

Wednesday, 30 June 2021

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## ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

You are summoned to a meeting of the Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the Council Chambers, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney on **Thursday, 8 July 2021 at 6.30 pm.**



Giles Hughes  
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillors: Councillor Andrew Beaney (Chairman), Councillor Andy Graham (Vice-Chair), Councillor Jake Acock, Councillor Jill Bull, Councillor Laetisia Carter, Councillor Owen Collins, Councillor Maxine Crossland, Councillor Mark Johnson, Councillor Nick Leverton, Councillor Lysette Nicholls, Councillor Mathew Parkinson, Councillor Elizabeth Poskitt, Councillor Andrew Prosser and Councillor Alex Wilson

Recording of Proceedings – The law allows the public proceedings of Council, Cabinet, and Committee Meetings to be recorded, which includes filming as well as audio-recording. Photography is also permitted. By participating in this meeting, you are consenting to be filmed.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings please let the Committee Administrator know prior to the start of the meeting.

# AGENDA

1. **Minutes of Previous Meeting (Pages 5 - 8)**  
To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2021.
2. **Apologies for Absence**  
To receive any apologies for absence.
3. **Declarations of Interest**  
To receive any declarations from Members of the Committee on any items to be considered at the meeting.
4. **Participation of the Public**  
To receive any submissions from members of the public, in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.
5. **Chairman's Announcements**  
Purpose:  
To receive any announcements from the Chairman of the Committee.
6. **Presentation from GLL Better**  
Purpose  
To receive a presentation from representatives of GLL Better (Greenwich Leisure Ltd) the Councils Leisure Services provider.  
  
Recommendation  
Committee members note the presentation.
7. **Enforcement Update**  
Purpose  
  
To receive a verbal update from the Group Manager for Resident Services.  
  
Recommendation  
  
That the update be noted.
8. **Oxfordshire Plan Consultation Document (Pages 9 - 1166)**  
Purpose  
To consider the Oxfordshire Plan Consultation Document and provide comment where necessary.
9. **Council Priorities and Service Performance Report - Quarter 4 (Pages 1167 - 1226)**  
Purpose  
This report provides details of service performance during Q4.  
  
Recommendation  
That the Committee reviews, and challenges as appropriate, performance for 2020-21 Q4.

10. **Committee Work Programme (Pages 1227 - 1238)**

Purpose:

To provide the Committee with an updated Work Programme for 2020/2021.

Recommendation:

That the Committee notes the work programme and provides comment where needed.

11. **Cabinet Work Programme (Pages 1239 - 1242)**

Purpose:

To give the Committee the opportunity to comment on the Cabinet Work Programme published on 22 June 2021.

Recommendation:

That the Committee decides whether to express a view to the Cabinet on relevant issues in its Work Programme.

12. **Members Questions**

To receive any questions from Members of the Committee.

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## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Record of Decisions of the meeting of the  
**Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee**  
Held Council Chamber at 6.30 pm on **Thursday, 17 June 2021**

### PRESENT

Councillors: Councillor Andrew Beaney (Chairman), Councillor Andy Graham (Vice-Chair), Councillor Jill Bull, Councillor Owen Collins, Councillor Maxine Crossland, Councillor Mark Johnson, Councillor Nick Leverton, Councillor Lysette Nicholls, Councillor Mathew Parkinson, Councillor Elizabeth Poskitt, Councillor Andrew Prosser and Councillor Alex Wilson.

Officers: Giles Hughes (Chief Executive) and Heather McCulloch (Shared Healthy Communities Manager), Adrienne Frazer and Michelle Ouzman (Strategic Support Officers).

### **I Minutes of Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 8 April 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, with the following amendments and updates:

Minute Number 43 – Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme: Councillor Collins provided an update from Councillor Ashbourne confirming that there were six families, in receipt of grant funding, that had been helped by the scheme.

Minute Number 44 – Affordable Housing Consultation: The Chairman noted that questions had been asked about travelling communities and park home sites being included in the supplementary planning document.

Minute Number 46 – Service Performance Report Quarter Three: With regards to Planning complaints, it was noted that the Planning Department was under pressure. The Chairman proposed to speak to the Chairman of Development Control Committee with regard to this issue.

The Chief Executive noted that he had requested an update on Planning from the Group Manager – Resident Services which would be considered in the July meeting.

Item 60 – Members Questions: Councillor Cooper noted that he had asked a question about Woodstock outdoor swimming pools re-opening times.

### **2 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Jake Acock.

### **3 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

### **4 Participation of the Public**

There were no submissions from members of the public in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.

### **5 Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman advised that the papers for the consultation on Oxfordshire's Local Plan, Regulation 18 (Part 2), would be published on 2 July 2021 by the Oxfordshire Growth Board. The consultation would be discussed at the 8 July 2021 committee and Members were asked to note that the papers for this item would be late.

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## **6 Start Time of Meetings**

The Chairman provided a brief overview of previous start times of the meeting. Councillor Leverton proposed that Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee meet at 6.30 pm for the year 2021/22. The Chairman seconded the proposal.

**RESOLVED:** That the committee's start time be noted.

## **7 Presentation from Domestic Abuse Strategic Lead, OCC**

The Committee received and considered the presentation of the Shared Healthy Communities Manager, which provided Members with the opportunity to ask questions about the Domestic Abuse service in the District and the County.

During discussions, Members asked for clarification on the statistical data, the terminology being used and the joined up nature of services around Oxfordshire.

West Oxfordshire District Council's contribution of £10,000 for a further two years of funding for the Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Service was noted.

Members also asked about the assistance provided for people with learning disabilities, especially in rural communities, and about provision and support for male survivors of domestic abuse and fathers of young children who were experiencing difficulties. The Shared Healthy Communities Manager informed the meeting that the Place of Safety resource was available to this client group.

Officers outlined the options and services that aimed to change behaviour and Councillor Graham offered to raise this at County Council level, particularly in relation to the work carried out in the education service.

Members also discussed the services available to the BAME community. The Shared Healthy Communities Manager informed the Committee about a project based in Oxford City which focussed on the BAME community.

The Chairman thanked the Shared Healthy Communities Manager for her comprehensive presentation.

## **8 Committee Work Programme**

The Committee received and considered the report which gave members the opportunity to comment on the recent review of the Work Programme for 2021/2022.

Following discussions, it was noted that:

Supplementary Planning Documents would be considered by Development Control Committee in future;

The consideration of the Council's work around Domestic Abuse could be moved to the 'other reports' section of the work programme;

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The report on the upgrade to West Oxfordshire's public space CCTV provision had been moved to the September Cabinet meeting. An equitable distribution of CCTV across the district was seen as desirable and the value of high quality provision to the police was noted. It was felt that the CCTV management being run from Oxford City would not provide the best service to the District;

Following a query raised by Councillor Graham, a report was requested for the July meeting on the Council's preparation for the arrival of refugees from Afghanistan. It was anticipated that some of the refugees would arrive at RAF Brize Norton and Members felt that further information was required about the District Council's role in assisting their resettlement;

Concerns were also raised about a need to increase the provision of NHS Dental services in West Oxfordshire, particularly in Carterton. Officers agreed to investigate the matter.

**RESOLVED:** That the amendments to, and contents of, the Committee Work Programme be noted.

9

### **Notice Of Motion - Re-use of IT Equipment**

The committee considered the motion referred by Council on 28 April 2021, for the Council and other public bodies in West Oxfordshire to re-use IT equipment that would previously have been disposed of.

The content of the motion, was as follows:

*"This Council notes that The Covid-19 lockdowns have shown how vital technology is to keeping people connected, in particular the vulnerable in society, many of whom have been confined to their homes and unable to see loved ones, and that according to Age UK 51% of digitally excluded people are over the age of 65, while refugees and the homeless also face worrying levels of digital exclusion.*

*This Council calls for:*

- 1. The Council, public bodies in West Oxfordshire, and local businesses to reform their procurement policies by donating IT locally to those in need rather than scrapping it, using schemes such as the Laptops for Homeless and Vulnerable Initiative;*
- 2. A local re-use and recycling centre to enable SocialBox.Biz and its charity partners to collect and distribute old technology to those in need in West Oxfordshire; and*
- 3. Direct council suppliers to support the SocialBox.Biz initiative and, together with the Council, to proactively take part in sponsoring and promoting the SocialBox.Biz message to local businesses, through traditional media and social media channels. "*

Committee Members expressed broad support for the motion and Councillor Bull noted that the issue could be as much about connectivity as access to appropriate IT hardware. Councillor Graham noted that is the motion was also concerned with reducing waste and therefore linked in to the climate change agenda. Members proposed a variety of potential recipients for the project, should it go ahead, such as: U3A, local schools and charities working with developing countries.

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**RESOLVED:** That a detailed proposal be produced by officers to be presented to Council for consideration.

**10 Preparation for presentation from GLL**

The Committee considered the issues it would like to discuss with GLL at the July meeting. Councillor Graham requested that an overview of the business model adaptations and business recovery models following the pandemic be provided. In addition, he hoped to see information on business planning for the next two to three years.

Councillor Leverton requested clarification on where the responsibility lay for the poor quality of football pitches in Carterton.

Finally, the Chairman asked that any additional questions be forwarded to himself or Democratic Services by Friday 25 June 2021.

**11 Cabinet Work Programme**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Head of Democratic Services, which gave Members the opportunity to comment on the Cabinet Work Programme published on 18 May 2021.

It was noted that:

Item 1 - approval of upgrade to West Oxfordshire's public space CCTV provision and monitoring arrangements was part of the committee's work programme.

Items 6 and 8 - options for the future use of the Witney Town Centre Shop and options for the future of 33A High Street, Burford (Visitor Information Centre) - the Chairman offered to discuss with the Chairman of Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee which would be the most appropriate scrutiny committee to consider these two items.

**RESOLVED:** That the contents of the Cabinet Work Programme be noted.

**12 Members Questions**

There were no questions from Members.

The Meeting closed at 7.32 pm

CHAIRMAN

 <p><b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b></p>	<p><b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b></p>
<p>Name and date of Committee</p>	<p><b>Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Thursday 8 July 2021</b></p>
<p>Report Number</p>	<p><b>Agenda Item 8</b></p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p><b>Oxfordshire Plan Consultation Document</b></p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>Accountable member</p>	<p>Cllr Jeff Haine, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning Email: Jeff.Haine@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Accountable officer</p>	<p>Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Email: Giles.Hughes@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Summary/Purpose</p>	<p>To consider the approval of the Oxfordshire Plan consultation document which sets out a range of planning policy options and a series of spatial strategy options for Oxfordshire.</p> <p>When complete the Oxfordshire Plan will provide a high-level spatial planning framework for Oxfordshire up to 2050 and will be a statutory planning document supplementing Local Plans. The Plan aims to be transformational and occupies new policy areas, such as on climate change, environmental betterment, health impacts and zero carbon transport. It has now reached the Regulation 18 part 2 stage.</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p>Annex A - Evidence Reports being published alongside the consultation document at Reg 18 part 2 stage</p> <p>Annex B – Oxfordshire Plan Regulation 18 (Part 2) Consultation Document</p>
<p>Recommendation/s</p>	<p><i>That the Committee decides whether to express a view on the following recommendations to Cabinet:</i></p> <p><i>a) To approve the Regulation 18 (Part 2) consultation document for public consultation as attached; and</i></p> <p><i>b) To authorise the Chief Executive to make any necessary editorial corrections and minor amendments to the documents, and to agree the final publication style, in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and subject to agreement with their counterparts in the other four partner Local Planning Authorities.</i></p>
<p>Corporate priorities</p>	<p>Climate Action: Leading the way in protecting and enhancing the environment by taking action locally on climate change and biodiversity</p> <p>Healthy Towns and Villages: Facilitating healthy lifestyles and better wellbeing for everyone.</p>

	<p>A Vibrant District Economy: Securing future economic success through supporting existing local businesses and attracting new businesses to deliver the economic ambitions of the Local Industrial Strategy.</p> <p>Strong Local Communities: Supporting and building prosperous and inclusive local communities.</p> <p>Meeting the Housing Needs of our Changing Population: Securing the provision of market and affordable housing of a high quality for a wide range of house holders making their home in West Oxfordshire.</p>
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Considerable consultation and engagement has already taken place during earlier stages of the Oxfordshire Plan. This is summarised in the report.

## **1. BACKGROUND**

### **1.1 The Partnership**

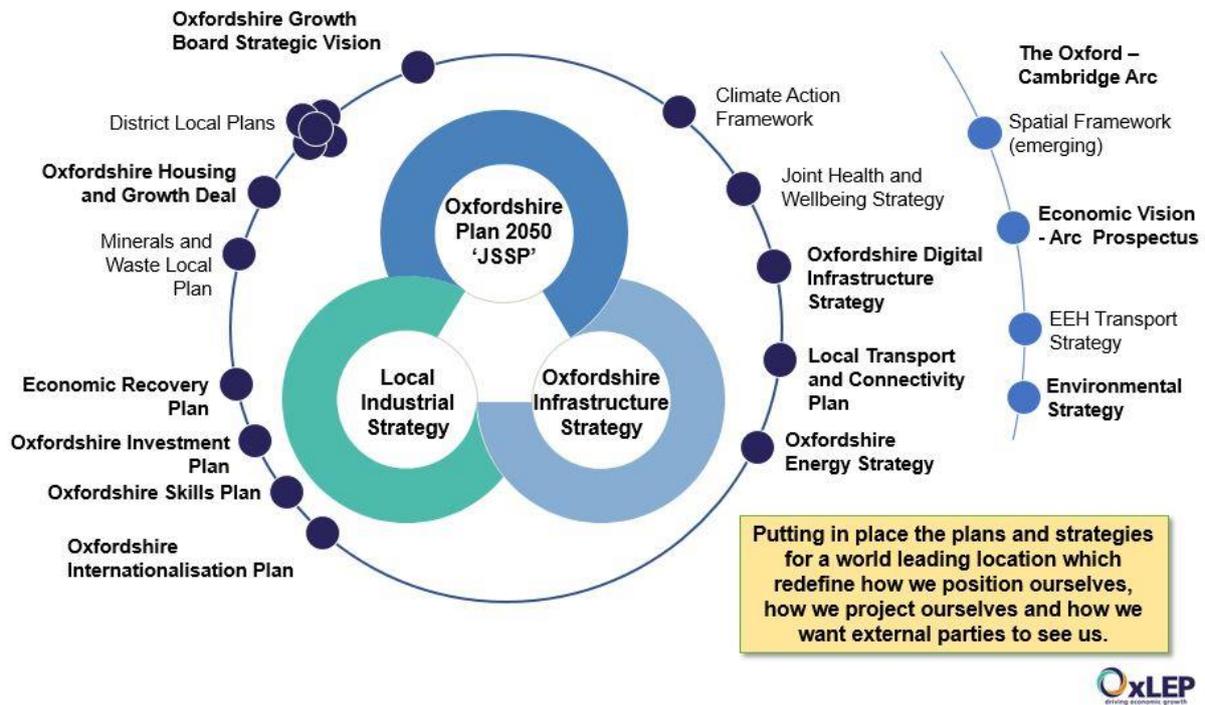
- 1.1.1 The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (OP2050) is being produced by the five local planning authorities in Oxfordshire, working in close partnership with Oxfordshire County Council and OxLEP throughout. The city and district councils formally approve each key stage.
- 1.1.2 A core team was established to co-ordinate the production of the OP2050 working closely with officers at the councils.
- 1.1.3 Development of the consultation document and evidence base has involved the Growth Board's Oxfordshire Plan Members Advisory Group, the Oxfordshire Heads of Planning Group, a technical Liaison Group and specialist officer input throughout the plan-making process.

## **2. MAIN POINTS**

### **2.1. Progress to date**

- 2.1.1 The 2018 Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal included a commitment by the Oxfordshire Councils to prepare a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan (The Oxfordshire Plan) alongside Government investment of £215m for affordable housing and infrastructure improvements.
- 2.1.2 The first major consultation on the Oxfordshire Plan (covering Plan vision, objectives, aspirations and possible spatial typologies) took place in February and March 2019 (Regulation 18 Part 1), and then a vision for the Oxfordshire Plan was developed in response to the consultation responses.
- 2.1.3 An extensive evidence base was commissioned, and Sustainability Appraisal scoping & ongoing testing has been undertaken.
- 2.1.4 The team also undertook number of further consultation steps including initiating a 'Call for Ideas' (promoted development sites and other project proposals), stakeholder events and engagement with young people.
- 2.1.5 The relationship was considered with other plans & strategies and strategic influencers such as the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS), Oxfordshire's Infrastructure Strategy (OX SIS), Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) and the Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS).
- 2.1.6 Considered the nature of 'Good Growth' in Oxfordshire.
- 2.1.7 Developed Oxfordshire's Strategic Vision for the Growth Board, intended to provide a strategic framework for a number of Oxfordshire-wide documents, to enable the closer coordination of planning, transport, infrastructure and economic development, amongst others. It sits alongside the Oxfordshire Plan's vision and was prepared & approved by the collective leadership of the Oxfordshire Growth Board & has been agreed by all Oxfordshire councils.

# Oxfordshire's Strategic Map – Reimagining Our Role



2.1.8 The core team has also undertaken Duty to Co-operate scoping and continuous engagement with neighboring Councils. This has included the Oxford City Council and District Councils & County Council & LEP, together with authorities adjoining Oxfordshire including Thames Valley, Bucks and Swindon. It has also included the 'prescribed bodies', such as Natural England, Environment Agency, Historic England & NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups.

2.1.9 The team have also updated the Local Development Scheme which sets out the key forward dates, prepared a detailed Equalities Statement and a new Statement of Community Involvement, which sets out the basis for engagement with the community, particularly the 'remote and online' arrangements in the time of Covid.

## 2.2 Structure of the Consultation document

2.2.1 The Oxfordshire Plan consultation document comprises:

- Introduction and context
- Plan Vision and Objectives
- Plan Themes and Policies
- Strategic Spatial Options

## 2.3 Developing the Plan

2.3.1 The Oxfordshire Plan is being prepared as a Development Plan under Section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchases Act 2004 (as amended). Once adopted the Oxfordshire Plan will form part of the Development Plan of each District and where appropriate will carry weight in the determination of planning applications and appeals for development, alongside the adopted Local Plan.

- 2.3.2 The development of the Oxfordshire Plan follows the Local Plan regulations (Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 as amended).
- 2.3.3 We are now at the Regulation 18 stage, with significant discretion on content so long as our proposals are backed by evidence and the Sustainability Appraisal has played a major role in shaping the detail. The Regulation 18 is a consultation stage at which different options can be tested. The Regulation 19 stage (the draft Plan) is where the Plan takes shape with policy detail.
- 2.3.4 A consultation document has been prepared that takes a series of proposals from the Planning Authorities as its foundation. It has been expanded into a full draft consultation document following discussion with Councillors representing each Council on the Advisory Group and officers. The draft consultation document seeks to ensure the content is strategic, setting the framework for Oxfordshire over 30 years (twice the operational length of a normal Local Plan) and shaping future growth, policies and setting the content for new Local Plans.
- 2.3.5 The consultation document sets out to show how joint action at an Oxfordshire level, where issues impact on more than one District, can add to what is already in place in the adopted Local Plans. The document consults on options that have the potential to set a framework for Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans, with options on policy criteria with some matters more appropriately left to Local Plans or Neighbourhood Plans.
- 2.3.6 At the Regulation 18 stage we are concerned with considering options on policies and spatial distribution and have sought to present such in the consultation document as 'preferred options' with 'alternative options' where appropriate. This is not the final plan but shows the direction of travel. The Plan sets out how we intend to progress from Regulation 18 to the Regulation 19 stage. Several local plans have been adopted since the Regulation 18 part 1 consultation in February 2019, so the Regulation 18 part 2 takes into account the development already planned in all the adopted Local Plans.

## **2.4 Scope of the Oxfordshire Plan**

- 2.4.1 As agreed through the 2018 Oxfordshire Growth and Housing Deal, the Oxfordshire Plan is being prepared as a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan covering 2020-2050.
- 2.4.2 The Oxfordshire Plan aims to be a different sort of plan. The Plan aims to be ambitious and transformational and occupies new policy areas; some require explanation in the plan at this stage; especially on climate change and environmental enhancement. The plan seeks to achieve cleaner, greener growth & higher quality development as a result of the proposed strategy and associated policies.
- 2.4.3 The consultation document describes 32 Policy Options that will be tested at the Regulation 18 stage. The document sets out why options are included, what the challenge is and why the response is proposed.
- 2.4.4 Possible policies for the Plan were identified following Reg 18 part 1, which the partnership considered. These have been subsequently expanded through consideration of evidence, such as the Sustainability Appraisal, into new policy proposals judged appropriate for consideration at the Oxfordshire level.
- 2.4.5 The proposed policy content covers strategic, Oxfordshire-wide policy options where issues related to more than one District. The document aims to set a long-term, overarching and high-level spatial planning framework for Oxfordshire for the period up to 2050.
- 2.4.6 Policies are in some case establishing an enabling/framework, others are more detailed. Others will be used in formulation of more detailed Local Plan policies.

- 2.4.7 Our development approach is set out under 5 themes that will create a County wide long-term framework. 32 strategic policies are proposed across five themes:
- **Theme One:** Addressing climate change.
  - **Theme Two:** Improving environmental quality.
  - **Theme Three:** Creating strong and healthy communities.
  - **Theme Four:** Planning for sustainable travel and connectivity.
  - **Theme Five:** Creating jobs and providing homes.
- 2.4.8 Under these themes county-wide policies are being proposed, including policies on climate change, environmental net gain, health impact assessment and urban renewal due to the retail changes impacting on our town and city centres, business site intensification and high design standards for new development.
- 2.4.9 The Plan is closely aligned with the development of the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan and the OXIS infrastructure assessment. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan that will accompany the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan will be based on update of OXIS. This will complete before the Regulation 19 stage.
- 2.4.10 The plan will also have a Monitoring Framework at the Regulation 19 stage that is aligned with the OXIS monitoring framework.
- 2.4.11 The options consulted upon at Regulation 18 part 2 will be turned into final proposals by the Regulation 19 stage.

## 2.5 Strategic Spatial Options

- 2.5.1 Finally, the Plan will also establish housing and economic growth requirements to 2050 and broad locations for growth. This document proposes consulting on the options for the distribution of growth through spatial options.
- 2.5.2 Five spatial strategy options have been identified. These are to be tested through the Regulation 18 part 2 consultation. The process for moving from Regulation 18 to Regulation 19 is set out.
- 2.5.3 The five spatial strategy options identified are:
- **Option 1:** Focus on opportunities at larger settlements and planned growth locations.
  - **Option 2:** Focus on Oxford-led growth.
  - **Option 3:** Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs.
  - **Option 4:** Focus on strengthening business locations.
  - **Option 5:** Focus on supporting rural communities.
- 2.5.4 The adopted local plans already establish the distribution of significant growth to 2031/35/36 and are taken account of in the spatial strategy and proposed spatial options.
- 2.5.5 At this stage we are not identifying individual options that can necessarily accommodate all of Oxfordshire's growth over next 30 years, nor identifying any one of options taken in isolation as the eventual long-term spatial strategy. At the next stage when a draft Plan is published (Regulation 19) broad locations for growth will be identified, with Local Plans being the mechanism for final site allocations. The eventual long-term spatial strategy is anticipated to draw from all of the five strategic spatial options at this next stage.

## **2.6 Level of new growth**

- 2.6.1 We have undertaken an assessment of the growth needs of Oxfordshire up to 2050, the Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment (OGNA), which will be published alongside the Regulation 18 part 2 consultation document given its important role as an evidence document. It sets out three scenarios for housing need. One that is based on the Government's standard methodology, a mid-range option, and a higher one that factors in additional economic growth.
- 2.6.2 The decision on which level of growth will be taken around Christmas 2021 to inform the Regulation 19 stage draft plan. In setting the level of planned housing provision, the OGNA will be one of the factors considered alongside a number of others.
- 2.6.3 Our strategy seeks to take account of the five District Local Plans that have been adopted in Oxfordshire and take account of the growth already committed in each District, totalling circa 75,000 houses. The consultation document clarifies that the housing need assessment is just a starting point, the current Local Plan growth up to 2031/35/36 has to be taken into account and leaves a smaller 'residual' figure of new development to be planned for in the Oxfordshire Plan.

## **2.7 The relationship with the Oxford-Cambridge Arc**

- 2.7.1 The consultation document also includes a section on the relationship with the Oxford to Cambridge Arc. Our aspiration is for our work on the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan to strongly inform and influence government's thinking on the Arc Spatial Framework.
- 2.7.2 MHCLG have announced the development of a Spatial Framework for the Arc, to take place in stages:
- Policy Statement – February 2021 (MHCLG announced a focus on brownfield land, new settlements and climate change)
  - Vision consultation – Summer 2021
  - Options consultation - Spring 2022
  - Draft Framework consultation – Autumn 2022
- 2.7.3 The Oxfordshire Plan will help ensure that Oxfordshire has a strong voice in the development of the Ox-Cam Arc Spatial Framework and that our interests are taken into account.
- 2.7.4 Decisions on the development of the Arc will also feed into the site assessment that is to be undertaken as part of the work to prepare the Regulation 19 draft Plan.

## **2.8 Regulations and Legal Advice**

- 2.8.1 Legal support and advice has been received throughout the key stages of the process, as with the preparation of a Local Plan.
- 2.8.2 The Plan follows the Local Plan regulations and will be part of the Development Plan for each District. We are at Regulation 18 stage and have significant discretion about consultation document content, so long as it is backed by evidence. Regulation 18 is a testing/consultation stage.
- 2.8.3 The development of the consultation document is also informed by a significant evidence base, especially the Sustainability Appraisal.

## **2.9 Accompanying documents**

2.9.1 A number of accompanying documents have been provided to be available to Councillors when considering the Regulation 18 part 2 Consultation Document and whether to approve it for consultation. These include:

- An updated Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)
- A report on Duty to Cooperate.
- Statement of Common Ground (NPPF requirement, para 27)
- Equalities Statement

2.9.2 There are also three independent studies that are being made available to inform the decision to proceed to consultation:

- Sustainability Appraisal (SA)
- Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)
- The Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment (OGNA)

2.9.3 The Annex shows the extensive evidence base, additional reports and studies that will be published as part of the evidence base at the start of the consultation period.

2.9.4 This includes an updated Local Development Scheme that sets out all the forward dates for the completion of the Oxfordshire Plan.

## **2.10 Consultation Period**

2.10.1 The consultation is to commence on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2021 for ten weeks, up to 8<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

2.10.2 At the Regulation 18 part 2 stage we have discretion as to the length of time the consultation period.

2.10.3 As noted earlier the purpose of this consultation is to seek public views and test the options presented throughout the consultation document. Councillors are requested to engage with the consultation process once it commences rather than seeking to answer the questions posed before the consultation begins.

2.10.4 We have planned for the engagement process to be online given the Covid uncertainties.

## **2.11 Website**

2.11.1 The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 has a website <https://oxfordshireplan.org/> where the Regulation 18 part 2 consultation documents will sit. The website will be the key tool for the engagement during the consultation period.

2.11.2 The website will contain:

- Overview text about the Oxfordshire Plan, stage reached and consultation purpose.
- A consultation response form, including a series of questions included.
- A summary leaflet.
- A downloadable Regulation 18 part 2 consultation document.
- The ability to access the key accompanying documents that the Councils will receive.
- Link to the supporting evidence including the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) & the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).
- Link to the OGNA report
- Link to secondary evidence such as the Local Transport & Connectivity Plan (LTCP) and the OXIS which supports the Oxfordshire Plan but which is being consulted upon separately.
- Text confirming that the County Minerals and Waste Plan is separate.

- A download form for proposals to be submitted by site promoters.

## 2.12 Online events for which dates are being confirmed.

- District-based webinars: 2 per district, 1st to take place in 3rd week of August (from 16th), 2nd to take place in 3rd week of September (commencing 20th)
- CPRE webinar date confirmed as 19<sup>th</sup> August.
- A number of specialist webinars covering Environment and Developers. Each of these is to take place in the week commencing Tuesday 31st August.
- OxLEP Business events: 2 events, one w/c 19th July and one in mid-September
- Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce: July 6<sup>th</sup>

## 2.13 The future timetable

2.13.1 The scale of the work undertaken at the Regulation 18 part 2 stage puts the plan-making process in a good position to meet the future timetable that was agreed with MHCLG in February 2021.

2.13.2 We plan to reach:

Stage	Timeline
Scrutiny Meetings	8th to 15th July 2021
Cabinet/ Executive Meetings	19th to 22nd July 2021
<i>Second</i> Regulation 18 Consultation (on options)	30 <sup>th</sup> July - September 2021
Regulation 19 Consultation (draft plan)	May - June 2022
Submission	September 2022
Examination	November/December 2022
Inspectors Report	February/March 2023
Adoption	May/June 2023
Monitoring	<i>From adoption onwards</i>

## 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1. None directly for West Oxfordshire District Council at this stage. The consultation has been funded through the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal.

## 4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1. Legal support and advice has been received throughout the key stages of the process, as with the preparation of a Local Plan.

- 4.2. The Plan follows the Local Plan regulations and will be part of the Development Plan for each District. We are at Regulation 18 stage and have significant discretion about consultation document content, so long as it is backed by evidence. Regulation 18 is a testing/consultation stage.
- 4.3. The development of the consultation document is also informed by a significant evidence base, especially the Sustainability Appraisal.

## **5. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1. This is a consultation document and there are no significant risks from approving the consultation. If the consultation did not happen there could be reputational risks as a consequence of not delivering on the commitment in the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal.

## **6. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 6.1. A separate Equalities Statement has been prepared.

## **7. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1. One of the key themes in the consultation document is addressing climate change, and policy options are included to tackle this.

## **8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 8.1. Cabinet could choose not to approve the consultation document.

**Annex A: Evidence Reports being published alongside the consultation document at Reg 18 part 2 stage.**

<b><i>Accompanying Overview Report</i></b>
The Reg 18 (Part 2) Consultation Document
Statement of Community Involvement
Duty to Co-operate Statement
Statement of Common Ground
Equalities Statement
Published separately: Local Development Scheme update
<b><i>Key Evidence</i></b>
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)
Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)
Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment (OGNA)
<b><i>Secondary Evidence</i></b>
Transport and Connectivity
Water Cycle Study (Phase 1) incorporating SFRA
Health Impact Assessment
Climate Change Report
Natural Capital Work
Nature Recovery Network
Circular Economy
Settlement Potential (incl. Urban Capacity)
Infrastructure OxIS phase 1

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**Oxfordshire Plan –  
Regulation 18 (Part 2) Consultation Document**

**VERSION 27 (Full Text) with paragraph numbers  
At 1 July 2021**

## Foreword

1. Oxfordshire is a unique and special place shaped by its beautiful and varied landscapes, rich cultural heritage and areas important to nature conservation. Its towns, villages and the City of Oxford form part of a dynamic network of places that have grown to support an innovation-driven economy that is nationally and internationally significant, with Oxfordshire forming part of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc. These characteristics, together with Oxfordshire's connections to other places, mean that, for many, Oxfordshire is a prosperous and healthy place to live. But there are also persistent, multi-faceted inequalities in some of our places, and challenges linked to climate change, congestion, housing affordability and threats to the natural, built and historic environments.
2. The Oxfordshire Plan will change the way we plan for Oxfordshire's future. To fully make the most of our opportunities and to more effectively tackle the challenges that Oxfordshire faces requires a new partnership-based approach to planning: one that continues to value the vital role played by local and neighbourhood plans, but which also recognises that some issues require transformative change through concerted effort over the medium and longer-term, are better considered on a wider geographical scale and best tackled through joined-up policy responses that build resilience.
3. Climate change is one example. Decisions made locally have the potential to impact on outcomes in that area, but also more widely within Oxfordshire as well as beyond the county's boundaries. We also understand there are important linkages between climate change, where development is located, Oxfordshire's status as an international centre of world-leading innovation and research, movement and connectivity, the wellbeing of the natural environment, people's health and the importance of enhanced resilience across all these areas. Likewise, there are many factors that impact on people's wellbeing including housing, their physical and mental health, employment, income, education, the built and natural environment, access to green space and cultural facilities and a sense of community.
4. Not all these issues are within the sphere of influence of a statutory development plan, but statutory planning does have an important role to play. This strategic plan for Oxfordshire has been jointly prepared by the four district councils – Cherwell District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council – and Oxford City Council, working in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership.
5. Oxfordshire has a global reputation for innovation. We want our Plan to be bold and ambitious, setting out challenging policies that place Oxfordshire at the forefront of sustainable development because we want Oxfordshire to be an even better-quality place to live, work, visit and invest in 2050. Realising our ambition will require a step-change in Oxfordshire's approach to place-shaping: one that is transformational. This document sets out an innovative strategy that plans positively and collaboratively for inclusive growth in ways that fully align and integrate sustainability objectives, providing a framework for local plans. Our aim is to enhance environmental, social and economic wellbeing through 'good growth' in ways that are distinctively 'Oxfordshire' and deliver the best possible

outcomes for our communities, environment and businesses, benefitting current and future generations.

6. We hope the public and stakeholders will support our new approach to planning for Oxfordshire.

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Draft Spatial Strategy

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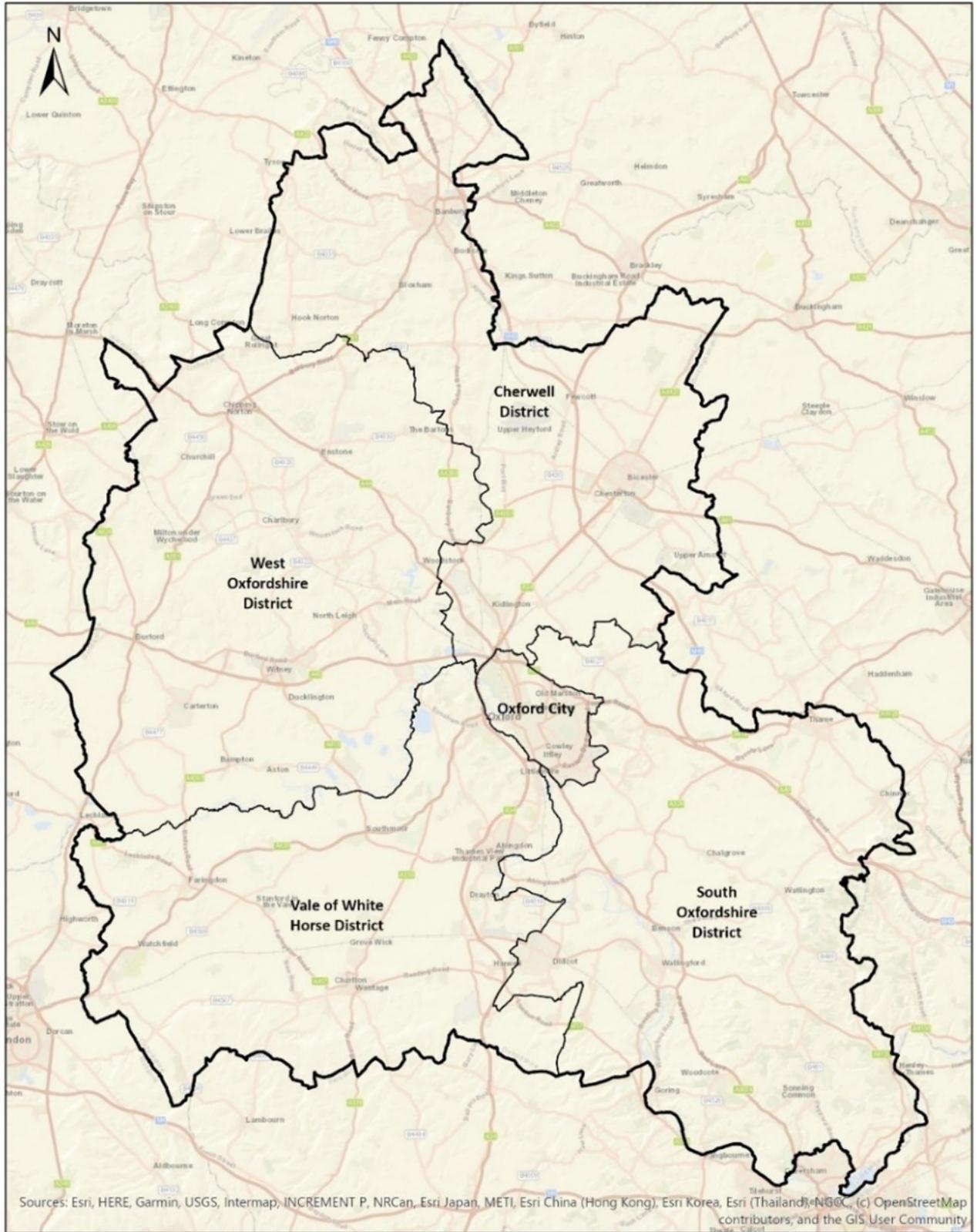
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# Map of Oxfordshire



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## List of Proposed Policy Options for the Oxfordshire Plan

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## Introduction and Overview

### Why produce a joint plan for Oxfordshire?

7. Oxfordshire is a place of unique opportunities and assets, but there are also challenges.
8. Oxfordshire is taking a strategic approach to planning its future. We think this is the best way to realise the transformational opportunities that exist to tackle climate change, improve the environment, secure social justice and support long-term, sustainable, innovation-led economic growth. Addressing these issues to secure better outcomes requires a long-term co-ordinated approach across Oxfordshire. One of the particular opportunities associated with this approach to planning is that it helps create certainty for those making future decisions about investment, and offers greater potential that strategic infrastructure – physical, social and environmental – will be delivered in a co-ordinated way that helps ensure that growth is truly sustainable and inclusive.
9. This joint approach to planning builds on earlier collective work undertaken in Oxfordshire to agree how to accommodate the level of housing growth, including Oxford's unmet housing needs, identified in the 2014 Strategic Housing Market Assessment. That work highlighted the importance of deeper and closer engagement and a broader-based approach to planning for Oxfordshire.
10. The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is one of the commitments made by the six Oxfordshire authorities as part of the ambitious 2018 Housing and Growth Deal with Government. The Plan is being prepared by a core team working in close partnership with Oxfordshire's District Councils, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, and through the Oxfordshire Growth Board.

### What is the Oxfordshire Plan?

11. The Oxfordshire Plan is a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan (or JSSP). It is a formal Development Plan Document being prepared under Section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). Once adopted, the Plan will form part of the Development Plan for Oxford City Council ('the City Council') and each District Council ('the District Councils') in Oxfordshire: Cherwell District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council.
12. The Oxfordshire Plan will set out the long-term, overarching and high-level spatial planning framework for Oxfordshire for the period to 2050. It will be used in the formulation of more detailed local plans and neighbourhood development plans and, where appropriate, its policies will carry weight in the determination of planning applications and appeals for development. It will also provide a spatial framework for a wide range of other plans, strategies and programmes relevant to Oxfordshire that have a bearing on the use of land. These include (but are not limited to) the Local Industrial Strategy, Oxfordshire's Infrastructure Strategy, the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan and the Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy. Looking more widely, the Oxfordshire Plan will play an important role in helping shape the emerging Spatial Framework for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.

13. Key factors in the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan are its scope and the appropriate level of detail. The Plan will only contain policies that are appropriate to its overarching role as part of Oxfordshire's portfolio approach to plan-making and strategy development. It will not, for example, include policies that are more appropriately made in local or neighbourhood plans, and its policies will add value by being Oxfordshire-specific and not simply replicating national policy. Following further consideration since the initial scoping published in 2018, it is proposed the Plan will include policies relating to:

- Oxfordshire's spatial strategy;
- tackling climate change;
- improving environmental quality;
- priorities for new infrastructure;
- the scale and broad location of new development;
- healthy place-shaping; and
- urban renewal.

14. Some policies will apply across Oxfordshire, while other policies will apply only to large-scale developments and/or to broad locations for new development. The Oxfordshire Plan should be read as a whole.

15. The policies in the Oxfordshire Plan will cover 30 years and reflect the changing levels of certainty there are over this period. While there is greater certainty over the earlier part of the Plan period, there is also less scope to effect transformational change. Uncertainty increases further into the plan period, particularly around external factors such as climate and technological change, together with future changes to planning legislation and national policy, but so too does the scope for emergence of new opportunities to deliver sustainable development in different and better ways. The Oxfordshire Plan has an important role to play in setting Oxfordshire on the pathway to deliver transformational change based on a different approach to place-making.

16. The City and District councils in Oxfordshire each have their own adopted local plans.

<b>Cherwell District Council</b>	Adopted July 2015	2011-2031
<b>Cherwell District Council</b>	Part 1 Partial Review: Oxford's Unmet Housing Need Adopted September 2020	2011-2031
<b>Oxford City Council</b>	Adopted June 2020	2016-2036
<b>South Oxfordshire District Council</b>	Adopted December 2020	2011-2035
<b>Vale of White Horse District Council</b>	Adopted December 2016	2011-2031
<b>West Oxfordshire District Council</b>	Adopted September 2018	2011-2031

17. The committed growth in these existing adopted local plans will be particularly important in influencing the policies for the first ten to fifteen years of the Oxfordshire Plan from 2020 to the early 2030s. The Oxfordshire Plan will set the policy framework for future local plans in each of the four Districts and the City of Oxford that follow the current round of plans.
18. Oxfordshire also has a Minerals and Waste Local Plan which is prepared by Oxfordshire County Council. Part 1 of that Plan was adopted in 2017. Part 2 (Site Allocations) is in preparation<sup>1</sup>.
19. The Oxfordshire Plan does not cover proposals that are defined as Nationally Significant Infrastructure. A separate planning process will apply in those cases as set down by the 2008 Planning Act, and the relevant supporting National Policy Statements.
20. The Oxfordshire Plan is being developed with a substantial technical evidence base and has been subject to testing through Sustainability Appraisal (SA) at key stages and to early Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening. The SA and HRA work continue to influence the development of the Plan.
21. The Plan is also being shaped by public and stakeholder engagement. An initial formal Regulation 18 Part 1 consultation 'Introducing the Oxfordshire Plan' took place in February & March 2019<sup>2</sup>. That consultation sought views on what the Plan's vision, aspirations, objectives and broad spatial strategy should be. The public's response to that consultation is set out in the Regulation 18 Part 1 consultation report<sup>3</sup>. Taken together, the responses gave a very clear overall steer that there is an appetite for an approach that:
  - is ambitious, radical, innovative and creative,
  - is Oxfordshire-specific and reflective of local people's views,
  - prioritises climate change, and
  - focusses on social, economic and environmental wellbeing, and not solely on a narrow definition of growth.
22. This Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation document has responded to these earlier comments by setting out an ambitious and innovative set of policy approaches based on five themes (addressing climate change, improving environmental quality, creating strong and healthy communities, planning for sustainable travel and connectivity and creating jobs and providing homes) and a set of spatial strategy options.

## What is the Oxfordshire Plan seeking to achieve?

23. National planning policies require that Oxfordshire plans positively for growth in ways that achieve the three overarching objectives of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These overarching objectives of sustainable development are intrinsically linked.

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<sup>1</sup> [New Minerals and Waste Local Plan | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Introducing the Oxfordshire Plan Feb 2019.pdf \(oxfordshireplan.org\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Reg-18-Part-1-Consultation-Summary.pdf \(oxfordshireplan.org\)](#)

24. The approach proposed in this consultation document seeks to deliver real and lasting positive change in Oxfordshire by creating the right environmental, social and economic conditions and by building resilience. The emerging Plan: contributes to protecting and enhancing our **natural, built and historic environment** by making prudent use of natural resources (including our land), improving biodiversity, improving air quality, tackling, mitigating and adapting to climate change and supporting low-carbon solutions; helps support **economic prosperity** by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places at the right times with timely provision of infrastructure to meet the needs of Oxfordshire's world-leading economy; supports our **communities** by planning for energy efficient homes sufficient in number and of the right tenures, types and sizes to meet the needs of Oxfordshire's residents – current and future – in well-designed communities with accessible, inclusive, high quality and accessible services and public spaces and in ways that support communities' health, social and cultural wellbeing.
25. Rather than seeing environmental, economic and social objectives as competing demands that need to be balanced, the approach proposed in the Oxfordshire Plan is to align and integrate these priorities so that they are mutually supportive. The emerging Plan recognises that the environment, economy, connectivity, social inclusion, housing and community assets are all key to Oxfordshire's wellbeing. The Oxfordshire Plan will be a key tool in achieving our ambitions for transformative and long-term sustainable development in ways that are distinctive to Oxfordshire and reflect local circumstances across the county. The aim for Oxfordshire is to deliver '*good growth*'.
26. What Oxfordshire means by 'good growth' is defined in the Oxfordshire Growth Board's 'Strategic Vision for Long-Term Sustainable Development 2050'<sup>4</sup> that has been adopted by each Council. This definition of 'Good Growth' is a 'golden thread' that will run through the Oxfordshire Plan. The definition has been assessed as part of the Sustainability Appraisal of the emerging Oxfordshire Plan.

**'Good Growth' in Oxfordshire will:**

- Be **clean and green**, placing the county at the leading edge of UK and global de-carbonisation efforts by maximising all opportunities to significantly reduce Oxfordshire's carbon footprint, and increasing natural capital across the county.
- Be **sustainable**, focusing development in ways that enhance quality of place and at locations which enable people to live and work nearby, improving digital connectivity and avoiding unnecessary travel in the first instance, but using opportunities to increase movement by sustainable and active modes of travel when needed.
- Embrace **innovation** based on our technology sectors and knowledge-intensive activity, and develop new innovative solutions for working, learning, mobility, health care, resource management, sustainable design and improved public services.

<sup>4</sup> [Sustainable Development \(oxfordshiregrowthboard.org\)](https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org)

- Be **healthy and inclusive**, with all development addressing inequalities and contributing positively to the overall health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's communities, environment and economy.
- Facilitate **environmental improvements** and make **efficient** use of Oxfordshire's natural resources and land.
- Enhance and expand access to the county's internationally significant **historic environment** and **cultural and heritage assets**.
- Support diverse, accessible employment, generating a highly productive and **inclusive economy** based on our world-class research, innovation and technology.
- Build **resilience** to change, with growth planned in ways that: build on strengths and assets to support communities during periods of change; support economic diversity and can accommodate changes in technology; recognise changes in the way that people live and work and changing demographics; and respond to global impacts, particularly from climate and economic changes.
- Expect **high-quality** development which will have a positive impact on communities in terms of design, energy and water efficiency and public realm, utilises low impact building and construction methods and materials, and is properly supported by the necessary infrastructure including excellent digital connectivity. Everything we build or design in Oxfordshire will be fit for purpose in the world of 2050, respond to different circumstances, contribute to Oxfordshire's sense of distinctiveness and rich variety, and support connected communities.

*Source: Oxfordshire's Strategic Vision for Long-Term Sustainable Development, 2021*

## Oxfordshire's Strategic Vision for Long-Term Sustainable Development

27. The Strategic Vision was prepared and approved by the collective leadership of the Oxfordshire Growth Board and has been agreed by each of the Oxfordshire councils. The Strategic Vision was shaped by engagement with Oxfordshire's communities and stakeholders on a draft Strategic Vision (November 2020) and by expert, informal sustainability testing. The Strategic Vision sets out what Oxfordshire should look like in 2050 and how it can be achieved through a range of strategies acting together. It is a positive statement of shared strategic priorities designed to facilitate a step-change in the approach to planning for and delivering sustainable development in Oxfordshire, challenging the norm and drawing on new ways of thinking.

28. The ambition for Oxfordshire has been set high. The Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire's future is outcome-focussed, driven by improvements to people's wellbeing and recognises that the future of Oxfordshire has the potential to benefit not just the wellbeing of its own residents and communities, but also the wellbeing of the UK and communities across the globe.

### Strategic Vision 2050: Outcomes for Oxfordshire

By 2050, Oxfordshire will:

- have achieved carbon neutral status, and be accelerating towards a carbon negative future, removing more carbon than it emits each year. Energy production will be sustainable.
- be the first generation to leave the natural environment in a better state than that in which we found it. The natural environment will be more biodiverse, support social, economic and ecological resilience and have the capacity to adapt to change.
- have a healthier and happier population with better physical and mental health. Young people will feel confident, positive and excited about their future and people will spend more of their later life active, in good health and with care available in their communities to meet their changing needs.
- be a globally competitive economy which is sustainable, diverse and inclusive, generating high quality, productive and knowledge-based employment for our communities. It will utilise the county's strengths and resources, including its world-class universities and world-leading research, innovation and technology assets. There will be improved educational attainment and a skills system aligned to the needs of business and communities, helping to provide the conditions in which all Oxfordshire's people can benefit and thrive.
- be a more equal place, supported by inclusive growth that gives everyone a fair chance in life to prosper. Deprivation and disadvantage will have been tackled wherever it manifests itself in our urban and rural areas, and discrimination will have been removed.
- enjoy a built and historic environment which is rich and diverse, comprising high quality places where people want to live, work, visit and invest. Our rich and distinctive internationally recognised heritage assets, visitor economy and vibrant cultural offer will have been further enhanced and there will be improved access to them.
- have energy efficient, well-designed homes, sufficient in numbers, location, type, size, tenure and affordability to meet the needs of our growing economy, young people, residents and future generations.
- have transformed movement and connectivity within the county and beyond. There will be greater digital connectivity and physical mobility in and between places in ways that enhance environmental, social and economic wellbeing, with an emphasis on sustainable travel, including walking and cycling.
- have flourishing, diverse and vibrant communities rooted in pride with our local, national and international connections and a strong sense of civic identity. Individuals and families will support each other in partnership with sustainable public services, a thriving voluntary and community sector and be connected to dynamic and socially responsible businesses.

29. The Strategic Vision's definition of 'good growth' forms the basis for a set of Guiding Principles.

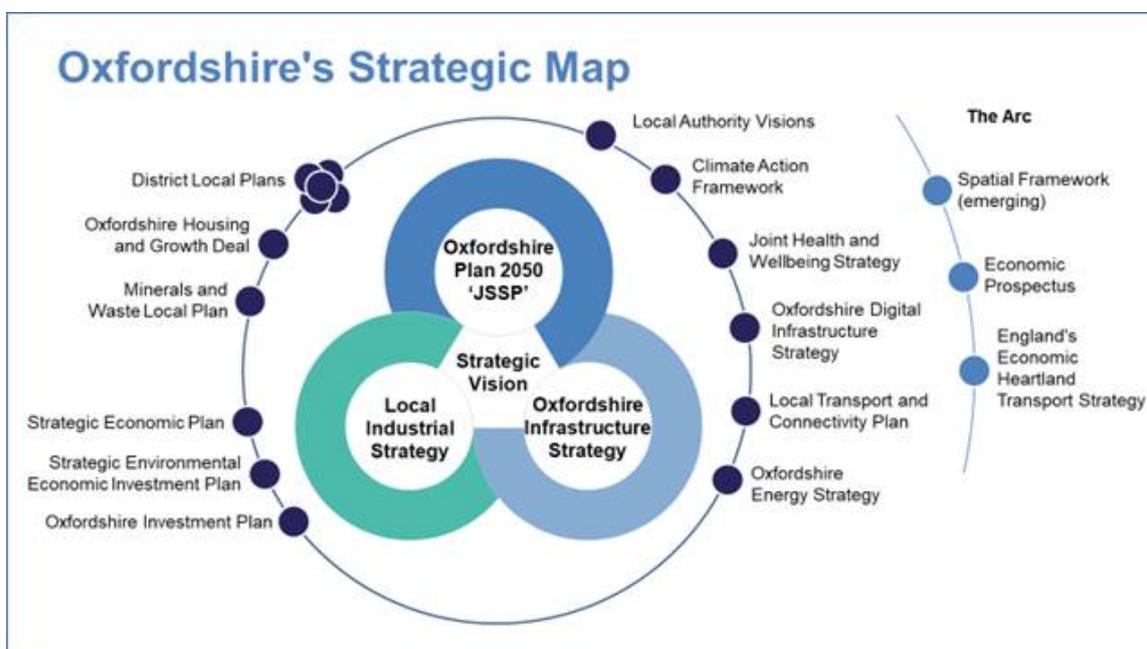
### **Strategic Vision 2050 Guiding Principles: Headlines**

1. We will reverse the impacts of climate change.

2. We will create the conditions to support a world-leading and innovation rich economy which is clean, prosperous, diverse, inclusive, successful and sustainable.
3. We will improve our overall health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities.
4. We will enhance our natural environment.
5. We will reflect our distinctive and diverse communities and places.
6. We will deliver homes that meet the needs of current and future generations.
7. We will embrace technological changes.
8. We will expect high-quality development.
9. We will help people to help each other by supporting communities and individuals to achieve positive change for themselves.
10. We will maximise the benefits of strong collaboration within Oxfordshire.
11. We will proactively and positively engage and collaborate beyond Oxfordshire.

30. Taken together, the Strategic Vision outcomes, the definition of 'good growth' and the Guiding Principles form the foundation for Oxfordshire's over-arching approach to long-term sustainable development for Oxfordshire and for developing plans, strategies and programmes.

31. The Strategic Vision will be delivered by a wide range of plans, strategies and programmes, including the Oxfordshire Plan.

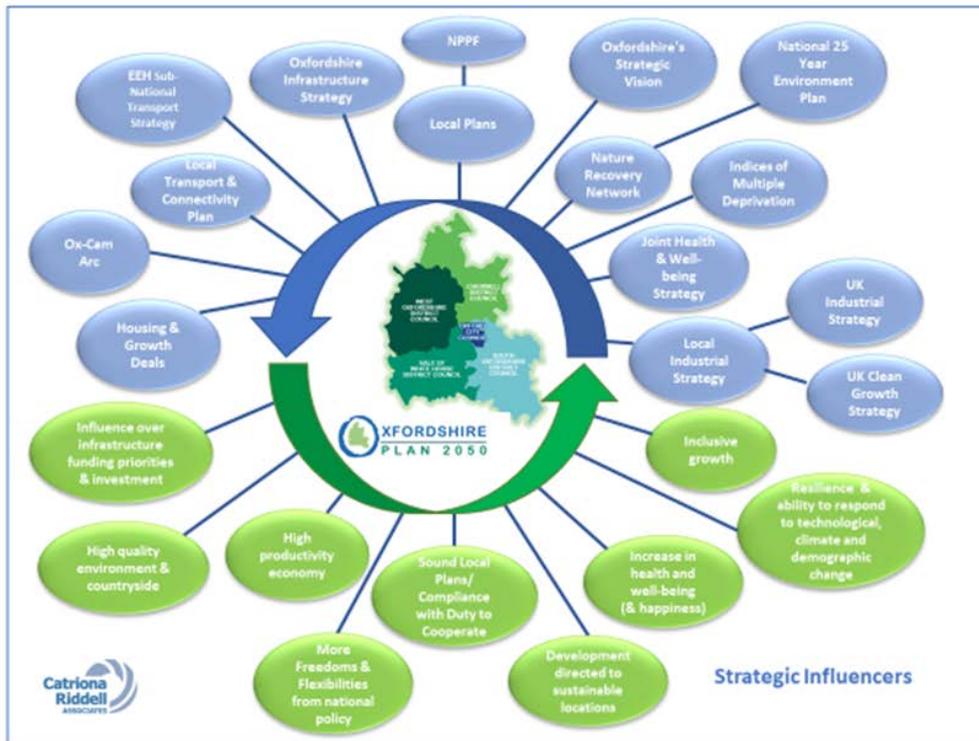


32. The Strategic Vision does not define what its ambition looks like spatially because that is the role of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. However, the Strategic Vision's definition of 'good growth' and the Guiding Principles help define the role that place-making might play in delivering the Strategic Vision outcomes. The Strategic Vision is being used as a tool – built on a wide consensus – to inform development of the policies, spatial options and overall spatial strategy in the

Oxfordshire Plan, with appropriate weight attached to it and as part of the process of demonstrating that the Oxfordshire Plan's overall strategy is being selected against reasonable alternatives on a robust, consistent and objective basis.

## Relationship with other plans and strategies

33. There are already other plans, strategies, policies and investment programmes (in existence or emerging), as well as legislative requirements, that will influence strategic-level place-shaping in Oxfordshire, including where development should take place. The Strategic Vision refers to these as 'strategic influencers'. We have 'mapped' the main strategic influencers in the following diagram.
34. This context will continue to evolve as new strategic influencers emerge at national, sub-national or local level, or as others change. Oxfordshire will be shaped by these strategic influencers to varying degrees over the next 30 years and this is reflected in the emerging Oxfordshire Plan. In many cases the relationships between these strategic influencers and the Oxfordshire Plan is a two, rather than one-way process.
35. The existing local plans will be particularly important in influencing the first 10-15 years of the Oxfordshire Plan. The Oxfordshire Plan will act as the framework for the next generation of local plans that are prepared for each District and the City of Oxford.
36. Once adopted, the Oxfordshire 2050 plan will set a policy and growth framework for Oxfordshire. It will form part of the Development Plan for each District and once adopted will be a material consideration for LPAs to consider in the formulation of more detailed plans locally and, where appropriate, its policies will carry weight in the determination of planning applications and appeals for development.



## Oxford-Cambridge Arc

37. In the medium to longer-term, Oxfordshire's role within the Oxford-Cambridge Arc (the Arc) is likely to be an increasingly important influence. The Arc is a globally significant area between Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge, forming a key national economic priority based on UK and world-leading innovation. Taken together, the Arc area houses one of the fastest growing economies in England, supporting over 2 million jobs and adding over £110 billion to the economy every year. The whole of Oxfordshire, with its world-class universities and world-leading research, innovation and technology assets, forms the western part of the Arc.
38. The Arc has generated close cooperation between Councils, LEPs and Universities across the Arc and the Oxfordshire Growth Board has played an active role in developing the Arc since its inception.
39. The Arc is becoming a focus for shared economic activity, joint working and shared prosperity and considering the joint infrastructure across a large area which has a major potential for GDP growth, based on its economic strengths in key sectors, its universities, innovation and intellectual capital.
40. The Arc provides a forum for joint work to deliver on zero carbon commitments, address water stress and increase electricity supply through local provision and support for renewables. Likewise, the emerging Oxfordshire Plan places an emphasis on tackling climate change, enhancing the environment, strengthening communities and securing sustainable transport as well as the quality of new growth that results.

41. The Government's ambition is to build a better economic, social and environmental future for the Arc, with high-quality, well-connected and sustainable communities making the Arc an even more beautiful place to live, work and visit.

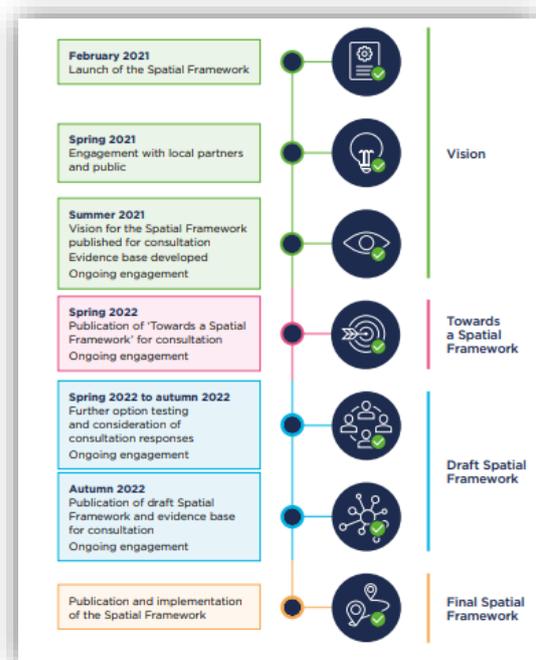
42. To achieve this ambition, the Government, alongside local partners, is developing a Spatial Framework for the Arc. This will be a long-term strategic plan that helps co-ordinate infrastructure, environment and new developments in the area. The Arc Spatial Framework is being led by Government. In February 2021 the Government published its 'Introduction to the Arc Spatial Framework'<sup>5</sup> and announced its intention to explore the establishment of an Arc Growth Body to 'give a clear economic leadership voice to the area'.



43. The February 2021 document sets out the opportunities and challenges for the Arc and establishes a set of core principles that will underpin development of the Framework. The Framework will form a fully integrated single land use and infrastructure plan comprising both planning and transport policies. The Framework is likely to include policies relating to employment space, policies to enable new settlements to come forward, policies to support habitat recovery and provision of green space, policies relating to brownfield development and expansion of existing settlements, policies enabling housing needs to be met in full, strategic transport policies, climate resilience and air quality policies and strategic policies to facilitate utilities investment.

44. Once complete, the Framework will have the status of national planning policy. This will give the Arc Framework significant weight in the planning system for guiding local plan preparation and in decision-making, sitting alongside the NPPF as an important 'material consideration'. The Arc will also have national transport policy status, allowing it to guide the plans prepared by local transport bodies.

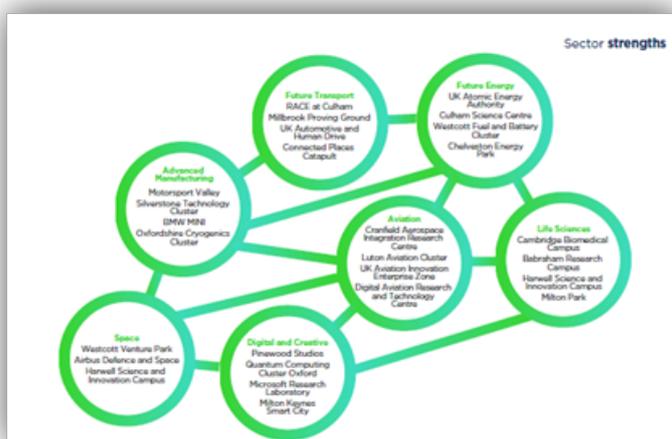
45. The Introduction to the Framework includes an indicative timeline. The timeline does not include a publication date for the final Spatial Framework, but the intention is to publish a draft for consultation in



<sup>5</sup> [Planning for sustainable growth in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Autumn 2022. The next key stage is publication of a Vision for the Spatial Framework in summer 2021 following engagement with local partners and the public.

46. The respective timetables for the Oxfordshire Plan and the Arc Spatial Framework mean that the Oxfordshire Plan – together with the Strategic Vision – will be able to help ensure that Oxfordshire has a strong voice in the development of the Arc Spatial Framework and that its interests are taken into account. Likewise, as work on the Arc Spatial Framework gathers pace, it will help inform the choice of options to be considered at the next stage (Regulation 19) of the Oxfordshire Plan process.
47. The Oxford-Cambridge Arc Economic Prospectus was published in Autumn 2020<sup>6</sup>. This sets the collective ambition of the Arc Leadership Group, the Arc Universities Group and the Arc Local Enterprise Partnerships Group.



48. The ambition is that *'By 2050, the Arc will be the world leading place for high-value growth, innovation and productivity. A global hub where ideas and companies are generated and thrive, home to exemplary models of 21<sup>st</sup> century development, with a high-quality environment and outstanding quality of life, and with a strong economic focus that drives inclusive clean growth'*.

### Links with other neighbouring areas and the Duty to Co-operate

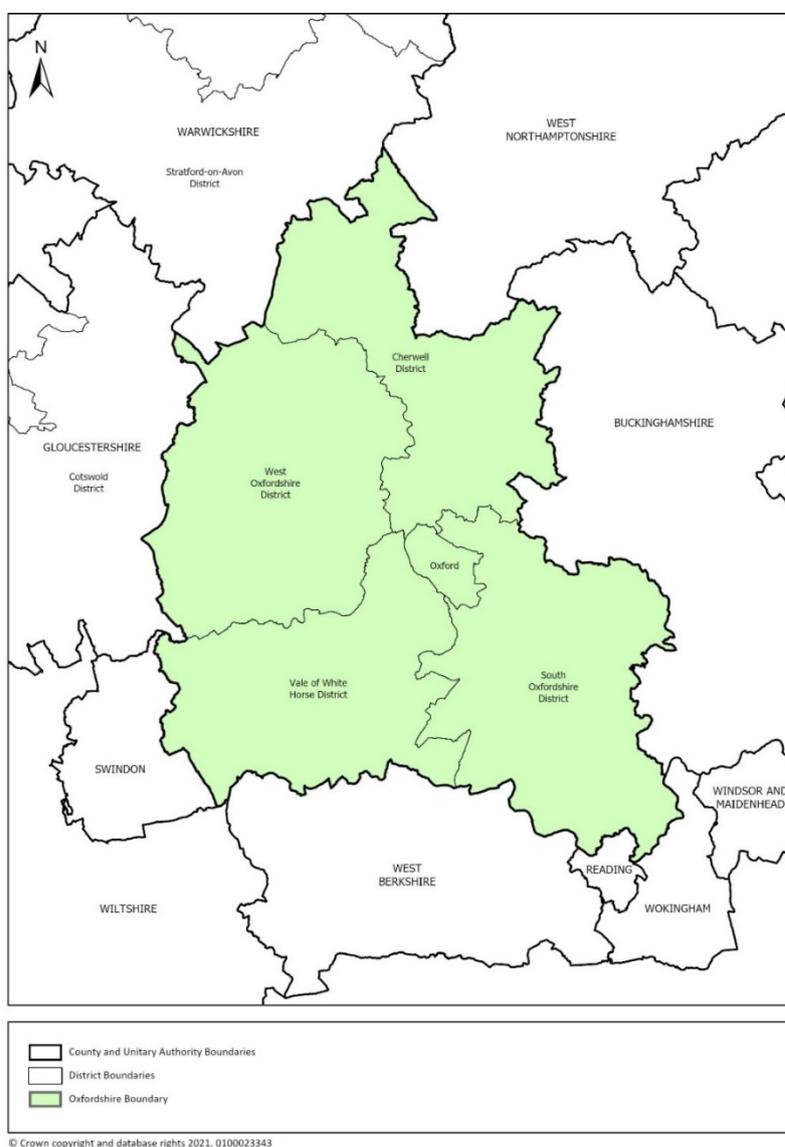
49. As a formal Development Plan document, the Oxfordshire Plan is being prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Duty to Co-operate. The Duty to Co-operate is a legal requirement set out in section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as inserted by section 110 of the Localism Act 2011. The Duty is reflected in the National Planning Policy Framework 2019<sup>7</sup> (paragraphs 24-27).
50. The City Council and District Councils have worked constructively, actively and on an on-going basis with the County Council and LEP under the auspices of the Oxfordshire Growth Board and other partners within and beyond Oxfordshire to

<sup>6</sup> [Oxford-Cambridge Arc economic prospectus | Oxford City Council](#)

<sup>7</sup> [National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

develop policies for strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries as an integral part of the preparation of a positive and justified strategy.

51. Whilst the Oxfordshire Plan focuses on the county of Oxfordshire, it is important to recognise that social, environmental and economic relationships do not stop at Oxfordshire's boundary. For example, many people travel in and out of Oxfordshire for work or to access services such as education and healthcare. We are engaging with the authorities that adjoin Oxfordshire to make sure that these relationships are given appropriate consideration throughout the plan-making process as we recognise that change in Oxfordshire will also be influenced by links with neighbouring areas such as the Thames Valley, Buckinghamshire and Swindon.
52. We are also working closely with organisations known as 'prescribed bodies' in producing the Oxfordshire Plan, to ensure that cross-boundary strategic planning matters are appropriately addressed. This includes Natural England, the Environment Agency, Historic England, Highways England and NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups.



53. It is important to note that the Oxfordshire Plan intends to meet Oxfordshire's development needs within the Oxfordshire boundary. We are not looking to

neighbouring authorities to accommodate any of Oxfordshire's development needs; in particular we are not looking to neighbouring authorities to accommodate any of our housing needs. Engagement with adjoining authorities has confirmed that Oxfordshire is not being asked to accommodate any unmet development needs from elsewhere.

54. Further detail on how we are engaging with neighbouring authorities and prescribed bodies can be found in the Duty to Co-operate Statement. This engagement will continue throughout the plan-making process.

55. In addition, a Statement of Common Ground has been agreed by each of the Oxfordshire authorities and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership which sets out how the partners are working together to address strategic planning matters in Oxfordshire.

## Notes on reading this consultation document

This consultation document sets out different approaches that the Oxfordshire Plan might take. It has been produced so that we can share our current thinking with communities and stakeholders, and so that we can ask for views on what the Oxfordshire Plan should do.

This document sets out the different approaches that the Oxfordshire Plan might take in two ways:

### 1. The Policy Options

The Oxfordshire Plan will set out policies that will guide new development in Oxfordshire. These policies will be based around five key themes:

- i. Addressing climate change;
- ii. Improving environmental quality;
- iii. Creating strong and healthy communities;
- iv. Planning for sustainable travel and connectivity; and
- v. Creating jobs and providing homes.

This document sets out different options for policies that might be included in the Oxfordshire Plan. There are two types of option:

**Preferred Policy Option** – This is what we think the Oxfordshire Plan should do, based on the evidence that we have and the engagement that we have undertaken with communities and stakeholders so far.

**Alternative Policy Option** – This is a different approach that the Oxfordshire Plan could take, that we also need to consider.

Some policy options are quite high-level and set out a broad approach that we might take. Other policy options are more detailed and suggest specific requirements for new development.

### Viability

It is important to remember that we will be producing further evidence to inform the continued development of the Oxfordshire Plan, including an assessment of how

different policy options might affect the financial viability of development, both individually and as a set. This will be completed during the preparation of the Regulation 19 document. We need to make sure that the policies in the Oxfordshire Plan are deliverable.

## **2. The Spatial Options**

The Oxfordshire Plan won't allocate sites for development, but it will set out broad locations for growth in Oxfordshire over the next 30 years. This document sets out five high-level options for how we might look to distribute development in Oxfordshire.

We want to know what you think about the different policy and spatial options in this document. Your views will help us to decide what is included in the Oxfordshire Plan.

## **Purpose of this consultation & how to get involved**

This is an important step in the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan.

We have previously consulted the public and stakeholders on what the Plan's vision, aspirations, objectives and broad spatial strategy should be, consulted on a Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report and invited submissions in response to a 'Call for Ideas', which included ideas on strategic locations. In addition, the Oxfordshire Growth Board's informal Open Thought initiative added to the debate and ideas by tapping into the wealth of knowledge in Oxfordshire to help identify solutions to accommodate changes in how we will live and work, how we will connect with each other and how we will manage and respond to climate change.

We have now reached the next stage of formal consultation on the Oxfordshire Plan: Regulation 18 Part 2. This document sets out options for thematic-based policies and a number of spatial strategy options that will shape the future of Oxfordshire. We are seeking the public's and stakeholder views on these options and whether there are other options that the Oxfordshire Plan should consider.

Our consultation will run for 10 weeks from the 30<sup>th</sup> of July to 8<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

Based on the responses received, we will propose our preferred policies and strategy for growth in Oxfordshire (in a Regulation 19 stage Draft Plan), with a further round of consultation in May 2022, prior to the Oxfordshire Plan being submitted for independent Examination.

We are also inviting 'Call for Ideas' submissions. This is because it is important that up-to-date information is available on sites to inform development of the Regulation 19 stage Draft Plan.

### **Responding to the consultation**

Anyone wishing to respond during the consultation can do so at [www.oxfordshireopenthought.org](http://www.oxfordshireopenthought.org)

Visitors will find all the details of the emerging Plan online, including the five key themes of addressing climate change, improving environmental quality, creating strong and healthy communities, planning for sustainable travel and connectivity and

creating jobs and providing homes. There will also be options for how much we grow and where that growth might happen.

The consultation document is available for download in Word format.

People can give their views via the interactive form on the Open Thought website.

People can give their views via the interactive form on the Open Thought website. Alternatively, if they wish to submit their thoughts in writing, they can send them by email to [info@oxfordshireplan.org](mailto:info@oxfordshireplan.org) or can post them to Oxfordshire Plan 2050, Speedwell House, Speedwell Street, Oxford, OX1 1NE.

## Oxfordshire Plan Vision and Objectives

56. A draft vision for the Oxfordshire Plan was consulted upon at the Regulation 18 Part 1 stage:

57. *'In 2050 the people of Oxfordshire are living in sustainable communities with a high quality of life and strong sense of community. The integrity and richness of the county's historic character and natural environment are valued and conserved. A wide range of secure and good quality housing options are within reach for all. Existing and new communities are well connected, integrated, distinct, attractive and desirable places to live; their design and layouts facilitate healthy lifestyles and sustainable travel options. Productivity has increased and residents are well-skilled and able to access a wide range of high-value job opportunities and share in wealth creation. The private and public sector continue to have the confidence to invest in the county. Oxfordshire has embraced the technological, demographic and lifestyle changes of recent decades and new developments are fit for the future and resilient to climate change. The wellbeing of residents and workers is enhanced through being part of this special place'.*

58. The following objectives for the Oxfordshire Plan were formed following the Regulation 18 Part 1 consultation:

### **Oxfordshire Plan Objectives**

1. To demonstrate leadership in addressing the climate emergency by significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
2. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's historic, built and natural environments, recognising the benefits these assets contribute to quality of life, local identity and economic success.
3. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's distinctive landscape character, recreational and biodiversity value by identifying strategic green and blue infrastructure, improving connectivity between environmental assets and securing a net gain for biodiversity.
4. To improve health and wellbeing by enabling independence, encouraging active and healthy lifestyles, facilitating social interaction and creating inclusive and safe communities.
5. To sustain and strengthen Oxfordshire's economic role and reputation by building on our key strengths and relationships.
6. To ensure that the benefits and opportunities arising from Oxfordshire's economic success are felt by all of Oxfordshire's communities.
7. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs, including affordable housing, and to ensure that housing delivery is phased appropriately to support the needs of our communities.
8. To ensure that new housing is flexible to meet the varied needs of people through all stages of life.
9. To deliver high quality, innovatively designed development that ensures efficient use of land and resources.

10. To reduce the need to travel and to support people in making sustainable transport choices by providing inclusive, integrated, safe and convenient pedestrian, cycle and public transport infrastructure linking communities.
11. To ensure that communities are digitally connected and that innovative technologies are supported.

## Themes and Policies

### Theme One: Addressing Climate Change

59. Climate change is the most significant threat facing humankind today, with the threat of increased flood risk, severe drought and more extreme weather patterns resulting from greenhouse gas emissions and global warming. Such threats will have serious consequences for the health and wellbeing of communities without taking proactive steps to address the causes and mitigate the impacts of climate change.
60. It is essential that climate change considerations run through the Oxfordshire Plan strategy, to support the integrity and resilience of the natural environment and Oxfordshire's communities.
61. Climate change is central to each of the Oxfordshire Plan themes and policies, as to properly address climate change, a coherent, joined-up approach encompassing development standards, transport and infrastructure and healthy ecosystems is required.
62. Recent years have seen stronger national commitments to address the causes of climate change with strategies to accelerate clean growth and reduce greenhouse gas emissions becoming increasingly more prevalent.
63. In 2019, the UK became the first major economy to pass net zero emissions law in an attempt to end the UK's contribution to global warming by 2050. Amendments to the Climate Change Act 2008 commit the UK Government to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 100% (compared to 1990 levels) in the UK by 2050. The UK's 2050 net zero target is one of the most ambitious in the world and key to meeting the United Nations Paris Climate Agreement, which aims to limit global temperature increases to no more than 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and sets a long-term goal of net zero carbon emissions<sup>8</sup>.
64. It is recognised that local areas will play a key role in developing opportunities for low carbon energy and in making efforts to meet national and international commitments to tackling climate change.
65. The Oxfordshire Energy Strategy<sup>9</sup> is a key strategic influencer on the Oxfordshire Plan and sets objectives to;
- Secure smart, modern, clean energy infrastructure to support planned housing, industrial and commercial growth and
  - Lead nationally and internationally to reduce county-wide emissions by 50% by 2030, on 2008 levels and set a pathway to achieve zero carbon by 2050.
66. Since the adoption of the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy, all Oxfordshire authorities, including the County Council have declared climate emergencies which recognise the importance of addressing climate change, by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, with commitments for net zero carbon emissions.

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<sup>8</sup> [Paris Climate Agreement](#) (2015) UNFCCC

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/energystrategy>

	Date of Declaration	Council operations Target	District wide target
Cherwell District Council	25/07/2019	2030	2030
Oxford City Council	28/01/2019	2030	2040
South Oxfordshire District Council	03/04/2019	2025	2030
Vale of White Horse District Council	13/02/2019	2030	2045
West Oxfordshire District Council	26/06/2019	2030	2050
Oxfordshire County Council	02/04/2019	2030	2050

67. The Climate Emergency declarations provide an impetus for Oxfordshire's local authorities to strive for carbon reductions in their own operations and through those things that they can influence such as planning for development within their areas.

68. One of the main mechanisms for addressing county-wide emissions arising from development is the county's planning framework, with adopted local and neighbourhood plans setting the vision, objectives and policies for sustainable development.

69. The adopted local plans for Oxfordshire set clear objectives for addressing climate change and achieving net zero carbon development, particularly the recently adopted Oxford Local Plan 2036 and South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 which set clear pathways for achieving net zero residential development by 2030, using a combination of low carbon technology, renewable energy and energy efficiency.

70. There is a varied policy approach taken across local plans, however, with some deferring to buildings regulations to determine standards for the design and construction of buildings.

71. Achieving net zero in Oxfordshire will require reductions in emissions from all sources and it is the intention of the Oxfordshire Plan to drive these down as far as possible. The Oxfordshire Plan will also seek to establish a framework in which environmental enhancements can be directed to where they can be most effective in mitigating the impacts of climate change and offsetting any residual carbon emissions that cannot be eradicated at source.

72. It is important that the Oxfordshire Plan takes a proactive approach to addressing climate change and supporting the transition to a low carbon future as required by the National Planning Policy Framework. It is considered that taking a proactive approach to guiding development and environmental enhancements will be beneficial to the health and wellbeing of communities and in supporting a green recovery in Oxfordshire. There are a wealth of business and organisations driving innovation in the green economy and many more involved in the supply chains and supporting business sectors. Driving up standards in the Oxfordshire Plan and setting clear ambitions for addressing the causes, building resilience to

and mitigating the impacts of climate change will bring multiple benefits to the county, provided the right investments can be made in the right places at the right time and the necessary skills and opportunities are built within our communities.

73. The Oxfordshire Plan aims to deliver against its climate change ambitions through a range of approaches including a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (improved building standards, increased renewable energy generation) and minimising vulnerability to and improving the resilience of communities and the natural environment (Natural Capital, Nature Recovery, Water Environment and biodiversity net gain).

Theme One – Meets the following Objectives of the Oxfordshire Plan

No 1. To demonstrate leadership in addressing the climate emergency by significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

No 2. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's historic, built and natural environments, recognising the benefits these assets contribute to quality of life, local identity and economic success.

No 9. To deliver high quality, innovatively designed development that ensures efficient use of land and resources.

## **Policy Option 01 - Sustainable Design and Construction**

74. Central to Oxfordshire's efforts to achieve net zero carbon, in accordance with challenging targets will be to address the main sources of greenhouse gas emissions in Oxfordshire.

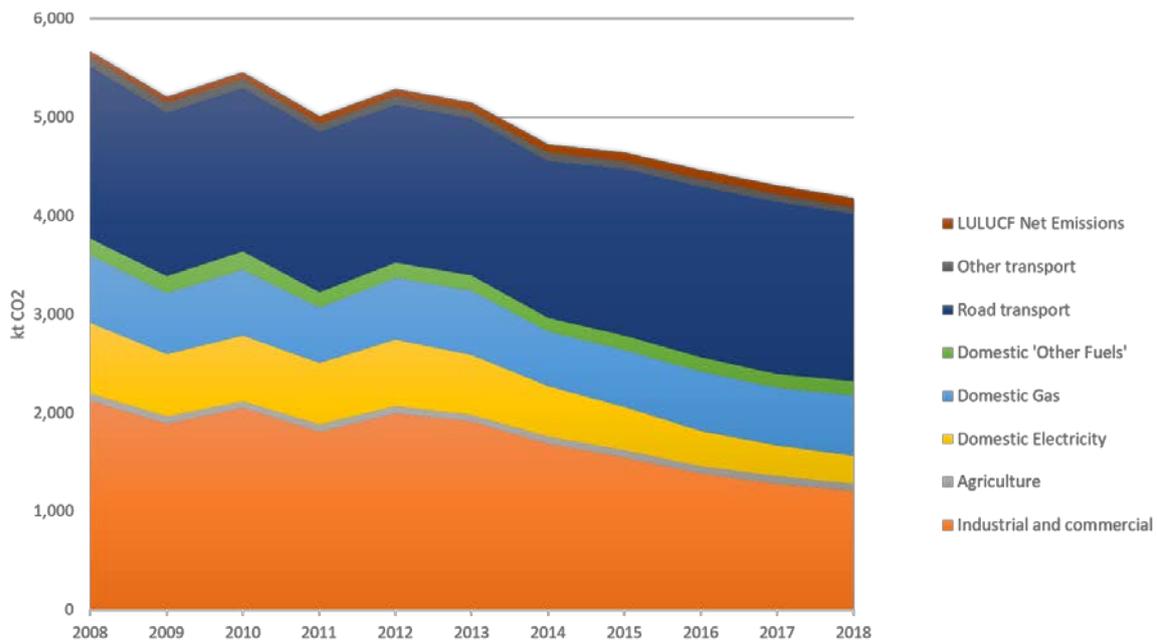
75. An assessment undertaken as part of the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy identifies the main sources of greenhouse gas emissions in Oxfordshire as road transport and housing.

76. The diagram below illustrates the contribution that a number of key sectors have historically made to overall carbon dioxide emissions in Oxfordshire<sup>10</sup>. Although there has been a decrease in overall emissions since 2008, they remain high with road transport, residential development, public services and commercial services contributing the majority of these.

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<sup>10</sup> [Aether, Oxfordshire Greenhouse Gas emission projections, 2018 update](#)

Oxfordshire CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by sector, 2008 to 2018



77. To successfully achieve net zero carbon emissions, the focus needs to be on the highest emitters in a way that ensures targets are met, without impacting on the delivery of necessary infrastructure and services to meet the needs of Oxfordshire's communities.

78. It is essential that the Oxfordshire Plan takes steps to mitigate the impact of new development by reducing its carbon footprint.

79. There are a significant number of planned houses in the pipeline that will be constructed to existing building standards and will therefore contribute less to achieving the ambitious national and local carbon reductions targets that have been set.

80. The Government have confirmed<sup>11</sup> that from 2025, the Future Homes Standard will ensure that new homes produce at least 75% lower CO<sub>2</sub> emissions compared to those built to current standards. In the short-term this represents a considerable improvement in the energy efficiency standards for new homes. Homes built under the Future Homes Standard will be 'zero carbon ready', which means that in the longer-term, no further retrofit work for energy efficiency will be necessary to enable them to become zero carbon homes as the electricity grid continues to decarbonise.

81. From 2021, new homes will be expected to produce 31% less CO<sub>2</sub> emissions compared to current standards. This will deliver high-quality homes that are in line with our broader housing commitments and encourage homes that are future-proofed for the longer-term.

82. Notwithstanding the Government commitment to improve building regulations, it is important to note that local authorities have the ability to set local targets for

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Future-Homes-Standard-Government-response.pdf>

the design and construction of new buildings. The NPPF does not prevent local authorities from setting higher ambitions particularly in relation to energy efficiency standards that exceed Building Regulations.

83. There is already evidence of Oxfordshire authorities setting a clear pathway to zero carbon through their local plan policies, as well as examples of individual developments and strategic growth locations achieving far greater carbon reductions than comparable scale developments within the same localities.

84. Such achievements are a clear signal that net zero carbon can be achieved in developments at a range of scales, when there are strong policies in place and when developers have an opportunity to test construction techniques and use of materials supported by sufficient investment.

85. For Oxfordshire to go further than existing and proposed Government standards, a consistent county-wide definition of net zero carbon needs to be established. This requires consideration of existing and emerging definitions for zero carbon.

### **The Eco Town Definition**

The definition of zero carbon for eco-towns set out in the Planning Policy Statement (2009) is that ,over a year, the net carbon dioxide emissions from all energy use within the buildings on the eco-town development, as a whole, are zero or below. The initial planning application and all subsequent planning applications for the development of the eco-town should demonstrate how this will be achieved.

The definition excludes embodied carbon and emissions from transport but includes all buildings – not just houses but also commercial and public sector buildings which are built as part of the eco-town development.

### **UKGBC Net Zero Carbon Buildings – A Framework Definition (UK Green Building Council)**

From November 2018 to March 2019, UKGBC brought together an extensive range of industry stakeholders, including a task group<sup>12</sup>, to build consensus on a framework definition for net zero carbon buildings in the UK<sup>13</sup>.

The primary focus of the framework is to set in place a path to achieve net zero carbon buildings in both construction and operation (in-use energy consumption), whilst beginning to provide direction for addressing whole-life carbon in the industry.

The Framework definition of Net Zero Carbon Buildings consists of two definitions:

1. Net zero carbon – construction (for new buildings and major renovations). When the amount of carbon emissions associated with a building's product and construction stages up to practical completion is zero or negative, through the use of offsets or the net export of on-site renewable energy.

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.ukgbc.org/uncategorised/zerocarbontaskgroup>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.ukgbc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Net-zero-Carbon-Buildings-A-framework-definition.pdf>

2. Net zero carbon – operational energy (for all buildings in operation). When the amount of carbon emissions associated with the building's operational energy on an annual basis is zero or negative. A net zero carbon building is highly energy efficient and powered from on-site and/or off-site renewable energy sources, with any remaining carbon balance offset.

A third definition, 'new zero carbon – whole-life' is also proposed at a high level, but further work is needed to develop the detail of this approach.

The framework includes five steps, shown in diagram below. Some of the steps are relevant to the definition for construction and some to the definition for operational energy. However, a building targeting net zero carbon for construction should be designed to achieve net zero carbon for operational energy.

Each step has a set of principles that have been ordered in terms of priority and should be reviewed in that order. Each principle sets out the approach that should be followed, including a rationale for the principle, associated technical requirements and, where relevant, any areas for future development.

Broadly speaking the definitions seek to:

- ensure that a whole-life carbon assessment is undertaken,
- prioritise reductions in energy demand and consumption over all other measures,
- report annually on in-use energy consumption,
- prioritise on-site renewable energy sources and require any off-site renewable energy to demonstrate additionality,
- offset any remaining carbon using a recognised offsetting framework and publicly disclose this.

## Steps to Achieving a Net Zero Carbon Building

### 1. Establish Net Zero Carbon Scope\*

1.1 Net zero carbon – **construction**

1.2 Net zero carbon – **operational energy**



### 2. Reduce Construction Impacts



2.1 A whole life carbon assessment should be undertaken and disclosed for all construction projects to drive carbon reductions



2.2 The embodied carbon impacts from the product and construction stages should be measured and offset at practical completion



### 3. Reduce Operational Energy Use



3.1 Reductions in energy demand and consumption should be prioritised over all other measures.



3.2 In-use energy consumption should be calculated and publicly disclosed on an annual basis.



### 4. Increase Renewable Energy Supply



4.1 On-site renewable energy source should be prioritised



4.2 Off-site renewables should demonstrate additionality



### 5. Offset Any Remaining Carbon



5.1 Any remaining carbon should be offset using a recognised offsetting framework



5.2 The amount of offsets used should be publicly disclosed



**D** New buildings and major refurbishments targeting net zero carbon for construction should be designed to achieve net zero carbon for operational energy by considering these principles.

\* Please also note, a further scope for net zero whole life carbon (1.3) will be developed in the future.

Source: Net zero carbon buildings – A framework definition (UKGBC, April 2019)

## London Energy Transformation Initiative

The London Energy Transformation Initiative (LETI) was established in 2017 to support the transition of London's built environment to net zero carbon, providing guidance that could be applied to the rest of the UK.

A network of over 1,000 built environment professionals have worked collaboratively to compile evidence-based recommendations for London Plan and London Environment Strategy policies. The LETI Climate Emergency Design Guide defines what good looks like in context of the climate emergency for new buildings.

The guidance focusses on delivering net zero carbon new buildings which means having regard to whole-life carbon, which in the context of the document means;

- Operational carbon – net zero operational carbon means that buildings burn no fossil fuels, are 100% powered by renewable energy and achieve a high level of energy performance in line with national climate change targets.
- Embodied carbon – The carbon emissions emitted producing a building's materials, their transport and installation as well as disposal at the end of life.

A key recommendation of the guidance is that the Energy Use Intensity (EUI) of a building should replace carbon emission reductions as the primary metric used in policy, regulations and design decisions. EUI is an annual measure of the total energy consumed in a building. EUI is regarded as a good metric as it depends on how the building performs in use.

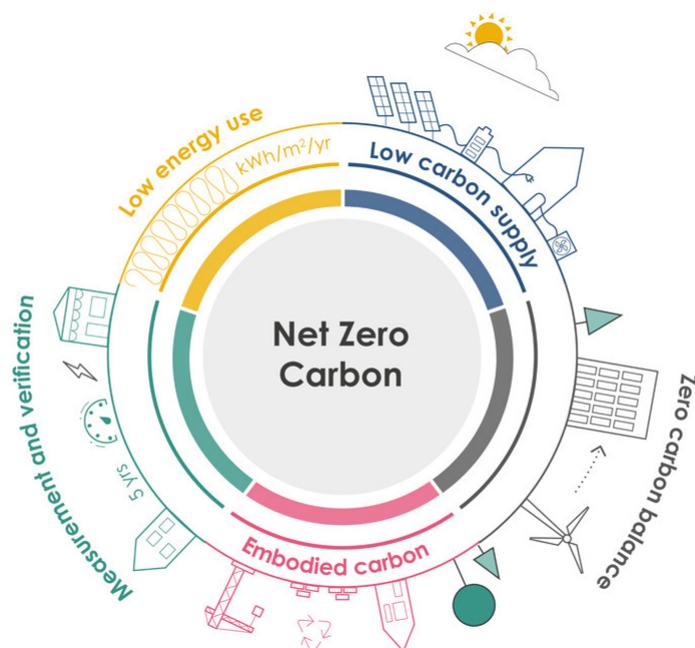
EUI includes all the energy consumed in the building including regulated energy (heating, hot water, cooling, ventilation and lighting) and unregulated energy (plug loads and equipment e.g. kitchen white goods, ICT and AV equipment). It does not however include charging of electric vehicles.

The guidance makes recommendations for operational energy which includes the fabric efficiency of building materials, window areas and energy consumption. It also makes recommendations for embodied carbon emissions.

To achieve Net Zero Operational Carbon, LETI propose ten key requirements for new buildings:

1. Total energy use of different building typologies not to exceed Energy Use Intensity (EUI) targets for energy uses in buildings including regulated and unregulated energy.
2. A fabric first approach ensuring that space heating demand for all building types is below 15kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/yr.
3. Annual energy use and renewable energy generation to reported for the first year post completion as part of a measurement and verification process.
4. Embodied carbon of construction materials should be assessed to reduce impacts of construction process.
5. Heating and hot water should not be generated from fossil fuels.

6. Average annual carbon content of heat supplied (gCO<sub>2</sub>/kWh) should be reported.
7. On-site renewable electricity should be maximised.
8. Energy demand response and storage measures should be incorporated, and the building annual peak energy demand should be reported.
9. An annual carbon balance calculation should be undertaken to demonstrate that a building achieves a net zero carbon balance.
10. Any energy use not met on-site should be met by investment into additional renewable energy capacity off-site.



Source: London Energy Transformation Initiative

### The Circular Economy

In addition to different definitions for net zero carbon development, it is also useful to consider circular economy principles and how these relate to resource consumption, waste and carbon emissions.

A circular economy keeps products, components and materials at their highest use and value. In a circular economy, every item or material is useful and valuable to another part of the economy. It provides an alternative to the current 'linear' economy – in which we make, use and dispose of products, components and materials and recover little value from them.

Significant greenhouse gas emissions arise from consumption habits in society. A circular economy seeks to shift away from a linear pattern of resource extraction, use and wastage to one in which products and materials are retained and used at their highest use value for longer through maintenance, repairs and upgrades.

As construction waste accounts for the largest proportion of waste within the Oxfordshire waste cycle<sup>14</sup>, circular economy principles are relevant to the Oxfordshire Plan, particularly efforts to achieving net zero carbon emissions through the design and construction of new development.

The use of natural or recycled materials in construction, designing buildings for adaptability and changing uses over time as well as the ability to dismantle and recover materials at the end of a building's life would all help to minimise resource extraction and waste arising from construction in Oxfordshire. This would help to minimise carbon emissions associated with construction and development over the lifetime of the Plan.

Consideration of circular economy principles through the Oxfordshire Plan has potential to deliver a wide range of benefits beyond tackling waste and reducing carbon emissions with positive social implications, new jobs, improved skills and new business opportunities<sup>15</sup>.



Source – Useful Projects – Circular Economy in construction

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/planning-minerals-and-waste/AnnualMonitoringReport2018.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> <https://usefulprojects.co.uk/circular-economy-in-construction/>

86. The Government's proposals to strengthen Building Regulations and to define future standards for new buildings have the potential to deliver a consistent approach for the delivery of zero carbon buildings and take a big step on the pathway to net zero carbon. However, they may not be ambitious enough to meet targets for achieving net zero carbon in Oxfordshire.
87. Consideration should be given to elements of other emerging design standards which could assist in accelerating our efforts, particularly where better regard is had to the whole-life carbon of buildings, including embodied carbon, operational energy use and renewable energy generation.
88. The various industry consensus definitions developed by LETI and the UKGBC are more ambitious in scope compared to recently adopted local plan policies which focus on achieving carbon reductions rather than addressing whole-life carbon.
89. Well-designed places are those that respond to the impacts of climate change through energy efficiency, minimising greenhouse gas emissions and embodied carbon, as well as adapting to anticipated events such as rising temperatures and increased flood risk.

## Policy Options

90. The preferred policy approach is to define an Oxfordshire-wide definition for net zero carbon design and construction for development in Oxfordshire. This will assist in achieving the County's objectives in achieving net zero carbon emissions over the lifetime of the Oxfordshire Plan with multiple benefits including supporting the health and wellbeing of communities and encouraging clean growth and innovation, consistent with Strategic Vision and Oxfordshire Plan objectives.

## Preferred Policy Option

### **Policy Option 01: Sustainable Design and Construction**

To include in the Oxfordshire Plan a policy setting out sustainable design and construction requirements to be applied to major residential and non-residential developments within Oxfordshire.

This policy would be subject to viability and deliverability testing but with the objective to achieve net zero whole-life carbon for both residential and non-residential buildings, taking account of embodied carbon, low energy use and renewable energy supply.

Developments should be fossil fuel free and fossil fuels should not be used to provide space heating, hot water or fuel for cooking. Demand for energy should be balanced by the provision of on-site renewable energy generation.

Carbon offsetting would only be permitted where it is demonstrable that net zero carbon cannot be achieved on site.

A financial contribution based on defined calculation would be made to carbon offsetting projects including off-site renewable energy generation or carbon sequestration consistent with defined natural capital and nature recovery approaches defined in the Plan.

Buildings should be designed to be resilient to the effects of a changing climate, including overheating.

New buildings should be designed to be durable but flexible and adaptable to changing needs over time.

Residential and non-residential buildings should be designed and built to maximise the use of natural or recycled material in construction and to enable disassembly at the end of a building's life in accordance with circular economy principles.

### **Alternative Policy Option 01-1**

91. One alternative policy option is to defer standards for the design and construction of new buildings to district local plans. National policy does not prevent local authorities from setting higher ambitions, particularly in relation to energy efficiency standards that exceed Building Regulations.

92. This is not a preferred option as different targets and timescales for achieving net zero carbon development in local plans could hinder efforts to achieve net zero carbon emissions in Oxfordshire during the lifetime of the Plan.

### **Alternative Policy Option 01-2**

93. Another alternative is to defer guidance on sustainable design and construction to building regulations and the Future Homes and Future Buildings Standards.

94. This is not a preferred option as failure to introduce more stringent national standards for the design and construction of new development could hinder Oxfordshire's efforts to achieve net zero carbon emissions during the lifetime of the Plan.

## **Policy Option 02 - Energy**

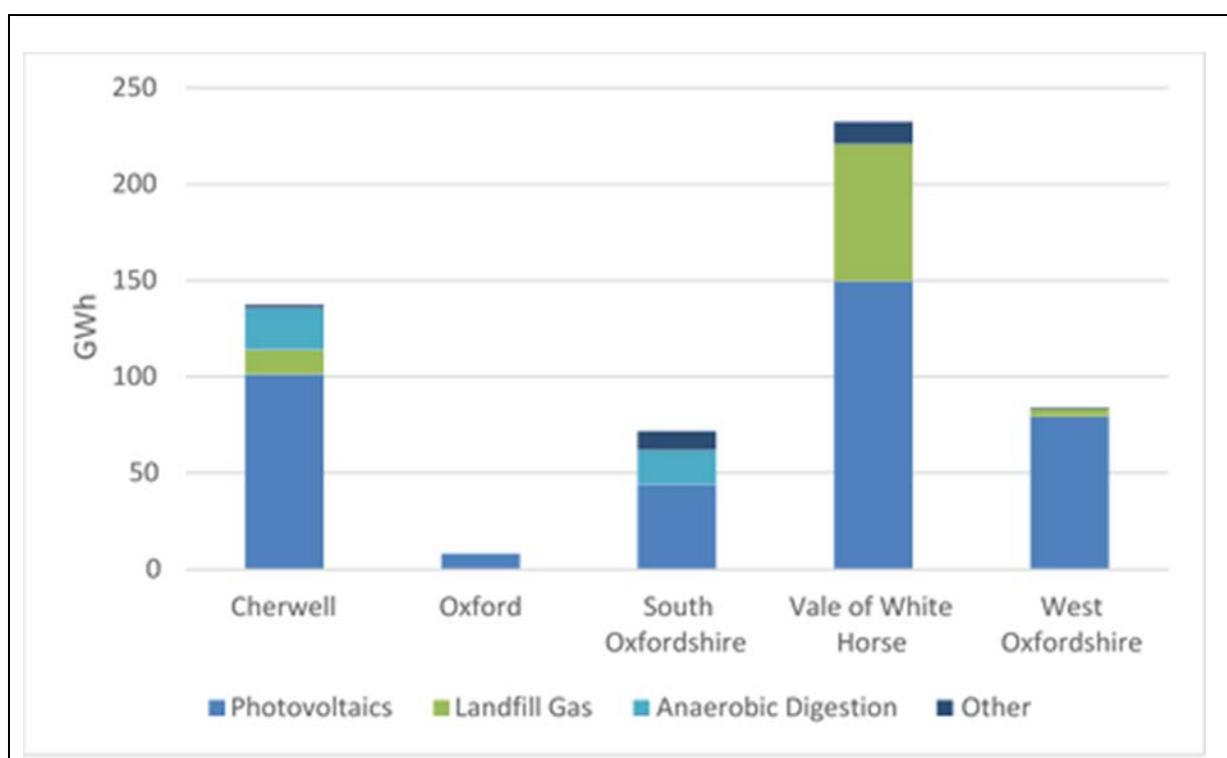
95. Building standards can contribute significantly to carbon emissions reductions, by reducing the amount of energy required to operate a building and reducing the amount of energy lost through the fabric performance of a building.

96. In order to achieve net zero targets however, it is necessary to consider the net zero carbon energy balance, to ensure that there is sufficient renewable energy to meet energy requirements of development.

97. It is important to consider the future of energy infrastructure as part of the Oxfordshire Plan as the energy system, the generation and transmission and amount of electricity consumed, are likely to be very different by 2050. The electrification of heat, rise in the use of electric vehicles and increases in

renewable energy generation will place new and significant burdens on an already constrained electricity network.

98. The Government's Energy White Paper (December 2020)<sup>16</sup> builds on their Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution (November 2020)<sup>17</sup> and establishes the Government's goal of a decisive shift from fossil fuels to clean energy in power, buildings and industry, while creating jobs and growing the economy and keeping energy bills affordable. It addresses how and why our energy system needs to evolve to deliver this goal and provides a foundation for the detailed actions to be taken.
99. The way in which we produce and use energy is at the heart of the Energy White Paper. Meeting challenging targets for net zero carbon emissions will mean eliminating the use of fossil fuels to power the economy and heat our homes and an increase in clean electricity which will become the predominant form of energy.
100. Existing energy infrastructure in Oxfordshire covers the generation, transmission and distribution of energy and includes gas, electricity and renewable energy. Homes and businesses across the county are served energy from a variety of different sources with varying proportions across all energy types.
101. There is already a significant amount of energy generated in Oxfordshire from a range of renewable sources, but with substantial variations in type and volume across the districts. The following diagram illustrates this:



102. Electricity network operators in Oxfordshire are transitioning from Distribution Network Operators (DNO) to Distribution System Operators (DSO)

<sup>16</sup> [Energy White Paper: Powering our Net Zero Future](#)

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-ten-point-plan-for-a-green-industrial-revolution>

to accommodate the changes that will be required to enable net zero carbon. This transition requires flexibility in the management of the electricity network to ensure that the supply and demand for electricity are balanced. It has implications for spatial planning in Oxfordshire and will influence the distribution of future development.

103. The Climate Change Committee (CCC)<sup>18</sup> has forecast that by 2050 demand on electricity networks could treble as the UK moves toward its net zero carbon emissions future. Key to delivering the ambitions of the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy is to ensure that the local network infrastructure is sufficient for new generation and demand.
104. High level analysis of capacity at primary electricity sub stations in Oxfordshire<sup>19</sup> identified a number of major electricity infrastructure projects which still required funding, to support the level of planned housing and employment growth to 2031.
105. The capacity of existing infrastructure and the cost and complexity of future upgrades to support planned growth in Oxfordshire are important considerations for the future planning of the county, both in terms of how much growth can be accommodated and where.
106. The significant demand that Oxford's substations already face undermines the feasibility of connecting new sources of generation to the distribution network. This could either stop new renewable generation from being deployed or make it prohibitively expensive.
107. Energy consumption analysis by local authority area in Oxfordshire shows relatively consistent levels as well as consistent fuel type proportions over the past 10 years, with bioenergy and wastes only partially replacing other traditional fuel sources. Oxfordshire's reliance on petroleum products and gas must reduce at a fast rate in order to meet national 2030 targets and clean energy goals.
108. This need is exacerbated by the population growth expected in the county. Electricity consumption has shown a reduction between 2008 and 2019 in all local authority areas through efficiency gains. However, alongside population growth, other factors will result in a need to address electricity consumption (e.g. transition to electric vehicles and decarbonisation of heat). Targets for electric vehicle use raise specific concerns over the requirements for large-scale investment in the electrical grid and network infrastructure.
109. Oxfordshire is home to two national demonstrator projects part funded by the UK's Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund<sup>20</sup> with investment in industry and research to accelerate innovation in smart local energy systems.
  - Energy Superhub Oxford is focused on the electric vehicle (EV) charging network with a transmission-connected network of rapid electric vehicle charging, hybrid battery energy storage, low carbon heating and smart energy management technologies that reduces stress on local grids.

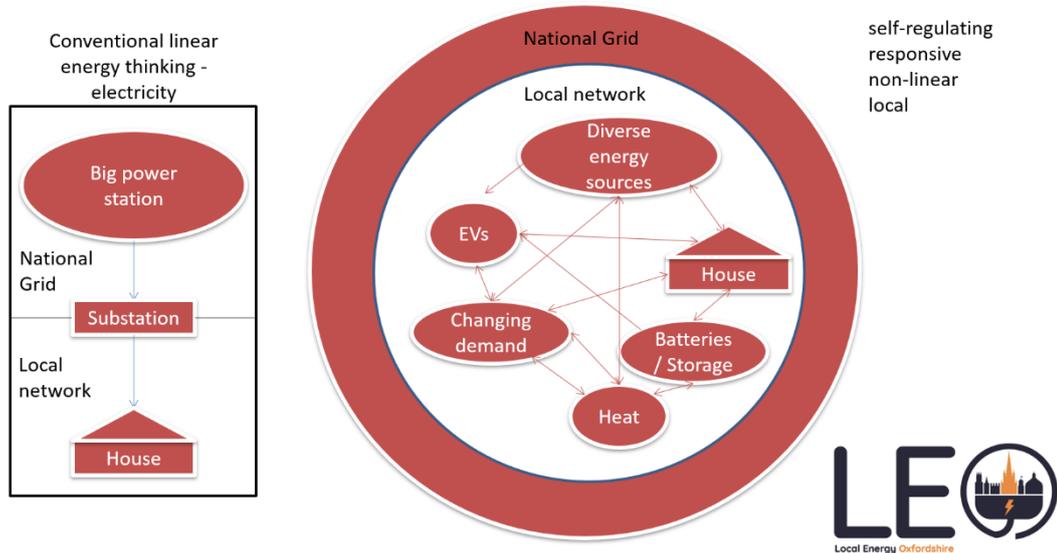
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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.theccc.org.uk/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/sites/default/files/uploads/Oxfordshire%20Energy%20Strategy.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.ukri.org/our-work/our-main-funds/industrial-strategy-challenge-fund/clean-growth/prospering-from-the-energy-revolution-challenge/>

- Project Local Energy Oxfordshire (LEO) is one of the most ambitious, wide-ranging, innovative, and holistic smart grid trials ever conducted in the UK. LEO will improve our understanding of how opportunities can be maximised and unlocked from the transition to a smarter, flexible electricity system and how households, businesses and communities can realise its benefits.



110. Both projects are important in demonstrating how integrated, intelligent local systems can deliver power, heat and mobility to users in new and better ways. The lessons learned will be influential in shaping the Oxfordshire Plan strategy including the distribution of development and investment in infrastructure.
111. The economic benefits of a low carbon transition in Oxfordshire will be realised by supporting ambitious and innovative clean generation projects across the county and supporting projects that reduce energy demand across all sectors and increase energy efficiency for domestic, industrial and commercial buildings.
112. The Oxfordshire Plan provides an opportunity to develop new ways of partnership working and to deliver innovative projects in the county. Establishing local smart energy networks will ensure that housing and economic growth is supported by clean energy and contributes to meeting net zero carbon targets.
113. There is a need to significantly increase the proportion of renewable electricity generated within the county to achieve a net zero carbon energy balance. Energy systems and the grid must adapt, to operate in a way that allows growth and supports the de-carbonisation of both heat and transport and takes account of implications for electricity demand and distribution.
114. The future of energy in Oxfordshire may have implications for the future distribution of development, and delivery of strategic scale renewable energy generation will have land use implications.
115. It is important for the Oxfordshire Plan to consider future infrastructure needs and land use implications of future energy infrastructure, particularly

increases in renewable energy generation capacity, to set a framework for delivery as part of a sustainable spatial strategy for Oxfordshire.

## Policy Options

116. The preferred policy option is to maximise the use of renewable energy in new developments in Oxfordshire, to ensure that rising demands for electricity are matched with zero carbon energy provision, to achieve a net zero carbon energy balance and to support efforts to achieve net zero carbon emissions over the lifetime of the Oxfordshire Plan.

117. This is considered to be a strategic matter, as to ensure there is sufficient renewable energy generation capacity in the county may require land to accommodate renewable energy generation technology.

## Preferred Policy Option

### Policy Option 02: Energy

The Oxfordshire Plan would seek to minimise energy demand and maximise the use of renewable energy, where viable, meeting all demands for heat and power without increasing carbon emissions.

Target for 100% of energy needs for major developments to be met from renewable energy sources.

Developments would be required to maximise energy efficiency whilst integrating renewable and smart energy technologies in order to minimise energy demand.

Installation and integration of these technologies should be delivered at the development stage to avoid more costly retrofitting after completion.

The Oxfordshire Plan would support the delivery of strategic and community scale renewable energy schemes, particularly where their establishment can support development and the transition to a smart, local energy system for Oxfordshire.

## Alternative Policy Option 02-1

118. One alternative policy option is to not set county-wide targets for renewable energy in new developments and to defer to local plans and individual developments.

119. This option is not preferred, as establishing different approaches to renewable energy generation for new developments through local plans could undermine efforts to achieve targets for net zero carbon emissions in Oxfordshire over the lifetime of the Oxfordshire Plan.

## Alternative Policy Option 02-2

120. Another alternative policy option is to set a percentage target for renewable energy generation in new developments e.g. minimum 10%.

121. This option is reasonable as the continued decarbonisation of the National Grid will help to ensure that a zero carbon energy balance could be achieved nationally and locally during the lifetime of the Plan, particularly with increased renewable energy generation locally. It is not the preferred option as a lower target would potentially fall short of local targets of net zero carbon emissions during the lifetime of the Oxfordshire Plan.

### **Policy Option 03 - Water Efficiency**

122. It is essential that Oxfordshire's communities, natural environment and businesses have access to the water they need, both now and in the future.

123. Water resources serving Oxfordshire and the wider South East region are under increasing pressure. This is due to a range of factors including climate change, population growth and limitations on the amount of water that can be taken from rivers and aquifers to avoid harm to the natural environment.

124. Thames Water's current Water Resource Management Plan forecasts that, without action, there will be a substantial shortfall between water supply and water demand within the next 25 years, significantly increasing the possibility of droughts.<sup>21</sup>

125. The Oxfordshire authorities are working closely with Thames Water, the Environment Agency and other key stakeholders to understand water resource issues to 2050 and beyond. This engagement has fed into the production of the Water Cycle Study which will inform the Oxfordshire Plan. (A Phase 1 Scoping Study has been published as part of this consultation and a further, more detailed assessment will be undertaken prior to Regulation 19.) The evidence is clear that we need to make best possible use of Oxfordshire's water resources.

126. Water efficiency standards for new development are set out in the Building Regulations.<sup>22</sup> Currently, for new homes, water consumption must not exceed 125 litres per person per day. (On average, a person in England uses 141 litres of water per day.<sup>23</sup>) However, local planning authorities can, where there is a clear local need, require new homes to meet a higher optional requirement of 110 litres per person per day.<sup>24</sup> All adopted local plans in Oxfordshire apply the optional requirement of 110 litres per person per day.

127. In 2019, the Government consulted on the possibility of introducing a more ambitious national water efficiency standard for residential development.<sup>25</sup> However, the outcome of that consultation is not yet known.

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<sup>21</sup> Thames Water (April 2020) [Water Resources Management Plan 2020-2100](#)

<sup>22</sup> HM Government (2015, with 2016 amendments) The Building Regulations 2010 Approved Document G; Sanitation, Hot Water Safety and Water Efficiency; Requirement G2 and Regulation 36

<sup>23</sup> DEFRA (July 2019) [Consultation on Measures to Reduce Personal Water Use](#).

<sup>24</sup> MHCLG (March 2015) [Planning Practice Guidance; Housing: Optional Technical Standards](#);  
Paragraph: 014; Reference ID: 56-014-20150327

<sup>25</sup> DEFRA (July 2019) [Consultation on Measures to Reduce Personal Water Use](#).

128. The Building Regulations do not set specific water efficiency standards for non-residential development, but state that reasonable provision must be made to prevent undue water consumption.
129. There are examples of best practice that we can also look to. For example, the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) has developed a set of performance targets as part of their '2030 Climate Challenge'. *'The performance targets align with the future legislative horizon and set out a challenging but achievable trajectory to realise the significant reductions necessary by 2030 in order to have a realistic prospect of achieving net zero carbon for the whole UK building stock by 2050'*. This includes water use performance targets for different types of development (homes, offices and schools).<sup>26</sup>
130. Measures to improve water efficiency include rainwater harvesting (the collection of rainwater directly from the surface it falls on) and grey water recycling (the collection and treatment of used water from baths, showers and bathroom taps). Once collected, treated and stored, this water can be used for non-potable purposes such as toilet flushing, garden watering and clothes washing using a washing machine. Evidence suggests that rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling schemes are more efficient, cost effective and have a lower carbon footprint when they operate at a 'community-scale'.<sup>27</sup>
131. In planning to 2050, it is reasonable to assume that more ambitious water efficiency standards may become achievable as technology, design and construction methods evolve and become more affordable over time.
132. Ambitious policies in the Oxfordshire Plan are consistent with the opportunity that the Oxfordshire Plan represents to secure the transformational change that the Plan is seeking to achieve.

## Policy Options

133. One option is to not have a strategic policy on water efficiency in the Oxfordshire Plan and to instead leave it to local plans to set policies in relation to water efficiency. However, responding to county-wide and regional pressures on water resources is a strategic cross-boundary planning matter. It is therefore considered appropriate to include a county-wide strategic water efficiency policy in the Oxfordshire Plan.
134. If it were left to local plans to set policies on water efficiency, there is a risk that different approaches might be taken. This could result in less certainty and clarity for developers and communities. It may also make it more difficult to meet proposed ambitions around the delivery of transformational change, addressing the impacts of climate change and responding to county-wide and regional pressures on water resources.
135. For this policy option there is a preferred policy option and two alternatives that follow the text box.

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<sup>26</sup> RIBA (2021) [2030 Climate Challenge \(Version 2\)](#)

<sup>27</sup> Artesia Consulting on behalf of OFWAT (April 2018) [The Long Term Potential for Deep Reductions in Household Water Demand](#)

## Preferred Policy Option

136. The preferred approach is for the Oxfordshire Plan to set ambitious minimum water efficiency standards for new development in Oxfordshire. This would help to ensure a consistent approach across the county. It is considered appropriate given increasing pressures on water resources, both within Oxfordshire and across the wider region. Setting ambitious policies in the Oxfordshire Plan is consistent with the opportunity that the Oxfordshire Plan represents to deliver long-term transformational change and to address the impacts of climate change. Local plans could provide further detail as appropriate.

### **Policy Option 03: Water Efficiency**

The Oxfordshire Plan would seek to require the most ambitious minimum water efficiency standards possible for new development.

For residential development, this would include exploring the potential to go beyond the current optional requirement of 110 litres per person per day. (For example, RIBA 2030 Climate Challenge Targets of 75 litres per person per day.)

For non-residential development, this would include exploring the potential to set minimum water efficiency standards for some uses. (For example, RIBA 2030 Climate Challenge Targets or BREEAM standards.)

The Oxfordshire Plan would also require development at strategic growth locations to maximise water efficiency through the delivery of community-scale rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling schemes.

It would be important for the Oxfordshire Plan to provide flexibility to adapt to any new, more ambitious water efficiency standards that may be introduced or become achievable over the plan period.

#### **Alternative Policy Option 03-1**

137. Require water neutrality in Oxfordshire. (This is when the total demand for water is the same after new development is built, as it was before. It means that any new demand for water would be offset by making existing homes and buildings in Oxfordshire more water efficient.)

138. This approach could be implemented alongside the preferred option of setting ambitious minimum water efficiency standards. It would represent transformational change and would further help to address the impacts of climate change. However, this is not a preferred option as at it is unclear how this approach could be delivered, funded and monitored.

#### **Alternative Policy Option 03-2**

139. Set less ambitious water efficiency standards in the Oxfordshire Plan. For example:

- i. align with the current optional requirement of 110 litres per person per day for new homes;
- ii. do not set water efficiency standards for non-residential development; and/or
- iii. encourage (rather than require) development at strategic growth locations to maximise water efficiency through the delivery of community-scale rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling schemes.

140. This is not a preferred policy option as it would not deliver transformational change. There are opportunities to do more to address the impacts of climate

change and to respond to county-wide and regional pressures on water resources.

## **Policy Option 04 - Flood Risk**

141. Many communities across Oxfordshire have been affected by flooding. Flooding causes both immediate and long-term disruption to people's lives, businesses and wildlife.
142. The risk of flooding is expected to increase in future years, with climate change altering weather patterns and increasing the severity and frequency of extreme weather events. It is important to ensure that the impacts of climate change on flood risk are appropriately managed and mitigated so that Oxfordshire's communities, businesses and natural environment are resilient, with the ability to adapt and thrive in the long-term, to 2050 and beyond.
143. The Oxfordshire Authorities are commissioning a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) to inform the production of the Oxfordshire Plan. The SFRA will provide up-to-date information on flood risk, from all sources, and will be based upon the latest evidence and modelling, including the latest climate change projections. The SFRA will consider the individual and cumulative impacts on flood risk of growth proposed through the Oxfordshire Plan in combination with growth proposed in other plans (including Oxfordshire's adopted local plans and plans for adjoining areas as appropriate). Information in the SFRA will be used to apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development. It will also identify infrastructure and other adaptations necessary to manage flood risk to 2050 and beyond. The SFRA will be published at the next stage of consultation (Regulation 19).
144. In considering flood risk management and adaptation in Oxfordshire, the priority will be to work with natural processes wherever possible, utilising natural flood management methods. This approach can help to deliver wider benefits for people and wildlife by helping to restore habitats, improve water quality and increasing resilience to climate change.
145. As natural flood management works best when a 'catchment-based approach' is taken (where efforts are coordinated to manage the flow of water along the whole length of a river catchment from its source to sea), the Oxfordshire authorities will work with the Environment Agency and other stakeholders to implement this approach.
146. Ambitious policies in the Oxfordshire Plan would enable the local planning authorities to work together to secure a transformational change across the entire Thames catchment.

## **Policy Options**

147. We could leave it to local plans to set policies in relation to flood risk; but increasing resilience to climate change is a strategic cross-boundary planning matter. It is considered appropriate to include a county-wide flood risk management policy in the Oxfordshire Plan. This is not the preferred option as there is a risk that local plans might take different approaches to flood risk. This

could result in less certainty and clarity for developers and communities. It may also make it more difficult to meet proposed ambitions around the delivery of transformational change and increasing resilience to climate change.

## Preferred Policy Option

148. The preferred approach is for the Oxfordshire Plan to provide a strategic planning framework for managing flood risk in Oxfordshire. This framework would set out flood risk management and drainage requirements relevant to development across Oxfordshire. It would be consistent with the opportunity that the Oxfordshire Plan represents to deliver long-term transformational change and to address the impacts of climate change, with a specific emphasis on nature-based solutions.

149. There is a significant amount of existing development in the functional floodplain (Flood Zone 3b) in Oxfordshire. The preferred policy approach incorporates recommendations from the Environment Agency to increase the resilience of existing development in Flood Zone 3b. In taking this approach, the impact on design (specifically building heights) needs to be considered. However, given the severity of the risks associated with flood risk, the preferred approach prioritises flood resilience. If this approach is consistently applied, then over time building heights would become more aligned as increasing numbers of homes are rebuilt or raised. Local plans could provide further detail as appropriate.

### Policy Option 04: Flood Risk

The Oxfordshire Plan would require the following:

- 1) Development to take account of both its impact on flood risk and the potential impacts of flood risk on the development and its future occupiers/users.
- 2) Development to utilise natural flood management and drainage methods, including:
  - the use of appropriate green infrastructure;
  - the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS);
  - the use of design measures (such as the use of permeable external surface materials);
  - maximising opportunities to restore natural river flows and floodplains;
  - avoiding building over or culverting watercourses; and
  - removing existing culverts wherever possible.
- 3) Major development to comply with Oxfordshire County Council's Local Standards and Guidance for Surface Water Drainage on Major Development in Oxfordshire (published November 2018)<sup>28</sup> or any subsequent standards/guidance which might supersede this. Additional SuDS features may be required where there are impact pathways on habitats of national and international importance.

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/LOCAL-STANDARDS-AND-GUIDANCE-FOR-SURFACE-WATER-DRAINAGE-ON-MAJOR-DEVELOPMENT-IN-OXFORDSHIRE.pdf>

- 4) Where existing built development in Flood Zone 3b is proposed to be redeveloped or extended, opportunities would be taken to ensure that the new development is resilient to flooding over its lifetime. Replacement buildings in Flood Zone 3b to have finished floor levels above the 1 in 100 year flood level, plus an allowance for climate change.
- 5) Flood risk evidence to support local plans to identify areas of the functional floodplain (Flood Zone 3b) where householder development and small non-residential extensions are having a cumulative impact on flood risk. Opportunities to manage development in Flood Zone 3b that would otherwise be permitted under the General Permitted Development Order 2015 (as amended) to be considered.
- 6) The Oxfordshire authorities to work with the Environment Agency and other stakeholders to support a catchment-based approach to flood risk management across the Thames catchment area. Schemes that utilise natural flood management methods and deliver wider benefits for Oxfordshire's communities, wildlife and businesses would be supported and prioritised.
- 7) Flood risk management and mitigation measures identified within the SFRA to be incorporated within the policy framework as appropriate.

#### **Alternative Policy Option 04-1**

150. Include a strategic flood risk policy in the Oxfordshire Plan but reduce the scope of this policy. For example:

- i. Support the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) but do not require compliance with specific local guidance/standards; and/or
- ii. Support increasing the resilience of existing development in Flood Zone 3b, but do not set specific requirements.

151. This is not a preferred option as there is a risk that local plans might set different flood risk management and drainage requirements across Oxfordshire. This could result in less certainty and clarity for developers and communities. It may also make it more difficult to meet proposed ambitions around the delivery of transformational change and addressing the impacts of climate change.

## Theme Two: Improving Environmental Quality

152. Oxfordshire's natural, historic and built environments are what makes Oxfordshire distinct and special, attracting people to live and stay in Oxfordshire and underpinning the health and wellbeing, quality of life and sense of identity of Oxfordshire's communities.
153. The natural environment is the foundation of Oxfordshire's prosperity and through its varied ecosystems, geodiversity and landscapes provide people with a range of benefits upon which human wellbeing depends. Such benefits include thriving wildlife, food, clean water and air and reduced risks from environmental hazards, such as flooding and drought.
154. Protection and enhancement of all-natural assets is needed to build resilience in nature and within our communities and it therefore needs to be central to plan-making in Oxfordshire.
155. From the county-wide landscape scale to the individual development and community scale, nature is important to the health and resilience of people and wildlife.

Theme Two – Meets the following Objectives of the Oxfordshire Plan

No 1. To demonstrate leadership in addressing the climate emergency by significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

No 2. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's historic, built and natural environments, recognising the benefits these assets contribute to quality of life, local identity and economic success.

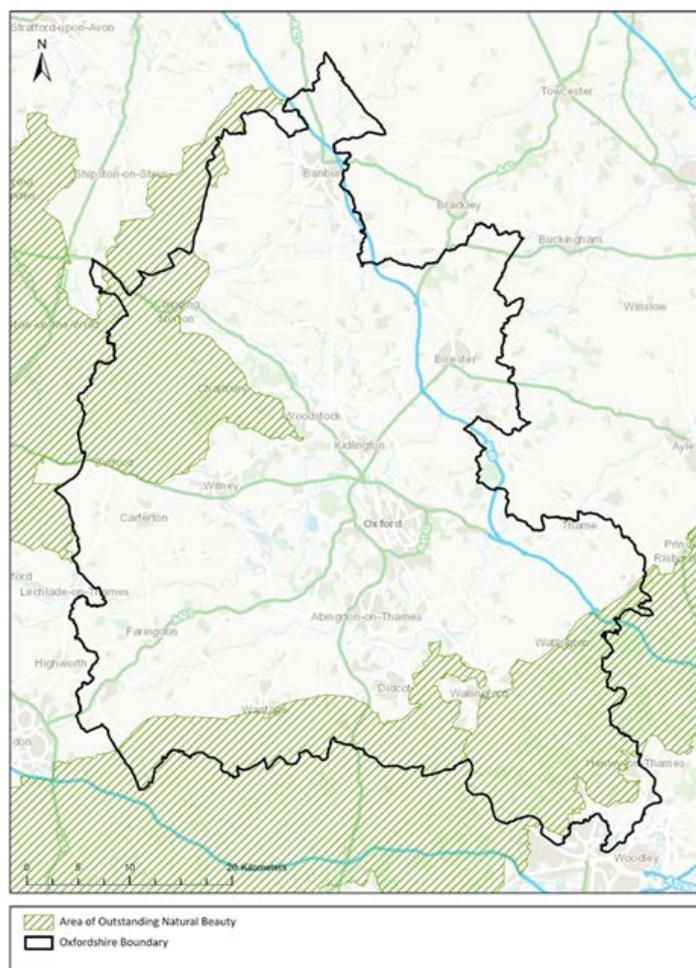
No 3. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's distinctive landscape character, recreational and biodiversity value by identifying strategic green and blue infrastructure, improving connectivity between environmental assets and securing a net gain for biodiversity.

### Policy Option 05: Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Characters

156. Oxfordshire's landscapes are particularly important in defining the character of the county and what makes it distinctive.
157. The protected landscapes of the Chilterns, Cotswolds and North Wessex Downs Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty cover over a quarter of the land area of the county. These distinctive and varied landscapes, defined by their underlying geology, land use practices and the many water courses that cross them are highly valued and protected for their natural beauty, distinctiveness and tranquillity.

158. Great weight has been given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and their settings in Oxfordshire and this has shaped the pattern of development in the county over time.

159. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in these areas, and the Oxfordshire Plan will continue to support this, as AONBs continue to have the highest level of protection in relation to their landscape and scenic beauty.



Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

160. Oxfordshire has many attractive landscapes and townscapes of distinct character, which are valued by residents and visitors alike. The National Landscape Character map of England shows Oxfordshire to be covered by eight different National Character Areas, which are defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, history and cultural and economic activity.

161. At a county level, these areas are reflected in the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS) as regional character areas. In addition, OWLS define a number of landscape types which are recognisable by common characteristics defined by geology, topography, landcover and settlement pattern.

## Preferred Policy Option

162. Landscape protection and enhancement is an important factor in plan-making and as such, is a key objective of the Oxfordshire Plan. The significance of any impacts on landscape are dependent on the sensitivity of landscape and the nature of any changes proposed. An understanding of such sensitivities will be central in guiding the Oxfordshire Plan spatial strategy.
163. The preferred policy option is to establish a positive strategy for the protection and enhancement of landscape and townscape features in Oxfordshire, due to the significance and importance of these features on the identity, sense of place, health and wellbeing and prosperity of Oxfordshire's communities.
164. It is necessary for the Oxfordshire Plan to have regard to the landscape and townscape character of the county in terms of shaping policies, defining the spatial strategy and determining the spatial distribution of growth. Further detailed evidence on landscape sensitivity and impacts will be required as the Oxfordshire Plan evolves, but it is important to recognise the importance landscape and townscape character will have on determining the overarching spatial strategy for the Oxfordshire Plan.

#### **Policy Option 05: Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Characters**

The Oxfordshire Plan would establish a positive strategy for the conservation and enhancement of landscape and townscape features at a county-wide landscape scale, taking account of topography, vegetation, tranquillity, dark skies, settlement pattern and landscape protection status.

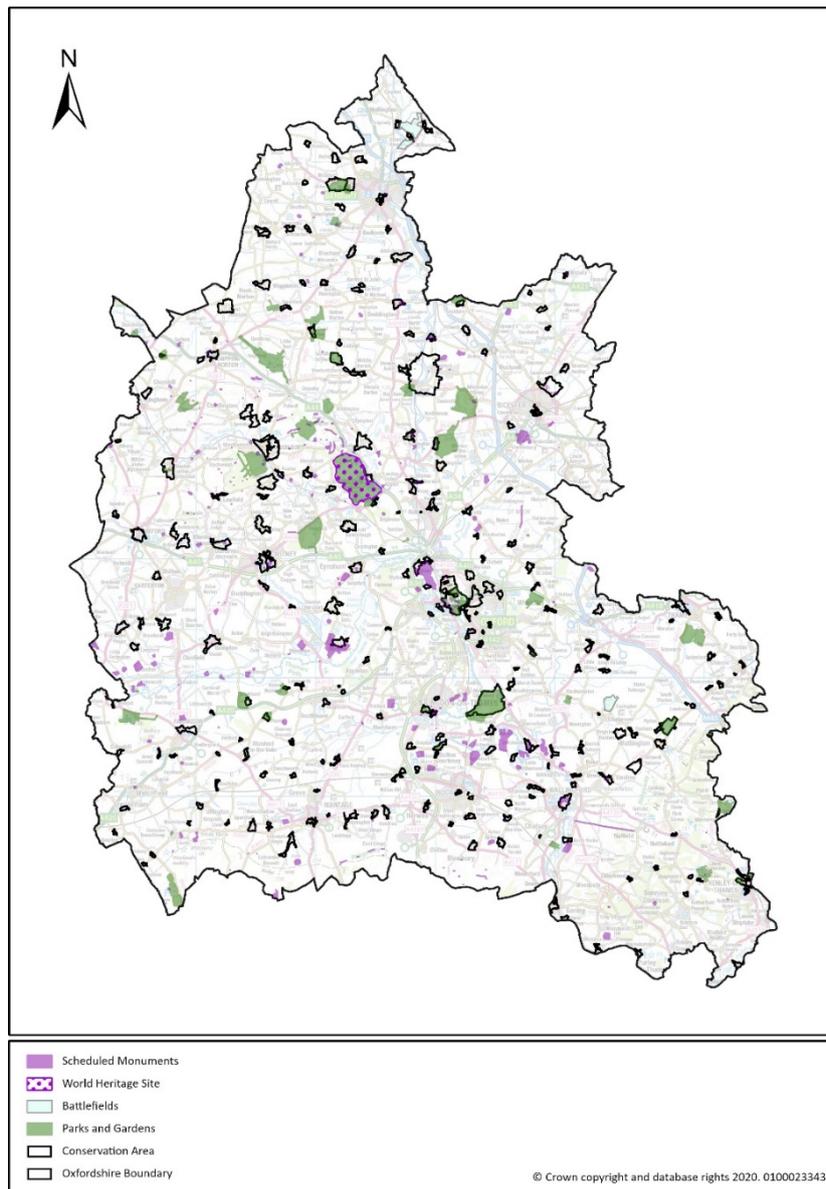
Landscape character and visual impact assessments would be required to support major new developments and urban extensions as well as the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan itself and subsequent plans and strategies guiding development in Oxfordshire.

Regard should be had to the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study and relevant landscape character studies relating to parts of Oxfordshire.

#### **Policy Option 06: Protection and Enhancement of Historic Environment**

165. Oxfordshire has a rich and varied cultural heritage that defines the distinctive character of the county with a wealth of heritage sites, from the prehistoric, the Roman occupation and the Saxon, Norman, Medieval, post-medieval and Victorian periods.
166. There are numerous fine examples of heritage assets throughout the Oxfordshire landscape include the Neolithic long barrow at Wayland Smithy, the Iron Age hillforts such as Uffington Castle and Sinodin Hill, Roman temples at Frilford, Wiggington and the Lowbury Hill and the chalk figure of the Uffington White Horse, one of the most iconic examples of Iron Age art in the world.

167. In addition, the county contains the internationally renowned medieval collages and buildings of Oxford, one of the region's most important tourist destinations. Other significant heritage assets include Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site, Rousham Park and former RAF Upper Heyford. These heritage assets, as well as locally listed buildings, form a valued and important resource that underpins Oxfordshire's distinctiveness and sense of place.
168. It is vital that the Oxfordshire Plan recognises the importance of the county's cultural heritage, not just in defining the sense of place and identity, but for the value that it brings to the local economy, supporting the enterprise base and attracting significant tourist spending through the visitor economy.
169. These archaeological and historic heritage assets are a finite resource that are highly valued by the local community as well as both nationally and internationally. They form an important backdrop to the characteristic sense of place of Oxfordshire that makes it such a vibrant and attractive place to live and work. The historic environment also plays an important role in community identity. These irreplaceable historic assets are easily disturbed and destroyed by unsympathetic development unless carefully managed.

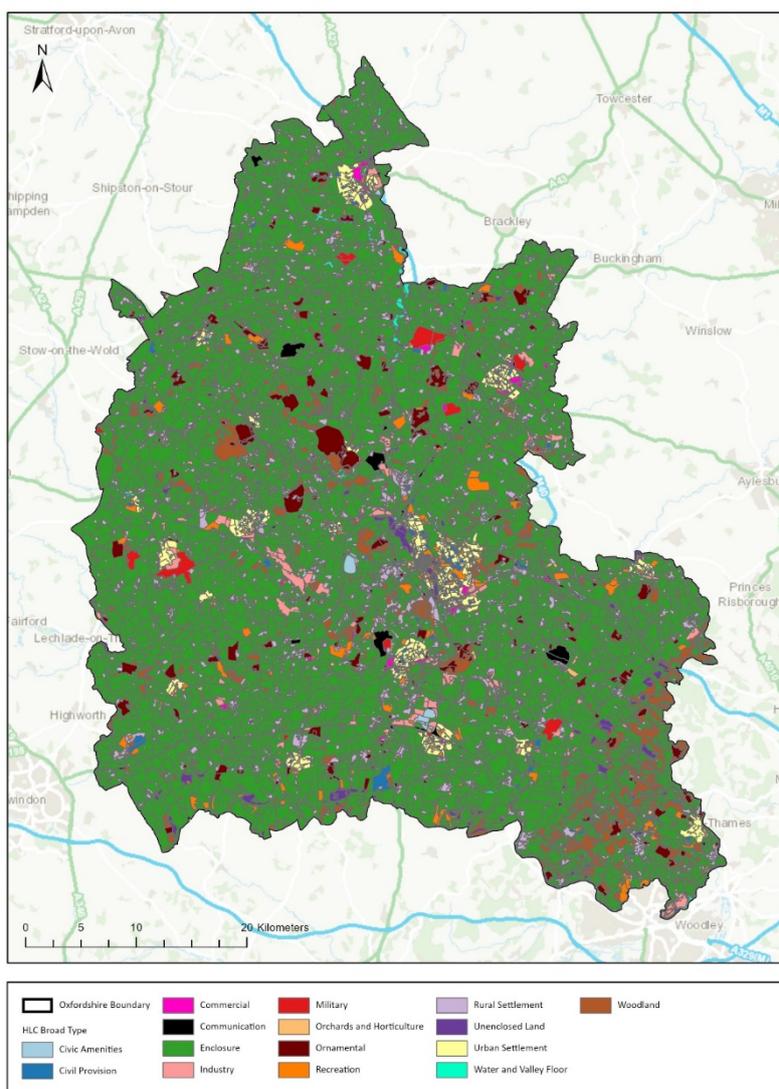


Oxfordshire Heritage Assets

170. Approaches to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment and heritage assets are well established in national and local policy through local plans. The Oxfordshire Plan has the potential to add value by setting a positive strategy for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment at a landscape scale.
171. Historic Landscape Characterisation identifies specific characteristics of an area or to better understand what makes a place special or distinct and helps to build an understanding of sensitivity, vulnerability and capacity for change. Historic landscape characterisation mapping has been undertaken for the whole of Oxfordshire in order to identify broad historic landscape types across the county.

172. This assessment gives a broad understanding of the county's historic character and indicates patterns of historic and current land use. As the assessment covers the whole of the Oxfordshire landscape, it also gives an understanding of archaeological potential within different parts of the county as well as the potential to support biodiversity, so there are synergies with other parts of the Plan relating to climate change and the natural environment.

173. An understanding of the historic importance of landscapes can help shape the Oxfordshire Plan spatial strategy to ensure that they are protected and enhanced for the value that they bring in terms of recreation, education, sense of place and historic character.



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Historic Landscape Characterisation Broad Types

### Preferred Policy Option

174. The preferred policy option is to establish a positive strategy for the conservation and enhancement of Oxfordshire's historic environment, due to the significance and importance of Oxfordshire's historic environment on the identity, sense of place, health and wellbeing and prosperity of Oxfordshire's communities.

175. The Oxfordshire Plan should have regard to the location, scale and importance of Oxfordshire's heritage assets in terms of shaping policies, defining the spatial strategy and determining the spatial distribution of growth. Further detailed evidence on heritage impact will be required as the Oxfordshire Plan evolves.

### **Policy Option 06: Protection and Enhancement of Historic Environment**

The Oxfordshire Plan would establish a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of Oxfordshire's historic environment at the strategic scale, taking account of the county's historic environment and heritage assets including historic landscapes, archaeology, Scheduled Monuments, World Heritage Site, Historic Parks and Gardens, Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings and their settings.

Development proposals would be required to assess the impact on the historic environment and heritage assets including both known and potential heritage assets including assessing the likelihood of currently unidentified assets being identified.

Regard would be had to the county's Historic Environment Record and local assessments relating to heritage assets including important views, conservation areas and locally listed buildings.

Detailed historic characterisation work would be required to assess the impact of major development, including new settlements, urban extensions or rural development including proposals for the Oxfordshire Plan and spatial strategy on the significance of heritage assets.

Development should conserve and enhance the historic environment and the setting of heritage assets.

### **Policy Option 07 - Nature Recovery**

176. It is recognised that nature is declining around the world at unprecedented rates and that there has been continued decline of biodiversity nationally and locally over the past decade. Although there have been some conservation successes in Oxfordshire, nature is still in decline.

177. A key finding of the 2017 'State of Nature in Oxfordshire' report<sup>29</sup> was that there is continued fragmentation and loss of connectivity across the county's landscapes, affecting the future viability of habitats and species. Long-term decline in woodland and farmland biodiversity in particular has continued, threatening a number of associated species with extinction.

178. Agricultural changes are one of the main contributing factors to habitat degradation and fragmentation with losses of semi-natural grasslands and floodplain meadows resulting from more intensive agricultural methods.

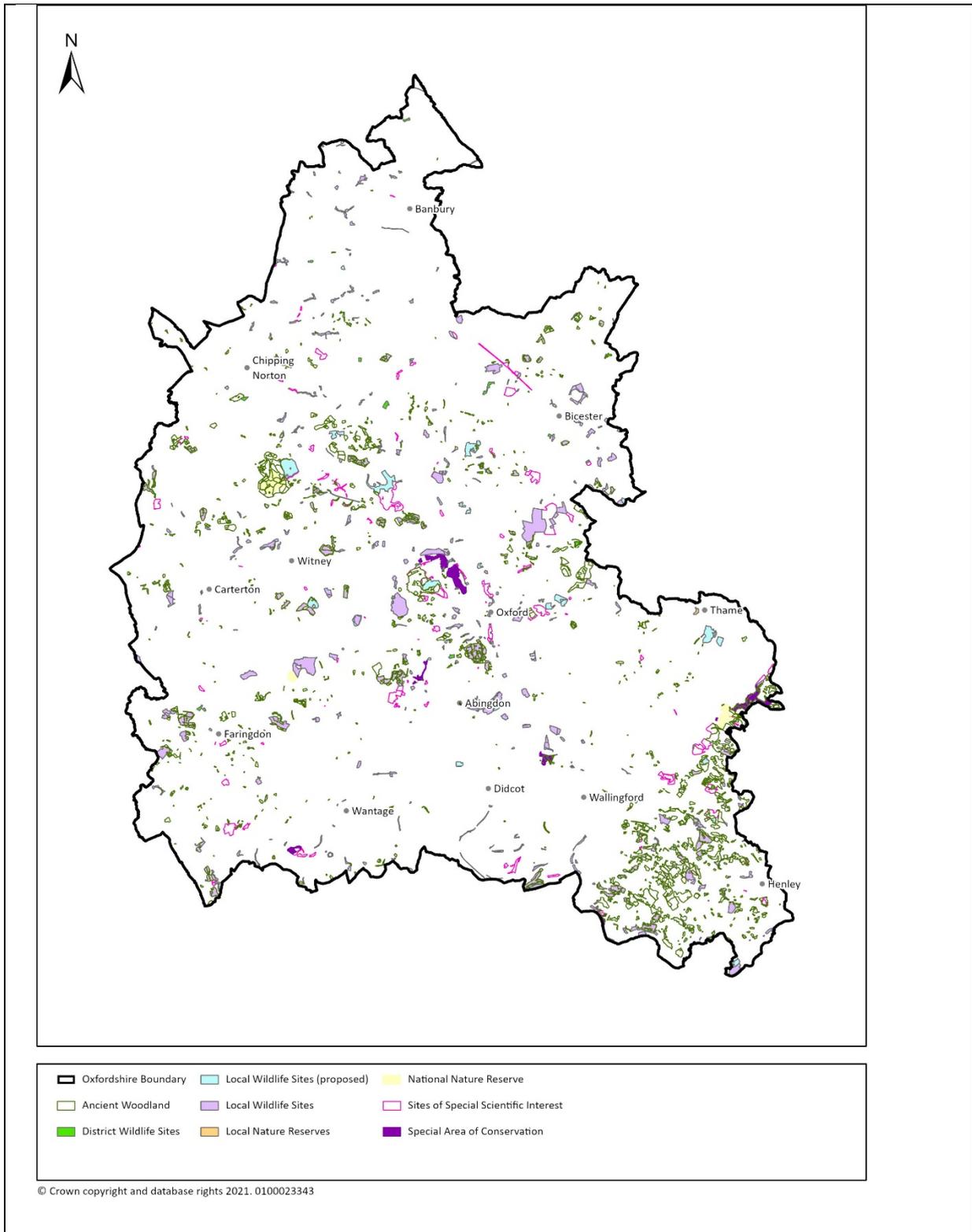
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<sup>29</sup> State of Nature in Oxfordshire 2017, Wild Oxfordshire

179. Climate change is also a significant contributory factor with changes in temperature and rainfall resulting in negative impacts on species composition and the integrity of habitats. Pollution and growing urbanisation and invasive species are also known to contribute to species decline.
180. Despite widespread degradation and loss of habitats, Oxfordshire retains some of the finest and rarest habitats anywhere in the country such as the wet grasslands of Otmoor. It is important that the Oxfordshire Plan aims to protect all that is good and valuable while aiming to repair and recover that which has been lost through harmful land use practices in recent years.
181. Key actions identified for Oxfordshire in the State of Nature Report included the need to create larger and more connected areas of high-quality habitat and to assist landowners and farmers in identifying financially viable ways of managing land in a more nature friendly way. Better planning for green and blue infrastructure is regarded as being beneficial for both people and nature.
182. The Oxfordshire Plan has an opportunity to take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking account of flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating and drought from rising temperatures.
183. It is proposed that the Oxfordshire Plan takes a holistic approach to nature recovery and environmental enhancement, enabled by the Plan's county-wide coverage. This allows the plan to look at threats and opportunities for the natural environment at the landscape scale which isn't necessarily possible for district-level local plans.
184. The Oxfordshire Plan aims to protect and enhance the natural environment of Oxfordshire, including its natural capital assets, landscapes and wildlife. A key focus of this approach is on minimising impacts on and delivering net gains for biodiversity.
185. Supporting the health and resilience of habitats and species and supporting biodiversity is fundamental to the delivery of ecosystems services for the multiple benefits that they bring to the health and wellbeing of the planet and the human populations that comprise Oxfordshire's communities.
186. There is a wide distribution of wildlife rich, protected sites across Oxfordshire. Such sites benefit from protected status, meaning that national policy and adopted local plan policy steers harmful uses away from such sites and aims to deliver enhancements where possible.
187. This well-established approach may have been successful in protecting individual sites but less successful in arresting the fragmentation of habitats and building resilience amongst species to a changing climate. Wildlife within protected habitats cannot survive indefinitely in isolation but need to be part of a wider network of habitats connected at the landscape scale.
188. Conservation Target Areas (CTAs) were introduced to Oxfordshire in 2006 to identify areas where targeted conservation action could deliver the greatest benefits. There are currently 37 CTAs in Oxfordshire, covering over 20% of the

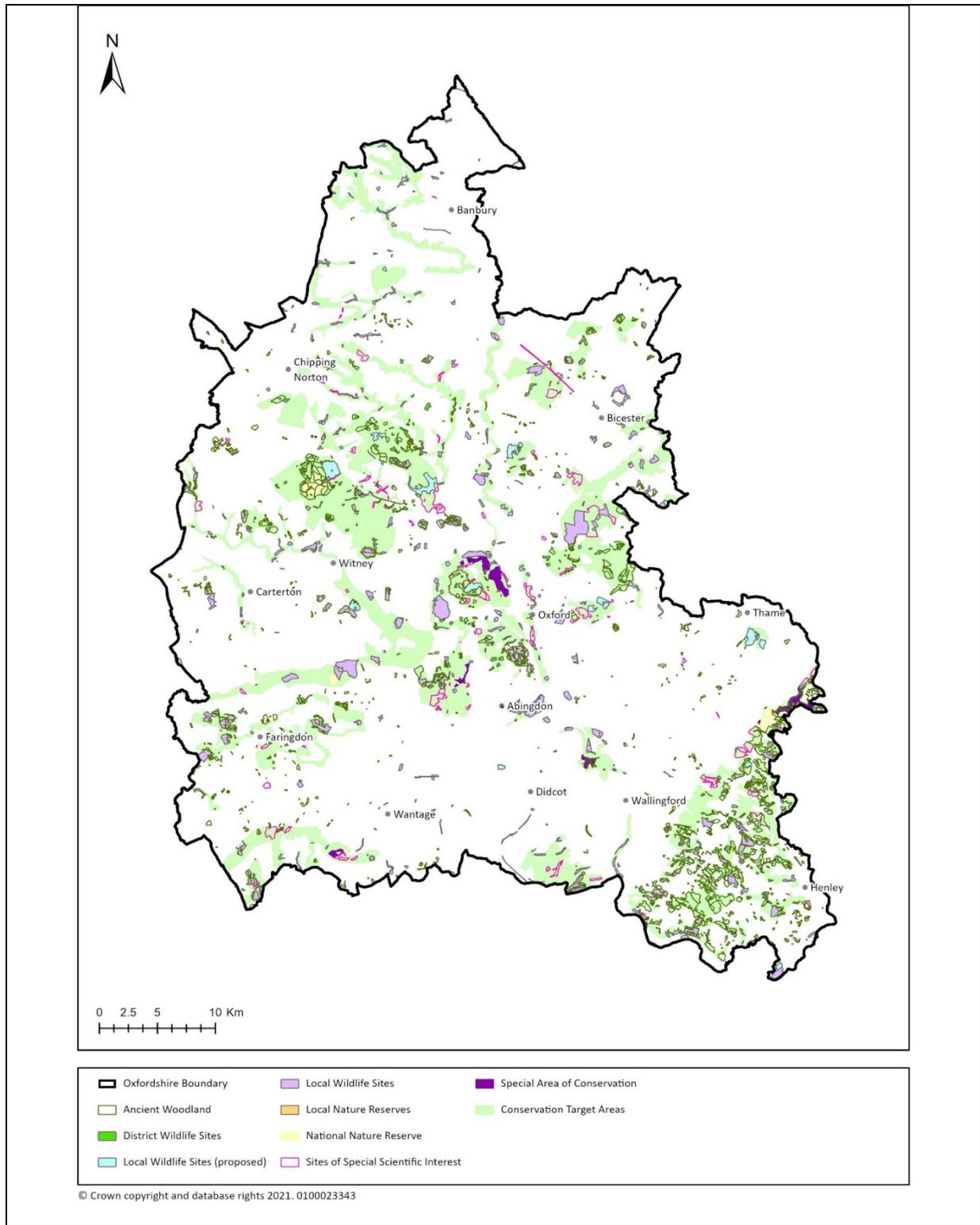
county providing a focus for co-ordinated delivery of agri-environment schemes and biodiversity enhancements delivered through the planning system.

189. The Oxfordshire Plan presents an opportunity to build on the CTA approach, to map and plan for ecological connectivity and enhancement at a landscape scale and to link key wildlife sites to achieve measurable gains in biodiversity.
190. The establishment of a Nature Recovery Network (NRN) for Oxfordshire is considered to be an important step in defining the key spatial elements required to deliver more coherent and robust ecological networks for the county and to ensure that future development avoids harmful impacts on nature and makes a meaningful contribution to nature's recovery.
191. For nature to recover it is important to look beyond currently protected sites and take action to extend and link existing sites, both to support wildlife and to recover the range of economic and social benefits that nature provides.
192. Looking at ecological networks at the landscape scale, provides an opportunity to consider where existing habitats can be improved and increased in size, to improve connectivity between patches of habitat and to restore natural processes.
193. The primary role of a Nature Recovery Network for Oxfordshire would be to support abundant wildlife but should also enhance natural beauty, conserve geodiversity and provide opportunities and benefits for people including flood alleviation, recreation and climate change resilience and adaptation.
194. The map below shows the distribution of many of the protected wildlife sites across Oxfordshire. Although these sites benefit from protected status and many sit in a rural setting surrounded by countryside, they are not necessarily resilient to change and are in many cases disjointed from other similar habitat types as a result of intervening land uses. Species living within such sites may be threatened by not being able to migrate under changing environmental conditions. It should be noted that the map is not exhaustive and does not include all protected sites and habitats in Oxfordshire, such as all local designations.



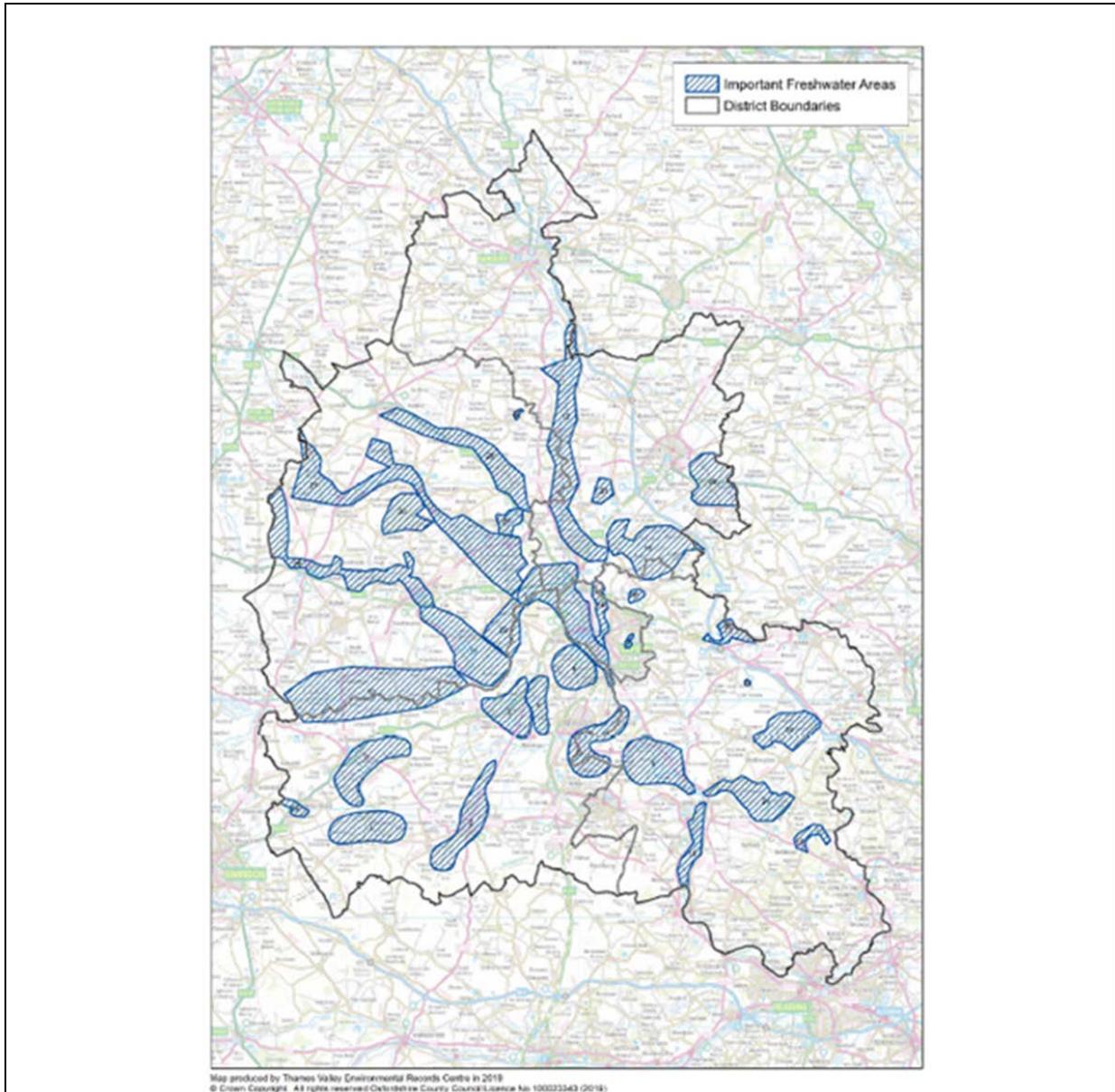
195. The following map illustrates how protected sites for wildlife are set within the existing network of Conservation Target Areas in Oxfordshire.

196. Conservation Target Areas were first established in Oxfordshire in 2006 and since then have been recognised in local plans as a focal point for conservation work and deliver biodiversity net gains in a more co-ordinated manner. Local plans in Oxfordshire ensure that the aims of CTAs are considered as part of the plan-making and decision-taking process for changing land uses in Oxfordshire.



197. Establishing a Nature Recovery Network for Oxfordshire could build on the foundation of the CTAs and expand to include important freshwater areas, to ensure that the network includes both aquatic and terrestrial habitats.

198. Important freshwater areas<sup>30</sup> are those areas that are most important for freshwater wildlife. In order to identify coherent ecological networks to be protected through plans and strategies, it is necessary to understand the extent and geographical distribution of such areas. Important freshwater areas are illustrated on the map below.



199. There is significant overlap between the CTAs and Important Freshwater Areas, emphasising that aquatic and terrestrial habitats should be considered in tandem in identifying ecological networks and making space for nature. For freshwater networks, there are a number of terrestrial habitats that are important to the health of freshwater areas, such as woodlands in the upper catchments of river systems, which regulate both the flow and quality of water entering rivers systems.

200. There are several catchment management plans already in place in Oxfordshire which guide conservation and flood management and improved

<sup>30</sup> <https://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/research/important-freshwater-areas/>

water quality along water courses in the county. Such management plans consider the interaction between land uses in river catchments with a focus on how nature-based solutions can deliver benefits to both people and nature. Examples of such work include natural flood risk management schemes which aim to reconnect rivers with their floodplains, remove blockages to wildlife and delay the responsiveness of river channels to rainfall and to slow and store surface water runoff.

201. Combining both Conservation Target Areas and Important Freshwater Areas provides a strong spatial overview of where conservation efforts could be targeted in Oxfordshire to deliver multiple benefits, reducing fragmentation of sites and waterbodies and helping to build climate change resilience in the natural environment.

202. Building a greater understanding of how these valuable areas for biodiversity can be better connected, will assist in the formation of a coherent ecological network for Oxfordshire, setting the framework for future planning for development and conservation and enhancement of the natural environment.

203. Analysis has been undertaken in Oxfordshire to identify the most important areas for biodiversity and the areas that are most important for connecting these together<sup>31</sup>. The analysis has enabled the identification of a draft Nature Recovery Network for Oxfordshire. A draft NRN has been refined through a process of engagement and consultation to define three distinct zones in Oxfordshire with 'soft boundaries' that can be subject to further refinement through the process of creating a future nature recovery strategy.

204. The draft NRN for Oxfordshire comprises the following components and the map which follows indicates the extent of the areas.

#### **Core Zone:**

The Core zone of the NRN contains the most important sites for biodiversity in the county. The identification of the core zone of the NRN does not diminish the protection afforded to such sites through existing national and local policy, which will continue to benefit from a high level of protection.

Special Protection Areas	Cherwell District Wildlife Sites
Special Areas for Conservation,	Oxford City Wildlife Sites
Sites of Special Scientific Interest	BBOWT reserves
Ramsar sites	Woodland Trust woodlands
Local Nature Reserves	Other sites of local importance for
Local Wildlife Sites (including	nature conservation
proposed)	All priority habitats

The core of the NRN is the main priority for nature conservation. Actions within the core zone should focus on the protection and management of important sites to support the greatest amount of biodiversity.

#### **Recovery Zone:**

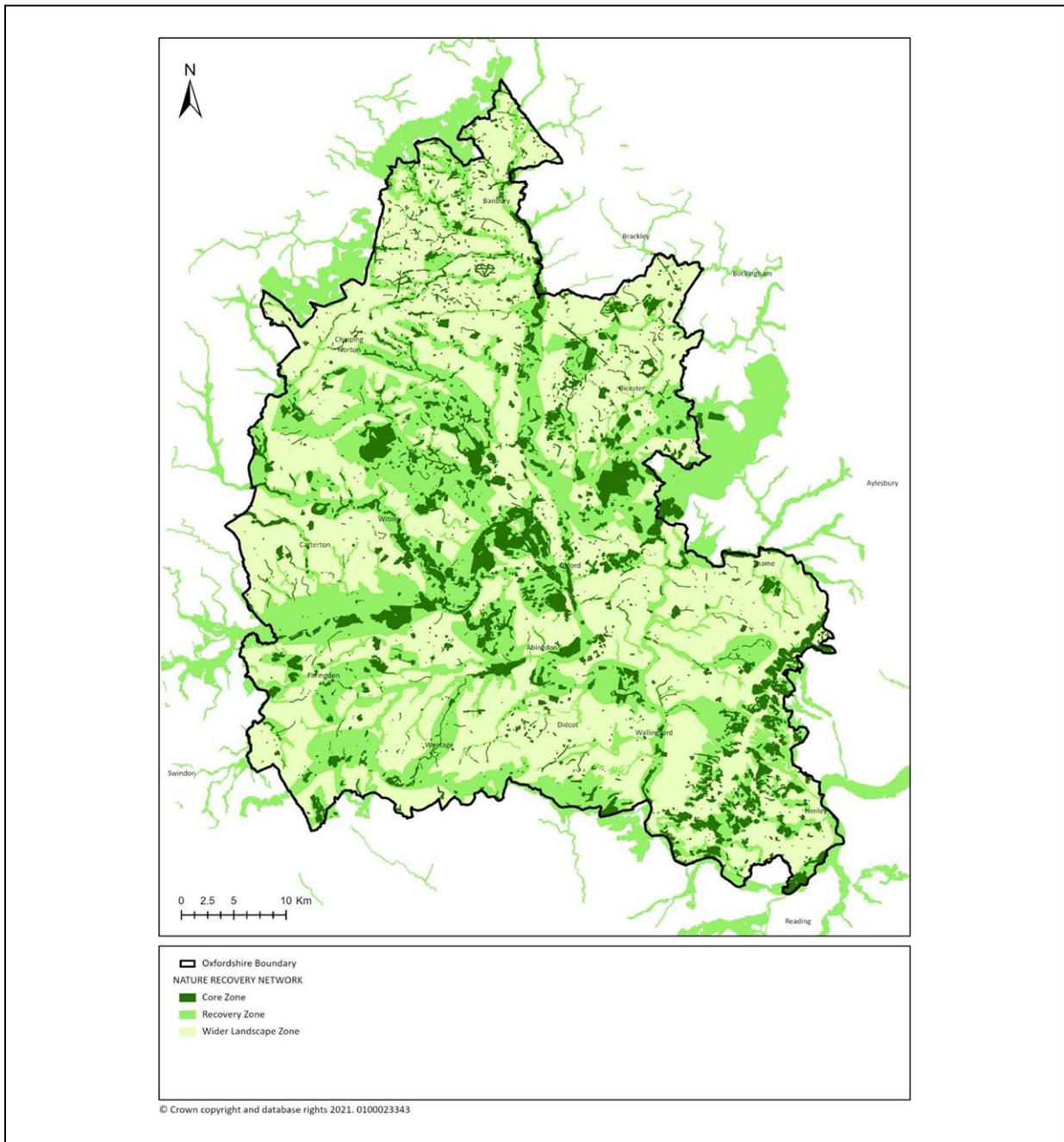
<sup>31</sup> Link to TVERC technical report.

The recovery zone consists of Conservation Target Areas, Important Freshwater Areas and a freshwater network, with additional areas of land added to provide better connectivity.

The recovery zone is where new habitat creation and habitat restoration should be focussed. Habitat creation and restoration in this zone will better link parts of the core network, either by buffering and connecting core sites or by providing corridors or stepping-stones between core sites.

**Wider Landscape Zone:**

The wider countryside is still important for nature's recovery. The focus within the wider landscape zone should be on strengthening landscape character and making room for nature, including hedgerow restoration and creation, managing farmland with nature in mind or improving access to the countryside.



## Policy Options

### Preferred Policy Option

205. The preferred option is to identify those parts of the county that are important for establishing a well-connected ecological network and to use this mapped resource to shape the policies, define the spatial strategy and determine the spatial distribution of development in the Oxfordshire Plan. Utilising the draft Nature Recovery Network to shape the Oxfordshire Plan will ensure that future development and ecological enhancements are directed to locations where they can minimise harm and secure the greatest benefits in supporting nature's recovery and building resilience in communities and ecosystems to climate change.

## **Policy Option 07: Nature Recovery**

The Oxfordshire Plan would utilise the draft Nature Recovery Network for Oxfordshire to guide the spatial distribution of sustainable development and the spatial strategy for the Oxfordshire Plan, as part of a commitment to strengthening ecological networks, delivering biodiversity net gains and building resilience to climate change in Oxfordshire, recognising the importance of the county's habitats, natural resources and landscapes in supporting biodiversity, connecting habitats and aiding nature's recovery.

The Nature Recovery Network would build on the established CTAs for Oxfordshire and would not diminish any of the protections afforded to protected sites, habitats or species but will seek to better connect them.

The proposed draft Nature Recovery Network would be comprised of three zones:

- *Core Zone* - the most important sites for biodiversity in Oxfordshire - including all nationally and locally designated sites, nature reserves, priority habitats and ancient woodland.
- *Recovery Zone* - comprising the Conservation Target Areas, Important Freshwater Areas and additional areas added to provide better habitat connectivity.
- *Wider Landscape Zone* - covering the rest of the county, recognising the important contribution that agricultural and urban landscapes beyond the Recovery zone can make to nature's recovery.

The draft Nature Recovery Network would provide a framework for future plan-making (Including the Oxfordshire Plan) and decision-taking, ensuring that future developments do not undermine efforts to connect habitats and to make landscapes more permeable to biodiversity.

The Nature Recovery Network provides a spatial illustration of a connected ecological network for Oxfordshire and sets the context for a future Nature Recovery Strategy in accordance with the 25 Year Environment Plan. The Oxfordshire Plan would support the establishment of a Nature Recovery Strategy for Oxfordshire.

The Nature Recovery Network would provide a focus for biodiversity net gains and wider environmental net gains as part of a co-ordinated approach to environmental protection and enhancement for Oxfordshire.

### **Alternative Policy Option 07-1**

206. One discounted policy option has been to not progress the development of the Nature Recovery Network map in the Oxfordshire Plan and to leave it to the subsequent Nature Recovery Strategy for Oxfordshire to define. This would defer to the established approach of site, species and habitat protection, Conservation Target Areas and application of mitigation hierarchy for biodiversity to be applied through local plans.

207. This option is not preferred as the Oxfordshire Plan provides an opportunity to plan more holistically for ecological connectivity at the landscape scale. Not utilising the draft Nature Recovery Network to shape the Oxfordshire Plan spatial strategy might undermine future efforts to establish ecological networks and to plan for nature recovery through a future Nature Recovery Strategy.

## **Policy Option 08 - Biodiversity Gain**

208. Biodiversity net gain is an approach which aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than before.

209. Oxfordshire has a diverse and distinctive landscape which supports a variety of habitats. The Oxfordshire State of Nature report (2017)<sup>32</sup> found that there continues to be long-term declines in farmland and woodland biodiversity and that there is continued fragmentation and loss of connectivity across the county's landscape, affecting the future viability of habitats and species.

210. Such issues of fragmentation and ecological connectivity can be addressed to a significant extent through the establishment of a Nature Recovery Network.

211. In order to account for past losses and degradation of the natural environment however, achieving significant biodiversity net gains through planning are likely to be desirable.

212. Preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan provides an opportunity to set high level ambitions for biodiversity and wider environmental net gains in the county and to set a consistent approach and framework for plan-making and decision taking across the county.

213. Approaches to biodiversity net gain have already been developed in parts of Oxfordshire with local plans setting requirements and targets for biodiversity net gain through new development as well as varying targets set at individual site level for planned garden communities. The use of biodiversity metrics is recognised as an important mechanism through which the biodiversity value of land pre- and post-development is measured.

214. The Oxfordshire Plan has the potential to add value and perform a key role in achieving biodiversity net gain through new developments through to 2050, which is key to reducing harmful impacts on wildlife, supporting recovery of nature, reversing long-term declines in biodiversity and addressing climate change.

215. The Oxfordshire Plan aims to protect and enhance Oxfordshire's distinct landscape character, recreational and biodiversity value. Achieving net gain for biodiversity is one way the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 can help to achieve this. This Plan will provide an opportunity to be ambitious and align the views of key stakeholders across the county, providing a county-wide framework for all the local authorities to work within. National policy is clear that the natural and local

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<sup>32</sup> [State of Nature | Wild Oxfordshire](#)

environment should be enhanced through minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity.

216. Nationally, biodiversity net gain is proposed to be set at 10% for all new development<sup>33</sup>. Planning to 2050 provides an opportunity to set clear ambitions for environmental improvement and it is not considered unreasonable to have targets in the Oxfordshire Plan which go beyond existing and proposed national and local targets.

217. A key challenge in securing biodiversity net gains through development will be the effect on viability but this is a challenge that must be addressed if the Oxfordshire Plan is to meet objectives for net zero carbon and to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

218. A Natural England biodiversity net gain study<sup>34</sup> showed there is little or no effect on the viability of housing developments with up to 20% biodiversity net gain, and that there is a strong case for more.

219. The preference should be for biodiversity net gains to be delivered on site, following the mitigation hierarchy and, where this is not possible, it should be delivered as close to the loss as possible. The Nature Recovery Network would provide a focus for off-site biodiversity net gains, with the Core Zone and Recovery Zone providing opportunities to deliver the greatest benefits for biodiversity and ecological connectivity.

#### The mitigation hierarchy

Avoid harm,  
Minimise impacts,  
Rehabilitation / restoration,  
Compensation (on-site),  
Offset (off-site).

220. Securing biodiversity net gains will have knock-on positive effects, delivering direct and indirect benefits to environmental enhancement, nature resilience and the provision of ecosystem services to support health and wellbeing of communities.

### Policy Options

221. The protection and enhancement of Oxfordshire's wildlife, habitats and ecological networks is central to the Oxfordshire Plan.

222. All development proposals in Oxfordshire should have regard to impacts on priority habitats, designated sites, Conservation Target Areas and the Nature Recovery Network for Oxfordshire.

### Preferred Policy Option

<sup>33</sup> Environment Bill 2020 [Environment Bill - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament](#)

<sup>34</sup> Biodiversity Net Gain Study (Vivid Economics, June 2018)

223. The preferred option is to set an ambitious target for biodiversity net gain as a standalone policy as one of the primary mechanisms through which nature's recovery can be delivered through the Oxfordshire Plan. Setting an ambitious target above national requirements emphasises the importance of supporting nature's recovery and improving environmental quality through the Oxfordshire Plan.

224. It is recognised that there could be viability implications for achieving higher biodiversity net gain targets in parts of Oxfordshire, but it is also noted that higher targets are being sought within individual developments and strategic developments in other parts of the county.

### **Policy Option 08: Biodiversity Gain**

The Oxfordshire Plan proposes to set minimum target for biodiversity net gain across Oxfordshire to protect, enhance, restore, increase and connect the natural environment and secure measurable net gains in biodiversity.

20% biodiversity net gain - Standard benchmark for the whole of the county.

Biodiversity net gain will be measured using the DEFRA Biodiversity Metric.

*The delivery of biodiversity net gain should follow the mitigation hierarchy with a preference to deliver gains on site. Where on site delivery is not possible, gains should be delivered within the administrative boundary of the Local Authority and wherever possible within a Conservation Target Area.*

### **Alternative Policy Option 08-1**

225. Establish differential biodiversity net gain targets for different parts of the county with higher targets (e.g. 25%) in opportunity areas for environmental enhancement including Green Belt, AONBs, Conservation Target Area, as well as Broad Areas for Growth identified in the Oxfordshire Plan and a lower target (10% national minimum) for the rest of the county.

226. This alternative policy option may assist in drawing out the challenge of viability that is anticipated in different parts of the county, whilst prioritising areas where biodiversity net gain from development is particularly sensitive and necessary.

### **Alternative Policy Option 08-2**

227. Leave to national standards and do not set minimum biodiversity net gain targets in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

228. This is not the preferred policy option as reliance on the UK-wide 10% net gain would fall short of Oxfordshire's efforts to support nature's recovery and account for past losses to biodiversity.

## Policy Option 09 - Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services

229. Earlier policy options considered the merits of establishing a Nature Recovery Network (NRN) for Oxfordshire and for setting relatively high targets for biodiversity net gain, in order to increase space for nature and to increase the resilience of the natural environment to climate change and other pressures.
230. The emphasis of the NRN and biodiversity net gain are very much on building resilience in nature and supporting wildlife conservation, but investment in the natural environment to deliver wider environmental net gains can deliver economic and social benefits too.
231. Maintaining stocks of natural capital in good condition both in terms of quality and quantity will ensure a sustainable flow of ecosystems services underpinning human health and wellbeing.
232. A focus on natural capital and the ecosystem services that habitats provide gives a more holistic way of considering our relationship with the natural environment and how the protection and enhancement can deliver multiple economic, social and environmental benefits.
233. Natural Capital is the elements of nature that directly or indirectly produce value to people, including ecosystems, species, freshwater, land minerals and air, as well as natural processes and functions.
234. The core elements of natural capital that are important in terms of the ecosystems services they provide are biodiversity (plants and animals), geodiversity (soil, rock), water and the air we breathe.
235. These stocks of natural capital provide a wide range of ecosystem services which can broadly be grouped into three categories:

Types of ecosystems services		
Provisioning Services	Cultural Services	Regulating Services
Food crops Livestock Wood Fish Fresh water supply	Recreation Aesthetic value Education and knowledge Interaction with nature Sense of place	Flood control Erosion control Water quality Carbon storage Air quality Cooling and shading Noise regulation Pollination Pest control

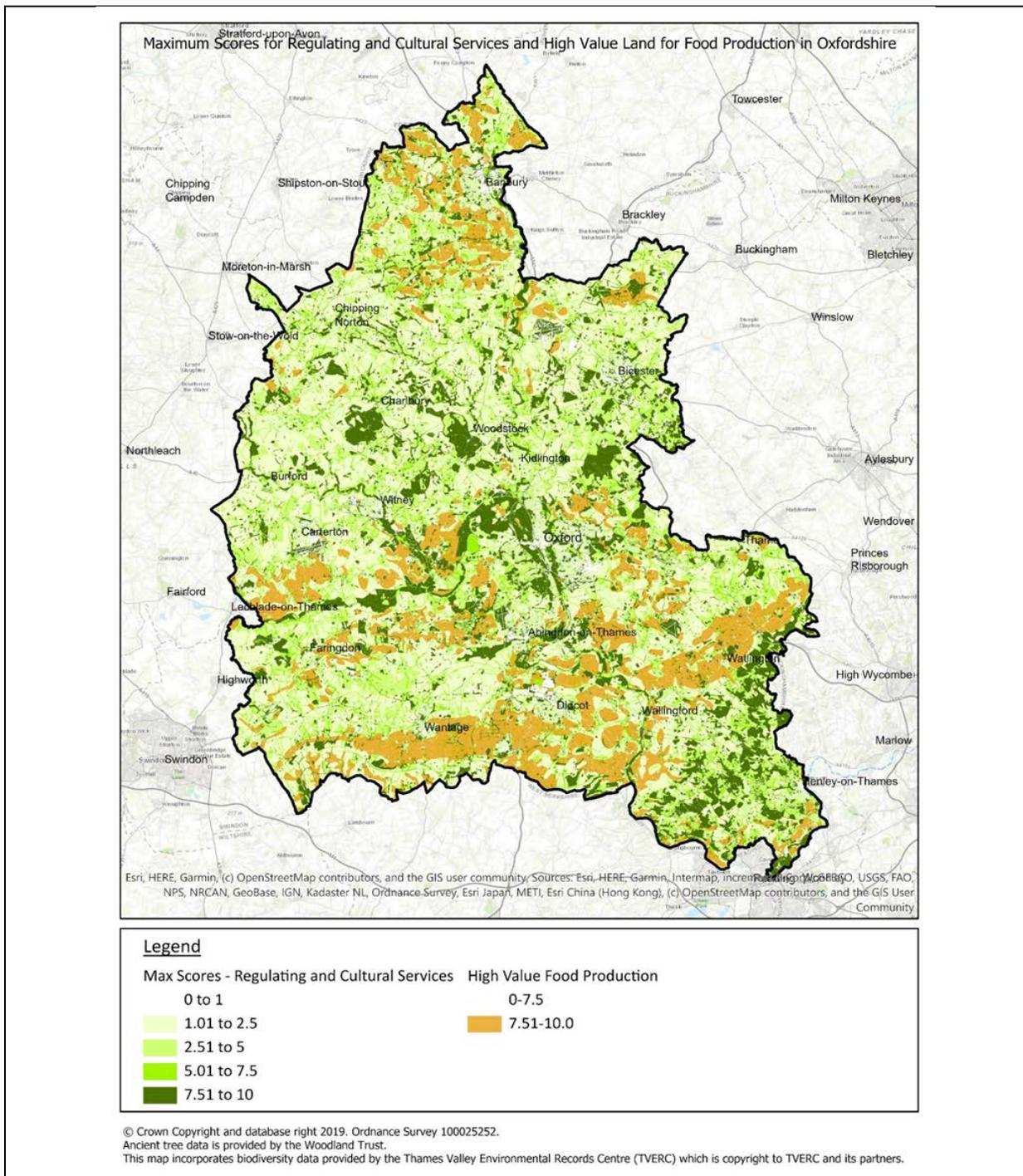
236. The protection and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity is fundamental to protecting stocks of natural capital and the flows of ecosystem services that underpin human health and wellbeing.
237. The approach to biodiversity protection and enhancement outlined in previous sections through the Nature Recovery Network and targets for biodiversity net gain will ensure that enhancements are delivered closest to where impacts arise or where they can deliver the most positive impacts.

238. Detailed work has been undertaken in Oxfordshire to provide a baseline understanding of the supply of natural capital across the county and the ability of habitats to provide ecosystem services. The baseline assessment covers 18 types of ecosystem services illustrated in the table above.
239. A robust methodology for natural capital assessment has been developed by Oxford University<sup>35</sup> which has been influential in steering assessments and approaches in neighbouring counties and throughout the Oxford-Cambridge Arc<sup>36</sup>.
240. The Oxfordshire Natural Capital mapping project provides a spatial overview of parts of the county that perform well in terms of the provision of ecosystem services. A summary of some of the key ecosystem services is illustrated in the map which follows.
241. Darker green colours on the map indicate habitats that perform well in terms of regulating and cultural services (as listed in the table above) and lighter green areas are those that perform less well. Many of the dark green areas represent areas of woodland such as the Chilterns in South Oxfordshire and the Wychwood Forest in West Oxfordshire. Areas of woodland score particularly well in terms of regulating services such as carbon sequestration, flood risk mitigation, shading and cooling and are valuable in terms of cultural services such as creating a sense of place and for recreation. It is important to note that the mapping makes no assessment of the quality of natural capital assets which may vary across the county.
242. Darker green areas are areas that should be protected and enhanced in order to preserve the beneficial ecosystem services they provide.
243. Lighter green areas on the summary map represent habitats that potentially perform less well in terms of the ecosystem services that they provide, although this doesn't distinguish between those habitats that provide multiple services and those that only provide one service. These areas may present opportunity areas to deliver environmental net gains, particularly where they relate to existing and future development, where demand for certain ecosystem services may be greatest. It is important to note that almost all of the land in Oxfordshire provide ecosystem benefits to people in one form or another.
244. As a predominantly rural county, dominated by agricultural land, most of the land coverage in Oxfordshire scores well in terms of provisioning services such as food production and water supply. In order to differentiate between the best areas for food production and those that are potentially less productive, the orange colours on the summary map indicate areas of best and most versatile agricultural land. This is land which is most flexible, productive and efficient and can best deliver future crops for both food and non-food.
245. An understanding of the supply of natural capital and ecosystem services for Oxfordshire is regarded as important, not only in terms of protecting what we have, but also in terms of increasing the supply, particularly where demand for services arises such as in new development locations.

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<sup>35</sup> Provide link to natural capital report with methodology

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.oxcamlncp.org/our-project>



246. This understanding of the supply of natural capital assets and ecosystem services can have multiple benefits in plan-making not just in terms of guiding the spatial distribution of development, but also in terms of guiding green infrastructure investment and environmental enhancements such as increased woodland coverage, accessible natural greenspace and natural flood risk mitigation and the application of Environmental Land Use Management Schemes (ELMS).

247. There is a strong case for investment in green infrastructure for the multiple social, environmental and economic benefits that a well-connected green infrastructure network can bring. Planning for, and enhancing,

Oxfordshire’s Green Infrastructure is an essential part of realising the county's long-term ambitions and economic aspirations.

248. Analysis has been undertaken to highlight a number of areas that present barriers to economic growth, with a significant economic cost to Oxfordshire each year.

**Top seven sustainability challenges in Oxfordshire and their annual cost to the economy**

Issue	Annual cost to Oxfordshire GVA
Mental Health	£1,300,000,000
Obesity	£427,000,000
Air pollution	£207,000,000
Transport – congestion	£170,000,000
Transport – accidents	£135,000,000
Inactive lifestyles	£120,000,000
Noise	£119,000,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£2,496,000,000</b>

*Source – Making the case for investment in Green Infrastructure – Brillianto - Oxfordshire County Council*

249. Green infrastructure is a key part of natural capital, though natural capital also includes intensive farmland, which is not usually considered as green infrastructure.

250. The natural capital maps developed to support the Oxfordshire Plan can be used to identify high value natural capital assets, and these can then be used to help identify strategic networks of green and blue infrastructure, and options for strengthening these networks.

251. An understanding of the supply and demand for ecosystem services coupled with investment in green infrastructure will enable the delivery of nature-based solutions to address the sustainability challenges identified in Oxfordshire. Investment in green infrastructure is most effective where it is spatially targeted and designed to deliver multiple benefits in the same location. It is for this reason that our understanding of natural capital and ecosystem services provision should be central to plan-making and environmental investment in Oxfordshire.

252. Applying natural capital approaches will help integrate the value of nature in all decision-making and develop a better understanding of impacts and dependencies on nature.



A recently compiled business case for green infrastructure investment in Oxfordshire identified a number of headline benefits.

- A 1% increase in the amount of greenspace in a ward generates a 1% increase in the value of a residential property in England.
- Vegetation may reduce noise by as much as 50%.
- A noise reduction of just 1 decibel for every property in the county would be worth £8m p.a. to the Oxfordshire economy.
- Investment in cycling infrastructure could take one car off the road for as little as 80 pence per day.
- Reducing speed limits in residential areas could reduce traffic accidents by half.
- People with good access to green space are 24% more likely to be physically active.
- A 10% increase in physical activity in adults would be worth over £6m to the Oxfordshire Economy.
- Oxfordshire's woodlands remove 175,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) per year from the atmosphere with an estimated value of £6 million each year.
- Green roof energy savings are 30 kwh/m<sup>2</sup> or 14 kg CO<sub>2</sub>/m<sup>2</sup> or £5-6 m<sup>2</sup> per year for heating and air conditioning.
- River woodland is worth £6,000 per year per hectare for its flood regulation benefits. Sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) are half the cost of traditional drainage over a 60-year life span.
- During an extreme rainfall event green roofs can retain up to 90% of rainfall.
- One square metre of green roof can offset the annual particulate matter emissions of one car.
- Planting of vegetation in streets can reduce street-level pollution concentrations by up to 60%.
- Oxfordshire's rural woodlands remove 400 tonnes of air pollutants and thereby save £6.5 million in healthcare cost per year.
- Converting intensive agriculture to a mixture of woodland and pasture near cities can generate benefits of £1,300 per hectare per year.

*Source – Making the case for investment in Green Infrastructure – Brillianto - Oxfordshire County Council*

253. Taking a natural capital approach with ambitious targets will enable the Oxfordshire Plan to deliver sustainable development that secures investment in nature across Oxfordshire.

### **Policy Options**

254. One discounted option has been to include natural capital considerations within place-shaping principles rather than defining an Oxfordshire-wide approach to the assessment of supply and demand for ecosystem services.

255. This is not the preferred option as it would represent a more traditional approach to green infrastructure delivery established in adopted local plans and

would not capitalise on the detailed evidence available to shape the Oxfordshire Plan.

### **Preferred Policy Option**

256. The preferred option is to identify the parts of the county that are important and valuable for natural capital and ecosystems services and to use this mapped resource to shape the policies, define the spatial strategy and determine the spatial distribution of development in the Oxfordshire Plan.

257. Utilising the Natural Capital mapping to shape the Oxfordshire Plan would ensure that future development and environmental enhancements are directed to locations where they can minimise harm and deliver multiple benefits for the environment and communities as well as building resilience in communities and ecosystems.

#### **Policy Option 09: Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services**

The proposal is that the Oxfordshire Plan will utilise the Natural Capital baseline mapping for Oxfordshire so that it can be used to guide strategic planning for development and green infrastructure investment at the strategic and site scale including the Oxfordshire Plan spatial strategy.

The Oxfordshire Plan would establish a Natural Capital Approach to planning in Oxfordshire, placing natural capital considerations at the heart of planning for development, infrastructure, and environmental enhancements including nature-based solutions.

A natural capital approach will recognise the importance of healthy and thriving ecosystems in supporting the health and wellbeing of communities, supporting climate change resilience and provision of ecosystems services.

The Oxfordshire Plan would require an assessment of natural capital and ecosystem services impact for major developments, policies, plans or programmes including the identification of strategic environmental opportunity areas and green infrastructure.

The use of an eco-metric may better enable the quantification of environmental value in order to establish the type and scale of investments to secure net gains.

Local plans should be guided by the baseline assessment of natural capital assets and ecosystem services developed for Oxfordshire to influence the spatial distribution of development and investment in green infrastructure and nature-based solutions.

#### **Policy Option 10 – Green Belt**

258. The aim of Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Not all countryside and greenspace are classified in this way.

Green Belt is a specific policy protection that only applies to certain designated areas.

259. Oxfordshire has an expansive area of Green Belt that surrounds the city of Oxford and which extends in to all four rural districts surrounding the city.

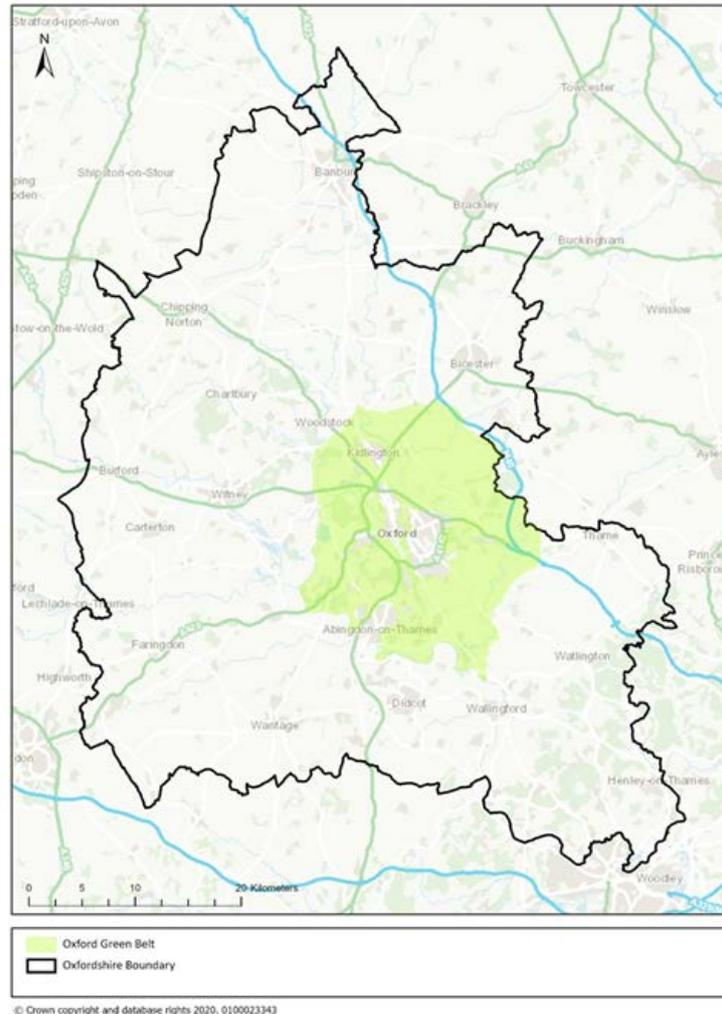
260. The first Oxford Green Belt policies were introduced in 1958 with a tight inner boundary surrounding the city of Oxford and extending for 5 or 6 miles in every direction washing over a number of surrounding villages.

261. The rationale for the protection of the Green Belt in Oxfordshire has been expanded over time but with the main purposes of protecting the special character of Oxford and its landscape setting, checking the growth of Oxford and preventing ribbon development and urban sprawl and preventing the coalescence of settlements.

262. If applied to Oxford, the national definition of Green Belt and the 5 purposes that it serves are as follows;

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of Oxford;
- b) to prevent neighbouring settlements merging into one another;
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of Oxford; and
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

263. The extent of Oxford's Green Belt is illustrated on the map below:



264. Making changes to the Green Belt boundary, i.e. taking land out of the Green Belt or adding new areas to it, requires exceptional circumstances to be demonstrated. The consideration of Spatial Options could lead to further Green Belt release if exceptional circumstances could be demonstrated.
265. As the NPPF records in para 137 *'Before concluding that exceptional circumstances exist to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries, the strategic policymaking authority should be able to demonstrate that it has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development.'*
266. The extent of the Oxford Green Belt has reduced in recent years, particularly on the inner edge, adjacent to Oxford, where there has been pressure for development to meet housing needs, and a lack of reasonable alternatives to deliver this new development. Allocations for development that satisfied the 'exceptional circumstances' test have resulted in land being removed from the Green Belt in sustainable locations through the adopted Local Plans.
267. Looking forward to 2050 and having regard to the importance of openness and permanence of the Green Belt, the Oxfordshire Plan could present an opportunity to enhance the Green Belt for beneficial uses as the NPPF sets out in para 141 *'Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and*

*recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.'*

268. So, for the Oxfordshire Plan, the beneficial uses could include the list of uses identified in the NPPF and also the provision of accessible natural green space, creation of ecological networks and local food production and with direct and indirect benefits for the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's residents and the protection and enhancement of landscape, heritage and biodiversity.

### **Policy Option**

269. It is proposed that the Oxfordshire Plan should have regard to the Green Belt in determining the spatial strategy for Oxfordshire to 2050 and NPPF paras 136 and 137. Subject to meeting the NPPF requirements this could include identification of opportunities to enhance the Green Belt for its beneficial uses.

### **Preferred Policy Option**

270. The preferred option is for the Oxfordshire Plan to consider NPPF para 141 and having completed the appropriate assessment the Plan would then focus on Green Belt enhancement in order to strengthen the important roles that the Green Belt plays, as well as supporting key objectives of the Oxfordshire Plan to improve the health and wellbeing of communities, deliver environmental enhancements and support nature's recovery.

#### **Policy Option 10 – Green Belt enhancement**

The Oxfordshire Plan would identify strategic opportunities to enhance the existing Oxford Green Belt i.e. provide access, opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation, enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or improve damaged or derelict land.

### **Policy Option 11 - Water Quality**

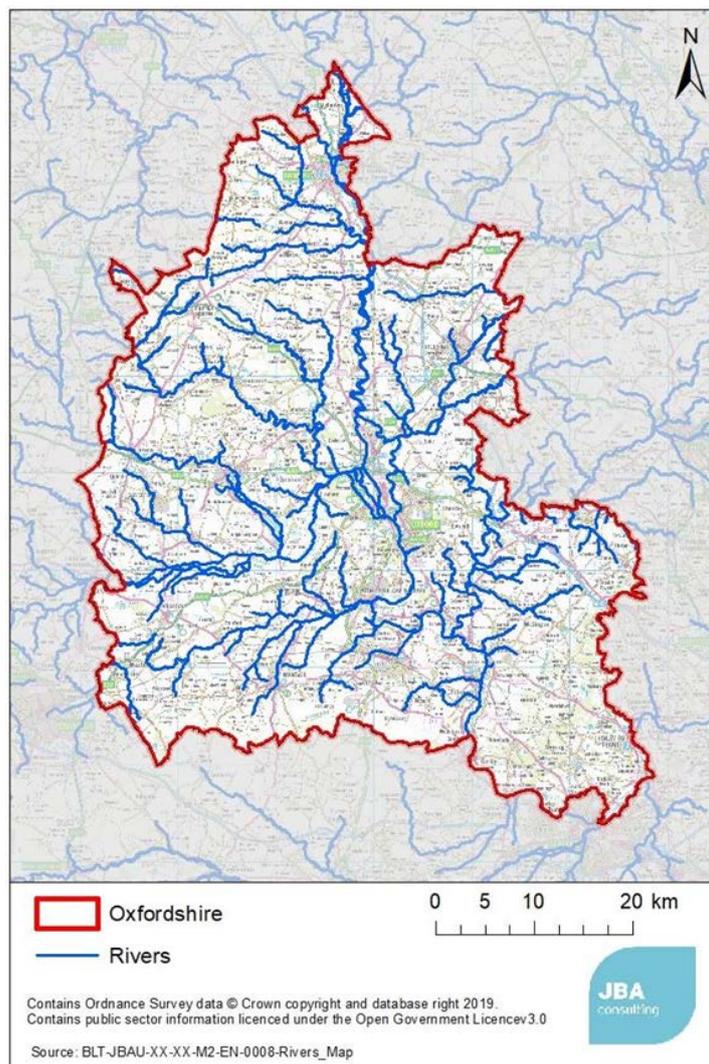
271. Oxfordshire's rivers, lakes, streams and canal are an integral part of the county's ecosystems, heritage and identity. They provide a wide range of services, including:

- providing/supporting a diverse range of habitats and wildlife (including nationally and internationally protected habitats) such as chalk streams;
- providing water supplies for homes and businesses;
- providing opportunities for sports, leisure and recreation;
- contributing to landscape character and sense of place; and
- supporting tourism.

272. In addition, Oxfordshire's groundwater resources have an important role in providing drinking water (a third of drinking water in England comes from

groundwater<sup>37</sup>), supporting agriculture and naturally recharging rivers, lakes and streams.

Map showing surface waterbodies in Oxfordshire<sup>38</sup>



273. The quality of Oxfordshire's waterbodies affects the health and wellbeing of our communities, natural environment and businesses.

274. Activities that can affect the quality of Oxfordshire's waterbodies include pollution from wastewater or sewage, pollution from built development and transport, physical modifications to the size and shape of natural river channels and pollution from agriculture.<sup>39</sup>

275. It is important that the Oxfordshire Plan helps to:

- prevent new and existing development from contributing to water pollution;
- prevent new and existing development from being affected by unacceptable levels of water pollution; and

<sup>37</sup> Environment Agency: <http://apps.environment-agency.gov.uk/wiyby/37833.aspx>

<sup>38</sup> JBA Consulting (July 2021) Oxfordshire Strategic Water Cycle Study – Phase 1 Scoping

<sup>39</sup> DEFRA & Environment Agency (December 2015) Part 1: Thames River Basin District River Basin Management Plan

- ensure that new development seeks to improve water quality wherever possible.

276. The Water Framework Directive (WFD) provides a framework for the protection of inland surface waters, estuaries, coastal waters and groundwater. It requires the achievement of a 'good' qualitative and quantitative status for all water bodies. Whilst the UK is no longer part of the European Union, this requirement was transposed into UK law and implemented through the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2003. The principle of all waterbodies aiming to achieve good ecological status is also broadly aligned with the principles set out in the Government's 25-Year Environment Plan.

277. River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) implement the EU Water Framework Directive. They cover entire river systems (including river, lake, groundwater, estuarine and coastal waterbodies) and aim to protect and improve the quality of our water environment. Oxfordshire is within the Thames River Basin District. Consideration should be given to the Thames River Basin District RBMP in producing the Oxfordshire Plan and in making planning decisions.

Map showing Oxfordshire within the wider Thames River Basin District. <sup>40</sup>

Figure 1: Map of the Thames river basin district



Thames river basin management plan. Part 1

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278. It should be noted that RBMPs are updated every six years. The current Thames River Basin District RBMP was published in 2016. A review of this plan is currently underway and consultation on the draft RBMP is expected during 2021.

279. An Oxfordshire focused Water Cycle Study is also being undertaken to inform the production of the Oxfordshire Plan. The Phase 1 Water Cycle Study sets out baseline information on water quality in Oxfordshire and considers, at a high level, the potential impacts of growth. A more detailed Phase 2 Water Cycle Study will be undertaken to help inform the next stages of the plan-making

<sup>40</sup> DEFRA & Environment Agency (December 2015) [Part 1: Thames River Basin District River Basin Management Plan](#)

process. It will help to inform where growth is proposed in Oxfordshire and the infrastructure needed to support and mitigate it. The Phase 2 Water Cycle Study will be published at the next stage of consultation (Regulation 19).

## Policy Options

280. One option would be to not have a strategic policy on water quality in the Oxfordshire Plan and to instead leave it to local plans to set policies in relation to water quality.
281. This is not the preferred option as there is a risk that local plans might take different approaches to water quality. This could result in less certainty and clarity for developers and communities. It may also make it more difficult to meet proposed ambitions around environmental improvement and nature recovery.

## Preferred Policy Option

282. The preferred approach is for the Oxfordshire Plan to provide a strategic planning framework for the protection and enhancement of water quality in Oxfordshire. This framework would set minimum standards for development in Oxfordshire, helping to ensure a consistent approach across the county. It would also provide a framework for improving water quality wherever possible, aligning with proposed ambitions around environmental improvement and nature recovery. Local plans could provide further detail as appropriate.

### Policy Option 11: Water Quality

The Oxfordshire Plan would require the following:

- 1) Water quality to be protected and enhanced. All development to take account of its potential impact on water quality.
- 2) Development to cause no deterioration in the quality of waterbodies, surface water and groundwater, nor would it prevent the future attainment of 'good' status under the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 and Groundwater Direction 2016 or subsequent amendments.
- 3) Where there are impact pathways on habitats of national or international importance, development would not prevent a protected waterbody achieving the objectives set out in the Common Standards Monitoring Guidance (CSMG).
- 4) Development to improve water quality wherever possible by:
  - i. incorporating appropriate green infrastructure and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to manage and treat surface water run off close to source and to minimise the risk from contaminants and sediment;
  - ii. reducing the risk of discharges of surface waters to the sewerage network and of pollution, including groundwater infiltration, from wastewater treatment works;
  - iii. prioritising natural flood management over hard flood defences;
  - iv. protecting and enhancing watercourses and habitats along river corridors;

- v. where appropriate restoring 'natural' systems, including de-culverting, restoring or re-profiling rivers and naturalising riverbanks;
  - vi. adopting water efficiency measures to reduce pressure from low water levels and flows;
  - vii. restoring contaminated land; and
  - viii. working with and taking opportunities identified by River Basin Management Plans, Catchment Partnerships and flood risk management authorities.
- 5) Major development to be phased to align with any necessary wastewater treatment work and associated infrastructure upgrades to ensure that development would not lead to a deterioration in the quality of receiving waterbodies.
- 6) Measures to help waterbodies in Oxfordshire achieve Bathing Water Status, which help to protect and enhance water quality for all river users, to be supported.

## Policy Option 12 - Air Quality

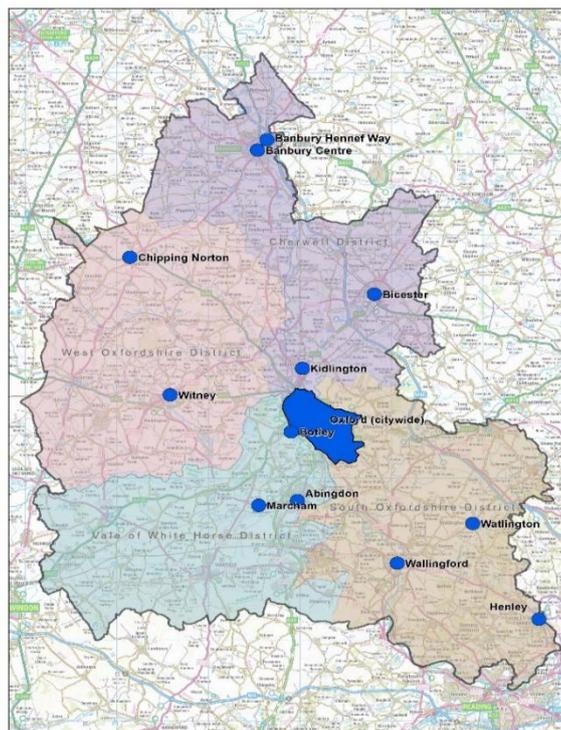
283. Clean air is essential to the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's communities and the natural environment. Air pollutants can have direct effects on human health, habitats and biodiversity and climate change. The Oxfordshire Plan aims to help to:

- prevent new and existing development from contributing to air pollution;
- prevent new and existing development from being affected by unacceptable levels of air pollution; and
- ensure that new development seeks to improve air quality wherever possible.

284. Public Health England advises that 'there is no evidence of a threshold for health effects' from air pollution and that local authorities should 'seek to lower population-level exposure and reduce everyone's exposure to air pollution, as well as targeting 'hotspots'', to maximise health benefits.

285. There are currently 13 designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in Oxfordshire. These are areas where nitrogen dioxide levels exceed national air quality objectives. Each AQMA has an Air Quality Action Plan which sets out how air quality will be improved.

## Map showing Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in Oxfordshire



286. Whilst air quality is a particular concern where development is proposed within an AQMA or where it might affect an AQMA, there are other parts of Oxfordshire that suffer from poor air quality, or which have the potential to be affected by poor air quality that also need to be considered. This includes habitats of national or international importance that are particularly sensitive to changes in air quality. It is important that all of Oxfordshire benefits from clean air.
287. An Air Quality Impact Assessment (AQIA) will be undertaken to inform the production of the Oxfordshire Plan. This will include an assessment of how different growth scenarios might affect air quality and in turn how this may affect human health and natural habitats. The AQIA will help to inform where growth is proposed in Oxfordshire and the infrastructure proposed to mitigate and support it. It will also help shape policies in the Oxfordshire Plan. The AQIA will be published at the next stage of consultation (Regulation 19).

### Policy Options

288. One option is to not have a strategic policy on air quality in the Oxfordshire Plan and to instead leave it to local plans to set policies on air quality. However, the protection and enhancement of air quality is a strategic cross-boundary planning matter and it is considered appropriate to include a county-wide air quality policy in the Oxfordshire Plan.
289. If it were left to local plans to set policies on air quality, there is a risk that local plans might take different approaches to air quality. This could result in less certainty and clarity for developers and communities. It may also make it more difficult to meet proposed ambitions around the delivery of transformational change, environmental improvement and creating strong and healthy communities.

## Preferred Policy Option

290. The preferred approach is for the Oxfordshire Plan to provide a strategic planning framework for the protection and enhancement of air quality. This framework would set minimum standards for development in Oxfordshire, helping to ensure a consistent approach across the county. It would also provide a framework for improving air quality wherever possible, aligning with proposed ambitions around environmental improvement and creating strong and healthy communities. Local plans could provide further detail as appropriate.

### Policy Option 12: Air Quality

The Oxfordshire Plan would support the protection and enhancement of air quality. Development would be expected to take account of:

- i. Its impact on air quality; and
- ii. Any potential impacts of poor air quality on future occupiers/users.

Development proposals in or affecting an Air Quality Management Area would be expected to be consistent with the relevant local Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP).

Major development proposals would be expected to be accompanied by an air quality assessment. Guidance would be produced to set out what information this should include. Guidance could be produced at a county-wide or local level.

Development would be expected to improve air quality wherever possible. For example, by:

- i. supporting walking, cycling and public transport and reducing the need to travel;
- ii. supporting the uptake of zero and low emission vehicles;
- iii. avoiding the creation of street canyons which trap traffic pollution;
- iv. minimising human exposure to traffic pollution through the careful design of streets, outdoor spaces and buildings;
- v. reducing emissions from buildings and other non-transport sources; and
- vi. providing appropriate green infrastructure.

Where it is identified that development would have a negative impact on air quality, and/or that air quality would have a negative impact on the future occupiers/users of development, a hierarchical approach to mitigation would be required:

*Avoid* – Consider measures to avoid negative impacts, particularly if sensitive uses or habitats are affected.

*Reduce* – Where it is not possible to avoid negative impacts, consider measures to reduce negative impacts. For example, through traffic and travel management, careful design and green infrastructure provision.

*Offset* – Where it is not possible to reduce negative impacts to an acceptable level, consider compensatory measures which take a broader view of the human health and habitat impacts within and outside the development area. This could include supporting measures in an Air Quality Action Plan or low emissions strategy where applicable.

Where possible, the Oxfordshire Plan would identify strategic opportunities to address the main sources of air pollution in Oxfordshire. This would be informed by evidence (including the AQIA). It should be noted that these opportunities might be more appropriately highlighted within other policies (for example policies within Theme Four: Planning for sustainable travel and connectivity). All policies in the Oxfordshire Plan would be aligned with the ambition of improving environmental quality, including improving air quality.

### **Alternative Policy Option 12-01**

291. Include a strategic air quality policy in the Oxfordshire Plan but reduce the scope of this policy. For example: do not require air quality assessments for major development proposals.
292. This is not a preferred option as there is a risk that local plans might take different approaches to air quality. This could result in less certainty and clarity for developers and communities. It may also make it more difficult to meet proposed ambitions around the delivery of transformational change, environmental improvement and creating strong and healthy communities.

## Theme Three: Creating Strong and Healthy Communities

293. The relationship between spatial planning and our health is an important and valuable one. The built and natural environment are key determinants of our health and wellbeing and therefore it is important to recognise the role that planning plays in influencing both our physical and mental health. The Oxfordshire Plan provides an opportunity to ensure that planning policy in Oxfordshire encourages the creation of sustainable, well-designed communities that are safe, socially cohesive and promote active and healthier lifestyles.
294. The way in which we plan for and design new developments has an influence not only on our health and wellbeing, but on the choices we make and the sense of safety, community and identity that we feel. Through careful planning and the design of new growth, we can help to deliver a high quality of life in Oxfordshire and maximise the health and wellbeing of residents.
295. Overall, Oxfordshire has better than average health outcomes compared to other parts of the country. However, in those communities suffering socio-economic deprivation, ill-health and preventable health issues are more pronounced. The Oxfordshire Plan aims to reduce health inequalities across the county and broaden access to opportunities for social interaction as well as active and healthy lifestyles.
296. The Oxfordshire Plan could set out a range of policies or principles that will help to plan for and shape communities that are strong, healthy, and cohesive. These could include high standards for developments to adhere to such as ensuring all new developments meet Garden Town and Garden Village standards, implementing healthy place-shaping principals for strategic-scale development, and also requiring Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) to be undertaken for certain new development.
297. The Oxfordshire Plan recognises that growth increases the demand for leisure, recreation and open space facilities, as well as community facilities including education, health and other services. As a result, it is considered that the Plan should set out policy proposals for these facilities, ensuring that they are accessible, high quality and in appropriate locations to contribute to the quality of life of communities.
298. The policy proposals set out in this theme will ultimately help the Oxfordshire Plan to create strong and healthy, rooted and inclusive communities across the county, and ensure health and wellbeing is a key consideration in the planning process in Oxfordshire, as well as helping to address inequalities and broaden access to opportunities for all.

Theme Three – Meets the following objectives of the Oxfordshire Plan

No 1. To demonstrate leadership in addressing the climate emergency by significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

No 4. To improve health and wellbeing by enabling independence, encouraging active and healthy lifestyles, facilitating social interaction and creating inclusive and safe communities.

No 7. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs, including affordable housing, and to ensure that housing delivery is phased appropriately to support the needs of our communities.

No 8. To ensure that new housing is flexible to meet the varied needs of people through all stages of life.

No 9. To deliver high quality, innovatively designed development that ensures efficient use of land and resources.

No 10. To reduce the need to travel and to support people in making sustainable transport choices by providing inclusive, integrated, safe and convenient pedestrian, cycle and public transport infrastructure linking communities.

### **Policy Option 13 - Healthy Place Shaping and Health Impact Assessments**

299. The Oxfordshire Plan is committed to reducing health inequalities, increasing life expectancy and improving the quality of life for all who live, work and visit Oxfordshire. As a result, it is proposed that the Oxfordshire Plan should require all proposals for major development and urban extensions to contribute towards the creation of healthy communities, by adhering to healthy place-shaping principles for delivery of high-quality, sustainable places.

300. The inclusion of such a policy would help to promote a clear and consistent approach to healthy place-shaping across the county and ensure that the City and district local plans contain relevant and effective measures to create healthy places.

301. Health Impact Assessments (HIA) are a way in which we can ensure that health and wellbeing are carefully considered in planning policy and proposals throughout Oxfordshire. HIAs can be undertaken at any stage in the development process but are best done at the earliest stage possible. HIAs can be undertaken as stand-alone assessments or as part of a wider Sustainability Appraisal or Environmental Impact Assessment. The process looks at the positive and negative impacts of a development as well as assessing the indirect implications for the wider community. The aim is to identify the main impacts and prompt discussion about the best ways of dealing with them to maximise the benefits and avoid any potential adverse impacts.

302. The Oxfordshire Plan is itself supported by a Health Impact Assessment and the potential health impacts of the Plan's policies and strategy will be assessed through the plan-making process.

303. A Health Impact Assessment can take a number of forms, which range from full assessments which involve a comprehensive analysis of all potential

health and wellbeing impacts, to rapid and desktop assessments, which are a quicker and simpler method of assessment.

304. The main objective of an HIA is to inform and influence decision-making, with the main output being developments that minimise risks and maximise the benefits for the health and wellbeing of communities.
305. The introduction of Health Impact Assessments for new development in Oxfordshire, would ensure that greater emphasis is placed on the need to create healthy places by developers and decision makers.

## **Policy Options**

306. It is proposed that the Oxfordshire Plan sets out a number of healthy place-shaping principles which will guide and inform how major developments are planned in Oxfordshire. These principals are varied, and include considerations of, for example, the impacts of air quality on human health, social isolation and loneliness and physical activity.
307. As cross-cutting principles, many of these are woven through other proposed themes and policies of the Oxfordshire Plan, so an alternative option is to not include a standalone policy for healthy place-shaping in the Plan. However, this approach would risk diluting the emphasis and importance placed on healthy place-shaping in Oxfordshire and could result in an inconsistent approach to healthy place-shaping across the county.
308. Setting countywide healthy place-shaping principles would not prevent local principles also being established as the local ones would reflect the characteristics of the local population. The county-wide principles would seek to identify the issues that any local principles should address.
309. The preferred policy option is to include a Health Impact Assessment policy within the Oxfordshire Plan, requiring major developments to be supported by an HIA.
310. The inclusion of an HIA policy for the whole of Oxfordshire would allow for clear guidance to be provided for when and where the preparation of a HIA would be appropriate. An alternative policy option would be to leave HIA policies to individual local plans. However, this alternative option would risk an inconsistent approach to HIAs in local plans, or even a lack of a HIA policy, and therefore it is not preferred.

## **Preferred Policy Option**

### **Policy 13: Healthy Place-Shaping and Health Impact Assessments**

We propose that the Oxfordshire Plan should include healthy place-shaping as a standalone policy, to establish a framework that can apply across Oxfordshire for

the design and masterplanning of major developments (as defined in the NPPF<sup>41</sup>). Example of the principles that a policy might usefully include are set out below:

- Explicitly address the existing and projected health and wellbeing needs of an area and consider how existing community assets could be enhanced to help promote healthy life expectancy.
- Help to reduce obesity and levels of physical inactivity through the provision of good-quality playing pitches, parks and open space, sports and active leisure facilities, and outdoor gyms that are accessible to all.
- Provide opportunities for people to become more active through the design of street layout and public realm to encourage walking and cycling as priority modes of transport; create and enhance cycling and walking networks as well as ensure connectivity between new development, local services and facilities and public transport.
- Reduce social isolation and loneliness through providing good-quality social community infrastructure which encourages opportunities for social interaction and helps to support the growth of friendly communities. Also, to create community development strategies which contain actions to encourage community cohesion, both within the development itself and between the new development and existing communities.
- Make it easier for people to make healthier food choices by providing allotments and other opportunities for food growing such as community gardens, school allotments, community orchards, roof gardens, edible landscaping around new schools and housing developments involving fruit and nut trees and planting.
- Aim to improve air quality and reduce noise through locating and designing pollution generating land uses and roads to avoid adverse impacts on sensitive land uses.
- Provide diversity in the residential offer that improves accessibility, affordability and promotes inter-generational connectivity and lifetime neighbourhoods.
- Design good quality buildings which are energy efficient and mitigate against the impacts of climate change.
- Create safe environments, addressing the fear and perception of crime, including improving safety for all road users.

It is also proposed that the Oxfordshire Plan includes a policy requiring the rapid Health Impact Assessment (HIA) for major developments in Oxfordshire, but the length and detail of the assessment should be proportionate to the scale and complexity of the proposed development.

A methodology and assessment checklist for carrying out rapid HIA of major development proposals (10 or more houses) has been prepared for Oxfordshire and has been published as the Oxfordshire Health Impact Assessment Toolkit.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Major development is defined in the NPPF as: 'For housing, development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more. For non-residential development it means additional floorspace of 1,000m<sup>2</sup> or more, or a site of 1 hectare or more'.

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/210126-Oxon-HIA-Toolkit-FINAL.pdf>

## Policy 14: - Health Infrastructure

311. As the population of Oxfordshire grows and changes, so does the need for the right buildings in the right locations to meet the differing health needs of the different locations of the county. Reorganisation and reconfiguration are complex and tend to impact on more than one local authority area.
312. Over the next 20-30 years it is highly likely that further reorganisation of the health estate across Oxfordshire will be proposed. It would be prudent to consider adopting a policy to provide a land use planning framework for Oxfordshire within which future health estate reviews might be considered.

### Policy Options

313. The preferred approach is an enabling policy that aims to set out a framework in which the land use and planning elements of future health reorganisations might be considered, recognising that many of the issues arising will be matters that impact across more than one local planning authority.
314. One alternative policy option is to leave these considerations to future local plans, but there is a risk that the cross-boundary nature of health estate changes will be lost. A strategic approach that brings together more than one local planning authority is likely to be more effective in securing influence over the actions proposed by the NHS. Our preference is to put a framework policy in place to enable forward planning by the local planning authority, with the health bodies and their developers in conjunction with the local community and Parish/Town Councils affected.

### Preferred Policy Proposal

#### Policy 14: Health Infrastructure

In considering reviews to reconfigure the health estate of Oxfordshire the following factors should be considered:

Where changes to the health estate are considered and will impact upon more than one District, an integrated, coordinated and comprehensive planning approach will be taken and a masterplan prepared, in collaboration and agreed with the local planning authority/ies, Oxfordshire County Council and other statutory undertakers covering the development of the whole site or sites. This would be especially important where the catchment crosses administrative boundaries.

This comprehensive masterplan setting out the strategic justification and rationale with a realistic timetable would be essential to establish the case for the review and to show the proposals for each location.

New health infrastructure should be designed with changing medical technology and innovative approaches in mind where relevant, (for example, by ensuring building materials used in development will not block internet connectivity signals that can be needed for medical uses).

In Oxfordshire, public access and good connectivity is central, so new locations must prioritise the ease of public transport and active travel access for both public and workforce needs.

In considering how best to modernise the health estate, both the quality of buildings and their functional effectiveness will be key. New buildings must be well-designed with renewable energy provision at its heart to help reduce use of carbon in the new buildings, with strong energy management policies to reduce their operational cost and enhance their efficiency and effectiveness.

## **Policy Option 15 - High-Quality Design for New Development and Garden Town Standards for New Settlements**

315. Oxfordshire is a special place. It is home to a range of different settlements, from the city of Oxford to market and railway towns, to rural villages and hamlets. Each has its own unique characteristics and heritage.
316. Oxfordshire also benefits from extensive countryside, a series of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and a varied landscape. The relationship between Oxfordshire's settlements and surrounding rural areas is extremely important.
317. New development in Oxfordshire should recognise what makes Oxfordshire special and respond to the distinctive character of the setting in which growth and new development takes place.
318. There is a growing network of Garden Towns and villages across Oxfordshire, from Bicester and Didcot Garden Town to Salt Cross, Berinsfield and Dalton Barracks Garden Villages. The designation is a statement of intent that new development will be well-planned, with a high design quality.
319. These settlements and approaches embody the aspiration of the Oxfordshire Plan that all new settlements or development sites should be highly sustainable and well-designed places, with health and wellbeing as an early consideration, alongside tackling climate change and environmental improvements. There is an increasing focus on the importance of high-quality design by national Government too, with National Design Codes and other measures proposed.
320. All new proposed settlements should be planned to Garden Town and Garden Village standards to set a framework for thinking about how the proposed settlement might best be developed, as the means by which new communities benefit from high design standards and quality places. This should include the prioritisation of brownfield land first, including the reuse and more intensive use of former MoD sites, subject to the consideration of other constraints. Consideration will also be needed as to how the challenge of the circular economy is to be addressed.
321. We see the need for large-scale development and new settlements to align with the TCPA guidance on Garden City Principles<sup>43</sup>.

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=f3272413-6d74-44c3-870f-fd333161f3a1>

322. New settlements should be located in locations that are accessible by sustainable modes of transport; so, where a Garden Town or Village is proposed it must be well- related to existing or planned sustainable transport infrastructure especially rail services, together with the opportunity to strengthen cycling and walking connections to regional and national networks.

## Policy Options

323. The best way to secure this ambition is for the Oxfordshire Plan to establish a framework that individual local plans can respond to, taking account of local circumstances.
324. An alternative option would be to leave design matters for local plans and, neighbourhood plans based on national guidance., However this would miss an opportunity to set an Oxfordshire-wide high-quality design ambition and is therefore not preferred.

## Preferred Policy Proposal

### **Policy Option 15: High-Quality Design for New Development and Garden Town Standards for New Settlements**

This approach would set an ambition for high-quality design in Oxfordshire, with local plans, neighbourhood plans and design guides providing more detailed, locally specific requirements as appropriate.

This could include:

- Requiring development to respond to Oxfordshire's distinctiveness.
- Requiring development to recognise, respect and wherever possible enhance Oxfordshire's extensive and varied heritage.
- Recognising that what we build in the next 30 years will be a legacy for future generations. Development should therefore be responsive and resilient to future change. It should also be of a high design quality that communities, both now and in the future, can be proud of.
- Encouraging creative and innovative design solutions, including the use of new materials and building methods where appropriate.
- To respond to the impacts of climate change, new development should seek to minimise the carbon and energy impacts of their design and construction through mitigation and adaption measures.
- Encouraging the implementation of design codes where appropriate in order to achieve high-quality design and local distinctiveness.
- Ensuring green (or blue where relevant) infrastructure will be incorporated as an integral part of new development and public access to high quality green space.
- The development of a countywide tool kit (possibly as an SPD) for checking that a response to distinctiveness has been achieved in the design of the

proposed development i.e. a checklist of factors while retaining the space for the solution to be arrived at local level

In addition, any new settlements should be planned to Garden Town and Garden Village standards as the means by which new large-scale development and new village scale developments secure high design standards and deliver quality places.

There are a number of proposed policies across all five themes of the Oxfordshire Plan that are relevant to the masterplanning of new settlements This policy highlights a number of specific considerations that should be taken into account when reading the Plan as a whole:

This policy option for the Oxfordshire Plan would expect:

- All developments over 700 units to be led by a comprehensive masterplan together with a design code.
- Well-designed communities, with housing planned alongside new employment provision.
- Neighbourhood centres and community facilities (including community centres, schools and health facilities) to be provided.
- Such developments to include high levels of high quality, accessible and appropriate green space and green infrastructure, as well as sustainable water systems and SuDs.
- Such developments to have addressed healthy place-shaping principles.
- Excellent design with sustainable building materials used to achieve carbon reduction.
- All housing, business and retail units to contain energy management systems, renewal energy provision, grey water schemes, full fibre broadband connection to support home working, home learning and EV charging points.
- Schemes to be designed to reduce the need to travel, linked to the LTCP area strategies.
- Active travel measures to be supported and 20-minute neighbourhoods to be created that encourage walking and cycling connections to regional and national routes.

## **Policy 16 - Leisure, Recreation, Community and Open Space Facilities**

325. Leisure, recreation, community and open space facilities provide significant benefits to both the mental wellbeing and physical health of communities in Oxfordshire, as well as making an important contribution to the vitality of our city, town and local centres. Open spaces, as well as grassroot sport and recreation facilities, can also make a positive contribution to biodiversity and the local environment. In reflection of this, it is important that the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 continues to support these facilities.

326. Many leisure, recreation, community and open space facilities in the county mainly serve local communities. However, there are some facilities that have catchments beyond city, district and county boundaries.

## Policy Options

327. The preferred policy option is to leave local plans to set policies for local (non-strategic) leisure, recreation, community and open space facilities, with the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 setting a policy for strategic facilities that serve communities both in the county and further afield.

## Preferred Policy Proposal

### **Policy 16 – Leisure, Recreation, Community and Open Space Facilities**

Development proposals for high quality strategic leisure, recreation and open space facilities in Oxfordshire will be encouraged that serve more than one District, or county-wide, sub-regional, regional or national purpose, including (but not limited to):

- Strategic indoor sports and recreational facilities, such as leisure centres, aquatic centres, and indoor pitches, courts and stadiums.
- Strategic outdoor sports facilities and open space, such as pitches, courts, golf courses, as well as country parks and associated visitor facilities.

A strategic facility is a high-quality facility that will serve a county-wide, sub-regional, regional, or national purpose, for example (but not limited to) county sports grounds, stadiums, new golf courses, and country parks. It could also include activities associated with the stately homes of Oxfordshire. Due to the extent and variety of facilities that can fall under this definition, whether the facility is ultimately considered strategic will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

The Oxfordshire Plan would expect all new strategic leisure, recreation and open space facilities development to meet the following criteria:

- They must be located within the built-up areas of the city, towns and villages. In the villages, development must be proportionally scaled and in keeping with the character of the settlement. Development outside of these areas will only be supported in exceptional circumstances, for example where it is evidenced that it cannot reasonably be located in the city, or a town or village in the county, such as water-based facilities or parkland uses.
- They must be located in accessible locations, with excellent public transport and link to networks for walking and cycling and the public rights of way network.
- Use of sustainable travel is encouraged and a sustainable travel plan will be required that sets out the details of the bus and rail connectivity to be secured.
- They must be designed with renewable energy provision incorporated to help reduce use of carbon.
- They must have minimal traffic, environmental, visual and landscape impact.

- Provision for the long-term maintenance and management of the facilities will be sought and must be agreed as part of a planning application.
- School sports halls and outdoor playing fields should be made available to the local community. New facilities of this type would be required to enter into community use agreements.
- Sports lighting would operate within agreed hours where there is a need unless the lighting gives rise to demonstrable harm to biodiversity.

Community facilities would be a matter for individual local plans except where community facilities are intended to meet the needs of a wider district or neighbouring district(s) in which case they should be located within or adjoining rural service centres to maximise accessibility.

### **Alternative Policy Option 16-01**

328. As an alternative, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 could include a policy that seeks to protect the existing indoor and outdoor sports facilities and open spaces within the County. Those within built-up areas are most likely to be at threat from other forms of development. A policy which acknowledges the importance of retaining existing open spaces within built-up areas and seeks to protect them would do more to secure the future of these types of facilities within the built-up areas. Access to any new private facilities would also be encouraged.

## Theme Four: Planning for Sustainable Travel and Connectivity

329. The transport network across Oxfordshire is critical for residents to be able to access services, facilities and employment, as well as being needed for delivery of freight and goods. However, there are continued pressures on the use of this network associated with travel demand that needs to be managed and leads to wider impacts. This includes environmental impacts associated with use of vehicles including air quality and carbon emissions.
330. With planned new development, the demand for travel is expected to increase and it is therefore important that this is managed, and plans are put in place to both support sustainable transport choices and reduce the need to travel where possible. In addition, the wider objectives and targets on climate action mean that there will be a need to ensure the Oxfordshire Plan supports a move towards a transport network across Oxfordshire and beyond that significantly reduces carbon emissions over the next few years. In practice, this will mean significant enhancement to bus and rail services, and a focus on delivering comprehensive active travel networks that enable people to choose walking and cycling for more local journeys, securing health gains as well as supporting the tackling of climate change.
331. The Oxfordshire Plan also needs to take account of and support wider infrastructure and transport strategy development. It will be particularly important that the Oxfordshire Plan complements and supports the new Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP), but also in a wider context aligns with other cross-boundary strategies including the England's Economic Heartland Transport Strategy, and guidance and strategy being developed at a national level as part of the de-carbonisation agenda. Major planned strategic schemes such as East West Rail will also significantly impact on the transport choices available in Oxfordshire and more widely across the Oxford-Cambridge Arc. The Oxfordshire Plan can support and complement such plans to transform sustainable travel options.
332. It is also important that long-term spatial planning recognises that the way people live their lives is increasingly influenced by changes brought about by technology and innovation. For example, the availability of high quality fixed and mobile digital connectivity can significantly impact on the need to travel, with trends such as flexible and home working dependant on its continued provision. The take up of lower carbon vehicles, particularly Electric Vehicles, will also need supporting, and developments should be designed to provide for these.
333. The management and movement of freight and goods is also changing, influenced by trends such as the continued increase in internet-based shopping, and the uptake of freight by rail. The Oxfordshire Plan can support the development of a more sustainable freight management system.

Theme Four – Meets the following Objectives of the Oxfordshire Plan

No 1. To demonstrate leadership in addressing the climate emergency by significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

No 4. To improve health and wellbeing by enabling independence, encouraging active and healthy lifestyles, facilitating social interaction and creating inclusive and safe communities.

No 9. To deliver high quality, innovatively designed development that ensures efficient use of land and resources.

No 10. To reduce the need to travel and to support people in making sustainable transport choices by providing inclusive, integrated, safe and convenient pedestrian, cycle and public transport infrastructure linking communities.

No 11. To ensure that communities are digitally connected and that innovative technologies are supported.

## Policy Option 17: Towards a Net Zero Carbon Transport Network

334. Emissions from transport currently account for around a third of greenhouse emissions in Oxfordshire, with the majority of this from road traffic<sup>44</sup> Although vehicle fuel efficiency and the switch to lower emission vehicles has started to have some impact, emissions from transport have not been falling as quickly as in other areas such as energy, meaning that the proportion of emissions from transport (road and rail) have increased over the last few years. (Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire Report). Reducing carbon from transport movements will therefore be key if Oxfordshire is to meet its climate action commitments.

335. Both local and national policy is clear that there is a need to cut our carbon emissions from transport. At a national level this is set out in the emerging Department for Transport De-carbonisation Plan, which already includes strategies for increasing walking and cycling, and bus use<sup>45</sup> At a sub-national level, ambitions for a net zero carbon emissions transport network are set out in the recently adopted Transport Strategy for England's Economic Heartland<sup>46</sup> At a local level, a new Local Transport and Connectivity Plan is being developed, with a draft Vision recently consulted upon which focuses on improving digital connectivity, active travel and public transport to support the move towards a net zero carbon emissions transport system, and meet wider social/ health outcomes.<sup>47</sup>

336. These policies indicate that if we are to achieve required reductions in carbon emissions from transport, there will need to be a change in way that transport is planned and managed. In particular, there will need to be:

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<sup>44</sup> <https://scattercities.com/>

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/creating-the-transport-decarbonisation-plan>

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.englandseconomicheartland.com/transport/>

<sup>47</sup> <https://consultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/localtransportconnectivity/consultationHome>

- A reduction in overall travel movements, especially by private vehicles, enabled in part through investment in digital technology;
- A shift to public transport and active travel modes, especially for shorter journeys, enabled by increased investment in public transport, walking and cycle networks;
- Better management of freight and goods, with a focus on decarbonisation and enabling zero emission 'last mile' deliveries;
- A significant uptake of zero carbon vehicles, supported by investment in charging facilities, and,
- Ensuring the opportunities offered through technology and innovation to support sustainable transport solutions are taken up.

337. Spatial planning has a clear role in supporting the move towards a net zero carbon emissions transport system. In particular, the location and design of new development can have a significant impact on the propensity for people to travel, and the number, type and length of travel movements. For example, the recently completed RTPi report, 'Net Zero Transport; the role of spatial planning and place-based solutions' sets out that transport and land-use planning needs to be integrated if carbon reductions are to be met.<sup>48</sup>

338. Development plan policies can assist and be complementary to the policy development in transport and infrastructure plans. Paragraph 104 (b) of the NPPF (2019) states the need for planning policies to *'be prepared with the active involvement of local highways authorities, other transport infrastructure providers and operators and neighbouring councils, so that strategies and investments for supporting sustainable transport and development patterns are aligned,'* whilst (d) states that policies should, *'provide for high quality walking and cycling networks and supporting facilities such as cycle parking (drawing on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans).'*

## Policy Options

339. Building on this guidance, the Oxfordshire Plan policies can in particular support the emerging LTCP policies, and any associated updated transport targets needed to move towards a net zero carbon emissions transport network. This includes active travel policies, expected to focus on developing an active travel network for the county and further developing Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans at key settlements. Policies can also support better sustainable first mile/ last mile transport connectivity to public transport hubs such as rail stations. This will help complement major planned investment, including service and station improvements enabled through East West Rail, and other major rail capacity investment proposed as part of the 'Oxfordshire Connect' priorities arising out of the Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Study.<sup>49</sup>

340. The alternative of leaving these policies to local plans is not supported given the strategic and cross boundary nature of transport network.

## Preferred Policy Option

<p><b>Policy Option 17: Towards a Net Zero Transport Network</b></p>
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<sup>48</sup> <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/netzerotransport>

<sup>49</sup> <http://democratic.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=543&MId=2783>

All development proposals should be planned to both take account of, and take opportunities to support delivery of an Oxfordshire net zero carbon emissions transport network, including:

- Supporting delivery of enhanced walking and cycling networks and routes, including those identified as part of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPS), and more strategic active travel links between settlements and other key locations such as areas of employment and public transport hubs;
- Supporting delivery of enhancements to the bus network, including proposals for bus priority measures and service enhancements;
- Supporting delivery of enhancements to the rail network, including linking in with new and improved stations, and supporting service enhancements;
- Supporting delivery of improvements to transport interchange, including enhanced transport hubs such as at rail stations that facilitate take up of sustainable travel opportunities, and where relevant link with opportunities for park and ride;
- Supporting delivery of measures that improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the freight and logistics network that are consistent with delivering a net zero carbon emissions transport network: and,
- Supporting delivery of improvements to the local and strategic road network that are consistent with delivering a net zero carbon emissions transport network.

It will be important that the location and planning for new development takes into account the more detailed policies within the County Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP), and where relevant other policy, both at a sub-national and national level. In particular, it will be important to take into account and support strategic cross-boundary proposals that contribute towards delivering a net zero carbon system, such as strategic public transport improvements like East West Rail.

## **Policy Option 18: Sustainable Transport in New Development**

### **Sustainable Development Principles**

341. How development is planned and delivered impacts on the transport choices that new residents will make. Put simply, if development is planned around providing for private car use, with limited opportunities for residents to walk, cycle or use public transport, then less sustainable travel choices are locked in from the outset, and very difficult to change in the future. Given the contribution of transport to carbon emissions, this would make it very difficult for new development to both achieve required carbon reductions, as well as achieving wider objectives in particular on health and wellbeing.

342. The NPPF (2019) makes clear that development plans should look to prioritise sustainable transport options where possible. Paragraph 102 (c) states that plan-making should ensure that '*opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued*,' whilst paragraph 103 states that, '*significant development should be focused on locations which are or can*

*be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes.'*

343. Unfortunately, historically much development across the country and indeed parts of Oxfordshire has been planned and delivered with a focus on providing for and mitigating the impact of car-based travel. The RTPI Net Zero carbon report makes clear that there is therefore a need to re-examine how land-use and transport planning are integrated, if we are to achieve our zero carbon vision. In particular, the report notes there is a need to move away from a 'predict and provide' approach centred on planning for forecast transport movements (often based on past examples) to one very much focused on planning and delivering a vision (with targets) of what needs to be achieved. Once the vision and targets have been set, a hierarchical approach to planning for transport movements can then be undertaken, ensuring that supporting transport and land-use measures are prioritised.

344. Planning for transport also needs to be integrated into and support wider place-shaping principles. Paragraph 104(a) of the NPPF (2019) states that planning policies should, '*support an appropriate mix of uses across an area, and within larger scale sites, to minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities.*'

345. More recently, the concept of 15 or 20 minutes neighbourhoods has come to the fore, and is about creating places where resident's everyday needs, such as education, employment, community health and wellbeing facilities and recreation opportunities can be met within a short walk or cycle ride.<sup>50</sup> Both the planning guidance and 20-minute neighbourhood concept supports the hierarchical approach to planning for transport and movement, through reducing the need for longer-distance travel, particularly by private vehicle. To enable this, there will also be a need to ensure that the street and movement network for new development is well designed, taking on-board key principles such as those outlined for 'healthy streets' to encourage take-up of more sustainable travel options.<sup>51</sup>

## **Planning for Zero Emission Vehicles**

346. The UK government announced in November 2020 that the sale of diesel and petrol cars and vans will be phased out by 2030, with the plan for all new cars and vans to be 'fully zero emission at the tailpipe from 2035.' Between 2030 and 2035 all new cars and vans will need to 'have the capability to drive a significant distance with zero emissions.'<sup>52</sup> The main way to enable this switch will be the sale of Electric Vehicles, including plug-in hybrid vehicles, with the proportion of new cars sold that are defined as 'ultra-low emission' now increasing year-on-year. To support this, there is an acknowledgement of the need to roll out significant further charging infrastructure at homes, on local streets and along strategic roads.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/guide-the-20-minute-neighbourhood>

<sup>51</sup> [www.healthystreets.com](http://www.healthystreets.com)

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-takes-historic-step-towards-net-zero-with-end-of-sale-of-new-petrol-and-diesel-cars-by-2030>

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/green-motoring-milestone-with-half-a-million-ultra-low-emission-vehicles-now-on-uk-roads>

347. Oxfordshire is already starting to plan in detail for the required charging infrastructure to support the move towards zero-emission vehicles. The Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure Strategy was signed-off by the County Council Cabinet, and most of the district councils in March/ April 2021 and sets out key policies and actions for roll out of EV infrastructure over the next 5 years.<sup>54</sup> The strategy recognises that forecasts predict sales of EVs to significantly increase in the run up to central Government timescales, with Oxfordshire forecast to be ahead of the rest of the country based on sales to date.

348. The NPPF (2019) recognises that planning has a key role to play in ensuring the roll out of appropriate EV charging infrastructure in new development. Para 115 notes that any local parking standards should take into account, *'the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other low emission vehicles,' whilst para 110 states that applications for development should 'be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.'* In July 2019, the Government also consulted on proposals to set minimum requirements for EV charging in new and existing residential and non-residential development, proposing chargers in every new car parking space for residential developments with at least 10 spaces, and 1 in every 5 spaces for non-residential development with at least 10 spaces.<sup>55</sup>

349. The recently adopted local plans for Oxford and South Oxfordshire both have policies that support introduction of EV charging points, with the Oxford City policy specifying the need for EV charging points at each residential unit with a parking space, and for at least 25% of non-allocated spaces to have charging points. Non-allocated spaces can not only provide for both residents and visitors, but they can also help enable shared mobility options such as car clubs. EV charging can also be integrated into the energy networks for new development, with smart charging of vehicles aligning with energy demand and power supply from renewables.

## Policy Option

350. The preferred option for the Oxfordshire Plan takes account of the Oxfordshire EV strategy which recommends that future planning policies should seek to meet or exceed those targets set out for Oxford City. Building on national planning guidance, the recent local plan policies and the Government proposals for building regulations, there is an opportunity through the Oxfordshire Plan to set out a common minimum standard for all new developments that supports the move towards 100% uptake of EVs. There is also an opportunity to plan for this provision alongside the energy and digital networks within any development.

351. The Preferred policy option seeks to set a standard framework for considering these matters across development in Oxfordshire.

## Preferred Policy Option

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<sup>54</sup> <https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/preparing-oxfordshire-for-the-electric-vehicle-revolution/>

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/electric-vehicle-chargepoints-in-residential-and-non-residential-buildings>

## Policy Option 18: Sustainable Transport in New Development

In this approach, all development proposals should consider and plan for transport and access against a vision, focussed on enabling people to travel by active and sustainable means. In particular, plans should be considered in a hierarchical way as follows:

1. *Reducing the need to travel* - ensuring that high quality digital connectivity is provided to enable working and access to services from home, and that necessary services and facilities are planned and provided in close proximity to new housing areas which can be accessed through safe and direct walking and cycling routes.
2. *Planning for sustainable travel modes* - ensuring that new development is primarily designed to enable movement by active travel and public/shared transport, and that sites are well connected to surrounding sustainable transport networks. The street and movement network should be designed to focus on enabling residents to be able to walk and cycle, and easily access public transport options.
3. *Providing for zero emission vehicle use* - ensuring that any essential vehicle travel for people and goods is prioritised for zero carbon emission vehicles, with adequate charging and other supporting infrastructure provided as per the following standards:
  - a) For residential development, each new residential unit with an allocated parking space should be provided with an electric vehicle charging point. At least 25% of non-allocated spaces (with a minimum of 2) should be provided with an electric vehicle charging point.
  - b) For non-residential development, at least 25% of spaces should be provided with electric vehicle charging points.

Provision of EV charging infrastructure should be integrated in the masterplanning for new development from the outset, alongside provision for full fibre broadband, 5G mobile networks, and sustainable energy provision.

The spatial context of any proposed development would also be important in determining the detail of proposals within the sustainable travel hierarchy, and certain measures will be more suited to certain locations than others. However, at all times measures at the top of the hierarchy should be robustly considered first, before moving on to measures further down the hierarchy. Provision and management of parking should also be considered in this context, recognising priority for zero emission vehicles. It will also be important that planning and development takes into account relevant more detailed guidance such as the walking and cycling design guidance as part the LTCP and accessibility guidance, as well as ensuring connectivity with existing walking/cycling networks identified in Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans.

The diagram that follows sets out key questions to consider through the hierarchical approach.



## Policy Option 19: Supporting Sustainable Freight Management

352. Movement of freight and goods is an inherent part of our market-based economy. Complex supply chains have built up over time, based on usage of a range of logistics facilities and the transport network. The majority of freight and goods are moved by road, both by Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) and Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs). Due to Oxfordshire's central location in the country and proximity to major ports and airports such as Southampton and Heathrow there are major freight movements through the county, particularly on the main road routes such as the A34 and M40, but also by rail.<sup>56</sup>

353. However, there has been increasing concern regarding the impacts of freight movements on particular areas and less strategic roads. The current Local Transport Plan freight strategy therefore recognises the benefits of focusing freight movements on the strategic road and rail network, as well as managing and mitigating the impact of freight movements in other areas.<sup>57</sup>

354. The NPPF (2019) Paragraph 104 (e) notes the need for planning policies to 'provide for any large-scale transport facilities that need to be located in the area, and the infrastructure and wider development required to support their operation, expansion and contribution to the wider economy. In doing so they

<sup>56</sup> [Supporting freight - England's Economic Heartland \(englandseconomicheartland.com\)](https://www.englandseconomicheartland.com)

<sup>57</sup> [LTP4 - Countywide and corridor strategies | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

*should take into account whether such development is likely to be a nationally significant infrastructure project and any relevant national policy statements.'*

355. At a more local level, the increasing demand for local deliveries to both homes and businesses enabled through digital connectivity has in turn driven increases in use of smaller goods vehicles. For example, the number of LGVs increased by 29% over the 10-year period between 2004 and 2014, with Department for Transport forecasting indicating continued growth over the next 30 years, including being much higher than HGV growth over the same period.<sup>58</sup> Looking to the future, there is also potential for further delivery of goods by automated and/or electric vehicles, or drones should relevant legal and practical considerations be overcome<sup>59</sup>. There is therefore a need to look at how to best manage this demand for shorter distance journeys alongside management of longer-distance HGV movements, and look at opportunities to reduce associated environmental emissions. One example of this is supporting consolidation and transfer of freight for more local journeys by cargo bike, including through enabling new and enhanced facilities. 'Pedal and Post' is already operating successfully in Oxford and helping to enable further such operations across Oxfordshire will assist the move to more sustainable and low carbon last-mile delivery.<sup>60</sup> There is also opportunity to support delivery of the charging infrastructure needed to enable a move towards use of electrically powered LGVs in the shorter-term, and HGVs in the longer-term.

## Policy Options

356. The preferred policy option would close the current planning policy gap and provide a strategic framework for considering freight issues as proposals come forward. These are not matters that are well suited to consideration through individual local plans given the strategic nature of freight movement and goods management across Oxfordshire and the need for consistent criteria for consideration of proposals.

## Preferred Policy Option

### **Policy Option 19: Supporting Sustainable Freight Management**

Development proposals would be supported that enable a move towards more sustainable freight and goods delivery, and which have the potential to improve system efficiency and effectiveness and allow uptake of lower carbon transport choices. Facilities that support uptake of zero-emission freight vehicles such as electric vehicle charging areas should also be supported.

However, such facilities will not be suitable at all locations. The following matters should therefore all be reviewed carefully before considering support:

- The alignment of any proposals with local, sub-national, and national policy and guidance;

<sup>58</sup> LTCP Baseline Report at: [Local Transport and Connectivity Plan - vision consultation - Oxfordshire County Council Consultation Portal](#)

<sup>59</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-of-mobility-automation-in-freight-transport>

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.pedalandpost.co.uk/>

- The proximity of proposed facilities to relevant strategic transport corridors;
- The ability for facilities to be easily accessed by sustainable transport modes; and,
- Any environmental, amenity, or heritage impacts on surrounding areas.

## Policy Option 20: Digital Infrastructure

357. The Oxfordshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy sets out that society is increasingly dependent on high quality digital infrastructure provision for our everyday needs.<sup>61</sup> This was thrown into focus during the recent COVID-19 pandemic where digital provision was key in enabling many people to continue to work and access services and facilities remotely. However, the trend towards a more digital world was already happening before then, with a move to cloud storage and applications, the increasing trend and requirements around homeworking, and the significant growth in video-on demand content. Demand for high quality digital connections is only going to grow in the future with the move towards Internet of Things and Artificial Intelligence.

358. The Oxfordshire Digital Infrastructure and the national Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review outlines that in order to provide for this more digital world there is a need to focus on roll out of both full fibre broadband (allowing for reliable internet speeds of up to 1Gbps/ 1,000 Mbps), and the infrastructure needed to support deployment of 5G mobile technology.<sup>62</sup> The review targets near 85% nationwide coverage of full fibre by 2025, and deployment of 5G to the majority of the country by 2027. In short, it is expected that full fibre and 5G mobile coverage should be norm within 5 to 10 years.

359. In practical terms, full fibre provision relies on the effective laying of fibre optic cabling, whilst 5G depends on traditional mast mounted equipment and also small cell deployment. Small cell technology is in turn dependent on mobile transmitters every 100m or so, and most transmitters require a fibre connection. Both technologies therefore need to be planned together when being rolled out in a particular area, such as a new development.

360. Para 112 of the NPPF (2019) makes clear that planning policies should '*support the expansion of electronic communication networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections.*'

361. The benefits of providing this infrastructure at the outset of new development are:

- Allowing delivery of 'smart homes' that help residents in their day-to-day lives, for example by better controlling heating to reduce energy consumption;
- Allowing residents to work from home or local offices reducing the need for commuting;
- Ensuring that all new residents have full access to high quality digital provision from when moving in, making sure that they are not digitally excluded;

<sup>61</sup> <https://digitalinfrastructureoxfordshire.co.uk/whats-next/timeline-strategy/digital-infrastructure-strategy>

<sup>62</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-telecoms-infrastructure-review>

- Giving new residents live provision of real-time integrated public transport information where journeys are necessary;
- Allowing for provision of sensors in homes of vulnerable people to enable access to services and permitted monitoring of live health data; and;
- Facilitation of a Living Labs environment to trial new technology.

## Policy Options

362. An Oxfordshire-wide approach will ensure that all development proposals take into account national strategy and guidance as well as securing the scale of investment needed to secure a full rollout of investment.

## Preferred Policy Option

### Policy Option 20: Digital Infrastructure

In this approach all new residential and business developments would plan for the provision of fixed and mobile technology from the outset.

Full fibre broadband connectivity should be provided, with full ducting for use of fibre cabling to be designed and laid out during the construction of development.

Alongside any other supporting infrastructure, this should also provide and support roll out of 5G mobile technology throughout the development. Infrastructure providers should ensure works are effectively co-ordinated with other parties, including the Highway Authority.

## Policy Option 21: Strategic Infrastructure Priorities

363. New development needs to be supported by high quality infrastructure. This needs to be delivered in a timely fashion, alongside delivery of housing, employment and other types of development. However, the funding and delivery of infrastructure is complex, with many different infrastructure providers and funding streams. Funding for key infrastructure to be directly delivered on development sites such as schools and green spaces can often be secured directly through Section 106 payments.

364. Funding for more strategic infrastructure such as major transport improvements is often more complex, requiring input from a number of public and private sector partners. It can often require a package approach, with developer contributions matched with funding from elsewhere such as central Government which is often short-term and competitive in nature. Other investment, such as provision of new digital networks, is largely private sector led.

365. The respective Oxfordshire local plans are all supported by Infrastructure Delivery Plans (IDP), which set out in particular the infrastructure seen as needed to support delivery of allocated development sites, and planned funding sources and timing for delivery. All four Districts, the City of Oxford and the County

Council are also now required to produce an Infrastructure Funding Statement annually which sets out how developer contributions are being spent.

366. However, there has been a recognition for some time that strategic infrastructure requirements and funding often needs to be considered at an Oxfordshire-wide level. In 2017 an Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) was initiated and subsequently endorsed by the Oxfordshire Growth Board which reviewed and prioritised strategic infrastructure across the county, with a timescale of up to 2040. This was the first time that infrastructure priorities had been considered comprehensively in Oxfordshire in this way and has helped secure significant funding for major projects such as improvements to the A40, and a new bridge over the Thames north of Didcot.<sup>63</sup>

367. In 2020, the Growth Board agreed that the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy should be updated, and a Stage 1 OxIS, covering the period up to 2040 has now been produced. A key emphasis of the OxIS update was the need to consider and prioritise defined strategic infrastructure against a set of strategic needs. These were very much aligned with the principles set out in the Oxfordshire Vision, focused on the Environment, Health, Place Shaping, Productivity and Connectivity, with a set of indicators under each area allowing for a qualitative score to be produced for each infrastructure project. The relative importance to supporting housing and employment growth was also considered in the assessment, based on linkages with local plan allocated growth.

368. The OxIS Stage 1 update has allowed for an objective assessment to be undertaken of the relative importance of different strategic infrastructure, and its alignment with currently planned growth. This has resulted in identification of priority schemes in infrastructure types including transport, education, green and blue infrastructure and water management. It has also identified the funding gaps and requirements for this infrastructure. Though considering against a range of needs, the work has also given a better understanding of how different types of infrastructure perform against wider outcomes.

## **Policy Options**

369. Alongside other evidence, the OxIS Stage 1 report will help inform the refinement of Oxfordshire Plan spatial options towards a preferred option at Regulation 19 stage. It is also intended that a final Stage 2 report will be produced to assess strategic infrastructure priorities to 2050 and consider how these align with the preferred spatial options. It is expected that this will provide a strategic infrastructure framework for delivery of infrastructure needs alongside new development and inform the more detailed planning for sites at the local plan level. In effect, it is expected to become the Infrastructure Delivery Plan to support the Oxfordshire Plan.

370. The preferred policy option seeks to ensure that the Oxfordshire Plan and the OxIS are aligned, given the significance of strategic infrastructure that frequently crosses more than one local planning authority.

## **Preferred Policy Option**

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<sup>63</sup> <https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/projects/original-oxis/>

### **Policy Option 21: Strategic Infrastructure Priorities**

Development proposals would be planned to both take account of and take opportunities to support delivery of the strategic infrastructure priorities identified in the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS), and any subsequent updates. Local plans, and any supporting documents such as Infrastructure Delivery Plans, and Infrastructure Funding Statements should also take into account OxIS when being developed and updated.

#### **Alternative Policy Option 21-01**

371. Safeguard land for strategic infrastructure priorities. This is not preferred, as this should be considered in more detail in the individual local plans that follow the completion of the current OxIS work programme.

## Theme Five: Creating Jobs and Providing Homes

### Creating Jobs

372. Oxfordshire is ambitious for its economy and is forwards looking. The Oxfordshire Plan seeks to help Oxfordshire to position to meet global challenges and secure new economic opportunities. With significant sector strengths in life sciences, high-performance engineering and R&D, local opportunities include ensuring we are reducing inequalities and ensuring all citizens have an opportunity to access new local jobs as well as advanced skills and education.
373. Economic priorities for Oxfordshire draw on the strategies prepared by the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, including the Strategic Economic Plan and the COVID Recovery Plan. The Oxfordshire Plan supports the delivery of those two economic plans, recognising the importance of the wider economy, which the planning system should support and seeks to ensure that the planning authorities across Oxfordshire can respond to the impact of COVID on retail and hospitality sectors through re-imagining the role of our town centres.
374. The Oxfordshire Plan contains proposals to assist with the economic recovery from COVID. These proposals build on the strengths of the economy and seek to harness its capability in the long-term to maintain high level of GVA growth, to secure the retention of young people, and improve access to skills and training resources.
375. The Oxfordshire Plan recognises that the economy will continue to evolve over next 30 years; this Plan seeks to support that evolution and assist it to become less carbon dependent. The Plan also seeks to support economic innovation as well as improved productivity by ensuring that land use is flexible and can adapt to economic change in both rural and urban Oxfordshire.
376. The Oxfordshire Plan looks to take full account of climate change and the need for environmental enhancement to achieve a greener economic future. The use of 5G and the application of new advanced digital infrastructure will help our businesses and institutions position for the future, as well as help to maintain the current high levels of home working.
377. Over the 30-year duration of this Plan, new affordable housing in Oxfordshire will both reduce the need to travel long distances to work, and through the provision of a wider range of house types help to ensure that the workforce of Oxfordshire companies can live in the County and economic success is not held back. Equally, new and renewed business premises will extend the capacity available of floorspace, employment and in Oxfordshire.

Theme Five – Meets the following Objectives of the Oxfordshire Plan

No 1. To demonstrate leadership in addressing the climate emergency by significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

No 5. To sustain and strengthen Oxfordshire's economic role and reputation by building on our key strengths and relationships.

No 6. To ensure that the benefits and opportunities arising from Oxfordshire's economic success are felt by all of Oxfordshire's communities.

No 7. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs, including affordable housing, and to ensure that housing delivery is phased appropriately to support the needs of our communities.

No 8. To ensure that new housing is flexible to meet the varied needs of people through all stages of life.

No 9. To deliver high quality, innovatively designed development that ensures efficient use of land and resources.

## Policy Option 22 - Supporting the Creation of Jobs

378. The Oxfordshire Plan is aligned with the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (LIS)<sup>64</sup> and seeks to maintain the economic success of the county over the long-term. A central piece of evidence for the Oxfordshire Plan is the Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment (OGNA) which considers the housing need figure across a range of scenarios, including options that consider the relationship to economic growth.

379. Like many issues affecting land use planning, the UK approach to regional and local economic growth is changing. This is partly due to COVID-19 and Brexit, as well as securing the economic aspirations of the Oxford to Cambridge Arc, and the Government's focus on 'levelling up' across the UK and its 'Plan for Growth', launched alongside the March 2021 budget. The current Oxfordshire LIS responds to the UK Industrial Strategy which aims to increase growth and productivity, creating more prosperous communities, much of which is core thinking in the emerging Government approach.

380. The Oxfordshire LIS is underpinned by three guiding principles: i) Invest in Oxfordshire, deliver for the UK; ii) Oxfordshire – the UK's 'innovation engine'; and iii) Global Oxfordshire, Global Britain. The key sectors and technologies in which Oxfordshire excels has global reach, meaning Oxfordshire is a critical driver for UK economic growth post-Brexit. The Oxfordshire Plan is one of the tools by which this economic success is to be maintained.

381. The LIS identifies key assets in the innovation ecosystem which underpin that strategy; the LIS looks to build on these strengths and assets to drive R&D

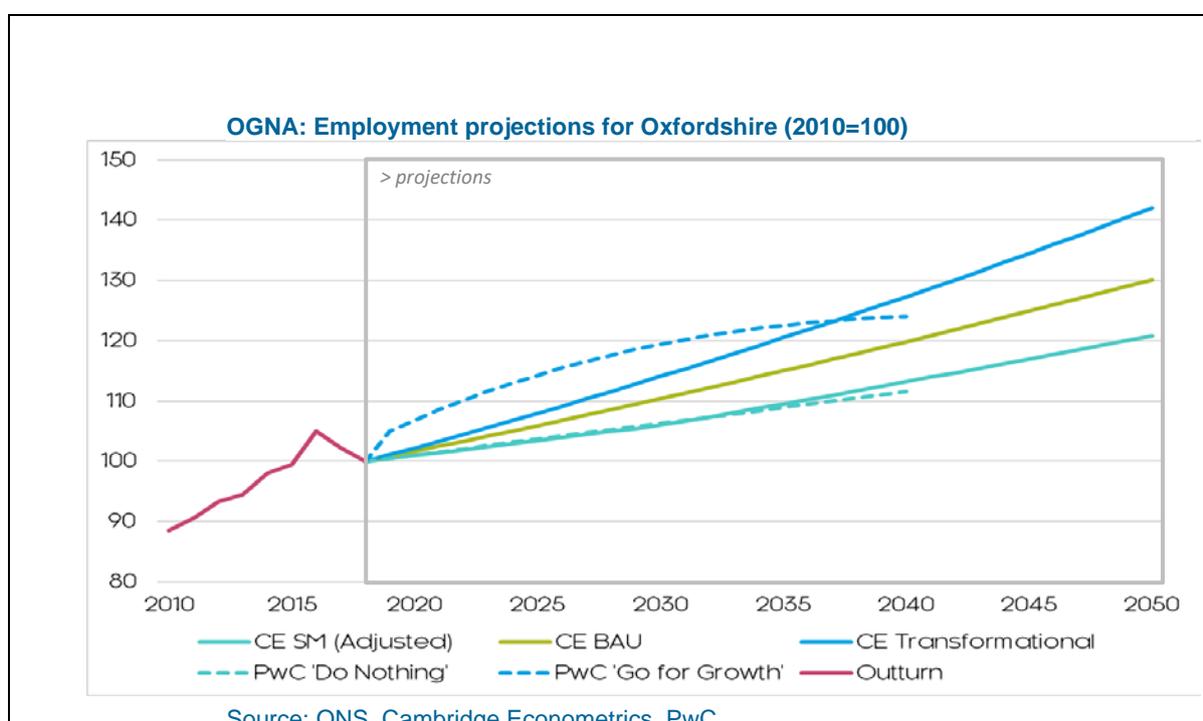
<sup>64</sup> [Local Industrial Strategy | OxLEP \(oxfordshirelep.com\)](https://www.oxfordshirelep.com)

and innovation across the region. The Oxfordshire Plan seeks to strengthen the economic activity taking place in our town and city centres, plus the business and science parks located across the county, as 'priority locations' and supports those priority sectors where strategic jobs growth is focussed as identified in the LIS.

382. The Oxfordshire Plan supports the creation of jobs across a range of sectors and in various locations, particularly to achieve the shift to 'good growth' as the economy begins to transition to address climate change.

383. One of the purposes of the Oxfordshire Plan is to consider the level of employment growth and the links to housing need over the Plan period. There are a number of ways to identify the requirements for job growth figures, but there is considerable uncertainty later on in the Plan period, from 2040 onwards.

384. The following figure is taken from the OGNA and highlights the range of forecasts for job growth 2020-2050.



## Policy Options

385. There are a number of policy options that have been considered including whether to encourage appropriate forms of development which would lead to the creation of jobs, without placing any numerical requirements on any of the local planning authorities. The Oxfordshire Plan could provide the strategic framework for emerging local plans and neighbourhood plans to work with.

386. One other alternative would be to use a floor space calculation of new B Class employment instead of a jobs number for the Plan as a whole.

387. The challenge with both these alternatives is that the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan is looking to secure a progressive change to business working practices to 2050 and such approaches are traditional rather than transformational. In

addition, recent changes to Use Class orders (new Class E) has made calculating floorspace requirements difficult. Therefore, we consider that the proposed policy option is likely to be the better option as it provides an overarching positive strategy which local plans and neighbourhood plans can build on, responding to local circumstances.

### **Preferred Policy Option**

388. The proposed policy option could be to consider the level of jobs growth using the OGNA trajectories to identify the employment growth figure for Oxfordshire for 2020-2050. Economic growth and housing growth would need to be aligned and take into account a range of other factors. The decision on the appropriate level of jobs growth would be taken alongside the final decision on the housing growth figure that will draw on the OGNA scenarios.

389. The OGNA calculations could then be broken down into tranches for the local planning authorities to use (e.g.10 years) in the preparation of local plans. Figures provided for each tranche would have to be indicative, and subject to review by local plans due to the complex nature of job creation and to allow for individual circumstances to be taken into account.

#### **Policy Option 22: Supporting the Creation of Jobs**

The Oxfordshire Plan encourages the creation of jobs which align with the objectives of the Plan.

The Oxfordshire Plan could use the OGNA scenarios to consider the level of jobs growth and identify the employment growth figure for Oxfordshire for 2020-2050. This would align job creation calculations with the housing growth scenarios that the OGNA considered.

### **Policy Option 23 - Protection of Economic Assets**

390. Oxfordshire has a significant network of business, science and technology parks located in the city and towns and in rural locations too. They range from the internationally significant sites at Harwell and Culham, to the smaller business parks on the edges of towns and offices within the city. They are the location for companies of different sizes and sectors and are a major focus for employment. This diverse economic base provides Oxfordshire with economic strength and resilience.

391. Oxfordshire has a number of economic assets that are of not only regional importance, but of national and international importance. These include, the MINI Plant in Oxford, known for its car production, and Harwell Science and Innovation Campus and Culham Science Centre in the Science Vale, both world-renowned for being the UK's leading centres for science, research and innovation. Additionally, the business, science parks, innovation and technology centres of Oxfordshire are where a significant amount of business activity takes place across the county. Ensuring that the buildings associated with these economic assets remain fit for purpose is an essential

component of how these locations continue to adapt to changing economic circumstances, current sector strengths and how those grow and evolve in the future.

## Policy Options

392. The economy of Oxfordshire will continue to evolve over the next 30 years, supported through the Local Industrial Strategy and future economic growth strategies. This policy seeks to enable sensible forward planning by site owners and business operators about their future site and building needs for new economic purposes, for science, technology and innovation, as business needs change, in both the rural and urban parts of Oxfordshire. The policy would support a flexible intensification of economic activity at these sites, with re-purposed buildings and site layouts, new build and extensions as required.
393. The aim is to seek to ensure that the network of sites continues to support new innovative economic uses, but also becomes more sustainable, not just as buildings are upgraded, but as sites seek to reduce their carbon footprint and increase their take up of renewable energy, whilst supporting new aspects of the economy of Oxfordshire as innovation continues and key sectors continue to evolve.
394. The preferred policy option seeks to secure a consistent long-term approach across Oxfordshire to ensure that investment continues to flow to support the business and science park network as major economic assets.
395. One alternative policy option is to leave these considerations to future local plans. The disadvantage of this approach is to miss the strategic opportunity from an Oxfordshire-wide approach. Strategic economic assets are at the heart of Oxfordshire economy. A framework policy is preferred to provide a minimum level of consistency of approach across Oxfordshire.

## Preferred Policy Proposal

### **Policy Option 23: Protection of Economic Assets**

The Oxfordshire Plan would continue to support the appropriate growth of economic assets. This growth may come in the form of:

- New investment in the physical fabric of economic assets and their estate.
- Economic assets being extended as well as re-purposed, re-provisioned and re-used for new and innovative economic activities.
- Flexibility on what those future economic uses might be to support economic innovation within them, recognising that Oxfordshire has strengths in key economic sectors and over the 30 years of this plan we would anticipate new sectors emerging from the investment by the private sector, entrepreneurs, the Universities, LEP and Government.

Appropriate growth would be supported particularly where there is:

- Investment in renewable energy provision and higher quality more sustainable buildings and a focus for new digital infrastructure.

- An increased use of renewable energy including charging points for electric and hybrid vehicles.
- Improved walking, cycling and public transport connectivity and capacity.

The loss of existing economic assets would not generally be supported unless proposals are in accordance with the relevant development plan policies across the districts and city concerned with the loss of economic assets.

The Oxfordshire Plan would support flexible working practices, including live-work accommodation. As we wish to retain and grow economic uses across Oxfordshire's economic assets, we will not support the loss of economic assets to housing but will support the introduction of live-work units where that supports the success of the economic asset and the economic activities undertaken.

## Policy Option 24 – Town Centre Renewal

396. Major changes are affecting town, city centres and other urban centres, with dramatic retail changes and high levels of vacant premises. The changing role and nature of retail is generating significant uncertainty, while the full implications and impacts from the period of the COVID -19 pandemic (2020/1 - 2021/2) are not yet known. At the same time, recent changes to planning controls and Use Class Order Amendments are expanding more flexible changes of use away from retail.

397. Re-imagining and re-purposing town centres and urban centres is essential to enable new economic activities to come forward for consideration, to enable new economic uses to be accommodated and to plan for change over the long-term. Our policy approach is intended to support the vitality of service centres, being flexible and responsive to future changes, and supporting the high-level retail hierarchy. It is intended to set the context for future local plans.

398. We want to see town and urban centre uses supported with an increased role for a range of leisure facilities, new business uses, new live-work facilities, hospitality and the night economy. It may also require a local level move to review the extent of the primary retail frontage to most effectively protect the remaining retail uses. Consideration will also be needed as to how the challenge of the circular economy is to be addressed.

399. While this policy focuses on land use matters, there are a range of active measures outside of planning that can be taken to strengthen town and urban centres including promotion, shopper directories, loyalty cards, cultural events and festivals, and shop front renewal schemes, all of which can help generate new footfall into our towns.

## Policy Options

400. The preferred policy approach seeks to provide the local planning authorities with an enabling policy with which to respond quickly to support newly arising economic opportunities in the city and town centres across Oxfordshire. It establishes a framework policy to support long-term action at the local level

following the major changes to retail and the hospitality sector accelerated through the COVID period.

401. Establishing an Oxfordshire-wide framework is judged the right means to enable forward planning by developers in conjunction with the local planning authorities and the local business community and Parish/Town Council affected.

## Preferred Policy Proposal

### Policy Option 24: Town Centre Renewal

To encourage new dynamism into the central area of each market town (and Oxford's city, district, urban and local centres) and generate new footfall, the Oxfordshire Plan would support the vitality and viability of town centres. At each of the market towns and Oxford City, the Oxfordshire Plan will support the changing nature of our town centres and provide future flexibility to this change, for example, by continuing to support the retail uses, and in addition, supporting new measures including:

- New leisure and hospitality uses, including the night-time economy and 'pop up' venues in vacant buildings.
- New economic and business uses including where appropriate, new live-work units.
- The redevelopment of town centres to make them more visually appealing.
- Markets and their facilities, traditional, seasonal and contemporary.
- New cultural activities, community uses and the consolidation of civic facilities.
- Improved walking, cycling and public transport facilities to and from town centres to surrounding residential areas.
- Taking account of the role that heritage has to play in creating a sense of place and a dynamic town centre environment.
- Taking account of unique, local factors and not taking 'a one-size fits all' approach.

We would encourage the preparation of a town centre strategy between the local planning authority, landowners and businesses to consider challenges and opportunities on a holistic basis and as the means to take local level decisions about the most appropriate boundary of the areas to be devoted to primary and secondary retail, recognising that it may be most effective to reduce the area and consolidate and strengthen the remaining zone.

### Policy Option 25 - Visitor Economy

402. We recognise the importance of sustainable tourism for Oxfordshire's economy and the jobs it creates. As the economy recovers from COVID and the visitor economy looks to new provision, we anticipate opportunities to grow this important economic sector in Oxfordshire.

## Policy Options

403. The Oxfordshire Plan is considering major developments that have an impact beyond more than one district or the city. Large tourism proposals that can have an impact county-wide or across more than one district or the city would be covered by this policy. The Plan aims to set out a positive approach to encouraging new sustainable tourism development in appropriate places, to benefit urban and rural Oxfordshire based on a coordinated approach to infrastructure to support sustainable tourism development and investment.
404. The Oxfordshire Plan recognises that Oxfordshire's heritage is a key aspect of its tourism industry, likewise the business use of facilities such as through hotels at business parks plays a significant role in generating footfall.
405. One alternative policy option is to leave these considerations to future local plans, but our recommendation is to put a framework policy in place to enable forward planning by developers in conjunction with the local planning authority and the local community and Parish/Town Council affected
406. The preferred policy option seeks to set in place a strategic framework to address those proposals that are likely to impact on more than one local planning authority.

### **Preferred Policy Proposal**

#### **Policy Option 25: Visitor Economy**

We want to encourage new development to advance the visitor economy designed to have a national and international draw. Proposals for such purposes could be supported under this option, subject to the following criteria to guide development, including:

- The provision of new conference facilities, high grade hotel accommodation, resort hotels and museums, new stadium-scale sports facilities designed to have a national and international draw.
- The development of new leisure complexes and the provision of associated specialist sports equipment.
- New adventure-based tourist attractions and sports-based leisure and visitor facilities.
- Active tourism in rural Oxfordshire that supports the rural economy and diversification.

We would expect all new visitor facilities to meet the following criteria:

- They must be located either a) within the built-up areas of the city, towns and villages, and in the villages, development must be proportionally scaled and in keeping with the character of the settlement, or b) development outside of these areas in rural Oxfordshire would be supported where it supports rural diversification and is proportionate to the rural location.
- Being sensitive to the local and historic context.
- They must be located at sites which can provide excellent transport and connectivity, that are easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.

- Use of sustainable travel is encouraged and a sustainable travel plan would be required that sets out the details of the bus and rail connectivity that is to be secured.
- They must be designed with renewable energy provision and others to help reduce use of carbon.
- They must have minimal traffic, environmental, visual and landscape impact.

## Policy Option 26 - Culture and Arts

407. Oxfordshire's city, towns and villages offer a variety of cultural and arts facilities that attract visitors well beyond the county's borders. Oxfordshire's world-renowned city of Oxford, as well as many of its traditional market towns and villages, play a role in making the county a sub-regional hive for cultural activity. Rural Oxfordshire too contains a diverse provision, from great houses to the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, where rural arts, heritage and cultural activities are well established. As a result, it is considered important to ensure the continued growth of Oxfordshire's diverse cultural and creative industries.

408. Culture and the arts are a valued part of our society and play a key role in ensuring social wellbeing and community cohesion, as well as having a positive impact on our physical and mental health. Culture and the arts not only enrich our personal lives, but also our economy. In 2011, businesses in the UK arts and culture industry generated an aggregate turnover of £12.4 billion<sup>65</sup>. Cultural and arts facilities additionally serve an educational purpose, as for example, museums and galleries are often utilised by schools and universities for teaching and research.

409. In recent times the culture and creative industries have suffered as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. It has therefore become increasingly important that they are supported in reflection of the difficulty faced by both industries during the pandemic, and the years that will follow it. It is also important to look forward to how these industries are likely to adapt and change in future. By 2050, these industries will likely turn increasingly more digital, so considering the changing physical nature of cultural and arts facilities is also necessary, as demand for temporary spaces such as pop-up venues may increase, whilst digital media venues may become more prevalent.

## Policy Options

410. In order to ensure the continued growth of cultural and creative industries in Oxfordshire, a preferred policy option is proposed for inclusion in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 which aims to advance these industries by supporting new strategic cultural and arts facilities across the county that will have regional, national and international draw.

411. One alternative policy option is to leave these considerations to future local plans, but our recommendation is to put a framework policy in place to

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<sup>65</sup> The Arts Council evidence review

enable forward planning by developers in conjunction with the local planning authority where the proposal is likely to impact on more than one district.

## Preferred Policy Proposal

### Policy Option 26: Culture and Arts

In order to advance Oxfordshire's culture and creative industries, proposals for new cultural and arts facilities designed to have regional, national and international draw would be supported, including (but not limited to):

- New cultural centres, museums, exhibition halls, galleries, and other visual arts facilities.
- New performing arts centres, concert halls, theatres, auditoriums.
- The provision of public broadcasting facilities, including public television, radio stations and other electronic media outlets.
- Evening and night-time cultural venues such as public houses, night clubs, cinemas and music venues.
- Associated cultural and arts facilities, including studio and rehearsal space.
- Pop up culture and arts venues, such as in vacant buildings.
- New cultural and arts provision at the great stately houses of Oxfordshire.

We would expect all new culture and arts facilities to meet the following criteria:

- They must be located within the built-up areas of the city, towns and villages. In the district's villages, development must be proportionally scaled and in keeping with the character of the settlement. Development outside of these areas will only be supported in exceptional circumstances, for example where it is evidenced that it cannot be reasonably be located in the city, or a town or village in the county, such as at the great houses.
- They must be located at sites which can provide excellent transport and connectivity, that are easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.
- Use of sustainable travel is encouraged and a sustainable travel plan will be required that sets out the details of the bus and rail connectivity that is to be secured.
- They must be designed with renewable energy provision and others to help reduce use of carbon.
- They must have minimal traffic, environmental, visual and landscape impact.
- There is no negative cumulative impact resulting from the proposed use in relation to the number, capacity and location of other similar uses (existing or committed) in the area.

We would also seek to protect and retain existing cultural and arts facilities. Planning applications for the change of use of a cultural or arts facility must be accompanied by evidence to demonstrate that the continuation of the use of premises of the existing facility is not viable. It must be demonstrated that:

- all reasonable efforts have been made to market the premises for its existing use; and
- all reasonable efforts have been made to support and improve the operation and management of the business; and

- it is demonstrated that suitable alternative facilities exist to meet the needs of the local community.

## **Policy Option 27: Meeting Skills and Education Needs**

412. The Further and Higher Education (FEHE) sectors are one of the economic assets of Oxfordshire. The Universities of Oxford are world class and play a central role in the dynamism of the Oxfordshire economy, bringing forward innovation and technology, as well as new investment and company spinouts that act as a major driver of the economic success of the county.
413. Oxfordshire has historically had a high education and skills base. We will encourage and support development that will diversify and strengthen the skills and education base into the future to encourage its continued role in the innovation ecosystem.
414. We recognise that reorganisation and re-provision is likely to take place over the next 20-30 years, as Government policy changes, to provide new services to students of all ages, to respond quickly to demographic changes, improve skills access and to use land and property more efficiently and effectively. This enabling policy is designed to support effective forward planning by the sector to continue to meet the needs of training and education providers, as well as businesses of all sectors in Oxfordshire.
415. The provision of primary and secondary education facilities, along with those for early years and lifelong learning has a critical role to play in supporting population growth as well as meeting new training needs and improving access to the world of work. The demand for pre-school facilities is increasing due to changes in lifestyles and work patterns and is a critical underpinning of the economic dynamism of Oxfordshire.
416. We recognise the important role that skills and training facilities and schools have to play in maintaining the quality of life of communities and will support the growth plans of schools. The County Council in its role as Local Education Authority is responsible for securing provision of new schools and school places. It has a statutory duty to ensure that there are enough school places. The local planning authorities will work with the County Council and the FEHE sector to support the range of education and training facilities required, including provision of nursery, primary and secondary schools; further and higher education facilities; community learning facilities; special schools; and other educational facilities as required. This may include seeking the provision of new schools, contributions towards these facilities or contributions towards expanding existing facilities as new growth takes place.
417. We want to ensure that the design of these facilities is flexible enough to accommodate the changing needs of their users and the communities they serve. Where appropriate and agreed with the education & skills provider the use of the facilities after hours will be encouraged to support learning among the wider community and may be able to enhance recreation provision. New skills and educational buildings should be located in sustainable locations within the built-

up limits of settlements to secure active travel and improved public transport connectivity; as well as being considered within regeneration schemes to encourage social mobility and 'upskilling'.

## Policy Options

418. The preferred policy option seeks to ensure that there is a framework policy in place to enable future development or the land use aspects of the reorganisations of skills and education facilities to be considered in a consistent way, especially where the provision reaches beyond administrative boundaries. This is an issue that has also arisen in a number of Duty to Co-operate discussions with neighbouring Councils.

419. One alternative policy option is to leave these considerations to future local plans, but our recommendation is to put a framework policy in place to enable forward planning by the institutions affected, with their developers in conjunction with the local planning authority and Oxfordshire County Council.

## Preferred Policy Proposal

### **Policy Option 27: Meeting Skills and Education Needs**

To support the provision of modern and up to date facilities to support existing and future education and training needs across the county:

1. The local planning authority should work with partners to support the provision of new schools, universities and colleges, community learning and other training facilities which provide for education and the development of skills across each district, the city and county-wide, where needed.
2. The provision of new facilities that are integrated into regeneration opportunities to support social mobility will be encouraged.
3. Education and training facilities should be designed to:
  - a. achieve a high degree of durability and environmental efficiency to minimise maintenance and running costs;
  - b. increase use of renewable energy and help reduce use of carbon;
  - c. provide a safe, secure and pleasant environment conducive to learning;
  - d. be sustainably designed and located to promote sustainable methods of travel, both by active travel and by public transport; and
  - e. be designed to enable future expansion and long-term flexibility, as required.
4. The co-location of community and education facilities will be supported where they create community hubs that can serve the needs of the community and catchments that cross administrative boundaries.
5. Where proposals relate to large schemes or strategic housing developments or the expansion of existing campuses, an integrated, coordinated and comprehensive planning approach would be taken and a masterplan would be prepared, in collaboration and agreed with the local planning authority/ies, Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) and other statutory undertakers covering the

development of the whole site or sites. This will be especially important where the catchment crosses administrative boundaries. Any new education sites must comply with the OCC guidance documents issued at that time to ensure efficient and effective use of the site.

## Providing Homes

420. The Oxfordshire Plan aspires to meet the housing needs of current and future generations.
421. The cost of housing continues to be a major issue across Oxfordshire and impacts on where people can live and what they can afford, whether they purchase or rent property. This is a particular challenge faced within Oxford City but it affects the neighbouring four districts too and impacts on the economy by leading to lengthy commutes and an inability to retain younger people leaving University.
422. The Oxfordshire Plan proposes to support the use of new construction technologies to both reduce cost of building new housing but to ensure it uses less energy too.
423. The Oxfordshire Plan proposes to support innovation over the next 30 years, be it in housing design, build quality and incorporation of measures to help tackle climate change.
424. The national push for 'zero carbon ready' homes has been embraced by the Oxfordshire Plan as part of its ambitious set of measures proposed in Theme One: Addressing Climate Change and builds on the innovation achieved on current development sites such as NW Bicester.
425. The Oxfordshire Plan proposes to set a framework for housing quality (see Themes One and Three) and undertaking health impact assessments (see Theme Three) to improve the quality of life for residents. The Oxfordshire Plan places an emphasis on tackling climate change and securing environmental betterment. That emphasis has led to the proposed emphasis on achieving high design standards, which are recognised as being essential for reducing inequalities as well as having environmental impact and helping to achieve improved health & wellbeing of residents, as well as reducing energy costs.
426. The Plan seeks to secure the retention of young people and the less well-off through the proposed adequate provision of affordable housing and to secure sufficient provision for older people too, through extra care, care villages and other types of provision. The Plan proposes to support people who can't afford access to the housing market, those in low paid jobs, and newly forming households with the need for smaller accommodation. The Oxfordshire Plan also supports the delivery of First Homes, a new national form of affordable housing. The Plan proposes to support new approaches to Community Led Housing, the use of Community Land Trusts and the contribution that public land has to play in enabling new innovative approaches to housing provision.

427. The Oxfordshire Plan proposes a strong brownfield land focus with support for programmes of urban renewal which means a reduced level of greenfield release with valued green space protected. The Plan looks to support the renewal of town centres.

428. The Plan will seeks to support achieving higher densities by building residential property higher, three or four storeys, in appropriate locations, to improve the overall land use and to reduce the need for more greenfield release.

429. Finally, the Plan looks to support the role of small and medium sized developers who tend to build the majority of smaller sites, to a high standard and more quickly than is achieved on larger sites. The planning authorities in Oxfordshire will explore the introduction of an accelerated consenting process.

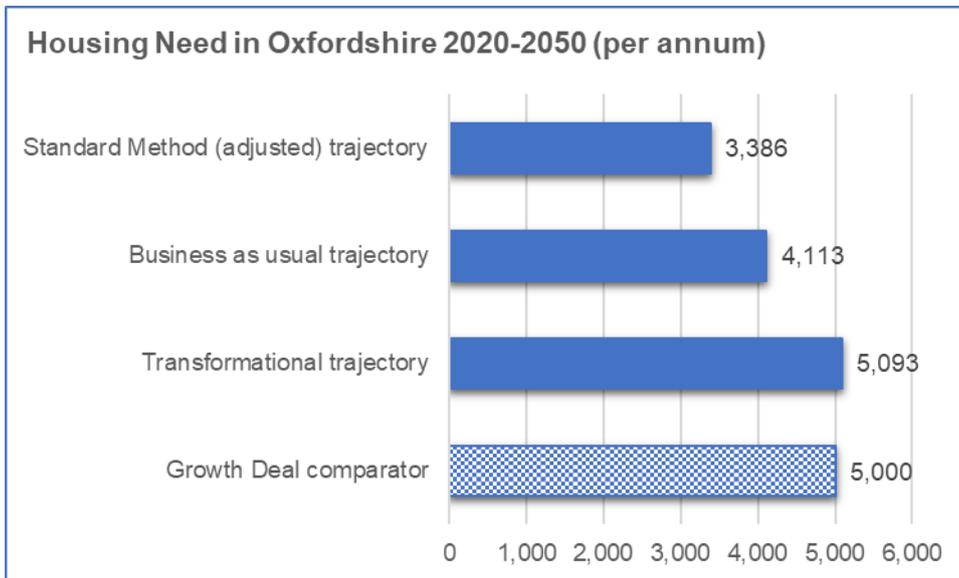
## Policy Option 28 - Homes: How Many? Commitments and Locations

### How Many Homes?

430. In planning for housing, the terms 'need', and 'requirement' have specific meanings. The Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment (OGNA) assesses the growth **needs** for Oxfordshire to 2050 to identify the range of what might be reasonable levels of growth to test through the Plan. It will then be for the Plan-making process to arrive at a growth **requirement** figure for the Plan policies.

431. The OGNA modelling focusses on three levels of growth: Standard Method adjusted, Business as Usual, and Transformational. These three show the range. The Oxfordshire Plan cannot go lower than standard method (or it would fail to comply with Government guidance), and it would be unrealistic to aim for higher growth than the aspirations in the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS), associated with the transformational trajectory given the need to balance homes and jobs, as well as the challenge of delivery and the environment and infrastructure constraints that exist.

Housing Need in Oxfordshire 2020-2050		
	Total	Per annum
Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory	101,580	3,386
Business as usual trajectory	123,390	4,113
Transformational trajectory	152,790	5,093
Growth Deal comparator	150,000	5,000



432. Whilst the OGNA has set out a range of housing needs figures it has not advised on a target or requirement that the Oxfordshire Plan should take forward. Through the Plan making process (including this Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation) we are testing the level of growth options. The decision on the final housing requirement will need to balance the OGNA with other evidence studies, and other decision-making tools such as Sustainability Appraisal, consultation, and the strategy set out in this Plan. This process will follow the outcome of this Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation on the proposed strategy of the Plan, the proposed policy options and the proposed Strategic Spatial Options.

433. The next tranche of growth has already been committed in the 2020 – 2031/5/6 period of the Oxfordshire Plan through the City and District's planning consents. In a number of Districts, committed growth associated with consents continues into the period after 2031/5/6 due to the delivery period of strategic development sites and windfalls. In the next phase of Plan making the total of these commitments will be taken off the OGNA scenarios to present the 'residual' figure. This is the housing requirement that we will need to plan for.

### Committed Growth

434. Oxfordshire has adopted local plans in place for each District with consents issued on allocated sites and others, such that committed growth runs from 2020 (the starting date for the Oxfordshire Plan) onwards and in 3 of the Districts there are strategic sites that will continue to be built out beyond the end of the local plan period which the Oxfordshire Plan needs to take into account in considering the housing requirement to be considered.

435. The next table (as of 2020/21) illustrates this.

District	Local Plan period	To illustrate 'Committed growth' using Plan trajectories	2011-2019/20	2020/21 – end of Local Plan	Beyond end of Local Plan
Cherwell	2011-2031	22,840 (pt1) 4,400 (PRev)	11,202	16,038	<b>2,707</b> (NW Bicester)
Oxford	2016-2036	10,884	1,159	9,725	-
South	2011-2035	30,056	16,360	13,696	<b>2,815</b> (Chalgrove: 895 after 2035) (Grenoble Rd: 520 after 2035) (Culham: 1,400 after 2035)
Vale	2011-2031	25,359	9,112	16,348	<b>1,883</b> (Valley Park, Didcot: 713) (Grove Airfield: 1,042) (NW Valley Park: 128)
West	2011-2031	15,799	4,630	11,169	None
<b>Totals</b>		<b>109,338</b>	<b>42,463 approx.</b>	<b>66,875 approx.</b>	<b>7,405</b>
				<i>Illustrative Committed Growth 2020/21 onwards = 74,280</i>	

436. This committed growth (taken from local plan trajectories to illustrate the issue at this stage) should be taken into account. The table below illustrates the 'residual figure' that arises by taking the OGNA scenario figure minus committed growth to leave a 'residual' figure:

OGNA Homes 2020-2050		<i>Illustrative Residual (OGNA minus Committed Growth). Approximately</i>
<b>Standard Method</b>	101,580	27,300
<b>Business as usual trajectory</b>	123,390	49,110
<b>Transformational trajectory</b>	152,780	78, 500

437. So, the range of new growth we intend to test in the preparation of the Regulation 19 Plan is of the order of 26,000-77,000 homes (not 101,000-153,000). This lower range is the basis for looking at broad areas of growth through the Oxfordshire Plan 2031/5/6 to 2050. i.e. over a 20-year period, after the end of the current adopted local plans. *Note:* In considering this issue in the preparation of the Regulation 19 Plan we will use the most up to date data from AMRs from each local planning authority to ensure we use a common basis for the calculations.

438. The decision on where in the range the housing requirement for Oxfordshire should sit will be informed by the outcome of the evaluation and evidence in the next phase of plan-making in preparing the Regulation 19 Plan.

## Locations

439. The Oxfordshire Plan has identified five strategic spatial options for consideration in the next section of the consultation document. These options take into account the locations for growth set out in the adopted local plans.

440. The next stage of the development of the Oxfordshire Plan will consider the application of the growth need numbers to assess the most appropriate locations for future growth to be identified in the Regulation 19 Plan version.

## Preferred Policy Option

### **Policy Option 28: Homes: How Many? Commitments and Locations**

Through this consultation on the Regulation 18 Part 2 stage of the Oxfordshire Plan, the scenarios for the total housing requirement figure 2020-2050 (the OGNA) need to be considered and views are sought.

The Regulation 19 stage will consider the OGNA range taking the level of committed growth into account using AMRs, its ongoing delivery as well as the identification of a residual figure that is broken down into tranches (e.g. 10 years).

#### **Commitments**

It is proposed that the Regulation 19 Plan is prepared on the basis of what is already committed in the five Districts using the most up to date AMRs, deducted from the OP2050 requirement identified through the OGNA.

#### **Locations**

Homes and jobs to be delivered in strategic locations following a process of assessment.

District-level figures will be provided for the remaining requirement (i.e. OGNA minus committed growth level).

As the Strategic Spatial Options section shows, as part of the site assessment process to take the proposed options forward in detail, we propose to use a step-by-step process, drawing on our extensive Plan evidence base to assess capacity and delivery in broad locations.

A range of evidence will be required including a HELAA, to assess capacity and availability of brownfield land, as well as constraints analysis on flooding, landscape and other factors, plus input from the SA/HRA and considerations of climate change.

The aim is to establish a final list of prospective locations for future growth that secure the objectives of this Plan and especially, sustainable outcomes, zero carbon growth and environmental enhancement.

## **Policy Option 29 – Urban Renewal**

441. This policy aims to enable forward planning of urban renewal schemes and will include the reuse of brownfield land and an intensification of land use in our market towns, the City of Oxford and at the former MoD bases and sites

where the largest holdings of brownfield land are located. Urban renewal brings new vitality to areas and helps secure more sustainable locations, with investment in new services, new employment and improved health outcomes from urban re-design. The modernisation of housing and replacement of housing seeks to achieve higher residential densities, as well as more energy efficient, healthier living in higher quality housing.

442. New development can help secure gains and opportunities for the area being invested in, such as environmental gains, habitat creation and improved access to the countryside and improved walking and cycling opportunities. New affordable housing can be secured using Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) to secure significant energy gains for residents and reduced building costs.

443. Urban renewal is already taking place in a number of locations including the redevelopment of parts of Didcot and in the west end of Oxford around the rail station, whereas innovative approaches to custom build housing are being pursued at Graven Hill, Bicester. Urban renewal is expensive, and it takes time to prepare schemes with impact, so this is a policy that is intended to enable schemes to be developed with planning authority support through the life of the Oxfordshire Plan.

444. The policy will draw on brownfield land registers and support the forward programmes of redevelopment that are prepared by local planning authorities to bring new use to areas where private sector led schemes have been delayed. Joint ventures between the public, private, voluntary sector and other bodies such as Universities and other institutions will be supported.

## Policy Options

445. The preferred policy option for the Oxfordshire Plan is to put in place a framework policy to guide the development of options to renew areas over the next 20 to 30 years.

446. One alternative policy option is to leave these considerations to future local plans, but our recommendation is to put a framework policy in place to enable forward planning by developers in conjunction with the local planning authority and the local community and Parish/Town Council affected.

## Preferred Policy Proposal

### Policy Option 29: Urban Renewal

Urban renewal schemes and the reuse of brownfield and 'underutilised land' to achieve a more efficient use of land and to help minimise the use of new greenfield land across Oxfordshire will be supported.

This policy would include:

- Support for proposals that include a package of measures to renew and replace existing buildings (i.e. those that are under-utilised, energy inefficient or are degraded or derelict), with more modern higher quality housing to achieve

higher densities where appropriate, as well as being designed to be more energy efficient and support healthier living.

- Mixed use schemes will be encouraged, with the colocation of employment and residential provision to improve the sustainability of the location.
- Support opportunities for investment in redevelopment and development to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land where appropriate.
- The identification of appropriate areas for regeneration with a clear boundary within the market towns and the City of Oxford as well as major brownfield locations such as former MoD sites and areas of former MoD housing.
- Sensitivity to local context particularly where there are heritage assets.
- Support for the use of Modern Methods of Construction (MMC), including custom build, to secure energy gains for residents and reduced building costs.
- Support for opportunities for urban renewal and brownfield land development to achieve net environmental gains and recognise and utilise the function brownfield land often has in for example, wildlife, flood risk mitigation, and carbon storage.

Appropriate land will be identified through Brownfield land registers as well as programmes established for urban settings, through Council housing companies, Housing Associations and others.

## **Policy Option 30 - Affordable Homes**

447. Affordable homes are greatly needed across Oxfordshire. The OGNA Phase 1 Report stated that 'evidence points to a very significant scale of need for affordable housing in Oxfordshire'. Across the county, average house prices are at over 10 times median earnings, and up to 17 times median earnings in the city of Oxford. The high cost of housing has significant impacts for those living and working in Oxfordshire, as well as on economic growth. High house prices have led to those working in Oxfordshire needing to commute longer distances to and from their workplace, which in turn puts increased pressure on transport infrastructure across the county.

448. Increasing land values across Oxfordshire combined with land availability constraints, means that it is likely that house prices will worsen during the plan period. Innovative methods of construction, such as 'Modern Methods of Construction' (MMC) can reduce the building cost of housing, including affordable housing, whilst also securing energy gains for residents. Community-led housing (CLH) schemes are also an innovative way in which affordable housing supply can be boosted. CLH schemes also help to deliver not only much needed affordable homes, but also additional benefits to the communities they serve, as the homes are delivered by local people for local people. As identified in the OGNA Phase 1 Report, other initiatives such as local authority house building (supported by national Government) could help to boost affordable housing delivery, and also help councils to return to their historic role as provider of homes in the four districts and the City of Oxford.

449. Importantly, the delivery of affordable homes is also influenced by Government funding and initiatives aimed at increasing affordable housing supply (both for rent and purchase) including home ownership through subsidised routes such as shared ownership and the First Homes scheme. First Homes are a specific kind of discounted market sale housing and is the Government's preferred discounted market tenure and should account for at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered by developers through planning obligations. In order to qualify as a First Home, a property must be sold at least 30% below the open market value, however local authorities and neighbourhood planning groups have discretion to require a higher minimum discount of either 40% or 50% if they can demonstrate a need for this. Local authorities are also encouraged to ensure that First Homes work well in their area, which may include requiring a higher minimum discount, lower price or income caps, or local connection/key worker requirements. This provides an opportunity for all the Oxfordshire authorities to understand their individual needs.
450. Public funding is also a key factor in helping to support delivery, and locally this has been secured through the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal and is also available at a national level through the Government's Affordable Homes Programme. A variety of methods will be needed to ensure the delivery of affordable homes in Oxfordshire is maximised, and the inclusion of an affordable homes policy in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is a way in which it can help achieve this aim.
451. The provision of affordable housing is well established nationally and locally, with the NPPF setting out clearly that affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments, other than in designated rural areas (where policies may set out a lower threshold of 5 units or fewer).

## **Policy Options**

452. In order to help address the acute affordable housing needs across the county, it is proposed that the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 includes an overarching policy that ensures maximum levels of affordable housing are delivered on new residential sites across Oxfordshire. This would mean that the detail surrounding tenure mix and affordable housing requirements (expressed as a percentage) would remain a decision for local authorities to include in their local plans in light of local evidence. The Oxfordshire Plan is not setting a county-wide figure for affordable housing.
453. One alternative policy option would be to include percentage requirements and/or tenure mix targets in the Oxfordshire Plan to ensure a consistent, strong and diverse affordable housing mix across the county. However, this is not the preferred policy option as it could potentially overlook the differences in the housing market across Oxfordshire. Affordable housing requirements vary across the Oxfordshire authorities and it is important that all the authorities retain this flexibility to be able to respond to local circumstances. It would also be difficult to ensure that the policy has the necessary flexibility to plan over the longer term to 2050, when the needs of Oxfordshire might change. The remaining alternative option would be to not include an affordable homes policy in the Oxfordshire Plan, but instead leave all decisions and detail regarding affordable housing to local plans.

## Preferred Policy Option

### Policy Option 30: Affordable Housing

In order to help address affordable housing needs across the county, the Oxfordshire Plan would require local plans (and neighbourhood plans where relevant) to seek maximum levels of affordable housing on residential (use Class C2/C3) development sites of 10 units or more, those in excess of 0.5ha (subject to local viability considerations), and within the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB's) development sites of over 5 units.

In order to ensure residential development sites are well integrated and cohesive, the affordable housing units should be visually indistinguishable from market housing on site, and thus 'tenure blind'.

Affordable housing units should also be distributed throughout the site to prevent concentrations of affordable homes in one particular area. Any limitations on number of affordable units being clustered in groups should be set out in local plans, informed by local evidence and site-specific circumstances.

Tenure mix targets and affordable housing requirements (expressed as a percentage) will be for local plans to decide in the light of local evidence.

Innovative arrangements such as Community Led Housing schemes will be supported.

### Alternative Policy Option 30-01

454. Instead of leaving tenure mix to local plans, should the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 set tenure mix targets across Oxfordshire?

455. This could be added to the policy set out above. An example of how percentages could be split (that reflect existing local plans and between the City of Oxford and neighbouring Districts) is as follows:

- 25% Affordable Rented
- 35% Social Rented
- 15% other routes to affordable housing (including shared ownership)
- 25% First Homes

456. But the risk of this approach is that it is less robust and reflective of changing circumstances over the longer-term period that the Oxfordshire Plan is intending to address.

## Policy Option 31 - Specialist Housing Needs

457. Across Oxfordshire there is a wide range of housing needs. One of Oxfordshire's key strengths is its thriving and diverse communities, therefore providing the appropriate types of houses for these communities is essential.
458. The NPPF sets out that the housing needed for different groups in the community should be reflected in planning policies. This includes, but is not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their home and people wishing to commission or build their own homes.
459. Across Oxfordshire it is essential that housing is provided for different groups in the community, who all have different needs, in the right places. The needs of Gypsies, Travellers, Travelling Showpeople are addressed separately in the Plan. Across Oxfordshire, whilst there are similarities between the types of housing needed, each authority area is different and has its own specific needs.
460. Oxford City has a higher proportion of student accommodation due to the location of the universities. The Oxford City Local Plan 2036 responds appropriately to this through its policies. Whilst this high concentration in the city is likely to continue, during the longer-term plan period for the Oxfordshire Plan it is unknown if any university expansions are going to occur outside of the City. It may be that in looking forward, the universities decide to explore wider Oxfordshire options. Planning over this longer period the Oxfordshire Plan should be in a position to provide a framework to assist the four districts and the City of Oxford in dealing with any future proposals.
461. One trend which is likely to have an impact on the four districts and the City of Oxford across the 30-year plan period, is housing for older people. People are living longer lives and the proportion of older people in the population is increasing. Oxfordshire has an aging population and it is forecast that this trend will continue. Housing for older people needs to be appropriately located with good access to public transport and local facilities, including shops and healthcare.
462. From previous consultations on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, we know that making homes accessible and affordable and meeting a variety of needs is important to communities. In response to the Regulation 18 Part 1 consultation, it was highlighted that housing should meet a variety of needs, such as those of older people and people with disabilities. Some respondents also raised that the Oxfordshire Plan should make new homes accessible and affordable to local people, including key workers.

## **Policy Options**

463. The Oxfordshire Plan will be determining a broad spatial strategy and broad locations for growth. As such it will not include detailed housing needs or requirements about the need for specialist housing. It is more appropriate to consider specialist housing matters via local plans and neighbourhood plans given the differences between provision and requirements in the Districts and the City of Oxford.

464. However, the Oxfordshire Plan can play a role in providing a framework for the local plans to work within. There are county-wide similarities with specialist housing that could benefit from a strategic level policy. A policy in the Oxfordshire Plan could provide high level support for the delivery of specialist housing, recognising the role the local plans will play in setting out the levels of appropriate specialist housing that should be delivered.

465. This policy is intended to be sufficiently flexible to allow the four districts and the City of Oxford to deal with individual needs. Policy could only be high level as evidence would be needed if policy became specific.

### **Preferred Policy Option**

#### **Policy Option 31: Specialist Housing Needs**

1. The Oxfordshire Plan would support the delivery of specialist housing where meeting an identified need, in appropriate locations and where proposals conform with development plan policies.
2. Specialised housing may include, but is not limited to:
  - Housing for older people
  - Student accommodation
  - Housing for key workers
  - Housing for people with disabilities
3. Where appropriate, specialist housing should:
  - be integrated into proposed developments and existing neighbourhoods to create mixed and balanced communities;
  - have good access to public transport and local facilities;
  - enable the delivery of well-connected locations which maximise walking, cycling and public transport;
  - be appropriate for its intended occupant, e.g. living spaces, provision of storage and accessibility; and
  - not result in significant adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbourhood uses.

#### **Alternative Policy Option 30-01/02/03/04**

466. An alternative policy option could be for the Oxfordshire Plan to consider the specific requirements for identified groups in the community, as set out below for example. However, this is not the preferred option as it could potentially overlook the differences in the housing market across Oxfordshire and local plans are the most appropriately placed to respond to locally specific housing needs.

1. Support the delivery of specialist housing where meeting an identified need, in appropriate locations and where proposals conform with local plan policies.
2. Where there is an identified need, housing for older people should:

- Have good access to public transport;
  - Have good access to local facilities and services, including healthcare and shops;
  - Be appropriate for its intended occupants;
  - Not result in significant adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring uses;
  - Provide suitable parking in accordance with the relevant parking standards and provide pick up and drop off facilities suitable for taxis, minibuses and ambulances; and
  - Be built maximising energy standards in accordance with the approach set out in this document.
3. Where there is an identified need, student accommodation should:
- Be appropriate for its intended occupants;
  - Be secured for student use;
  - Be integrated into proposed developments and existing neighbourhoods to create mixed and balanced communities;
  - Maximise walking, cycling and public transport in well-connected locations;
  - Not result in significant adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbourhood uses;
  - Provide suitable parking in accordance with the relevant parking standards; and
  - Be built maximising energy standards in accordance with the approach set out in this document.
4. Where there is an identified need, housing for key workers should:
- Be appropriate for its intended occupants;
  - Be integrated into proposed developments and existing neighbourhoods to create mixed and balanced communities;
  - Maximise walking, cycling and public transport in well-connected locations;
  - Not result in significant adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbourhood uses;
  - Provide suitable parking in accordance with the relevant parking standards; and
  - Be built maximising energy standards in accordance with the approach set out in this document.

### **Alternative Policy Option 30-02**

467. Another alternative option would be to not have a strategic policy on specialist housing in the Oxfordshire Plan and to instead leave it to local plans to set policies in relation to specialist housing need.

468. Local plans are best placed to address local housing needs, and this is reflected in the preferred policy option. However, leaving it completely to local plans is not the preferred approach as the Oxfordshire Plan provides an opportunity to establish an Oxfordshire wide overarching strategic policy on specialist housing.

## Policy Option 32 - Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

469. All the local authorities in Oxfordshire have a responsibility to address the needs for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. Currently across Oxfordshire there are 6 permanent council-owned traveller sites, providing 89 pitches and 21 privately run authorised sites<sup>66</sup>.
470. In accordance with national planning policy, a county-wide Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) has been commissioned jointly to inform the production of the Oxfordshire Plan. The current evidence across the county comprises the Cherwell, Oxford City, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse GTAA 2017 and the West Oxfordshire GTAA 2016. The Oxfordshire GTAA which will support the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is an update of the 201 & 2017 GTAA's.
471. The Government's planning policy document, Planning Policy for Traveller Sites<sup>67</sup>, sets out that local authorities should set targets which address the likely permanent and transit accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. This document provides definitions for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. For the purpose of planning policy 'gypsies and travellers' means:
472. *'Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.'*
473. For the purpose of this planning policy 'travelling showpeople' means:
474. *'Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family's or dependants' more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above.'*
475. The Oxfordshire Plan will play an important role in assessing county-wide accommodation needs and travel patterns. The Government's overarching aim is to ensure fair and equal treatment for travellers, in a way that facilitates the traditional and nomadic way of life of travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community. It is important to note that Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople have different accommodation need requirements. For example, Travelling Showpeople need additional space in order to store and maintain large equipment and vehicles.
476. The Oxfordshire Plan will provide an overarching framework, supported by the GTAA. The proposed methodology of the GTAA will provide an accommodation need figure based on ethnic identity; and also a figure based on the definitions above from national policy. The needs of those who are not

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<sup>66</sup> [Authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

<sup>67</sup> [Planning policy for traveller sites - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

covered in the GTAA will be addressed through the Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment ('OGNA').

477. One of the aims of Government is working collaboratively to develop fair and effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for sites. Given the transient nature of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, collaborative working with neighbourhood authorities has played an important role and will continue to play an important role as the Oxfordshire Plan progresses. The Oxfordshire Plan provides an opportunity to work collaboratively to develop a county-wide strategy to meet these needs.

478. The GTAA will assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople for the period 2020-2035 and consider potential future needs up to 2050 for the whole of the county. It will quantify the accommodation needs, relating to permanent pitches/plots, sites/yards, and transit sites and/or negotiated stopping arrangements. The GTAA will not recommend any sites for allocation; this will be done via local plans and the Oxfordshire Plan will provide the overarching strategic framework.

### **Policy Options**

479. The proposed policy options relating to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople have been informed by the emerging evidence base, primarily the Oxfordshire GTAA. The GTAA will provide a need figure for each local authority, as well as advising on potential strategic approaches, but site allocations will remain with the local plan.

480. Due to COVID-19, the preparation of the GTAA has been delayed with the household surveys unable to be completed prior to this consultation. It is anticipated these will resume shortly and the final GTAA will be published at the next stage of consultation (Regulation 19).

### **Preferred Policy Option**

#### **Policy Option 32: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople**

The Oxfordshire Plan will set out an Oxfordshire-wide need figure and local planning authority breakdowns in 5-year tranches per each authority.

The Oxfordshire Plan will set out locational criteria for the provision of pitches for Gypsies and Travellers, plots for Travelling Showpeople and transit sites/pitches, this may include, but is not limited to:

- Safe access for pedestrians and vehicles;
- Accessibility to facilities and services;
- Availability of utilities;
- Green Belt (subject to the provisions of the NPPF);
- Landscape – e.g. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty(subject to the provisions of the NPPF);
- Flooding;
- Historic and natural environment;
- Accessibility to preferred routes on the highway network; and

- Impact on human health/ natural environment/ local amenity.

# Spatial Strategy Options

## Introduction

481. This part of the Plan outlines the spatial strategy options on which we are seeking views. It begins by explaining the purpose of the options, the principles on which they are based, the criteria used to evaluate them and links with the Sustainability Appraisal process. The section outlines the scale and distribution of committed growth in Oxfordshire's existing local plans and goes on to describe five spatial strategy options. This part of the Plan concludes with a section on the process for selecting a preferred spatial strategy option and broad locations for growth in the Regulation 19 Plan.

## Proposed Spatial Strategy

482. At this stage in the Plan preparation process, we are not identifying individual spatial strategy options that can necessarily accommodate all of Oxfordshire's growth over the next 30 years. Nor is any one of the options, taken in isolation, likely to form Oxfordshire's eventual long-term spatial strategy. It is much more likely that the preferred strategy in the Regulation 19 Plan will comprise components from more than one of the options which, when combined together and depending on how robust the potential interventions are likely to be, will most effectively deliver the Plan's priorities and the outcomes set out in the Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire.

483. Presenting a set of options allows us to explore how, and the extent to which, each option would deliver Oxfordshire's ambitions for long-term, transformative, sustainable development. The options have been broadly defined to consider opportunities for 'good' housing and economic growth, but also opportunities for a wider range of improvements that contribute to 'good growth', including new infrastructure and environmental enhancements, as well as the scope for enhancing the beneficial use of the Green Belt, and constraints.

484. It is important that each of the options is 'reasonable', clearly defined and sufficiently distinctive to allow for robust testing as part of the plan-making process. Nevertheless, the five spatial strategy options are underpinned by a set of **common principles**.

- All options help deliver the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision and the Plan's Vision & Objectives. They seek to align economic, social and environmental objectives – though each option does this in different ways and to varying degrees because each is based on a different key driver for transformation.
- All options make effective use of land by planning positively for re-use of previously developed or brownfield land, including under-utilised land and buildings as urban regeneration schemes.
- All options prioritise the environment as a common thread that flows from the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision. This includes climate change, nature recovery, natural capital and enhanced resilience. This means there is no separate environment-led option.

- All options support the City of Oxford as the key driver for good growth within Oxfordshire.
- All options give priority to national policies that protect areas or assets that are of particular intrinsic importance and are likely to endure over the whole Plan period **and** are likely to impact on the distribution of development at the strategic scale.
- All options will seek to influence and shape the priorities within the emerging Spatial Framework for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.
- All options recognise that in the short-term, adopted local plans will be particularly important in shaping Oxfordshire's spatial strategy, but that over the longer-term – the 30-year time-span of the Oxfordshire Plan – there is greater scope to effect change, but also greater uncertainty.

485. To evaluate the options, we have identified what the three overarching objectives of sustainable development mean in an Oxfordshire context and set them out as a set of **criteria**. There is a strong read-across between these criteria, Oxfordshire's Strategic Vision and this Plan's Vision & Objectives.

1. Guiding new development to the most sustainable locations.
2. Using land effectively by planning positively for brownfield land and supporting urban regeneration.
3. Protection and enhancement of Oxfordshire's highly valued countryside and landscape.
4. Enhancement of the network of green spaces and blue infrastructure in urban and rural areas in ways that deliver social, economic and environmental benefits.
5. Support for nature's recovery in ways that optimise the range of economic and social benefits that nature provides.
6. Creation of places that build community resilience in terms of climate change, health of habitats and healthy place-shaping.
7. Maintenance of an effective Green Belt around Oxford and enhancement of its beneficial use in line with national policy.
8. Planning for growth opportunities that will reduce inequalities and improve the health and wellbeing of the most disadvantaged.
9. Strengthening the conditions that support our network for economic activity comprising innovation hubs and clusters and corridors based on science and technology and other key economic assets.
10. Reducing the need to travel and improving connectivity, with new development located where there is existing or planned sustainable transport links (or the potential for such links based on new investment) and the potential for active travel.
11. Planning for further development at existing settlements where this can be done sustainably.
12. Contributing to the success of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.

486. The evaluation of the options presented here is consistent, robust, objective, evidence-based, transparent and sets out at a high level the positive and negative impacts of each option and the interventions that would be required to deliver it.

487. The **Sustainability Appraisal** has played – and will continue to play – an important ongoing role in strategy and option development. The 'Introducing

the Oxfordshire Plan 2050' consultation document included the following set of spatial scenario typologies:

### **Spatial Scenario Typologies, February 2019**

- Scenario 1: Intensification of city, town and district centres
- Scenario 2: New settlements
- Scenario 3: Dispersal with development spread evenly across the county, including in smaller settlements
- Scenario 4: 'Wheel' settlement cluster with a focus on Oxford and the existing larger towns and key corridors into Oxford and between towns
- Scenario 5: Intensification around the edges of larger settlements and strategic extensions
- Scenario 6: Spokes and hubs with a continued focus on Oxford and key corridors into Oxford
- Scenario 7: 'String' settlement/ settlement cluster with development focused on a number of linked settlements.

488. These typologies were further refined following public consultation to inform the following set of eight potential alternatives for the spatial distribution of growth for consideration through the Sustainability Appraisal of the Oxfordshire Plan.

### **Spatial Alternatives, July 2020**

1. Intensification in existing towns and cities: Increase density of existing and planned settlements, prioritise brownfield sites.
2. Intensification of housing development around strategic economic assets: Co-location of uses to meet business and research park needs.
3. Public transport 'Wheel' (transport-led): Concentrate development around areas of good public transport connectivity.
4. Rail 'String' (transport-led): Locate string of settlements along new/upgraded rail corridors (e.g. Cowley line).
5. OxCam 'String' (transport-led): New development along route of OxCam Expressway, once the route has been decided, consistent with NIC Growth Deal aspirations.
6. Strategic road junctions: Concentrate development around strategic road junctions.

7. Proportionate dispersed growth between existing settlements (needs-led): Oxford, towns and villages.
8. New settlements with new strategic transport connections.
9. Protect environmental assets (environment-led): Identify environmental constraints first (eg. strategic green and blue infrastructure, historic environment, flooding, AONB and other sensitive landscapes, best and most versatile agricultural land etc, possibly through natural capital mapping), then place housing and employment where they avoid significant impacts and enable enhancements.

*Source: Oxfordshire Plan 2050, Sustainability Appraisal – Alternatives, LUC in association with Levett-Therivel Sustainability Consultants, July 2020*

489. Alternatives 5 & 6 which would focus development on roads (the Oxford-Cambridge expressway for Alternative 5 and existing road junctions for Alternative 6) were the least sustainable alternatives of the nine considered through the Sustainability Appraisal. The expressway was formally cancelled by Government on 18 March 2021 after analysis showed that the proposed project would not be cost-effective, with any benefits outweighed by the costs.
490. Alternative 5 is no longer considered 'reasonable' and it has been discounted from further consideration.
491. Alternative 6 was assessed as having significant negative effects across a range of SA objectives, including health, reliance on the car, climate change, pollution, soils and efficient use of land, biodiversity and geodiversity and landscape. This alternative is also not considered 'reasonable' and none of the spatial options put forward at this stage focuses development on roads.
492. Alternative 8 (new settlements with new strategic transport connections) was assessed as having a mix of positive and negative effects, depending on the scale of new settlements, their location and the type of strategic transport connections created. New settlements have not been taken forward as a separate strategic spatial option in the Plan; rather a new settlement (or settlements) is considered as a spatial typology that could potentially help deliver several of the strategic options set out in this document.

### The level of 'committed growth'

493. As noted in the section on housing, the OGNA was commissioned because we recognised at the outset that in order for the Oxfordshire Plan to be robust, we would require a different approach to assessing Oxfordshire's long-term growth needs. The commissioning brief for the OGNA recorded:
494. *'National planning policy requires an assessment of Local Housing Need based on a standard methodology as set out in the PPG. However, there are limitations and uncertainties in applying a methodology over such a long timescale when it has been designed on the basis of 10 to 15-year local plans. For example, forecasting affordable housing need is particularly sensitive to*

*market and pricing fluctuations so it is challenging to forecast over a long timescale to 2050.*

495. *As such the city/district councils are commissioning this assessment to provide bespoke analysis of the growth needs for Oxfordshire to supplement the Standard Methodology, to inform the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan and which is capable of satisfying the soundness requirements for Examination.*

496. *The aim of this study is to identify numerical scenarios for sustainable housing and economic growth needs in Oxfordshire over the period 2020-2050 based on consideration of key drivers including the housing market, demography and the economy. Taken together, the scenarios will provide a tool that policy-makers can use when developing policies for the Oxfordshire Plan.'*

497. The OGNA ranges appear in the emerging Oxfordshire Plan at the Regulation 18 stage as the scale of future growth that the Plan has to consider up to 2050 is a fundamental part of the what the Plan is being created to do. At the Regulation 19 stage (the next stage), the Plan will set the broad areas of growth, with policies that will apply to 2050 and the monitoring and infrastructure elements. But the plan also draws on the Growth Board Strategic Vision that has been adopted by each Council and a series of Objectives that have led to a series of Themes for grouping proposed policies.

498. The Oxfordshire Plan and the Growth Board's Strategic Vision include an agreed broadly-based definition of 'good growth'. This is important as rather than seeing economic, social and environmental objectives as competing demands that need to be balanced or prioritised, our approach is to align and integrate all our priorities.

499. But in testing the OGNA ranges, we need to consider what the Plan is trying to achieve as whole (including for example, on Climate Change and Environmental quality). We also need to consider the level of growth set out in the adopted local plans for Oxfordshire which runs into the time period of the Oxfordshire Plan.

500. As noted in the earlier plan section (Homes: How many? Commitments and locations) Oxfordshire has five adopted local plans with committed growth running from 2020 (the starting date for the Oxfordshire Plan) onwards and in 3 of the Districts there are strategic sites that will continue to be built out beyond the end of the local plan period which the Oxfordshire Plan needs to take into account too.

501. This committed growth (taken from local plan trajectories, based on allocated sites) has to be taken into account. The OGNA figure minus committed growth leaves a 'residual' figure.

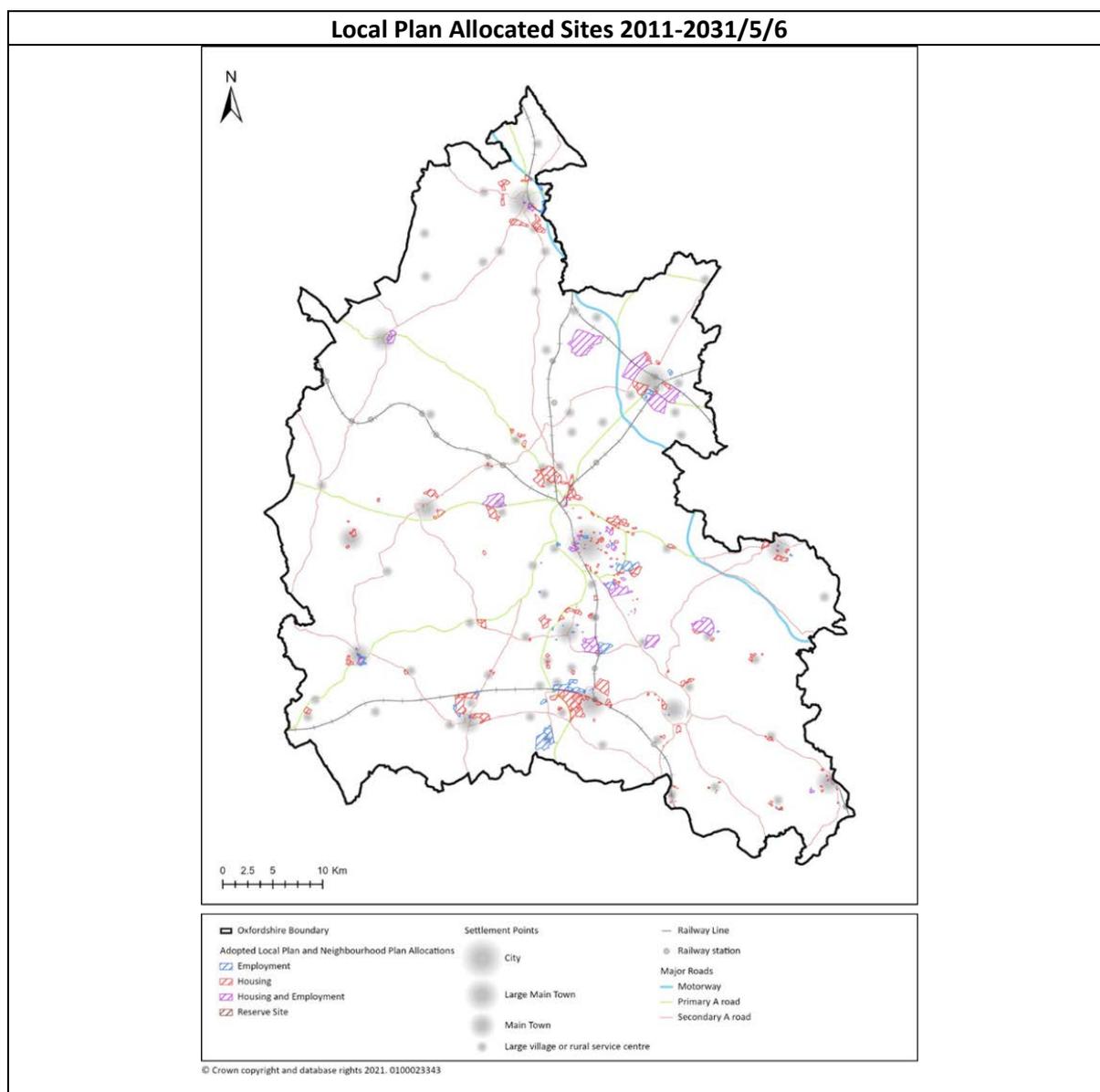
502. The decision on where on the range the figure for Oxfordshire should sit cannot be taken at this stage (Regulation 18 Part 2). This decision is to be informed by the outcome of the evaluation and evidence in the next phase of plan-making.

503. For the local planning authorities to take that decision in due course, it is recognised that there must be an appropriate set of spatial options that have

been consulted upon (the Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation undertakes this) and then have undertaken further technical testing and an assessment of different site proposals that have been sent to us for consideration, a process that includes a consideration of the Plan's Vision, its objectives and the five policy themes of the Plan (Climate Change, Environmental quality etc).

504. This process of evaluation will be undertaken early in the period between Regulation 18 Part 2 and Regulation 19, the next consultation stage (due to be undertaken in May 2022). This Regulation 18 Part 2 Plan contains a section setting out how the Plan is to proceed from Regulation 18 to Regulation 19 through this process of evaluation.

505. The spatial strategy options also take account of the locations of growth from the adopted local plans.



## The Spatial Strategy Options

506. We are consulting on five spatial strategy options:

- Option 1 Focus on opportunities at larger settlements and planned growth locations.
- Option 2 Focus on Oxford-led growth.
- Option 3 Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs.
- Option 4 Focus on strengthening business locations.
- Option 5 Focus on supporting rural communities.

507. These five options are seen as being clear and distinctive high-level 'reasonable alternatives' to consult on at Regulation 18.

- Option 1 aims to add more growth onto the growth level and locations set out in the adopted local plans.
- Options 2 to 5 are more transformational.

508. Each option is high level and helps identify how new housing, employment and other development could be distributed, and where there are opportunities for environmental enhancement and infrastructure improvements.

509. Each spatial strategy option shows the current local plan allocations for reference purposes.

510. Each option includes detail of scope and justification and most importantly the delivery challenges, as there are no easy options. No one option appears able to accommodate all of the proposed additional Plan growth on top of the growth associated with the existing adopted local plans. It is anticipated that a mix of options will be needed to deliver our spatial strategy.

## **Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations**

### **Scope & scale**

This option would distribute the bulk of growth to 2050 to those locations that have accommodated the majority of five local plan allocations in the first phase of the Plan up to the mid-2030s, on the edges of the towns, the City and former MoD sites (such as Heyford Park, Chalgrove Airfield, Carterton/Brize Norton & Dalton Barracks) ie the growth would be focused in line with current adopted Local Plan strategies.

It would also include opportunities for urban renewal, intensification and brownfield redevelopment.

The focus of this option would be strategic scale housing growth at existing market towns, Oxford, former MOD sites and planned garden communities. As a result, if this were pursued as an option, it would include consideration of growth proposals that would bring more development to locations already receiving a high level of growth and constitute an extension of the existing local plan strategies, adding to the pattern of existing and planned infrastructure investment.

The limits of the option are that it is not the easy option it first appears due to transport issues at a number of locations, such as Banbury that may limit the ability to absorb more growth and limited land availability at Didcot.

This option does **not** include consideration of new settlements beyond those identified in existing local plans.

The scope of this option includes all of the top-tier settlements within each local plan settlement hierarchy as well as rural service centres that have plans to accommodate significant growth and new planned garden communities.

Oxford	Cherwell	South	Vale	West
Oxford	Banbury Bicester Begbroke/Kidlington/Yarnton Heyford Park	Didcot Henley Thame Wallingford Berinsfield Chalgrove Airfield Culham	Abingdon Faringdon Grove Wantage	Carterton/Brize Norton Chipping Norton Witney Eynsham Woodstock

**Justification**

Many stakeholders and communities have already expressed views about the merits of this proposed development distribution during the development of the five District local plans. The strategies underpinning these plans were shaped to a significant degree by the previous Structure Plan for Oxfordshire which concentrated growth at County Towns, as well as the more recent challenge of accommodating Oxford's unmet housing needs outside of the city administrative area in the neighbouring Districts.

The existing distribution of allocated growth has been found sound and sustainable through five independent examinations of the current adopted local plans for each District, which also concluded that exceptional circumstances exist for the Green Belt boundary reviews that took place in the preparation of the Cherwell, Oxford City, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Plans.

There was significant opposition to the allocation of land in many Oxfordshire locations, particularly where it affected communities in the Green Belt in South Oxfordshire and Cherwell. Such locations are regarded as sustainable as they are situated in accessible locations for Oxford and many of the major economic growth and innovation areas for the county. Further development in these locations would require demonstration of 'exceptional circumstances', and subsequent Green Belt review.

This option would continue to focus growth to locations with the highest concentration of jobs, affordable housing need and sustainable transport connectivity, to ensure that development helped meet the needs of existing and future communities in a sustainable manner. The emphasis would be on growing existing communities and those locations previously determined to be the most

sustainable locations for strategic scale growth. Clearly, assessment would be required to identify the scale of what might be possible in specific locations.

The current local plans include allocations for a high level of development through new garden communities across Oxfordshire (e.g. at Bicester, Didcot, Salt Cross, Berinsfield and Dalton Barracks) which are being established during the first phase of the Oxfordshire Plan up to 2036. These new communities will be complemented by the delivery of new infrastructure which could accommodate further development beyond 2040.

This option includes areas of urban renewal, intensification within urban areas, opportunities for brownfield redevelopment (including at former MoD sites such as Heyford Park and Chalgrove Airfield and current areas of MoD housing such as Carterton and their adjoining areas) and would take account of the changing nature and role of town centres (in part arising from the COVID impacts on the retail sector).

This option would focus growth around existing sustainable transport nodes and proposed infrastructure investment to ensure communities have access to sustainable transport choices for movement within communities and for inter-urban connections. We wish to avoid the risk that growth at the edge of main settlements becomes increasingly distant from town centres and transport hubs. There is a need to ensure that connections are provided to maximise sustainability, with neighbourhood centres that do not detract from the viability/vitality of town centres.

This option could result in further expansion of settlements at the urban fringe, eroding rural character and the relationship with the surrounding countryside. Hence, the detailed assessment required prior to publication of the Regulation 19 Plan. As we know, planned growth already takes us to the limits of what is acceptable at some settlements in terms of constraints. A number of towns face significant challenges in entertaining additional growth such as Banbury, where the current pattern of connectivity is severely stretched with considerable infrastructure challenges to resolve to deliver the level of planned growth associated with the adopted local plans. The same is also the case at Didcot and the edge of Oxford.

This option excludes new significant level growth at the villages of Oxfordshire.

New settlements do not form part of this strategy option.

## **Opportunities**

Opportunities and sustainability gains to be secured where growth is considered include:

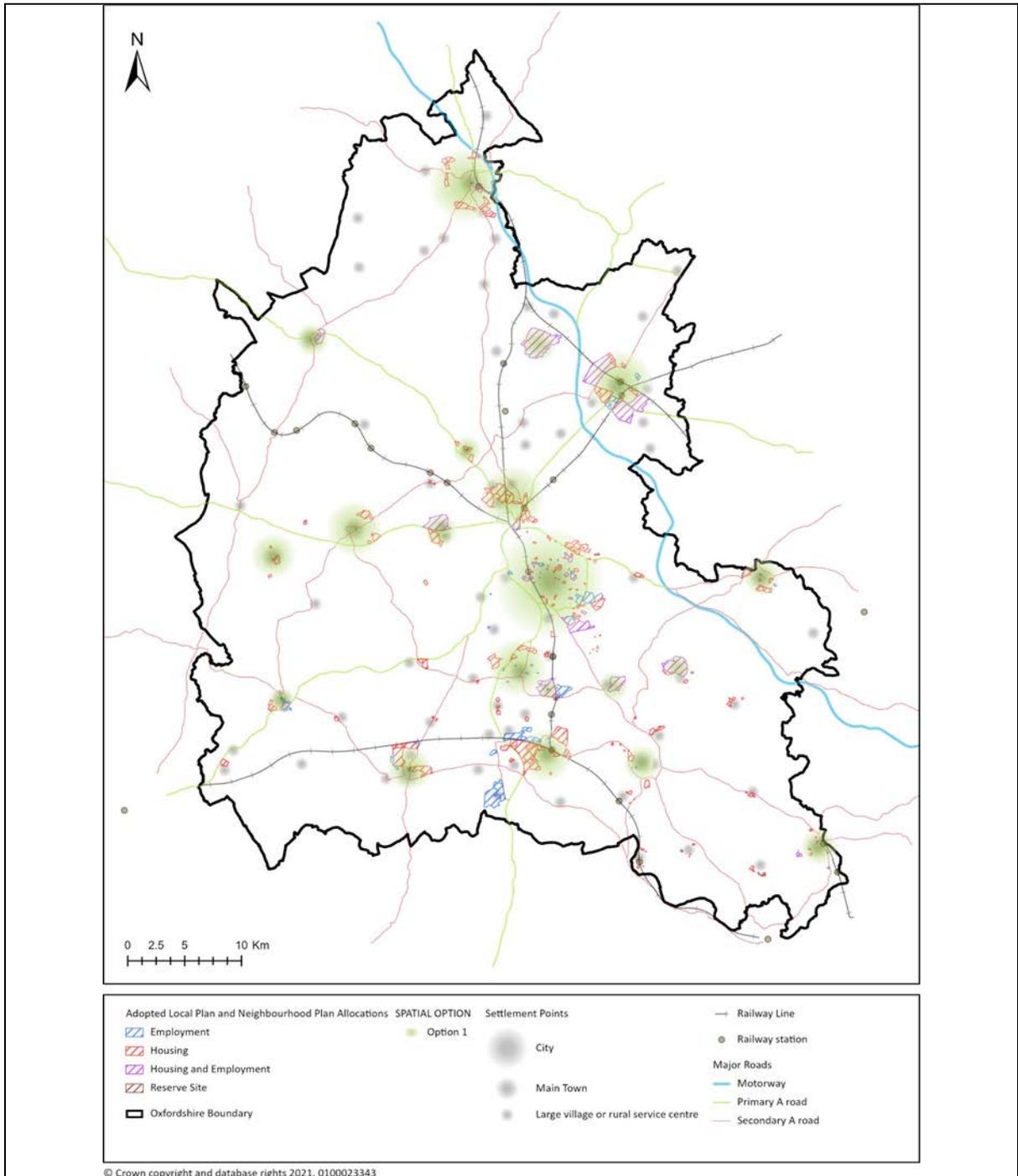
- Securing brownfield redevelopment
- Addressing the changing role of town centres
- Meeting affordable housing needs
- Concentration around sustainable transport nodes and supporting sustainable travel movements
- Opportunities for multi modal travel
- Strengthened community services and facilities in most accessible locations / Strengthening existing role of settlements.
- Meeting the needs of an ageing population
- Addressing existing deprivation

- Links to OxIS and existing planned infrastructure where capacity allows
- Securing '20 minutes neighbourhoods'
- Extended walking and cycling provision including connections to regional routes.
- Supporting a mixed economy – balancing jobs and housing growth.

Note: There may be an opportunity to create a new tier within the settlement hierarchy, associated with the settlement potential work, that draws out a vision for the settlements to 2050 which takes account of opportunities and constraints and would include:

- City – main hub/centre
- Bigger Towns – between the city & market towns. Could be grown to have an extended role/function and significant new services/facilities (could include Bicester, Didcot).
- Market Towns – more traditional scale/character/role/function

**Option 1 – Focus on opportunities at larger settlements and planned growth locations.**



## Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth

### Scope & scale

This option covers urban intensification within the City of Oxford, new or extended urban extensions on the edge of the City.

It includes consideration of growth proposals that are well-connected to the city or are potential extensions to planned growth sites on city edge related to growth in the current adopted local plans and employment sites on the edge of the city that form an Oxford-focused cluster. This may require consideration of a need for a further Green Belt release if the 'exceptional circumstances' test can be met.

The limits of the option are that we know there are significant constraints on what can be achieved within the current administrative area of Oxford, as while there is some potential for more urban renewal and transformation within the city over a 30 year period, it is likely to be modest in scale. Following the release of land on the edge of the city in the Cherwell, South and Vale local plans there are only limited options for additional growth, but some options being promoted which should be tested. The big challenge is to secure the integration of major sites, transport connectivity and green infrastructure connections.

Our aim is to seek to retain the current economic-housing balance, so do not anticipate changes of use to established economic sites.

This option does **not** include consideration of new settlements.

The focus of this option will be on the City and its immediate locale, recognising the role that Oxford plays as a vital economic node, its function as the main service centre and key focal point for the county as a whole. New city-focused growth would aim to support and strengthen Oxford's role as a global centre for knowledge and innovation and its role as a modest sized compact city, as well as one of the anchors of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.

If new or extended urban extensions were to be considered it is anticipated that Green Belt land would be required. This option could include consideration of enhancement to the Green Belt adjoining the city for beneficial public uses, such as new parkland.

### Justification

This option would focus growth within the city and its immediate hinterland to capitalise on economic growth in the city utilising sustainable transport connections, rail, bus and cycling, such as the west end regeneration centred on the Oxford rail station improvement or at the Parkway station, Cowley Branch Line and Park and Rides to support prosperity in the rest of the county.

Recognising the significant role of the city as a global centre/leader in knowledge and innovation, as driver of the county economy and the importance of Oxford as an anchor in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc and how building on the strengths of the city and meeting the needs of its communities will underpin regional prosperity.

The challenge faced by Oxford in meeting its full housing need, as well as an urgent need to provide more affordable housing led to four local plans neighbouring Oxford meeting its unmet housing need up to 2031/36. Improved cycling links and public transport connections are being put in place to ensure that the new development areas fully integrate with the city.

The focus on 'levelling up within the city in order to support a more productive economy and to deliver inclusive growth will lead to new approaches to regeneration and housing delivery.

Further development on the edge in the Green Belt (that meets the 'exceptional circumstances' test) should be to a high design quality, together with improved connectivity to the city, reinforce the links to the business parks surrounding the city and invest in environment enhancements to the Green Belt around the edge of the city.

### **Opportunities**

Opportunities and sustainability gains to be secured where growth is considered include:

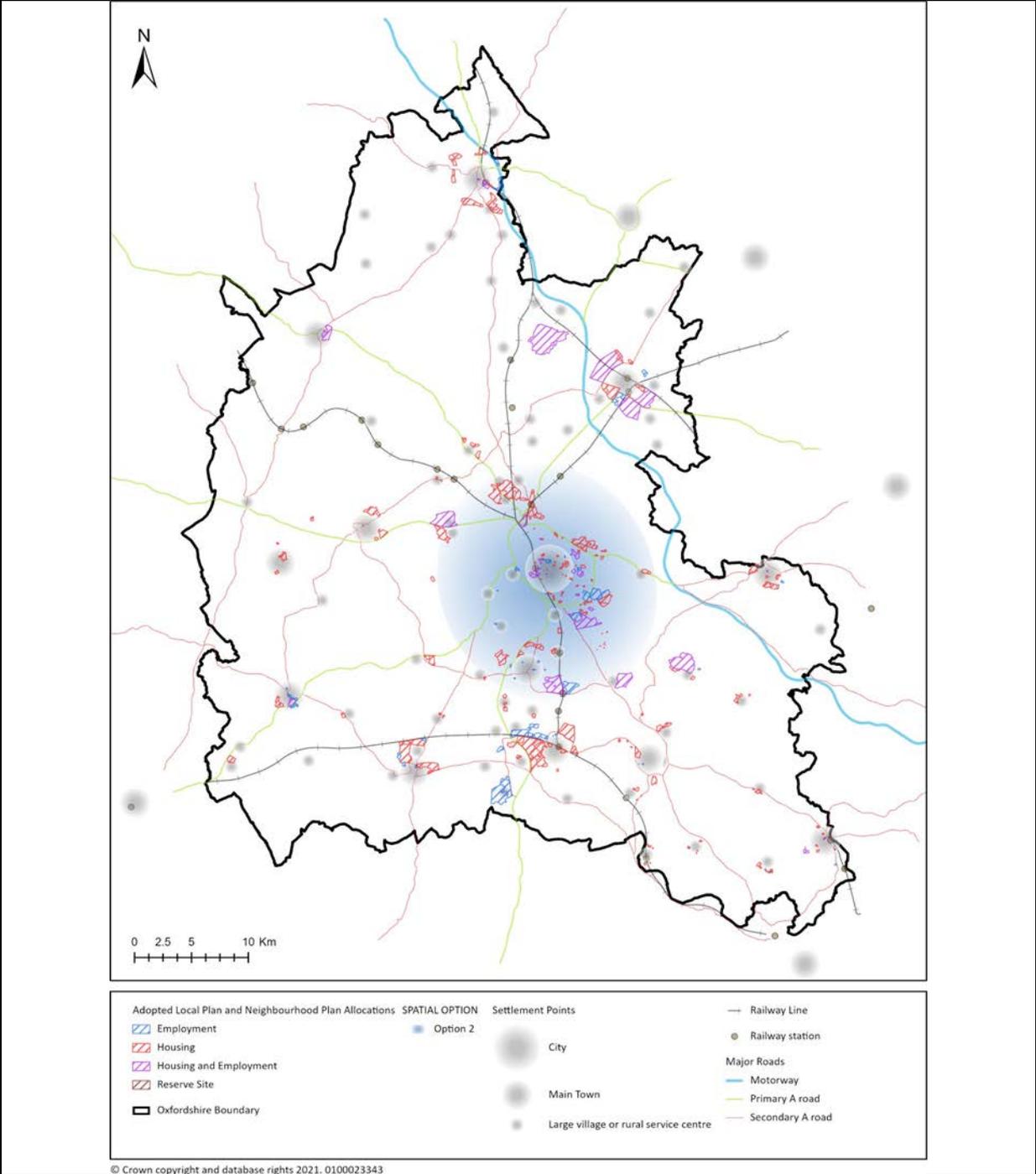
1) Securing wider economic opportunities:

- Growing Oxford's (and subsequently Oxfordshire's) global role as a centre for knowledge and innovation
- Re-purposing of business and science parks with new economic uses as they age and new business activities need to be supported.

2) Securing local opportunities:

- Growth related to Oxford's main service centre as a highly sustainable location
- A well-established network of sustainable and active travel to connect to
- Securing regeneration opportunities and some brownfield redevelopment
- Addressing engrained deprivation and reducing inequalities
- Responding to the changing role of town centres
- Co-location of jobs and housing
- Securing '20 minutes neighbourhoods'
- Extended walking and cycling provision including connections to regional routes
- Capitalising on skills
- Enhancing Green Belt for its beneficial uses - for people as well as nature.

## Option 2 – Focus on Oxford led Growth.



## Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs

### Scope & scale

This option covers new growth based in the most sustainable transport corridors, where frequent bus services operate and rail stations act as transport hubs. This includes new rail stations being planned through strategies such as the Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Study. This option aligns with the emerging Local Transport Connectivity Plan, being prepared by Oxfordshire County Council.

It includes consideration of growth proposals that sit within the main public transport corridors, both rail and bus, linking the rural parts of Oxfordshire with towns and key employment locations and the city itself where the highest density of public transport corridors is focused (and thus not all of the M40 is included). It also takes account of existing and planned key transport hubs. The aim is to align future growth with transport infrastructure investment. The strategy would continue to concentrate Oxfordshire's population through the identified corridors, including the main settlements and potentially at lower order settlements and new settlements within these corridors.

This option **does** include consideration of new settlements. Development may be generated from transport investment that improves the sustainability of particular locations.

This option focuses on bus and rail corridors for the purpose of considering an option. Vehicles will become much more sustainable over the plan period as the switch to electric accelerates.

#### Bus Routes

- Existing: High frequency bus routes and rapid transport routes.
- New: Need to consider the quantum of growth required to deliver bus routes? A new national bus strategy and bus services implementation plan is due from Government shortly; this is too soon to account for at the Regulation 18 stage and will input at the Regulation 19 stage.

#### Trains

- Existing: Based on the location of stations (nodes) with a walking/cycling distance buffer around existing stations. Not all stations play an equal role as some are major hubs, others smaller.
- New: Opportunities related to new stations or improved services at existing stations. A new national rail strategy is due from Government shortly; this is too soon to account for at the Regulation 18 stage and will input at the Regulation 19 stage.

### Justification

The option fits with the zero carbon ambitions of the Oxfordshire Plan. Central to the Oxfordshire Plan vision and objectives is the need to address the causes of climate change and to improve the health and wellbeing of communities. Securing growth based on a sustainable transport network will be central to achieving those

objectives and this option places the focus and emphasis on growth in areas with good public transport links. Our spatial strategy has moved away from putting the car first.

The focus and emphasis of this option is on the existing public transport network and primarily locations that are connected with Oxford and thus form part of the first/last mile considerations. This option may result in a hub and spoke pattern of development with future growth focussed in areas with good public transport connectivity to Oxford, with new development focused on transport nodes such as Oxford Parkway and the regeneration of Oxford station and growth associated with Culham station and other new stations.

This option also considers wider area connections, such as between Oxfordshire and the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, the Thames corridor and M40 corridor, together with the relationship to major settlements close to the plan area, including Swindon and Reading.

This option would focus growth at locations within or connected to the highest concentrations of jobs, affordable housing need and sustainable transport connectivity, to ensure that development was well placed to meet the needs of existing and future communities in a sustainable manner. The emphasis would be on ensuring that future communities, whether part of an expanding settlement or new garden community would be well connected to the sustainable transport network.

This option could support areas where urban renewal, intensification within urban areas, or opportunities for brownfield redevelopment can be triggered by transport improvements (such as new railway stations and extending rail services on the Great Western Line, or following the upgrade to Oxford Station, including the North Cotswold Line, East-West Rail and the line to Didcot) as well as new rapid bus connections and would also take account of the changing nature and role of town centres.

It may result in the establishment of new garden communities where they are well related to existing or planned sustainable transport infrastructure investment such as on the Oxfordshire rail network, not in isolated locations.

This option would closely align with the LTCP vision including active and healthy travel, encouraging healthy choices, promoting the use of public transport and improved regional and local connectivity.

The option considers 'Connectivity for all', not just those who are able to drive. Public transport provisions meet the needs of younger and older people, those with disabilities & those on lower incomes.

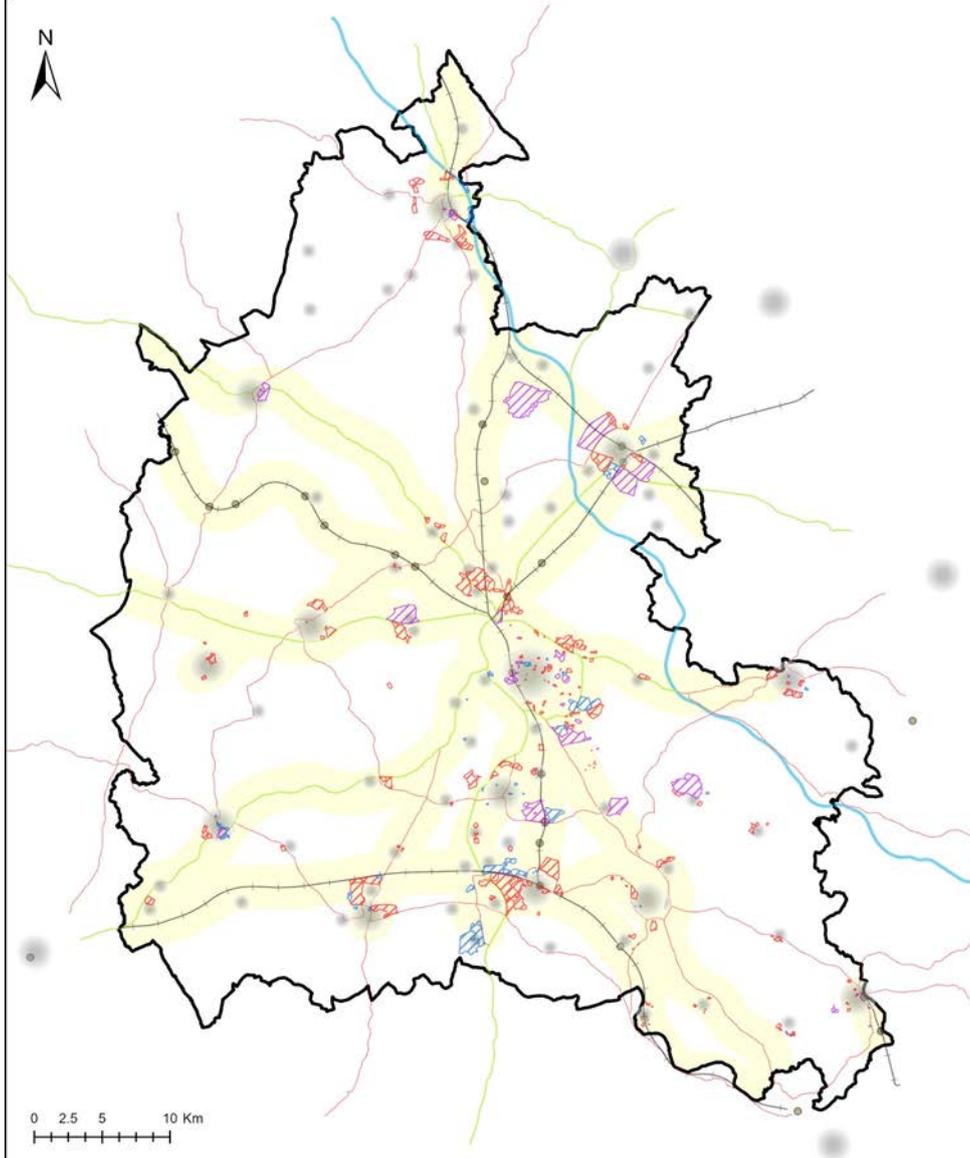
### **Opportunities**

Opportunities and sustainability gains to be secured where growth is considered include:

- Concentration around sustainable transport nodes and supporting sustainable travel movements
- Opportunities for multi modal travel and integrated transport networks
- Enhancing sustainable transport and building on existing infrastructure

- Links to OxIS and existing planned infrastructure where capacity allows
- Decarbonising the transport network
- Establishment of new settlements in sustainable locations
- The potential to create new and/or improved sustainable transport hubs/corridors.
- Strengthened community services and facilities in most accessible locations
- Meeting the needs of an ageing population
- Addressing existing deprivation
- Securing brownfield redevelopment
- Addressing the changing role of town centres
- Meeting affordable housing needs where they arise
- Supporting a mixed economy – balancing jobs and housing growth.
- Distributing growth away from locations that have experienced significant growth in first phase of plan and are allocated through adopted local plans.
- Securing '20 minutes neighbourhoods'
- Extended walking and cycling provision including connections to regional routes.
- Moving away from car dependent developments.

**Option 3 - Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs.**



<p>Adopted Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan Allocations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; border: 1px solid blue; background: repeating-linear-gradient(45deg, transparent, transparent 2px, blue 2px, blue 4px);"></span> Employment</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; border: 1px solid red; background: repeating-linear-gradient(-45deg, transparent, transparent 2px, red 2px, red 4px);"></span> Housing</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; border: 1px solid purple; background: repeating-linear-gradient(-45deg, transparent, transparent 2px, purple 2px, purple 4px);"></span> Housing and Employment</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; border: 1px solid pink; background: repeating-linear-gradient(-45deg, transparent, transparent 2px, pink 2px, pink 4px);"></span> Reserve Site</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; border: 2px solid black;"></span> Oxfordshire Boundary</li> </ul>	<p>SPATIAL OPTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: yellow;"></span> Option 3</li> </ul>	<p>Settlement Points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: grey; border-radius: 50%;"></span> City</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: grey; border-radius: 50%; opacity: 0.5;"></span> Main Town</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: grey; border-radius: 50%; opacity: 0.2;"></span> Large village or rural service centre</li> </ul>	<p>Railway Line</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 2px; background-color: black;"></span> Railway Line</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%;"></span> Railway station</li> </ul> <p>Major Roads</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px solid blue;"></span> Motorway</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px solid green;"></span> Primary A road</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px solid black;"></span> Secondary A road</li> </ul>
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## Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations

### Scope & scale

This option centres on the network of business and science parks that covers Oxfordshire and particularly those identified as priority economic assets in the OXLEP LIS key locations within Oxfordshire's 'innovation ecosystem'.

This option includes consideration of growth proposals that would extend business and science parks or create new ones, with housing and residential areas alongside, co-located with these economic hubs, to reduce the need to travel and to create more sustainable locations. This option does not support the conversion of business parks themselves for housing.

This option would also include the intensification of economic activities at the business and science parks, building on current economic strengths in key sectors such as life sciences and advanced engineering, as new economic innovations are applied, and buildings need to be repurposed to support new economic activities and create more jobs. As the OXLEP LIS highlights, as current and new economic sectors grow, the demand for employment space will grow further. It is also anticipated that as the Oxford to Cambridge Arc takes shape over the next 20 to 30 years, more land for economic purposes will be required, especially as the economy gradually converts to zero carbon and new economic opportunities arise for the wider economy and SMEs as a result.

The option would focus new growth where it would help to support/strengthen Oxfordshire's key economic assets and take account of key economic assets identified in the LIS that are not yet built out. The limits of the option are that it is anticipated that the opportunity to undertake the sort of residential growth alongside the network of business parks that is proposed in this option is modest.

This option **could** include the creation of new settlements, where new business and science parks are proposed as part of a comprehensive, mixed use development proposal.

Location identified in LIS (Figure 10)	
Banbury	Oxford Brookes University
Begbroke Science Park	Oxford Business Park
Bicester Garden Town	Oxford Centre for Innovation
Carterton/Brize Norton	Oxford North
Culham Science Centre	Oxford Science Park
Didcot Garden Town	Oxford Station and West End
Grove Technology Park	Oxford Technology Park
Harwell Campus	Oxford University
Headington Hospital Quarter	Salt Cross garden Village
Heyford Park	Shrivenham Defence Academy
Howbery Park	The Quadrant, Abingdon
Milton Park	Witney Business and Innovation Centre
Osney Meads Innovation Quarter	

## **Justification**

Oxfordshire is at the centre of innovation for the UK. It has a strong network of science parks and innovation firms across the county, with towns such as Bicester and Banbury, Carterton and locations such as Heyford Park all playing an important role, alongside the globally significant Science Vale with its critical economic assets at Culham and Harwell and the City of Oxford, with its universities, at the heart of the county-wide network.

The strength of Oxfordshire's economy has been and will be driven to a large extent by innovation sectors and business clusters within towns such as Bicester and Didcot as well as transformative technologies developed through the universities and the network of business and science parks in Oxfordshire.

The challenges in retaining growth in these key sectors and enabling business to establish themselves and grow in Oxfordshire are well recognised and include the availability of space for business to grow, the availability of affordable housing and capacity in the transport and infrastructure network.

This option supports clean economic growth to support innovation and economic prosperity across the county. The option would support the intensification and extension of existing business and science sites and emphasises supporting innovation and securing innovation centres, live-work units and building on the recent Treasury Plan for Growth.

Supporting the growth and sustainability of Oxfordshire's innovation ecosystem will help support a balanced economy across Oxfordshire so that prosperity is shared. This option includes the potential to renew and strengthen the economic role of our city and town centres.

The focus of this option is on the spatial relationship between these key innovation and economic growth clusters, with the emphasis on enhanced transport and digital connectivity and the co-location of housing and jobs to reduce the need for travel and create a more sustainable approach to growth.

This option takes account of a recent survey of key employment sites and their potential for growth.

The option also addresses the impact of COVID-19 and the long-term need for people to be located close to their workplaces - recognising lots of the work in the knowledge economy needs specialist equipment, laboratories, etc. Also, the business opportunities arising from MoD activities and technology support undertaken at military bases such as Brize Norton.

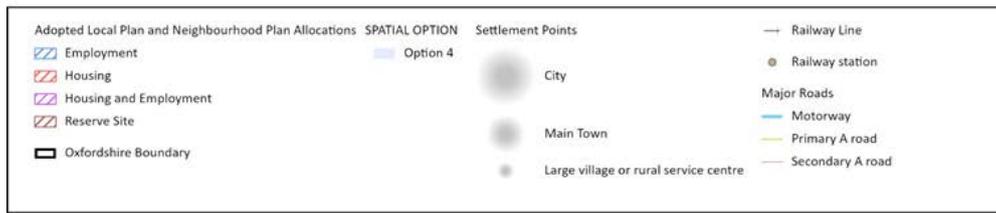
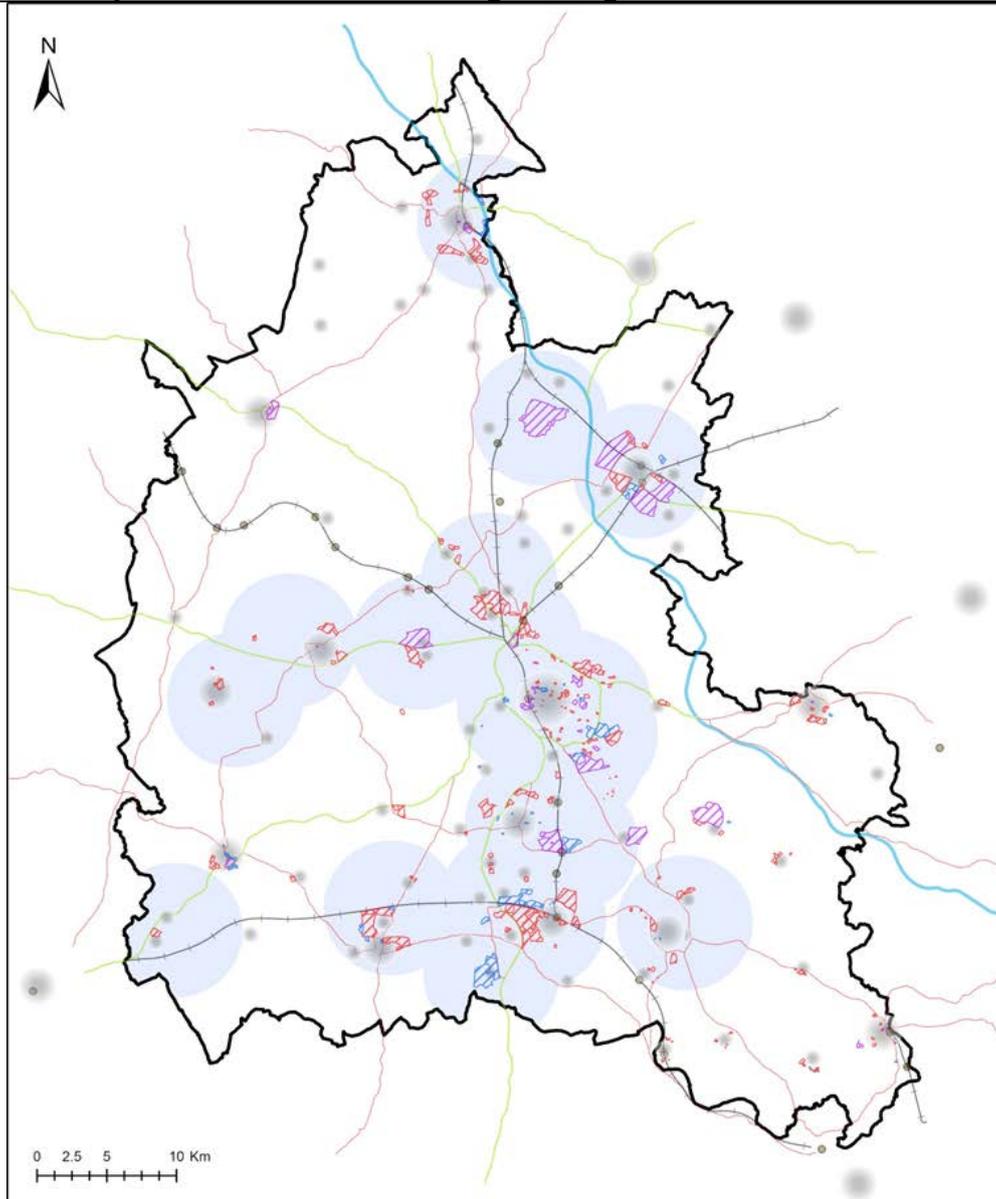
## **Opportunities**

Opportunities and sustainability gains to be secured where growth is considered include:

- A) Securing global economic opportunities:
- Supporting the innovation ecosystem and the wider economy too
  - Securing affordable housing is a key issue to address to remove a key constraint on economic growth

- Spreading growth and investment (and the opportunities associated with this) across a wide geographical area and a wide range of key economic assets.
- B) Securing local (Oxfordshire) economic opportunities:
- Reducing the need to travel
  - Concentration of growth around sustainable transport nodes
  - Securing '20 minute neighbourhoods'
  - Extended walking and cycling provision including connections to regional routes.

**Option 4 – Focus on strengthening business locations.**



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## Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities

### Scope & scale

This option covers rural Oxfordshire and focuses on the villages and areas between the villages.

It includes consideration of growth proposals beyond the areas supported through the current adopted local plans that might bring new investment and strengthen patronage in rural areas that is essential to support rural services (and improve access), improve access to education and shops etc. It could include new investment in the rural economy, new village clusters, as well as taking account of strong cross-boundary relationship with major settlements outside Oxfordshire, such as Swindon.

The scope for this option is to consider growth in rural settings away from the main service centres and top-tier settlements that will accommodate the current local plan-led growth up to the mid-2030s and a redirection of development to more rural parts of the county provided that suitable access to the public transport network and key services and facilities is possible.

The limits of the option are that we anticipate the SA and the other evidence that supports the Plan will show that there is a limit to the level of new growth that can be absorbed in each of the four rural Districts. We anticipate that limited rural growth will feature in the Regulation 19 Plan.

This option **does** include consideration of extending existing and allocated Garden Villages and establishing new settlements.

### Justification

Many villages have an aging population and have lost their services. Limited growth could arrest that decline and strengthen their sustainability. The most widespread deprivation factor in Oxfordshire relates to barriers to housing and services.

Such inequalities are less prevalent within the main market towns and settlements that are planned to grow from the sites allocated in the adopted local plans. The main settlements have benefitted from investment in infrastructure and affordable housing over a number of years and although deprivation and inequalities exist within these communities, rural areas have in many cases become increasingly isolated, particularly with the removal of public transport services and restricted growth.

This option would seek to address existing issues of isolation and rural deprivation by redirecting growth away from main settlements to where it could best address such inequalities; this approach is being taken in the current South Oxfordshire Plan with the Berinsfield Garden Village.

Regard will be had to infrastructure delivery and how investment in infrastructure in the first phase of the Plan might facilitate further growth beyond and up to 2050.

While there are settlements that might be strengthened by limited growth to improve accessibility, housing choice and service, it is anticipated that only modest levels of

growth would arise from this option due to constraints such as poor access and the limited capacity of rural roads.

It is likely that as farming practices and land stewardship continues to evolve, in response to climate change and policy changes around environmental stewardship, the process of farm diversification will lead to new innovations in the rural economy that will themselves support limited residential growth in rural areas.

It could involve support for new villages and modest growth at villages not faced by connectivity challenges. But a major dispersal of new growth across a wide range of villages would not be consistent with the Plan strategy as it is much harder to deliver strategic scale infrastructure and it is harder to deliver major change to meet zero carbon ambitions.

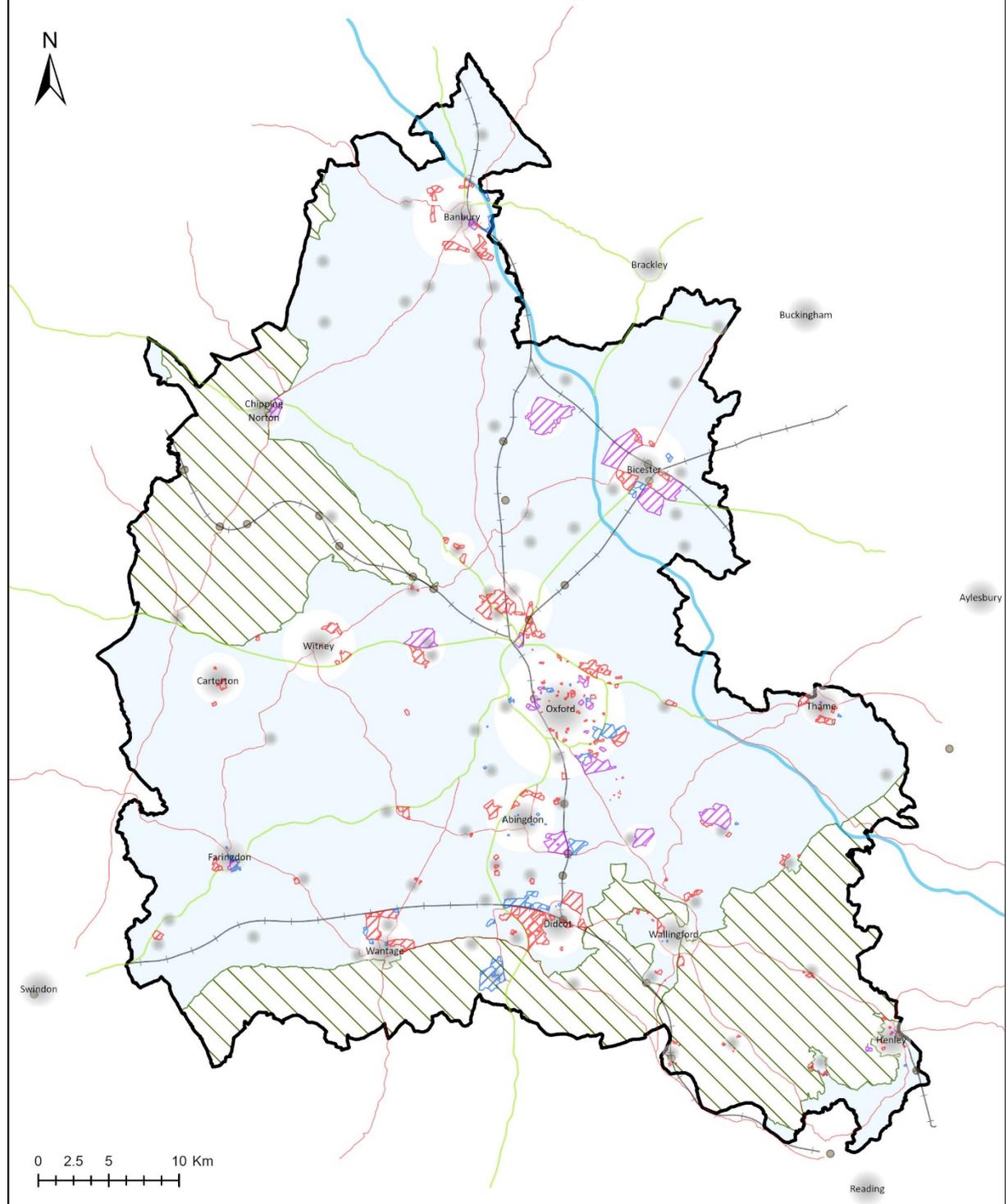
A number of locations would also currently be in the Green Belt and therefore any removal of land from the Green Belt would be subject to identifying the exceptional circumstances for doing so.

### **Opportunities**

Opportunities and sustainability gains to be secured where growth is considered include:

- Addressing rural deprivation and inequalities by improving access to services, facilities, homes and jobs in rural areas
- Maximising cross-boundary relationships
- Reducing pressure on main settlements
- Supporting the diversification of the rural economy
- Securing '20 minutes neighbourhoods' and delivering zero carbon growth
- Extended walking and cycling provision including connections to regional routes.

## Option 5 – Focus on supporting rural communities.



Adopted Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan Allocations	SPATIAL OPTION	Settlement Points	Railway Line
Employment	Option 5	City	Railway station
Housing		Main Town	Major Roads
Housing and Employment		Large village or rural service centre	Motorway
Reserve Site			Primary A road
Oxfordshire Boundary			Secondary A road

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## Next Steps: Proceeding from Regulation 18 to Regulation 19

511. Following the consultation on the Regulation 18 Plan, a site options assessment will be undertaken using a series of steps to enable the 'Broad Areas of Growth' to be identified, taking account of current local plan allocations, new development proposals and opportunities for enhancement. This evaluation will involve testing of site options against the Oxfordshire Plan evidence-base using consistent data and baseline information.
512. Consideration will also be given to the strategic interventions required to deliver each spatial strategy option and the testing of each option against different scales of growth.
513. As noted in the section on the level of 'committed growth', a decision will also be taken as to where on the OGNA range the level of growth to be accommodated should be set at the end of 2021. This will take account of the level of 'committed' growth already met in the five adopted local plans from 2020 to 2031/5/6 onwards and thus consider a 'residual growth' figure for the 2031/5/6 period to 2050.
514. We anticipate that the Regulation 19 Plan will contain a mix of the five spatial options.
515. The assessment of site proposals in the period between Regulation 18 and 19 will also need to take account of the MHCLG-led Arc Spatial Framework as it emerges. It is possible that there may be growth requirements to be considered from that source.

STEP 1: (September 2021) Identify high-level spatial strategy options for distributing growth in Oxfordshire.

STEP 2: Testing of each of the high-level spatial strategy options, including Oxfordshire's growth requirements, opportunities & constraints.

This step will include the assessment of sites and will combine consideration of urban renewal and brownfield potential, the use of the HEELA and settlement capacity analysis, climate change and environmental enhancement opportunities, transport factors and issues arising from the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA), as well as reviewing the link to the Strategic Vision and Plan Objectives. The assessment will be published as part of the evidence base for the Regulation 19 Plan.

STEP 3: Selection of Spatial Strategy.

STEP 4: Identification of areas of focus.

STEP 5: Further testing of suitability, achievability, and deliverability to establish development capacity and sustainability of approach for Oxfordshire.

STEP 6: Confirm broad locations for growth (and any phasing) for the Oxfordshire Plan and each District.

STEP 7: (December 2021) Confirm level of growth within the OGNA range.

516. The conclusion of these steps will inform the 'broad locations of growth' that will be presented for consultation in the Regulation 19 Draft Oxfordshire Plan.

## The Draft Monitoring Framework

517. Effective monitoring is important to ensure that Plan policies are being implemented and are achieving their aims.
518. Our monitoring report will measure and report on the effectiveness of policies within the Oxfordshire Plan. It will report on a range of data to assess whether: policy targets have been met, or progress is being made towards meeting them; policy targets are not being met, or are not on track to being achieved, and the reasons for this; whether policies are having an impact in respect of national and local policy targets; and whether any other targets need adjusting or replacing because they are not working as intended; whether policies need changing to reflect changes in national policy or strategic needs appropriate infrastructure is being delivered to support growth.
519. If policies need changing the monitoring report will list the actions needed to achieve this. Our monitoring report will be published every 12 months.
520. For each policy in the Plan, we will develop an indicator and a target, which will be used to measure the policy's effectiveness. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) also lists a number of 'significant effects indicators' which will be used to monitor the 'significant effects identified in the SA. Data collected on these indicators will be reported on in our monitoring report.
521. A set of trajectories for housing and employment to address delivery across the programme period as a whole will also be completed. These are of necessity indicative but provide a baseline against which overall implementation can be assessed. They include completions and strategic developments which have an existing planning permission.

### Delivering the Plan

522. Data on these indicators will be gathered and reported on an annual basis. We will also report on whether the established targets have been met, and, if not, what actions are to be taken to ensure they are met in future.
523. We have worked with our delivery partners including Oxfordshire County Council during the preparation of this Plan and its Infrastructure Delivery Plan (OxIS) to ensure the partnership is focused on the monitoring and delivery of strategic policies with the right infrastructure at the right times.
524. We will continue to work as a partnership of planning authorities through the Oxfordshire Growth Board and with the County Council and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership. The Statement of Common Ground shows the joint working undertaken during the preparation of the Plan and details the various forums and organisations we work with on a regular basis to debate and coordinate strategic planning issues. Actions resulting from cooperation with other local planning authorities or organisations will be reported in the monitoring report.

525. Our Monitoring Report will assess the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan including the rate of delivery of allocated sites by measuring performance against the indicators identified in the Monitoring Framework.

526. Annual monitoring will inform future local plan reviews. These reviews may be in response to shortfalls in the implementation of the Plan's policies and in the delivery of infrastructure, to changes in national policy or strategic needs or due to the need to roll forward the Plan period.

## Joint Monitoring Framework

527. The Monitoring Framework will be developed in conjunction with the completion of the OxIS between the Regulation 18 and 19 stages. Linked to the OxIS monitoring system, metrics are likely to include:

### Climate Change and the Environment

- Carbon Emissions
- Climate Change Impact Resilience
- Natural Environment & Biodiversity
- Waste & Recycling
- Water & Noise Pollution

### Health

- Health Inequality
- Access to Spaces for Physical Activity
- Health Service Access
- Air Quality
- Mental Health & Wellbeing

### Communities and Place-Shaping

- Liveable Communities
- Community Safety & Security
- Heritage & Culture
- Socially Integrated Communities
- Inclusive & Integrated Active Travel

### Transport and Connectivity

- Digital Connectivity
- Clean & Secure Energy Grid Capacity
- Secure Water Supply & Wastewater
- Transport Connectivity & Performance within Oxfordshire
- Strategic Transport Connectivity

### The Economy and Productivity

- World Class Inclusive Education & Skills Development
- Reduce Oxfordshire's Socio-Economic Inequalities
- Attract & Retain Talent in Oxfordshire
- Global Business Innovation Ecosystem
- Drive Productive Economic Growth & Employment

### Housing

- Affordable Housing
- New modes of construction



# Oxfordshire Plan 2050

## Duty to Co-operate Statement

Second Regulation 18 Consultation  
July 2021



**Cherwell**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

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DISTRICT COUNCIL

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## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Oxfordshire Plan is a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan (JSSP) which is being produced by Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council (referred to throughout this document as 'Oxfordshire's City and District Councils'). The Oxfordshire Plan will provide a strategic planning framework for Oxfordshire to 2050.
- 1.2 In producing the Oxfordshire Plan, Oxfordshire's City and District Councils have a legal duty to engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis with each other, Oxfordshire County Council, neighbouring authorities and specific organisations set out in the Planning Regulations<sup>1</sup> in order to maximise the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan in addressing cross-boundary strategic planning matters. This legal duty is known as the 'duty to co-operate'.
- 1.3 This Duty to Co-operate Statement explains how Oxfordshire's City and District Councils have complied with the duty to co-operate through the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan to date (up to the second Regulation 18 consultation). This Statement sets out:
- How Oxfordshire's City and District Councils are working together, and in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council and Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, to produce the Oxfordshire Plan;
  - The other organisations that Oxfordshire's City and District Councils are co-operating with in producing the Oxfordshire Plan, as well as the strategic matters relevant to each of these organisations;
  - The nature and timing of the co-operation undertaken to date; and
  - The outcomes of the co-operation to date, including how it has influenced the production of the Oxfordshire Plan.
- 1.4 As co-operation to address cross-boundary strategic planning matters will continue throughout the plan-making process, an updated version of this Duty to Co-operate Statement will be published at the Regulation 19 stage.

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<sup>1</sup> The Town and Country Planning (England) Regulations 2012, Part 2, Regulation 4

## 2 Duty to Co-operate Requirements

### **Legal Requirements**

- 2.1 The duty to co-operate is a legal requirement under Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as inserted by Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011).
- 2.2 The duty to co-operate requires local planning authorities to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with other local planning authorities, county councils and prescribed bodies in order to maximise the effectiveness of development plan documents in relation to strategic planning matters.
- 2.3 Legislation<sup>2</sup> defines strategic matters as:
  - a) 'Sustainable development or use of land that has or would have a significant impact on at least two planning areas, including (in particular) sustainable development or use of land for, or in connection with, infrastructure that is strategic and has or would have a significant impact on at least two planning areas; and
  - b) Sustainable development or use of land in a two-tier area if the development or use is a county matter, or it has/would have a significant impact on a county matter.'

### **National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019)**

- 2.4 Paragraphs 24-27 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provide further detail on how the duty to co-operate should be applied through the plan-making process.
- 2.5 Paragraph 25 of the NPPF states that 'strategic policy-making authorities should collaborate to identify the relevant strategic matters that they need to address in their plans'.
- 2.6 Paragraph 26 of the NPPF states that 'effective and on-going joint working between strategic policy-making authorities and relevant bodies is integral to the production of a positively prepared and justified strategy. In particular, joint working should help to determine where additional infrastructure is necessary and whether development needs that cannot be met wholly within a particular plan area could be met elsewhere'.
- 2.7 Paragraph 27 of the NPPF states that 'in order to demonstrate effective and on-going joint working, strategic policy-making authorities should prepare and maintain one or more statements of common ground'. A statement of common ground should document the strategic cross-boundary planning matters being addressed and the progress made in addressing them. Statements of common ground 'should be produced using the approach set out in national planning guidance and be made publicly available throughout the plan-making process to provide transparency'.

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<sup>2</sup> Planning and Compulsory Act 2004, Section 33A, Subsection 4 (as inserted by the Localism Act 2011)

- 2.8 Before they can be adopted, all emerging development plan documents are examined to assess whether they have been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements (including the duty to co-operate) and whether they are sound. Paragraph 35 of the NPPF sets out the four tests of soundness, two of which are directly related to the duty to co-operate:

*Test of soundness A: 'Positively prepared - providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development'.*

*Test of soundness C: 'Effective - deliverable over the plan period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground'.*

### **Planning Practice Guidance**

- 2.9 National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides additional detail in relation to the application of the duty to co-operate, including the organisations that should be engaged with, how the duty to co-operate will be considered at examination and how two or more strategic policy-making authorities can co-operate in plan preparation. The PPG highlights that local planning authorities can agree to prepare joint plans with neighbouring authorities under Section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as a means of co-operating in local plan preparation.<sup>3</sup> The PPG also provides more detailed information on how statements of common ground should be prepared and presented.

### **Other Relevant Guidance**

- 2.10 The Planning Inspectorate's Procedure Guide for Local Plan Examinations<sup>4</sup> states that in order to demonstrate compliance with the duty to co-operate, 'the most helpful approach is for local planning authorities to submit a statement of compliance with the duty'. The statement of compliance should identify and detail:
- i. Any relevant strategic matters and how they have been resolved, or, if they have not been resolved, why not;
  - ii. Who local planning authorities have co-operated with and on which strategic matter(s);
  - iii. The nature and timing of the co-operation (for example by including meeting notes); and
  - iv. The outcomes of the co-operation, including how it has influenced the plan.

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<sup>3</sup> Planning Practice Guidance: Plan-making: Maintaining Effective Engagement: How can 2 or more strategic policy-making authorities co-operate on local plan preparation to satisfy the duty to co-operate? Paragraph: 032 Reference ID: 61-032-20190315 Revision date: 15 03 2019

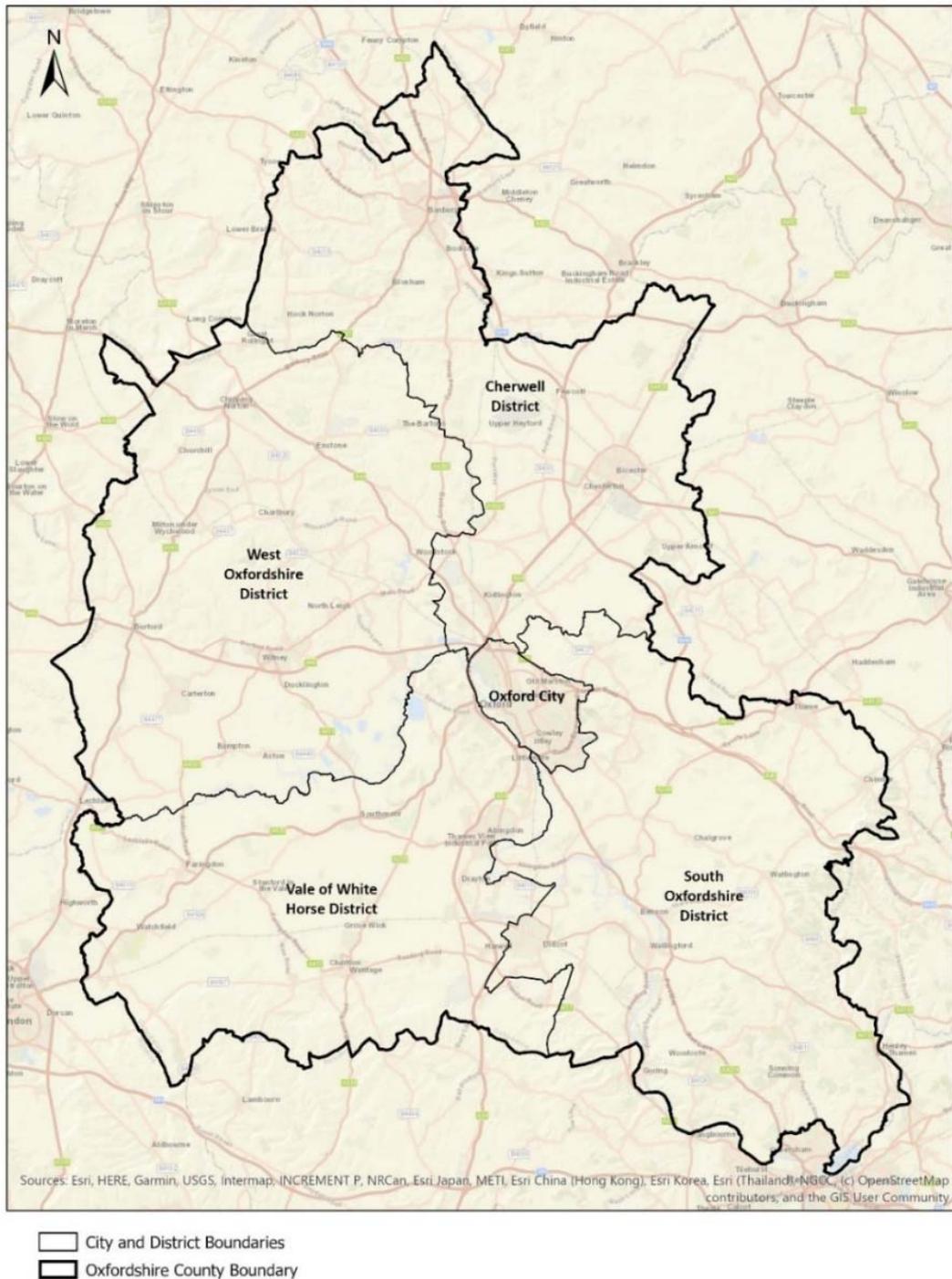
<sup>4</sup> The Planning Inspectorate (February 2021) Procedure Guide for Local Plan Examinations. Seventh Edition.

### 3 Duty to Co-operate Bodies

#### **Oxfordshire Authorities**

3.1 Oxfordshire has a two-tier local government arrangement. There are five City and District Councils (Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council) and one county council (Oxfordshire County Council) which spans the entire Oxfordshire area. Figure 1 shows Oxfordshire’s administrative boundaries.

**Figure 1: Oxfordshire’s Administrative Boundaries**



- 3.2 Oxfordshire's City and District Councils are the local planning authorities and are responsible for strategic plan-making. Oxfordshire's City and District Councils are working together to produce the Oxfordshire Plan under Section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as a means of co-operating to effectively address strategic planning matters in Oxfordshire.
- 3.3 Oxfordshire County Council has responsibilities including transport, education and minerals and waste planning.
- 3.4 Oxfordshire's City and District Councils and Oxfordshire County Council have a legal duty to engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis with each other in the production of the Oxfordshire Plan. Oxfordshire County Council is a key partner in the production of the Oxfordshire Plan.

### **Neighbouring Authorities**

- 3.5 In producing the Oxfordshire Plan, Oxfordshire's City and District Councils are co-operating with the authorities that adjoin Oxfordshire in relation to relevant cross-boundary strategic planning matters.
- 3.6 The following local authorities have administrative boundaries that directly adjoin Oxfordshire:
- Buckinghamshire Council
  - Cotswold District Council
  - Gloucestershire County Council
  - Reading Borough Council
  - Stratford-Upon-Avon District Council
  - Swindon Borough Council
  - Warwickshire County Council
  - West Berkshire Council
  - West Northamptonshire Council
  - Wiltshire Council
  - Wokingham Borough Council
- 3.7 A map illustrating neighbouring authorities' geographical relationships with Oxfordshire is provided at Appendix 1.
- 3.8 When work on the Oxfordshire Plan commenced, Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire had two-tier arrangements of local government. However, on 1 April 2020 a new unitary authority for Buckinghamshire was created and on 1 April 2021 Northamptonshire became two new unitary authorities – North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire.
- 3.9 Prior to 1 April 2020, local government in Buckinghamshire consisted of four district councils (Aylesbury Vale District Council, Chiltern District Council, South Bucks District Council and Wycombe District Council) and one county council (Buckinghamshire County Council). Aylesbury Vale District Council, Wycombe District Council and

Buckinghamshire County Council all had administrative boundaries that directly adjoined Oxfordshire.

- 3.10 In producing the Oxfordshire Plan, engagement was undertaken with all the Buckinghamshire district councils and Buckinghamshire County Council up to 31 March 2020. Whilst Chiltern District Council and South Bucks District Council did not directly adjoin Oxfordshire's boundary, those authorities were engaged with in order that any strategic planning matters relevant to the wider Buckinghamshire area could be identified and addressed from the early stages of producing the Oxfordshire Plan. From 1 April 2020 engagement has been with the newly formed Buckinghamshire Council.
- 3.11 Prior to 1 April 2021, local government in Northamptonshire consisted of seven district/borough councils and one county council. Within this structure, Northamptonshire County Council and South Northamptonshire District Council had administrative boundaries that directly adjoined Oxfordshire. From 1 April 2021, Northamptonshire become two unitary authorities - West Northamptonshire Council and North Northamptonshire Council.
- 3.12 In producing the Oxfordshire Plan, engagement was undertaken with Daventry District Council, Northampton Borough Council, South Northamptonshire Council and Northamptonshire County Council up to 31 March 2021. Whilst Daventry District Council and Northampton Borough Council did not directly adjoin Oxfordshire's boundary, those authorities were engaged with in order that any strategic planning matters relevant to the wider West Northamptonshire area could be identified and addressed from the early stages of producing the Oxfordshire Plan. From 1 April 2021 engagement has been with the newly formed West Northamptonshire Council.

### **Prescribed Bodies**

- 3.13 The Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012<sup>5</sup> identify prescribed bodies that local planning authorities must co-operate with in plan-making.
- 3.14 In producing the Oxfordshire Plan, Oxfordshire's City and District Councils are co-operating with relevant prescribed bodies in relation to cross-boundary strategic planning matters. The prescribed bodies relevant to the production of the Oxfordshire Plan are:
- i. Environment Agency
  - ii. Historic England<sup>6</sup>
  - iii. Natural England
  - iv. The Mayor of London
  - v. The Civil Aviation Authority
  - vi. Homes England<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The Town and Country Planning (England) Regulations 2012, Part 2, Regulation 4

<sup>6</sup> Previously the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England.

<sup>7</sup> Previously the Homes and Communities Agency.

- vii. Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)<sup>8</sup> - The majority of Oxfordshire is within the Oxfordshire CCG area, but there are small areas of Oxfordshire that fall within the Buckinghamshire CCG and Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire CCG areas (Appendix 2).
- viii. The Office of Rail and Road<sup>9</sup>
- ix. Highways Authority - Highways England is responsible for motorways and major trunk roads in England. Local roads are managed by Oxfordshire County Council.

3.15 Whilst Oxfordshire is not within, and does not directly adjoin, the Greater London administrative boundary, engagement with the Mayor of London (via the Greater London Authority) will be undertaken under the duty to co-operate. This is because London, as a major capital city, has social and economic influences to varying extents across the wider south-east area, including with Oxfordshire and the Oxford-Cambridge Arc area. There is therefore some potential for relevant strategic matters.

3.16 The following organisations are also identified as prescribed bodies in the Regulations but are not considered relevant to the production of the Oxfordshire Plan:

*Integrated Transport Authorities* - Integrated Transport Authorities are only established for the six main metropolitan areas<sup>10</sup> outside of London. Oxfordshire does not fall within an Integrated Transport Authority area, nor does it adjoin an Integrated Transport Authority area. There is no apparent functional relationship between Oxfordshire and any Integrated Transport Authority area. It is therefore considered that there are no strategic matters with Integrated Transport Authorities relevant to the production of the Oxfordshire Plan.

*Marine Management Organisations* - Marine Management Organisations licence, regulate and plan marine activities in the seas around England. Oxfordshire is centrally located within England and is entirely inland. Oxfordshire does not include any coastline, nor do any of authorities that adjoin Oxfordshire. There is no obvious functional relationship between Oxfordshire and the sea. It is therefore considered that there are no strategic matters with Marine Management Organisations relevant to the production of the Oxfordshire Plan.

*Transport for London (TfL)* - TfL has potential to provide support to projects located outside of London but that provide connections to London. However, engagement with TfL has confirmed that there are no strategic matters with TfL relevant to the production of the Oxfordshire Plan.

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<sup>8</sup> Previously Primary Care Trusts.

<sup>9</sup> Previously the Office of Rail Regulation.

<sup>10</sup> Greater Manchester, Liverpool City Region, Sheffield City Region, Tyne and Wear, the West Midlands and West Yorkshire.

### **Local Enterprise Partnerships**

- 3.17 Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) are private sector led partnerships between businesses and local public sector bodies. They aim to bring private sector expertise into local economic decision making and to encourage collaboration and strategic decision making at a functional economic area scale.
- 3.18 The PPG states that LEPs are not subject to the requirements of the duty to co-operate themselves, but that local planning authorities must co-operate with LEPs. Local planning authorities must have regard to the activities of LEPs when preparing plans, so long as those activities are relevant to plan-making.<sup>11</sup>
- 3.19 The Oxfordshire LEP covers the entire county of Oxfordshire. The Oxfordshire LEP is a key partner in the production of the Oxfordshire Plan.
- 3.20 In producing the Oxfordshire Plan, engagement will be undertaken with neighbouring LEPs under the duty to co-operate as there may be strategic matters where co-operation is required given the Oxfordshire Plan's strategic nature and long timeframe. However, it is recognised that that relationships with surrounding functional economic areas are likely to vary in terms of their nature, strength and significance. It should also be noted that considerable joint working is being undertaken between LEPs across the Oxford-Cambridge Arc area (Section 7).
- 3.21 The following LEPs have boundaries that directly adjoin Oxfordshire (Appendix 3):
- Buckinghamshire LEP
  - Coventry and Warwickshire LEP
  - Gloucestershire LEP
  - South East Midlands LEP
  - Swindon and Wiltshire LEP
  - Thames Valley Berkshire LEP

### **Local Nature Partnerships**

- 3.22 Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs) are partnerships of a broad range of local organisations, businesses and people who aim to bring about improvements in their local natural environment.
- 3.23 The PPG states that LNPs are not subject to the requirements of the duty to co-operate themselves, but that local planning authorities must co-operate with LNPs. Local planning authorities must have regard to the activities of LNPs when they are preparing plans, so long as those activities are relevant to plan-making.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Planning Practice Guidance: Plan-Making: Maintaining Effective Cooperation: Are other public bodies subject to the duty to co-operate? Paragraph: 030 Reference ID: 61-030-20190315 Revision date: 15 03 2019

<sup>12</sup> Planning Practice Guidance: Plan-Making: Maintaining Effective Cooperation: Are other public bodies subject to the duty to co-operate? Paragraph: 030 Reference ID: 61-030-20190315 Revision date: 15 03 2019

- 3.24 Oxfordshire does not currently have a LNP. However, on 31 July 2019 West Oxfordshire District Council passed a motion calling for a LNP for Oxfordshire to be formed.<sup>13</sup> West Oxfordshire District Council then wrote to the other Oxfordshire authorities to ask for support in taking this forward. On 28 January 2020 the Oxfordshire Growth Board provided its support for establishing a LNP for Oxfordshire which could link in with the Growth Board's work and wider regional discussions concerning the natural environment. Since the Growth Board offered support for the establishment of an LNP, there have been several informal discussions with local partners to develop proposals. Progress is still being made towards establishing an LNP with the support of funding from the Growth Board.
- 3.25 In lieu of an LNP for Oxfordshire, informal engagement will be undertaken with the Oxfordshire Environment Board (OxEB) and Oxfordshire Biodiversity Action Group (BAG) in addition formal co-operation with Natural England and the Environment Agency in relation to natural environment matters. The membership of both OxEB and BAG represent a wide range of natural environment bodies including: the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT); Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Conservation Boards; the Earth Trust; Thames Valley Environment Records Centre (TVERC); Wild Oxfordshire and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB).
- 3.26 In producing the Oxfordshire Plan, engagement will be undertaken with neighbouring LNPs under to the duty to co-operate as there may be strategic matters where co-operation is required given the Oxfordshire Plan's strategic nature and long timeframe. However, it is recognised that adjoining LNPs have varying levels of resources and that some have more formalised structures than others, which is likely to result in variations in their capacity to engage in the Oxfordshire Plan process. It should also be noted that considerable joint working is being undertaken between LNPs and other organisations across the Oxford-Cambridge Arc in relation to the protection and enhancement of the natural environment (Section 7).
- 3.27 The following LNPs have boundaries that directly adjoin Oxfordshire (Appendix 4):
- Berkshire LNP
  - Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes LNP
  - Gloucestershire LNP
  - Northamptonshire LNP
  - Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull LNP
  - Swindon and Wiltshire LNP (Link 2 Nature)

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<sup>13</sup> Minutes of this meeting are available to view on West Oxfordshire District Council's website: <https://cmis.westoxon.gov.uk/cmisis/Meetings.aspx>

## 4 Strategic Matters

4.1 Paragraph 20 of the NPPF sets out the matters that are considered strategic in plan-making. These are matters which relate to the overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make provision for:

- a) 'housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;
- b) infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);
- c) community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and
- d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.'

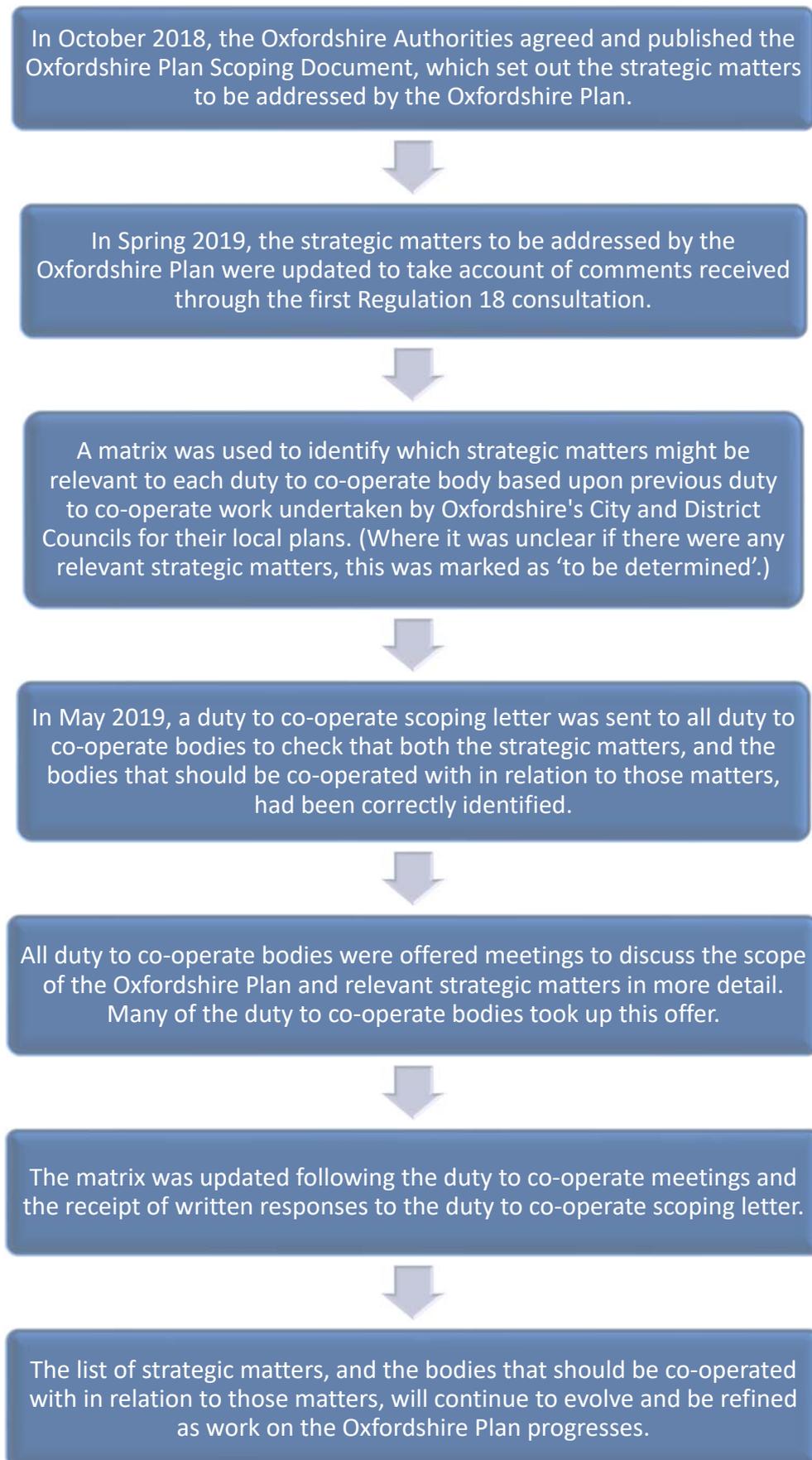
The PPG states that this list is not exhaustive and that this may be adapted to meet specific local needs.<sup>14</sup>

4.2 A duty to co-operate scoping exercise was undertaken to identify the relevant strategic matters for the Oxfordshire Plan and the duty to co-operate bodies that should be engaged with in relation to these matters (Figure 2).

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<sup>14</sup> Planning Practice Guidance: Plan Making: Maintaining Effective Cooperation: What are the strategic matters on which cooperation is required? Paragraph: 014 Reference ID: 61-014-20190315 Revision date: 15 03 2019

**Figure 2: The Oxfordshire Plan Duty to Co-operate Scoping Process**



4.3 Through the scoping process, the following strategic matters for the Oxfordshire Plan were identified:

- Biodiversity / Natural Environment / Green Infrastructure
- Boat dwellers
- Climate Change (including mitigation and adaptation)
- Community Facilities (including health and education)
- Contaminated Land
- Economy and Employment
- Flood Risk
- Green Belt
- Gypsies, Travellers, Caravan Dwellers, Travelling Showpeople
- Healthy Placeshaping
- Heritage and Historic Environment
- Housing Requirements
- Housing Supply
- Landscape Quality and Character
- Other infrastructure (including water supply)
- Retail/Leisure/other commercial development
- Transport
- Water Resources / Water Quality

4.4 The full matrix showing which strategic matters have been identified as relevant to each duty to co-operate body is provided at Appendix 5. It should be noted that this is a 'living list' and that the strategic matters relevant to each duty to co-operate body may evolve over time in response to emerging evidence, further engagement and changing circumstances.

## 5 Co-operation within Oxfordshire

### **Background to Joint Working in Oxfordshire**

- 5.1 Oxfordshire's City and District Councils and Oxfordshire County Council have a long history of co-operation and joint working in relation to strategic planning matters.
- 5.2 The six Oxfordshire authorities were members of the Oxfordshire Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership (SPIP) which oversaw the preparation of the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (published in 2014)<sup>15</sup> and the Oxford and Oxfordshire City Deal<sup>16</sup> (signed in January 2014).
- 5.3 In 2014, the SPIP became the Oxfordshire Growth Board<sup>17</sup> - a joint committee with the leaders of all six Oxfordshire authorities as the core voting members. The Oxfordshire Growth Board also includes associate members from the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Universities, Oxfordshire Skills Board, Environment Agency, Homes England, Network Rail and Highways England. Oxfordshire Growth Board meetings are held in public every two months. The work of the Oxfordshire Growth Board is supported by a Scrutiny Panel and focused Advisory Sub-Groups.
- 5.4 The Oxfordshire Growth Board exists to help Oxfordshire's leaders and partners work together for the benefit of residents by building consensus on strategic issues such as supporting good growth, strategic service planning and placemaking. The Oxfordshire Growth Board has no direct decision-making powers in relation to planning and development, which is carried out by the elected councillors at each of Oxfordshire's City and District Councils.
- 5.5 The Oxfordshire authorities worked together as part of the Oxfordshire Growth Board to assess how unmet housing need from Oxford City might best be accommodated within the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area. Local plans based on the 2014 SHMA, and which accommodate Oxford City's unmet housing need, have all now been adopted.
- 5.6 The Oxfordshire authorities also worked together through the Oxfordshire Growth Board to produce the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy<sup>18</sup> (OxIS) - a shared evidence base that has helped to inform local plans and to address strategic infrastructure issues, particularly transport (for example by supporting funding bids such as the Housing and Infrastructure Fund).
- 5.7 In 2017, the government announced the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal in the autumn budget. The Housing and Growth Deal was subsequently signed in March 2018.

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<sup>15</sup> GL Hearn (April 2014) Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment

<sup>16</sup> The Oxford and Oxfordshire City Deal was signed by the Deputy Prime Minister on 30 January 2014. Details are available online: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/city-deal-oxford-and-oxfordshire>

<sup>17</sup> Details of the Oxfordshire Growth Board terms of reference, meetings, work programmes and evidence documents are available at: [www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org](http://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org)

<sup>18</sup> AECOM (November 2017) Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy

- 5.8 Through the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal, the Oxfordshire authorities committed to:
- i. The submission and adoption, subject to the inspection process, of a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan (the Oxfordshire Plan) covering all five district councils in Oxfordshire by 2021<sup>19</sup>; and
  - ii. Plan for and support the delivery of 100,000 new homes between 2011 and 2031 – backed up with a credible plan for delivery, outlining interim milestones and targets as agreed with Homes England and Government.
- 5.9 Through the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal, the Government committed to:
- i. Provide Oxfordshire with up to £215 million funding for investment in new homes and infrastructure; and
  - ii. Explore options to grant Oxfordshire certain time-limited planning flexibilities, subject to consultation where appropriate.
- 5.10 In September 2019, the Oxfordshire Growth Board resolved to undertake a review of its role and functions.<sup>20</sup> Following an extensive public review in 2020, the Growth Board has adopted a new purpose which is to:
- i. Co-ordinate local efforts to manage economic, housing and infrastructure development in a way that is inclusive and maximises local social and environmental benefits;
  - ii. Support the development of local planning policy that meets the UK Government’s stated aim of net zero carbon by 2050, and contributes towards biodiversity gain whilst embracing the changes needed for a low carbon world; and
  - iii. Seek to secure funding in the pursuit of these aims and oversee the delivery of related work programmes delegated to it by the Joint Committee’s constituent local authority members.

### **Strategic Vision**

- 5.11 In 2020, the Oxfordshire Growth Board began to develop a strategic vision for Oxfordshire’s long-term sustainable development (known as the ‘Strategic Vision’). Consultation on a draft Strategic Vision was undertaken from November 2020 to January 2021. The Strategic Vision was subsequently refined (taking account of the comments received) and endorsed by the Oxfordshire Growth Board in March 2021.
- 5.12 Each of the six Oxfordshire authorities has now agreed the Strategic Vision and it will inform future plans and strategies for Oxfordshire, including the Oxfordshire Plan, the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan, the OxIS review and future local plans.

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<sup>19</sup> In July 2020 Oxfordshire Growth Board secured support in principle from the Government for extensions to various programmes within the [Housing & Growth Deal](#) including the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan. The meetings notes are available online: <https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/oxfordshire-housing-growth-deal-extension/>

<sup>20</sup> Oxfordshire Growth Board meeting 24 September 2019. Agenda and minutes are available to view online: <http://democratic.southoxon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=330&MIId=2473>

### **Co-operation in the Production of the Oxfordshire Plan**

- 5.13 The Oxfordshire Plan is a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan (JSSP) which is being produced by Oxfordshire's City and District Councils in close partnership with Oxfordshire County Council and OxLEP. The Oxfordshire Plan will provide a strategic planning framework for Oxfordshire to 2050 and will inform the production of future local plans and decision-making on development proposals. The Oxfordshire Plan is a key commitment of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal.
- 5.14 Oxfordshire's City and District Councils are working together to produce the Oxfordshire Plan under Section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as a means of co-operating to effectively address strategic planning matters in Oxfordshire.
- 5.15 The Oxfordshire Plan is being developed by consensus, with officers and elected members from all the Oxfordshire authorities and OxLEP working together at every stage of plan-making process to ensure that individual and collective views are taken into account. A number of mechanisms for co-operation and joint working between elected members and officers (at all levels) have been established to support the delivery of the Oxfordshire Plan (Tables 1 and 2).

<b>Table 1: Mechanisms for co-operation and joint working between the six Oxfordshire authorities and OxLEP in the production of the Oxfordshire Plan – Officers</b>		
<b>Mechanism for Joint Working</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Frequency of Meeting</b>
Programme Board	Senior officers from the six Oxfordshire authorities and OxLEP are responsible for overseeing the delivery, project management and finances of Growth Deal workstreams, including the Oxfordshire Plan.	Fortnightly
Heads of Planning	Oxfordshire's City and District Councils' Heads of Planning, with senior officers from Oxfordshire County Council and OxLEP, oversee and provide direction on the delivery of the Oxfordshire Plan and its evidence base.	Monthly
Oxfordshire Plan Core Team	A core team of planning policy officers has been established to co-ordinate the day to day delivery of the Oxfordshire Plan and its evidence base. The Core Team helps to facilitate co-operation and joint working between the six Oxfordshire authorities and OxLEP at every stage of plan-making process. Many of the Core Team officers are seconded from the Oxfordshire authorities.	Daily
Officer Liaison Meetings	Planning policy officers from Oxfordshire's City and District Councils, with officers from Oxfordshire County Council and OxLEP, are involved in the day to day delivery of the Oxfordshire Plan and its evidence base. These officers are committed to dedicating one day per week to Oxfordshire Plan work.	Fortnightly
Working Groups	Working groups have been established to produce and/or oversee the production of specific evidence base workstreams for the Oxfordshire Plan. Working groups comprise officers from each of the Oxfordshire authorities (often these are officers with specialist expertise), the Core Team and other organisations, including OxLEP and prescribed bodies, as appropriate.	As required

<b>Table 2: Mechanisms for co-operation and joint working between the six Oxfordshire authorities and OxLEP in the production of the Oxfordshire Plan – Elected Members</b>		
<b>Mechanism for Joint Working</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Frequency of Meeting</b>
Oxfordshire's City and District Councils	All key stages in the plan-making process will be formally approved by Oxfordshire's City and District Councils at public meetings according to their constitutions (cabinet and/or council meetings) and subjected to the relevant scrutiny processes of each council.	As required
Oxfordshire Growth Board	The Oxfordshire Growth Board is a joint committee with the leaders of all six Oxfordshire authorities as the core voting members. The Oxfordshire Growth Board also includes associate members from OxLEP, the Universities, Oxfordshire Skills Board, Environment Agency, Homes England, Network Rail and Highways England. Whilst it is not a plan-making authority, the Growth Board discusses items relevant to the Oxfordshire Plan such as evidence base studies.	Quarterly
Oxfordshire Growth Board Advisory Sub-Group	A specialist sub-group of the Oxfordshire Growth Board which provides advisory input into the development of the Oxfordshire Plan.  The Chair of the Sub-Group is drawn from the voting members of the Oxfordshire Growth Board, with the express requirement that their role is to act independently in the interests of Oxfordshire and the Growth Board, and not of their own political group or local authority area. The other members of the Sub-Group are drawn from elected members from each of the Oxfordshire authorities.	Monthly
Oxfordshire Growth Board Scrutiny Panel	Includes three councillors from each of the Oxfordshire authorities. It is empowered to review any decisions and make recommendations on reports to the Growth Board.	Quarterly

5.16 Oxfordshire's City and District Councils, in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council and OxLEP, have produced and agreed a number of key documents to support the delivery of the Oxfordshire Plan. This includes:

i. *Oxfordshire Plan Scoping Document (October 2018)*<sup>21</sup>

At the outset of the project, Oxfordshire's City and District Councils agreed the scope of the Oxfordshire Plan, including its geographical extent, policy context, plan period, timetable, structure, and governance arrangements.

ii. *Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) (February 2019)*<sup>22</sup> (Revised July 2019)

The SCI sets out how and when Oxfordshire's City and District Councils intend to inform, involve and consult interested parties in the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan. An updated SCI, which takes account of the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, will be published alongside the second Regulation 18 consultation.

iii. *Local Development Scheme (LDS) (October 2018)*<sup>23</sup> (Revised July 2019)

The LDS sets out the timetable for producing the Oxfordshire Plan. An updated LDS will be published alongside the second Regulation 18 consultation.

<sup>21</sup> Oxfordshire Plan 2050 [Scoping Document](#) (October 2018)

<sup>22</sup> Oxfordshire Plan 2050 [Statement of Community Involvement](#) (February 2019)

<sup>23</sup> Oxfordshire Plan 2050 [Local Development Scheme](#) (October 2018)

**Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) Update**

- 5.17 OxIS is a shared evidence base that has helped to inform local plans and to address strategic infrastructure issues, particularly transport (for example by supporting funding bids such as the Housing and Infrastructure Fund).
- 5.18 The Oxfordshire Growth Board has commissioned an OxIS update to support and inform the Oxfordshire Plan. The OxIS update will establish infrastructure investment priorities and potential delivery and funding opportunities to 2050.

## 6 Co-operation with Adjoining Authorities, LEPs, LNPs and Prescribed Bodies

- 6.1 Oxfordshire's City and District Councils are co-operating with adjoining authorities, adjoining LEPs, adjoining LNPs and prescribed bodies throughout the production of the Oxfordshire Plan.
- 6.2 Table 3 summarises the key stages of engagement with adjoining authorities, LEPs, LNPs and prescribed bodies to date (up to the second Regulation 18 consultation).

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Type of Engagement</b>
Nov 2018 - Jan 2019	<b>Oxfordshire Plan Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) Consultation</b> Consultation on the SCI sought to ensure that the methods and timing of engagement in the plan-making process would be appropriate and effective.
Dec 2018	<b>Oxfordshire Plan Stakeholder Launch Event</b> A launch event was held for key stakeholders (including adjoining authorities and prescribed bodies) to introduce the Oxfordshire Plan and to ask for their initial views on what the Oxfordshire Plan's vision, aspirations and objectives should be.
Jan - Mar 2019	<b>Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report</b> Consultation was undertaken on the Sustainability Appraisal's proposed scope and objectives.
Feb - Mar 2019	<b>Regulation 18 (Part 1) Consultation</b> Consultation focused on identifying Oxfordshire's key strategic issues and opportunities, developing a vision, aspirations and objectives for the Oxfordshire Plan and considering the advantages and disadvantages of different high-level spatial typologies for distributing growth in Oxfordshire.
Mar - Apr 2019	<b>Call for Ideas</b> An open call for broad locations to be considered through the plan-making process for housing and/or employment development, infrastructure projects or environmental designations.
May 2019	<b>Oxfordshire Plan Stakeholder Event</b> A further event for key stakeholders (including duty to co-operate bodies) to help refine the Oxfordshire Plan's vision, aspirations and objectives.
May 2019	<b>Duty to Co-operate Scoping Letter</b> A duty to co-operate scoping letter was sent to adjoining authorities, LEPs, LNPs and prescribed bodies to check that both the strategic matters, and the bodies that should be co-operated with in relation to those matters, had been correctly identified.
May 2019 - Jan 2020	<b>Duty to Co-operate Scoping Meetings</b> Duty to co-operate meetings were held with adjoining authorities, LEPs, LNPs and prescribed bodies to discuss the scope of the Oxfordshire Plan and relevant strategic matters in more detail.
July 2020	<b>Duty to Co-operate Update Letter</b> Letters were sent to adjoining authorities, LEPs, LNPs and prescribed bodies to provide an update on the revised timetable for the Oxfordshire Plan (in light of the Covid-19 pandemic), to introduce Oxfordshire Open Thought and to provide an update on next steps.

June – Aug 2020	<p><b>Engagement on Key Technical Challenges arising from Regulation 18 (Part 1): Oxfordshire Open Thought</b></p> <p>An online tool used to discuss three big challenges facing Oxfordshire as it plans for the future: how we will all live and work, how we will move around and how we will tackle climate change.</p>
Nov 2020 - Jan 2021	<p><b>Strategic Vision Consultation</b></p> <p>Whilst the Strategic Vision will have a wider role and influence, it will be a key influencer for the Oxfordshire Plan. Consultation was undertaken on the draft Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire.</p>
Dec 2020	<p><b>Duty to Co-operate Update Letter</b></p> <p>Letters were sent to adjoining authorities, LEAs, LNPs and prescribed bodies to provide an update on the revised timetable for the Oxfordshire Plan (following a new agreement with Government), to introduce the Strategic Vision and to provide an update on next steps.</p>
May - June 2021	<p><b>Pre-Regulation 18 (Part 2) Duty to Co-operate Meetings</b></p> <p>Duty to co-operate meetings were held with adjoining authorities, LEAs, LNPs and prescribed bodies to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Provide an update on the Oxfordshire Plan (work undertaken to date and proposed next steps);</li> <li>ii. Discuss emerging policy and spatial options and related cross-boundary strategic planning matters;</li> <li>iii. Discuss the Oxfordshire Plan’s emerging evidence base and related cross-boundary strategic planning matters; and</li> <li>iv. Receive an update from adjoining authorities, LEAs, LNPs and prescribed bodies on development plan preparation, evidence base development and/or any other work relevant to cross-boundary strategic planning matters.</li> </ol>

6.3 In addition to the key stages of engagement set out above, there has been co-operation with relevant adjoining authorities, LEAs, LNPs and prescribed bodies through other mechanisms where appropriate, specifically:

- Where appropriate, prescribed bodies are associate members of the Oxfordshire Growth Board – for example, Highways England;
- Where appropriate, prescribed bodies are members of working groups that produce and/or oversee the production of specific evidence base workstreams for the Oxfordshire Plan (Table 1) – for example, the Environment Agency is part of the Water Cycle Study working group;
- Where appropriate, prescribed bodies have reviewed proposed methodologies and draft outputs for emerging evidence base documents - for example Natural England reviewed the proposed Habitats Regulations Assessment methodology;
- Where appropriate, prescribed bodies have reviewed and made suggestions relating to emerging policy options – for example the Environment Agency reviewed and made suggestions relating to water quality policy options;
- Where appropriate, additional duty to co-operate meetings have taken place with adjoining authorities, LEAs, LNPs and prescribed bodies; and
- Where appropriate, co-operation with adjoining authorities, LEAs, LNPs and prescribed bodies has been undertaken through related workstreams, for

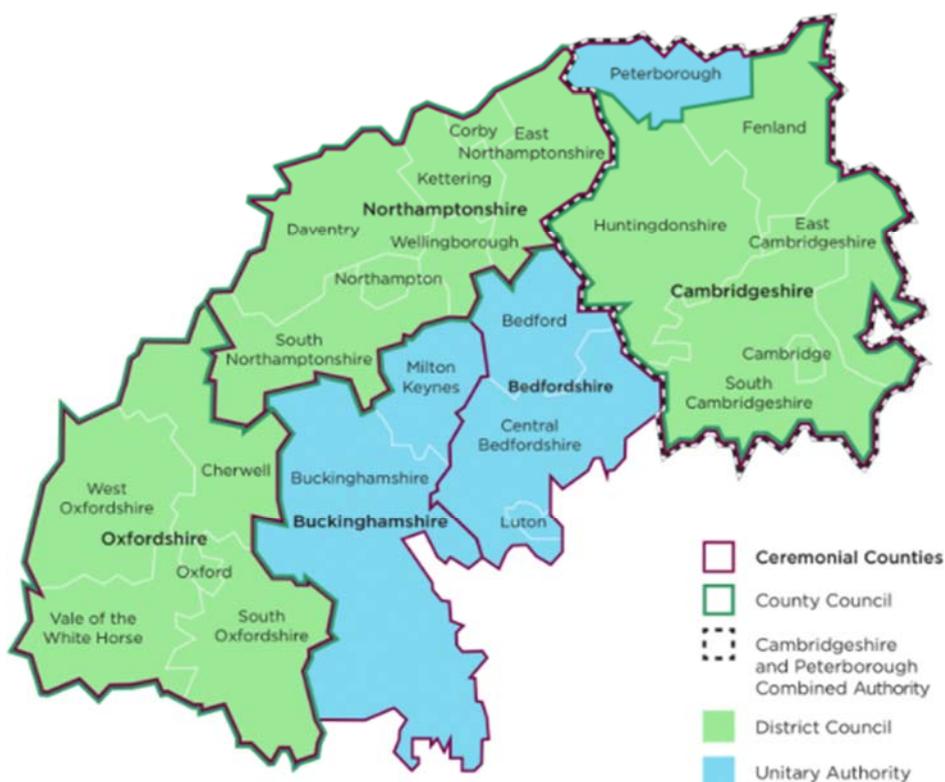
example through England Economic Heartland and Oxford-Cambridge Arc workstreams.

- 6.4 Detailed records of engagement with adjoining authorities, adjoining LEPs, adjoining LNPs and prescribed bodies and how this has helped to ensure that the Oxfordshire Plan effectively addresses strategic matters is provided at Appendix 6.

## 7 Co-operation across the Oxford-Cambridge Arc

- 7.1 The Oxford-Cambridge Arc (the Arc) is a globally significant area between Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge. It is formed of five ceremonial counties: Oxfordshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire (Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Oxford-Cambridge Arc**



*Note: On 1 April 2021 unitary authorities were created covering West Northamptonshire and North Northamptonshire.*

- 7.2 The Government has identified the Arc as a national economic priority and is committed to developing, with local partners, a Spatial Framework for the Arc. The Arc Spatial Framework is being led by Government and in February 2021 an 'Introduction to the Oxford-Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework' was published. This document sets out the Government's continued commitment to working collaboratively with residents and local partners, seeking input at each stage of decision-making.
- 7.3 The Arc has already generated close cooperation between Councils, LEPs and Universities across the Arc, and the Oxfordshire Growth Board has played an active role in developing the Arc since its inception. All the Oxfordshire local authorities are committed to reaching the potential for transformational growth and environmental improvement across the Arc.
- 7.4 Many of the ambitions of the Arc align with the objectives of the Oxfordshire Plan. The Arc provides a forum for joint working across important issues such as climate change,

connectivity, environmental quality and housing needs. Alongside the Arc, the Government is investing in and supporting a number of other deals and projects. Those specifically related to Oxfordshire include the growth deal with Oxfordshire, investing in the new East West Rail link, providing £400 million of Housing Infrastructure Fund investment, an agreed city deal with Oxford, and a commitment to examine the case for development corporations, linked to the new transport hubs around East West Rail station.

- 7.5 In preparing the Oxfordshire Plan, engagement with the Government and relevant partners on the Arc forums will continue, with it likely that Oxfordshire's role within the Arc will be an increasingly important influence. Participation in the various forums, including the deals and projects referred to above, which have direct and indirect links with the Arc provide an opportunity for joint working on wider cross boundary topics such as water stress and electricity supply.
- 7.6 Engagement already takes place with those local authorities which have boundaries adjoining Oxfordshire and which are also part of the Arc area, Buckinghamshire Council and West Northamptonshire Council. It is recognised that the relationship with those Arc areas beyond those immediately adjoining are likely to vary in terms of their strength and significance.

## 8 Statement of Common Ground

- 8.1 In 2018, revisions to the NPPF introduced a requirement for strategic policy-making authorities to prepare and maintain one or more statements of common ground throughout the plan-making process.<sup>24</sup>
- 8.2 A statement of common ground documents the cross-boundary strategic planning matters being addressed and the progress made in cooperating to address those matters. It documents where effective co-operation is and is not happening throughout the plan-making process and is a way of demonstrating at examination that plans are deliverable and based on effective joint working across local authority boundaries.<sup>25</sup> The NPPF requires that statements of common ground are produced using the approach set out in the PPG, and that they are made publicly available throughout the plan-making process to provide transparency.
- 8.3 A statement of common ground documenting the cross-boundary strategic planning matters being addressed through the production of the Oxfordshire Plan and the progress made in co-operating to address those matters will be agreed and published as part of the second Regulation 18 consultation.
- 8.4 The statement of common ground for the Oxfordshire Plan will be a living document and will be reviewed and updated throughout the plan-making process.
- 8.5 The PPG is clear that statements of common ground are expected to be concise and are not intended to document every occasion that strategic policy-making authorities meet, consult with each other or otherwise engage under the duty to co-operate. Therefore, whilst statements of common ground form part of the evidence required to demonstrate that the duty to co-operate has been complied with, they will also need to provide clear signposting or links to more detailed evidence.<sup>26</sup> This Duty to Co-operate Statement provides the detailed record of co-operation that sits behind the statement of common ground for the Oxfordshire Plan.

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<sup>24</sup> A revised National Planning Policy Framework was published in July 2018 and was subsequently updated in February 2019. The requirement to produce a statement of common ground is set out at Paragraph 27.

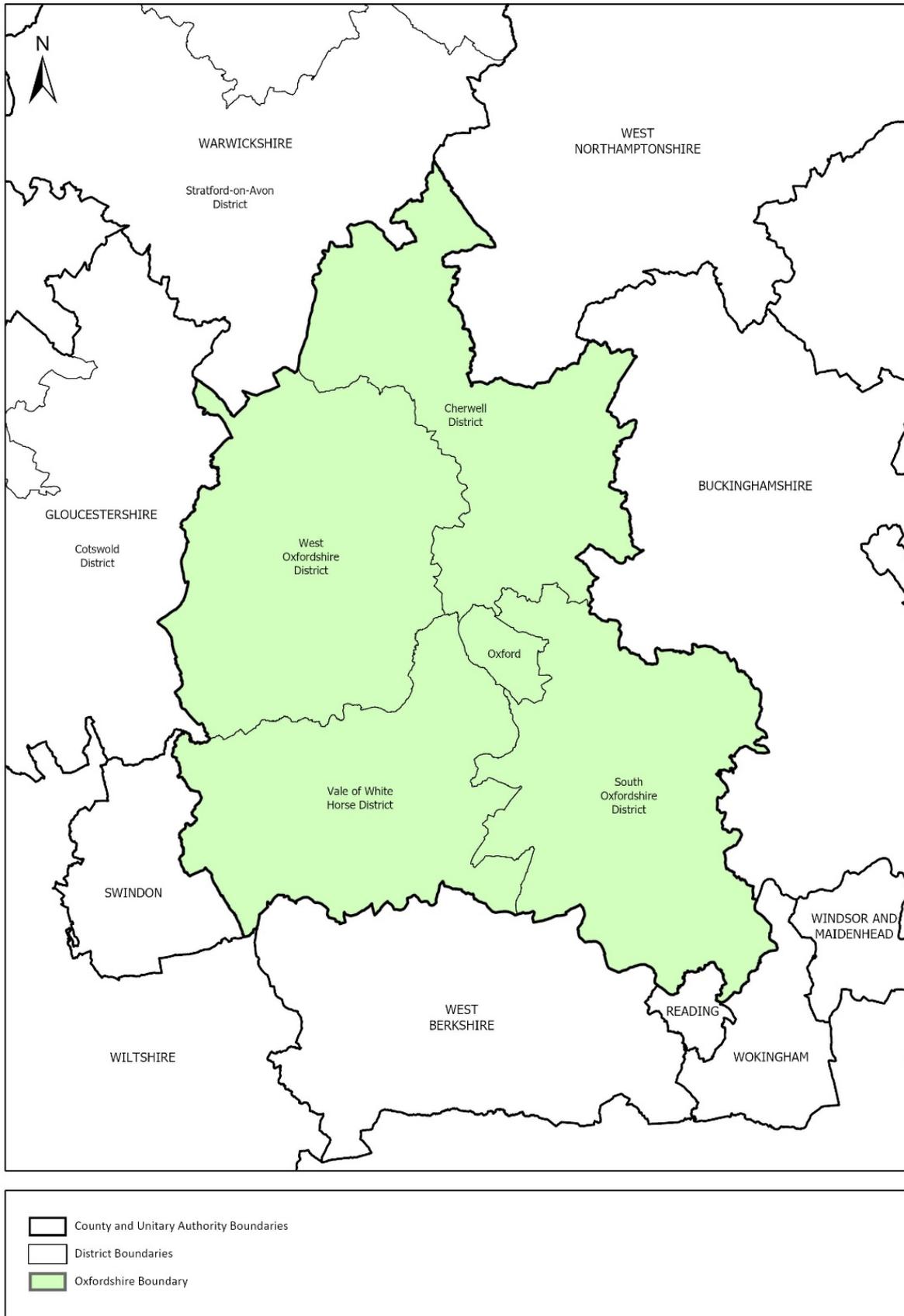
<sup>25</sup> Planning Practice Guidance: Plan-Making: Maintaining Effective Cooperation: What is a statement of common ground? Paragraph 010 Reference ID: 61-010-20190315 Revision Date: 15 03 2019

<sup>26</sup> Planning Practice Guidance: Plan-Making: Maintaining Effective Cooperation: Statement of Common Ground - Scope: What is a statement of common ground expected to contain? Paragraph 011 Reference ID: 61-011-20190315 Revision Date: 15 03 2019

## 9 Conclusions

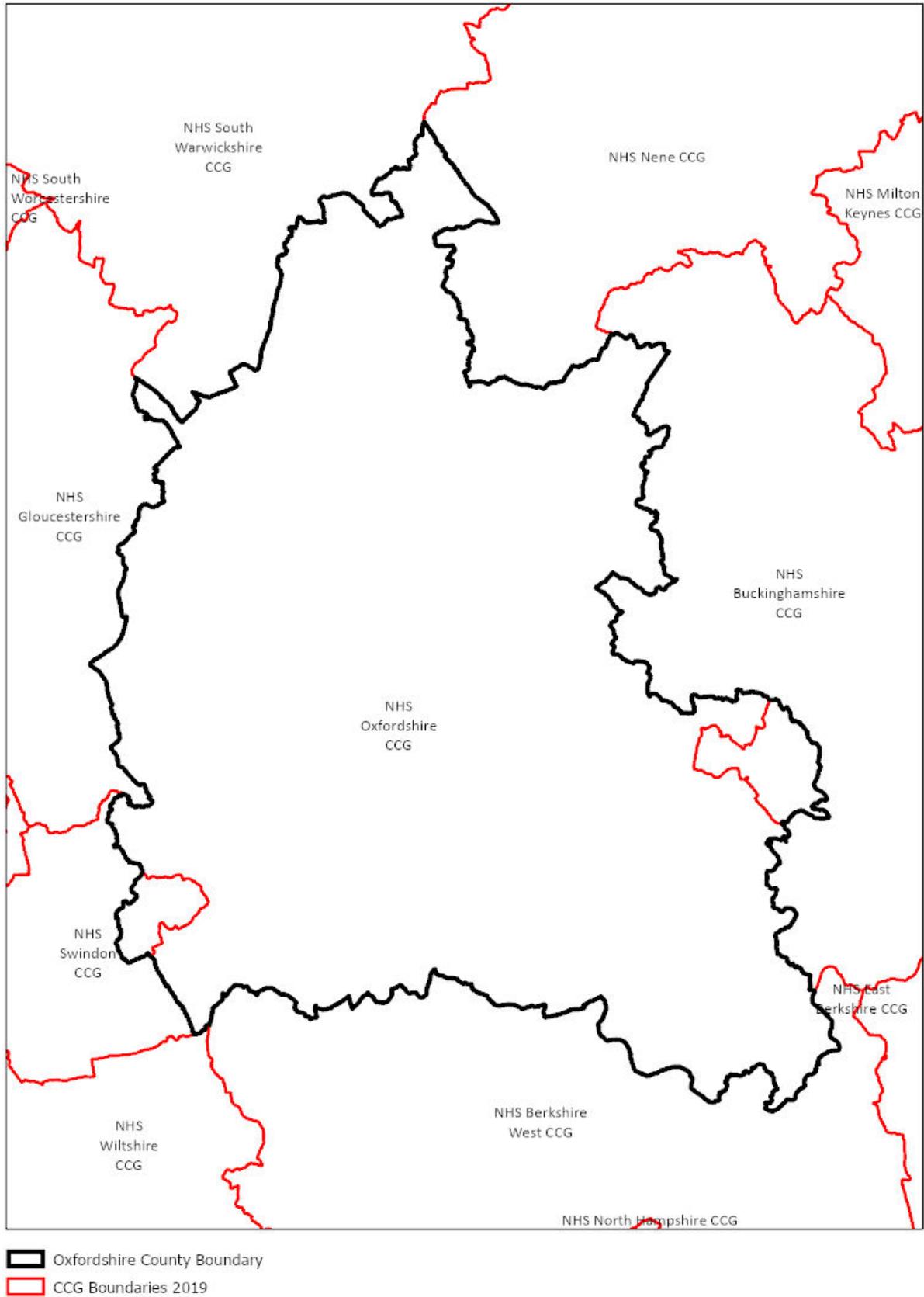
- 9.1 This Duty to Co-operate Statement sets out how Oxfordshire's City and District Councils have engaged constructively, actively and on an on-going basis with each other, Oxfordshire County Council, neighbouring authorities, prescribed bodies, LEPs and LNPs in the production of the Oxfordshire Plan to date (up to the second Regulation 18 consultation).
- 9.2 As co-operation to address cross-boundary strategic planning matters will continue throughout the plan-making process, an updated version of this Duty to Co-operate Statement will be published at the Regulation 19 stage.

## Appendix 1: Neighbouring Authorities Map



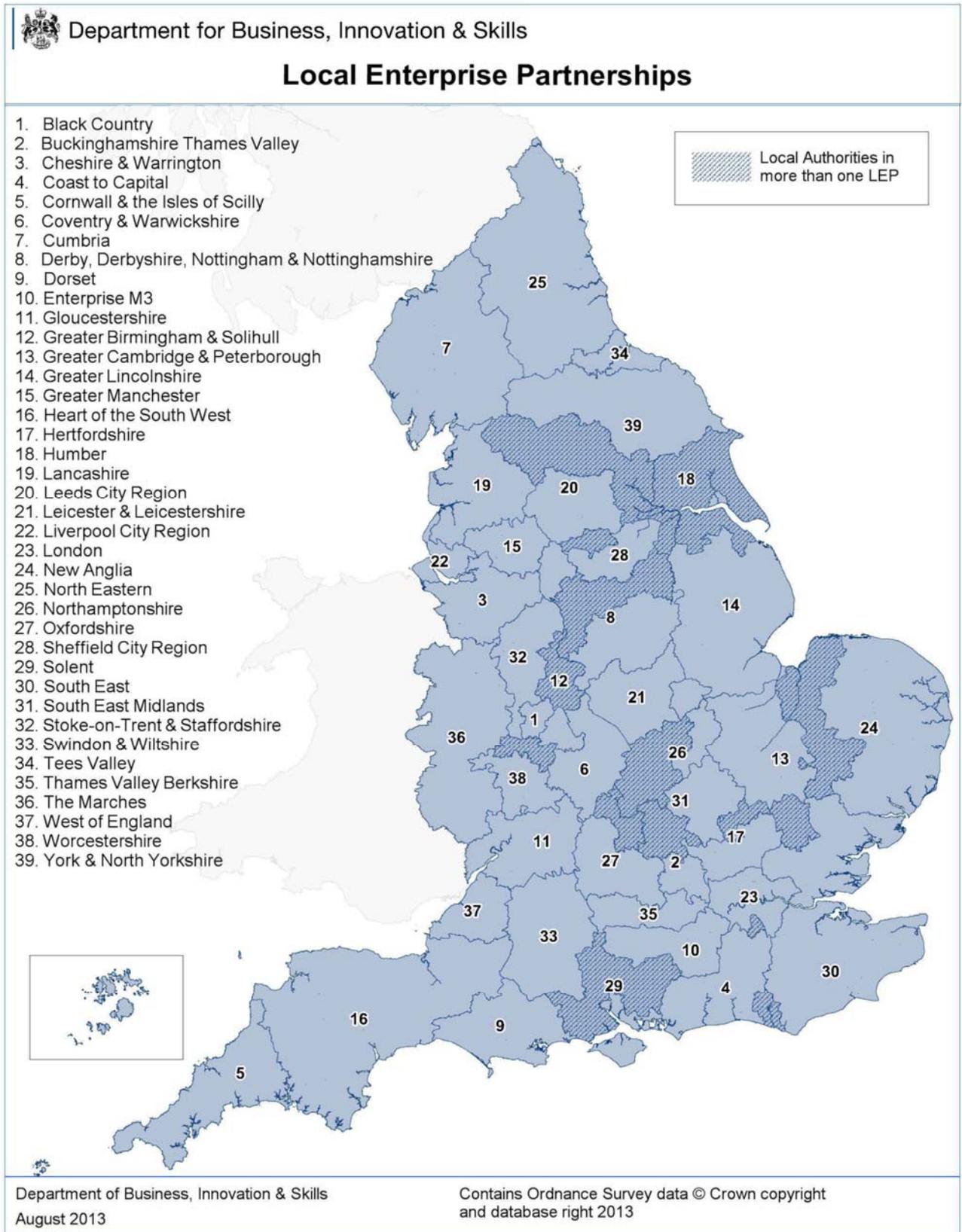
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## Appendix 2: Clinical Commissioning Group Boundaries<sup>27</sup>



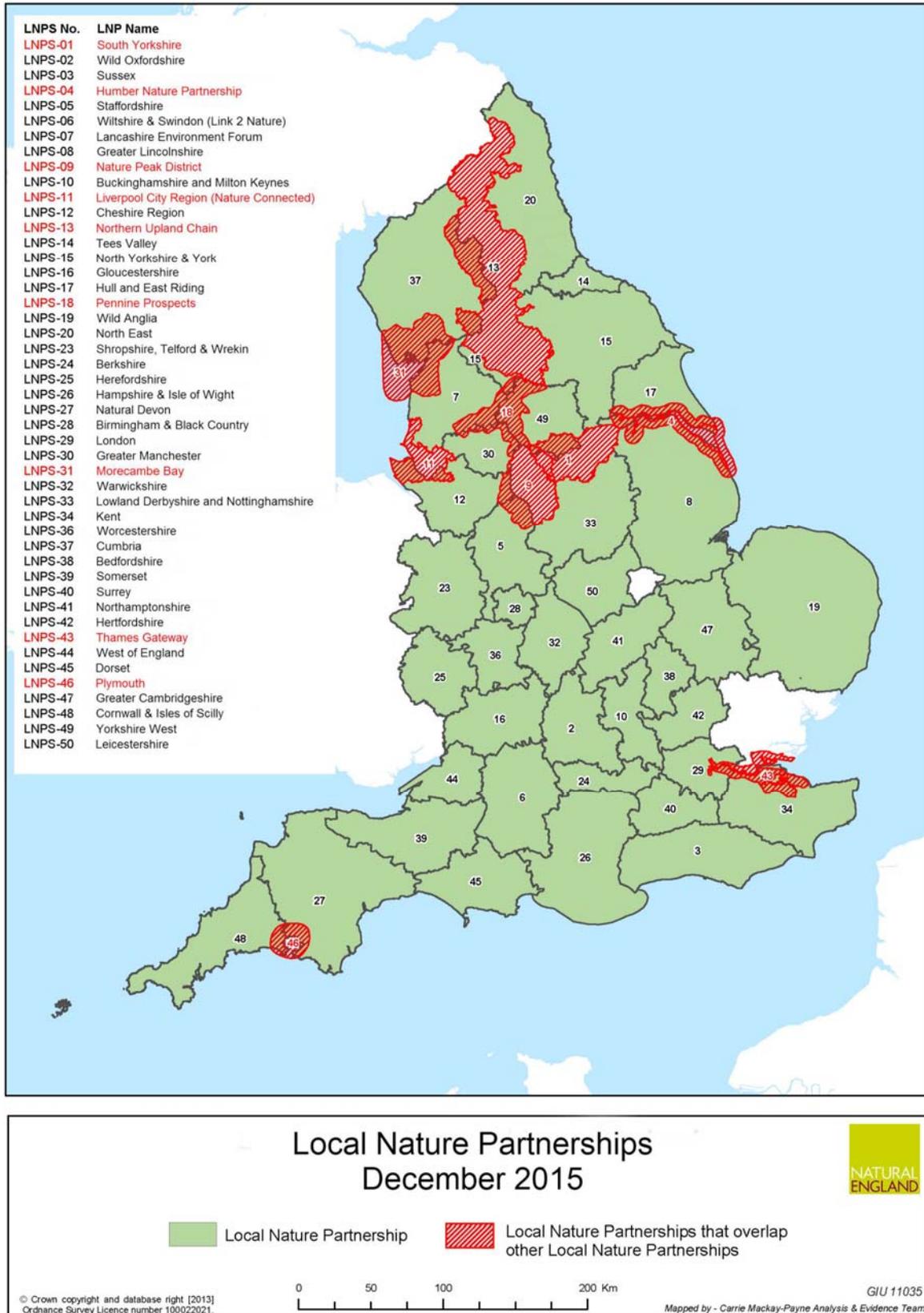
<sup>27</sup> It should be noted that NHS Swindon CCG and NHS Wiltshire CCG are now part of the Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire CCG.

## Appendix 3: Neighbouring Local Enterprise Partnerships Map<sup>28</sup>



<sup>28</sup> It should be noted that a review is currently underway to eliminate overlaps and to ensure that all businesses and communities are represented by one local enterprise partnership.

## Appendix 4: Local Nature Partnerships Map<sup>29</sup>



<sup>29</sup> It should be noted that this map was produced in 2015 and some information is now out of date. For example, it shows Wild Oxfordshire as the LNP for Oxfordshire. Oxfordshire does not currently have a LNP.

## Appendix 5: Strategic Matters Matrix

	Housing Requirements	Housing Supply	Gypsies & Travellers,	Boat Dwellers	Economy & Employment	Retail\Leisure\Other Commercial Development	Transport	Community Facilities (inc. Health & Education)	Other Infrastructure (inc. Water Supply)	Healthy Place-Shaping	Climate Change (inc. Mitigation & Adaptation)	Flood Risk	Water Resources\Water Quality	Heritage & Historic Environment	Biodiversity\Natural Environment\GI	Green Belt	Contaminated Land	Landscape Quality & Character
<b>Oxfordshire</b>																		
Cherwell District Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Oxford City Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
South Oxfordshire District Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vale of White Horse District Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
West Oxfordshire District Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Oxfordshire County Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	

		Housing Requirements (	Housing Supply	Gypsies, & Travellers	Boat Dwellers	Economy & Employment	Retail\Leisure\Other Commercial Development	Transport	Community Facilities (inc. Health & Education)	Other Infrastructure (inc. Water Supply)	Healthy Place-Shaping	Climate Change (inc. Mitigation & Adaptation)	Flood Risk	Water Resources\Water Quality	Heritage & Historic Environment	Biodiversity\Natural Environment\GI	Green Belt	Contaminated Land	Landscape Quality & Character
<b>Adjoining Authorities</b>																			
<b>Berkshire</b>	Reading Borough Council	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓			
	West Berkshire Council	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓			✓			✓
	Wokingham Borough Council	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓			✓			
<b>Buckinghamshire</b>	Buckinghamshire Council	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓					✓
<b>Gloucestershire</b>	Cotswold District Council		✓					✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
	Gloucestershire County Council			✓		✓	✓	✓					✓			✓			✓
<b>Northamptonshire</b>	West Northamptonshire Council		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓		✓	✓			✓
<b>Swindon &amp; Wiltshire</b>	Swindon Borough Council		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓					✓	✓		✓			✓
	Wiltshire Council		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓					✓	✓		✓			✓
<b>Warwickshire</b>	Stratford-on-Avon District Council		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓								✓			✓
	Warwickshire County Council			✓		✓	✓	✓					✓			✓			✓

	Housing Requirements	Housing Supply	Gypsies & Travellers,	Boat Dwellers	Economy & Employment	Retail\Leisure\Other Commercial Development	Transport	Community Facilities (inc. Health & Education)	Other Infrastructure (inc. Water Supply)	Healthy Place-Shaping	Climate Change (inc. Mitigation & Adaptation)	Flood Risk	Water Resources\Water Quality	Heritage & Historic Environment	Biodiversity\Natural Environment\GI	Green Belt	Contaminated Land	Landscape Quality & Character
<b>Prescribed Bodies</b>																		
Civil Aviation Authority							✓											
Environment Agency		✓	✓	✓					✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	
Highways England	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓					✓				✓		
Historic England	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Homes England	✓	✓	✓															
Mayor of London	✓	✓			✓		✓		✓				✓					
Natural England		✓			✓		✓				✓		✓		✓			✓
NHS Buckinghamshire CCG								✓		✓								
NHS Oxfordshire CCG	✓	✓			✓			✓		✓								
NHS Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire CCG								✓		✓								
Office of Rail & Road							✓											

	Housing Requirements	Housing Supply	Gypsies & Travellers,	Boat Dwellers	Economy & Employment	Retail\Leisure\Other Commercial Development	Transport	Community Facilities (inc. Health & Education)	Other Infrastructure (inc. Water Supply)	Healthy Place-Shaping	Climate Change (inc. Mitigation & Adaptation)	Flood Risk	Water Resources\Water Quality	Heritage & Historic Environment	Biodiversity\Natural Environment\GI	Green Belt	Contaminated Land	Landscape Quality & Character
<b>Adjoining Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)</b>																		
Buckinghamshire LEP	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Coventry & Warwickshire LEP	<i>To be determined (if any)</i>																	
Gloucestershire LEP	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓				✓	✓			✓			✓
South East Midlands LEP					✓	✓	✓			✓	✓				✓			
Swindon & Wiltshire LEP					✓		✓				✓				✓			
Thames Valley Berkshire LEP					✓		✓				✓							

	Housing Requirements	Housing Supply	Gypsies & Travellers,	Boat Dwellers	Economy & Employment	Retail\Leisure\Other Commercial Development	Transport	Community Facilities (inc. Health & Education)	Other Infrastructure (inc. Water Supply)	Healthy Place-Shaping	Climate Change (inc. Mitigation & Adaptation)	Flood Risk	Water Resources\Water Quality	Heritage & Historic Environment	Biodiversity\Natural Environment\GI	Green Belt	Contaminated Land	Landscape Quality & Character
<b>Adjoining Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs)</b>																		
Berkshire LNP															✓			✓
Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes LNP	<i>To be determined (if any)</i>																	
Gloucestershire LNP	<i>To be determined (if any)</i>																	
Northamptonshire LNP	<i>To be determined (if any)</i>																	
Swindon and Wiltshire LNP - Link to Nature	<i>To be determined (if any)</i>																	
Warwickshire LNP	<i>To be determined (if any)</i>																	

## Appendix 6: Records of Co-operation

### Record of Co-operation: Berkshire

This record summarises co-operation to date (up to the second Regulation 18 consultation) with:

- Reading Borough Council (Reading BC);
- West Berkshire Council;
- Wokingham Borough Council (Wokingham BC);
- Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (TVBLEP); and
- Berkshire Local Nature Partnership (LNP).

Record of Co-operation: Berkshire			
Engagement Type	Date	Summary	Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process
SCI Consultation	Nov 2018 - Jan 2019	Reading BC, West Berkshire Council, Wokingham BC, TVBLEP and Berkshire LNP did not submit comments on the SCI.	N/A
Stakeholder Launch Event	Dec 2018	Reading BC, West Berkshire Council, Wokingham BC, TVBLEP and Berkshire LNP did not attend this Event.	N/A
SA Scoping Report Consultation	Jan - Mar 2019	Reading BC, West Berkshire Council, Wokingham BC, TVBLEP and Berkshire LNP did not submit comments on the SA Scoping Report.	N/A
Regulation 18 Consultation (1)	Feb - Mar 2019	<p>Wokingham BC made the following comments:</p> <p><u>Cross-boundary Relationships</u>                      The important links between Oxfordshire and the wider region, particularly the strong economic and transport links between Oxfordshire and the Berkshire/Thames Valley areas, should be recognised and taken into account. All technical analysis and future engagement should fully recognise cross-boundary relationships and impacts.</p>	<p><u>Cross-boundary Relationships</u>                      The emerging Oxfordshire Plan and its supporting evidence base recognise and take account of cross-boundary relationships at a range of geographical scales.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Berkshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<p><u>Spatial Scenarios</u> It is important that all scenarios consider the potential opportunities and impacts beyond Oxfordshire's boundary. Co-operation with the relevant authorities beyond Oxfordshire will be vital.</p> <p><u>Strategic Infrastructure</u> A potential new Thames river crossing between Oxfordshire and the Wokingham/Reading area is of particular interest to Wokingham BC. There are historic and ongoing discussions between South Oxfordshire District Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Reading BC and Wokingham BC. This potential link should be acknowledged through the Oxfordshire Plan.</p>	<p><u>Spatial Scenarios</u> Five spatial options are identified at the second Regulation 18 stage. Potential opportunities and impacts are identified at a high level and will be tested, including through the second Regulation 18 consultation. A more detailed assessment will be undertaken to identify the Oxfordshire Plan's spatial strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19. This assessment process will include co-operation with adjoining authorities.</p> <p><u>Strategic Infrastructure</u> The potential for a new Thames river crossing or any other necessary transport solutions between Oxfordshire and the Wokingham/Reading area will be considered through both the plan-making process and the OxIS update. This will include consideration of need, impacts, opportunities and deliverability. There is ongoing engagement with Berkshire in relation to this matter.</p>
<b>Call for Ideas</b>	Mar-Apr 2019	<p>Reading BC submitted three proposals through the Call for Ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Location for an additional crossing of the River Thames, east of Reading.</li> <li>▪ Park and Ride locations along three corridors into Reading from South Oxfordshire (the A4074 from Woodcote, B481 from Sonning Common and A4155 from Henley-on-Thames).</li> <li>▪ Consideration of implications for strategic development on the edge of Reading.</li> </ul>	<p>Call for Ideas submissions will be considered through the plan-making process and, where appropriate, the OxIS update. Call for Ideas submissions will be assessed as part of the identification of the Oxfordshire Plan's spatial strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Berkshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
<b>Duty to Co-operate Scoping Exercise</b>	May 2019	<p>A joint response was submitted by Reading BC, Wokingham BC and TVBLEP which highlighted existing and on-going co-operation in relation to a potential new Thames river crossing between Oxfordshire and the Wokingham/Reading area.</p> <p>Reading BC confirmed that the schedule of matters for which it is identified as a potential duty to co-operate partner accord relatively well with those in their own Duty to Co-operate Scoping Strategy (December 2015) for which Oxfordshire authorities are identified. The principal difference is that Reading's strategy identifies a need for co-operation with South Oxfordshire District Council on strategic landscape matters, as well as on tall buildings (with such buildings in Reading likely visible from parts of the Chilterns AONB within South Oxfordshire). However, it is appreciated that these are more likely to be specific duty to co-operate matters with South Oxfordshire, rather than for the Oxfordshire Plan as a whole.</p>	Engagement with Berkshire will be undertaken under the duty to co-operate in relation to relevant strategic matters throughout the plan-making process in order to maximise the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan. The strategic matters identified at this stage will be the starting point for this engagement. However, it is recognised that the strategic matters relevant to Berkshire may require review/refinement as work on the Oxfordshire Plan progresses. Discussions with Berkshire in relation to relevant strategic matters will be ongoing throughout the plan-making process.
<b>Stakeholder Event</b>	May 2019	Reading BC, West Berkshire Council, Wokingham BC, TVBLEP and Berkshire LNP did not attend this Event.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	24 Sept 2019	<p>A joint duty to co-operate meeting took place with Reading BC, West Berkshire Council, Wokingham BC and TVBLEP.</p> <p><u>Housing Need and Supply</u> Berkshire's housing needs will be met within the Berkshire housing market area. There is no unmet housing need for Oxfordshire to consider.</p>	<p><u>Housing Need and Supply</u> No unmet housing need from Berkshire to consider.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Berkshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<p><u>New Thames Crossing</u> Joint approach and evidence needed to explore the feasibility of improving north-south connections between Reading/Wokingham/Oxfordshire. One option is a bridge, but all reasonable options need to be explored. No current local plan allocations are dependent on a new Thames crossing. No funding currently identified.</p> <p><u>Park and Ride Provision</u> Reading's local plan identifies the need for new park and ride provision. Opportunities for new sites will be sought on key corridors, this includes possible locations within South Oxfordshire.</p> <p><u>Education</u> There is pressure on secondary school places in Reading. Any growth close to Reading would need to take appropriate account of this.</p>	<p><u>New Thames Crossing</u> The potential for a new Thames river crossing or any other transport solutions between Oxfordshire and the Wokingham/Reading area will be considered through both the plan-making process and the OxIS update. This will include consideration of need, impacts, opportunities and deliverability. There is ongoing engagement with Reading Borough Council, Wokingham Borough Council and TVBLEP in relation to this matter.</p> <p><u>Park and Ride Provision</u> The potential for new park and ride provision to serve Reading will be considered through both the plan-making process and the OxIS update. This will include consideration of need, impacts, opportunities and deliverability. There is ongoing engagement with Reading Borough Council in relation to this matter.</p> <p><u>Education</u> - Potential opportunities and impacts beyond Oxfordshire's boundary will be considered as part of the identification of the Oxfordshire Plan's spatial strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19.</p>
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	11 Feb 2020	A joint duty to co-operate meeting took place with neighbouring local nature partnerships, which Berkshire LNP attended. The emerging natural environment evidence base for the Oxfordshire Plan was discussed, including natural capital, nature recovery, green infrastructure, the water cycle study and Habitats Regulations Assessment. Berkshire LNP highlighted challenges related to establishing an active LNP and ensuring the strategic co-ordination of natural environment issues.	Engagement with Berkshire LNP will be undertaken under the duty to co-operate in relation to relevant strategic matters throughout the plan-making process in order to maximise the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan.

<b>Record of Co-operation: Berkshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
<b>Oxfordshire Open Thought</b>	Jun - Aug 2020	Reading BC, West Berkshire Council, Wokingham BC, TVBLEP and Berkshire LNP did not submit comments via Open Thought.	N/A
<b>Strategic Vision Consultation</b>	Nov 2020 - Jan 2021	Reading BC, West Berkshire Council, Wokingham BC, TVBLEP and Berkshire LNP did not submit comments on the Strategic Vision.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	14 May 2021	<p>A joint duty to co-operate meeting took place with Reading BC, West Berkshire Council, Wokingham BC, TVBLEP and Berkshire LNP.</p> <p><u>Strategic Infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ TVBLEP's Recovery &amp; Renewal Plan includes references to north-south connectivity and A34 improvements (including bus routes between West Berkshire and Harwell).</li> <li>▪ Environment Agency flood-relief schemes across the Thames river catchment area.</li> <li>▪ Potential new Thames river crossing between Oxfordshire and the Wokingham/Reading area.</li> </ul> <p>A review of the strategic matters relevant to each organisation was undertaken.</p> <p>It was agreed that a statement of common ground was not needed at the second Regulation 18 stage.</p>	<p><u>Strategic Infrastructure</u></p> <p>Strategic infrastructure requirements will be considered through both the plan-making process and the OxIS update. This will include consideration of need, impacts, opportunities and deliverability. There is ongoing engagement with Berkshire in relation to strategic infrastructure.</p>

**Record of Co-operation: Buckinghamshire**

This record summarises co-operation to date (up to the second Regulation 18 consultation) with:

- Aylesbury Vale District Council, Chiltern District Council, South Buckinghamshire District Council, Wycombe District Council and Buckinghamshire County Council (until 31 March 2020);
- Buckinghamshire Council (from 1 April 2020);
- Buckinghamshire Local Enterprise Partnership (BLEP); and
- Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership (BMKLNP).

<b>Record of Co-operation: Buckinghamshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
<b>SCI Consultation</b>	Nov 2018 - Jan 2019	The Buckinghamshire councils, BLEP and BMKLNP did not submit comments on the SCI.	N/A
<b>Stakeholder Launch Event</b>	Dec 2018	A Buckinghamshire CC representative attended this event which introduced the Oxfordshire Plan and highlighted some of the key challenges in planning to 2050. Attendees were asked their views on Oxfordshire's future.	Stakeholder feedback from this event fed into the first Regulation 18 consultation document.
<b>SA Scoping Report Consultation</b>	Jan - Mar 2019	Buckinghamshire CC confirmed that it did not have any comments on the SA Scoping Report. No comments received from the district councils, BLEP and BMKLNP.	N/A
<b>Regulation 18 Consultation (1)</b>	Feb - Mar 2019	<p>The Buckinghamshire authorities submitted a joint response.</p> <p><u>Plan Vision, Objectives &amp; Aspirations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Oxfordshire Plan's vision should emphasise future economic, transport links with neighbouring authorities and the wider south east region, with an emphasis on sustainable modes.</li> <li>▪ Reference to conserving the natural environment in the vision is insufficient given the Government's commitment to environmental gains.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Plan Vision, Objectives &amp; Aspirations</u></p> <p>The Oxfordshire Plan's vision and objectives were amended to take account of comments received through the first Regulation 18 consultation.</p> <p>The emerging Oxfordshire Plan and its supporting evidence base recognise and take account of cross-boundary relationships at a range of geographical scales.</p>

Record of Co-operation: Buckinghamshire			
Engagement Type	Date	Summary	Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Generally supportive of the aspirations but would like to see more reference to the wider context, beyond Oxfordshire, and a greater emphasis on climate change.</li> <li>▪ A number of specific points were made in relation to draft objectives 1-9.</li> </ul> <p><u>Growth Proposals</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ An early understanding of how growth proposals in Oxfordshire respond to the Ox-Cam Arc and Expressway is needed.</li> <li>▪ Early notification and discussion is needed should growth be proposed at Thame, Chinnor or Bicester to allow potential cross-boundary effects to be assessed.</li> <li>▪ There is no mention of the Aecom study being undertaken on behalf of the Government into the options for new development in relation to new settlements and or urban extensions. However, the Arc Leaders have expressed reservations about the Aecom work and are of the view that the locations for new developments should be driven from the bottom up. This should be reflected in the Plan. It is vitally important the approach in Oxfordshire connects to the approach across the rest of the Arc. Aylesbury Vale has also already undertaken work in relation to the potential location of new settlements which should also be considered. Whichever distribution option is chosen it is essential that it maximises the use of existing or future sustainable transport options, protects environmental capital and takes into account the location of development and infrastructure in the wider sub-region beyond the county boundary. It is also observed that the longer term delivery of new settlements is</li> </ul>	<p>Addressing climate change and improving environmental quality have been identified as key themes within the emerging Oxfordshire Plan.</p> <p><u>Growth Proposals</u></p> <p>Five spatial options are identified at the second Regulation 18 stage. Potential opportunities and impacts are identified at a high level and will be tested, including through the second Regulation 18 consultation. A more detailed assessment will be undertaken to identify the Oxfordshire Plan’s spatial strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19. This assessment process will include co-operation with adjoining authorities</p>

Record of Co-operation: Buckinghamshire			
Engagement Type	Date	Summary	Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process
		<p>ideally suited to the longer term nature of a plan reaching to 2050.</p> <p><u>Green Infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The lack of reference to green infrastructure at a strategic scale is a considerable omission. The Chilterns AONB, River Thames and other assets need greater visibility.</li> </ul> <p><u>Transport Infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High levels of cross-boundary travel, particularly by car. The cross-boundary impacts of growth on local and strategic roads needs to be monitored and mitigated.</li> <li>Keen to explore opportunities for public transport and active travel connections benefiting both areas.</li> <li>Improving connectivity within the Oxford-Cambridge Arc corridor is key.</li> <li>Support improvements to rail services across the region.</li> <li>Freight movements on rural roads is an issue for Buckinghamshire. Buckinghamshire Freight Strategy published in 2018. More weight should be given to reducing the impacts of road freight as a key sustainability issue. Cross-boundary working on this issue welcomed.</li> </ul> <p><u>Transport Infrastructure: Specific Ambitions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Haddenham Train Station to Thame Cycleway.</li> <li>Long Crendon to Thame walking and cycle opportunities.</li> <li>Strategic cycling network improvements, possibly including connections between all proposed East West Rail Stations.</li> <li>Buckingham and Brackley cycleway, with connections across the HS2 line.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Green Infrastructure</u></p> <p>Green infrastructure is highlighted in the second Regulation 18 consultation document, with policy options related to natural capital, nature recovery, landscape and water quality.</p> <p><u>Transport Infrastructure</u></p> <p>The emerging Oxfordshire Plan and its supporting evidence base recognise and take account of cross-boundary relationships at a range of geographical scales. Planning for sustainable travel and connectivity is a core theme in the emerging Oxfordshire Plan and the production of the Oxfordshire Plan is aligned with the production of the Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) and the OxIS update. The second Regulation 18 consultation document includes policy options related to supporting sustainable freight management. There is ongoing engagement with Buckinghamshire in relation to this matter.</p> <p><u>Transport Infrastructure: Specific Ambitions</u></p> <p>Strategic infrastructure requirements will be considered through both the plan-making process and the OxIS update. This will include consideration of need, impacts, opportunities and deliverability. There is ongoing engagement with Buckinghamshire in relation to strategic infrastructure.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Buckinghamshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<p><u>Education</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are currently a number of Buckinghamshire residents that attend primary and secondary schools in South Oxfordshire (particularly Thame). Similarly, a number of Oxfordshire residents attend schools in Buckinghamshire (predominantly secondary school pupils). Any proposed future growth in Thame and the surrounding areas will be likely to increase demand for school places and will have an impact on pupil movements between Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire.</li> </ul> <p><u>Wider Infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome the focus on providing infrastructure to support electric vehicle use and the focus on redirecting energy generation towards more sustainable sources.</li> <li>The importance of securing adequate water resources is also acknowledged as an issue for the whole of the south east so new facilities must be viewed in that wider context and over the longer term.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Education</u></p> <p>Strategic infrastructure requirements will be considered through both the plan-making process and the OxIS update. Cross-boundary opportunities and impacts will be considered as part of the detailed assessment process to identify the Oxfordshire Plan's spatial strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19. Co-operation with adjoining authorities will be undertaken as part of this process.</p> <p><u>Wider Infrastructure</u></p> <p>These points are noted.</p>
<b>Call for Ideas</b>	Mar-Apr 2019	The Buckinghamshire authorities, BLEP and BMKLNP did not make a Call for Ideas submission.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Scoping Exercise</b>	May 2019	<p>The Buckinghamshire councils submitted a joint response to the Duty to Co-operate Scoping Letter.</p> <p>The district authorities are to be the leads on the following strategic matters until the new unitary authority is made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housing requirements</li> <li>Housing supply</li> <li>Gypsies, Travellers, Caravan Dwellers and Travelling Showpeople</li> <li>Employment</li> </ul>	Engagement with Buckinghamshire will be undertaken under the duty to co-operate in relation to relevant strategic matters throughout the plan-making process in order to maximise the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan. The strategic matters identified at this stage will be the starting point for this engagement. However, it is recognised that the strategic matters relevant Buckinghamshire may require review/refinement as work on the Oxfordshire Plan progresses. Discussions with

<b>Record of Co-operation: Buckinghamshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Retail, leisure and other commercial development</li> <li>▪ Other infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Climate Change</li> <li>▪ Landscape quality and character</li> </ul> <p>Buckinghamshire County Council is to be the lead on the following strategic matters until the new unitary authority for Buckinghamshire is made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Transport</li> <li>▪ Community facilities including health and education</li> <li>▪ Flood risk</li> </ul> <p>Buckinghamshire County Council also stated that whilst water resources and water quality has not been identified as a strategic matter, they would like to be involved in discussions as the lead body for Buckinghamshire if required.</p> <p>Wycombe District Council also submitted an individual response which identified that water supply and flood risk may also be strategic cross-boundary issues with Wycombe District.</p> <p>It was suggested that the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes' Natural Environment Partnership should be added to the list of duty to co-operate bodies as the Local Nature Partnership (LNP) for Buckinghamshire.</p>	Buckinghamshire in relation to relevant strategic matters will be ongoing throughout the plan-making process.
<b>Stakeholder Event</b>	May 2019	A Buckinghamshire County Council representative attended this event.	Stakeholder feedback from this event fed into the review of the Oxfordshire Plan's vision, aspirations and objectives.
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	4 Nov 2019	Duty to co-operate for the Oxfordshire Plan was added to the agenda for a regular Buckinghamshire Planning Policy Officers Group (BPPOG) meeting.	

<b>Record of Co-operation: Buckinghamshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<p><u>Housing Need and Supply</u> Buckinghamshire does not currently have any unmet need. Oxfordshire also anticipates meeting its own needs within its boundaries.</p> <p><u>Strategic Infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Growth at Haddenham and/or Princes Risborough has potential to impact on infrastructure/services at Thame.</li> <li>▪ Buckinghamshire County Council is keen for further discussions in relation to sustainable transport. There are opportunities through the emerging transport vision for the Oxfordshire Plan and the development of the new Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan.</li> <li>▪ Oxfordshire County Council is putting together a proposal to look at the A41 through Bicester in 2020/21, including making it more attractive for sustainable modes. Will liaise with Buckinghamshire on cross-boundary issues.</li> <li>▪ Expressway – several councils across Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire have expressed concerns or objections to the Expressway. The Oxfordshire Plan will need to test all reasonable options.</li> </ul> <p><u>Evidence Base</u> Water – The EA raised issues related to River Thames modelling through the Wycombe local plan process. Similar issues may be raised for Oxfordshire.</p>	<p><u>Housing Need and Supply</u> No unmet housing need from Buckinghamshire to consider.</p> <p><u>Strategic Infrastructure</u> Cross-boundary opportunities and impacts will be considered as part of the detailed assessment process to identify the Oxfordshire Plan’s spatial strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19. Co-operation with adjoining authorities will be undertaken as part of this process.</p> <p>Planning for sustainable travel and connectivity is a core theme in the emerging Oxfordshire Plan. The production of the Oxfordshire Plan is aligned with the production of the LTCP and the OxIS update. Oxfordshire County Council will engage with Buckinghamshire as part of the LTCP process. Co-operation with Buckinghamshire will also be undertaken in relation to transport evidence to support the Oxfordshire Plan.</p> <p>The Oxford to Cambridge Expressway project has now been cancelled.</p> <p><u>Evidence Base</u> Noted. This will be taken into consideration in the production of relevant evidence base studies.</p>
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	11 Feb 2020	A joint duty to co-operate meeting took place with neighbouring local nature partnerships, which BMKLNPN attended. The emerging natural environment evidence base for the Oxfordshire Plan was discussed, including natural	Engagement with BMKLNPN will be undertaken under the duty to co-operate in relation to relevant strategic matters throughout the plan-making process in order to maximise the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan.

<b>Record of Co-operation: Buckinghamshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		capital, nature recovery, green infrastructure, the water cycle study and Habitats Regulations Assessment. BMKLNPN highlighted that the Buckinghamshire authorities have agreed a biodiversity accounting approach and have produced a model policy. BMKLNPN also highlighted strategic-scale environmental opportunities mapping across the Arc.	
<b>Oxfordshire Open Thought</b>	Jun - Aug 2020	Buckinghamshire Council, BLEP and BMKLNPN did not submit comments via Oxfordshire Open Thought.	N/A
<b>Strategic Vision Consultation</b>	Nov 2020 - Jan 2021	Buckinghamshire Council, BLEP and BMKLNPN did not submit comments on the Draft Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	27 April 2021	<p>A duty to co-operate meeting took place with Buckinghamshire Council and BLEP.</p> <p><u>Oxford-Cambridge Arc</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alignment between the emerging Oxfordshire Plan and the emerging Arc Spatial framework.</li> <li>Buckinghamshire LEP is not part of Arc governance arrangements.</li> </ul> <p><u>Growth Locations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement with Buckinghamshire needed as spatial options are refined to identify the Oxfordshire Plan's spatial strategy and broad locations for growth.</li> </ul> <p><u>Economy and Employment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The government is currently undertaking a review of the role and coverage of LEPs across England.</li> <li>Unknown implications of Brexit and Covid-19.</li> <li>BLEP's recovery strategy is based on increased productivity.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Oxford-Cambridge Arc</u> These points are noted.</p> <p><u>Growth Locations</u> Cross-boundary opportunities and impacts will be considered as part of the detailed assessment process to identify the Oxfordshire Plan's spatial strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19. Co-operation with adjoining authorities will be undertaken as part of this process.</p> <p><u>Economy and Employment</u> Policy options related to the economy and employment will be published as part of the second Regulation 18 consultation. Engagement with Buckinghamshire and BLEP will continue throughout the plan-making process.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Buckinghamshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Oxfordshire Plan needs flexibility to respond to long term change.</li> </ul> <p>It was agreed that a statement of common ground was not needed at the second Regulation 18 stage.</p>	

### Record of Co-operation: Gloucestershire

This record summarises co-operation to date (up to the second Regulation 18 consultation) with:

- Cotswold District Council (Cotswold DC)
- Gloucestershire County Council (Gloucestershire CC)
- Gloucestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLEP)
- Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership (GLNP)

<b>Record of Co-operation: Gloucestershire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
<b>SCI Consultation</b>	Nov 2018 - Jan 2019	Gloucestershire CC confirmed that it did not have any comments to make on the SCI. Cotswold DC, GLEP and GLNP did not submit comments on the SCI.	N/A
<b>Stakeholder Launch Event</b>	Dec 2018	Cotswold DC, Gloucestershire CC, GLEP and GLNP did not attend the Oxfordshire Plan Stakeholder Launch Event.	N/A
<b>SA Scoping Report Consultation</b>	Jan-Mar 2019	<p>Gloucestershire CC made the following comments:</p> <p><u>Cross-boundary Relationships</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In describing Oxfordshire's location, proximity to Gloucestershire could be noted. There are links in relation to transport priorities, impacts and opportunities at a strategic and local level. The pull of the Evesham area is of relevance.</li> </ul>	The Oxfordshire authorities, with the SA consultants working on their behalf, reviewed all of the comments received in relation to the SA Scoping Report and considered where the SA Scoping Report required amendments. This process is set out in detail in Appendix 3 of the revised SA Scoping Report (LUC, May 2019).

Record of Co-operation: Gloucestershire			
Engagement Type	Date	Summary	Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire share the Cotswolds AONB. Challenges and opportunities related to the AONB are shared. Joint working and pooled or co-ordinated resources may better meet AONB transport challenges.</li> <li>▪ Oxfordshire’s growth projections are mirrored in neighbouring counties. The effects of development and travel at a regional level may also need to be considered.</li> </ul> <p><u>Transport Infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Strategic and Major Road Networks are of particular relevance to both Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire. Arterial routes carry significant levels of traffic, including freight. Gloucestershire County Council are concerned about growth along the A40 if the impacts are not fully mitigated. The need for joint working in relation to freight management should be recognised. The long-term role of the A40 as an extension to the OxCam Expressway (to the M5) as needs to be considered.</li> <li>▪ Gloucestershire County Council would be less concerned about growth affecting the A44 around the area of Chipping Norton, as this is a local access route. However, if the impacts of growth along the A40 are not mitigated, freight might switch to this route causing additional problems at Moreton-in-Marsh.</li> <li>▪ There is no direct rail access between the Central Severn Vale of Gloucestershire and Oxford, although the new Worcestershire Parkway train station will improve connectivity. Substantial investment will be required at existing stations along the North Cotswold line to encourage and facilitate greater use of rail services. The North Cotswold Line Task Force (of which</li> </ul>	

Record of Co-operation: Gloucestershire			
Engagement Type	Date	Summary	Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process
		<p>Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire County Councils are members) is undertaking studies looking at improving frequency and journey times between Worcester, Oxford and London. It is also considering the infrastructure improvements required to bring about these service enhancements. It would be useful to reference this ongoing work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Providing quality bus services connecting development to stations will be critical in reducing car dependency.</li> </ul>	
<b>Regulation 18 Consultation (1)</b>	Feb-Mar 2019	<p>Gloucestershire CC made the following comments:</p> <p><u>Transport Infrastructure</u>                      Transport issues are a concern for Gloucestershire CC. Some transport priorities, impacts and opportunities are linked to those of Oxfordshire. The pull of the Evesham area is of relevance.</p> <p>The Strategic and Major Road Networks are of particular relevance to both Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire. Arterial routes carry significant levels of traffic, including freight. Gloucestershire County Council are concerned about growth along the A40 if the impacts are not fully mitigated. The need for joint working in relation to freight management should be recognised. The long-term role of the A40 as an extension to the OxCam Expressway (to the M5) as needs to be considered.</p> <p>Substantial investment will be required at existing stations along the North Cotswold line to encourage and facilitate greater use of rail services. The North Cotswold Line Task Force (of which Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire County Councils are members) is undertaking studies looking at</p>	<p><u>Transport Infrastructure</u>                      The emerging Oxfordshire Plan and its supporting evidence base recognise and take account of cross-boundary relationships at a range of geographical scales. Planning for sustainable travel and connectivity is a core theme in the emerging Oxfordshire Plan and the production of the Oxfordshire Plan is aligned with the production of the Oxfordshire LTCP and the OxIS update. The second Regulation 18 consultation document includes policy options related to supporting sustainable freight management.</p> <p>The emerging Oxfordshire Plan and its evidence base, including the OxIS update, recognises potential to enhance rail services. One of the Oxfordshire Plan’s spatial options is focused on sustainable transport hubs and corridors. Potential rail infrastructure improvements are considered at a high level within this option and will be considered in greater detail as part of the detailed assessment process to identify the Oxfordshire Plan’s</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Gloucestershire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<p>improving frequency and journey times between Worcester, Oxford and London. It is also considering the infrastructure improvements required to bring about these service enhancements. It would be useful to reference this ongoing work. The relationship between the work of the NCLTF and other transport related bodies within Oxfordshire should be set out to ensure an integrated and joined up approach.</p> <p>Providing quality bus services connecting development to stations will be critical in reducing car dependency.</p>	<p>spatial strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19. Co-operation with adjoining authorities will be undertaken as part of this process.</p>
<b>Call for Ideas</b>	Mar-Apr 2019	Cotswold DC, Gloucestershire CC, GLEP and GLNP did not make a Call for Ideas submission.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Scoping Exercise</b>	June 2019	<p>Gloucestershire CC agreed with the strategic matters identified and suggested including Network Rail and Great Western Railway as other bodies on the schedule.</p> <p>Cotswold DC identified the following strategic matters as of being of relevance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Housing Supply (specifically related to RAF Fairford)</li> <li>▪ Community Facilities (inc. Health &amp; Education)</li> <li>▪ Other Infrastructure (inc. Water Supply)</li> <li>▪ Climate Change (inc. Mitigation &amp; Adaptation)</li> <li>▪ Flood Risk</li> <li>▪ Water Resources\Water Quality</li> <li>▪ Heritage &amp; Historic Environment</li> </ul> <p>GLEP identified the following strategic matters as being of relevance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Housing requirements</li> <li>▪ Housing supply</li> <li>▪ Economy and employment</li> <li>▪ Retail, leisure and other commercial development</li> </ul>	<p>Network Rail and Great Western Railway are not prescribed bodies for the purposes of the duty to co-operate. Engagement will be undertaken with Network Rail and Great Western Railway via other means as appropriate.</p> <p>Engagement with Gloucestershire will be undertaken under the duty to co-operate in relation to relevant strategic matters throughout the plan-making process in order to maximise the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan. The strategic matters identified at this stage will be the starting point for this engagement. However, it is recognised that the strategic matters relevant to Gloucestershire may require review/refinement as work on the Oxfordshire Plan progresses. Discussions with Gloucestershire in relation to relevant strategic matters will be ongoing throughout the plan-making process.</p>

Record of Co-operation: Gloucestershire			
Engagement Type	Date	Summary	Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Transport</li> <li>▪ Climate Change</li> <li>▪ Flood Risk</li> <li>▪ Biodiversity, natural environment and green infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Landscape quality and character</li> </ul>	
<b>Stakeholder Event</b>	May 2019	Cotswold DC, Gloucestershire CC, GLEP and GLNP did not attend the Stakeholder Event.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	30 Oct 2019	<p>A joint duty to co-operate meeting took place with Cotswold DC, Gloucestershire CC and GLEP. The following issues were discussed:</p> <p><u>Cross-boundary Relationships</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Planned growth at RAF Fairford in Gloucestershire is a key issue with potential cross boundary implications for Oxfordshire.</li> </ul> <p><u>Economy and Employment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Gloucestershire LEP is preparing a Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) focused on cyber-tech, agricultural-technologies and green issues.</li> </ul> <p><u>Transport Infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan (LTP) is currently being reviewed. The new LTP will extend to 2041 and will include ‘connecting places strategies’ with cross-boundary connectivity. Potential to link into and benefit from the Oxford-Cambridge Arc is likely to be a key aspiration.</li> <li>▪ A Rail Investment Strategy has been commissioned which will cover the North Cotswolds rail corridor and aims to</li> </ul>	<p><u>Cross-boundary Relationships</u> Cross-boundary opportunities and impacts will be considered throughout the plan-making process.</p> <p><u>Economy and Employment</u> Noted. Potential synergies will be considered through the plan-making process.</p> <p><u>Transport Infrastructure</u> The emerging Oxfordshire Plan and its supporting evidence base recognise and take account of cross-boundary relationships at a range of geographical scales. Planning for sustainable travel and connectivity is a core theme in the emerging Oxfordshire Plan and the production of the Oxfordshire Plan is aligned with the production of the Oxfordshire LTCP and the OxIS update. Co-operation with Gloucestershire to continue in relation to this matter.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Gloucestershire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<p>deliver faster rail connections between Worcester and Oxford.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Roads such as the A40 and A44 are key corridors connecting Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire.</li> </ul> <p><u>Strategic Matters</u> Cotswold DC identified the following additional strategic matters as being of relevance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Transport;</li> <li>▪ Biodiversity/Natural Environment/Green Infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Landscape Quality and Character</li> </ul>	<p><u>Strategic Matters</u> Engagement with Cotswold DC will be undertaken under the duty to co-operate in relation to relevant strategic matters throughout the plan-making process in order to maximise the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan.</p>
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	11 Feb 2020	A joint duty to co-operate meeting took place with neighbouring local nature partnerships, which GLNP attended. The emerging natural environment evidence base for the Oxfordshire Plan was discussed, including natural capital, nature recovery, green infrastructure, the water cycle study and Habitats Regulations Assessment.	Engagement with GLNP will be undertaken under the duty to co-operate in relation to relevant strategic matters throughout the plan-making process in order to maximise the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan.
<b>Oxfordshire Open Thought</b>	Jun - Aug 2020	Cotswold DC, Gloucestershire CC, GLEP and GLNP did not submit comments via Oxfordshire Open Thought.	N/A
<b>Strategic Vision Consultation</b>	Nov 2020 - Jan 2021	<p>Gloucestershire CC made the following comments on the Draft Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire:</p> <p><u>Mineral and Waste Planning Authority Comments</u> Officers broadly support the inclusion of engagement and collaboration as one of the guiding principles for the emerging Oxfordshire strategic vision. Joint working should be a priority in the future planning for minerals and waste to support growth and to help address climate change.</p>	Amendments were made to the Strategic Vision to take account of comments received prior to the Strategic Vision being agreed by the Oxfordshire authorities.

Record of Co-operation: Gloucestershire			
Engagement Type	Date	Summary	Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process
		<p><u>Historic Environment Comments</u> The Strategic Vision should acknowledge the contribution that the historic environment can make to regeneration, sense of place and wellbeing. Detailed engagement with Historic England Place Advisors and its published guidance would allow more considered inclusion of historic environment issues.</p>	
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	30 April 2021	<p>A duty to co-operate meeting took place with Gloucestershire CC, Cotswold DC and GLEP.</p> <p><u>Housing Needs and Supply</u> Gloucestershire’s housing needs to be met within the Gloucestershire housing market area.</p> <p><u>Spatial Options</u> If clusters of settlements are being considered, then the potential for cross-boundary clusters should form part of this consideration. Potential for joint evidence.</p> <p><u>Infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ongoing communication needed regarding transport matters, particularly concerning freight and quarry movements. Cumulative impacts of growth could start to have implications for development strategies.</li> <li>▪ Education - need to recognise cross-boundary relationships (such as the draw of Chipping Campden School).</li> </ul> <p><u>Natural Environment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Both Oxfordshire and Cotswolds DC emphasise the importance of addressing climate change, with a focus on nature-based solutions.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Housing Needs and Supply</u> No unmet housing need from Gloucestershire to consider.</p> <p><u>Spatial Options</u> Cross-boundary opportunities and impacts will be considered as part of the detailed assessment process to identify the Oxfordshire Plan’s spatial strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19. Co-operation with adjoining authorities will be undertaken as part of this process.</p> <p><u>Infrastructure</u> Strategic infrastructure requirements will be considered through both the plan-making process and the OxIS update. Cross-boundary opportunities and impacts will be considered as part of the detailed assessment process to identify the Oxfordshire Plan’s spatial strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19. Co-operation with adjoining authorities will be undertaken as part of this process. The second Regulation 18 consultation document includes policy options related to</p>

Record of Co-operation: Gloucestershire			
Engagement Type	Date	Summary	Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The River Thames starts in Gloucestershire. Interventions in Gloucestershire could provide flood alleviation benefits downstream.</li> <li>▪ Cotswold DC involved in discussions around possible canal extensions. Potential connections to Oxford. Cotswold DC to provide future updates.</li> <li>▪ Gloucestershire authorities are utilising their nature recovery network in their HELAA process.</li> <li>▪ Gloucestershire authorities noted sensitivities around North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC. Ongoing discussions with Natural England. This is more than 10km from Oxfordshire, however possible impacts would need to be considered if the Oxfordshire Plan proposed significant growth close to the western boundary.</li> <li>▪ Cotswold AONB Management Plan is not supported by Cotswold DC.</li> </ul> <p>It was agreed that a statement of common ground was not needed at the second Regulation 18 stage.</p>	<p>supporting sustainable freight management. There is ongoing engagement with Gloucestershire in relation to strategic infrastructure.</p> <p><u>Natural Environment</u> There is ongoing engagement with Gloucestershire in relation to natural environment matters.</p> <p>The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the Oxfordshire Plan takes account of protected sites beyond Oxfordshire’s boundary. Further cross-boundary discussions to take place if there is a risk of the Oxfordshire Plan having likely significant effects on North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC.</p>

**Record of Co-operation: Mayor of London**

This record summarises co-operation to date (up to the second Regulation 18 consultation) with:

- The Mayor of London (via the Greater London Authority (GLA)).

<b>Record of Co-operation: Mayor of London / Greater London Authority (GLA)</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
<b>SCI Consultation</b>	Nov 2018 - Jan 2019	The GLA did not submit comments on the SCI.	N/A
<b>Stakeholder Launch Event</b>	Dec 2018	The GLA did not attend this event.	N/A
<b>SA Scoping Report Consultation</b>	Jan - Mar 2019	The GLA did not submit comments on the SA Scoping Report.	N/A
<b>Regulation 18 Consultation (1)</b>	Feb - Mar 2019	The GLA did not submit comments at the first Regulation 18 (Part 1) stage.	N/A
<b>Call for Ideas</b>	Mar-Apr 2019	The GLA did not make a Call for Ideas submission.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Scoping Exercise</b>	May 2019	The GLA identified the following relevant strategic matters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Housing</li> <li>▪ Employment and Economy</li> <li>▪ Transport</li> <li>▪ Water Management (in particular water supply/resources)</li> </ul>	Engagement with the GLA will be undertaken under the duty to co-operate in relation to relevant strategic matters throughout the plan-making process in order to maximise the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan. The strategic matters identified at this stage will be the starting point for this engagement. However, it is recognised that the strategic matters relevant to the GLA may require review/refinement as work on the Oxfordshire Plan progresses. Discussions with the GLA in relation to relevant strategic matters will be ongoing throughout the plan-making process.
<b>Stakeholder Event</b>	May 2019	The GLA do not attend this event.	N/A

Record of Co-operation: Mayor of London / Greater London Authority (GLA)			
Engagement Type	Date	Summary	Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	14 Jan 2020	<p>A duty co-operate meeting was held with GLA officers.</p> <p>Given the number of authorities in the South East, the GLA is focused on engaging with clusters through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sub-national transport bodies</li> <li>▪ Local Enterprise Partnerships</li> <li>▪ Strategic partnerships looking at growth</li> </ul> <p><u>Housing Need and Supply</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ London takes a bespoke approach to SHMAs and SHLAAs.</li> <li>▪ Emerging London Plan sought to meet London’s housing needs in full, but the Inspector queried some of the assumptions around small sites which would leave a shortfall in supply compared to demand, so has advised reducing the housing target in the plan. If SoS requires an early Plan review then likely to need to explore other options to meet demand, particularly the potential to work with authorities outside of London. Not currently looking at Green Belt release.</li> </ul> <p><u>Economy and Employment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Industrial land and logistics – London is experiencing that as land is lost, values are increasing. In parallel, demand for logistics near urban centres is increasing as things like ‘one hour delivery’ become more common.</li> </ul> <p><u>Strategic Infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ GLA updated infrastructure costings October 2019. Includes pooled contributions to tackle strategic items</li> </ul>	<p><u>Housing Need and Supply</u></p> <p>No unmet housing need from London to consider at this stage.</p> <p><u>Economy and Employment</u></p> <p>Noted. The Oxfordshire Plan will need to consider current and future trends.</p> <p><u>Strategic Infrastructure</u></p> <p>Noted. OxIS update to consider potential funding sources for strategic infrastructure.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Mayor of London / Greater London Authority (GLA)</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<p><u>Water Resources</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Mayor does not currently have a formal position on the need for the Oxfordshire reservoir. Would need to consider the evidence first.</li> <li>▪ GLA emphasis on water efficiency first.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Water Resources</u></p> <p>Noted. The second Regulation 18 document has some ambitious options related to water efficiency.</p>
<b>Oxfordshire Open Thought</b>	Jun – Aug 2020	The GLA did not make a Call for Ideas submission.	N/A
<b>Strategic Vision Consultation</b>	Nov 2020 - Jan 2021	The GLA did not submit comments on the Strategic Vision.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	7 Jun 2021	<p>A duty co-operate meeting was held with GLA officers.</p> <p><u>Natural Environment</u> Similarities between the London Plan and the Oxfordshire Plan. Both aspire to set exemplar policies and to push beyond national standards where possible.</p> <p><u>Oxford - Cambridge Arc</u> The relationship between the Oxfordshire Plan and the Arc Spatial Framework was discussed.</p> <p><u>Economy and Employment</u> Impacts of Covid-19 and challenges of planning for recovery. Unprecedented situation. Particular impact on high streets.</p> <p><u>Design</u> Making an efficient use of land - London delivering high densities using a ‘mansion block model’ where height is not appropriate.</p> <p>Value in maintaining communication, beyond the duty to co-operate, as two strategic planning bodies. Whilst London and Oxfordshire are planning at different scales there are synergies.</p>	<p><u>Natural Environment</u> Noted. There may be opportunities to learn from approaches taken in the London Plan 2021.</p> <p><u>Oxford-Cambridge Arc</u> Noted.</p> <p><u>Economy and Employment</u> Noted. Policy options related to the economy and employment will be published as part of the second Regulation 18 consultation. Oxfordshire Plan needs flexibility to respond to long term change.</p> <p><u>Design</u> Noted. There may be lessons that Oxfordshire can learn from this approach, albeit that London and Oxfordshire are planning at very different scales.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Mayor of London / Greater London Authority (GLA)</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		It was agreed that a statement of common ground was not needed at the second Regulation 18 stage.	

### **Record of Co-operation: West Northamptonshire**

This record summarises co-operation to date (up to the second Regulation 18 consultation) with:

- Daventry District Council, Northampton Borough Council, South Northamptonshire District Council and Northamptonshire County Council (until 31 March 2021);
- West Northamptonshire Council (from 1 April 2021);
- South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP); and
- Northamptonshire Local Nature Partnership (NLNP).

<b>Record of Co-operation: West Northamptonshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
<b>SCI Consultation</b>	Nov 2018 - Jan 2019	The West Northamptonshire authorities, SEMLEP and NLNP did not submit comments on the SCI.	N/A
<b>Stakeholder Launch Event</b>	Dec 2018	A joint Cherwell DC and South Northamptonshire DC representative attended this event.	Stakeholder feedback from this event fed into the Regulation 18 (1) consultation document.
<b>SA Scoping Report Consultation</b>	Jan - Mar 2019	Cherwell DC and South Northamptonshire DC submitted joint comments on the SA Scoping Report. They highlighted that several of the numbers in Table 3.9 of the SA Scoping Report were inaccurate and recommended that this be checked by the Thames Valley Records Centre.	The Oxfordshire authorities, with the SA consultants working on their behalf, reviewed all of the comments received in relation to the SA Scoping Report and considered where the SA Scoping Report required amendments. This process is set out in detail in Appendix 3 of the revised SA Scoping Report (LUC, May 2019).
<b>Regulation 18 Consultation (1)</b>	Feb - Mar 2019	The West Northamptonshire authorities, SEMLEP and NLNP did not submit comments at Regulation 18 (1).	N/A

<b>Record of Co-operation: West Northamptonshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
<b>Call for Ideas</b>	Mar-Apr 2019	The West Northamptonshire authorities, SEMLEP and NLNP did not make a Call for Ideas submission.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Scoping Exercise</b>	May 2019	<p>South Northamptonshire DC identified the following additional strategic matters as being of relevance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Heritage and Historic Environment</li> <li>▪ Landscape quality and character</li> <li>▪ Healthy place-shaping</li> <li>▪ Transport</li> </ul> <p>Northamptonshire CC stated that the strategic matters of relevance are transport and flood risk.</p> <p>SEMLEP stated its significant interest in the Oxfordshire Plan as a neighbouring LEP and as part of the Oxford to Cambridge Arc.</p>	Engagement with West Northamptonshire will be undertaken under the duty to co-operate in relation to relevant strategic matters throughout the plan-making process in order to maximise the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan. The strategic matters identified at this stage will be the starting point for this engagement. However, it is recognised that the strategic matters relevant to West Northamptonshire may require review/refinement as work on the Oxfordshire Plan progresses. Discussions with West Northamptonshire in relation to relevant strategic matters will be ongoing throughout the plan-making process.
<b>Stakeholder Event</b>	May 2019	The West Northamptonshire authorities, SEMLEP and NLNP did not attend this event.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	27 April 2020	<p>A joint duty to co-operate meeting was held with Northampton Borough Council, South Northamptonshire Council and the West Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit.</p> <p><u>Housing Needs and Supply</u> The West Northamptonshire authorities expect to meet their own development needs.</p> <p><u>Oxford - Cambridge Arc</u> Both Oxfordshire and West Northamptonshire are part of the Arc and the authorities will also work together as part of that project.</p>	<p><u>Housing Needs and Supply</u> No unmet housing need from West Northamptonshire to consider.</p> <p><u>Oxford - Cambridge Arc</u> Noted. Joint working across the Arc will continue as the Government seeks to develop a Spatial Framework.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: West Northamptonshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<p><u>Infrastructure</u> The importance of health facilities in Oxfordshire to residents of West Northamptonshire was highlighted - particularly Horton General Hospital (Banbury) and the John Radcliffe (Oxford). Access to the John Radcliffe is a particular concern.</p> <p>The West Northamptonshire districts are also working together to produce a joint strategic plan to 2050. There are mutual benefits to having conversations that go beyond duty to co-operate matters and start to share experiences and lessons learnt from joint planning to 2050.</p>	<p><u>Infrastructure</u> Strategic infrastructure requirements will be considered through both the plan-making process and the OxIS update. This will include consideration of cross-boundary opportunities and impacts.</p>
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	30 June 2020	<p>A joint duty to co-operate meeting was held with Daventry District Council, Northampton Borough Council, South Northamptonshire Council and the West Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit.</p> <p><u>Housing Needs and Supply</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Oxfordshire seeking to align HELAAs. Discussed experiences in West Northamptonshire and the use of an expert panel.</li> <li>▪ West Northants housing and economic needs assessment underway. Interim findings received. The West Northamptonshire authorities still expect to meet their own development needs.</li> <li>▪ Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment (OGNA) addendum commissioned to take account of Covid-19.</li> </ul> <p><u>Cross-boundary Relationships</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Banbury’s role as a service centre extends into West Northamptonshire.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Housing Needs and Supply</u> No unmet housing need from West Northamptonshire to consider.</p> <p><u>Cross-boundary Relationships</u> Cross-boundary opportunities and impacts will be considered as part of the detailed assessment process to identify the Oxfordshire Plan’s spatial strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19. Co-operation with adjoining authorities will be undertaken as part of this process.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: West Northamptonshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<u>Infrastructure</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>West Northamptonshire authorities working with SEMLEP and EEH on a Strategic Infrastructure Plan.</li> </ul>	<u>Infrastructure</u> Noted. Potential synergies will be considered through the plan-making process.
<b>Oxfordshire Open Thought</b>	Jun - Aug 2020	The West Northamptonshire authorities, SEMLEP and NLNP did not submit comments via Oxfordshire Open Thought.	N/A
<b>Strategic Vision Consultation</b>	Nov 2020 - Jan 2021	The West Northamptonshire authorities, SEMLEP and NLNP did not submit comments on the Draft Strategic Vision.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	11 May 2021	A duty to co-operate meeting was held with West Northamptonshire Council and SEMLEP.  <u>Housing Needs and Supply</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>West Northamptonshire housing and economic needs assessment nearing completion. Additional work undertaken to take account of Covid-19. West Northamptonshire still expect to meet their own development needs.</li> </ul> <u>Spatial Options</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>West Northamptonshire developing a set of spatial options. Expected publication July 2021.</li> <li>West Northamptonshire commissioning work on new settlements. Will consider the potential role of new settlements, areas of search and all reasonable alternatives.</li> <li>West Northamptonshire testing spatial options against different infrastructure packages. More detailed site specific work to follow.</li> </ul>	  <u>Housing Needs and Supply</u> No unmet housing need from West Northamptonshire to consider.  <u>Spatial Options</u> Cross-boundary impacts and opportunities to be considered throughout the plan-making process. No significant considerations for Oxfordshire identified at this stage.

<b>Record of Co-operation: West Northamptonshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<p><u>Economy and Employment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SEMLEP Economic Recovery Strategy published December 2020. Increased emphasis on environmental sustainability and net zero carbon.</li> </ul> <p>It was agreed that a statement of common ground was not needed at the second Regulation 18 stage.</p>	<p><u>Economy and Employment</u></p> <p>Synergies with Oxfordshire’s Recovery Strategy are noted.</p>

**Record of Co-operation: Swindon and Wiltshire**

This record summarises co-operation to date (up to the second Regulation 18 consultation) with:

- Swindon Borough Council (Swindon BC);
- Wiltshire Council;
- Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP); and
- Swindon and Wiltshire Local Nature Partnership (SWLNP).

<b>Record of Co-operation: Swindon and Wiltshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
<b>SCI Consultation</b>	Nov 2018 - Jan 2019	Swindon BC, Wiltshire Council, SWLEP and SWLNP did not submit comments on the SCI.	N/A
<b>Stakeholder Launch Event</b>	Dec 2018	Swindon BC, Wiltshire Council, SWLEP and SWLNP did not attend this event.	N/A
<b>SA Scoping Report Consultation</b>	Jan - Mar 2019	Swindon BC, Wiltshire Council, SWLEP and SWLNP did not submit comments on the SA Scoping Report.	N/A
<b>Regulation 18 Consultation (1)</b>	Feb - Mar 2019	Swindon BC, Wiltshire Council, SWLEP and SWLNP did not submit comments at Regulation 18 (1).	N/A

<b>Record of Co-operation: Swindon and Wiltshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
<b>Call for Ideas</b>	Mar-Apr 2019	Swindon BC, Wiltshire Council, SWLEP and SWLNP did not make a Call for Ideas submission.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Scoping Exercise</b>	May 2019	Swindon BC advised that water resources/quality should be added to the strategic matters of relevance to Swindon Borough given that Oxfordshire and Swindon are in the same catchment area and there are known concerns over long-term security of supply.	Engagement with Swindon and Wiltshire will be undertaken under the duty to co-operate in relation to relevant strategic matters throughout the plan-making process in order to maximise the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan. The strategic matters identified at this stage will be the starting point for this engagement. However, it is recognised that the strategic matters relevant to Swindon and Wiltshire may require review/refinement as work on the Oxfordshire Plan progresses. Discussions with Swindon and Wiltshire in relation to relevant strategic matters will be ongoing throughout the plan-making process.
<b>Stakeholder Event</b>	May 2019	Swindon BC, Wiltshire Council, SWLEP and SWLNP did not attend this event.	N/A
<b>Liaison Meeting</b>	12 Nov 2019	Members of the Oxfordshire Plan Core Team attended a regular Oxfordshire/Swindon liaison meeting. The matters discussed included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Oxfordshire Plan progress, feedback from Regulation 18 (1) and next steps.</li> <li>▪ Update on emerging Oxfordshire LTCP</li> <li>▪ Update on strategic planning in Swindon, including Local Plan progress and New Eastern Villages.</li> <li>▪ England's Economic Heartland.</li> <li>▪ Oxford-Cambridge Expressway.</li> <li>▪ Oxfordshire Rail Study.</li> <li>▪ A420 corridor.</li> </ul>	Swindon's New Eastern Villages are close to the Oxfordshire boundary and there are potential cross boundary impacts and opportunities that need to be considered through the plan-making process.  Transport is a key strategic matter with Swindon. The emerging Oxfordshire Plan and its supporting evidence base recognise and take account of cross-boundary relationships at a range of geographical scales. Planning for sustainable travel and connectivity is a core theme in the emerging Oxfordshire Plan and the production of the Oxfordshire Plan is aligned with the production of the Oxfordshire LTCP and the OxIS update. There will be ongoing engagement with Swindon and Wiltshire in relation to this matter.

<b>Record of Co-operation: Swindon and Wiltshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
<b>Liaison Meeting</b>	3 March 2020	<p>Members of the Oxfordshire Plan Core Team attended a regular Oxfordshire/Swindon liaison meeting. The matters discussed included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Oxfordshire Plan progress, forthcoming Open Thought engagement and evidence commissioned.</li> <li>▪ Update on emerging Oxfordshire LTCP.</li> <li>▪ Update on strategic planning in Swindon, including Local Plan progress and New Eastern Villages.</li> <li>▪ Rail strategies.</li> </ul>	<p>Swindon's New Eastern Villages are close to the Oxfordshire boundary and there are potential cross boundary impacts and opportunities that need to be considered through the plan-making process.</p> <p>The emerging Oxfordshire Plan and its evidence base, including the OxIS update, recognises potential to enhance rail services. One of the Oxfordshire Plan's spatial options is focused on sustainable transport hubs and corridors. Potential rail infrastructure improvements are considered at a high level within this option and will be considered in greater detail as part of the detailed assessment process to identify the Oxfordshire Plan's spatial strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19. Co-operation with adjoining authorities will be undertaken as part of this process.</p>
<b>Oxfordshire Open Thought</b>	Jun - Aug 2020	Swindon BC, Wiltshire Council, SWLEP and SWLNP did not make an Open Thought submission.	N/A
<b>Liaison Meeting</b>	17 Sept 2020	<p>Members of the Oxfordshire Plan Core Team attended a regular Oxfordshire/Swindon liaison meeting. The matters discussed included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Oxfordshire Plan progress and timetable updates.</li> <li>▪ Update on emerging Oxfordshire LTCP.</li> <li>▪ Update on strategic planning in Swindon including Local Plan progress and New Eastern Villages.</li> </ul>	Swindon's New Eastern Villages are close to the Oxfordshire boundary and there are potential cross boundary impacts and opportunities that need to be considered through the plan-making process.
<b>Strategic Vision Consultation</b>	Nov 2020 - Jan 2021	Swindon BC, Wiltshire Council, SWLEP and SWLNP did not submit comments on the Strategic Vision.	N/A
<b>Liaison Meeting</b>	18 March 2021	Members of the Oxfordshire Plan Core Team attended a regular Oxfordshire/Swindon liaison meeting. The matters discussed included:	Swindon's New Eastern Villages are close to the Oxfordshire boundary and there are potential cross

<b>Record of Co-operation: Swindon and Wiltshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Oxfordshire Plan progress, new timetable, development of policy options and spatial strategy, and Strategic Vision.</li> <li>▪ Update on emerging Oxfordshire LTCP.</li> <li>▪ Update on strategic planning in Swindon including Local Plan progress and New Eastern Villages.</li> <li>▪ Rail and bus matters</li> </ul>	<p>boundary impacts and opportunities that need to be considered through the plan-making process.</p> <p>Transport is a key strategic matter with Swindon. Planning for sustainable travel and connectivity is a core theme in the emerging Oxfordshire Plan and the production of the Oxfordshire Plan is aligned with the production of the Oxfordshire LTCP and the OxIS update. There will be ongoing engagement with Swindon in relation to this matter.</p>
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	10 May 2021	<p>A duty to co-operate meeting was held with Swindon BC, Wiltshire Council and SWLEP.</p> <p><u>Housing Need and Supply</u> Swindon BC and Wiltshire Council have joint housing and economic needs evidence, which needs updating to take account of Covid-19. Swindon and Wiltshire are not looking to OXFORDSHIRE to accommodate any unmet housing need.</p> <p><u>Spatial Options</u> Oxfordshire’s spatial strategy options recognise cross-boundary functional relationships. The relationship with Swindon is likely to be particularly important in south-west Oxfordshire. This will be a key consideration in Spatial Strategy Option 5 (supporting rural communities). Relationships to be further explored as work progresses.</p> <p>The need to consider infrastructure capacity/delivery in identifying the Oxfordshire Plan’s spatial strategy was highlighted.</p>	<p><u>Housing Need and Supply</u> No unmet housing need from Swindon and Wiltshire to consider.</p> <p><u>Spatial Options</u> Five spatial options are identified at the second Regulation 18 stage. Potential opportunities and impacts are identified at a high level and will be tested, including through the second Regulation 18 consultation. A more detailed assessment will be undertaken to identify the Oxfordshire Plan’s spatial strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19. This assessment process will include co-operation with adjoining authorities.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Swindon and Wiltshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<p><u>Cross-Boundary Relationships</u> The need for the Oxfordshire Plan to consider different spatial geographies (based around different economic, policy/programme and transport influencers) was highlighted. This includes EEH, the Oxford - Cambridge Arc and the Fast Growth Cities Network.</p> <p><u>Transport</u> A key area for collaboration between Swindon, Wiltshire and Oxfordshire will be transport.</p> <p>SWLEP is exploring new energy vehicles (particularly hydrogen) and potential impacts on key routes, including the M4 and A420. Engagement with logistics businesses is being undertaken.</p> <p>Swindon and Wiltshire Rail Strategy work is ongoing. Bids submitted for Corsham and Wilton</p> <p><u>Natural Environment</u> SWLEP has joint funded PhD research into natural capital. The research will take five years to complete, but outputs will be published in stages.</p> <p><u>Economy &amp; Employment</u> Swindon and Wiltshire Local Industrial Strategy published March 2020.</p> <p>Innovation Campus at Wroughton linked to the circular economy.</p> <p><u>Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople</u> Lack of time for detailed discussion. No cross-boundary issues raised but further discussion needed.</p>	<p><u>Cross-Boundary Relationships</u> The emerging Oxfordshire Plan and its supporting evidence base recognise and take account of cross-boundary relationships at a range of geographical scales.</p> <p><u>Transport</u> Transport is a key strategic matter with Swindon. Planning for sustainable travel and connectivity is a core theme in the emerging Oxfordshire Plan and the production of the Oxfordshire Plan is aligned with the production of the Oxfordshire LTCP and the OxIS update. There will be ongoing engagement with Swindon in relation to this matter.</p> <p><u>Natural Environment</u> Noted. Any staged outputs will be considered where their timing aligns with the production of the Oxfordshire Plan and its evidence base.</p> <p><u>Economy &amp; Employment</u> Noted. Consideration will be given to any learning that can be taken from circular economy examples/best practice.</p> <p><u>Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople</u> Topic to be picked up at next duty to co-operate meeting.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Swindon and Wiltshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<p><u>Water Supply/Water Quality</u></p> <p>This is to be identified as a strategic matter for Wiltshire Council. Strategic water transfer infrastructure being considered in Wiltshire. (Note that this is not expected to relate to Swindon and Oxfordshire, as Wiltshire is in a different water supply area.)</p> <p>It was agreed that a statement of common ground was not needed at the second Regulation 18 stage.</p>	<p><u>Water Supply/Water Quality</u></p> <p>Noted. Strategic matters matrix updated. Future engagement to take place with Wiltshire Council in relation to water supply/water quality.</p>

#### **Record of Co-operation: Warwickshire**

This record summarises duty to co-operation to date (up to the second Regulation 18 consultation) with:

- Stratford-Upon-Avon District Council (Stratford-Upon-Avon DC);
- Warwickshire County Council (Warwickshire CC);
- Coventry and Warwickshire LEP (CWLEP); and
- Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Nature Partnership (WCSLNP).

<b>Record of Co-operation: Warwickshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>How this has shaped the Oxfordshire Plan</b>
<b>SCI Consultation</b>	Nov 2018 - Jan 2019	Stratford-Upon-Avon DC, Warwickshire CC, CWLEP and WCSLNP did not submit comments on the SCI.	N/A
<b>Stakeholder Launch Event</b>	Dec 2018	Stratford-Upon-Avon DC, Warwickshire CC, CWLEP and WCSLNP did not attend this event.	N/A
<b>SA Scoping Report Consultation</b>	Jan - Mar 2019	Stratford-Upon-Avon DC, Warwickshire CC, CWLEP and WCSLNP did not submit comments on the SA Scoping Report.	N/A

Record of Co-operation: Warwickshire			
Engagement Type	Date	Summary	How this has shaped the Oxfordshire Plan
Regulation 18 Consultation (1)	Feb - Mar 2019	<p>Warwickshire CC made the following comments:</p> <p><u>Transport Infrastructure</u> The Oxfordshire Economic Plan identifies transport schemes that will support the ‘knowledge spine’, which is a fundamental component of the Ox-Cam Arc. Oxfordshire County Council is also refreshing its transport evidence. Joining up these strategic opportunities would be mutually beneficial.</p> <p>Warwickshire CC wishes to work with the Oxfordshire authorities to develop a joint understanding of the likely cumulative impacts of strategic growth in Oxfordshire on a number of key routes in Warwickshire.</p> <p>Warwickshire CC is supportive of the three transport themes set out in the strategy and considers that improved rail infrastructure and services will have a positive impact on these aims. Of specific relevance is the further development of the Nuneaton - Coventry - Kenilworth - Leamington (NUCKLE) corridor where there are aspirations to develop services beyond Warwickshire to the Thames Valley and the East Midlands.</p> <p>Connectivity to the proposed East-West rail services is important and Warwickshire CC will continue to work with the relevant train operators to ensure successful integration with key rail corridors such as the West Coast Main Line and Chiltern Line.</p> <p>Both Oxfordshire County Council and Warwickshire CC are members of the North Cotswold Line Taskforce and are</p>	<p><u>Transport Infrastructure</u> Planning for sustainable travel and connectivity is a core theme in the emerging Oxfordshire Plan and the production of the Oxfordshire Plan is aligned with the production of the Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) and the OxIS update. There will be ongoing co-operation with Warwickshire in relation to this strategic matter.</p> <p>The emerging Oxfordshire Plan and its evidence base, including the OxIS update, recognises potential to enhance rail services. One of the Oxfordshire Plan’s spatial options is focused on sustainable transport hubs and corridors. Potential rail infrastructure improvements are considered at a high level within this option and will be considered in greater detail as part of the detailed assessment process to identify the Oxfordshire Plan’s spatial strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19. Co-operation with adjoining authorities will be undertaken as part of this process.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Warwickshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>How this has shaped the Oxfordshire Plan</b>
		<p>committed to working to secure infrastructure and service improvements to the North Cotswold Line.</p> <p><u>Cross-Boundary Relationships</u> There are shared synergies and growth ambitions between the Warwickshire and Oxfordshire economic areas.</p> <p>Stratford-Upon-Avon DC made the following comments:</p> <p><u>Vision and Aspirations</u> Generally support the vision but note that there is no reference to the wider context or role of Oxfordshire.</p> <p>The five aspirations seem appropriate. However, it is suggested that explicit reference is made to the Cotswolds AONB under Aspiration 1 and acknowledgement of the regional role of Oxfordshire under Aspirations 4 and 5 in particular.</p> <p><u>Cross-Boundary Relationships</u> The wider context for Oxfordshire is missing from the consultation document which could otherwise help to inform which option or options may be preferable.</p>	<p><u>Cross-boundary Relationships</u> The emerging Oxfordshire Plan and its supporting evidence base recognise and take account of cross-boundary relationships at a range of geographical scales.</p> <p><u>Vision, Objectives &amp; Aspirations</u> The Oxfordshire Plan's vision and objectives were amended to take account of comments received through the first Regulation 18 consultation.</p>
<b>Call for Ideas</b>	Mar-Apr 2019	Stratford-Upon-Avon DC, Warwickshire CC, CWLEP and WCSLNP did not make a Call for Ideas submission.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Scoping Exercise</b>	May 2019	<p>Warwickshire CC confirmed it is content with the strategic matters identified as being relevant.</p> <p>Stratford-Upon-Avon DC made the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Is necessary to distinguish between housing requirements and housing supply as strategic matters?</li> </ul>	Engagement with Warwickshire will be undertaken under the duty to co-operate in relation to relevant strategic matters throughout the plan-making process in order to maximise the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan. The strategic matters identified at this stage will be the starting point for this engagement. However, it is recognised that the strategic matters relevant to

<b>Record of Co-operation: Warwickshire</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>How this has shaped the Oxfordshire Plan</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The relevance of strategic matters will only be known when the spatial strategy has been identified.</li> </ul>	Warwickshire may require review/refinement as work on the Oxfordshire Plan progresses. Discussions with Warwickshire in relation to relevant strategic matters will be ongoing throughout the plan-making process.
<b>Stakeholder Event</b>	May 2019	Stratford-Upon-Avon DC, Warwickshire CC, CWLEP and WCSLNP did not attend this event.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	11 Feb 2020	A joint duty to co-operate meeting took place with neighbouring local nature partnerships, which WCSLP attended. The emerging natural environment evidence base for the Oxfordshire Plan was discussed, including natural capital, nature recovery, green infrastructure, the water cycle study and Habitats Regulations Assessment. WCSLNP highlighted that they hold habitats data going back a number of years and which helps to identify long-term trends. They are also undertaking monitoring using European Space Agency imagery.	Engagement with WCSLNP will be undertaken under the duty to co-operate in relation to relevant strategic matters throughout the plan-making process in order to maximise the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan.
<b>Oxfordshire Open Thought</b>	Jun - Aug 2020	Stratford-Upon-Avon DC, Warwickshire CC, CWLEP and WCSLNP did not make an Open Thought submission.	N/A
<b>Strategic Vision Consultation</b>	Nov 2020 - Jan 2021	Stratford-Upon-Avon DC, Warwickshire CC, CWLEP and WCSLNP did not submit comments on the Strategic Vision.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	9 June 2021	<p>Duty to co-operate for the Oxfordshire Plan was added to the agenda for a regular Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Association of Planning officers (CSWAPO) meeting. (This included representatives from Stratford-Upon-Avon DC, Warwickshire CC and CWLEP.)</p> <p>An update on Oxfordshire Plan progress and next steps was provided.</p>	

Record of Co-operation: Warwickshire			
Engagement Type	Date	Summary	How this has shaped the Oxfordshire Plan
		<p><u>Strategic Matters</u> It was agreed to keep the strategic matters for co-operation under review and to meet again, if necessary, following the start of the second Regulation 18 consultation.</p> <p><u>Housing Need and Supply</u> There is no unmet need from Warwickshire to discuss with Oxfordshire. The unmet need of Coventry is being met within the Warwickshire housing market area.</p> <p>It was agreed that a statement of common ground was not needed at the second Regulation 18 stage.</p>	<p><u>Strategic Matters</u> Noted. Strategic will be kept under review.</p> <p><u>Housing Need and Supply</u> No unmet housing need from Warwickshire to consider.</p>

**Record of Co-operation: The Civil Aviation Authority**

This record summarises co-operation to date (up to the second Regulation 18 consultation) with the Civil Aviation Authority.

<b>Record of Co-operation: The Civil Aviation Authority</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
<b>SCI Consultation</b>	Nov 2018 - Jan 2019	The Civil Aviation Authority did not submit comments on the SCI.	N/A
<b>Stakeholder Launch Event</b>	Dec 2018	The Civil Aviation Authority did not attend this event.	N/A
<b>SA Scoping Report Consultation</b>	Jan - Mar 2019	The Civil Aviation Authority did not submit comments on the SA Scoping Report.	N/A
<b>Regulation 18 Consultation (1)</b>	Feb - Mar 2019	The Civil Aviation Authority did not submit comments through the first Regulation 18 consultation.	N/A
<b>Call for Ideas</b>	Mar-Apr 2019	The Civil Aviation Authority did not make a Call for Ideas submission.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Scoping Exercise</b>	May 2019	The Civil Aviation Authority did not respond to the duty to co-operate scoping exercise.	N/A
<b>Stakeholder Event</b>	May 2019	The Civil Aviation Authority did not attend this event.	N/A
<b>Oxfordshire Open Thought</b>	Jun - Aug 2020	The Civil Aviation Authority did not make a submission via Oxfordshire Open Thought.	N/A
<b>Strategic Vision Consultation</b>	Nov 2020 - Jan 2021	The Civil Aviation Authority did not comment on the Strategic Vision.	N/A

**Record of Co-operation: Clinical Commissioning Groups**

This record summarises co-operation to date (up to the second Regulation 18 consultation) with:

- NHS Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (Oxfordshire CCG);
- NHS Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group (BANES, Swindon and Wiltshire CCG); and
- NHS Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group (Buckinghamshire CCG).

<b>Record of Co-operation: Clinical Commissioning Groups</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
<b>Oxfordshire Growth Board</b>	ONGOING	Oxfordshire CCG is an associate member of the Oxfordshire Growth Board.	The Growth Board discusses items relevant to the Oxfordshire Plan such as evidence base studies.
<b>Healthy Place Shaping Working Group</b>	ONGOING	Oxfordshire CCG is part of the Healthy Place Shaping Working Group. The working group is overseeing the delivery of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Health Impact Assessment</li> <li>▪ Oxfordshire Healthy Place Shaping Toolkit</li> <li>▪ Health Places Topic Paper</li> </ul>	This is helping to ensure that the Oxfordshire Plan and its evidence base are joined up with CCG ambitions, priorities and future plans.
<b>SCI Consultation</b>	Nov 2018 - Jan 2019	Oxfordshire CCG, BANES, Swindon and Wiltshire CCG and Buckinghamshire CCG did not submit comments on the SCI.	N/A
<b>Stakeholder Launch Event</b>	Dec 2018	An Oxfordshire CCG representative attended this event and provided input.	Stakeholder feedback from this event fed into the Regulation 18 (1) consultation document.
<b>SA Scoping Report Consultation</b>	Jan - Mar 2019	Oxfordshire CCG, BANES, Swindon and Wiltshire CCG and Buckinghamshire CCG did not submit comments on the SA Scoping Report.	N/A
<b>Regulation 18 Consultation (1)</b>	Feb - Mar 2019	Oxfordshire CCG made the following comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ An objective relating to developing strong and healthy communities is welcomed.</li> <li>▪ Oxfordshire CCG would like to be involved in the development of a healthy place shaping policy.</li> <li>▪ Any future decision making around development, infrastructure and place-making would be expected to</li> </ul>	<p>Creating strong and healthy communities is a key theme in the emerging Oxfordshire Plan.</p> <p>Oxfordshire CCG is involved in the development of a healthy place shaping policy through the Healthy Place Shaping Working Group.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Clinical Commissioning Groups</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<p>make it easier for Oxfordshire to be physically active and maintain a healthy lifestyle.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Oxfordshire has a diverse population which results in a range of different service needs.</li> <li>▪ It is important that NHS services in Oxfordshire are able to attract and maintain the workforce required to deliver services to Oxfordshire's growing population.</li> </ul>	
<b>Call for Ideas</b>	Mar-Apr 2019	Oxfordshire CCG, BANES, Swindon and Wiltshire CCG and Buckinghamshire CCG did not make a Call for Ideas submission.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Scoping Exercise</b>	May 2019	A joint response was received from Oxfordshire CCG and Buckinghamshire CCG. Relevant strategic matters include health infrastructure funding and healthy place shaping which should likely be included as a strategic matter.	Engagement with CCGs will be undertaken under the duty to co-operate in relation to relevant strategic matters throughout the plan-making process in order to maximise the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan. The strategic matters identified at this stage will be the starting point for this engagement. However, it is recognised that the strategic matters relevant to CCGs may require review/refinement as work on the Oxfordshire Plan progresses. Discussions with CCGs in relation to relevant strategic matters will be ongoing throughout the plan-making process.
<b>Stakeholder Event</b>	May 2019	Oxfordshire CCG, BANES, Swindon and Wiltshire CCG and Buckinghamshire CCG did not attend this event.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	26 Nov 2019	<p>A joint duty to co-operate meeting took place with Oxfordshire CCG and Buckinghamshire CCG.</p> <p><u>Housing Need and Supply</u> The quantum and location of new homes will have effects on demand for NHS services.</p>	<p><u>Housing Need and Supply</u> The relationship between the quantum and location of growth and potential infrastructure opportunities and impacts will be tested through the plan-making process, including through the second Regulation 18 consultation. A more detailed assessment will be undertaken as part of the identification of the Oxfordshire Plan's spatial</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Clinical Commissioning Groups</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<p>The recruitment and retention of staff is a key issue for the CCGs. The CCGs emphasised the need for affordable housing for key workers.</p> <p><u>Community Facilities (Health)</u> The CCGs are concerned about the current infrastructure funding gap. The CCGs' long-term land requirements and estates strategy shows a move to expand the role of GP surgeries so that they are local hubs, linked into communities. This will require more land/building space.</p> <p><u>Healthy Place Shaping</u> Oxfordshire CCG is a member of the Oxfordshire Plan Health Place-Shaping working group.</p>	<p>strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19. This assessment process will include further co-operation with CCGs.</p> <p>The emerging Oxfordshire Plan recognises that housing affordability is a key issue in Oxfordshire.</p> <p><u>Community Facilities (Health)</u> OxIS update to consider potential funding sources for strategic infrastructure. Ongoing engagement with the CCGs to ensure that the Oxfordshire Plan and its evidence base are joined up with CCG ambitions, priorities and future plans.</p> <p><u>Healthy Place Shaping</u> Noted. This is a key mechanism for ensuring that the Oxfordshire Plan and its evidence base are joined up with CCG ambitions, priorities and future plans.</p>
<b>Oxfordshire Open Thought</b>	Jun - Aug 2020	Oxfordshire CCG, BANES, Swindon and Wiltshire CCG and Buckinghamshire CCG did not make an Open Thought submission.	N/A
<b>Strategic Vision Consultation</b>	Nov 2020 - Jan 2021	Oxfordshire CCG, BANES, Swindon and Wiltshire CCG and Buckinghamshire CCG did not submit comments on the Strategic Vision.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	19 May 2021	<p>A joint duty to co-operate meeting took place with Oxfordshire CCG and Buckinghamshire CCG.</p> <p>It was noted that CCGs will be replaced by Integrated Care Systems (ICS) by April 2022. Oxfordshire will come under the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West ICS.</p>	Noted. Co-operation will take place with relevant ICSs when established.

<b>Record of Co-operation: Clinical Commissioning Groups</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<p><u>Health Infrastructure</u> A detailed review of OxIS health infrastructure schemes was undertaken.</p> <p>It was agreed that a statement of common ground was not needed at the second Regulation 18 stage.</p>	<p><u>Health Infrastructure</u> There will be continued co-operation with CCGs as work on the OxIS update continues. This will include appropriate consideration of proposed strategic growth locations.</p>
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	26 May 2021	<p>A duty to co-operate meeting took place with BANES, Swindon and Wiltshire CCG.</p> <p><u>Health Infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discussed OxIS update. No health infrastructure requirements identified for the Western Vale and environs sub-area.</li> <li>▪ BANES, Swindon and Wiltshire CCG currently supporting partners in preparing Primary Care Network estate plans. Planned update of service model to prioritise home care. Intention to improve support within communities through joined up services rather than focusing solely on primary care. Could have implications for how S106 contributions are secured and spent.</li> <li>▪ Recognition that patients in Shrivenham and Watchfield tend to look towards Swindon for healthcare facilities.</li> <li>▪ Need to ensure that South Central Ambulance Service are engaged in the Oxfordshire Plan process.</li> <li>▪ Transport is a key issue for staff and patients, particularly in terms of direct bus access to hospitals from parts of Oxfordshire. Discussions taking place through Local Transport Plan process between Swindon BC and Oxfordshire CC on sustainable transport and areas strategies.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Health Infrastructure</u> There will be continued co-operation with CCGs as work on the OxIS update continues. This will include appropriate consideration of proposed strategic growth locations.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Clinical Commissioning Groups</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		It was agreed that a statement of common ground was not needed at the second Regulation 18 stage.	

**Record of Co-operation: Environment Agency**

This record summarises co-operation to date (up to the second Regulation 18 consultation) with the Environment Agency.

<b>Record of Co-operation: Environment Agency (EA)</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
<b>Oxfordshire Growth Board</b>	ONGOING	The EA is an associate member of the Oxfordshire Growth Board.	The Growth Board discusses items relevant to the Oxfordshire Plan such as evidence base studies.
<b>Biodiversity / Natural Capital Working Group</b>	ONGOING	As part of this working group, the EA has fed into the development of the biodiversity and natural capital evidence base. This includes feeding into the review and refinement of SA alternatives and testing.	This is helping to ensure that the Oxfordshire Plan and its evidence base are joined up with EA ambitions, priorities and best practice.
<b>Water &amp; Flood Risk Working Group</b>	ONGOING	The EA is part of the steering group for the WCS Phase 1 Outline. The EA will therefore have the opportunity to oversee and feed into this work throughout the project. Specific EA input and how this has shaped the Oxfordshire Plan is detailed below.	This is helping to ensure that the Oxfordshire Plan and its evidence base are joined up with EA ambitions, priorities and best practice.
<b>SCI Consultation</b>	Nov 2018 - Jan 2019	The EA made the following comments in relation to the SCI: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The timetable for producing the Oxfordshire Plan is extremely ambitious.</li> <li>• The timings for each phase of the Oxfordshire Plan’s production should be specified in order to help stakeholders plan their workloads and ensure that they have suitable resources available to respond.</li> </ul>	A new timetable for producing the Oxfordshire Plan has since been agreed with the Government.

<b>Record of Co-operation: Environment Agency (EA)</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The consultation in February 2019 should be included within the SCI.</li> <li>Sufficient time must be allowed for the preparation of and consultation on the Oxfordshire Plan's evidence base.</li> </ul>	
<b>Stakeholder Launch Event</b>	Dec 2018	An EA representative attended this event and provided input.	Stakeholder feedback from this event fed into the first Regulation 18 consultation document.
<b>SA Scoping Report Consultation</b>	Jan - Mar 2019	<p>The EA made a number of comments in relation to the proposed scope of the SA. These related to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunities to integrate environmental issues with social and economic factors should be taken.</li> <li>The natural capital approach and the need to provide net environmental gain should be more evident.</li> <li>Resilience to climate change needs to be embedded in all new developments.</li> <li>The potential to deliver natural floodplain management should be considered.</li> <li>Issues related to contaminated land and potential for remediation should be considered.</li> </ul>	The Oxfordshire authorities, with the SA consultants working on their behalf, reviewed all of the comments received in relation to the SA Scoping Report and considered where the SA Scoping Report required amendments. This process is set out in detail in Appendix 3 of the revised SA Scoping Report (LUC, May 2019).
<b>Regulation 18 Consultation (1)</b>	Feb - Mar 2019	<p>The EA made a number of comments on the first Regulation 18 document:</p> <p><u>Plan Vision, Objectives &amp; Aspirations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The vision could be more aspirational on environmental issues.</li> <li>The aspirations have missed an opportunity to fully integrate environmental issues with the social and economic factors at this strategic level for the whole of Oxfordshire.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Plan Vision, Objectives &amp; Aspirations</u></p> <p>The Oxfordshire Plan's vision and objectives were amended to take account of comments received through the first Regulation 18 consultation.</p>

Record of Co-operation: Environment Agency (EA)			
Engagement Type	Date	Summary	Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A number of specific comments were made in relation to the phrasing of the draft objectives.</li> </ul> <p><u>Natural Environment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental enhancements could be provided through a natural capital approach to sustainable placemaking, the delivery of catchment wide natural flood management features and the implementation of climate change measures and adaption relating to water resources and carbon.</li> <li>The natural and built environment context section should mention the fluvial floodplains within Oxfordshire, which are a vital part of the natural environment and which should be appropriately considered within place making, not just as an environmental constraint but as important and valuable assets which provide a wide range of benefits.</li> <li>Resilience to climate change needs to be embedded in all new development.</li> <li>The remediation of contaminated land is an important issue.</li> </ul> <p><u>Water</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whilst the document recognises the problem of ensuring sustainable water resources within Oxfordshire, it doesn't identify the connection and direct implications of this key issue on the environment and the delivery of sustainable growth.</li> </ul> <p><u>Infrastructure</u></p> <p>The Infrastructure considerations section is silent on green and blue infrastructure and water related infrastructure.</p>	<p><u>Natural Environment</u></p> <p>Addressing climate change and improving environmental quality are key themes in the emerging Oxfordshire Plan. The second Regulation 18 consultation document identifies ambitious policy options related to natural capital, nature recovery, water quality and flood risk.</p> <p><u>Water</u></p> <p>This is explored through the Phase 1 Outline WCS. Further WCS work to be undertaken prior to Regulation 19.</p> <p><u>Infrastructure</u></p> <p>Green infrastructure is highlighted in the second Regulation 18 consultation document, with policy options related to natural capital, nature recovery, landscape and water quality.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Environment Agency (EA)</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
<b>Call for Ideas</b>	Mar-Apr 2019	<p>The EA made two submissions through the call for ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. A Strategic Nature Recovery Network – The promotion and facilitation of a landscape scale scheme which could be focused in part on the river valley network and linked to Conservation Target Areas to help deliver a net gain for biodiversity.</li> <li>ii. Thames Flood Storage – The EA is assessing the feasibility of various flood storage locations on the Thames upstream of Oxford and on the various upper tributaries of the Thames. The EA would like land to be safeguarded through the Oxfordshire Plan for flood storage.</li> </ul>	<p>Call for Ideas submissions will be considered through the plan-making process and, where appropriate, the OxIS update. Call for Ideas submissions will be assessed as part of the identification of the Oxfordshire Plan’s spatial strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19.</p>
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	16 April 2019	<p>A duty to co-operate meeting took place with the EA.</p> <p><u>Oxford-Cambridge Expressway</u> The EA has had limited engagement in this project. Potential to take account of natural capital work and environmental net gain suggested.</p> <p><u>Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS)</u> Remains at planning application stage. The EA emphasised that the OFAS is focused on reducing flood risk to existing properties. It does not necessarily facilitate future growth. The OFAS may lower flood risk on some promoted sites, but these need to be subject to the same planning process as all other sites.</p> <p><u>Flood Risk</u> Districts’ SFRA work was produced at different times and subsequently there are inconsistencies in the modelling information used and the consideration of climate change. Some SFRA’s may already be out of date. An update will</p>	<p><u>Oxford-Cambridge Expressway</u> The Oxford to Cambridge Expressway project has now been cancelled.</p> <p><u>Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS)</u> Noted.</p> <p><u>Flood Risk</u> An Oxfordshire-wide SFRA will be commissioned to support the Oxfordshire Plan.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Environment Agency (EA)</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		likely be required. Advised to also look at the County Council's SFRA for the Minerals and Waste Plan.  <u>Water</u> All districts have taken different WCS approaches. The EA advise that one consistent countywide study is undertaken to inform the Oxfordshire Plan.	<u>Water</u> An Oxfordshire-wide WCS will be commissioned to support the Oxfordshire Plan.
<b>Water Cycle Study (WCS) – Phase 1 Outline</b>	Apr-May 2019	The EA reviewed the brief for the Phase 1 Outline WCS and confirmed that it was generally supportive of the proposed requirements, but made the following specific comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The EA reiterated that the term 'environmental capacity' essentially means the ability of the receiving water environment to receive effluent without causing a deterioration in Water Framework Directive (WFD) status or compromising the attainment of future WFD objective status.</li> <li>▪ The EA emphasised that existing district level WCSs use different methodologies and are not directly comparable. The EA suggested that all growth within the plan period (both growth planned through local plans and proposed through the Oxfordshire Plan) is assessed consistently through a Phase 2 WCS.</li> <li>▪ The EA reminded us that the Water Companies Water Resources Management Plans (WRMPs) run to 2045 and that Oxfordshire spans multiple water companies with each having their own WRMPs.</li> </ul>	The brief for the Phase 1 Outline WCS was updated to ensure that expectations in terms of the consideration of environmental capacity and WRMPs were clearly articulated.  An exercise was undertaken to identify all the water companies relevant to Oxfordshire.
<b>Duty to Co-operate Scoping Exercise</b>	May 2019	The EA responded to the Duty to Co-operate Scoping Letter. The strategic matters relevant to the EA were identified as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Housing supply (in relation to locations)</li> </ul>	Engagement with the EA will be undertaken under the duty to co-operate in relation to relevant strategic matters throughout the plan-making process in order to maximise the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan. The

<b>Record of Co-operation: Environment Agency (EA)</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gypsies, Travellers. Caravan Dwellers, Travelling Showpeople (in relation to locations)</li> <li>▪ Boat Dwellers (in relation to the navigable watercourses and the location of houseboats rather than need/numbers)</li> <li>▪ Infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Climate change</li> <li>▪ Flood Risk</li> <li>▪ Water Resources / Water Quality</li> <li>▪ Biodiversity / Natural Environment / Green Infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Contaminated Land</li> </ul>	strategic matters identified at this stage will be the starting point for this engagement. However, it is recognised that the strategic matters relevant to the EA may require review/refinement as work on the Oxfordshire Plan progresses. Discussions with the EA in relation to relevant strategic matters will be ongoing throughout the plan-making process.
<b>Stakeholder Event</b>	May 2019	An EA representative attended this event and provided input.	Stakeholder feedback from this event fed into the review of the Oxfordshire Plan's vision, aspirations and objectives.
<b>EA presentation to Growth Board Advisory Sub-Group</b>	25 July 2019	A representative from the EA attended a Growth Board Member Sub-Group meeting and gave a presentation about the natural capital work being undertaken for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.	The presentation helped to raise awareness of the natural capital work being undertaken for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc amongst elected members.
<b>Water Cycle Study (WCS) – Phase 1 Outline</b>	Sept 2019	<p>Representatives from the EA attended the WCS inception meeting. The following issues were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Oxfordshire Plan progress update</li> <li>▪ WCS objectives and timeline</li> <li>▪ WCS Methodology (water resources and supply, water quality and wastewater infrastructure and flood risk.</li> <li>▪ Data requirements</li> </ul> <p>The EA re-stated that existing SFRA's may not utilise the most up-to-date modelling data and that there is a need for an up-to-date Oxfordshire-wide SFRA to inform/ support the Oxfordshire Plan.</p>	<p>It was agreed that the Oxfordshire Plan, as a joint strategic plan with a long timeframe, provides an opportunity to take an ambitious approach to water efficiency.</p> <p>The EA provided technical advice in terms of the methodology and modelling tools. The WCS consultants will work with the EA to incorporate this into the WCS.</p> <p>An Oxfordshire-wide SFRA will be commissioned to support the Oxfordshire Plan.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Environment Agency (EA)</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
<b>Water Cycle Study (WCS) – Phase 1 Outline</b>	March – April 2020	The EA reviewed the initial outputs from the Phase 1 Outline WCS and provided technical comments.	The technical comments from the EA have been incorporated into the WCS Phase 1 work and are reflected in the final report, which is a key evidence base document that will inform policy development and decision making.
<b>Thames Valley Flood Storage Scheme Meeting</b>	27 Jan 2021	<p>A meeting to discuss the EA’s emerging work on the Thames Valley Flood Scheme.</p> <p>Project to explore opportunities for large scale flood storage schemes across the Thames Valley area. Currently have 18 options, with 5 in Oxfordshire, but no detail was given on specific locations at this stage.</p> <p>There are three stages of consultation planned. In May 2021 the EA will consult on project ambitions. In early 2022 the EA will consult on broad areas of interest (shorter list). In late 2022 the EA will look to consult on specific locations and aim to produce a business case for the project in 2024.</p> <p>The EA said they would write to the districts to brief them on the project and will offer a Q and A session.</p> <p>The EA gave the impression that both soft and hard infrastructure were being looked at. Project at the very early stages but there were references to these areas being used for recreation or biodiversity uses.</p>	<p>The development of the EA’s Thames Valley Flood Scheme is likely to extend beyond the plan-making period. The emerging Oxfordshire Plan and OxIS update will take account of the project as far as they are able based upon available information.</p> <p>Potential for the Oxfordshire Plan to make a supportive/enabling statement in regard to this scheme will be explored through the second Regulation 18 consultation.</p>
<b>Oxfordshire Open Thought</b>	Jun - Aug 2020	The EA did not make an Open Thought submission.	N/A
<b>Strategic Vision Consultation</b>	Nov 2020 - Jan 2021	The EA did not submit comments on the Strategic Vision.	N/A

<b>Record of Co-operation: Environment Agency (EA)</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
<b>Review of Emerging Options</b>	Mar - Apr 2021	The EA reviewed emerging policy options under the addressing climate change and improving environmental quality themes at an early stage of options development.	Recommendations from the EA were taken into account in the production of the second Regulation 18 consultation document.
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	13 May 2021	<p>A duty to co-operate meeting took place with the EA. The emerging policy options under the addressing climate change and improving environmental quality themes were discussed, as were key elements of the evidence base such as the WCS, SFRA, sequential test, nature recovery network and natural capital mapping.</p> <p><u>Water Resources</u> The EA will advise on any known plans that set or seek to set water efficiency standards beyond current Building Regulations.</p> <p><u>Flood Risk</u> The EA is concerned about the net-loss of flood plain through small scale householder developments.</p> <p><u>Natural Environment</u> The EA is supportive of the identification of a nature recovery network for Oxfordshire. The EA highlighted the need for guidance to ensure that biodiversity net gain requirements are consistently applied, monitored and reported across Oxfordshire. The EA also highlighted the need to consider how net gains are protected in the long-term. The Environment Bill raises the possibility of protective covenants. The EA questioned how natural capital evidence will be made accessible for us by planners, developers, communities and other stakeholders.</p>	<p><u>Water Resources</u> This will be taken into consideration prior to Regulation 19.</p> <p><u>Flood Risk</u> Options for managing the net-loss of flood plain through small scale householder developments will be tested through Regulation 18 consultation.</p> <p><u>Natural Environment</u> The practical application of policy approaches will be explored in more detail prior to Regulation 19.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Environment Agency (EA)</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		It was agreed that a statement of common ground was not needed at the second Regulation 18 stage.	

### Record of Co-operation: Highways England

This record summarises co-operation to date (up to the second Regulation 18 consultation) with Highways England.

<b>Record of Co-operation: Highways England</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
<b>Oxfordshire Growth Board</b>	ONGOING	Highways England is an associate member of the Oxfordshire Growth Board.	The Growth Board discusses items relevant to the Oxfordshire Plan such as evidence base studies.
<b>SCI Consultation</b>	Nov 2018 - Jan 2019	Highways England did not submit comments on the SCI.	N/A
<b>Stakeholder Launch Event</b>	Dec 2018	Highways England did not attend this event.	N/A
<b>SA Scoping Report Consultation</b>	Jan - Mar 2019	Highways England did not submit comments in relation to the SA Scoping Report.	N/A
<b>Regulation 18 Consultation (1)</b>	Feb - Mar 2019	<p>Highways England made the following comments:</p> <p><u>Introducing the Oxfordshire Plan 2050</u></p> <p>Highways England will be concerned with proposals that have the potential to impact the Strategic Road Network (SRN), in this case the A34, A43 and M40.</p> <p>The route of the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway will have implications for local highway conditions as well as shaping the spatial strategy for the Oxfordshire Plan. Public consultation on OxCam route options is expected Autumn</p>	<p>Planning for sustainable travel and connectivity is a core theme in the emerging Oxfordshire Plan. The production of the Oxfordshire Plan is aligned with the production of the Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) and the OxIS update.</p> <p>Transport evidence is being produced to inform the Oxfordshire Plan and to understand potential impacts and opportunities associated with growth, including</p>

Record of Co-operation: Highways England			
Engagement Type	Date	Summary	Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process
		<p>2019, with a preferred route announcement expected in 2020.</p> <p>Highways England would like to engage at an early stage of evidence base development for the emerging Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) (being produced to align with the Oxfordshire Plan 2050) to ensure that the LTCP is deliverable and to avoid adverse impacts on the SRN.</p> <p>Planned transport infrastructure for the earlier part of the plan period is set out in the current Local Transport Plan and Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS). However, a funding gap and deliverability issues mean that delivery is not guaranteed. A bold, forward thinking Oxfordshire Plan that sets a clear vision for growth is more likely to release opportunities for Government funding and will help direct local authority and developer funding.</p> <p>As the evidence base for the emerging LTCP to 2050 is developed, any funding gaps should be identified along with any potential future funding mechanisms to ensure that the plan is deliverable in transport terms and that the required infrastructure ensures that the SRN can continue to operate in a safe and efficient manner.</p> <p><u>Topic Paper 8: Improving Connectivity and Movement</u> Transport and communications considerations to 2050 may have a substantial impact on travel across Oxfordshire. Early engagement throughout the development of the LTCP and refreshed OxIS would be welcomed to ensure that the scope of the proposed evidence base is sufficient in its approach to ensuring the safe and efficient operation of the SRN to 2050</p>	<p>impacts and opportunities related to the Strategic Road Network.</p> <p>The OxIS update will seek to prioritise infrastructure schemes and to consider potential funding sources.</p> <p>There will be ongoing engagement with Highways England throughout the plan-making process in regard to matters affecting the Strategic Road Network.</p> <p>The Oxford to Cambridge Expressway project has now been cancelled.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Highways England</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		and beyond. We would like to work in partnership to ensure the strategy developed aligns with the Highways England Road Investment Strategy to deliver the best outcomes for Oxfordshire and neighbouring authorities.	
<b>Call for Ideas</b>	Mar - Apr 2019	<p>Highways England made the following comments:</p> <p>Route Strategies form an important part of the evidence base for the Road Investment Strategy (RIS2). They provide a high-level view of the current performance of the SRN and provide evidence for future planning.</p> <p>Highways England looks forward to continuing the ongoing work with the local planning authorities and Oxfordshire County Council to identify and produce a robust transport strategy which would inform the size and scale of development deliverable within Oxfordshire up to and beyond the plan period.</p> <p>“The Strategic Road Network Planning for the Future” is a guide to working with Highways England on planning matters.</p>	There will be ongoing engagement with Highways England throughout the plan-making process in regard to matters affecting the Strategic Road Network.
<b>Duty to Co-operate Scoping Exercise</b>	May 2019	<p>The following strategic matters were identified as being of relevance to Highways England:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Transport</li> <li>▪ Housing Requirements</li> <li>▪ Housing Supply</li> <li>▪ Economy and Employment</li> <li>▪ Retail/Leisure/Other Commercial</li> </ul> <p>Highways England may also have some interest other areas such as flood risk and Green Belt.</p>	Engagement with Highways England will be undertaken under the duty to co-operate in relation to relevant strategic matters throughout the plan-making process in order to maximise the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan. The strategic matters identified at this stage will be the starting point for this engagement. However, it is recognised that the strategic matters relevant to Highways England may require review/refinement as work on the Oxfordshire Plan progresses. Discussions with Highways England in relation to relevant strategic

<b>Record of Co-operation: Highways England</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
			matters will be ongoing throughout the plan-making process.
<b>Stakeholder Event</b>	May 2019	Highways England did not attend this event.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	15 Jan 2020	<p>The following matters were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Oxfordshire Plan project update (including evidence base development), the emerging Oxfordshire LTCP and the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway.</li> <li>▪ The main strategic matter for Highways England is the A34, specifically its capacity limitations and the financial costs of upgrades.</li> <li>▪ Challenges associated with planning to 2050. Need to consider how the SRN will be used in the future. A bespoke approach may be needed for the later part of the plan period that is more reliant on narrative than data.</li> </ul>	The challenges related to planning to 2050 were explored through Oxfordshire Open Thought and will continue to be explored through the production of the Oxfordshire Plan's evidence base. There will be ongoing engagement with Highways England throughout the plan-making process in regard to matters affecting the Strategic Road Network.
<b>Oxfordshire Open Thought</b>	Jun - Aug 2020	Highways England did not make and Oxfordshire Open Thought submission.	N/A
<b>Strategic Vision consultation</b>	Nov 2020 - Jan 2021	<p>Highways England stated its particular support for Strategic Vision desired outcome 06 Connectivity &amp; Mobility: "The way we move around our county will be transformed, with greater connectivity and mobility in and between places in ways that enhance environmental, social and economic well-being."</p> <p>This strongly aligns with Highways England's Strategic Business Plan 2020-2025 outcomes. As agreed with DfT, Transport Focus and ORR, our framework reflects how we will deliver the following six committed outcomes:</p> <p>1) Improving safety for all</p>	Noted.

<b>Record of Co-operation: Highways England</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<p>2) Providing fast and reliable journeys                      3) A well-maintained and resilient network                      4) Delivering better environmental outcomes                      5) Meeting the needs of all users                      6) Achieving efficient delivery</p> <p>Highways England will be concerned with proposals that have the potential to impact the safe and efficient operation of the SRN, in this case the A34, A43 and M40.</p>	
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	5 May 2021	<p>A duty to co-operate meeting took place with Highways England. Updates were given on the Oxfordshire Mobility Model (OMM), LTCP and OxIS update.</p> <p><u>Transport Evidence</u>                      Challenges in developing an evidence base to support planning to 2050 were highlighted. Patterns of travel between home and work likely to become more complex and less certain over time.</p> <p><u>Infrastructure</u>                      The A34 does not have capacity to accommodate significant growth. Also need to consider wider pressures on the SRN, e.g. growth at Southampton Port increasing freight movements through to the midlands. Local road network also has limited capacity.</p> <p><u>Strategic Growth Locations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to consider infrastructure in the identification of growth locations.</li> <li>• MOD sites can be challenging due to their isolation. Often require significant transport infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<p>Transport evidence is being produced to inform the Oxfordshire Plan and to understand potential impacts and opportunities associated with growth, including impacts and opportunities related to the Strategic Road Network.</p> <p>The OxIS update will seek to prioritise infrastructure schemes and to consider potential funding sources.</p> <p>There will be ongoing engagement with Highways England throughout the plan-making process in regard to matters affecting the Strategic Road Network.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Highways England</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<p>Oxford has sustainable connections but limited capacity to accommodate growth. Spreading growth more widely, away from Oxford, generally increases infrastructure requirements</p> <p><u>Route Strategies</u> Highways England is Developing Route Strategies which will identify infrastructure schemes and will be used to help make decisions on funding. Stakeholder views on needs and aspirations to be fed into the strategies. Consultation due to start shortly - an opportunity for the Oxfordshire authorities to feed into this. Potential to consider where the A34 may act as a hinderance to growth.</p> <p>It was agreed that a statement of common ground was not needed at the second Regulation 18 stage.</p>	

**Record of Co-operation: Historic England**

This record summarises co-operation to date (up to the second Regulation 18 consultation) with Historic England.

<b>Record of Co-operation: Historic England</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
<b>SCI Consultation</b>	Nov 2018 - Jan 2019	Historic England stated its satisfaction with the proposed approach to engagement set out in the SCI and reiterated its commitment to engaging with the councils on the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan, including attendance at future stakeholder workshops and focused discussions with the councils on the historic environment.	Engagement with Historic England will be undertaken under the duty to co-operate in relation to relevant strategic matters throughout the plan-making process in order to maximise the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan.

<b>Record of Co-operation: Historic England</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
<b>Stakeholder Launch Event</b>	Dec 2018	Historic England did not attend this event.	N/A
<b>SA Scoping Report Consultation</b>	Jan - Mar 2019	Historic England provided a link to its general advice on Sustainability Appraisal and the historic environment as set out in Historic England's Advice Note 8 "Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment" - <a href="https://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/">https://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/</a>	The Oxfordshire authorities, with the SA consultants working on their behalf, reviewed all of the comments received in relation to the SA Scoping Report and considered where the SA Scoping Report required amendments. This process is set out in detail in Appendix 3 of the revised SA Scoping Report (LUC, May 2019).
<b>Regulation 18 Consultation (1)</b>	Feb - Mar 2019	<p>Historic England made a number of comments in relation to the 'Introducing the Oxfordshire' Plan document:</p> <p><u>Terminology</u> There should be specific reference to the historic environment. The terms "built environment" and "historic environment" are not interchangeable and are referred to separately within the NPPF. Oxfordshire's historic environment includes archaeological assets, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens and historic landscapes.</p> <p><u>Objectives</u> Draft Objective 1 was welcomed and supported for its reference to enhancing the historic environment, although the wording conserve/protect (as opposed to maintain) is more consistent with the NPPF.</p> <p><u>Evidence Base</u> Agreed that the consideration of heritage assets (based on a clear understanding) should be fundamental to the choices made in the plan. A relevant and up-to-date historic</p>	<p><u>Terminology</u> Noted. Clearer language will be used as advised.</p> <p><u>Objectives</u> The Oxfordshire Plan's objectives were amended to take account of comments received through the first Regulation 18 consultation.</p> <p><u>Evidence Base</u> Detailed evidence may be commissioned to support the identification of the Oxfordshire Plan's spatial strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19.</p>

Record of Co-operation: Historic England			
Engagement Type	Date	Summary	Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process
		<p>environment evidence base should be complied. This should include consideration of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Known and potential heritage assets (including assessing the likelihood of currently unidentified assets being identified);</li> <li>ii. Heritage assets beyond Oxfordshire’s boundary; and</li> <li>iii. New areas that might be worthy of designations as conservation areas or local listing.</li> </ul> <p>This information could be collated within a Heritage Topic Paper to draw together the evidence base and to highlight its implications and actions required.</p> <p>The historic environment evidence base should be proportionate and may need to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Detailed historic characterisation work assessing the impact of potential urban extensions or rural development.</li> <li>ii. Heritage Impact Assessments considering the potential impacts of allocations on the significance of heritage assets.</li> <li>iii. Seeking the views of local communities about what they value about the historic environment.</li> <li>iv. Archaeological assessment to consider whether heritage assets with archaeological potential are likely to be present in areas where the HER indicates that there has been little or no previous investigation.</li> </ul> <p><u>Growth Locations</u> Development options that provide opportunities for improvement and enhancement of the natural and built environment should be favoured.</p>	<p><u>Growth Locations</u> Opportunities and impacts are identified at a high level and will be tested, including through the second Regulation 18 consultation. A more detailed assessment will be undertaken to identify the Oxfordshire Plan’s spatial strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Historic England</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
<b>Call for Ideas</b>	Mar-Apr 2019	Historic England reminded the councils of the need to have regard to potential impacts on the historic environment when considering potential development sites. Historic England also offered to provide further advice on the identification of sites and on the impact of potential sites on heritage assets.	Five spatial options are identified at the second Regulation 18 stage. Opportunities and impacts are identified at a high level and will be tested, including through the second Regulation 18 consultation. A more detailed assessment will be undertaken to identify the Oxfordshire Plan's spatial strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19.
<b>Duty to Co-operate Scoping Exercise</b>	May 2019	Historic England confines its involvement in planning issues to matters that involve or otherwise affect the historic environment. Historic England's duty to co-operate is therefore appropriate in respect of strategic matters that would involve or otherwise affect a heritage asset. Given the extensive heritage resources of Oxfordshire, Historic England should be consulted on all policy areas as many of these will have impacts to some	Engagement with Historic England will be undertaken under the duty to co-operate in relation to relevant strategic matters throughout the plan-making process in order to maximise the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan. The strategic matters identified at this stage will be the starting point for this engagement. However, it is recognised that the strategic matters relevant to Historic England may require review/refinement as work on the Oxfordshire Plan progresses. Discussions with Historic England in relation to relevant strategic matters will be ongoing throughout the plan-making process.
<b>Stakeholder Event</b>	May 2019	Historic England did not attend this event.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	24 Jan 2020	A duty to co-operate meeting took place with Historic England.  <u>Evidence Base</u> Historic England advised that an updated Historic Environment Topic Paper and updated Conservation Area Appraisals would be beneficial to support the plan.  Historic England to provide guidance on the evidence required to support the Oxfordshire Plan at each stage.	<u>Evidence Base</u> Oxfordshire's City and District Councils will work with Historic England to ensure that the Oxfordshire Plan is supported by an appropriate and proportionate evidence base.

<b>Record of Co-operation: Historic England</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<p><u>Growth Locations</u> The Oxfordshire Plan should consider the density of development when considering impacts on heritage assets. Long term strategic thinking could enable wider greenfield areas to be considered for growth in order to protect heritage assets on brownfield sites, such as historic airfields.</p> <p><u>Ongoing Engagement</u> Informal engagement outside of statutory stages of consultation would be welcomed to help identify where significant issues might arise as a result of the Oxfordshire Plan's spatial strategy.</p>	<p><u>Growth Locations</u> Noted. Opportunities and impacts related to the historic environment are identified at a high level and will be tested, including through the second Regulation 18 consultation. A more detailed assessment will be undertaken to inform the Oxfordshire Plan's spatial strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19.</p> <p><u>Ongoing Engagement</u> Informal engagement outside of statutory stages of consultation will be undertaken as part of the identification of the Oxfordshire Plan's spatial strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19.</p>
<b>Oxfordshire Open Thought</b>	Jun – Aug 2021	Historic England did not submit comments via Open Thought.	N/A
<b>Strategic Vision Consultation</b>	Nov 2020 - Jan 2021	<p>Historic England made the following comments on the draft strategic vision:</p> <p>Whilst none of the sections on good growth or guiding principles deal specifically with the historic environment, there are synergies between the historic environment and many of these subjects. Historic England produces research on such matters, in our Heritage Counts series. Reports on Heritage and Society, Heritage and the Environment, Carbon in the Built Historic Environment and Heritage in the Economy were recently published and are of relevance.</p> <p>Any objectives and policies that are developed based on, or influenced by the Strategic Vision, should take the opportunity to draw out the synergies between the historic environment and the guiding principles and definition of</p>	Noted. Options relevant to the historic environment are set out in the second Regulation 18 consultation document.

Record of Co-operation: Historic England			
Engagement Type	Date	Summary	Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process
		good growth. The historic environment should be given specific consideration where appropriate.	
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	14 June 2021	<p>A duty to co-operate meeting took place with Historic England.</p> <p>OxCam Arc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Historic Environment Records for the entire OxCam Arc are being collated. This should be accessible via Oxfordshire County Council.</li> </ul> <p><u>Broad Locations for Growth</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An appropriate and proportionate evidence base is needed.</li> <li>Question around how geographically specific broad locations will be. Historic England able to provide advice on very broad areas.</li> </ul> <p><u>Evidence Base</u></p> <p>A proportionate Heritage Impact Assessment will be needed to inform the Oxfordshire Plan. If this is left until the local plan stage, it may be too late to realise opportunities and/or avoid negative impacts. Historic England able to review a draft Heritage Impact Assessment brief.</p> <p>Policy Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploring how the Oxfordshire Plan can add value beyond NPPF/local plans.</li> <li>Uncertainty around forthcoming planning reforms.</li> <li>Aiming to set a positive strategy for the for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. Difficult to achieve at this early stage. Focus efforts once growth locations are identified.</li> </ul>	<p>Opportunities and impacts related to the historic environment are identified at a high level and will be tested, including through the second Regulation 18 consultation. A more detailed assessment will be undertaken to inform the Oxfordshire Plan’s spatial strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19.</p> <p>Informal engagement outside of statutory stages of consultation will be undertaken as part of the identification of the Oxfordshire Plan’s spatial strategy and broad locations for growth prior to Regulation 19.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Historic England</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conservation Officer input also likely to be of value.</li> </ul> <p><u>Spatial Options</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Historic England likely to be nervous about an Oxford focused strategy. Concern that this could result in pressure to build higher. High risk of impacts on heritage assets due to the historic nature of the city.</li> </ul> <p>It was agreed that a statement of common ground was not needed at the second Regulation 18 stage.</p>	

**Record of Co-operation: Homes England**

This record summarises co-operation to date (up to the second Regulation 18 consultation) with Homes England.

<b>Record of Co-operation: Homes England</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
<b>Oxfordshire Growth Board</b>	ONGOING	Homes England is an associate member of the Oxfordshire Growth Board.	The Growth Board discusses items relevant to the Oxfordshire Plan such as evidence base studies.
<b>Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal</b>	ONGOING	The role of Homes England in the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal is both as the operational arm of Government overseeing the Deal but also a partner and critical friend. They act as the liaison with Government, informally checking on progress with Deal targets reporting back as appropriate but also act as a critical friend to Oxfordshire, advising and mentoring on issues, challenges and opportunities arising from the project. Crucially they sit on the Oxfordshire Growth Board and supporting officer groups that oversee the	The Oxfordshire authorities will continue to work with Homes England as the commitments made in the Housing and Growth Deal are delivered, and in the longer term as appropriate.

<b>Record of Co-operation: Homes England</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
		delivery of the Deal and so are involved in overseeing its operational governance.	
<b>SCI Consultation</b>	Nov 2018 - Jan 2019	Homes England did not submit comments on the SCI.	N/A
<b>Stakeholder Launch Event</b>	Dec 2018	A Homes England representative attended this event and provided input.	Stakeholder feedback from this event fed into the first Regulation 18 consultation document.
<b>SA Scoping Report Consultation</b>	Jan - Mar 2019	Homes England did not submit comments on the SA Scoping Report.	N/A
<b>Regulation 18 Consultation (1)</b>	Feb - Mar 2019	Homes England did not submit comments through the first Regulation 18 consultation.	N/A
<b>Call for Ideas</b>	Mar-Apr 2019	Homes England did not make a Call for Ideas submission.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Scoping Exercise</b>	May 2019	Homes England did not respond to the duty to co-operate scoping exercise.	N/A
<b>Stakeholder Event</b>	May 2019	Homes England did not attend this event.	N/A
<b>Oxfordshire Open Thought</b>	Jun - Aug 2020	Homes England did not make a submission via Oxfordshire Open Thought.	N/A
<b>Strategic Vision Consultation</b>	Nov 2020 - Jan 2021	Homes England did not comment on the Strategic Vision.	N/A

**Record of Co-operation: Natural England**

This record summarises co-operation to date (up to the second Regulation 18 consultation) with Natural England.

<b>Record of Co-operation: Natural England</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>How this has shaped the Oxfordshire Plan</b>
<b>Biodiversity / Natural Capital Working Group</b>	ONGOING	As part of this working group, Natural England has fed into the development of the biodiversity and natural capital evidence base. This includes feeding into the review and refinement of SA alternatives and testing.	This is helping to ensure that the Oxfordshire Plan and its evidence base are joined up with Natural England's ambitions, priorities and best practice.
<b>SCI Consultation</b>	Nov 2018 - Jan 2019	Natural England did not submit comments on the SCI.	N/A
<b>Stakeholder Launch Event</b>	Dec 2018	A Natural England representative attended this event and provided input.	Stakeholder feedback from this event fed into the Regulation 18 (1) consultation document.
<b>HRA: Proposed Approach</b>	Dec 2018	Natural England reviewed the proposed HRA approach and made a number of comments relating to the sensitivities of protected habitats, the proposed approach to screening and the proposed approach to assessing air quality, water levels/quality and recreational pressure.	The HRA methodology was updated in response to Natural England's technical advice.
<b>SA Scoping Report Consultation</b>	Jan - Mar 2019	Natural England made the following comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The SA should align with any similar work undertaken for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.</li> <li>▪ The SA should consider natural capital and ecosystem services.</li> <li>▪ The SA should consider green infrastructure.</li> <li>▪ Local documents should be considered under other plans, policies and programmes of relevance.</li> <li>▪ Additional baseline information should be considered.</li> <li>▪ An additional SA objective could address natural capital.</li> </ul>	The Oxfordshire authorities, with the SA consultants working on their behalf, reviewed all of the comments received in relation to the SA Scoping Report and considered where the SA Scoping Report required amendments. This process is set out in detail in Appendix 3 of the revised SA Scoping Report (LUC, May 2019).

<b>Record of Co-operation: Natural England</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>How this has shaped the Oxfordshire Plan</b>
<b>Regulation 18 Consultation (1)</b>	Feb - Mar 2019	Natural England suggested that spatial planning at the Oxfordshire-scale provides an opportunity to take a natural capital approach to understanding priorities and opportunities to improve Oxfordshire’s environment, including the principles of environmental net gain, a Nature Recovery Network and connecting people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing. Natural England provided a number of suggestions as to how these principals could be further integrated into the plan.	Improving environmental quality is a key theme in the emerging Oxfordshire Plan. Ambitious policy options are identified at the second Regulation 18 stage. An extensive natural capital and nature recovery evidence base has been developed.
<b>Call for Ideas</b>	Mar-Apr 2019	Natural England suggested that the Oxfordshire Plan provides an opportunity to identify a Nature Recovery Network for Oxfordshire and local Nature Recovery Areas.	Establishing a Nature Recovery Network for Oxfordshire is a preferred policy option in the second Regulation 18 consultation document.
<b>Duty to Co-operate Scoping Exercise</b>	May 2019	<p>Natural England agreed with the strategic matters identified but noted that other matters (for example commercial development, community facilities and other infrastructure) may also affect the natural environment and early discussion in relation to these matters would be welcomed.</p> <p>Natural England advised that soils (including Best and Most Versatile agricultural land) and Natural Capital should be strategic matters.</p>	<p>Engagement with Natural England will be undertaken under the duty to co-operate in relation to relevant strategic matters throughout the plan-making process in order to maximise the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan. The strategic matters identified at this stage will be the starting point for this engagement. However, it is recognised that the strategic matters relevant to Natural England may require review/refinement as work on the Oxfordshire Plan progresses. Discussions with Natural England in relation to relevant strategic matters will be ongoing throughout the plan-making process.</p> <p>It was agreed that soils and natural capital would be considered as part of the Biodiversity / Natural Environment / Green Infrastructure strategic matter.</p>

<b>Record of Co-operation: Natural England</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>How this has shaped the Oxfordshire Plan</b>
<b>Stakeholder Event</b>	May 2019	A Natural England representative attended this event and provided input.	Stakeholder feedback from this event fed into the review of the Oxfordshire Plan's vision, aspirations and objectives.
<b>HRA: Distance Based Risk Zones</b>	May - June 2019	Natural England reviewed the proposed methodology for developing distance based risk zones. Natural England accepted the proposed 10km lower risk buffer. Natural England was satisfied with the proposed buffers for water and recreational impacts and commented on the recommended screening distance for air quality.	The HRA pre-screening 'distance-based risk zones' work was progressed with Natural England's agreement.
<b>HRA: Distance Based Risk Zones</b>	Sept- Oct 2019	Natural England reviewed the draft distance based risk zones report. Natural England was generally satisfied with the buffer zones identified in the report on the basis that they will be used at a high level to inform thinking on the distribution of growth and will be followed by full HRA work once a draft plan has been produced. Natural England made some specific comments relating to protected habitats' sensitivities and the consideration of air quality issues.	It is agreed that this work provides a useful starting point to begin to consider the risk of effects on protected sites, at a high level, when starting to consider the distribution of growth in Oxfordshire to 2050. It is agreed that a comprehensive HRA should be undertaken at the appropriate time.
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	18 Dec 2019	A meeting took place with Natural England where the following matters were discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Oxfordshire Plan project update and next steps;</li> <li>▪ Emerging evidence base - Habitats Regulations Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal, Natural capital, Nature Recovery Network and Nature Recovery Strategy, Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study, Green Infrastructure, and Water Cycle Study.</li> <li>▪ Cost recovery arrangements.</li> <li>▪ Strategic matters for the Oxfordshire Plan.</li> <li>▪ Oxfordshire's Local Nature Partnership position.</li> </ul>	It was agreed that soils and natural capital would be considered as part of the Biodiversity / Natural Environment / Green Infrastructure strategic matter.

<b>Record of Co-operation: Natural England</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>How this has shaped the Oxfordshire Plan</b>
		The inclusion of soils as a strategic matter was discussed. The Oxfordshire Plan should assess and address impacts on Best and Most Versatile Land across the whole of Oxfordshire.	
<b>Oxfordshire Open Thought</b>	Jun - Aug 2020	Natural England did not submit comments via Oxfordshire Open Thought.	N/A
<b>Strategic Vision Consultation</b>	Nov 2020 - Jan 2021	<p>Natural England made the following comments:</p> <p><u>Defining Good Growth</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The natural environment should feature more strongly.</li> <li>▪ The cross-cutting role of natural capital should be flagged.</li> <li>▪ It should include contributing to nature’s recovery.</li> </ul> <p><u>Guiding Principles</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Should seek not only to enhance Oxfordshire’s natural capital assets, but also to grow them.</li> <li>▪ Nature’s recovery should be included within the guiding principles in terms of protecting and restoring the County’s valuable habitats and species and improving ecological resilience through creating ecological networks.</li> </ul> <p><u>Strategic Influencers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Agree with the identification of the 25 Year Environment Plan and draft Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network within this.</li> <li>▪ Suggest that the Oxfordshire Environment Board and Biodiversity Action Group are also included, with recognition that there is also a process underway to form an Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership.</li> <li>▪ Under the emerging Environment Bill, there will also be a requirement to produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy</li> </ul>	Amendments were made to the Strategic Vision to take account of comments received prior to the Strategic Vision being agreed by the Oxfordshire authorities.

<b>Record of Co-operation: Natural England</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>How this has shaped the Oxfordshire Plan</b>
		<p>(LNRS). It would be helpful to flag this as a future Strategic Influencer.</p> <p><u>Desired Outcomes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Welcome the desire to become carbon neutral and move towards a carbon negative future.</li> <li>▪ Welcome recognition of the natural environment's role in helping to achieve this.</li> <li>▪ Suggest that the role of nature-based solutions in mitigating the impacts of climate change is also included. We recommend that consideration is given to the potential land-use changes that will occur to achieve Net Zero, particularly that these are compatible with enabling the valued landscapes and biodiversity of the County adapt to the impacts of climate change.</li> </ul>	
<b>Emerging Policy Options</b>	Mar – Apr 2021	Natural England reviewed and provided comments on an early draft of the emerging policy options under the 'Addressing Climate Change' and 'Improving Environmental Quality' themes, prior to the formal second Regulation 18 consultation.	Recommendations from Natural England were taken into account in the production of the second Regulation 18 consultation document.
<b>Duty to Co-operate Meeting</b>	6 May 2021	<p>A duty to co-operate meeting took place with Natural England. The emerging policy options under the addressing climate change and improving environmental quality themes were discussed, as were key elements of the evidence base such as the HRA, nature recovery network and natural capital mapping.</p> <p><u>Natural Environment</u></p> <p>Nature Recovery Network - Flexible wording needed to recognise that the requirement to produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy is likely to come forward during the plan</p>	<p><u>Natural Environment</u></p> <p>Recommendations from Natural England were taken into account in the production of the second Regulation 18 consultation document.</p>

Record of Co-operation: Natural England			
Engagement Type	Date	Summary	How this has shaped the Oxfordshire Plan
		<p>period. Something similar is also likely to come forward for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.</p> <p>Biodiversity Net Gain – A 20% minimum requirement being considered/proposed for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.</p> <p>Natural Capital – The Oxfordshire Plan should emphasise the importance of natural capital. This will have strong links to other areas including the nature recovery network and air quality.</p> <p>Climate change – links to the Nature Recovery Network and potential for carbon sequestration should be recognised.</p> <p><u>Habitats Regulations Assessment</u>                      Questions around how to assess and mitigate likely significant effects when we are dealing with:                      i. Broad areas for growth. (Detailed allocations to come through local plans.)                      ii. Longer timeframe. (Greater uncertainty the further ahead you plan. Hard to model travel patterns/modes.)                      This issue was also flagged at the West of England EiP.                      Further discussion with Natural England would be valuable.</p> <p>It was agreed that a statement of common ground was not needed at the second Regulation 18 stage.</p>	<p><u>Habitats Regulations Assessment</u>                      Further engagement to take place with Natural England in relation to the HRA methodology.</p>

**Record of Co-operation: The Office of Rail and Road**

This record summarises co-operation to date (up to the second Regulation 18 consultation) with The Office of Rail and Road.

<b>Record of Co-operation: The Office of Rail and Road</b>			
<b>Engagement Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Impact of co-operation on the plan-making process</b>
<b>SCI Consultation</b>	Nov 2018 - Jan 2019	The Office of Rail and Road did not submit comments on the SCI.	N/A
<b>Stakeholder Launch Event</b>	Dec 2018	The Office of Rail and Road did not attend this event.	N/A
<b>SA Scoping Report Consultation</b>	Jan - Mar 2019	The Office of Rail and Road did not submit comments on the SA Scoping Report.	N/A
<b>Regulation 18 Consultation (1)</b>	Feb - Mar 2019	The Office of Rail and Road did not submit comments through the first Regulation 18 consultation.	N/A
<b>Call for Ideas</b>	Mar-Apr 2019	The Office of Rail and Road did not make a Call for Ideas submission.	N/A
<b>Duty to Co-operate Scoping Exercise</b>	May 2019	The Office of Rail and Road did not respond to the duty to co-operate scoping exercise.	N/A
<b>Stakeholder Event</b>	May 2019	The Office of Rail and Road did not attend this event.	N/A
<b>Oxfordshire Open Thought</b>	Jun - Aug 2020	The Office of Rail and Road did not make a submission via Oxfordshire Open Thought.	N/A
<b>Strategic Vision Consultation</b>	Nov 2020 - Jan 2021	The Office of Rail and Road did not comment on the Strategic Vision.	N/A

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**Oxfordshire Joint  
Statutory Spatial Plan**

# **Equalities Impact Assessment**

**July 2021**

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) reviews the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 preferred strategy (Reg 18 part 2) consultation document. The assessment includes the policy options contained within the five thematic sections set out in the consultation document, as well as the five spatial options.
- 1.2. The purpose of the EqIA is ensure that equality is placed at the centre of policy development and identifies the likely impacts of the preferred strategy on our city and district's existing and future communities. The EqIA can anticipate and recommend ways to avoid any discriminatory or negative consequences for a particular group. To do so, it will consider the impact of the policy and spatial options might have on the relevant 'protected characteristics' as defined in the Equalities Act 2010. These are:
  - Age
  - Disability
  - Gender reassignment
  - Marriage and civil partnership
  - Pregnancy and maternity
  - Sexual orientation
  - Race
  - Religion or belief
  - Sex
- 1.3. The EqIA will be updated as the plan-making process moves forward. It will sit alongside other key documents that support the Oxfordshire Plan, including the Sustainability Appraisal (SA), Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) and the evidence base.

## 2. Oxfordshire Baseline

### Population

- 2.1. Oxfordshire has a population of 691,700 people (ONS 2019). The split by each local authority district/city is as follows:
- Cherwell: 150,500
  - Oxford: 152,500
  - South Oxfordshire: 142,100
  - Vale of White Horse: 136,000
  - West Oxfordshire: 110,600

### Young People

- 2.2. Oxfordshire has a similar proportion of people aged 0 to 15 (19%) compared with the national average (19.01%) (ONS 2019). Oxford has the lowest proportion of people aged 0 to 15 in the county; however, it also has one of the lowest median age figures in the country at 28.9. The split by each local authority of people aged 0 to 15 was:
- Cherwell: 20.1%
  - Oxford: 17.8%
  - South Oxfordshire: 19.2%
  - Vale of White Horse: 19.3%
  - West Oxfordshire: 18.5%

### Older People

- 2.3. The proportion of people in Oxfordshire 70+ is 13.9%, which is lowered significantly by Oxford whose proportion of older people (70+) is 9.1%, compared to the rest of the districts who average 15.3% (ONS 2019). Rural areas typically have older populations than cities, so this is expected. The split by each local authority of people aged 70+ was:
- Cherwell: 13.4%
  - Oxford: 9.1%
  - South Oxfordshire: 15.9%
  - Vale of White Horse: 15%
  - West Oxfordshire: 16.2%

### People from ethnic minority backgrounds

- 2.4. As of the 2011 Census<sup>1</sup>, 16.4% of Oxfordshire's residents were from an ethnic minority background (non-white British). The percentage of those from ethnic minority backgrounds in Oxfordshire remains below the England average, which is 20%. The split by each local authority of residents from an ethnic minority background at the time of the 2011 census were:
- Cherwell: 13.7%
  - Oxford: 36.4%
  - South Oxfordshire: 9.07%

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<sup>1</sup> The 2011 Census is the latest whole population dataset for ethnicity. The next update will be from Census 2021 a release date for this is not yet available.

- Vale of White Horse: 10.24%
- West Oxfordshire: 7.43%

## Religion

- 2.5. As of the 2011 Census, the largest religious group in Oxfordshire is Christian, with 60.2% of Oxfordshire's residents stating Christianity as their religion. This is similar to the England average, where 59.4% of the country state they are Christian. The next largest group are those that state they have no religion at 27.9% of Oxfordshire residents. This is above the England average where 24.7% of people state they have no religion. As the question on religion was voluntary in the 2011 Census, 7.5% of people in Oxfordshire did not answer.

## Gypsy and Traveller Population

In the 2011 Census, 0.1% of people in Oxfordshire stated their ethnicity as Gypsy or Irish Traveller which is reflective of the England and Wales average (0.1%). West Oxfordshire has the highest number of gypsies and travelers with 182 living within the district. At the time of the 2011 Census, 51.5% lived in rural parts of Oxfordshire compared to 24% nationally. Oxfordshire County Council operates six permanent council-owned Traveller sites, which provide a total of 89 pitches. There are also 21 privately run sites across the county.

## Marital and Civil Partnership Status

- 2.6. In the 2011 Census Oxfordshire had 48.8% of married residents, this is lower than the average in England and Wales which is 50.5%. 0.3% of residents in a registered same-sex civil partnership and 34.7% of residents were single (never married or never registered a same-sex civil partnership).

## Health Statistics

- 2.7. According to the Oxfordshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2021<sup>2</sup>, Oxfordshire's population is relatively healthy. It does better or similar to the national average on most Public Health indicators. Life expectancy in Oxfordshire is significantly higher than national and regional average for both male and females. Men have an average life expectancy of 81.7 years and women have a life expectancy of 85.0 years compared to 79.4 years for males and 83.1 years for females nationally. However, according to the JSNA, mental health rates of diagnosis and referrals are continuing to increase.
- 2.8. COVID-19 has also had a great impact on health and wellbeing in Oxfordshire. In 2020 there were 18,200 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in people living in Oxfordshire, equivalent to a rate of 2,776 cases per 100,000 population. The majority of these cases were in the working age population. The JSNA noted that national data has shown COVID-19 has had a disproportionate impact on ethnic minority communities, with people from Black ethnic groups were most likely to be diagnosed. According to ONS data there were also approximately 700 deaths with COVID-19 on the death certificate in Oxfordshire in 2020. Deaths were relatively evenly spread across Oxfordshire's districts, however the rate was lower in Oxford than in the districts. The national and local lockdowns implemented due to

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<sup>2</sup> Oxfordshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2021: <https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/jsna-2021-full-report>

COVID-19 have also had an impact on wellbeing. The JSNA also reported that there has been a deterioration in mental health of young people with existing mental health needs in lockdown, which is largely linked to increased loneliness and anxiety.

### **Multiple Deprivation**

- 2.9. Oxfordshire has been ranked the 10<sup>th</sup> least deprived of 151 upper-tier local authorities in England in 2019. The number of people living in Oxfordshire in the most deprived 20% of areas of England by Indices of Deprivation were 4.1%, significantly lower than the national average of 20%. Oxfordshire has one area within the 10% most deprived areas nationally, which is within the Northfield Brook ward, south east Oxford. 16 areas are among the 20% most deprived nationally, compared to 13 in 2015. These are mostly contained within 10 wards, 1 in Abingdon, 3 in Banbury and 6 in Oxford.

### **People providing unpaid care**

- 2.10. The 2011 Census showed that 9.4% of people in Oxfordshire provided some level of unpaid care to another person. This is proportionately fewer than the estimate for England (10.2%) and the South East Region (9.8%). The Vale of White Horse is estimated to have the highest proportion of unpaid carers (10.3%) whilst Oxford is estimated to contain the lowest (7.7%).

### **Housing and Living Arrangements**

- 2.11. In 2011, there were 258,855 households recorded in Oxfordshire. 65.5% of these homes were owned either outright or with a mortgage/loan, 1.1% were shared ownership (part owned, and part rented) and 14.2% were social rented. The remaining 19.2% were either rented privately or lived rent free. The percentage of those who own their home is above the national average of 63%, whilst the percentage of those living in social housing is below the national average of 17%. The average household size in Oxfordshire was 2.4 people, which is consistent with the national average.

### **Lone Parent families**

- 2.12. Lone parent families with dependent children in Oxfordshire at the time of the 2011 Census was 18.8%. This is lower than the England average which is 24.5%. 43% of children in relative low-income families are in lone parent households. This is higher than the national average of 40.8%.

### **Economic activity**

- 2.13. In Oxfordshire, 82.3% of residents aged 16-64 were economically active in 2020 (including full and part time employees, self-employed and unemployed people). This is above the national rate of 79% and South East Region rate of 82%.

### **Unemployment**

- 2.14. Unemployment claimant count data by the Department of Work and Pensions shows that the number of people claiming unemployment-related benefits in February

2021 was 17,255. By area, in February 2021 the rate of unemployment claimants (as a percentage of the economically active population aged 16-64) was highest in Oxford followed by Cherwell. Of the economically active population in Oxfordshire, 5.1% of residents were unemployed compared with 5.1% in February 2020. This does not include people on the Coronavirus Job Retention scheme which is due to end in September 2021. As of 31 December 2020, there were 37,300 furloughed employees in Oxfordshire, a take-up of 11% compared with 13% take-up across England.

### Qualifications

- 2.15. People in Oxfordshire are relatively well qualified. 35.7% of residents in Oxfordshire had a degree or equivalent qualification according to the 2011 Census. This is well above the national average of 27.4%. Of those surveyed, 16.7% of residents had no qualifications. Cherwell had the greatest percentage of people with no qualifications at 19.7%. Oxford had the greatest percentage of people with a degree or equivalent qualification at 42.6%.

### Occupation

- 2.16. The largest employment sector in Oxfordshire is retail, with 14% of people in employment working within this sector. The second largest employment sector following closely is education also at 14%. The third largest employment sector is health and social work, with 11% of people in employment working within this sector. 48.3% of people in employment worked in a managerial, professional or associate professional occupation, which is higher than the regional average of 44.8% and national average of 41.1%. 9.7% of those in employment worked in elementary occupations, which is consistent with the regional average but lower than the national average which is 11.1%.

### 3. Who are the Oxfordshire Plan and its policies designed to support / help / serve?

- 3.1. The Oxfordshire Plan is a strategic plan, which will collectively consider the needs of the whole county. The Plan will help deliver greatly needed new homes – including affordable and social housing, and infrastructure to the county while helping to tackle climate change. The Oxfordshire Plan builds on the foundations set by the current and emerging Local Plans and looks beyond them, at the strategic planning issues for the period up to 2050. It will give the district and city councils a framework for future planning policies and help determine planning applications where appropriate.
- 3.2. The Plan will not allocate sites for housing or employment. Instead, it will identify key areas for sustainable growth with associated housing / employment numbers, while considering how to help tackle climate change, improve water efficiency and mitigate flood risk. Districts will then use this to produce future Local Plans which will provide a detailed view of how housing and infrastructure will be delivered, and how they will address the climate emergency.
- 3.3. The Oxfordshire baseline as detailed above is a reflection of census data from 2011, as well as more recent data from ONS. Once implemented, it is expected that the policies that will ultimately form the Oxfordshire Plan (in combination with those set out in adopted Local Plans) will positively influence the quality of life for people in Oxfordshire, and the Oxfordshire baseline will improve.
- 3.4. There are a number of ways in which the Oxfordshire Plan will help to improve the quality of life for Oxfordshire's residents and address inequalities across the county:
  - It will help to deliver more homes – the Plan will support our communities by planning for energy efficient homes sufficient in number and of the right tenures, types and sizes to meet the needs of Oxfordshire's residents – current and future – in well-designed communities with accessible, high quality and accessible services and public spaces and in ways that support communities' health, social and cultural well-being
  - It will help to create more jobs - The creation of a variety of jobs across the county will help to create prosperous communities that sustain the economic and social wellbeing of Oxfordshire's residents. The Oxfordshire Plan seeks to ensure we are levelling up and that all citizens have an opportunity to access new local jobs as well as advanced skills and education.
  - It will help to support the delivery of strategic infrastructure. The delivery of strategic infrastructure will help to connect communities across Oxfordshire, particularly those in isolated rural areas, and will help to encourage a shift towards more sustainable travel.
  - It will help to address climate change - By helping to tackle climate change and improving environmental quality, we will help to create more sustainable places, with housing that is cheaper to run and is accessible to those with specialist needs.
  - It will help to create healthy places - By ensuring that healthy placeshaping principles are imbedded into new development across Oxfordshire strong and healthy communities will be created, where residents lead more active lives, and health inequalities are lessened.

Cumulatively, the impact of the Oxfordshire Plan's policies alongside those found in the adopted Local Plans should help to reduce inequalities across the county as well as broaden opportunities available for residents – particularly those in the defined equality groups.

## 4. What is being assessed through the EqlA?

- 4.1. The assessment will cover the policy options within five thematic sections and the five spatial options. These are as follows:

### Theme One: Addressing climate change

This theme covers policies on sustainable design and construction, energy, water efficiency and flood risk. The overarching principles for this theme are to reduce carbon emissions, encourage a shift to sustainable energy, ensure the county is prepared for future weather events (i.e. flooding), and ensure an efficient use of energy and water across development in Oxfordshire.

### Theme Two: Improving environmental quality

This theme covers policies on the protection and enhancement of landscape characters and the historic environment, as well as policies on nature recovery, biodiversity gain, natural capital and ecosystem services, the green belt, air quality and water quality. The overarching principles for this theme are to plan for green and blue infrastructure benefits across the county, provide for nature recovery in Oxfordshire, achieve biodiversity net gain, respect the landscape, historic and built environment quality notable to Oxfordshire.

### Theme Three: Creating strong and healthy communities

This theme covers policies on design for new developments, Garden Town standards, healthy place shaping, health impact assessments, and leisure, recreation, community and open space facilities. The overarching principles of this theme are to ensure major new development is well designed and built to a high standard, to plan for a healthy future in Oxfordshire, address inequalities and broaden access to opportunities in the county, plan for a range of facilities and services that lead to enhanced quality of life, and importantly help build strong, rooted, inclusive communities in Oxfordshire.

### Theme Four: Planning for sustainable travel and connectivity

This theme covers policies on a net-zero carbon transport network, sustainable transport, sustainable freight management, digital infrastructure and strategic infrastructure priorities. The overarching principles of this theme are: to plan for reducing the need to travel in future, to prioritise active travel then public transport use, to support a move towards a net-zero transport network, to support improved connectivity and access to public services, to future proof where possible to allow easy adoption of future technologies, to provide best quality digital connectivity across the county, to plan for uptake of more sustainable freight management and take opportunities to link development planning with delivery of transport infrastructure improvements such as East West Rail, bus routes upgrades and active travel networks.

## Theme Five: Creating jobs and providing homes

This theme covers policies on homes (including affordable homes), jobs, town centre renewal, urban renewal, economic assets, culture and arts, the visitor economy, skills and education needs, specialist housing needs, and gypsies, travellers, and travelling showpeople. The overarching principles of this theme are to provide homes to meet Oxfordshire's needs, to support Oxfordshire's economy, to provide better access to jobs and affordable housing, and plan for a range of homes and jobs to support a variety of needs and a strong future for the county.

### Spatial Options

- **Option 1: Focused on opportunities in and around larger settlements & planned growth locations**

The focus of this option would be to distribute the bulk of growth to 2050 to those locations that have accommodated the majority of five Local Plan allocations in the first phase of the Plan up to the mid-2030s, at the edges of the towns, the City and former MoD sites. It would represent an extension of the existing plans and strategies, following the pattern of existing and planned infrastructure investment.

- **Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth**

This option covers urban intensification within the City of Oxford, new or extended urban extensions on the edge of the City. It includes consideration of growth proposals that are well-connected to the city or are potential extensions to planned growth sites on city edge related to growth in the current adopted Local Plans and employment sites on the edge of the city that form an Oxford-focused cluster.

- **Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs**

This option covers new growth based in the most sustainable transport corridors, where frequent bus services operate & rail stations act as transport hubs. This includes new rail stations being planned through strategies such as the Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Study. This option aligns with the emerging Local Transport Connectivity Plan, being prepared by Oxfordshire County Council.

- **Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations**

This option centres on the network of business parks that covers Oxfordshire and particularly those identified as priority economic assets in the OXLEP LIS key locations within Oxfordshire's 'innovation ecosystem'.

- **Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities**

The scope for this option is to consider growth in rural settings away from the main service centres and top tier settlements that will accommodate the current Local Plan led growth up to the mid-2030s and a redirection of development to more rural parts

of the county that are currently isolated from the public transport network and key services and facilities.

## 5. The Assessment Methodology

- 5.1. The EqlA will assess whether any of the spatial options or policy options within the five thematic sections have the potential to cause a negative impact or discriminate against those considered to have protected characteristics as listed in paragraph 1.2. We will also be including an additional measure which is 'Rural'. This has been added due to the rural nature of our districts (with the exclusion of the city of Oxford) and in recognition of the barriers rural groups may face specifically in relation to access to services.
- 5.2. The assessment is presented in a tabular format. The table lists each equality group and assesses any potential impacts (positive, negative, or neutral) that could potentially arise as result of the policy or spatial option. This is then followed by a summary of any impacts identified, and lists any actions to take forward as a result of the assessment.

- 5.3. The following symbols are used in the assessment:

Positive outcome for the protected characteristic group: ✓

Neutral impact in relation to the protected characteristic group: -

Negative outcome in relation to the protected characteristic group: ✗

- 5.4. A positive outcome means that the policy or spatial option will remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics, and takes steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people. A neutral impact means that neither a positive or negative impact will result from the implementation of the policy or spatial option. A negative outcome means that the policy or spatial option could result in a negative impact or discriminate against those in that specific protected characteristic group. If a negative outcome is identified and cannot be justified, mitigating action must be taken as set out in the 'action' column. It is acknowledged that many policy/spatial options will have indirect impacts to all equality groups. However, the assessment will focus on the direct impacts the policy/spatial options will have on the equality groups to derive the most significant impacts of the Plan options presented.
- 5.5. It is important to note that this assessment has been carried on the Oxfordshire Plan policy options and spatial options in order that it can properly inform the process of developing the Plan, the draft and final versions of the Oxfordshire Plan may differ to those in this assessment. This EqlA will be updated to reflect the final policies and spatial options at the Regulation 19 stage.

## 6. Equality Impact Assessment

The following table assess the Oxfordshire Plan policy and spatial options against the equality groups (gender reassignment, disability, age, race, sexual orientation, sex, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, rural). People in Oxfordshire may face barriers because of these characteristics.

### Key:

-  Theme One: Addressing Climate Change
-  Theme Two: Improving environmental quality
-  Theme Three: Creating strong and healthy communities
-  Theme Four: Planning for sustainable travel and connectivity
-  Theme Five: Creating jobs and providing homes
-  Draft Spatial Strategy

Oxfordshire Plan Policy Option	Gender Reassignment	Disability	Age	Race	Sexual Orientation	Sex	Religion or Belief	Pregnancy and Maternity	Marriage and Civil P.	Rural	Summary of Impact	Action
Policy 01 - Sustainable Design & Construction	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	The preferred policy option would require new development to achieve net zero operational carbon. Net zero carbon homes are significantly cheaper to run and are therefore likely to reduce energy bills which will help to address issues of fuel poverty. A high proportion of those affected by fuel poverty are older people who are particularly vulnerable to the cold.	None
Policy 02 – Energy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No direct impact to equality groups identified	None
Policy 03 – Water efficiency	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No direct impact to equality groups identified	None
Policy 04 – Flood Risk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No direct impact to equality groups identified	None
Policy 05 – Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Characters	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No direct impact to equality groups identified	None
Policy 06 – Protection and	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No direct impact to equality groups identified	None

Oxfordshire Plan Policy Option	Gender Reassignment	Disability	Age	Race	Sexual Orientation	Sex	Religion or Belief	Pregnancy and Maternity	Marriage and Civil P.	Rural	Summary of Impact	Action
Enhancement of Historic Environment												
Policy 07 - Nature Recovery	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No direct impact to equality groups identified	None
Policy 08 - Biodiversity Gain	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No direct impact to equality groups identified	None
Policy 09 - Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	The policy options will help to ensure that through development, stocks of natural capital are maintained in good condition so they can deliver a sustainable flow of 'ecosystem services' which ultimately underpin human health and wellbeing. As a result, these policy options will potentially have a positive impact on all equality groups in terms of reducing health and wellbeing inequalities.	None
Policy 10 - Green Belt	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No direct impact to equality groups identified	None
Policy 11 - Water Quality	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No direct impact to equality groups identified	None
											Ensuring air quality assessments are undertaken for new development across Oxfordshire will potentially	None

Oxfordshire Plan Policy Option	Gender Reassignment	Disability	Age	Race	Sexual Orientation	Sex	Religion or Belief	Pregnancy and Maternity	Marriage and Civil P.	Rural	Summary of Impact	Action
Policy 12 - Air Quality	-	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	have a positive impact on the health of all equality groups, however it will be directly beneficial for groups who are younger, older, disabled and pregnant, as these groups are often more vulnerable to the negative impacts poor air quality has on health.	
Policy 13 - Healthy Place Shaping and Impact Assessments	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<p>The inclusion of a Healthy Place Shaping policy that includes healthy place shaping principles committed to reducing health inequalities will have a positive impact on all equality groups.</p> <p>Additionally, the Health Impact Assessment element of this policy option proposes to require all major developments in Oxfordshire to be accompanied by a HIA. This will have a positive impact on all equality groups as it will help to tackle health inequalities and improve health and wellbeing through new major developments in Oxfordshire.</p>	None
Policy 14 – Health Infrastructure	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<p>This policy option proposes to provide a land use planning framework for Oxfordshire within which future health estate reviews might be considered. It will aim to ensure that health infrastructure is of high quality and in the right locations, with good access available by public transport and active travel methods. This policy option will have a positive impact on all equality groups as it will ensure that new health infrastructure is functional and easily accessible for all, which could have a direct impact</p>	None

Oxfordshire Plan Policy Option	Gender Reassignment	Disability	Age	Race	Sexual Orientation	Sex	Religion or Belief	Pregnancy and Maternity	Marriage and Civil P.	Rural	Summary of Impact	Action
											on the physical and mental health of those with protected characteristics.	
<b>Policy 15 – High Quality Design for New Development and Garden Town Standards for New Settlements</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	<p>A fundamental part of what makes design high quality is ensuring that it promotes healthy living. Urban design can help promote good mental health, help prevent mental illness, and help support people with mental health problems.</p> <p>The guiding principles of Garden Towns are inclusive and help to tackle inequalities particularly in relation to health and wellbeing. The implementation of Garden Town Standards for new settlements will have a positive impact on equality groups, however as this is predominately an urban policy the impact on rural groups is neutral. However, it is acknowledged that the influence of Garden Town standards have a wider reach than within the red line boundary of new settlements.</p>	None
<b>Policy 16 - Leisure, recreation, community and open space facilities</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<p>Supporting new strategic leisure and recreation facilities within the county has the potential to have a positive impact on all equality groups, as access to these facilities is beneficial to human health. However, it will have the most significant direct positive impact on those with disabilities and the young and elderly who often rely on leisure and recreation facilities for fitness and health.</p> <p>Additionally, supporting new community facilities will</p>	None

Oxfordshire Plan Policy Option	Gender Reassignment	Disability	Age	Race	Sexual Orientation	Sex	Religion or Belief	Pregnancy and Maternity	Marriage and Civil P.	Rural	Summary of Impact	Action
											have a positive impact on all equality groups. Access to services such as schools, libraries and emergency services is important for the health and wellbeing for all equality groups.	
<b>Policy 17 - Towards a Net-Zero Carbon Transport Network</b>	-	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	A movement to a net-zero carbon transport network across Oxfordshire would help to improve air quality and encourage active travel improvements, both of which would benefit the health of equality groups. However, those that would be most directly positively impacted are those that are disabled, the young and elderly, and those who are pregnant. This is because these groups are often more susceptible to the negative impacts of poor air quality and thus would benefit from a movement to a net-zero carbon transport network across the county.	None
<b>Policy 18 - Sustainable Transport in New Development</b>	-	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	The preferred policy option would help to ensure that new developments in Oxfordshire support sustainable transport options such as walking, cycling and public transport. This would potentially benefit the health of all equality groups but would have the most direct positive impact on those who are less likely to travel by car, such as those with mobility issues and the elderly. It will also have a particularly positive impact on those in rural areas that don't have access to sustainable means of travel.	None
<b>Policy 19 -</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No direct impact to equality groups identified	None

Oxfordshire Plan Policy Option	Gender Reassignment	Disability	Age	Race	Sexual Orientation	Sex	Religion or Belief	Pregnancy and Maternity	Marriage and Civil P.	Rural	Summary of Impact	Action
Supporting sustainable freight management												
Policy 20 - Digital infrastructure	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	The preferred policy option supports the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generational mobile technology and full-fibre broadband connections. This is beneficial to all equality groups but would have the most positive direct impact on the county's rural communities where access to good quality internet and mobile phone signal is often limited.	None
Policy 21 - Strategic Infrastructure Priorities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	All equality groups could potentially be positively impacted by the implementation of strategic infrastructure. For example, strategic transport infrastructure (particularly that which connects rural communities) would be beneficial to equality groups and can additionally help to regenerate areas. It should be noted that transport is not the only type of strategic infrastructure. Strategic infrastructure also includes health and adult social care, education, emergency services infrastructure and more.	None
Policy 22 - Supporting the	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	The creation of a variety of jobs across the county helps to create prosperous communities that sustains the economic and social wellbeing of the	None

Oxfordshire Plan Policy Option	Gender Reassignment	Disability	Age	Race	Sexual Orientation	Sex	Religion or Belief	Pregnancy and Maternity	Marriage and Civil P.	Rural	Summary of Impact	Action
Creation of Jobs											community. Provided that diverse full and part-time employment opportunities are created this policy should have a positive impact on all equality groups and help to tackle unemployment.	
Policy 23 - Protection of Economic Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No direct impact to equality groups identified.	None
Policy 24 - Town Centre Renewal	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	The renewal of the county's city and town centres could result in regenerative benefits to local communities, particularly those with levels of deprivation. This policy would potentially positively impact all equality groups through the delivery of new facilities and jobs created through town centre renewal. However, as this is predominately an urban policy, it will have neutral impact on rural communities.	None
Policy 25 - Visitor Economy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No direct impact to equality groups identified though it is recognised this could indirectly benefit all equality groups.	None
Policy 26 - Culture and Arts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No direct impact to equality groups identified though it is recognised this could indirectly benefit all equality groups.	None
Policy 27 - Meeting Skills and	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	This policy option aims to support the provision of modern and up to date facilities to support education and training. Education and training facilities play an	None

Oxfordshire Plan Policy Option	Gender Reassignment	Disability	Age	Race	Sexual Orientation	Sex	Religion or Belief	Pregnancy and Maternity	Marriage and Civil P.	Rural	Summary of Impact	Action
Education Needs											important role in teaching and upskilling young people and adults, which is particularly beneficial to those with protected characteristics who are more likely to be marginalised or disadvantaged in a work or education setting. This policy option aims to ensure these facilities meet the needs of all of the community and are located in accessible and sustainable locations. In reflection of the above, direct benefits to all groups are anticipated.	
Policy 28 - Homes: How Many? Commitments and Locations	-	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	<p>The delivery of a mix of good quality, affordable and specialist housing that meets the needs of Oxfordshire's residents will have a positive impact on all, but particularly those in certain equalities groups who are more statistically likely to be in need of affordable and specialist housing, including ethnic minorities, children and young adults, women (including those who are pregnant) and disabled people.</p> <p>Additionally, the spatial distribution of homes will have an indirect impact on equality groups, as ensuring they are in the right places is important to addressing inequalities regarding access to housing. However, it has the strongest positive impact on those equality groups listed in the paragraph above.</p>	None
Policy 29 – Urban Renewal											The implementation of urban renewal schemes across the county could result in regenerative benefits to local communities, particularly those with	None

Oxfordshire Plan Policy Option	Gender Reassignment	Disability	Age	Race	Sexual Orientation	Sex	Religion or Belief	Pregnancy and Maternity	Marriage and Civil P.	Rural	Summary of Impact	Action
	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	levels of deprivation. This policy would potentially positively impact all equality groups through its regenerative impact. However, as this is predominately an urban policy, it will have neutral impact on rural communities.	
<b>Policy 30 - Affordable Homes</b>	-	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-	-	-	-	Affordable homes are considered to provide positive benefits to all in the community, particularly those on lower incomes which are more statistically likely to be those in certain equalities groups, including ethnic minorities, children and young adults, women and disabled people. However, this is ultimately dependent on their access to the housing register.	None
<b>Policy 31 - Specialist housing needs</b>	-	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-	-	-	-	This policy option is specific in its intention to directly benefit older people, particularly those with disabilities or ill health by providing specialist housing that will allow them to live independently. One of the policy options is to provide specialist key worker housing. Key workers are statistically more likely to be those in ethnic minority groups, women or disabled. Therefore, the delivery of specialist key worker housing would positively benefit these groups.	None
<b>Policy 32 - Gypsies, Travellers, Travelling Showpeople</b>	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	Setting out a high-level narrative on suitable locations for meeting needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople would have a positive impact on this group.	None

Oxfordshire Plan Policy Option	Gender Reassignment	Disability	Age	Race	Sexual Orientation	Sex	Religion or Belief	Pregnancy and Maternity	Marriage and Civil P.	Rural	Summary of Impact	Action
<b>Strategic Environmental Allocations</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No direct impact to equality groups identified	None
<b>Spatial Option 1 –</b> Focus on opportunities at larger settlements and planned growth locations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No direct impact to equality groups identified	None
<b>Spatial Option 2 –</b> Focus on Oxford-led growth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No direct impact to equality groups identified	None
<b>Spatial Option 3 –</b> Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	This spatial option would have the potential to improve links from rural parts of Oxfordshire with the city, towns and key employment locations, which would have a positive impact on rural communities. Improved public transport provision will also benefit those less likely to travel by car, including the disabled and the elderly.	None

Oxfordshire Plan Policy Option	Gender Reassignment	Disability	Age	Race	Sexual Orientation	Sex	Religion or Belief	Pregnancy and Maternity	Marriage and Civil P.	Rural	Summary of Impact	Action
corridors and at strategic transport hubs												
<b>Spatial Option 4 -</b> Focus on strengthening business locations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No direct impact to equality groups identified	None
<b>Spatial Option 5 –</b> Focus on supporting rural communities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	This spatial option considers growth in rural settings. This option would help to address issues of rural isolation and deprivation by redirecting growth away from main settlements to where it could best address inequalities.	None

Oxfordshire Councils

# Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment

## Covid-19 Impacts Addendum



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# 1 Introduction

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The Oxfordshire Councils<sup>1</sup> have commissioned Cambridge Econometrics (CE) to prepare a Covid-19 Impacts Addendum to support the development of the Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment (OGNA).

The OGNA and its supporting documents will help to inform the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan. The Oxfordshire Plan will be a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan which sets out a development strategy for growth across Oxfordshire to 2050.

## 1.1 Context and links to other work

The Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment (OGNA) was initiated in 2019 and carried out throughout 2020. The work fell into two complementary phases; the **Phase 1 Report** provides overall growth need figures for housing and employment in Oxfordshire to 2050. It profiles local housing market, demographic, economic and commercial property market dynamics, all within the strategic policy environment. These factors are then brought together to provide trajectories for future housing and employment land needs, and resultant high-level implications for commuting and affordability.

Following on from this, the **Phase 2 Report** considers a range of high-level scenarios for the distribution of housing and employment across Oxfordshire. The purpose of this is to aid decision-makers in understanding of the implications of alternative spatial choices. It does not seek to identify specific options or priorities for development, but rather explores the potential scale and implications of different approaches.

During the course of this work, it became clear that the Covid-19 pandemic could have significant, long-term impacts that may be relevant to the scope of the study, both in terms of the prospects of different sectors locally, the demand for housing within the county, and the interaction between housing and employment location and transport demand under conditions of remote work.

To reflect the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic during the development of the OGNA, this short report - the **Covid-19 Impacts Addendum** - has therefore commissioned to sense-check, contextualise, and update the results of the *Phase 1* and *Phase 2 Reports* in light of these developments.

This report draws heavily on and supplements the extensive analysis and research undertaken for Oxfordshire LEP's **Economic Recovery Plan (ERP)**<sup>2</sup>, which was produced by Steer ED in conjunction with CE over 2020-21.

Informed by extensive quantitative and qualitative evidence, the Plan provides an authoritative and independent assessment of how, and where, the Covid-

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<sup>1</sup> The commissioning authorities comprise Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council.

<sup>2</sup> The Economic Recovery Plan and its supporting documentation can be accessed from Oxfordshire LEP's website [here](#).

19 pandemic has affected the Oxfordshire economy, and outlines a formal and proactive plan of economic renewal for the Oxfordshire economy post-Covid.

Therefore, it is recommended that the analysis presented in this report is read alongside the other supporting documentation of the OGNA and the Oxfordshire ERP, given their interconnectedness. This report supplements, rather than duplicates, the extensive analysis presented in these supporting documents.

In addition, a stand-alone **Executive Summary**, which highlights and brings together the key observations and messages from the three respective reports, has also been produced.

## 1.2 This report

This report is structured as follows:

- *Chapter 2* provides an overview of the latest evidence and theory to understand the impact of the pandemic on the UK and Oxfordshire, and the future prospects of a switch towards remote working;
- *Chapter 3* appraises the robustness of the *Phase 1 Report* employment projections for Oxfordshire, assessed in light of the pandemic and its related trends, and finally;
- *Chapter 4* concludes with a discussion as to the long-term options for remote working and a qualitative appraisal of the implications for employment land, housing demand, and commuting patterns.

A summary conclusion and accompanying references and appendices can also be found at the end of the report.

## 2 Interpreting the OGNA in a post-Covid World: Theory and Evidence

### 2.1 Introduction

Analysis and forecasts presented in the Oxfordshire Economic Recovery Plan (ERP) show that, despite the extent of the economic shock associated with the Covid-19 pandemic, the Oxfordshire economy has the potential to rapidly recover, stabilise, and return to long-term trends, and at a much faster rate than comparator areas.

Resultantly, over a longer timeframe (i.e. the 2050 horizon of the Oxfordshire Plan), post-Covid *levels of growth* in Oxfordshire are not expected to appear substantially different from those suggested by the OGNA's economic trajectories, despite the latter predating the pandemic. The robustness of the OGNA trajectories are explored in greater detail in *Chapter 3*.

However, beyond just the short- and medium-term economic impact, the longer-term legacy of the pandemic has the potential to trigger and accelerate substantive economic, social and behavioural change in Oxfordshire and beyond; for instance, through the rise in remote working, changing patterns in residential and commercial demand, and shifting transport use.

There is the potential that as a result of these changes, the *composition and distribution of this growth* in 2050 may not be the same as that previously observed in the OGNA, e.g. housing need may shift to suburban and rural locations, demand for retail floorspace could decline in city centres.

However, given the pandemic is at an early and evolving stage, there is still an unprecedented amount of uncertainty when it comes to estimating the longer-term scale and impact of these changes, and whether their impacts are merely transitory or permanent.

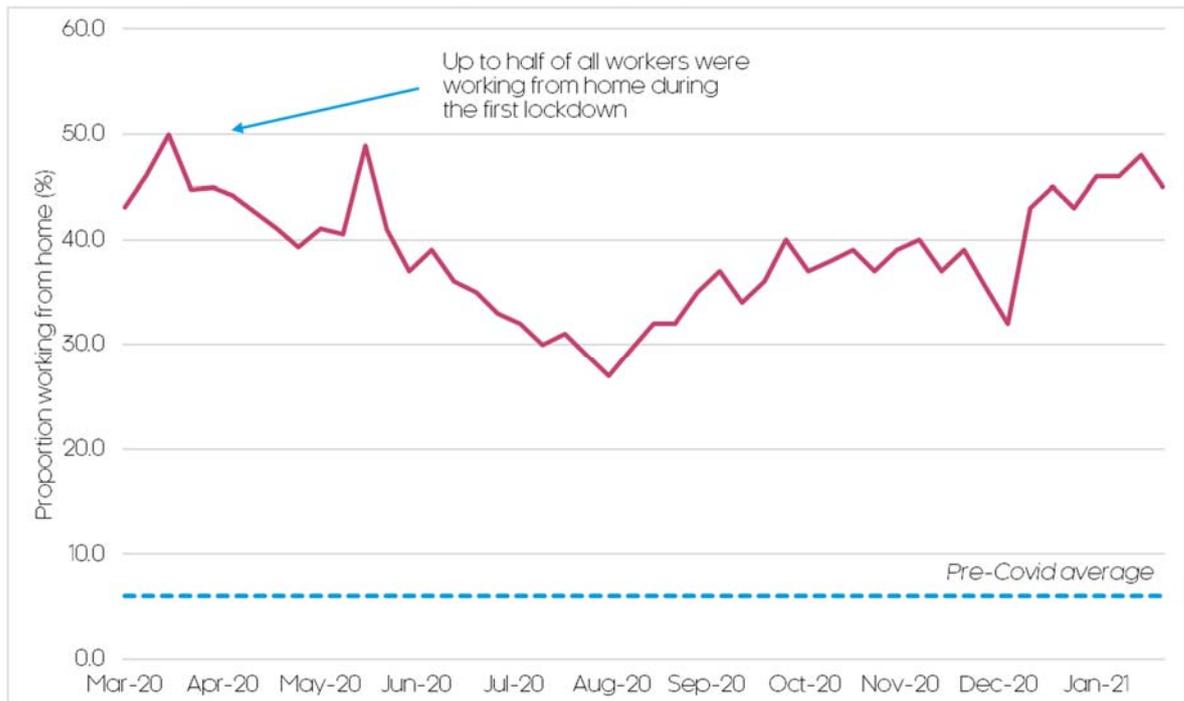
This chapter therefore seeks to understand the outlook of the OGNA and its themes within the context of a post-Covid world, drawing on the latest evidence, literature and theory to gauge the longer-term trends and implications, to inform a series of qualitative scenarios to 2050.

### 2.2 The pandemics legacy: a changing way of work

The Covid-19 pandemic, and associated 'lockdown' measures, have ushered in an unprecedented change in the way people work, almost overnight. As shown in Figure 2.2.1, at its peak in April 2020, half of the UK labour market was engaged in regular remote working ('working at home') in any given week, either exclusively or partially; pre-lockdown, the average share was only 6%.

This has largely been driven by Government advice for workers to avoid travelling to work and working from home where possible, to reduce virus transmission risks. This has in effect forced an enormous "natural experiment"<sup>3</sup> upon the UK workforce, and for many, the transition has been relatively smooth, and popular.

<sup>3</sup> Deloitte (2020), Home working and the future of cities

**Figure 2.2.1: Homeworking trends during the pandemic**

Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics. Note: data GB-wide.

For instance - as is explored in greater detail later in this chapter - workers have cited benefits including improved health, childcare benefits and a better work-life balance. Firms who were previously reluctant to allow or encourage remote working have been surprised by how productive and engaged their staff remained, and how well their systems have coped.

Yet with softening mobility restrictions over the Summer, there was a steady return to trend; by August 2020 for instance, more than two-thirds of workers were back to exclusively commuting to their workplace. Indeed, it is worth emphasizing that even during strict lockdown measures, the ONS found the majority of the workers were still reporting to have never worked from home.

The homeworking rate settled at around a third during Summer and early Autumn 2020, but continued to fluctuate throughout changing lockdown measures, approaching 50% share once more during the January 2021 lockdown, despite lighter mobility restrictions than the Spring 2020 lockdown.

The magnitude of these trends varies across areas, largely reflecting sectoral and occupational mix (which informs remote working potential). As shown in Figure 2.2.3<sup>4</sup>, it is estimated that – given its favourable sectoral and occupational structure – over 4 in 10 (43%) Oxfordshire jobs can be easily done from home, a higher proportion than regional and national averages (39% and 38% respectively).

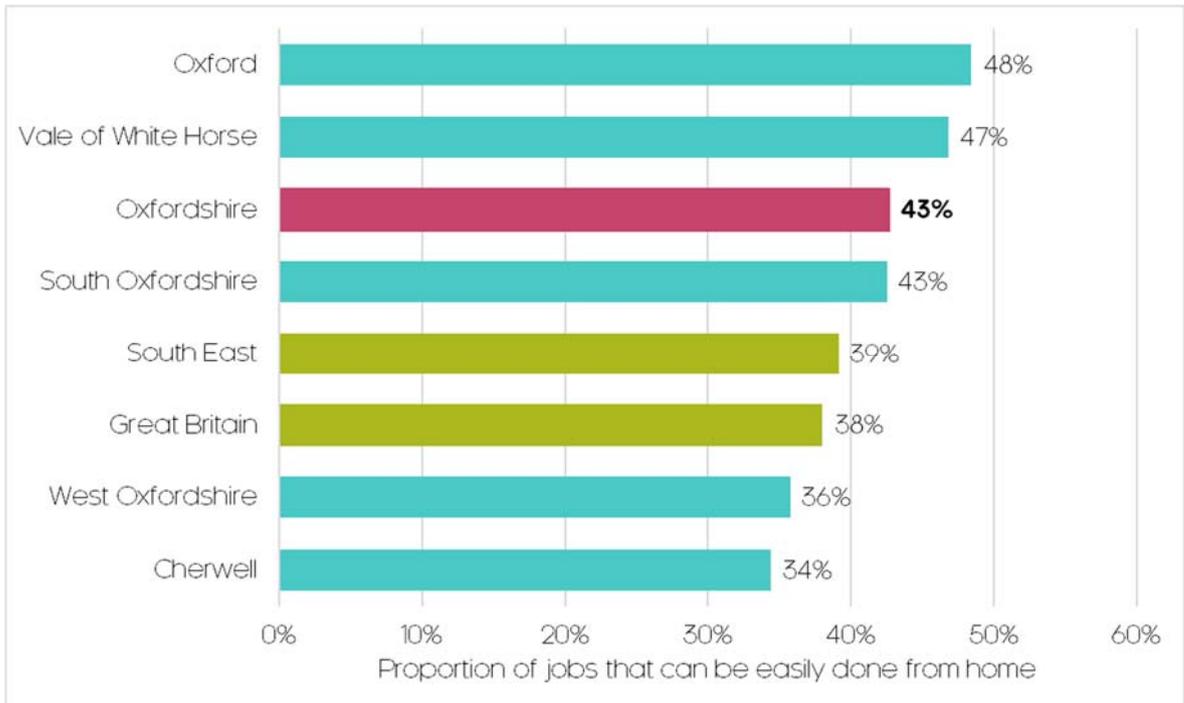
According to the Centre for Cities, Oxford has some of the highest home working potential in the country; almost half of its jobs, it concluded, “could be more easily done from home”.<sup>5</sup> Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire also saw rates well in excess of the national average. Cherwell and West Oxfordshire however saw notably lower rates of homeworking potential,

<sup>4</sup> Results adapted from research by; Dingel & Neiman (2020), How Many Jobs Can be Done at Home?

<sup>5</sup> Centre for Cities (2020), How will Coronavirus affect jobs in different parts of the country?

reflecting their sectoral and occupational structure (e.g. only 4% of jobs in accommodation and food and 14% in retail can be easily done from home).

**Figure 2.2.3: Homeworking potential across Oxfordshire**



Source: Dingel & Neiman (2020), ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

As a result of this high homeworking potential, as Figure 2.2.2 adapted from the ERP shows, relative to the national and regional average, Oxfordshire’s workers have been spending much less time at their workplace and more time at home, indicating that remote working has indeed flourished in the local

**Figure 2.2.2: Time spent at workplaces during the pandemic**



Source: Google, Cambridge Econometrics. Note: 7-day rolling average

labour market. In fact, at its peak during the first lockdown, workers in Oxfordshire were spending in excess of 70% less time at work.

Even when the pandemic abates and people are able to return to their place of work – which appears increasingly likely to be in the short-term given positive vaccine progress, of which the Oxfordshire life sciences cluster has played a critical role - it is likely some element of remote working will remain, and at multiples of its pre-Covid levels.

Of course, it should be noted that remote working and associated flexible ways of working (such as half days, split roles, reduced hours etc.) were present and growing pre-Covid. The pandemic has not prompted anything new in this regard, and CE's previous econometric forecasts have factored in technological change and changing homeworking potential (as a result of occupational change).

However, it has ensured that a profound change that may have taken decades to come to fruition has been accelerated in a matter of weeks. This has been facilitated by an unprecedented amount of innovative adaption and adoption by firms by both firms and employees.

And most importantly, compared with the other well-publicised effects of the pandemic – such as worklessness and job losses, reduced incomes and investment, and subdued demand – there is the potential for this trend to persist over a longer timeframe, and have a greater legacy on local economies.

Given the OGNA looks to a 2050 horizon, it is important that any longer-term trends are therefore given due consideration.

### 2.3 A changing way of work: outlook to 2050

Though the short-term trends and implications of this shift in working are clear to see, there is still a large amount of uncertainty regarding how this will be sustained and what the longer-term impacts might look like.

Undoubtedly, this will largely be dependent on how durable and widespread the shift to remote working turns out to be. Surveys of workers and businesses suggest increased remote working is likely to persist, albeit not on the same scale, whilst the pattern may be inconsistent across sectors and firms.

For instance, around a fifth of businesses say they intend to use remote working as a permanent business model, whilst employee surveys suggest more than a quarter expect to spend more time working from home, with 3 days in the office, two at home (a hybrid '3-2 model') emerging as the most preferred approach.<sup>6</sup> A BBC survey of 50 of the biggest UK employers also showed that almost half did not have any plans to return workers to the office – in the short term at least.<sup>7</sup>

Yet this outlook varies across and within firms. Google and Amazon, leading proponents of remote working, also acknowledge the majority of employees would prefer to return to the office, whilst the latter has still confirmed take up of 900,000 sq. ft of office space, citing the lack of spontaneity in virtual

---

<sup>6</sup> Bank of England (2020), Andy Haldane's Autumn Lecture

<sup>7</sup> BBC (2020), No plan for a return to the office for millions of staff

teamwork.<sup>8 9</sup> Away from the UK, a return to trend was also more evident; in France 83% of office staff were back over the Summer of 2020, and three quarters in Spain, Italy and Germany.<sup>10</sup>

There are also wider considerations which may affect longer-term trends and durability, including the social aspects of work, and issues associated with the ability to train and develop staff which may influence dynamics in the medium- and longer-term. Concern has also been expressed over employee welfare surveys which have noted increased remote working ‘fatigue’ and ‘burnout’ in recent months.<sup>11</sup>

Academics have also queried the longer-term impacts of remote working, in particular that relating to wellbeing and welfare, inequality, productivity and innovation, with some notable and well-evidenced concerns over negative effects.<sup>12</sup> Such factors could cause firms and workers to readdress remote working overtime, and may already be evident in the weakening appeal of a full-time shift; a recent Deloitte survey found fewer than 5% of respondents wanted to work entirely from home post-pandemic.<sup>13</sup>

Beyond surveys, technical analysis has also acknowledged the potential longevity of remote working. McKinsey, through a cross-referencing exercise of occupations expected to grow by 2050 with occupations that are able to be performed remotely, suggest that the proportion of workers able to work remotely will grow steadily between now and 2050.<sup>14</sup>

## 2.4 Demography and housing post-Covid

Depending on the scale and longevity of the Covid-accelerated shift in working patterns, the implications for demography and housing in local areas could be profound.

The sudden and successful transition to remote working for a large number of occupations over the pandemic infers such roles could – in theory – be performed anywhere, regardless of the employer’s location (once accounting for the necessary inputs – e.g. digital infrastructure - of course).

Likewise, even with the softening of lockdown restrictions over Summer 2020, many workers have continued to work remotely, even if only part-time, as – even if involuntarily – employers have become more receptive to flexible working arrangements, sweeping away the pre-Covid notion of ‘presenteeism’.

Resultantly, a worker’s proximity to their workplace may no longer be the overriding factor in determining where a person lives. The longstanding principle of “Marchetti’s constant”, which theorizes the average worker will reside within ~30 minutes commuting distance of their workplace, could weaken (or even break completely for those working remotely full time).

<sup>8</sup> Google (2020), Googlegeist Annual Workplace Survey

<sup>9</sup> WSJ (2020), Amazon bets on office based work with expansion in major cities

<sup>10</sup> The Guardian (2020), UK office workers slower to return to their desk after Covid

<sup>11</sup> Monster (2020), Overworked

<sup>12</sup> Economics Observatory (2020), Who can work home and how does it affect their productivity

<sup>13</sup> Deloitte (2020), Home working and the future of cities

<sup>14</sup> McKinsey (2020), What’s next for remote work: An analysis of 2,000 tasks, 800 jobs, and nine countries

Naturally, this could have implications for how workers consider their utility of and need for housing. With proximity to work de-prioritised, if factored in at all, workers will likely consider and re-prioritise other, non-employment factors, including:

- **Affordability:** for some workers, particularly those in large, economically successful cities (such as London), housing costs can be substantial relative to wages. With a decreased emphasis on proximity to work, workers may seek better value and more affordable housing elsewhere (even when accounting for increased commuting costs, in terms of both time and money).
- **Space:** even at this early stage, post-Covid housing markets have been driven by a ‘race for space’.<sup>15</sup> Ongoing restrictions and increased remote working have resulted in a preference for larger, flexible living spaces or properties with a spare room. For some, gardens and home offices have shifted from being not just desirable but essential. Unsurprisingly, this has seen demand spike in rural and suburban areas, where such properties are more prevalent, and also where pandemic risks generally are lower. In contrast, the market for flats in city centre locations has weakened.
- **Wider amenities:** schools, parkland and greenspace, leisure, recreation and culture all contribute to the wider amenity value of an area and have long been an important factor in where people chose to live (and how much they are willing to pay). With workplace proximity no longer a priority, people will have greater freedom to locate in areas that offer the greatest amenity value. Importantly, how people value amenity could adapt and shift post-Covid (e.g. greater emphasis on green and open spaces, less on crowded bars and restaurants).
- **Inertia:** if firms become increasingly open to the idea of hiring workers from across the UK or beyond with no obligation of relocation, then workers may increasingly simply stay where they are. There are significant benefits to remaining where they are settled, close to family, friends and social networks, and if they have them, the workplaces and schools of their partners and children. For new graduate workers, this may mean they increasingly remaining in university towns or cities.

Even at this early stage, such factors have already been observed impacting local housing markets. For instance, in the UK, Rightmove has seen a doubling in searches for homes in small towns and villages (with populations less than 10,000 people),<sup>16</sup> as prospective buyers seek additional space and lower costs in such areas.

They have also reported a significant rise in the number of people searching for homes further from town and city centres, with larger gardens and space for a home office.<sup>17</sup> In the US, consumers have also acted quickly and have been observed prioritising “more space, quieter neighbourhoods, home

<sup>15</sup> BBC (2020), House prices rise as Covid sparks rural relocation

<sup>16</sup> BBC (2020), Lockdown city living 'wasn't the best idea'

<sup>17</sup> BBC (2020), House prices rise as Covid sparks rural relocation

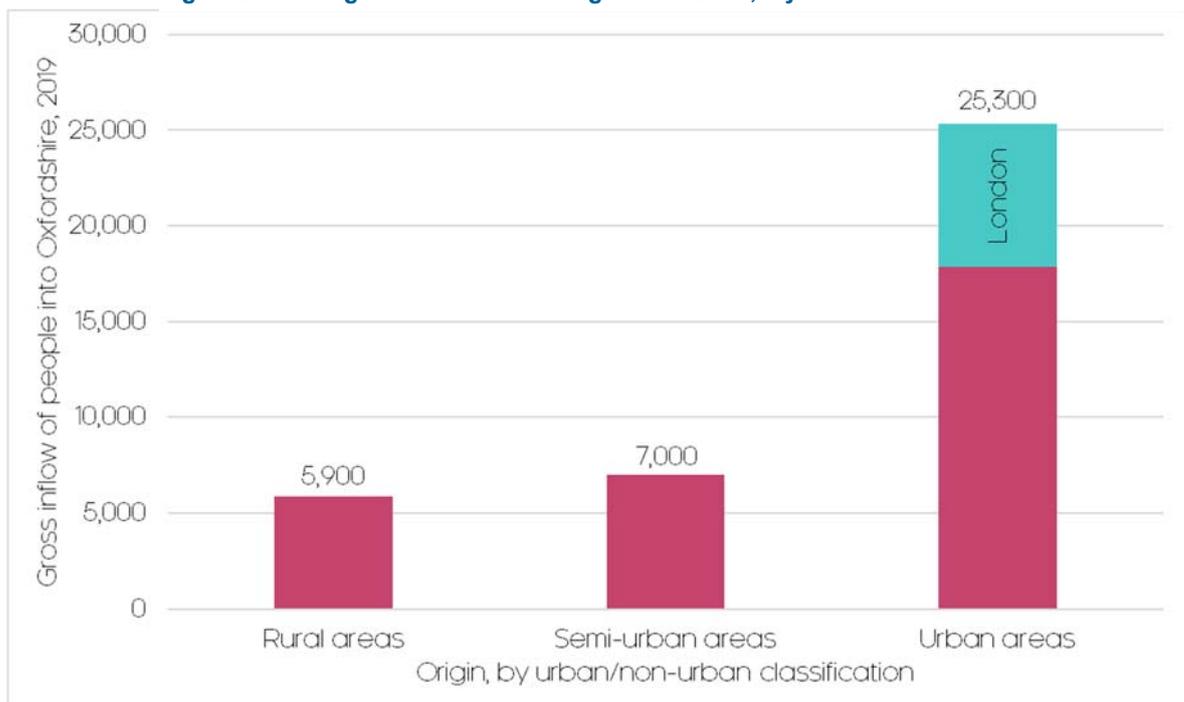
offices, newer kitchens and access to the outdoors, traits which have revived a strong interest in the suburbs and smaller metro areas.”<sup>18</sup>

Whilst declining rents and vacant stock have been evident in notoriously competitive and high-cost cities such as London, New York and San Francisco, “bidding wars are breaking out in suburbs and smaller cities as remote workers seek less harried, less expensive lifestyles and homes with a room that can serve as an office or gym.”<sup>19</sup> Nationwide reported over 40% of Londoners are moving or have considered doing so because of the pandemic.

However, there is the potential for Oxfordshire’s housing market to be, if not already, an attractive proposition for those readdressing their living situation post-Covid, including from households moving out of London to seek greater space and willing to undertake longer commutes (e.g. from 60 to up to 90 minutes) in return for more space and an attractive environment.

For instance, Oxfordshire is already an established destination for residents moving away from large urban centres. As Figure 2.4.1 shows, in the 12 months to June 2019, some 25,300 people arrived in Oxfordshire from urban areas within England, with a particularly established inflow from London, which accounted for almost a third (7,500) of these moves.

**Figure 2.4.1: Origin of Oxfordshire migrants in 2019, by urban/non-urban classification**



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Oxfordshire’s housing market is also particularly well suited to a potential post-Covid shift in demand. For example, detached and semi-detached properties – which given space and amenity benefits have proven increasingly desirable post-Covid – accounted for 65% of pre-Covid residential sales in Oxfordshire, well above the national average of 55%.

In addition, EPC data shows homes in Oxfordshire typically have more space than elsewhere in the country, with an average floor area of 108 m<sup>2</sup>, 8% larger

<sup>18</sup> Hechinger Report (2020), Pandemic speeds up influx of remote workers to small cities

<sup>19</sup> Forbes (2020), Covid-19 has changed the housing market forever

than the national average of 100 m<sup>2</sup>. Accompanying garden space is also more generous, with Oxfordshire properties having on average 300 m<sup>2</sup> of private garden, 14% bigger than the national average of 262 m<sup>2</sup>.

And combined with this is Oxfordshire's already high amenity values; high house prices in the county relative to wages suggest that theoretically "local amenity benefits are substantial".<sup>20</sup> This includes, for instance, the number of quality schools in Oxfordshire, the prevalence of greenspace, good connectivity, and existing cultural and recreational assets.

However, early sales data provides limited evidence of above-average interest in Oxfordshire's housing market post-Covid. Figure 2.4.2 shows monthly sales volumes in 2020 indexed to same month in 2019; after an effective 'shutdown' during lockdown (with volumes down 60% on pre-Covid levels), sales recovered strongly in Oxfordshire during the Summer, though this increase was in line with the regional and national averages.

**Figure 2.4.2: Residential sales volumes in 2020 relative to the same month in 2019**



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics. Note: a value of 100% would mean the same sales volume as the accompanying month in 2019.

Sales were somewhat more stable in Oxfordshire moving into the Autumn, yet were still running 6% lower than the previous year. Within Oxfordshire, only in Oxford and South Oxfordshire did sales volumes recover faster than the national average.

There has however been a sharp appreciation in house prices in Oxfordshire, largely a result of the Stamp Duty 'holiday'; the 7% rise between January and October 2020 exceeded both the 6% increase nationally, and the 1% rise over the same period in 2019, with the average sale price peaking at a record £375,600 in October 2020.

<sup>20</sup> SERC Discussion Paper (2011), Real Earnings Disparities in Britain

Of course, at the subnational level, it is difficult to disaggregate short- and longer-term trends in prices and sale volumes. The housing market has clearly been supported by a surge in households seeking to move in part (if not exclusively) to benefit from the temporary Stamp Duty ‘holiday’ introduced by Government to support the market.

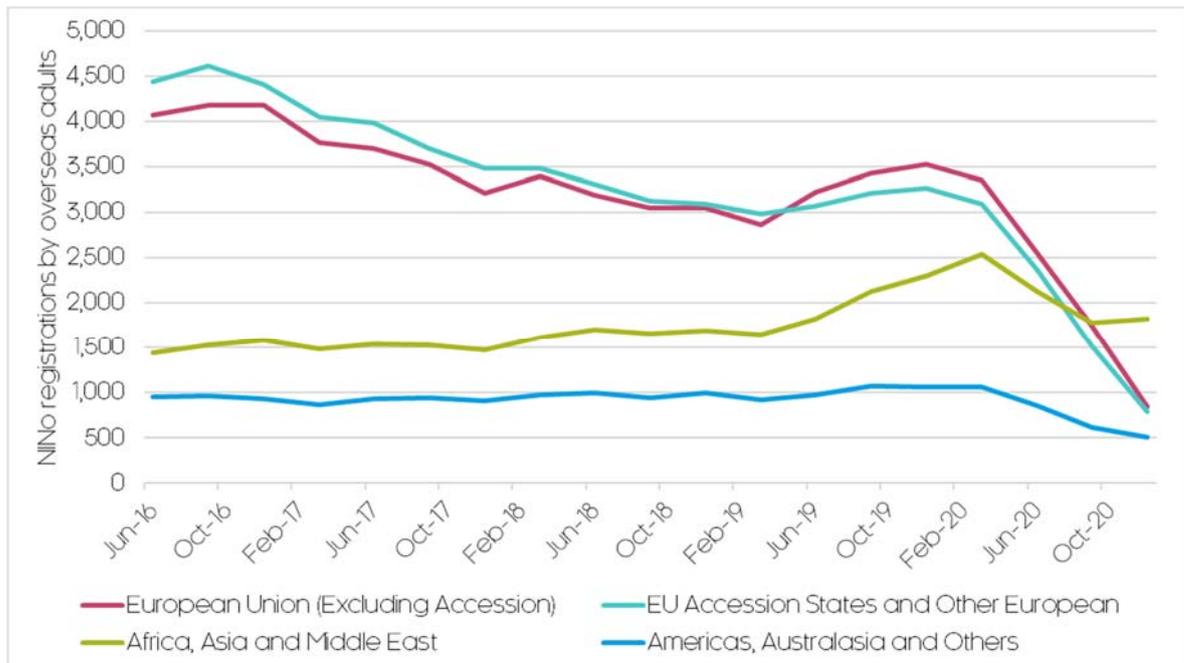
Housing market dynamics could however evolve through 2021, as buying conditions return closer to normal. Indeed, it should be emphasised that the market and its drivers over recent months represents only a very small part of the longer-term trajectory to 2050, especially when accounting for a period with restricted volumes and a bias to the higher-price end of the market.<sup>21</sup>

Such trends will likely ease or could even dissipate over the longer-term, though it is expected they will persist in some form as long as the model of remote working remains durable, if only for certain sectors.

It is also important to note that, though property prices and tastes move and adapt quickly, the response in respect of housing supply (i.e. new housing delivery) is more slowly influenced by the time associated with the planning process and construction. Therefore, any substantial, large-scale changes to population and accompanying housing supply are probably unlikely as a result of the Covid-induced change in property tastes, particularly in the short to medium-term.

In addition to the housing market, a more direct demographic change has been observed as a result of the pandemic. The reduction and relocation of working opportunities throughout 2020, attributable to both the pandemic and Brexit, has seen a significant decline in overseas labour staying and arriving in Oxfordshire. As Figure 2.4.3 shows, National Insurance Number (NINo)

**Figure 2.4.3: NINo registrations in Oxfordshire**



Source: DWP, Cambridge Econometrics. Note: quarterly values are for the preceding 12-months, not each individual quarter. NINo = National Insurance number

<sup>21</sup> HMRC data shows “higher priced properties have seen a stronger recovery in transaction numbers than those under £500,000.” See: Built Place (2021), Weekly Summary: 5th February 2021

registrations to overseas adults have dropped substantially; after a peaking at 10,000 registrations in March 2020, by December, registrations were running at less than half this rate.

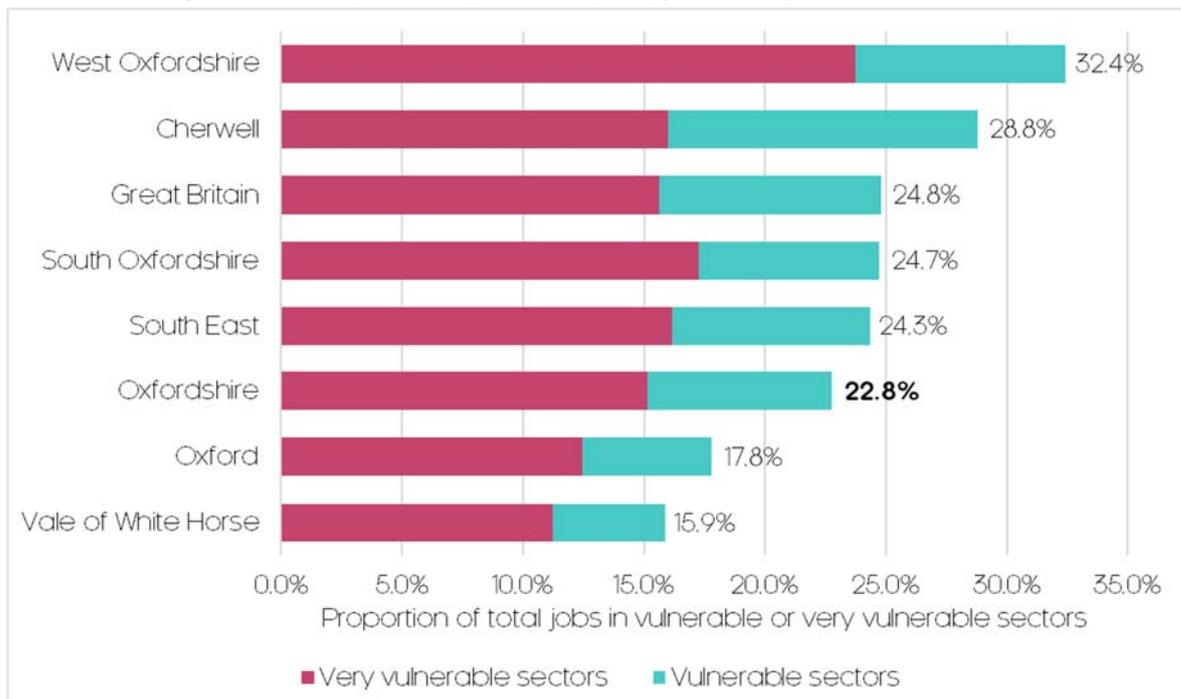
A sharp decline in registrations from European nationals (both EU and non-EU) accounted for more than three-quarters of this drop. Though the assumptions for the OGNA modelling accounted for a decline in net-migration, particularly as a result of Brexit, this was not to the sharp and sudden scale observed since the pandemic. As labour market conditions improve from 2021-onwards, it is likely such labour will return to the UK, and registrations will pick up again. The short-term impact could be notable though, particularly in the rental market and sectors reliant on non-UK employment.<sup>22</sup>

## 2.5 Sectors and employment land needs post-Covid

The ERP showed that few sectors will be immune to the shock associated with the Covid-19 pandemic, though it is anticipated the brunt of the impact will be concentrated in a handful of sectors. In particular, those unable to shift operations to remote working, those susceptible to demand-absorbing social distancing restrictions, and those at risk of changing behavioural attitudes post-Covid, will shoulder the greatest burden short-term.

Analysis by the Centre for Cities (adapted in Figure 2.5.1) shows the Oxfordshire economy has a notably lower incidence of jobs in ‘vulnerable’ and ‘very vulnerable’ sectors - these are activities that are expected to experience a discernible and lasting impact from the pandemic, such as tourism (i.e. accommodation and food service), transport (notably automotive and aviation), leisure, and some retail.

**Figure 2.5.1: Proportion of pre-Covid (2019) jobs in very vulnerable or vulnerable sectors**



Source: Centre for Cities, ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

<sup>22</sup> Financial Times (2021), Coronavirus sparks exodus of foreign-born people from UK

In fact, Oxford was ranked as having the lowest share of such jobs in the country, and resultantly is “expected to bounce back more quickly” than cities elsewhere in the country.<sup>23</sup>

Such proportions still equate to a significant number of jobs though, some 85,800 in Oxfordshire.

And the incidence varies within the county; Cherwell and West Oxfordshire are notably overrepresented with such activities, reflecting their local sectoral mix – for instance, almost half (43%) of the 53,700 tourism, retail and leisure jobs in Oxfordshire are located in these two districts.

Short-term, such vulnerable sectors have been highly reliant on furlough and financial support. Longer-term though there is the potential for deeper sectoral scarring and hysteresis related to the Covid crisis, particularly as support unwinds and sectors are unable to adapt and return to trend as others.

Importantly, beyond the wider economic and social implications noted in the ERP – such as the fact job and pay losses will disproportionately impact the young, low-paid and those on flexible contracts - from the perspective of the OGNA, this could also have implications for both the longer-term scale and distribution of employment land needs.

As of March 2020, 1.2 million m<sup>2</sup> of retail floorspace was present in Oxfordshire, 18% of total non-residential floorspace. Pre-Covid, despite well-publicised challenges (including falling footfall, the shift to online shopping, and high premises costs), the retail market was comparatively buoyant in Oxfordshire, with the Centre for Cities reporting Oxford’s high street vacancy rate (8%) as amongst the lowest in the country, and above-average footfall.

Some of these pre-Covid trends, such as the shift to online retail and associated distribution, was incorporated into the original OGNA floorspace modelling. Yet there is the potential for the pandemic to accelerate and shift additional headwinds against the sector, both directly and indirectly.

For instance, online shopping has surged during the pandemic - almost a quarter of retail spend in Oxford now takes place online<sup>24</sup>- whilst footfall, largely a result of enforced restrictions, has plummeted, with Oxford the fifth hardest hit city in the UK for footfall loss<sup>25</sup> - in part impacted by its dependency on tourism spend.

One of the legacies of the pandemic will likely be an acceleration of the proportion of retail spend online, particularly if people spend more time at home through remote working. Many firms have already adapted their business models and systems to cope with such demand. This will impact on the scale of physical retail floorspace needed, whilst jobs in these terms may shift away from stores towards distribution networks and warehousing.

In fact, freight and logistics demand has proven buoyant, and commercial road transport volumes were already eclipsing pre-Covid levels by Autumn 2020. Resultantly, Rightmove has reported a record number of enquiries for

<sup>23</sup> Centre for Cities (2020), What does the Covid-19 crisis mean for the economies of British cities and large towns?

<sup>24</sup> Centre for Cities (2020), How have coronavirus and lockdown impacted online shopping in cities?

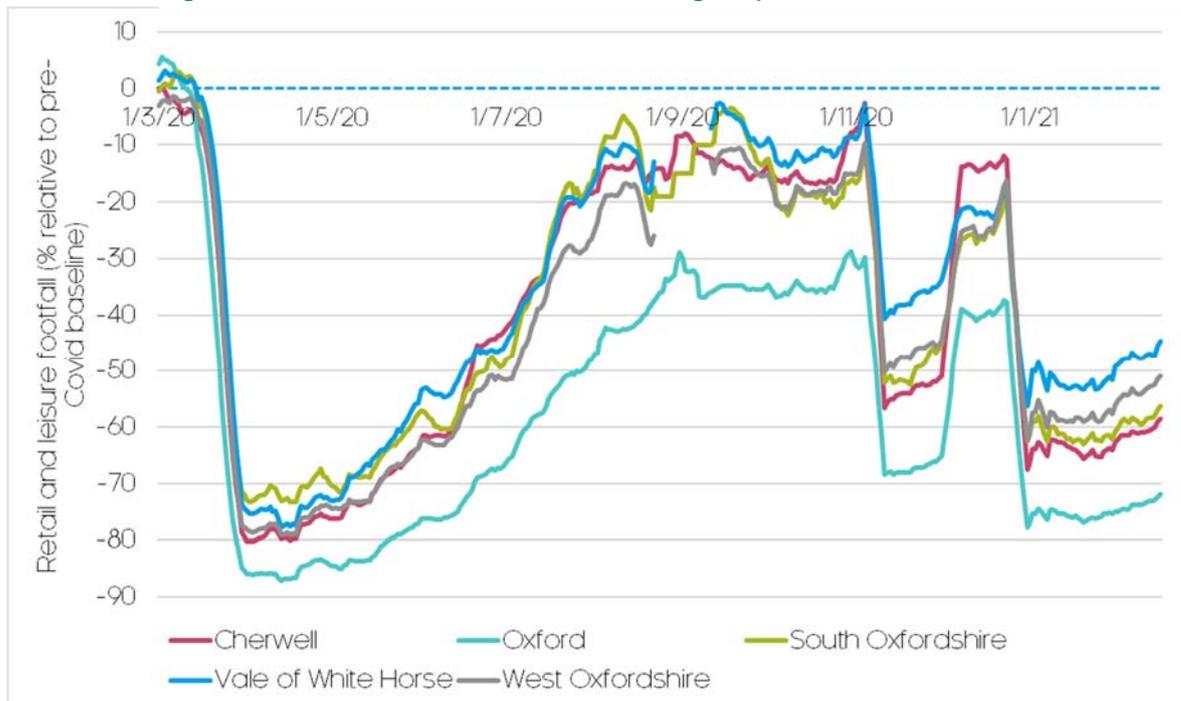
<sup>25</sup> Centre for Cities (2020), High streets recovery tracker

industrial and warehousing property, with the South East region leading this surge in interest.<sup>26</sup> Yet the same report also found enquiries for retail outlets are still higher than their pre-Covid average.

It is therefore likely that, rather than a wholesale decline, different retail centres will be affected in different ways. For instance, footfall and spending that hasn't moved online has also been observed shifting spatially, moving away from large city centres to suburbs and smaller towns, closer to where people live (particularly for convenience and food and drink-related vendors, encompassing the commute/office worker reliant 'Pret economy'<sup>27</sup>).

This is demonstrated in Figure 2.5.2, where footfall has been hardest hit and slowest to recover in Oxford (which saw a close to 90% decline in footfall during the first lockdown), whilst there has been an improved performance in suburban and rural districts, where some smaller and market towns have flourished. Over Summer 2020, many of these areas experienced footfall similar to pre-Covid levels.

**Figure 2.5.2: Footfall across Oxfordshire during the pandemic**



Source: Google, Cambridge Econometrics. Note: 7-day rolling average.

Alongside this, and indeed contributing to challenging high street conditions, is the risk exposed to the demand for office space as a result of the shift to remote working. As of March 2020, there was just over 1.1 million m<sup>2</sup> of office floorspace present in Oxfordshire, and as with retail the local market had been relatively buoyant pre-Covid, with 136,000 additional m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace delivered over the past five years.

With the pandemic and associated lockdown measures though, offices across the county have been left at reduced capacity (or closed) as production and staff moved online. The reaction of the market has been swift; commercial

<sup>26</sup> Yahoo Finance (2021), Demand for warehouses skyrockets as retailers adapt to online sales amid COVID-19

<sup>27</sup> Financial Times (2020), Goodbye to the 'Pret economy' and good luck to whatever replaces it

leases were down 60% in the first nine months of the year, according to Jones Lang LaSalle,<sup>28</sup> whilst Central London office values have already been observed falling by 10%.<sup>29</sup>

There is uncertainty however as to the extent the effects of the pandemic will persist over the timeframe to 2050. Already, some of the initial outlooks, including the ‘death of the office’ narrative,<sup>30</sup> appear overly pessimistic. For instance, in the same report, rather than a wholesale decline, Jones Lang LaSalle has observed an initial diversion in the market, with demand and rents rising for new offices, yet declining for older and second-hand space.

Likewise, a group of large US firms surveyed over 2020 predicted zero change in their future demand for space,<sup>31</sup> whilst Amazon has confirmed it will continue with one of the largest corporate office expansion programmes on record. KPMG reported by Spring 2021 many major employers were already scrapping plans to cut back on office space, given positive vaccine progress.<sup>32</sup> Theoretical analysis has also shown that under a hybrid model of remote working “total demand [for office space] might be the same or higher.”<sup>33</sup>

Regardless of the trajectory, previous analysis has shown commercial property markets can be highly adaptable to shocks and sudden changes in local values and needs,<sup>34</sup> in particular, through the change of use of land and premises. Such factors have contributed to stable real rents, even in highly competitive cities such as London.

Post-Covid, the sector may demonstrate this adaptability by focussing development around local service centres (e.g., retail and food, exploiting the footfall shift seen in Figure 2.5.2), distributed shared office space or city centre collaboration hubs (to enhance social and interaction benefits in a remote working future), and also the opportunities around the repurposing of city centre space (be it to residential, leisure, R&D, cultural etc.).

Alongside this, there are a myriad of other factors which may interact to shape office demand moving forward, including potential changes to office densities associated with social distancing, and changes to national policies in this area, including the introduction of Class E which includes office and retail space under a single use class facilitating change of use, and the potential impacts of new permitted development rights on the reduction of office space (particularly for second hand and lower-grade offices).

## 2.6 Commuting and transport post-Covid

As with demography and housing, depending on the scale and durability of the Covid-accelerated shift in working patterns, the implications for commuting could be similarly profound.

<sup>28</sup> Bloomberg (2020), Only the best London offices thrive in an emerging Covid divide

<sup>29</sup> Bloomberg (2020), Central London office values seen falling by 10 on Covid impact

<sup>30</sup> Financial Times (2020), ‘Death of the office’ exaggerated despite homeworking boom

<sup>31</sup> NBER (2020), Surveying Business Uncertainty

<sup>32</sup> Reuters (2021), Major employers scrap plans to cut back on offices - KPMG

<sup>33</sup> Economics Observatory (2020), Will coronavirus cause a big city exodus?

<sup>34</sup> BBC (2020), Coronavirus may have huge impact on property markets

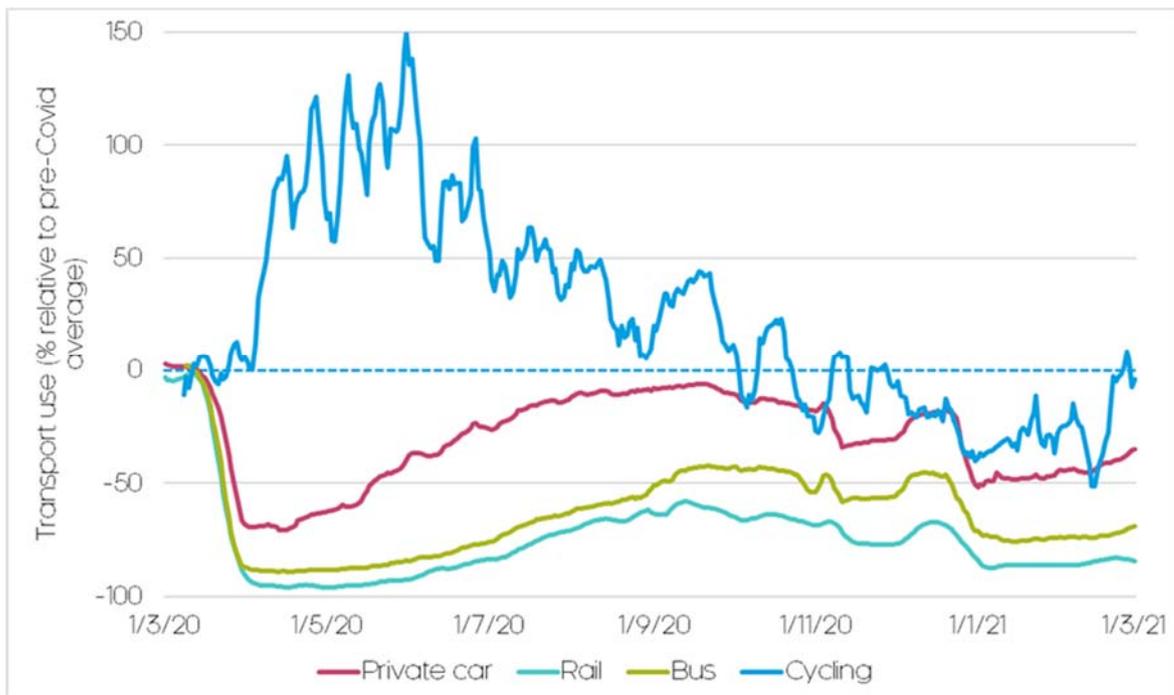
In 2018, an estimated 381,000 people regularly commuted within Oxfordshire for work, many by private means of transport (primarily car), but a large share also by public transport (bus and rail in particular) and active travel (walking or cycling). Notably, over the past decade, people have been prepared to travel longer and further to work in Oxfordshire, increasing reliance on private travel.

Since the Covid-19 pandemic, a substantial, unprecedented change has been observed. In fact, one of the most visual impacts of the pandemic has been the sudden and relatively sustained decline in commuting, largely a result of the shift to remote working, but also to some extent the behavioural response to pandemic risks associated with commuting (especially public transport).

As Figure 2.6.1 shows, across Great Britain transport use ground to an effective halt during the first lockdown, reflecting the ‘stay-at-home’ advice for all but essential workers during this time. Moving into the Summer, and with the loosening of restrictions, there was some return to trend, though less so for public transport (notably rail and bus) which barely eclipsed 50% capacity at its peak in September and has since tailed off again.

Those that have had to travel for work during the pandemic have increasingly prioritized private transport, which had almost recovered to pre-Covid levels by Autumn 2020, though it has since eased off given the reimposition of ‘stay-at-home’ advice in early 2021. Active travel, specifically cycling, has been one of the beneficiaries of reduced road volumes and short-term route improvements, though this started to decline moving into Winter 2020, actually falling below pre-Covid levels.

**Figure 2.6.1: Modal transport use since the pandemic**



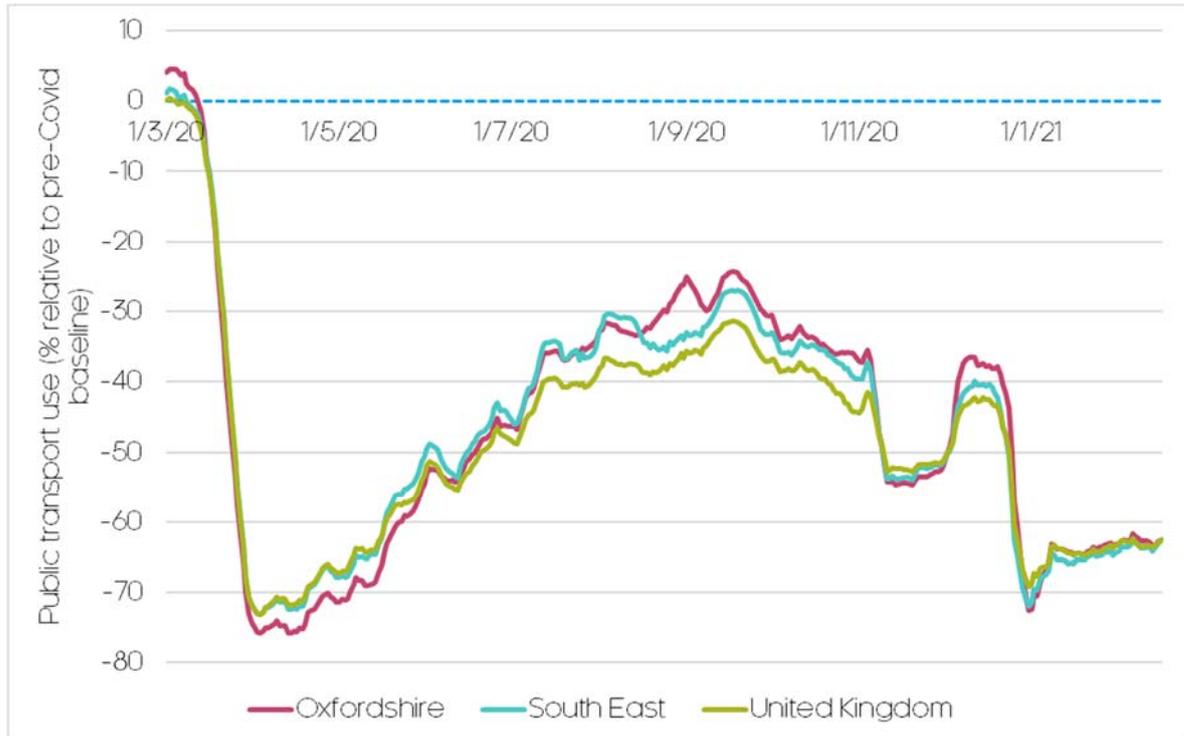
Source: DfT, Cambridge Econometrics. Note: 7-day rolling average.

Within Oxfordshire, residents have been much more successful in avoiding the daily commute than elsewhere in the country; at its peak, workplace visits in the county were 73% lower than its pre-Covid baseline. Though this rate settled at around 30-40% in Autumn 2020, prior to the second national lockdown, it has consistently remained below the national benchmark. In

contrast, time spent at home has soared by 20-30%, reflecting the shift to remote working.

Resultantly, as Figure 2.6.2 shows, this had a substantial effect on public transport use in Oxfordshire; the initial 76% drop in use during the first lockdown was larger than the regional and national averages (both 73%). Interestingly, use recovered faster in Oxfordshire than elsewhere and started to exceed the national average but has declined again since re-entering lockdown over Winter 2020-21.

**Figure 2.6.2: Public transport use during the pandemic**



Source: Google, Cambridge Econometrics. Note: 7-day rolling average.

The longer-term implications of the pandemic for public transport could be significant. Beyond the direct economic impact in terms of commuting revenues – e.g. for bus and rail companies, and automotive-related sales and servicing, which account for some 16,900 jobs in Oxfordshire - there are also broader economic implications associated with this shift in commuting, given the wider commercial ecosystem that is dependent on and has been built around places of work and commuting.

Some of this has been observed already. For instance, across cities in the UK there has been a reduction in city centre footfall and spending, impacting 'Pret economy' vendors, and a displacement towards suburbs and smaller towns, as home-working residents shop closer to home. As explored previously, this has also been evident in Oxfordshire, with a much stronger footfall recovery away from Oxford city centre.

The longer-term outlook for commuting, as with other Covid-related behavioural changes, is dependent on the robustness and popularity of remote working as a future model for work. There is the potential for both commuting patterns to change, as well as how many days a week commuters travel.

Indeed, given that commuting is both costly and demanding for many workers – in well-being studies, commuting ranks just after death and divorce for unhappiness, whilst longer commutes correlate with higher blood pressure and obesity<sup>35</sup> – the opportunity to reduce this burden has made it widely popular, and could contribute to remote working's longevity.

And the implications of a durable, sustained shift away from the daily commute could be significant; even just a hybrid model of remote working could lead to a substantial decline in total commuting levels, lifting thousands of private vehicle trips (as well their associated costs, such as emissions, congestion and accidents) off of Oxfordshire's roads.

For instance, assuming the 27% reduction in private vehicle use throughout 2020 equates to a similar drop in private vehicle trips, there could be some 22 million less private vehicle trips ending in Oxfordshire during 2020 relative to its peak in 2018 (when 80 million private trips ended in the county). This would have the potential to lift some 225 million vehicle miles off of Oxfordshire's roads, and their associated externalities (pollution, noise, congestion etc.)

## 2.7 Summary

Drawing on the latest theory and evidence, this chapter has sought to gauge the potential legacy of the pandemic, particularly in terms of matters associated with the thematic areas identified in the OGNA.

Many of the trends observed were to some extent already in place and were likely to be significant by 2050 anyway; rather than changing the direction of travel, the pandemic has accelerated these trends, whilst, crucially, bringing them to the attention of a wider social, business, and political audience.

Some of the short-term impacts of the pandemic have undoubtedly been significant in terms of the OGNA, and may be felt for several years to come. However, it is difficult to gauge whether they will still have a discernible legacy or impact in 2050.

The following chapter proceeds to consider the longer-term robustness of the OGNA's original economic trajectories, drawing on updated forecasts and evidence incorporating the impact of the pandemic and the trends analysed in this chapter.

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<sup>35</sup> BBC (2016), What your commute looks like

## 3 Evaluating the post-Covid Robustness of the OGNA Economic Trajectories

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter considers the longer-term robustness of the OGNA’s economic trajectories in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and its potential economic impact and legacy, which was explored in the previous chapter.

The economic trajectories form an important foundation for many of the observations and conclusions in the OGNA, particularly those relating to the scale and distribution of housing and employment needs to 2050. Therefore, evaluating their validity post-Covid is an important part of understanding and setting the OGNA within the context of a post-Covid world.

### 3.2 Background to the OGNA Economic Trajectories

The OGNA, which started development in 2019, is intended to provide an integrated evidence base to help the Oxfordshire Councils identify the appropriate levels and distributions of housing and employment over the period to 2050.

The OGNA reviewed the Government’s National Planning Policy Framework and the associated Planning Practice Guidance, which sets out a “Standard Method” for calculating the minimum local housing need, taking projected household growth and then applying an upward adjustment to improve affordability based on the median house price-to-income ratio.

However, a review of the existing evidence - including recent economic performance, the strategic policy context, and alternative econometric assumptions - suggested that the particular economic characteristics and wider strategic context of Oxfordshire are such that additional consideration is required through the process of developing the Oxfordshire Plan of the compatibility of the Standard Method of housing need assessment with wider strategic growth potential for the sub-region over the long run, or whether significant differences exist.

Resultantly, the OGNA modelled three alternative economic trajectories to 2050 to consider potential housing and employment land need:

- **Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory:** backwards calculated from the Standard Method calculation of housing need, with an adjustment for a revised demographic baseline.
- **Business as usual trajectory:** representing a continuation of Oxfordshire’s recent economic performance, taking particular account of the robust growth delivered during the recovery from the 2008-09 recession.
- **Transformational trajectory:** broadly the equivalent of the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy’s (LIS) aspirational “*go for growth*” scenario, but updated and adjusted to 2020.

The trajectories recognise that the national planning policies outline that the Standard Method is a minimum, is based on current data, and that national

planning practice guidance identifies circumstances where housing need may be above that shown by the Standard Method.

To produce these local economic trajectories, CE utilised forecasts from the bespoke Local Economy Forecasting Model (LEFM) component of its macroeconomic Multi-Sectoral Dynamic Model (MDM-E3) of the UK economy. As a consequence, the local area forecasts for Oxfordshire were consistent with CE’s macroeconomic forecasts for the whole of the UK economy at that time (late 2019, thus predating the Covid-19 pandemic).

### 3.3 Summary of the OGNA Economic Trajectories

The results of the three economic trajectories, shown in terms of total employment (i.e. job numbers), are presented in Figure 3.3.1 and Table 3.3.1 below. They present alternative visions of how the Oxfordshire’s economy might have performed under a pre-Covid context.

Figure 3.3.1: OGNA economic (jobs) trajectories to 2050

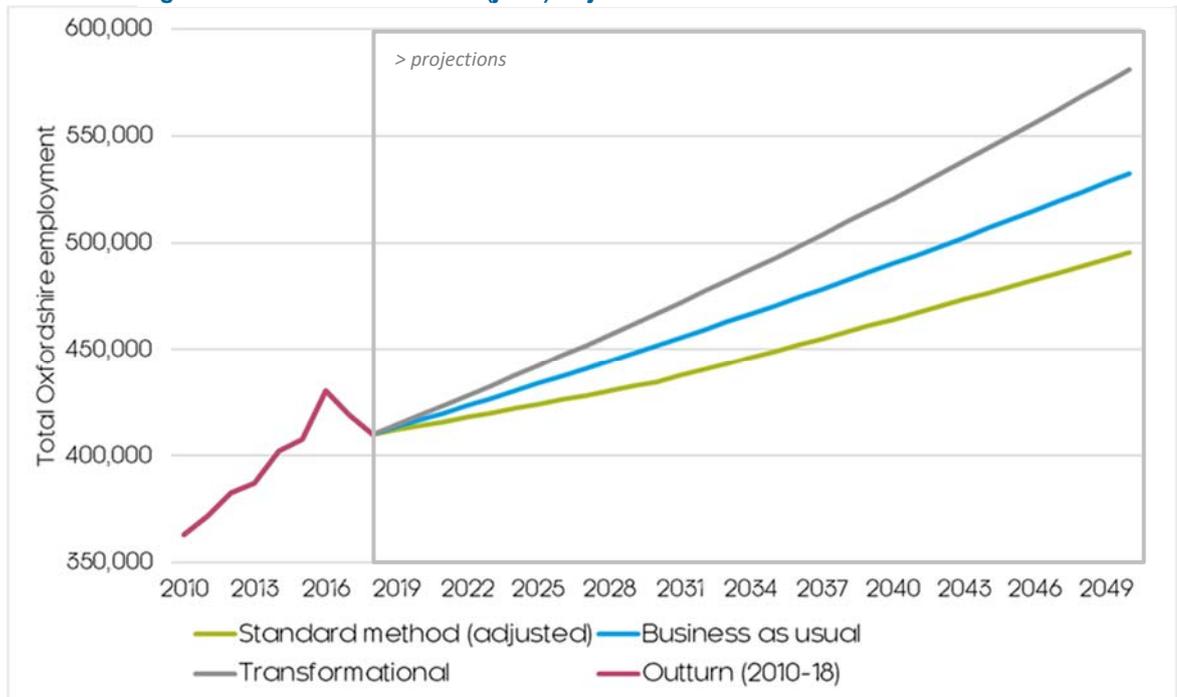


Table 3.3.1: OGNA economic (jobs) trajectories to 2050

	Jobs at 2018 (baseline)	Jobs at 2050	Jobs growth, 2018-2050	Jobs growth per annum, 2018-2050
Standard Method (adjusted) economic trajectory	410,000	495,600	85,500	2,700
Business as usual economic trajectory	410,000	532,500	122,500	3,800
Transformational economic trajectory	410,000	581,300	171,200	5,400

Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

The Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory showed net additional employment growth of 85,000 between 2018-50, modelling the level of economic activity that could be expected to be supported by delivery of housing in line with the Standard Method calculations (using the adjusted baseline demographic assumptions).

The business as usual trajectory models a continuation of Oxfordshire’s robust pre-Covid growth pattern. This showed employment growth of 122,000 over the period to 2050. At this pace of growth, Oxfordshire was expected to have continued along its past high-growth trajectory, as outlined in its 2014 SMHA and SEP, and achieved some of its LIS-related ambitions.

The highest scenario, the transformational trajectory, modelled the equivalent of delivering many of the aspirations set out in the Oxfordshire LIS Strategy, and would see employment growth of 171,000 jobs over the period to 2050. The Oxfordshire LIS set out a vision for Oxfordshire as one of the top three global innovation systems by 2040.

From these trajectories, the OGNA also modelled the corresponding level of housing provision that might be needed to support these levels of growth, taking account in particular of changes in the age structure of the population and the proportion of people of different ages in work. The implications for employment land and floorspace was also considered. The results for both of these are summarised in Table 3.3.2.

**Table 3.3.2: OGNA housing (dwellings) and employment land needs to 2050**

	Total housing need, 2020-50	Total employment land (ha) need, 2020-50
Standard Method (adjusted) economic trajectory	101,600	445
Business as usual economic trajectory	123,400	555
Transformational economic trajectory	152,800	807

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, Justin Gardener Consulting, Icenl.

### 3.4 Evaluating their post-Covid robustness

Given that the OGNA’s economic trajectories were informed by pre-Covid modelling assumptions and data (specifically, Summer 2019), they did not capture and account for the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on economic activity.

A key element of appraising the robustness of the modelling results will be understanding the ability and speed at which the Oxfordshire economy is able to recover and return to trend, as this will determine the probability of whether it can adapt and continue along its pre-Covid trajectory to 2050, or indeed exceed it, as per the transformational scenario outlined above.

As observed in the ERP, relative to previous recessions, the shock associated with the Covid-19 pandemic is novel; an unprecedented short-term shock to output, but a lighter and sectorally uneven employment effect. There is the potential for a rapid recovery, particularly on the labour market side, which could result in a much faster return to trend compared to previous shocks.

Combined with this is Oxfordshire’s intrinsic resilience and adaptability to economic shocks. As Table 3.4.1 shows, Oxfordshire’s resistance to economic shocks has generally been stronger than the wider UK economy, and it is expected to show greater resilience to Covid-19 pandemic relative to the wider UK economy.

**Table 3.4.1: Oxfordshire’s previous recession and recovery performance (GVA growth ratio, relative to the UK average)**

	Actual data							Covid-19 forecast	
	1975-79	1979-81	1981-90	1990-91	1991-07	2007-09	2009-19	2019-20	2020-30
	Recovery	Recession	Recovery	Recession	Recovery	Recession	Recovery	Recession	Recovery
Oxfordshire relative to UK	0.1	0.3	0.3	-1.5	0.2	1.0	0.2	0.3	0.4

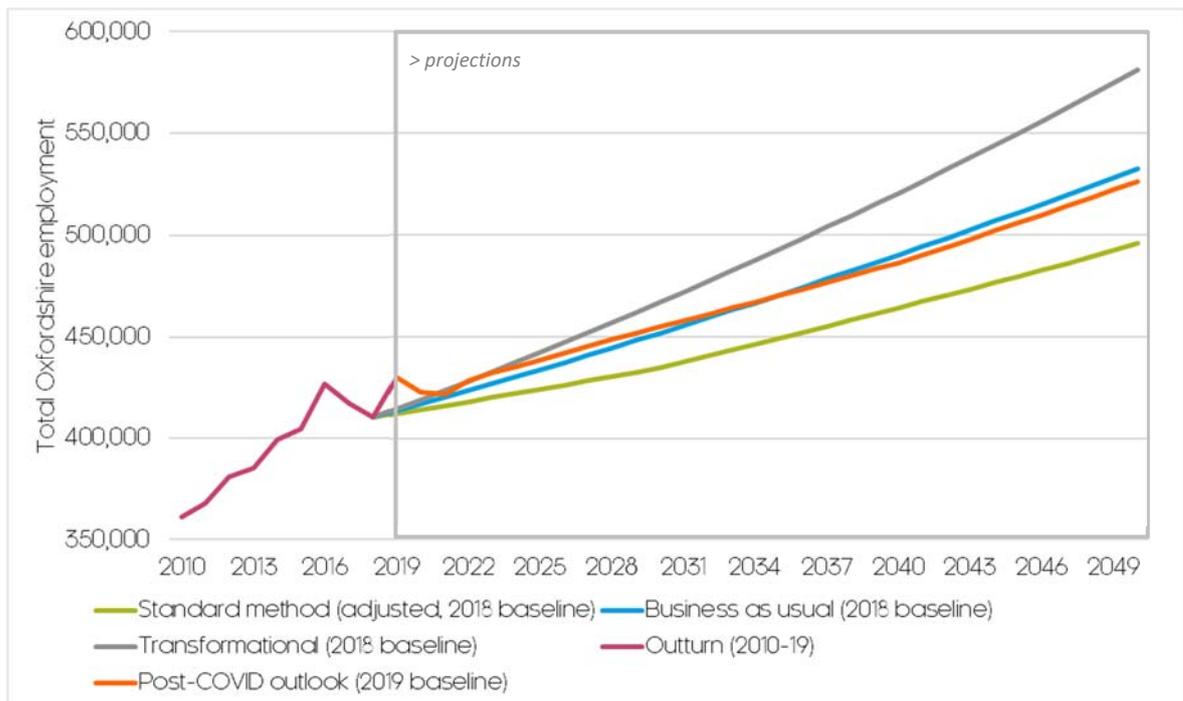
Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics. Note: Ratio calculated as Oxfordshire’s recovery/recession performance (GVA growth, in percentage terms) relative to the UK average.

Of particular interest, though, is the ability of the Oxfordshire economy to rapidly recover, stabilise, and return to long-term trends. In fact, following every recession over the past 50 years, the Oxfordshire economy has recovered much more quickly than the UK average, and in some cases, has even exceeded pre-recession trend growth.

For instance, during the recovery from the 2007-09 recession – the deepest economic contraction in the county since the 1970s - Oxfordshire emerged as the third fastest growing economy in the country (ranked out of 38 Local Enterprise Partnership areas). This has enabled Oxfordshire to establish and maintain a strong performance advantage relative to the rest of the country.

With these observations in mind, Figure 3.4.1 and Table 3.4.2 consider Oxfordshire’s revised central economic trajectory – incorporating the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic (‘post-Covid’), as well as the UK’s departure from the EU - and how this compares with the original OGNA results. Note that the results have been rebased to their respective forecast baselines, to allow for comparability across different forecast baselines, data and assumptions.<sup>36</sup>

**Figure 3.4.1: Oxfordshire’s post-Covid outlook to 2050, relative to the OGNA trajectories**



Source: Oxfordshire ERP, ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

<sup>36</sup> The baseline is 2018 for the OGNA and 2019 for the ERP. It should also be emphasised that both forecasts were developed within the same modelling framework. More information on modelling approach and assumptions can be found in Appendix A: Post-Covid Forecast Methodology.

**Table 3.4.2: Oxfordshire’s post-Covid outlook to 2050, relative to the OGNA trajectories**

	Jobs, baseline	Jobs, 2050	Jobs growth, baseline-2050	Jobs growth per annum, baseline-2050
<b>Post-Covid outlook (2019 baseline)</b>	<b>430,100</b>	<b>526,500</b>	<b>96,400</b>	<b>3,100</b>
Standard Method (adjusted, 2018 baseline) trajectory	410,100	495,600	85,500	2,700
Business as usual (2018 baseline) trajectory	410,100	532,500	122,500	3,800
Transformational (2018 baseline) trajectory	410,100	581,300	171,200	5,300

Source: Oxfordshire ERP, ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

The first thing to note under the post-Covid forecast is that the additional year of historic data now available (to 2019, represented by the pink ‘outturn’ line) shows the Oxfordshire economy grew particularly strongly in the lead-up to the pandemic, creating approximately 20,000 net additional jobs over 2018-19, reversing the easing of employment growth seen since 2016 (which was possibly attributable to post-Brexit uncertainty and employment shifting).

In fact, shortly before the pandemic in 2019, there was estimated to have been a record 430,300 jobs in Oxfordshire. Unsurprisingly, the expected contraction in employment over 2020-21 – which could result in a potential 8,000 permanent job losses (represented by the orange line) – brings a sudden halt and reversal to this robust growth, pulling trend employment growth down.

However, this contraction is smaller than both national and regional averages, and the Oxfordshire labour market is expected to recover quickly, eclipsing pre-Covid employment levels by 2023 (a year earlier than the rest of the country).

By the latter half of the 2020’s, employment growth will have settled at its pre-crisis trend, broadly in line with the business as usual trajectory (its approximate growth path over the past decade – the light blue line), and once more outpacing the national average.

### Business as usual trajectory

Most notably, by the 2030’s the post-Covid trend starts to closely track that of the business as usual trajectory – the central trajectory from the OGNA modelling - and by 2050, the two expect similar employment totals for Oxfordshire; approximately 533,000 under the post-Covid forecast, and 527,000 under the business as usual trajectory, with the small shortfall of 6,000 jobs largely attributable to the longer-term scarring of the pandemic.

This shows that, despite the contrasting context, under a consistent modelling approach there is still a broad alignment on Oxfordshire’s fundamental characteristics and medium to longer-term growth prospects. Of course, given the nature of the shock, the shape of the trajectories remains different, but this should not detract from the longer-term consistency in the results.

This is reasonable given the timeframe being considered, and on the understanding that historical trends take into account previous recessionary and recovery periods. Of course, the uncertainty of the forecasts heighten the further they look further into the future, but even in the short-medium term (where the data is more robust), the pandemic has not substantially altered Oxfordshire growth outlook.

### Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory

Post-Covid trend employment growth is still expected to exceed that of the Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory (the green line). Converted from the Standard Method of housing need, the OGNA considers this trajectory as the ‘minimum’ level of growth Oxfordshire should aim for.

Though this trajectory could appear conservative in a post-Covid context, it offers a realistic lower bound and the potential for a more pessimistic outlook (such as ongoing/additional restrictions 2021 onwards, or a subdued recovery). And being informed by a government framework (the Standard Method), the underlying methodology remains robust.

### Transformational trajectory

The transformational trajectory (the grey line), which assumes the realisation of LIS-related interventions and delivery, remains ambitious, requiring an uplift of over 50,000 additional jobs on the post-Covid trajectory.

The shock of the Covid crisis could make this more challenging to deliver, especially given any diversion of policy and resources (which many LIS interventions are reliant on). For instance, Government has already suggested LIS’ may no longer be the basis for future local funding and interventions post-Covid.<sup>37</sup>

However, it should be emphasised that much of this additional growth was targeted in high-innovation LIS “breakthrough sectors.” Many of these have remained largely unaffected or have even accelerated growth plans under the pandemic, most notably life sciences and health – with the Oxfordshire cluster at the forefront of the global pursuit of a vaccine – digital and IT services.

In fact, research adapted from the Centre for Cities shows some 130,000 jobs (34% of total jobs) in Oxfordshire are in sectors unaffected or experiencing higher demand from the pandemic. If Oxfordshire is able to exploit its global comparative advantage in such sectors in a post-Covid world, this transformational level of growth could remain within reach.

## 3.5 Summary

Overall, it does not appear the longer-term robustness of the OGNA’s economic trajectories has been significantly weakened or invalidated in light of the Covid-19 pandemic based on current projections, with broad agreement critically on Oxfordshire’s destination in 2050 (not least when accounting for the margins of error that accompany such forecasting exercises).

Given Oxfordshire’s intrinsic resilience and recoverability to economic shocks, it is expected the short-run impact from the pandemic will be less pronounced in Oxfordshire, whilst Oxfordshire’s recovery will also outperform the national average, resulting in a smaller shortfall relative to pre-Covid trends.

The business as usual trajectory remains the central outlook for the Oxfordshire economy, whilst the Standard Method (adjusted) and transformational trajectories represent realistic upper and lower bounds. A consistent modelling approach has been taken across the three trajectories, whilst underlying methodologies remain sound and have not been invalidated by the further assessment in this report.

<sup>37</sup> Local Government Chronicle (2021), Concern over apparent shelving of local industrial strategies

This should not however understate the significant impact of the pandemic on economic activity, and its potential longer-term legacy. Though pre- and post-Covid levels of growth may converge, the economic, social and behavioural legacy of the pandemic could well change what this growth looks like and means for Oxfordshire, as observed in the previous chapter.

However, significant uncertainty still exists as to the durability and impact of these trends over a longer timeframe. To address this, credible contrasting scenarios have been developed to appraise the potential implications of post-Covid trends for the observations and conclusions of the OGNA. These are considered in the following chapter.

## 4 Interpreting the OGNA in a post-Covid World: Behavioural Scenarios to 2050

### 4.1 Introduction

Given the uncertainty and lack of consensus over the longer-term embeddedness and trajectory of remote working, the following analysis considers three contrasting, qualitative scenarios looking at the longer-term implications of the Covid-induced behavioural change in working patterns, and what this means for some of the observations and conclusions in the OGNA.

As explored previously, the trend of remote working is likely to have a discernible and lasting impact on the thematic areas considered in the OGNA, particularly those relating to:

- demography and housing (e.g. by changing the attractiveness of urban living, or people revising their need to reside close to work);
- sectors and employment land needs (e.g. by shifting/reducing demand for retail, leisure and office space, or accelerating the shift to online shopping), and;
- commuting and transport (e.g. by shifting/reducing the volume, mode and distance of commuting trips).

Most importantly, compared with the other well-publicised effects of the pandemic, there is the potential the remote working trend and accompanying behavioural changes to persist over a longer timeframe, and have a greater legacy on local economies.

The behavioural scenarios have been informed by and build on the theory and evidence presented in the previous chapters. They are intended to be high level and indicative only.

Accompanying probabilities or projections have not been calculated, however, the scenarios do broadly relate to and will be informed by the success of the response to the pandemic over the coming months (in particular, the speed and efficiency with which a vaccine can be deployed).

It should be emphasised that efforts to determine the long-term effects of the Covid-19 pandemic (both quantitatively and qualitatively) on national and local economies are uncertain and indicative at this moment in time. The following analysis should therefore be regarded as such.

### 4.2 The scenarios

#### Scenario 1: a 'relative' return to normal

Even under the most optimistic outlooks, a swift and seamless return to pre-Covid working norms appears unlikely, especially given many businesses and workers will experience at least a year of remote working arrangements, even if under 'forced' experimentation.

Therefore, the first scenario assumes a 'relative' return to normal by 2050; the standard '5-0'<sup>38</sup> working week model will still be the norm for many firms and

<sup>38</sup> That is, five days in the workplace, zero days working at home. So a '3-2' model assumes three days in the workplace, two days working at home etc.

workers, but for a small minority a more flexible working model may be preferred (though the 0-5 remote working model will be rare).

The relative restraint could be driven by an increased awareness of remote workings costs – in terms of productivity, wellbeing and innovation – over the long term which leads workers and firms to desire and pursue a ‘return to normal’.

Under this scenario, remote working also fails to permeate into more interaction-driven service occupations – despite lockdown experimentation – such as teaching, banking and finance, and sales. Retail, construction, manufacturing and other customer-facing/manual trades largely if not exclusively return to pre-Covid norms.

The legacy of the pandemic on working patterns will still be evident though; rather than the 5% labour market share seen pre-Covid, regular remote working will be around 10-20%, largely encompassing professional and skilled occupations.

### **Scenario 2: a new normal**

This central scenario assumes a more realistic outlook to 2050; remote working – in some form - will persist for many. It stops short of assuming the current, 0-5 model will continue. Instead, firms and workers, having both appraised the benefits and costs of remote working, will reach agreement on a suitable ‘hybrid model’ of remote working e.g. a 3-2 arrangement.

Manual and customer-facing occupations (e.g. in retail, construction, manufacturing) will still rely on a traditional 5-0 model, but there may be some longer-term remote working uptake in associated back-office/desk-based operations.

The vast majority of professional occupations will be working flexibly, though a strict 0-5 week will still be in the minority, as most firms continue to value face-to-face interactions. Yet even firms with more interaction-driven service occupations (e.g. teaching) will experiment with longer term remote working arrangements.

As a share of the labour market, regular remote working will have settled at 30-40%, slightly below the rates experienced over the Summer of 2020. Despite this, the majority of workers will still exclusively travel to their place of work.

### **Scenario 3: a step change**

Under this scenario, a more drastic ‘step change’ is assumed to take place. Firms and workers overwhelmingly welcome and prioritise the benefits of regular, long-term remote working e.g. reduced overheads and transaction costs, improved work-life balance, geographic mobility.

They are also able to negotiate and manage some of the shortcomings associated with remote working, aided by ongoing technological improvements and innovations in related product and service areas. Resultantly, this leads to an unprecedented change in how labour markets function.

The majority of workers in the service sector are now engaged in regular remote working. The traditional 5-0 week, commonplace for over 90% of the workforce pre-Covid, is now in the minority, represented by a few occupations, largely manual and/or customer-facing.

For some service-based occupations, the majority of roles are now exclusively remotely-based, particularly in professional, IT and administrative services. Even previously difficult to permeate occupations, such as interaction-driven teaching, banking and finance, and health, start to engage with a longer-term model of remote working.

### 4.3 Results and implications for the OGNA

The following analysis draws on the three aforementioned scenarios to appraise the potential implications for Oxfordshire's demography and housing, sectors and employment land needs, and commuting and transport within the wider context of the OGNA.

#### Scenario 1: a 'relative' return to normal

Despite the magnitude of the short-term shock, under this conservative scenario for remote working it is likely there would be an insignificant impact to the distribution and type of growth expected to take place in Oxfordshire:

##### *Demography and housing:*

- There could be a marginal increase in Oxfordshire's total population, as workers (aged 30-40+) in typically urban-based professional and skilled occupations consider relocating to the area, prioritising high amenity values and relative (e.g. to London) affordability.
- This will likely be focussed in Oxfordshire's Wider County areas, where amenity values are typically higher and there is a greater availability of suitable properties, despite higher costs (though this will not be significant deterrence as higher-paid jobs are more amenable to remote working).
- Proximity to connectivity points, not least Oxford's central transport hubs, will remain important though, as most will probably be working a hybrid model. More isolated, less-connected areas will see muted demand.
- Resultantly, there could be a marginal increase in the demand for housing in areas such as the Wider County. This will largely be concentrated at the higher end of the market, with a particular emphasis on detached properties with accompanying rooms and green space.
- This could serve to push up prices at the higher end of the market, and thus deteriorate absolute affordability ratios, though the median and lower-quartile affordability will remain largely unaffected.

##### *Sectors and employment land needs:*

- Though a theme factored into the original OGNA, ongoing remote working has the potential to accelerate the shift to online shopping. If this persists, there could be reduced floorspace demand from some retail and leisure trades, who are either unable to compete with online competitors or are themselves able to undergo a wholesale shift to online operations, together with some growth in demand for warehousing floorspace such as close to the M40 and elsewhere to service 'last mile' delivery.

- Beyond this though, the implications for Oxfordshire’s employment land needs would be relatively limited under this scenario. Spatially, there could be a small legacy of the shifting of retail and leisure floorspace away from Oxford city centre to suburban locations and smaller towns. This would be largely concentrated in convenience and food and drink-based trades (the ‘Pret economy’).
- For office space, it is unlikely there would be any substantial shift relative to the trends outlined in the OGNA. There may be an increased emphasis on more flexible, interaction-led office space for some tenants though, particularly for sectors likely to embrace greater remote working, such as IT, professional and business services.

#### *Commuting and transport:*

- The limited persistence of remote working under this scenario means, by 2050, many workers will have returned to the standard, five-day model of commuting, with total trips (and distance) and a modal share broadly similar to that explored in the OGNA.
- The increased remote working uptake by some, mostly professional-based occupations, means total commuting trips may be marginally lower, particularly for private and public means of travel. The behavioural legacy of the pandemic, including aversion to public transport, may see a small increase in private modal share (but not absolute trips).
- Existing flows within Oxfordshire will largely be the same as that observed in the OGNA, depending on the respective housing distribution scenario. A marginal increase may be observed from the Wider County, into both Oxford and further afield (e.g. External), the latter particularly if there is an increase in London-based remote workers.

### **Scenario 2: a new normal**

Given the more likely scenario of a widespread adoption of a ‘hybrid’ model of remote working, the impact on the distribution and type of growth (but not the scale) expected in Oxfordshire could be more notable, if still limited:

#### *Demography and housing:*

- A larger, although still only moderate increase in Oxfordshire’s population could be observed, as a result of the widespread adoption of hybrid remote working attracting a larger pool of mobile residents, typically urban, whose workplace proximity is now less of a priority.
- This will be most predominant in middle and older-aged groups (30’s+), whose above-average incomes and high current housing costs ensures Oxfordshire is an affordable and attractive location. Some could comprise larger family units, attracted by Oxfordshire’s strong educational and lifestyle offer.
- Spatially, there will be a focus on the larger stock and higher-amenity offer of the Wider County areas, though some (particularly those with families) may be drawn to the affordability and good connectivity of the Knowledge Spine and Outer Fringe.

- The more widespread adoption of remote working may also pull some existing residents away from Oxford city, likely to the Outer Fringe and Knowledge Spine, though it is likely many in the city, especially the young, will continue to value the amenities it offers.
- Resultantly, demand for housing could increase in such areas. Again, this will likely be at the middle-higher end of the market, with an emphasis on detached/semi-detached properties. Depending on the speed and scale of the supply response, prices could accelerate at this end of the market.
- This could deteriorate the mean and median affordability in these areas. Lower-quartile affordability should remain largely unaffected, but there may be some pressures in well-connected areas with limited supply.
- Demand and prices for flats and other small urban properties could fall, though such stock is relatively underrepresented in Oxford, particularly compared to other cities. Any moves to introduce more widespread remote teaching could reduce student numbers in the city, and therefore demand for student accommodation.

*Sectors and employment land needs:*

- As with the previous scenario, the potential for a sustained shift to online shopping could lead to a small reduction in overall retail and leisure floorspace demand but with increased warehousing space needed. This could even be accelerated further under this scenario, with an observable correlation between increased remote working and online shopping.
- Similarly, there would likely be a more notable shift in the spatial pattern of retail and leisure floorspace demand; the ‘Pret economy’ of convenience and food and drink stores will adapt to reduced workday footfall, either moving online or to suburban and out of town premises. Existing city centre premises could be repurposed for either other commercial use or housing.
- Though a hybrid model of remote working becomes widespread, the demand for office floorspace could remain largely the same, as the benefits of an office presence prevails despite more flexible working arrangements. As before, there may be an increased emphasis on flexible, interaction-led office space. There will likely be a reduction in demand for older, lower-quality office space less amenable to remote working.
- Coincidentally, reduced transaction costs for firms (through improved digital communications and lower running costs) may incentivise some firms to relocate to Oxfordshire as relative costs are lower whilst many of the benefits remain, potentially increasing demand for office space. Conversely, some firms may use this as an opportunity to move away from Oxfordshire.

*Commuting and transport:*

- With the increased adoption of a hybrid model of remote working, there will be a larger drop in total commuting trips, as people spend an

increased number of days working from home rather than travelling to the office, though the latter still remains in the majority.

- The modal share may balance slightly more towards private modes of transport though, as people are likely to reside further from their workplace (and thus reduced probability of public and active travel) and will be happy to incur the cost of a longer private commute on a reduced basis.
- Depending on the housing scenario, flows from the Knowledge Spine and Outer Fringe have a higher potential of shifting to public and active travel modes, though the former may still be avoided given legacy of the behavioural aversion during the pandemic.
- Reliance on active travel may well increase, in both absolute and relative terms, given improved road conditions and potential route improvements during the pandemic. These would largely originate from the Outer Fringe.
- Interestingly, there may be an increase in the proportion of flows and distance travelled from inside Oxford to its outer suburbs (Outer Fringe) and surrounding towns (Wider County and Knowledge Spine), as previously city-centre based retail and leisure ('Pret economy') workers adapt to the potential shift in demand and footfall.
- The proportion of flows originating from the Wider County and Knowledge Spine could also increase, some into Oxford, the remainder to further afield External locations, including London. The latter in particular will be public travel reliant.

### Scenario 3: a step change

This ambitious scenario assuming a step change in the adoption of remote working could result in some substantial changes to the distribution and type of growth expected to take place in Oxfordshire:

#### *Demography and housing:*

- With remote working adopted by the majority of workers, a substantial pool of potential residents could be attracted to living in Oxfordshire. However, it is unlikely additional population growth will be substantially higher than previous scenarios, as demand, particularly from younger and non-professional occupations, may shift to more affordable locations.
- As with previous scenarios, the age profile of this shift will be broadly the same, as younger cohorts will either continue to prioritise existing urban locations, or pursue more affordable opportunities elsewhere. Greater remote working may incentivise additional family moves, as education and lifestyle becomes a greater priority instead of workplace proximity.
- Importantly for Oxfordshire, with the potential for teaching and education to move online – even if only part-time - under this scenario, there could be a significant reduction in the Oxford-based student population.

- Resultantly, a more varied spatial pattern could emerge. The Wider County and Knowledge Spine will remain attractive locations, with the potential for additional interest in more rural and isolated communities (given the necessary digital infrastructure) as full-time remote working increases.
- Oxford's student-led market could see notably reduced demand (particularly international), as remote-teaching persists, whilst lower income service-based workers may also leave the city. Resultantly, city-centre stock could have to adapt to commercial/alternative use, whilst shared-premises may be returned to single use.
- It is unlikely this will impact prices substantially in the city, whilst there is the potential for an appreciation in the Wider County and Knowledge Spine if supply is unable to respond effectively. Affordability will likely deteriorate, but could marginally improve in parts of the city, particularly at the lower-quartile end.

*Sectors and employment land needs:*

- As with the previous scenario, the potential for a sustained shift to online shopping could lead to a reduction in overall retail and leisure floorspace demand, which could be accelerated under this scenario if greater remote working corresponds with a greater shift to online shopping. Demand for warehouse space would again grow.
- With workers spending more time at home than in the office, related retail and leisure trades - such as the 'Pret economy' of convenience and food and drink stores - will either cease trading, move online or shift to suburban or out of town premises closer to where people live. Such stores may help support the concept of a '15-minute neighbourhood'.
- With a greater emphasis on permanent and hybrid remote working, office floorspace demand for office space will likely be lower. Many tenants will downsize, with a greater emphasis on flexible working space for those that do still go into the office, and interaction areas for clients and employee engagement.
- With this scenario also inviting the concept of an increase in remote-teaching, there is also the potential for reduced demand and redundant education space under this scenario, particularly in Oxford city.
- Redundant working spaces under this scenario could attract a variety of potential use changes, including leisure, cultural, or residential.

*Commuting and transport:*

- Under this scenario, for the first time the majority of workers will work more days at home than they do in the office. Resultantly, commuting trips could see a substantial drop, by a potential magnitude of two-thirds to a half, with significant economic, social and environmental ramifications.
- Modal share remains unpredictable under this scenario; with the potential for workers to live even further from their workplace, private travel reliance might increase – the longer and costlier private

commute can be balanced with its convenience if only for one or two days a week.

- Given significantly reduced volume on public transport, certain routes and options may become unviable. This could see a reduction in the public travel share, whilst increasing the reliance on private travel.
- Active travel will likely increase its modal share, particularly in and around Oxford, but for those few still commuting to their workplace five days a week (such as manufacturing and construction workers) such travel modes may not always be optimal.
- The potential for more people residing in the Wider County and Knowledge Spine could see an increase in the proportion of flows into Oxford and Externally, but in absolute terms these will drop substantially.
- As with the previous scenario, there could be an increase in flows and distance travelled for retail and leisure workers from Oxford to its suburbs and surrounding towns, as they adapt to the shift in footfall and spending, whilst finding it unaffordable to live nearby.

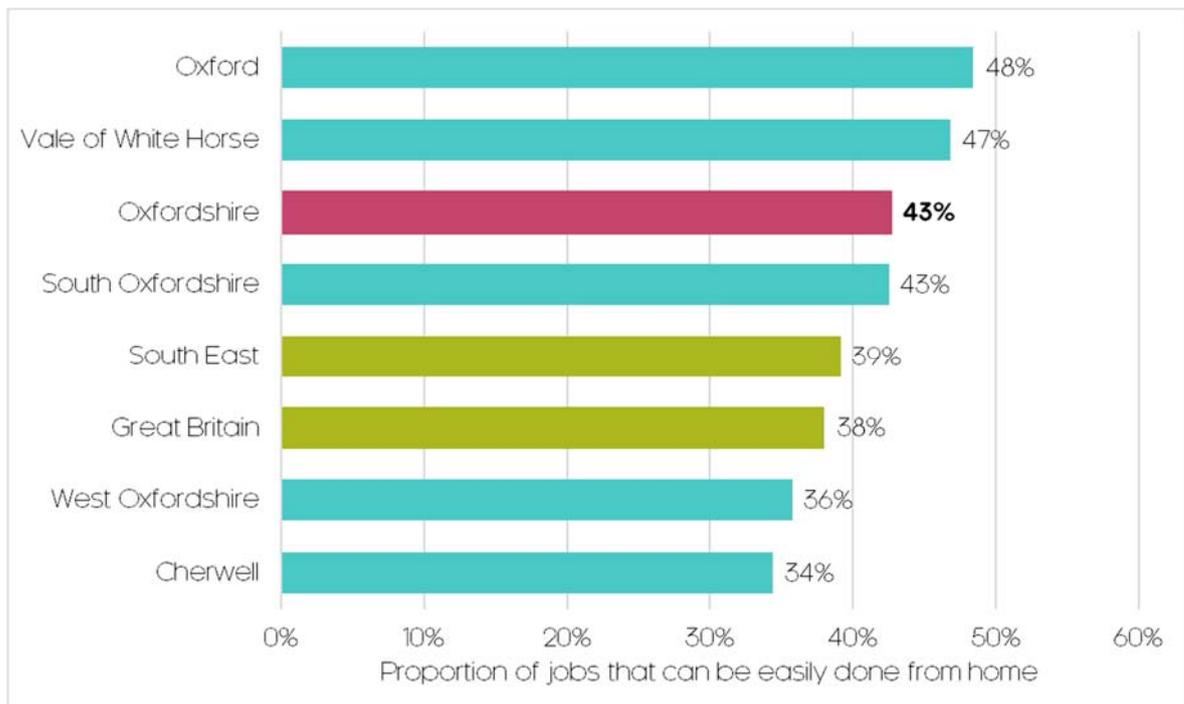
## 5 Conclusions

This conclusion chapter highlights and draws out the key findings and observations from the Covid-19 Impacts Addendum.

### The legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic

Drawing on the latest theory and evidence, the addendum has sought to gauge the potential legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic over the longer timeframe of the Oxfordshire Plan (to 2050). Particular attention has been given to the durability and legacy of the Covid-induced shift to remote working ('homeworking'), which as Figure 4.3.1 shows has the potential to be a much more prevalent within parts of Oxfordshire's labour market.

**Figure 4.3.1: Homeworking potential across Oxfordshire**



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics. Note: data GB-wide.

Beyond the short- and medium-term economic impact, the addendum appraises the longer-term potential for the pandemic to trigger and accelerate substantive economic, social and behavioural change in Oxfordshire and beyond, particularly in terms of matters associated with the thematic areas identified in the OGNA, such as:

- demography and housing (e.g. by changing the attractiveness of urban living, or people revising their need to reside close to work);
- sectors and employment land needs (e.g. by shifting/reducing demand for retail, leisure and office space, or accelerating the shift to online shopping), and;
- commuting and transport (e.g. by shifting/reducing the volume, mode and distance of commuting trips).

Yet in many instances, the pandemic has simply brought to the fore trends that were already in place and likely to be significant by 2050 anyway (and were typically considered, if not accounted for, within the original OGNA evidence base). Rather than changing the direction of travel, the pandemic

has accelerated these trends, whilst, crucially, bringing them the attention of a wider audience.

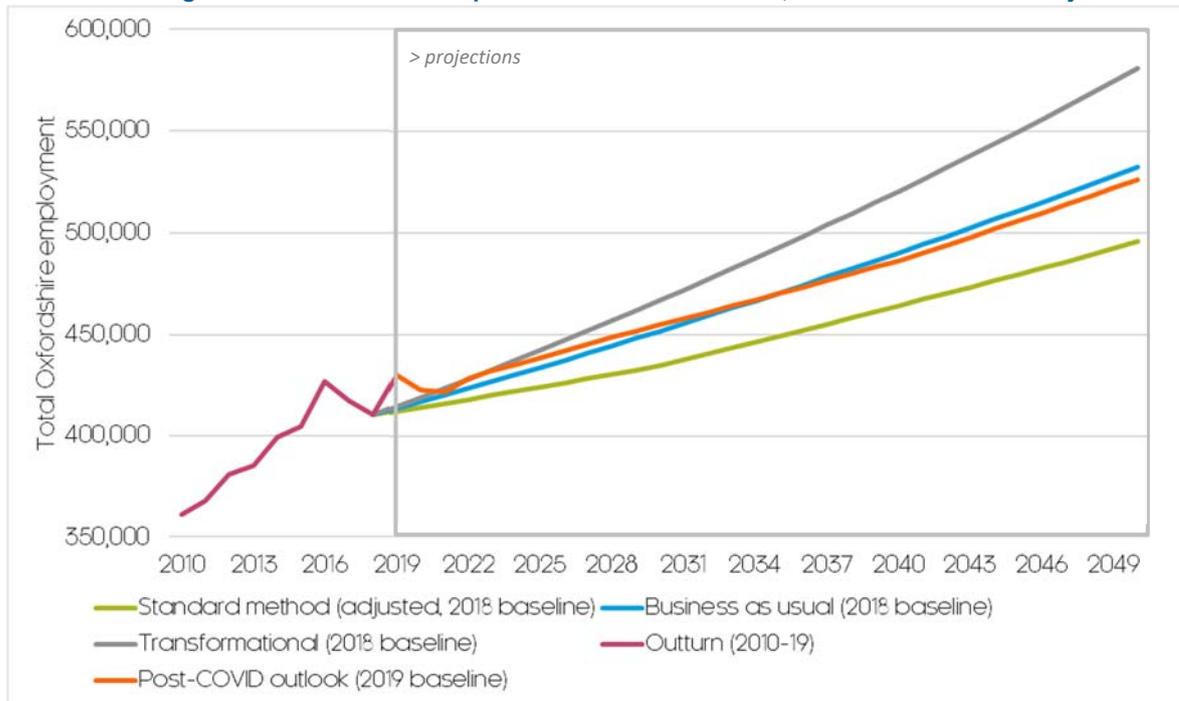
Likewise, for many workers and residents and Oxfordshire, it is important to note that the pandemic may have little to no impact relative to their pre-Covid routine; for instance, even during strict lockdown measures, the majority of workers were still reporting that they had never worked from home.

Although the negative short-term impacts of the pandemic have undoubtedly been severe within Oxfordshire, and will continue to be felt for several years to come, some of the Covid-induced trends, such as homeworking and localism, should be seen not as a threat but a significant opportunity to reshape Oxfordshire's economic geography and transport systems, particularly in the context of the urgent need to reduce emissions.

### Robustness of the Phase 1 trajectories

Informed by updated forecasts and evidence incorporating the impact of the pandemic and its accompanying trends (presented in Figure 4.3.2, with post-Covid forecasts shown as the orange line), the addendum appraises the longer-term robustness of the OGNA's original economic trajectories.

Figure 4.3.2: Oxfordshire's post-Covid outlook to 2050, relative to the OGNA trajectories



Source: Oxfordshire ERP, ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Given Oxfordshire's intrinsic resilience and recoverability to economic shocks, it is expected the short-run impact from the pandemic will be less pronounced in Oxfordshire, whilst Oxfordshire's recovery will also outperform the national average, resulting in a smaller shortfall relative to pre-Covid trends.

Resultantly, as far as Oxfordshire is concerned, the addendum considers that the analysis underpinning the *Phase 1* and *Phase 2 Report* remains current and valid, though there is undoubtedly a need for the planning system to build in an increased level of flexibility.

As Figure 4.3.2 and Table 4.3.1 show, the range of feasible trajectories for employment growth and subsequent housing need are still well represented by the three trajectories depicted in the *Phase 1 Report*. Similarly, the five

housing distribution scenarios outlined in the *Phase 2 Report* are still a suitable means of exploring the implications – in terms of commuting and affordability - between different approaches.

**Table 4.3.1: Oxfordshire’s post-Covid outlook to 2050, relative to the OGNA trajectories**

	Jobs, baseline	Jobs, 2050	Jobs growth, baseline-2050	Jobs growth per annum, baseline-2050
<b>Post-Covid outlook (2019 baseline)</b>	<b>430,100</b>	<b>526,500</b>	<b>96,400</b>	<b>3,100</b>
Standard Method (adjusted, 2018 baseline) trajectory	410,100	495,600	85,500	2,700
Business as usual (2018 baseline) trajectory	410,100	532,500	122,500	3,800
Transformational (2018 baseline) trajectory	410,100	581,300	171,200	5,300

Source: Oxfordshire ERP, ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

What may change is how policy makers calculate these implications, depending upon which version of the future they think is most likely to occur, as captured by the three post-Covid scenarios presented in this addendum. The scenarios, which look ahead to 2050, cover a range of feasible and contrasting behavioural changes as a result of the pandemic:

- *Scenario 1: a ‘relative’ return to normal* – a conservative scenario for the adoption and durability of remote working.
- *Scenario 2: a new normal* – a more likely scenario of a popular and widespread adoption of a ‘hybrid’ model of remote working.
- *Scenario 3: a step change* – an ambitious scenario assuming a positive step change in the adoption and durability of remote working.

Drawing on these scenarios, and flexibly incorporating any other relevant trends and indicators that emerge, policy makers are better placed to understand and appraise the scale and distribution of housing and employment space needed, and accompanying implications for commuting and affordability.

For instance, the original OGNA identifies a need for 560 hectares of employment land to 2050 under the central outlook of the business as usual trajectory. However, under the more extreme behavioural scenarios (i.e. scenarios 2 and 3) rather than maximising land allocations, local policy makers may wish to make more flexible allocations for employment land.

## Post-Covid monitoring and review

When planning for the Oxfordshire of 2050, there is an increased emphasis on planning for a vision that is both feasible and desirable; the “forced experiment” of the pandemic has provided us with incredibly valuable information as to what that might look like.

For instance, the geography of Oxfordshire’s residents has both expanded and contracted during the pandemic: expanded, by the reduced need for daily commuting, which has increased the range of feasible employment or residential options; contracted, by the increased opportunity and willingness to engage with and increase dependence on local communities and amenities.

Moving forward, there is a need for the planning system to continue to monitor such trends and build in additional flexibility and responsiveness, particularly

given there is still an unprecedented amount of uncertainty when it comes to estimating the scale and durability of the pandemic's longer-term impacts.

Building on the opportunities provided by the pandemic – such as increased active travel, and reduced commuting - there is also a need for additional analysis on how best to join up spatial planning with infrastructure delivery sequencing, to reach net zero carbon targets whilst maintaining an innovative and prosperous economy.

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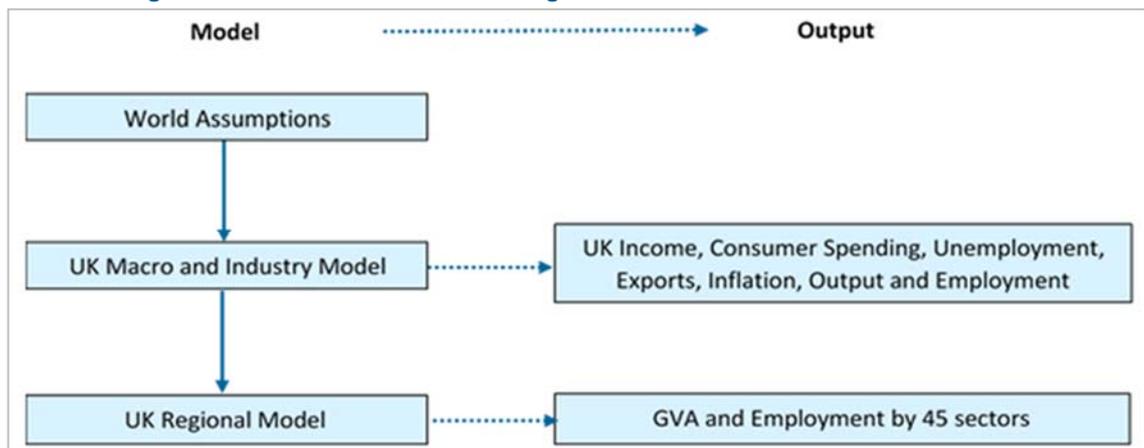
## 7 Appendix A: Post-Covid Forecast Methodology

As part of its work on the Oxfordshire Economic Recovery Plan (ERP), to better understand the likely longer-term impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Oxfordshire economy, Cambridge Econometrics (CE) worked with Steer-ED to develop a series of credible econometric forecasts for the county and its constituent local authority areas.

To produce these local area forecasts, CE utilised the bespoke Local Economy Forecasting Model (LEFM) component of its macroeconomic Multi-Sectoral Dynamic Model (MDM-E3) of the UK economy. Resultantly, the local area forecasts for Oxfordshire are consistent with CE’s macroeconomic forecasts for the UK economy as a whole.

Importantly, this approach and modelling framework is consistent with that used to produce the original OGNA trajectories. The forecasts used in this report and the ERP were produced over summer 2020.

**Figure 4.3.1: Links between Cambridge Econometrics’ suite of models**



Source: Cambridge Econometrics.

As Figure 4.3.1 demonstrates, an important feature of this modelling approach is the link to CE’s wider modelling suite and framework, ensuring any local area forecasts are consistent with CE’s world, UK national and UK regional forecasts and assumptions.

CE’s headline UK forecasts have been developed within the context of its position within global trade networks, the worldwide impact of Covid-19, and the changing nature of the UK’s trading relationship with the EU. These national level impacts are then systematically distributed to regions and local areas, based on historic sectoral relationships.

The regional and local impact depends, therefore, on the historic precedent of how local sectors have historically performed relative to their national or regional equivalents, thereby capturing the differing intrinsic resilience of local sectors to national economic shocks.

For example, if the Professional Services sector in Oxfordshire has historically been impacted less hard, and/or recovered more rapidly from past shocks,

than the UK Professional Services sector as a whole, then this will be reflected in the local forecasts.

To improve the quality and reliability of the Oxfordshire results, particularly in relation to the sectoral and local authority detail, additional quantitative and qualitative data have been incorporated into the forecasts, specifically for the year 2020, for which early data is now partly available.

For instance, by utilising the ‘live’ indicators collected by Steer-ED, for instance Job Retention Scheme (“furlough”) data, or business focus group feedback, it has been possible to enhance the quality of the local forecasts in the very short term whilst ensuring alignment between the CE’s and Steer’s workstreams.

It should be emphasised that at this early stage, any efforts to determine the quantitative implications of Covid-19 on national and local economies are highly uncertain and indicative. Even when accounting for this, as with all kinds of forecasting, there are margins of error associated with the results which tend to widen over time. Furthermore, it should also be noted that the quality and reliability of data decreases at more detailed levels of geography.

Whilst CE’s/Steer-ED’s approach incorporates a wide number of factors, including global, national and local interrelationships and detailed sectoral impacts, there are factors it cannot account for, including any long-term behavioural changes due to the pandemic, or large and unanticipated policy changes at the local or national level.

Oxfordshire Councils

# Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment

## Executive Summary



Cambridge Econometrics' mission is to provide clear insights, based on rigorous and independent economic analysis, to support policy-makers and strategic planners in government, civil society and business in addressing the complex challenges facing society.

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# 1 Introduction and Purpose

## The Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment

The Oxfordshire Councils<sup>1</sup> are working together to prepare the Oxfordshire Plan which will set out a development strategy for Oxfordshire to 2050.

To support the preparation of the Plan, the Oxfordshire Councils have commissioned Cambridge Econometrics and Icen Projects to prepare the Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment (OGNA). The OGNA is intended to provide an integrated evidence base to help the Oxfordshire Councils identify the appropriate level and distributions of housing and employment over the period to 2050. The core objectives of the OGNA are:

- To identify a strategic level, long-term, robust and transparent methodology for assessing Oxfordshire's housing needs over the period to 2050
- To provide a detailed commentary (including the baseline position) on Oxfordshire's housing and employment market, including demographic and economic dynamics and any other key drivers of housing need and how this may change in the period to 2050.
- To identify a range of credible and robust housing need scenarios for Oxfordshire.
- To establish an informed understanding of the implications for sustainable housing growth in Oxfordshire, of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc and of any other strategically significant infrastructure and growth strategies, including proposals for strategic growth in other areas which are likely to have a significant impact in Oxfordshire.
- To identify an appropriate functional economic market area and provide an assessment of employment land requirements.
- To advise on how the Oxfordshire Plan should respond to the uncertainty associated with long-term planning for strategic housing and employment provision.

The methodology adopted, which considers scenarios for future growth in Oxfordshire, responds to this and in particular the strategic and long-term nature of the Oxfordshire Plan.

## Context and nature of the Assessment

The Oxfordshire Plan will be a joint statutory spatial plan which covers a 30-year plan period from 2020 to 2050. The Plan is intended to be strategic, focusing on matters such as an overall spatial strategy for development, the integration of new development and investment in infrastructure, and how these can help to improve the quality of life for everyone.

<sup>1</sup> The commissioning authorities comprise Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council.

The Plan differs from those being prepared in many other areas across England, in particular:

- The Oxfordshire Plan is a strategic plan which is being prepared on a cross-boundary basis spanning the county of Oxfordshire;
- It is looking at a much longer timeframe – a 30-year period to 2050 - than many Local Plans which typically look 15-20 years into the future. This raises issues regarding the reliability of traditional approaches to assessing development needs in some instances;
- It considers the inter-relationship between the economy and spatial planning activities;
- Oxfordshire falls within the Oxford-Milton-Keynes-Cambridge Arc which has been identified by the National Infrastructure Commission and supported by Government. There is a need for the Oxfordshire Plan to consider the strategic context provided by this, including the emerging spatial framework for the Arc, along with other Government growth initiatives and policy. Preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan also provides the opportunity to influence the Arc and shape the future strategy for this strategic corridor.

In addition, one of the major advantages of looking long-term and strategically at the strategy for development and growth is the ability to properly coordinate new development and infrastructure investment and consider what strategic infrastructure might be needed to support growth in the long-term.

These particular circumstances provide a background to the OGNA to which the Assessment seeks to respond.

### This report

To ensure the preparation and analysis of an integrated evidence base that effectively addresses the core objectives of the OGNA, the Assessment has been divided into three complementary reports, broadly corresponding to three phases of work, starting with:

- **The Phase 1** , which addresses housing need, economic growth and employment land requirements for Oxfordshire, and appraises the high-level commuting and affordability implications;
- Following on from this, **The Phase 2 Report** defines and characterises the Oxfordshire Functional Economic Market Area, which is used to develop and test scenarios for the distribution of Phase 1 housing need and employment growth *within* Oxfordshire;
- Finally, to reflect the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic during the development of the OGNA, a **Covid-19 Impacts Addendum** has been produced to sense-check, contextualise, and update the results of the Phase 1 and Phase 2 Reports in light of these developments.

A stand-alone **Executive Summary** report, presented here, has been provided to highlight and bring together the key observations and messages from the three respective reports. The following summary is structured according to these three phases of work, starting with a summary of the *Phase 1 Report*.

## 2 The Phase 1 Report

### Introduction and purpose

The **Phase 1 Report** provides overall growth need figures for housing and employment in Oxfordshire to 2050. It profiles local housing market, demographic, economic and commercial property market dynamics, all within the strategic policy environment.

These factors are then brought together to provide trajectories for future housing and employment land needs, and resultant high-level implications for commuting and affordability.

The following summary highlights and draws out the key findings of the *Phase 1 Report* regarding housing need, economic growth and employment land requirements, and accompanying high-level commuting and affordability implications.

### Oxfordshire today

Oxfordshire, like many parts of the greater South East, is characterised by high housing costs and particular affordability pressures. Median house prices have risen from £100,000 to £350,000 in the county over the last 20 years. Whilst current low interest rates mean that mortgage finance is currently relatively cheap, lenders undertake stress testing and the absolute cost of homes to buy means that there are households that need significant savings to be able to buy a home.

Across Oxfordshire the median cost of a home was 10.4 times income in 2019, and Oxford has been ranked as one of the UK's least affordable cities. Influenced by the high cost of homes to buy and rent, there is a very significant need for affordable housing which the OGNA has estimated as being almost 3,200 affordable homes per year across Oxfordshire to 2030.

It is clear that affordability issues are having a real impact not just on young people in Oxfordshire, but also its business community. If left unaddressed this could hold back future economic growth potential. Poor housing affordability can provide a deterrent to young professionals hoping to live and work in Oxfordshire, which affects the ability of businesses to recruit staff to fill positions, including in high-tech and innovative business sectors.

These issues are partly a function of Oxfordshire's economic success. Oxfordshire has been one of the country's fastest growing economies in recent years, and sustained jobs growth of around 6,000 per year over the 2010-18 period. It has notable strengths in research-intensive activities including media and technology, science and healthcare, and public services. Whilst employment growth has been strong, productivity improvements have however stalled in recent years. The ability of companies to recruit and retain skilled staff is one component of this.

The evidence suggests that whilst rates of housing delivery have been rising, jobs growth over the 2010-18 period outpaced growth in housing and labour supply in Oxfordshire. Between 2011-18 the working-age population age 16-64 increased by just 1% (7,800 persons). A supply-demand imbalance for housing has resulted, contributing to both house price growth and growth in net in-commuting into Oxfordshire.

## The minimum local housing need

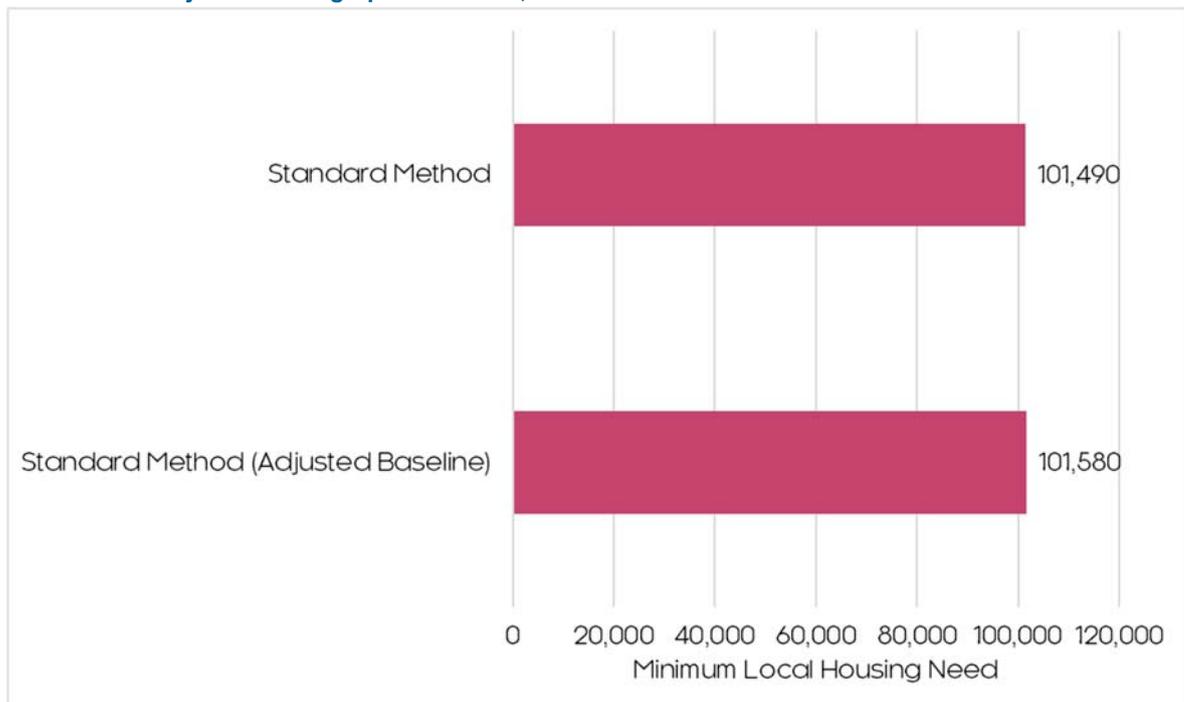
Government’s National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) sets out a “*Standard Method*” for calculating the minimum local housing need taking projected household growth and then applying an upward adjustment to improve affordability based on the median house price-to-income ratio.

The Standard Method calculation, following the Planning Practice Guidance at the time of preparation of the OGNA, indicated a minimum local housing need for Oxfordshire of 3,383 dwellings per annum which would equate to a baseline level of provision of 101,490 homes over the 2020-50 plan period. This is based on 2014-based Household Projections.

The review of demographic data undertaken as part of the OGNA indicates that it is likely that Oxford’s population has been under-estimated. To address these issues, revised demographic projections have been developed to provide a revised baseline assessment of the demographic need for housing informed by past population trends.

With appropriate assumptions on household formation, the revised demographic projections presented in the OGNA result in a marginally higher need for 3,386 dwellings per annum equivalent to 101,580 homes over the plan period (as shown in Figure 2.1 below).

**Figure 2.1: Standard Method minimum local housing need for Oxfordshire, and with an adjusted demographic baseline, 2020-50**



Source: Justin Gardner Consulting, Icenii Projects.

This level of housing provision would support population growth of 25.4% across Oxfordshire over the 30-year plan period (equivalent to an additional 183,000 persons).

The Standard Method local housing need changes over time, and the latest data for 2021 (analysis of this revision is appended to the *Phase 1 Report*) shows a slightly lower need for 3,358 dwellings per annum (using the 2014-based Household Projections) and 3,291 dwellings per annum (using the

## Oxfordshire's economic trajectories

adjusted projections). The latter would equate to a need for 98,730 homes over the period to 2050.

Government policy sets out that the conditions where other growth levels should be considered, and which are relevant to the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan. Extensive evidence considered as part of the OGNA in particular demonstrates an important inter-relationship between economic performance and growth potential and housing need.

Resultantly, the OGNA has modelled three alternative economic trajectories to 2050 to consider potential housing and employment land need:

- **Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory:** backwards calculated from the Standard Method calculation of housing need, with an adjustment for the revised demographic baseline.
- **Business as usual trajectory:** this trajectory represents a continuation of Oxfordshire's recent (pre-Covid) economic performance, taking particular account of the robust growth delivered during the recovery from the 2008-09 recession.
- **Transformational trajectory:** this trajectory is broadly the equivalent of the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy's (LIS) aspirational "go for growth" scenario, but updated and adjusted to 2020.

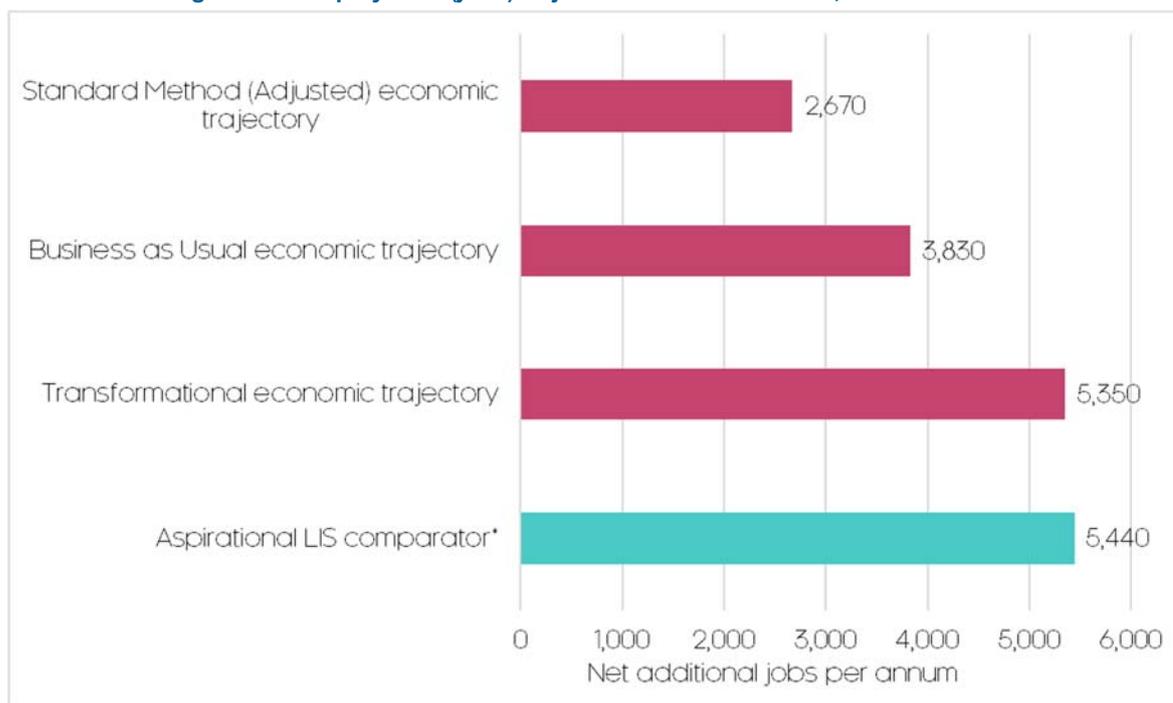
All of the trajectories have a baseline of 2018, the latest available year of data at the time of writing.

From this baseline, the Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory shows 85,400 additional jobs in Oxfordshire by 2050, modelling the level of economic activity that could be expected to be supported by delivery of housing in line with the Standard Method calculations (using the adjusted baseline demographic assumptions).

The business as usual projection models a continuation of Oxfordshire's recent (pre-Covid) robust growth. This shows 122,500 additional jobs in Oxfordshire over the period to 2050. At this pace of growth, Oxfordshire is expected to have continued along its recent growth trajectory, and achieved some of its LIS-related ambitions.

The highest scenario, the transformational trajectory, models the equivalent of delivering many of the aspirations set out in the Oxfordshire LIS, and results in 171,200 additional jobs in Oxfordshire over the period to 2050. The Oxfordshire LIS sets out an ambitious vision for Oxfordshire to be one of the top three global innovation systems by 2040.

The results of the three economic trajectories, shown in terms of additional jobs per annum, are presented in Table 2.1 and Figure 2.2 below (the latter of which includes the Oxfordshire LIS' jobs aspiration as a comparator, shaded in turquoise). They present alternative assumptions of how Oxfordshire's economy might perform. It's per annum not gross

**Figure 2.2: Employment (jobs) trajectories for Oxfordshire, 2018-50**

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, PwC. Note: \* LIS comparator corresponds to 2017-40 only.

**Table 2.1: Employment (jobs) trajectories for Oxfordshire**

	Employment (jobs) at 2018 (baseline)	2030	2040	2050	Net additional employment (jobs), 2018-50	Net additional employment (jobs) p.a., 2018-50
Standard Method (adjusted) economic trajectory	410,066	434,538	464,179	495,555	85,489	<b>2,672</b>
Business as usual economic trajectory	410,066	451,742	490,234	532,517	122,451	<b>3,827</b>
Transformational economic trajectory	410,066	466,804	520,636	581,254	171,188	<b>5,350</b>

Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics. p.a. = per annum.

Despite the application of a robust methodology and evidence base, there are clearly uncertainties associated with predicting the future economic performance of a local area, which heightens as the forecasts look further into the future.

However, the growth trajectories considered are reasonable parameters for growth when set against Oxfordshire's historic economic performance and employment growth trends over previous economic cycles, with Oxfordshire displaying particularly robust growth over the most recent economic cycle.

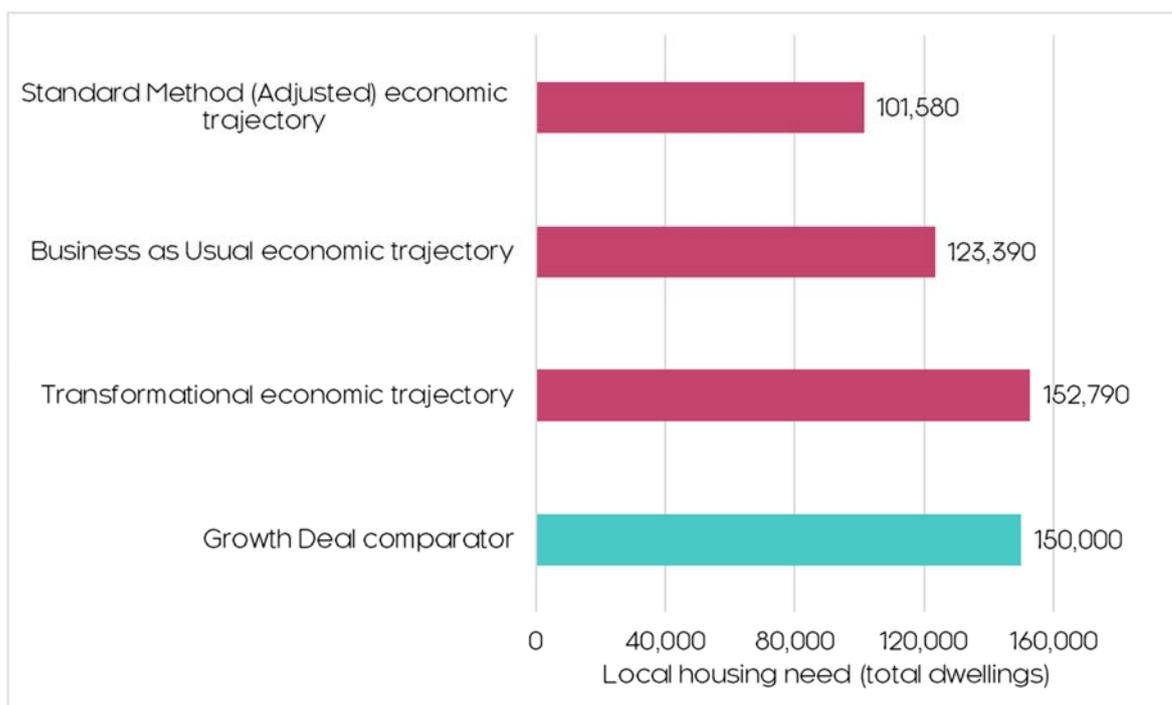
Building on this analysis, the OGNA has proceeded to model what level of housing provision might be needed to accommodate these levels of growth, taking into account factors such as the changes in the age structure of the population and the proportion of people of different ages in work.

The results of the housing need accompanying the economic trajectories are shown in Table 2.2 and Figure 2.3 below (the latter of which includes the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal housing aspiration as a comparator, shaded in turquoise. The Deal provides funding for affordable housing and infrastructure improvements to support the ambition of building 100,000 homes between 2011-31 to address the county’s severe housing shortage and support economic growth).

The analysis shows that to meet the Standard Method (adjusted) level of need over 2020-50, Oxfordshire would require around 3,400 dwellings each year; with the business as usual level of growth this increases to 4,100 dwellings per annum, with a transformational figure approaching 5,100 dwellings per annum, dependent on the realisation of LIS-related ambitions.

These figures can be compared with the Standard Method housing need (unadjusted, across the whole of Oxfordshire) of 3,400 dwellings per annum over the period 2020-50.

**Figure 2.3: Projected housing need in Oxfordshire from the economic trajectories, 2020-50**



Source: Justin Gardner Consulting, Icenj Projects. Note: the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal however only runs to 2031 however, and has been extrapolated using per annum rates of delivery.

**Table 2.2: Projected housing need in Oxfordshire from the economic trajectories, 2020-50**

	Households at 2020	Households at 2050	Change in households, 2020-50	Change in households p.a., 2020-50	Local housing need (dwellings) p.a., 2020-50
Standard Method (adjusted) economic trajectory	288,999	387,591	98,592	3,286	<b>3,386</b>
Business as usual economic trajectory	288,999	408,806	119,807	3,994	<b>4,113</b>
Transformational economic trajectory	288,999	437,328	148,329	4,944	<b>5,093</b>

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting, Icenj Projects. p.a. = per annum.

For the purposes of the Oxfordshire Plan, planning for higher levels of housing provision than the Standard Method provides greater potential both to support economic growth and deliver affordable housing; and a greater likelihood of improving the affordability of market housing over the plan period to 2050.

The OGNA does not however recommend one trajectory over another but provides a set of parameters for growth. In determining the appropriate strategy and how much development to plan for, the evidence in the assessment needs to be brought together with broader factors including the capacity to accommodate growth and environmental consequences of different levels of growth.

## Employment land provision

There is a healthy market for commercial property in Oxfordshire. Office take-up and availability is generally concentrated in Oxford and southwards along the 'Knowledge Spine', including Milton Park and Harwell Campus. Take-up and availability of industrial floorspace is more spread out across Oxfordshire, with noticeable amounts of speculative developments to the northeast of the county where there is good access to the M40.

It is evident that there are short-term supply constraints in the office market, particularly in the Oxford area and for Grade A space. Many of the area's science and business parks are at capacity. The evidence also points to a healthy market for industrial space.

The OGNA has modelled the implications of the jobs growth arising in each of the employment projections for employment land and floorspace. This has been compared to projections of past employment floorspace completions based on trends over the 2011-18 period.

For the purposes of considering the amount of land to allocate for employment uses, it is sensible to group together Office and Research and Development uses. These types of activities typically take place on business and science parks within Oxfordshire and can also take place in central parts of towns and cities including town and city centres.

Equally it is sensible to group together more general industrial land which can cater for both light and heavy industrial uses (Classes EG(iii) and B2) as well as storage and distribution (Use Class B8) which are less likely to take place in central areas.

Table 2.1 below brings together the results of the labour demand modelling and the projections of gross floorspace completions on this basis. This includes an allowance for replacement of losses and some supply-side flexibility.

**Table 2.3: Gross additional employment land needs (total hectares, ha) in Oxfordshire, 2020-50**

	Office, R&D and Education need (ha), 2020-50	Industrial, Warehousing & Other need (ha), 2020-50	Total employment land (ha) needed, 2020-50
Standard Method (adjusted) economic trajectory	149	296	<b>445</b>
Business as usual economic trajectory	185	369	<b>555</b>

Transformational economic trajectory	233	444	<b>677</b>
Completions projection	162	645	<b>807</b>

Source: Icenis Projects.

For office, R&D and education uses the OGNA concludes that labour demand trajectories provide an appropriate basis for considering the level of employment land provision which should be made within the Oxfordshire Plan. This demonstrates a need for provision of between 149-233 ha of land for these uses to 2050 (depending on the growth trajectory taken forwards).

However, for the broad industrial use category, there is a weaker relationship between jobs and floorspace or land requirements given productivity improvements and demand arising for replacement of older dated stock.

The OGNA therefore considers that greater weight should be afforded to the completions projection scenario for industrial land (which is based on past gross development trends) which suggests a need for almost 650 ha of industrial land for the 30 year plan period.

Overall, the evidence suggests that the scale of employment land needed across Oxfordshire could be up to 807 ha. The precise scale will be influenced by decisions on what growth scenario to take forward in the Plan.

### Commuting and affordability implications

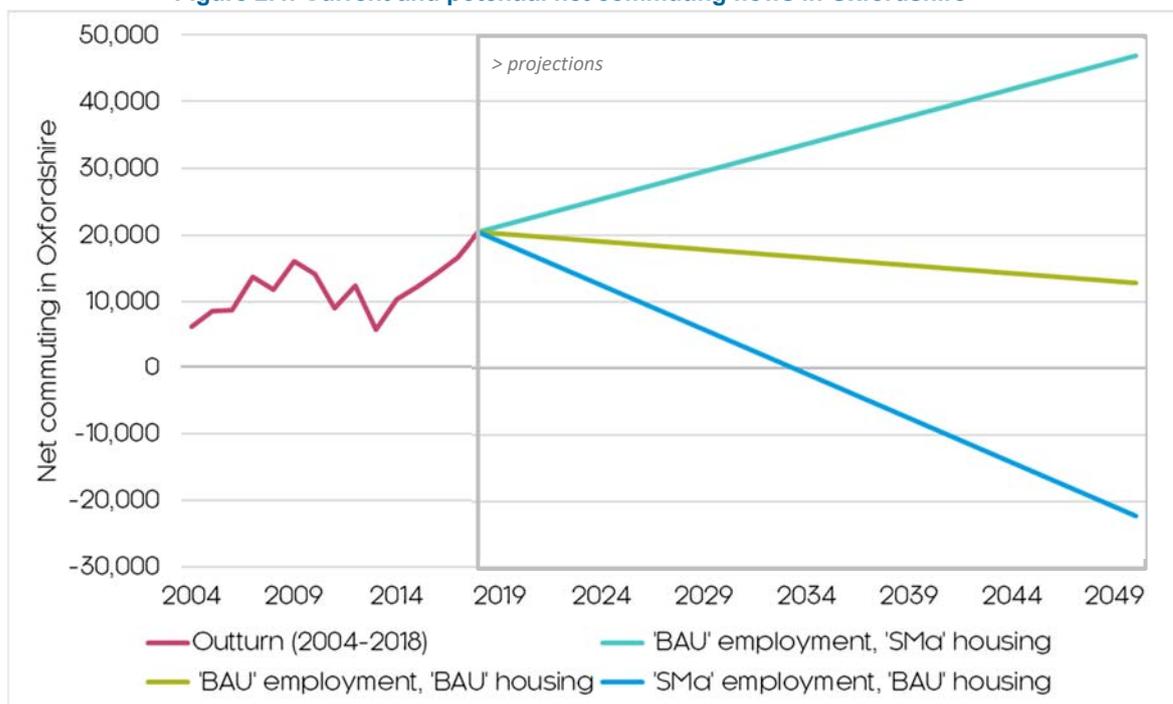
Over the past decade, relative to the supply of housing, employment growth has accelerated in Oxfordshire. This has had implications for both net commuting and housing affordability, which have both increased significantly in the county over this time. OGNA analysis has identified a statistically significant relationship between the balance of housing and employment growth in local areas, and the implications for commuting levels and affordability.

The analysis shows housing delivery above that required to sustain the associated level of employment growth will likely result in a reduction of net commuting and an improvement in housing affordability within Oxfordshire. Yet housing delivery below that required to sustain the associated level of employment growth will likely result in an increase in net commuting and a deterioration in housing affordability.

The intention of the three economic and housing trajectories is to ensure the delivery of employment and housing growth in Oxfordshire will become more aligned. The trajectories address this by incorporating a lowering of the ratio between the number of jobs relative to the number of dwellings in Oxfordshire, demonstrating how a balance of future housing and economic growth can stabilise and lower affordability and commuting pressures.

Such outcomes are increasingly desirable given the high welfare and inequality costs of unaffordable housing, and the growing strain on Oxfordshire's transport network from increased commuting (and associated externalities, notably, environmental and emissions effects, particularly in light of the desire to attain net zero).

Figure 2.4: Current and potential net commuting flows in Oxfordshire

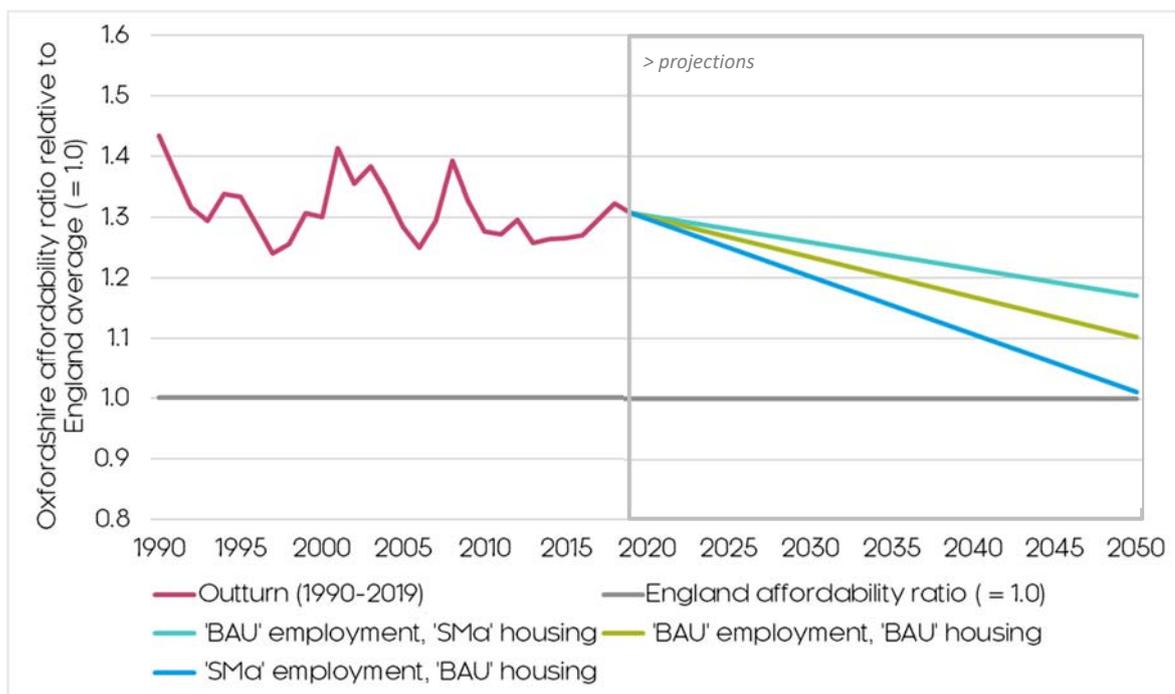


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Figure 2.4 above demonstrates how the balance of future housing and economic growth can impact upon net commuting in Oxfordshire:

- A lower employment growth trajectory relative to higher housing growth (the blue line) could see a reduction in Oxfordshire's net commuting, potentially below historic (pre-1991) levels. This would mean there are more residents than jobs in the county, so residents commute out for work.
- A higher employment growth trajectory relative to lower housing growth (the turquoise line) could see an increase in Oxfordshire's net commuting, above current record-highs. This would mean there are more jobs than residents in the county, so out of county residents commute in for work.
- A similar employment and housing growth trajectory (the green line) would see a steady decline in Oxfordshire's net commuting as it returns to 'normal' levels. The number of jobs is still marginally higher than the number of residents in the county, reflecting Oxfordshire's historically higher commuting ratio.

**Figure 2.5: Current and potential house price affordability in Oxfordshire, relative to the England average**



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics. Note: a ratio of 1.0 would equate to an affordability ratio exactly the same as the England average.

Figure 2.5 above demonstrates how the balance of future housing and economic growth can impact upon affordability (relative to the England average) in Oxfordshire:

- A lower employment growth trajectory relative to higher housing growth (the blue line) would see a significant reduction in Oxfordshire's affordability ratio relative to the England average. This could result in housing in Oxfordshire being as affordable as elsewhere in the country.
- A higher employment growth trajectory relative to lower housing growth (the turquoise line) would see a steadier reduction in Oxfordshire's affordability ratio relative to the England average. Housing would still be around 1.2x less affordable in Oxfordshire than elsewhere in the country though.
- A similar employment and housing growth trajectory (the green line) would still see a notable reduction in Oxfordshire's affordability ratio relative to the England average. This could result in housing in Oxfordshire being marginally less affordable than elsewhere in the country.

### Covid-19 and the Phase 1 Report

The development of the *Phase 1 Report* coincided with the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020 and 2021. It is clear that the pandemic and some of its long-lasting effects have the potential to impact upon the findings of *Phase 1* of the OGNA, not least those relating to commuting trends, and housing and employment land needs. As such additional consideration has been given to this question. This analysis is summarised by the *Covid-19 Impacts Addendum* below.

### 3 The Phase 2 Report

**Introduction and purpose**

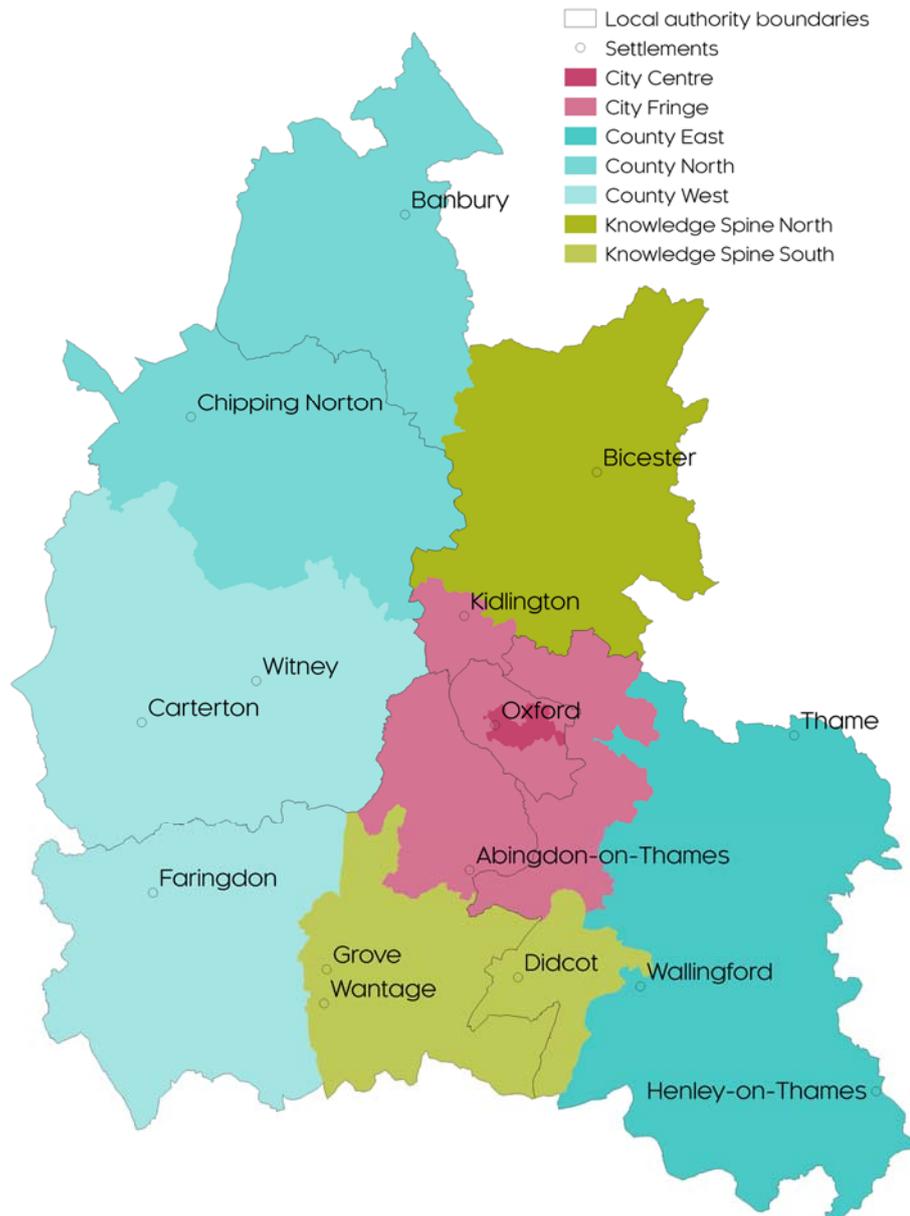
Following on from the *Phase 1 Report*, the **Phase 2 Report** considers a range of high-level scenarios for the spatial distribution of housing and employment need across Oxfordshire.

The purpose of this is to aid decision-makers in understanding of the implications of alternative spatial choices. It does not seek to identify specific options or priorities for development, but rather explores the potential scale and implications of different approaches.

The following summary highlights and draws out the key findings of the *Phase 2 Report* regarding the definition and characteristics of the Oxfordshire FEMA, the scenarios for the distribution of housing need and employment growth, and their resultant implications for commuting and transport use.

**The Oxfordshire Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA)**

**Figure 3.1: Spatial levels of the Oxfordshire FEMA**



Source: Cambridge Econometrics.

Functional Economic Market Areas (FEMAs) are designed to capture the extent and spatial distribution of a local economic market more accurately than administrative boundaries, which rarely reflect the true scale and reach of local economic markets and accompanying economic flows.

The OGNA has sought to identify the extent and characteristics of the Oxfordshire FEMA, to enable a more precise and in-depth exploration of potential spatial distributions of economic growth and housing need in Oxfordshire.

The analysis of several economic, demographic, and social markets and indicators showed that the county of Oxfordshire is a reasonable approximation for the Oxfordshire FEMA, with Oxford at its centre. Further spatial levels ('Zones') have also been identified within the FEMA, each with their own distinct characteristics and economic attributes. Presented in Figure 3.1 above, these include:

- **Oxford City Centre:** the area with the highest concentration of economic activity, as well as central urban amenities, with a strong and growing services-led economy.
- **Oxford City Fringe:** the area surrounding the City Centre, characterised by a high degree of integration with and connectivity to the City Centre, and the presence of important urban fringe sites, such as science parks and large suburb, as well as the undeveloped Green Belt. An area of diverse and fast-growing economic activity.
- **The Knowledge Spine:** an area of globally-recognised knowledge activity that runs through the centre of the FEMA, largely along the A34 corridor. Straddling the City and Centre and Fringe, it comprises a **Northern** and a **Southern** part. Both areas have seen robust economic and housing growth of late.
- **The Wider County:** areas that remain outside both the Knowledge Spine and City Centre and Fringe. They comprise three roughly equal parts of comparable economic activity and functionality: **County East**, **County West** and **County North**. Pockets of high economic and housing growth can be found within these predominantly rural areas.

As emphasised in the *Phase 2 Report*, these Zones are purely hypothetical, to allow for a better spatial understanding of housing need in relation to economic trends, and they should not be regarded as specific options or priorities for the distribution of development.

## Employment and housing need distributions to 2050

Understanding the potential spatial scale and pattern of employment growth is important for informing, testing and illustrating contrasting distributions for housing need. Drawing on the definition of the Oxfordshire FEMA and its constituent spatial levels ('Zones'), the OGNA has explored the potential spatial distribution of the three Oxfordshire-wide employment trajectories to 2050 (as prepared and presented in the *Phase 1 Report*).

The distributions for employment growth are summarised in Figure 3.2 below. Over the longer timeframe of the *Phase 1* employment trajectories (to 2050), there is the potential for a more spatially balanced growth picture to emerge compared to recent (2011-18) trends.

Central Oxfordshire, encompassing the Knowledge Spine (including Oxford City and Fringe), is expected to remain a significant driver of economic activity, accounting for a potential two-thirds of net additional jobs in the FEMA to 2050.

**Figure 3.2: Spatial scenarios for Zonal distribution of additional employment (jobs) growth, 2011-18 and 2018-50**



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics. County East excluded from 2011-18 outturn due to negative employment growth. Percentage shares relate to Zones proportion of FEMA-wide jobs growth to 2050.

Having considered the scale and pattern of potential economic growth within the Oxfordshire FEMA, the OGNA proceeds to illustrate a range of spatial distribution scenarios for the FEMA-wide housing need to 2050 (as prepared and presented in the *Phase 1 Report*.)

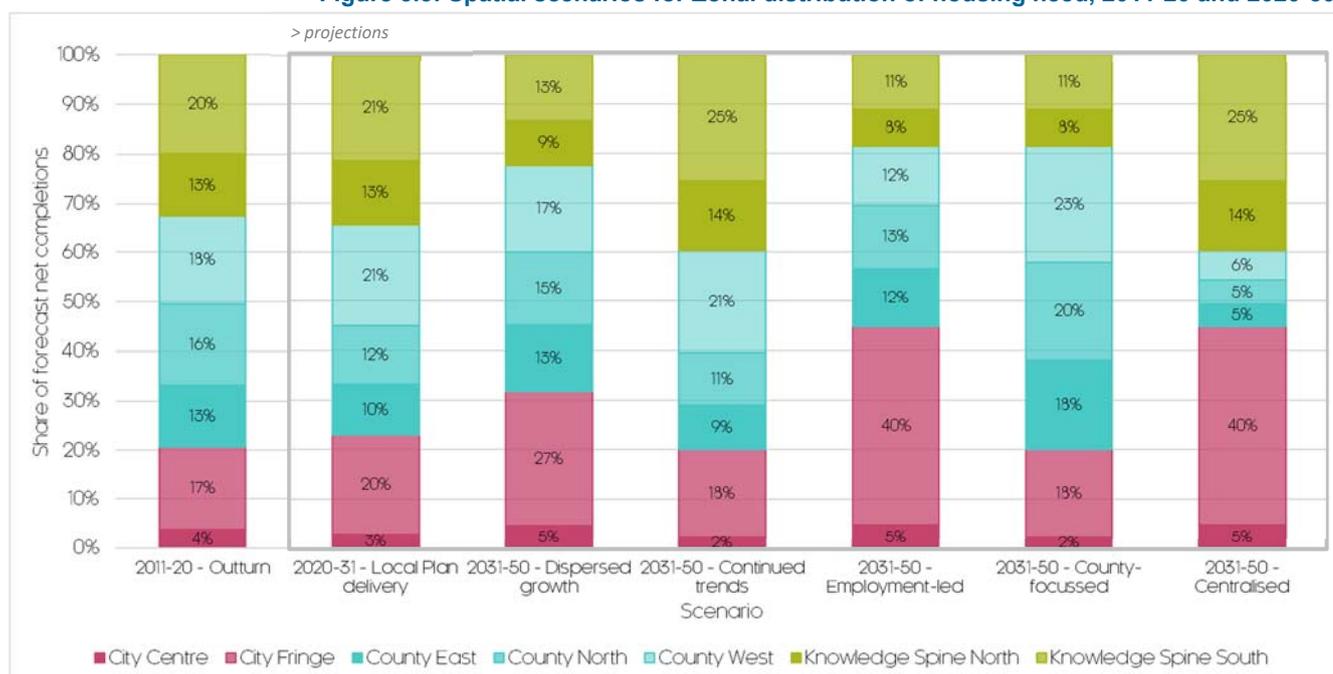
By taking the opportunity to quantify and test a range of different scenarios for housing distribution, the potential implications and trade-offs of different development choices can be identified and contrasted at a high-level.

The distributions of housing need have been informed by a set of robust and contrasting housing scenarios, with the results presented in Figure 3.3 below. The scenarios cover a variety of contrasting development choices for need after the 2020-31 period of Local Plan forecast completions. The scenarios include:

1. **An evenly dispersed scenario** – which sees housing need allocated at an even *percentage rate* (not quantity) across the FEMA.
2. **A continued trends scenario** – mirrors current concentrations of forecast net completions in Local Plans (which cover 2020-31), extrapolating them over the additional 2031-50 period.

3. **An employment-led scenario** – sees need matched to the distribution of projected Zonal employment growth, including growth in LIS-outlined key employment locations.
4. **A County-focussed scenario** – focuses need on the Wider County, resulting in the lowest proportion of need allocated to Oxford City Centre and Fringe and the Knowledge Spine.
5. **A centralised scenario** – focuses need on central Oxfordshire, incorporating Oxford City Centre and Fringe and the Knowledge Spine. This results in the lowest proportion of need allocated to the Wider County.

**Figure 3.3: Spatial scenarios for Zonal distribution of housing need, 2011-20 and 2020-50**



Source: MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics. Note: percentage shares are an average of distributions across the three employment trajectories. Percentage shares relate to Zones proportion of FEMA-wide housing need to 2050.

As Figure 3.3 (above) shows, the distribution scenarios cover a variety of contrasting development choices, ranging from an economic-led focus on distribution in central Oxfordshire (Oxford and the Knowledge Spine), to a more evenly dispersed approach across the county, to an emphasis on market towns in Wider County areas.

As it allocates housing growth rates equally across Zones, the **evenly dispersed** scenario sees housing distributed the most evenly between the Zones post-2031. The Wider County still has the highest absolute level of growth, as it starts with the highest number of initial dwellings at 2031.

The **continued trends** scenario, extrapolating 2020-31 Local Plan forecasts to 2050, sees significantly greater distribution to the Knowledge Spine, and marginally less allocated to the Wider County and City Centre and Fringe.

The **employment-led** scenario sees much greater distribution to Oxford City (specifically the City Fringe), and comparatively lower levels allocated to the Wider County and Knowledge Spine.

The **County-focussed** scenario combines the low City Centre and Fringe distribution from the *continued trends* scenario with the low distribution to Knowledge Spine from the *employment led* scenario. This scenario results in a very high relative allocation to the Wider County.

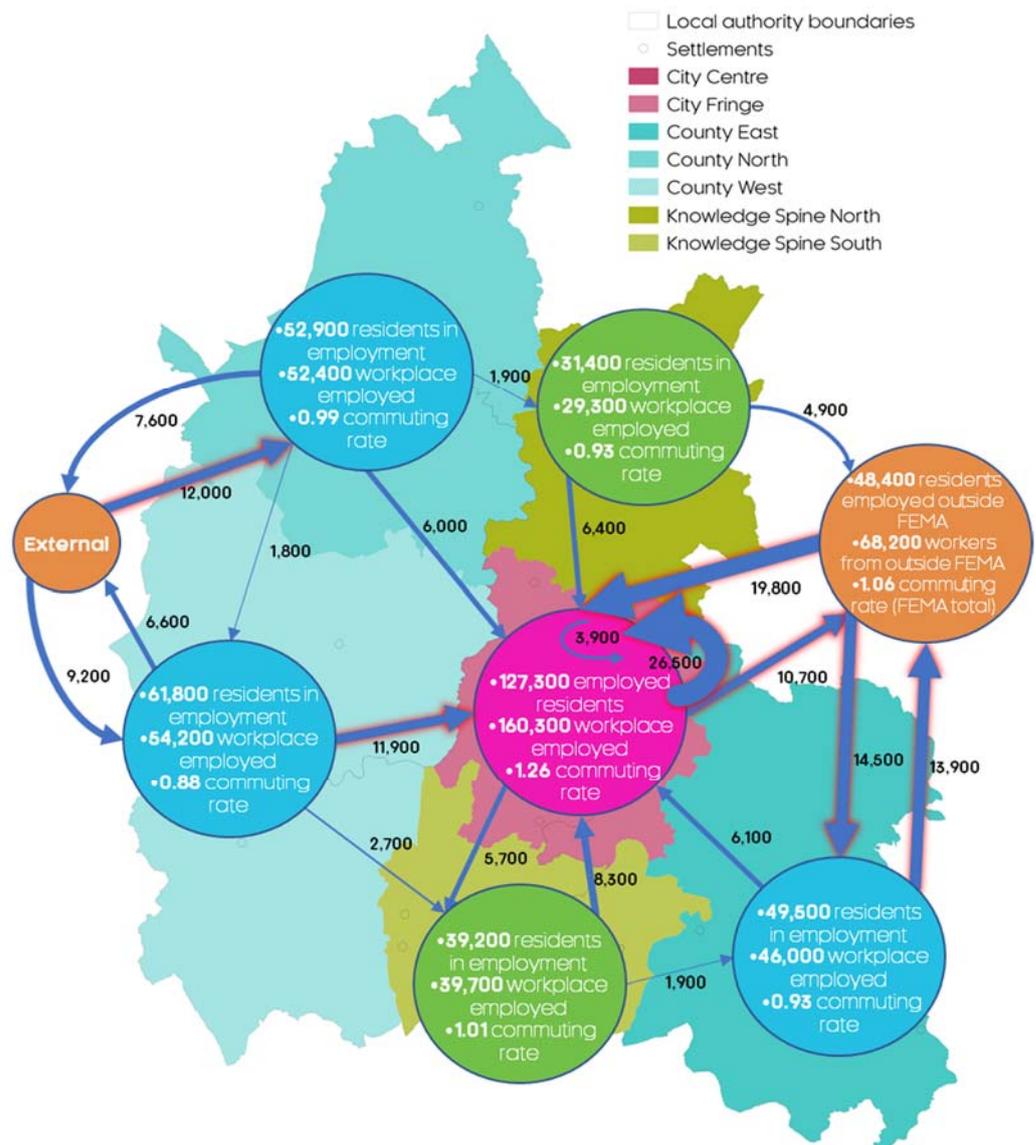
The **centralised** scenario reverses this process, with the high City Centre and Fringe distribution from the *employment-led* scenario paired with the high Knowledge Spine allocation from the *continued trends* scenario. This scenario results in a very low relative distribution to the Wider County.

It should be emphasised that these scenarios do not reflect preferred options or priorities for economic growth or housing delivery, but are rather hypothetical distributions to better understand the implications and trade-offs of different development choices at a high level. It should also be noted that these scenarios do not take into account specific site constraints, phased need, or development sites outside of the Local Plan period (2020-31).

**Implications for commuting**

By taking the opportunity to quantify and test a range of different housing distributions, potential implications and trade-offs can be identified and contrasted. The OGNA has specifically focussed on understanding the

**Figure 3.4: Stylized overview of commuting flows in the Oxfordshire FEMA, 2018**



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics

consequences for commuting trips, modal share and private vehicle miles within the FEMA, particularly given their important role in attaining net zero ambitions for the county.

Analysis of recent trends has shown that, as a result of employment growth accelerating relative to the supply of housing, commuting into the Oxfordshire FEMA has more than doubled over the past decade. This means more people are commuting – and commuting further, typically using private transport - to work in the FEMA, exacerbating congestion and environmental effects. Oxfordshire’s current commuting profile is summarised in Figure 3.4 (above).

Though the scale of potential employment and housing growth in Oxfordshire will increase the absolute number of commuting trips within the FEMA, the OGNA has found that, given certain development choices, there is the potential for the length of these trips to decrease, for modal share to shift towards greener, more sustainable forms of transport, and for millions of private vehicles miles to be taken off Oxfordshire’s roads by 2050.

Such outcomes are increasingly desirable given the growing pressure on Oxfordshire’s transport network, associated externalities (notably, environmental and emissions effects), and the desire to attain net zero, and should therefore be considered in the appraisal of any future spatial development options for the FEMA.

### **Covid-19 and the Phase 2 Report**

The development of the *Phase 2 Report* coincided with the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020 and 2021. It is clear that the pandemic and some of its long-lasting effects have the potential to impact upon the findings of *Phase 2* of the OGNA, not least those relating to the size and structure of the FEMA, and commuting trends and patterns. As such additional consideration has been given to this question. This analysis is summarised by the *Covid-19 Impacts Addendum* below.

## 4 Covid-19 Impacts Addendum

### Introduction and purpose

During the course of the OGNA development in 2020, it became clear the Covid-19 pandemic could have significant, long-term impacts that may be relevant to the scope of the study, in terms of the prospects of different sectors locally, the demand for housing within the county, and the interaction between housing and employment location and transport demand given remote work.

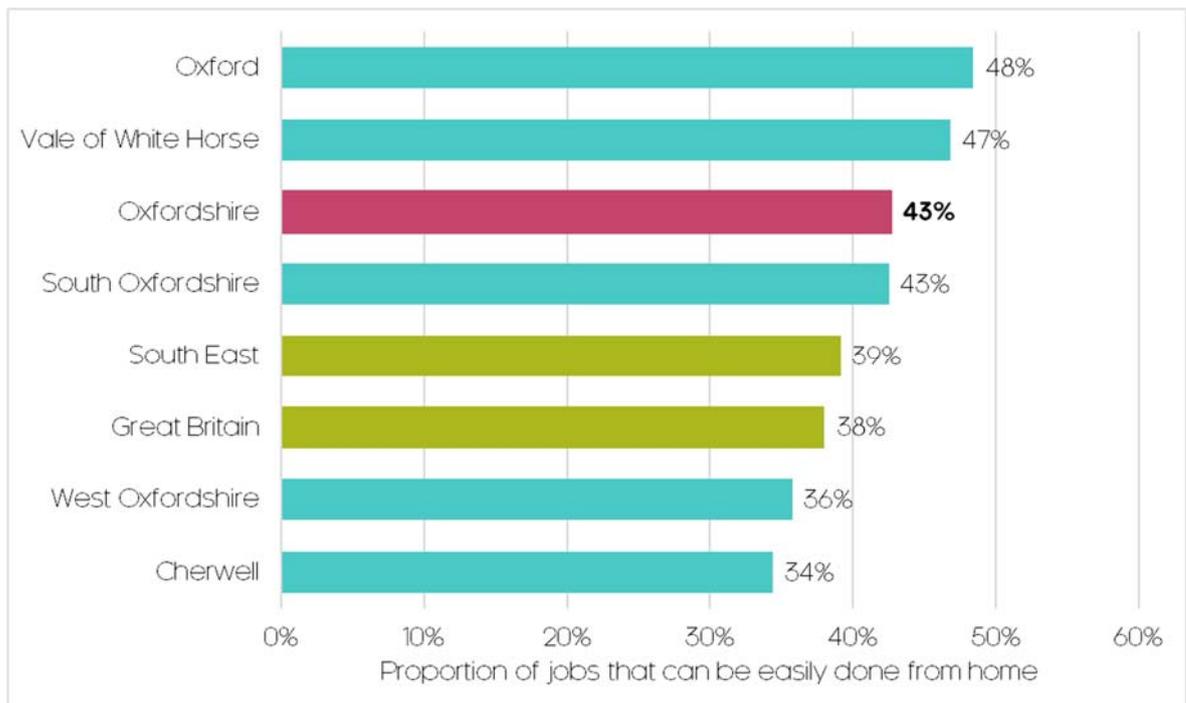
To reflect the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic during the development of the OGNA, this short report - the **Covid-19 Impacts Addendum** - was therefore commissioned to sense-check, contextualise, and update the results of the *Phase 1* and *Phase 2 Reports* in light of these developments.

The Addendum draws heavily on and supplements the extensive analysis and research undertaken for [Oxfordshire LEP's Economic Recovery Plan \(ERP\)](#), which was produced by Steer ED in conjunction with CE over 2020-21 in response to the pandemic. The following summary highlights and draws out the key findings and observations from the Covid-19 Impacts Addendum.

### The legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic

Drawing on the latest theory and evidence, the addendum has sought to gauge the potential legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic over the longer timeframe of the Oxfordshire Plan (to 2050). Particular attention has been given to the durability and legacy of the Covid-induced shift to remote working ('homeworking'), which as Figure 4.1 below shows has the potential to be a much more prevalent within parts of Oxfordshire's labour market.

**Figure 4.1: Homeworking potential across Oxfordshire**



Source: Dingel & Neiman (2020), ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Beyond the short- and medium-term economic impact, the addendum appraises the longer-term potential for the pandemic to trigger and accelerate substantive economic, social and behavioural change in Oxfordshire and beyond, particularly in terms of matters associated with the thematic areas identified in the OGNA, such as:

- demography and housing (e.g. by changing the attractiveness of urban living, or people revising their need to reside close to work);
- sectors and employment land needs (e.g. by shifting/reducing demand for retail, leisure and office space, or accelerating the shift to online shopping), and;
- commuting and transport (e.g. by shifting/reducing the volume, mode and distance of commuting trips).

Yet in many instances, the pandemic has simply brought to the fore trends that were already in place and likely to be significant by 2050 anyway (and were typically considered, if not accounted for, within the original OGNA evidence base). Rather than changing the direction of travel, the pandemic has accelerated these trends, whilst, crucially, bringing them to the attention of a wider audience.

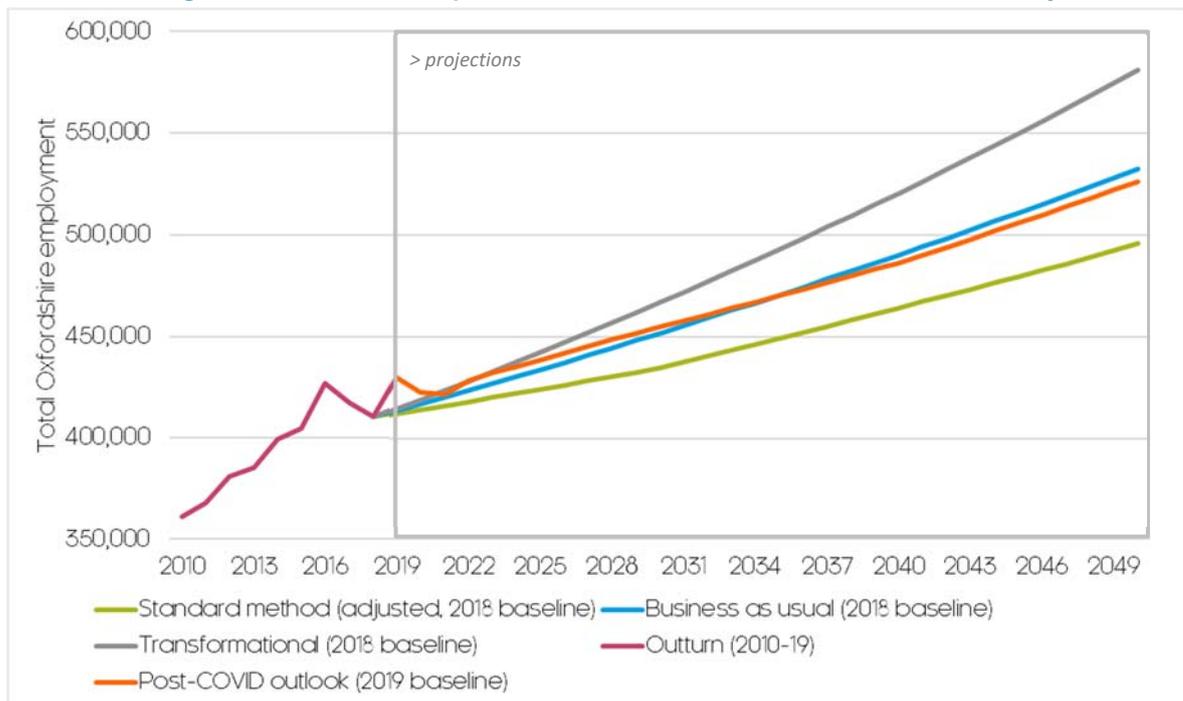
Likewise, for many workers and residents and Oxfordshire, it is important to note that the pandemic may have little to no impact relative to their pre-Covid routine; for instance, even during strict lockdown measures, the majority of workers were still reporting that they had never worked from home.

Although the negative short-term impacts of the pandemic have undoubtedly been severe within Oxfordshire, and will continue to be felt for several years to come, some of the Covid-induced trends, such as homeworking and localism, should be seen not as a threat but a significant opportunity to reshape Oxfordshire’s economic geography and transport systems, particularly in the context of the urgent need to reduce emissions.

**Robustness of the Phase 1 trajectories**

Informed by updated forecasts and evidence incorporating the impact of the pandemic and its accompanying trends (presented in Figure 4.3.2 below, with post-Covid forecasts shown as the orange line), the addendum appraises the longer-term robustness of the OGNA’s original economic trajectories.

**Figure 4.2: Oxfordshire’s post-Covid outlook to 2050, relative to the OGNA trajectories**



Source: Oxfordshire ERP, ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Given Oxfordshire’s intrinsic resilience and recoverability to economic shocks, it is expected the short-run impact from the pandemic will be less pronounced in Oxfordshire, whilst Oxfordshire’s recovery will also outperform the national average, resulting in a smaller shortfall relative to pre-Covid trends.

Resultantly, as far as Oxfordshire is concerned, the addendum considers that the analysis underpinning the *Phase 1* and *Phase 2 Report* remains current and valid, though there is undoubtedly a need for the planning system to build in an increased level of flexibility.

As Figure 4.2 and Table 4.1 show, the range of feasible trajectories for employment growth and subsequent housing need are still well represented by the three trajectories depicted in the *Phase 1 Report*. Similarly, the five housing distribution scenarios outlined in the *Phase 2 Report* are still a suitable means of exploring the implications – in terms of commuting and affordability - between different approaches.

**Table 4.1: Oxfordshire’s post-Covid outlook to 2050, relative to the OGNA trajectories**

	Jobs, baseline	Jobs, 2050	Jobs growth, baseline-2050	Jobs growth per annum, baseline-2050
<b>Post-Covid outlook (2019 baseline)</b>	<b>430,100</b>	<b>526,500</b>	<b>96,400</b>	<b>3,100</b>
Standard Method (adjusted, 2018 baseline) trajectory	410,100	495,600	85,500	2,700
Business as usual (2018 baseline) trajectory	410,100	532,500	122,500	3,800
Transformational (2018 baseline) trajectory	410,100	581,300	171,200	5,300

Source: Oxfordshire ERP, ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

What may change is how policy makers calculate these implications, depending upon which version of the future they think is most likely to occur, as captured by the three post-Covid scenarios presented in this addendum. The scenarios, which look ahead to 2050, cover a range of feasible and contrasting behavioural changes as a result of the pandemic:

- *Scenario 1: a ‘relative’ return to normal* – a conservative scenario for the adoption and durability of remote working.
- *Scenario 2: a new normal* – a more likely scenario of a popular and widespread adoption of a ‘hybrid’ model of remote working.
- *Scenario 3: a step change* – an ambitious scenario assuming a positive step change in the adoption and durability of remote working.

Drawing on these scenarios, and flexibly incorporating any other relevant trends and indicators that emerge, policy makers are better placed to understand and appraise the scale and distribution of housing and employment space needed, and accompanying implications for commuting and affordability.

For instance, the original OGNA identifies a need for 560 hectares of employment land to 2050 under the central outlook of the business as usual trajectory. However, under the more extreme behavioural scenarios (i.e. scenarios 2 and 3) rather than maximising land allocations, local policy makers may wish to make more flexible allocations for employment land.

**Post-Covid  
monitoring and  
review**

When planning for the Oxfordshire of 2050, there is an increased emphasis on planning for a vision that is both feasible and desirable; the “forced experiment” of the pandemic has provided us with incredibly valuable information as to what that might look like.

For instance, the geography of Oxfordshire’s residents has both expanded and contracted during the pandemic: expanded, by the reduced need for daily commuting, which has increased the range of feasible employment or residential options; contracted, by the increased opportunity and willingness to engage with and increase dependence on local communities and amenities.

Moving forward, there is a need for the planning system to continue to monitor such trends and build in additional flexibility and responsiveness, particularly given there is still an unprecedented amount of uncertainty when it comes to estimating the scale and durability of the pandemic’s longer-term impacts.

Building on the opportunities provided by the pandemic – such as increased active travel, and reduced commuting - there is also a need for additional analysis on how best to join up spatial planning with infrastructure delivery sequencing, to reach net zero carbon targets whilst maintaining an innovative and prosperous economy.

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Oxfordshire Growth Board

# Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment

## Phase 1 Report



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# 1 Introduction and Purpose

The Oxfordshire Councils<sup>1</sup> are working together to prepare the Oxfordshire Plan which will set out a development strategy for Oxfordshire to 2050.

To support the preparation of the Plan, the Oxfordshire Councils have commissioned Cambridge Econometrics and Icen Projects to prepare the Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment (OGNA). The OGNA is intended to provide an integrated evidence base to help the Oxfordshire Councils identify the appropriate level and distributions of housing and employment over the period to 2050. The core objectives of the OGNA are:

- To identify a strategic level, long-term, robust and transparent methodology for assessing Oxfordshire's housing needs over the period to 2050
- To provide a detailed commentary (including the baseline position) on Oxfordshire's housing and employment market, including demographic and economic dynamics and any other key drivers of housing need and how this may change in the period to 2050.
- To identify a range of credible and robust housing need scenarios for Oxfordshire.
- To establish an informed understanding of the implications for sustainable housing growth in Oxfordshire, of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc and of any other strategically significant infrastructure and growth strategies, including proposals for strategic growth in other areas which are likely to have a significant impact in Oxfordshire.
- To identify an appropriate functional economic market area and provide an assessment of employment land requirements.
- To advise on how the Oxfordshire Plan should respond to the uncertainty associated with long-term planning for strategic housing and employment provision.

The methodology adopted, which considers scenarios for future growth in Oxfordshire, responds to this and in particular the strategic and long-term nature of the Oxfordshire Plan.

## 1.1 Context and nature of the Assessment

The Oxfordshire Plan will be a joint statutory spatial plan which covers a 30-year plan period from 2020 to 2050. The Plan is intended to be strategic, focusing on matters such as an overall spatial strategy for development, the integration of new development and investment in infrastructure, and how these can help to improve the quality of life for everyone.

<sup>1</sup> The commissioning authorities comprise Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council.

The Plan differs from those being prepared in many other areas across England, in particular:

- The Oxfordshire Plan is a strategic plan which is being prepared on a cross-boundary basis spanning the county of Oxfordshire;
- It is looking at a much longer timeframe – a 30-year period to 2050 - than many Local Plans which typically look 15-20 years into the future. This raises issues regarding the reliability of traditional approaches to assessing development needs in some instances;
- It considers the inter-relationship between the economy and spatial planning activities;
- Oxfordshire falls within the Oxford-Milton-Keynes-Cambridge Arc which has been identified by the National Infrastructure Commission and supported by Government. There is a need for the Oxfordshire Plan to consider the strategic context provided by this, including the emerging spatial framework for the Arc, along with other Government growth initiatives and policy. Preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan also provides the opportunity to influence the Arc and shape the future strategy for this strategic corridor.

In addition, one of the major advantages of looking long-term and strategically at the strategy for development and growth is the ability to properly coordinate new development and infrastructure investment and consider what strategic infrastructure might be needed to support growth in the long-term.

These particular circumstances provide a background to the OGNA to which the Assessment seeks to respond. These are explored in more detail in the following chapter (*Chapter 2*).

## 1.2 This report

To ensure the preparation and analysis of an integrated evidence base that effectively addresses the core objectives of the OGNA, the Assessment has been divided into three complementary reports, broadly corresponding to three phases of work.

The **Phase 1 Report**, presented here, provides overall growth need figures for housing and employment in Oxfordshire to 2050. It profiles local housing market, demographic, economic and commercial property market dynamics, all within the strategic policy environment. These factors are then brought together to provide trajectories for future housing and employment land needs, and resultant high-level implications for commuting and affordability.

Following on from this, the **Phase 2 Report** considers a range of high-level scenarios for the distribution of housing and employment across Oxfordshire. The purpose of this is to aid decision-makers in understanding of the implications of alternative spatial choices. It does not seek to identify specific options or priorities for development, but rather explores the potential scale and implications of different approaches.

Finally, to reflect the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic during the development of the OGNA, a **Covid-19 Impacts Addendum** has been produced. The Addendum gauges the probable impact and legacy of the

pandemic on Oxfordshire, and the resultant implications for the evidence and observations presented in the OGNA (which largely predate the pandemic).

Therefore, it is recommended that the analysis presented in this report is read alongside the other supporting documentation of the OGNA, given their complementary coverage and interconnectedness.

In addition, a stand-alone **Executive Summary**, which highlights and brings together the key observations and messages from the three respective reports, has also been produced.

### 1.3 Report structure

The remainder of this report is structured as follows.

**Part A: Oxfordshire Today**, looking at;

- Oxfordshire's current strategic policy environment
- demographic trends
- the housing market, including a consideration of affordability and other key issues
- economic characteristics and commercial market dynamics

**Part B: Exploring Oxfordshire's Future Growth Needs**, which builds on this initial analysis and considers;

- the application of the Standard Method of local housing need
- analysis of the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy, and development of associated economic trajectories
- commercial space analysis and implied employment space under the economic trajectories
- implied housing need under the economic trajectories and comparison with results of the Standard Method
- consideration of affordable housing needs and the influence of different levels of growth on affordable housing delivery.
- the potential high-level commuting and affordability implications of the economic trajectories and implied housing need

**Part C: Conclusions and Appendices**, which includes;

- concluding remarks, and a summary of the key issues and options for housing and employment needs
- a full list of referenced resources, and associated report appendices

# Part A: Oxfordshire Today

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## 2 Strategic Policy Environment

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses some of the strategic policy influences on planning for housing and economic development needs. This includes national planning policies and guidance, the area's location within the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc and economic policy documents.

Oxfordshire is located in the South East region of the UK. It sits between the UK's two largest cities – London and Birmingham – and is linked to them by both road and rail. The M4 and M40 and A40, together with the rail network, connects Oxford to London, Birmingham and Bristol and through the Cotswolds to Cheltenham, Gloucester and Worcester. The A34 runs north/south through the county linking the Midlands to the Port of Southampton. Oxfordshire is also in relatively close proximity to the UK's largest airport, Heathrow.

### 2.2 National Planning Policies and guidance

Government has set out national planning policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The latest version of the NPPF was published on 19th February 2019 and is relevant to the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan as one of the 'soundness' tests against which the Plan in due course will be assessed is one of the consistency with policies in the Framework.<sup>2</sup>

The NPPF is clear that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development (Para 7) within which there are economic, social and environmental components. It sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development which, for plan making, means that plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their areas and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change; and should include strategic policies which – as a minimum – provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless the application of policies that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a strong reason for restricting the scale, type or distribution of development<sup>3</sup>; or the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits (Para 11).

The NPPF is clear that the planning system is intended to be 'plan-led' with plans providing the basis for the determination of planning applications. It expects plans to set out strategic policies which articulate the overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for housing, employment and other forms of commercial

<sup>2</sup> NPPF Paragraph 35.

<sup>3</sup> Areas or assets of particular importance within this context in Oxfordshire include the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, SSSI, SACs, local green space, Green Belt, areas at risk of flooding, irreplaceable habitats and designated heritage assets including Oxfordshire's only World Heritage Site at Blenheim Palace.

development, infrastructure, community facilities and the enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment.

The OGNA seeks to consider the need for housing and employment development in Oxfordshire. In developing the Plan, the Councils will draw this together with consideration of wider sustainability issues including the need to conserve and enhance the natural, built and historic environment, and ensure that new development is supported by necessary infrastructure.

## Assessing housing needs

The 2019 NPPF sets out that to determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing needs assessment, conducted using the 'Standard Method' in national planning guidance – unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals (Para 60).

The 'Standard Method' was introduced by Government in 2018 and uses a formulaic approach to calculate a minimum level of housing need.

Government's Planning Practice Guidance sets out that housing need is an **unconstrained** assessment of the number of homes needed in an area, and is the first step in the process of deciding how many homes to be planned for. It should be assessed separately from assessing land availability, establishing a housing requirement figure (i.e. how many homes to plan for) and preparing policies to address this.<sup>4</sup> In this context, this report considers unconstrained 'housing need' – it does not consider what level of homes should be planned for.

The Standard Method uses Government's 2014-based Household Projections to calculate the average annual household growth over the next 10 years, then applies a percentage uplift to this based on the extent to which an area's median house price-to-earnings ratio is above 4 to calculate a minimum annual housing need figure. A cap is applied to the affordability uplift in generating the minimum figure in some circumstances to ensure the figures derived are deliverable. For some cities and larger urban centres, a further uplift is now applied – but this does not affect authorities in Oxfordshire. The methodology is considered in greater detail in *Chapter 7*.

**Figure 2.2.1: Overview of the Standard Method for calculating local housing need**



Source: Icenii Projects.

<sup>4</sup> Planning Practice Guidance, Para ID: 26-001-20190220

The Planning Practice Guidance is clear that where plans cover more than one area, as is the case for the Oxfordshire Plan, housing need for the defined area should be at least the sum of the local housing need for each Local Planning authority within the area. It will be for the Councils to distribute the total housing requirement which is then arrived at across the plan area.<sup>5</sup>

The Standard Method provides a minimum starting point for assessing housing need. As explained in *Chapter 7* in this report, Para 60 in the NPPF and the associated Planning Practice Guidance<sup>6</sup> indicate that use of the Standard Method is not mandatory, however exceptional circumstances must be demonstrated to justify a housing need figure *lower* than that identified using the Standard Method, and such figures must be based on realistic assumptions on demographic growth and market signals. The Planning Practice Guidance outlines that more recent household projections (such as the 2016- and 2018-based projections) do not provide an appropriate basis for use in the Standard Method.<sup>7</sup>

In contrast, where planning authorities can show that an alternative approach identifies a need *higher* than using the Standard Method, and that it adequately reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals, the Planning Practice Guidance outlines that the approach can be considered sound as it will have exceeded the minimum starting point.

Planning Practice Guidance in Para 2a-010<sup>8</sup> sets out that there will be circumstances where it is appropriate to consider whether actual housing need is higher than the Standard Method indicates:

*“The government is committed to ensuring that more homes are built and supports ambitious authorities who want to plan for growth. The Standard Method for assessing local housing need provides a minimum starting point in determining the number of homes needed in an area. It does not attempt to predict the impact that future government policies, changing economic circumstances or other factors might have on demographic behaviour. Therefore, there will be circumstances where it is appropriate to consider whether actual housing need is higher than the Standard Method indicates.*

*This will need to be assessed prior to, and separate from, considering how much of the overall need can be accommodated (and then translated into a housing requirement figure for the strategic policies in the plan). Circumstances where this may be appropriate include, but are not limited to situations where increases in housing need are likely to exceed past trends because of:*

- *growth strategies for the area that are likely to be deliverable, for example where funding is in place to promote and facilitate additional growth (e.g. Housing Deals);*
- *strategic infrastructure improvements that are likely to drive an increase in the homes needed locally; or*

<sup>5</sup> Planning Practice Guidance ID 2a-013-20190220

<sup>6</sup> Planning Practice Guidance Para ID 2a-015-20190220

<sup>7</sup> Planning Practice Guidance Para ID 2a-015-20190220

<sup>8</sup> Planning Practice Guidance, Para ID: 2a-010-20190220

- *an authority agreeing to take on unmet need from neighbouring authorities, as set out in a statement of common ground.*

*There may, occasionally, also be situations where previous levels of housing delivery in an area, or previous assessments of need (such as a recently produced Strategic Housing Market Assessment) are significantly greater than the outcome from the Standard Method. Authorities will need to take this into account when considering whether it is appropriate to plan for a higher level of need than the Standard Method suggests.”*

As addressed further in this report, many of the circumstances identified in this part of the PPG are applicable in Oxfordshire, in that there is a Housing and Growth Deal in place providing funding to facilitate growth to 2031 (which covers the initial part of the period of the Oxfordshire Plan); Oxfordshire sits within a wider Oxford-Milton Keynes-Cambridge Arc which has been designated by Government effectively as a growth area; and major new strategic infrastructure is being considered including East-West Rail and proposals for an Oxford-Cambridge Expressway (currently on hold).

Recent Local Plans in Oxfordshire, including those in Oxford City and South Oxfordshire, which have assessed housing need as being above the Standard Method have been found to be sound at independent examination.

The Standard Method thus provides an important starting point in establishing the minimum level of housing need. The Growth Needs Assessment however then considers whether there is robust evidence to suggest that housing need could be higher or lower than the Standard Method suggests; and address the points in the box above.

This report takes account of evidence and Government policy/guidance available at the time of its preparation. Further evidence may however need to be prepared prior to submission of the Plan to take account of updated data, or changes in methodology or Government policy. The Government’s recent consultation on Changes to the Current Planning System<sup>9</sup> and the Planning White Paper may for instance in due course lead to revisions to legislation, policy and guidance influencing plan-making which the Councils would need to have regard to.

## Assessing economic development needs

The NPPF is clear that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt; and that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account local business needs and wider opportunities for development (Para 80). It is clear that this is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation and in areas with high levels of productivity, which would include Oxfordshire.

Planning policies are expected to set out an economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies; which identifies strategic sites for local and inward investment; addresses barriers to investment and is sufficiently flexible to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan (Para 81).

<sup>9</sup> MHCLG (Aug 2020) *Changes to the Current Planning System*

Planning Practice Guidance sets out that assessments of employment land needs may need to be undertaken on a cross-boundary basis where functional economic market areas cross administrative boundaries, as this Growth Needs Assessment shows is the case in Oxfordshire.

The Guidance sets out that considerations in assessing business needs include the existing stock of land in employment use, the pattern of employment land supply and loss, market evidence and consultation with relevant organisations. It outlines a range of data that needs to be brought together to assess future needs including employment forecasts/projections, assessments of future labour supply, projections of past take-up of employment space and other studies addressing changing business trend/models.<sup>10</sup> It also advises that the specific locational requirements of specialist or new sectors may need to be considered. This report provides a quantitative assessment and forecasts of future employment land needs across Oxfordshire.

## The Cambridge-Oxford Arc

There is an important strategic context to the consideration of growth needs in Oxfordshire, which is influenced by policies and strategies at national, regional and sub-regional levels. This includes Oxfordshire's location within the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc.

The National Infrastructure Commission's Partnering for Prosperity Report set out the case for strategic growth and infrastructure investment across the Cambridge-Oxford-Milton Keynes Arc. This is explored further below.

### 2.3 National Infrastructure Commission: Partnering for Prosperity

The National Infrastructure Commission's ('the NIC Report'), titled 'Partnering for Prosperity – A New Deal for the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc'<sup>11</sup> argued that the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc must be a national priority.

Underpinned by a range of detailed research, it outlined how the Arc is home to some of the country's strongest economies, that this has fuelled demand for homes, but that this has not been matched by housing supply.

It found the Arc is at the heart of the UK's knowledge economy, which reflects the concentration of world-leading universities and research facilities, internationally significant business clusters, a track record in innovation and entrepreneurship and the skills of its workforce. In Oxfordshire, this reflects the presence of Oxford University which is one of the top four in the world; the John Radcliffe and Churchill teaching hospitals, which drive internationally-significant clinical and medical developments; and the broader clustering in the area known as Science Vale (in and around Oxford, Didcot and Abingdon) of bioscience and medical technologies; physical sciences; telecommunications, computer hardware and software; and engineering and electronics.

This area is the location of long-established companies such as Oxford Instruments (founded in 1959), high profile companies such as Williams F1;

<sup>10</sup> Planning Practice Guidance ID 2a-027-20190220

<sup>11</sup> Published in November 2017.

relatively new companies experiencing very rapid growth (e.g. Immunocore) and developing technologies which could have global impact. Oxfordshire, and in particular the ‘knowledge spine’ which runs north-south through the centre of the county – is thus host to substantive high-tech science and innovation cluster.

The NIC report sets out that the number of patent applications in 2015 in Oxford was four times greater than the UK average; and the City is one of only two UK cities in the European top 20 for innovation. A strong enterprise culture together with the track record of the universities supports research and innovation, and the commercialisation of this.

The report outlines that fundamental to this success has been the skills of the workforce; describing Oxford for instance as having the most highly qualified workforces in the country with more than 60% of workers qualified to degree level or higher. Indeed, Centre for Cities has identified Oxford as having one of the highest concentration of highly skilled residents in Europe.<sup>12</sup>

The combination of innovation, enterprise and a highly-skilled workforce has supported Oxford (as well as Cambridge and Milton Keynes) to be amongst the most productive and fastest growing of main towns and cities across the UK. The NIC found, based on Centre for Cities research, that the contribution of places such as Oxford to UK economic performance, trading accounts and tax revenues is both significant and increasing.

The NIC stated strong economic assets and enterprise culture have supported strong economic performance, fuelling a demand for homes across the Arc which has not been matched by supply.

These issues underpinned the conclusion reached in the NIC report that rates of housebuilding across the Arc as a whole would need to double if the Arc is to achieve its economic potential. It sets out that this needs to form part of a package of investment – including in infrastructure; skills development; science, research and innovation; business infrastructure and the continued development of the Arc’s world-leading sectors.

The report goes on to state a clear spatial vision for the Arc over the next 50 years should be articulated. This should be jointly owned and led by local stakeholders, and by Government. It should provide an expression of the Arc’s long-term economic, physical and social development, as well as identify locations for growth and investment and enabling strategic infrastructure.

## **2.4 Government’s response to the NIC report**

Following the publication of the NIC’s report in November 2017, the Government issued a detailed response to the NIC’s recommendations in October 2018. This is relevant to the preparation of Local Plans across the Arc, as the NPPF in Paragraph 6 is clear that endorsed recommendations of the NIC may be material when preparing plans or deciding applications.

In responding to the NIC report, the Government welcomed it and its recommendations; recognising that:

<sup>12</sup> Centre for Cities (2016), *Competing with the Continent*.

*“With the right interventions and investment, we believe there is a transformational opportunity to amplify the Arc’s position as a world-leading economic place and support the government’s Industrial Strategy aim to boost the productivity and earning power of people across the UK”.<sup>13</sup>*

The Government acknowledged that the Arc is a globally significant place and has the potential to become even greater. In order to achieve this, the Government has designated the Arc as a key economic priority and recognised that a step change in housing delivery would be required to support this.

Since 2018, Government has been considering the delivery of transformational infrastructure projects to improve east-west connectivity across the Arc, most notably by completing the £1bn East West Rail scheme as well as potential road infrastructure projects. Proposals for an Oxford-Cambridge Expressway are however currently on hold.

The Government also recognised in its response that to build the one million new homes between 2016-2050 – what the NIC identified as the potential of the Arc - and deliver its full economic potential of the Arc, the planning and delivery of business, housing and infrastructure should be coordinated across the Arc.

In its 2020 budget, the Government announced plans to develop a long-term Spatial Framework to support strategic planning in the OxCam Arc, setting out that this would support the area’s future economic success and the delivery of the new homes required by this growth up to 2050 and beyond. There is clear potential for the Oxfordshire Plan to influence the development of the Spatial Framework (and vice-versa).

In the context of Oxfordshire’s location within the Oxford-Milton Keynes-Cambridge Arc and the Government’s ambitions for the Arc, it is reasonable for the Oxfordshire Plan to consider and test the inter-relationship between economic growth and housing need.

The Ox-Cam Arc reports do not however provide any specific guidance on how to calculate what level of housing provision should be planned for, or what share of the 1 million homes ambition might be delivered in Oxfordshire. This is for the Oxfordshire Plan to consider.

## 2.5 Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal

The six Oxfordshire councils (Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire county Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council) and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership announced a Housing and Growth Deal with Government on 22nd November 2017.

The deal is relevant in establishing a joint commitment to:

- The preparation, submission and adoption, subject to the examination process, of a joint statutory spatial plan covering all six local authorities in Oxfordshire (‘the Oxfordshire Plan’);

<sup>13</sup> HM Treasury (2018) Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc Study: government response, p. 1

- Planning for and supporting the delivery of 100,000 new homes between 2011 and 2031 – backed up with a credible plan for delivery, outlining interim milestones and targets as agreed with the HCA and Government.
- Funding of up to £215m funding from Government to support growth, which comprises £60m for affordable housing, £150m for infrastructure improvements and £5m resource funding to get a joint plan in place and support housing delivery.

The commitment to deliver 100,000 homes to 2031 has informed the preparation of the current round of Local Plans across the 5 Oxfordshire authorities, which collectively plan to meet this.<sup>14</sup>

The Oxfordshire Plan, which this report has been prepared to inform, is principally looking at longer-term strategic development beyond these timeframes to 2050; not least as major strategic growth which is being considered now through the Oxfordshire Plan is unlikely to deliver significant new development on the ground by 2031.

The Growth Deal does not specify what rate of development should be planned for in Oxfordshire beyond 2031. This will be for the Oxfordshire Plan to consider.

## 2.6 Housing and Infrastructure Fund (HIF)

Linked to the Housing and Growth Deal, Oxfordshire county Council has secured £218 million of funding from the Housing and Infrastructure Fund to support the delivery of the Didcot Garden Town. This will contribute to the delivery of:

- A4130 widening from A34 Milton Interchange towards Didcot;
- A new “*Science Bridge*” over the A4130, Great Western Railway Line and Milton Road into the former Didcot A Power Station site;
- A new Culham to Didcot river crossing between the A415 and A413; and
- A Clifton Hampden Bypass.

In November 2019, £102 million of Housing Infrastructure Funding was also secured to make major improvements to the A40 and ease congestion including the dualling of the A40 between Witney and the proposed Eynsham Park and Ryde; and delivery of a westbound bus lane from Oxford to Eynsham.

This infrastructure investment is intended to support the delivery of housing and employment development schemes in the existing round of Local Plans (either adopted or emerging).

## 2.7 Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (LIS)

The Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) was published by the Government in July 2019, responding to the UK Industrial Strategy. The NPPF

<sup>14</sup> South Oxfordshire's Local Plan and the Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan are at Examination at the time of writing. Plans in Oxford, Vale of White Horse and West Oxfordshire have been adopted.

states in Para 81 that plan-making should have regard to local industrial strategies in setting out an economic vision and strategy for the area.

The LIS builds upon the significant business investment over recent years through the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership. Over £600m worth of government and European funds have been secured through Growth Deals, a City Deal, European Structural Investment Funds and Infrastructure Funds – all part of an overall investment programme in Oxfordshire worth £2.2bn.

The LIS sets out an ambitious economic strategy up to 2040 with the aim of positioning Oxfordshire as one of the top three innovation ecosystems in the world and as a leading science and technology cluster. The important economic sectors, assets and growth opportunities identified in the strategy are spread across the whole of Oxfordshire with the main towns forming important parts of the economy. These include motorsport technologies around Banbury, Bicester and Grove; life sciences and creative industries around Milton Park and Didcot; and smart living technologies at the Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village.

The Oxfordshire LIS presents a long-term framework against which private and public sector investment decisions can be assessed, grouped around the five foundations of productivity:

- Places - Develop Oxfordshire as a living laboratory to help solve the UK's grand challenges
- Business environment - Become a powerhouse for commercialising transformative technologies
- Infrastructure - Enable greater connectivity and accessibility especially across key growth locations
- Ideas - Establish a globally connected innovation economy
- People - Develop a more responsive skill system creating better opportunities for all

The Oxfordshire LIS will also partly inform future local authority-level industrial strategies, such as the Cherwell Industrial Strategy which is currently being prepared as a 10-year strategy to facilitate a supportive business environment, help encourage enterprise and continued economic prosperity.

A detailed review of the Oxfordshire LIS and associated sector growth trajectories is provided later in this report in *Chapter 8*.

## 2.8 Conclusions

There are important national and sub-regional policy influences which are relevant in considering housing and economic development needs in Oxfordshire.

National policy sets out that the Standard Method set out in Planning Practice Guidance is the starting point for considering housing needs. The Housing and Growth Deal agreed between the Oxfordshire Councils and Government sets out that higher levels of growth will be planned for to 2031; but does not address the period beyond 2031 – this will be for the Oxfordshire Plan to consider.

Wider influences on considering the need for housing and employment land include Oxfordshire's economic dynamics, potential strategic infrastructure investment, and the county's location within the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc.

The National Infrastructure Commission has recognised Oxfordshire's economic dynamism and growth potential, and provision of sufficient housing and employment land are relevant considerations if its growth potential is to be realised. There is an opportunity for the Oxfordshire Plan to influence and shape the forthcoming Spatial Framework for the Arc.

## 3 Demographic Trends

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter considers recent demographic trends in Oxfordshire, in particular focussing on population size and age structure, as well as an understanding of how this has changed over time. Demographic dynamics are an input to the consideration of overall housing need within the Standard Method and the analysis in this chapter therefore informs the assessment of housing need in *Chapter 7*.

The latest official data about population change in Oxfordshire is contained within ONS mid-year population estimates (MYE) up to mid-2018 (published in 2019). The 2018 Mid-Year Population Estimates were the latest available at the time when this report was drafted.

Table 3.1.1 below shows the estimated population in each local authority and the proportion of the Oxfordshire total this amounts to. As of mid-2018, the population of Oxfordshire was estimated to be 687,500, with Oxford and Cherwell being the largest local authorities (and West Oxfordshire the smallest).

**Table 3.1.1: Estimated population by local authority, 2018**

	Estimated population, 2018	% of population, 2018
Cherwell	149,161	21.7%
Oxford	154,327	22.4%
South Oxfordshire	140,504	20.4%
Vale of White Horse	133,732	19.5%
West Oxfordshire	109,800	16.0%
<b>Oxfordshire</b>	<b>687,524</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: ONS.

### 3.2 Age structure

Table 3.2.1 below shows Oxfordshire's population age structure in five-year age bands compared to the regional and national profile. The data shows a similar age structure in Oxfordshire to the South East and to England, although there is a particular spike in the 20-24 age group which is likely to be related to the student population of Oxford.

**Table 3.2.1: Population profile in Oxfordshire, the South East and England, 2018**

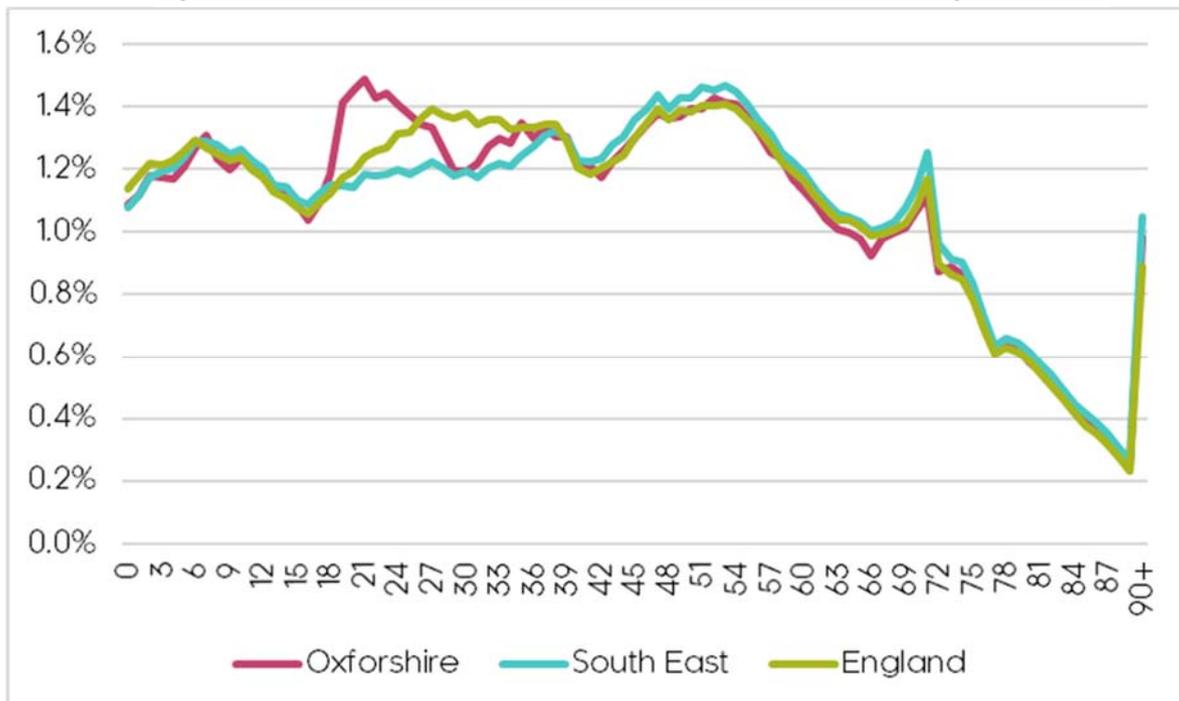
	Oxfordshire		South East	England
	Population	% of population	% of population	% of population
0-4	39,398	5.7%	5.8%	6.0%
5-9	42,783	6.2%	6.3%	6.3%
10-14	40,453	5.9%	6.0%	5.8%
15-19	40,021	5.8%	5.6%	5.5%
20-24	49,678	7.2%	5.9%	6.3%
25-29	44,772	6.5%	6.0%	6.8%
30-34	43,131	6.3%	6.0%	6.8%
35-39	45,310	6.6%	6.4%	6.6%

40-44	41,766	6.1%	6.3%	6.1%
45-49	46,432	6.8%	7.0%	6.8%
50-54	48,411	7.0%	7.3%	7.0%
55-59	43,672	6.4%	6.6%	6.4%
60-64	36,270	5.3%	5.5%	5.4%
65-69	33,692	4.9%	5.2%	5.0%
70-74	33,070	4.8%	5.2%	4.9%
75-79	23,221	3.4%	3.5%	3.3%
80-84	17,597	2.6%	2.7%	2.5%
85+	17,847	2.6%	2.8%	2.4%
All Ages	687,524	-	-	-

Source: ONS.

The differences between Oxfordshire and other areas can more clearly be seen in Figure 3.2.1 below which considers the age structure by single year of age. This shows for ages up to about 15 and from about 40 onwards that the profile of the county is relatively similar to that seen in the South East and England as a whole. A higher proportion of Oxfordshire’s population is however aged between 18-25 than is the case nationally; and there are more people in the late 20s and early 30s relative to the profile across the South East region. This influences the effects of affordability pressures within the county, which particularly affect younger households who are less likely to own a home.

Figure 3.2.1: Population profile in Oxfordshire, the South East and England, 2018



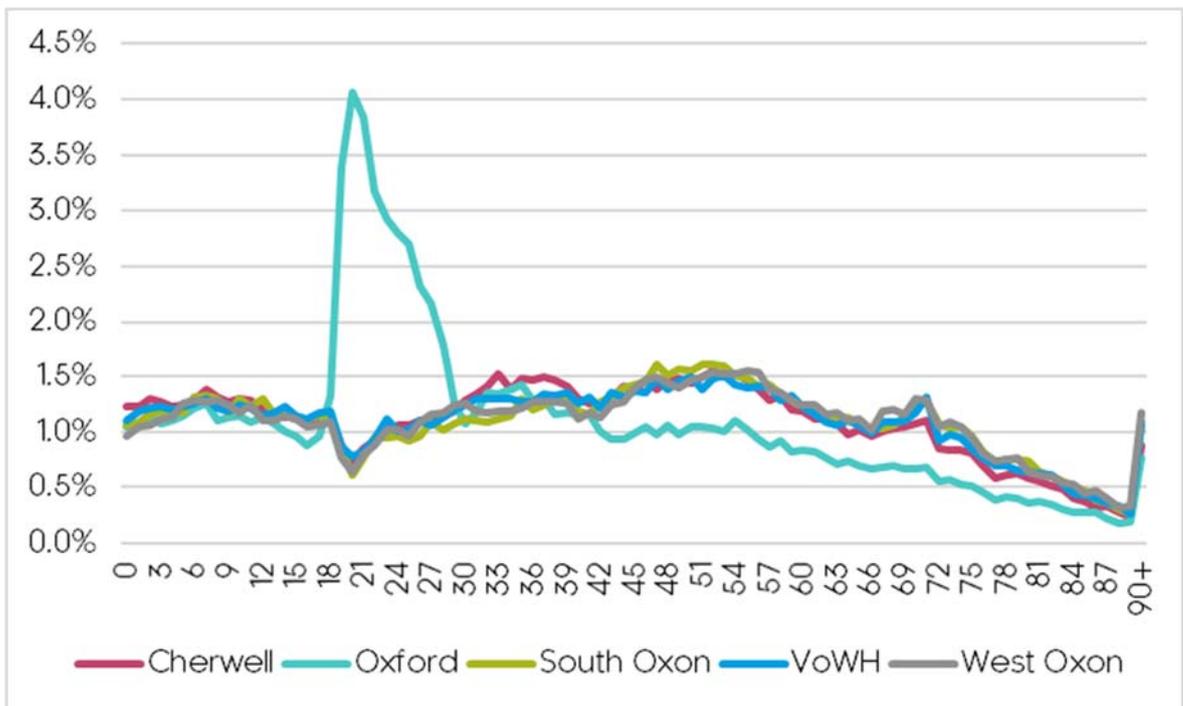
Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

The spike for student age groups can more clearly be seen when looking at individual local authorities (Figure 3.2.2. Note: South and West Oxfordshire abbreviated to South and West Oxon. Vale of White Horse abbreviated to VoWH). Oxford has a notably higher population in all age groups from about 18/19 up to 28/29. Outside of Oxford, the four authorities show a slight dip in

population around age 20 which will be related to people in these areas leaving to go to university in other areas.

The five local authorities have very similar population structure, with Oxford having a notably lower proportion of people aged over about 40, due to higher numbers in key student age groups. Cherwell has slightly higher numbers of people aged 29-39 but aside from this, the population structure in these four authorities is relatively similar.

**Figure 3.2.2: Population profile of local authorities in Oxfordshire, 2018**



Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

The analysis in Table 3.2.2 summarises the above information by assigning population to three broad age groups: a) children (0-16), b) working-age (16-65) and c) pensionable age (65+). This analysis shows that, compared with the region and national position, Oxfordshire has a broadly similar age structure.

**Table 3.2.2: Summary age bands in Oxfordshire, the South East and England, 2018**

	Oxfordshire		South East	England
	Population	% of population	% of population	% of population
Under 16	130,136	18.9%	19.2%	19.2%
16-64	431,961	62.8%	61.5%	62.6%
65+	125,427	18.2%	19.3%	18.2%
All Ages	687,524	-	-	-

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

However, if this analysis is repeated for individual authorities it is again clear that the age profile in Oxford is somewhat different (Table 3.2.3). In particular, the proportion of people aged 65 and over is only 12%, compared with 18% across the county and up to 22% in West Oxfordshire. With Oxford also having a slightly lower proportion of people aged under 16, it is the case that a high proportion of the population age within the 16-64 age band (70% of Oxford’s population, compared with 63% across the county).

**Table 3.2.3: Summary age bands of local authorities in Oxfordshire, 2018**

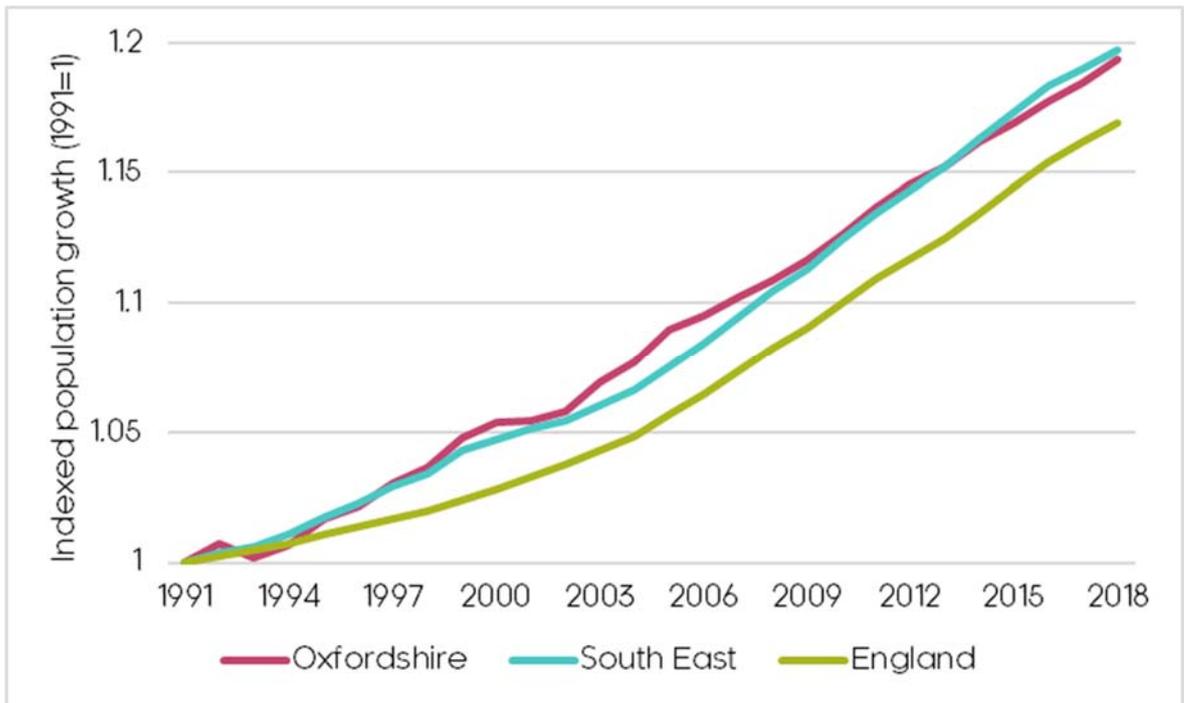
	Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxon	VoWH	West Oxon
Under 16	20.0%	17.7%	19.2%	19.3%	18.5%
16-64	62.0%	70.2%	59.9%	60.7%	59.9%
65+	18.1%	12.2%	20.9%	20.0%	21.5%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

### 3.3 Past population growth

Figure 3.3.1 below appraises population growth in the period from 1991 to 2018. Over this period the population of Oxfordshire has been rising, broadly tracking changes seen regionally. Population growth has however been above that seen for England as a whole. It is estimated that the population of the county had risen by 19% from 1991 levels, which compares to a 20% rise across the region and a 17% increase nationally.

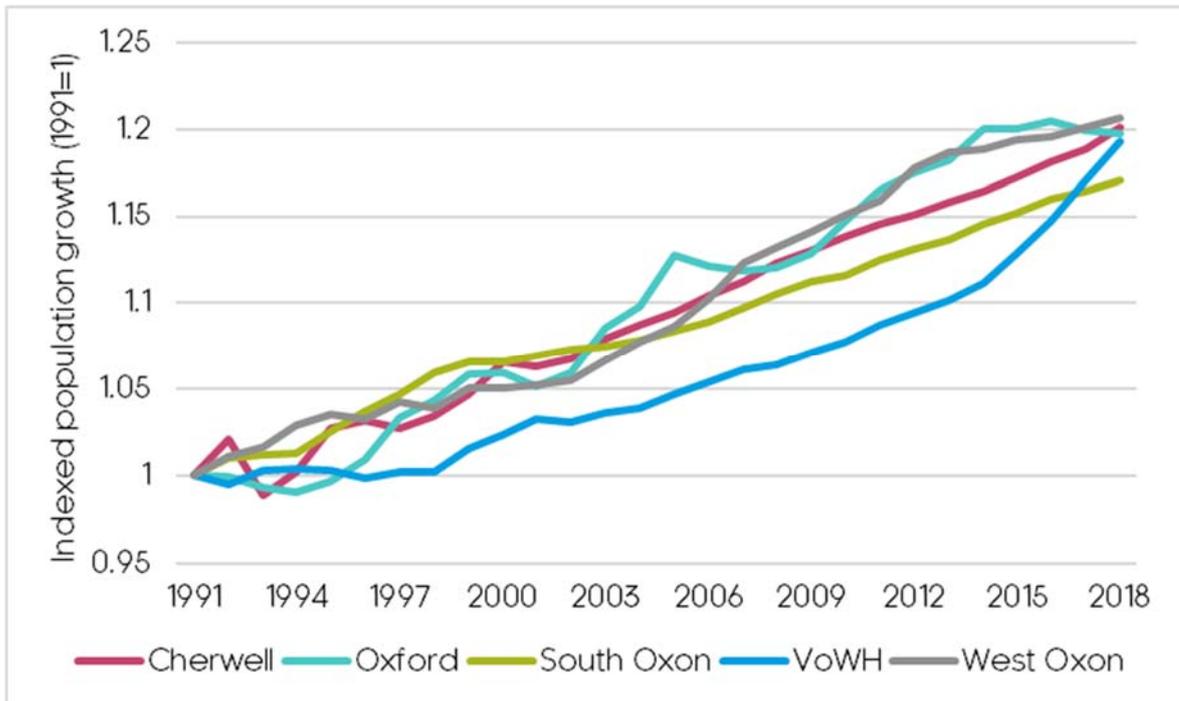
**Figure 3.3.1: Indexed population change in Oxfordshire, the South East and England, 1991-2018**



Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

When looking at individual local authorities a slightly different picture emerges. As shown in Figure 3.3.2, population growth varies modestly from 17% in South Oxfordshire up to 21% in West Oxfordshire over the 1991-2018 period. However, the changes to population have been far from uniform. Of particular note are the strong growth seen in Vale of White Horse over the past few years along with little change observed in Oxford City (based on published ONS data)<sup>15</sup>. These differentials are influenced in part by planning policies and capacity for new housing, with the recent upturn in housing delivery in Vale of the White Horse for instance influenced by its adoption of a new Local Plan planning for higher housing growth in December 2016.

<sup>15</sup> Alternative measure of population in Oxford are considered later in this section.

**Figure 3.3.2: Indexed population change for local authorities in Oxfordshire, 1991-2018**

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

This analysis is taken forward by looking at population changes in more recent years over the 2011-18 period (Table 3.3.1). The starting point being chosen as it is the last date from which population data has been consolidated with a 'known' source (i.e. the 2011 Census). The 2011-18 period also allows for comparison with Patient Register data, which provides an alternative source for considering changes to the size and structure of the population.

Over the 7-year period (2011-18), the MYE data suggests that the population of the county has risen by 5%. Within this there is an increase of 10% in Vale of White Horse and a much smaller increase for Oxford (less than 3%).

**Table 3.3.1: Population change for local authorities in Oxfordshire, 1991-2018**

	Population (2011)	Population (2018)	Change	% change
Cherwell	142,252	149,161	6,909	4.9%
Oxford	150,245	154,327	4,082	2.7%
South Oxon	134,961	140,504	5,543	4.1%
VoWH	121,891	133,732	11,841	9.7%
West Oxon	105,442	109,800	4,358	4.1%
Oxfordshire	654,791	687,524	32,733	5.0%
South East	8,652,784	9,133,625	480,841	5.6%
England	53,107,169	55,977,178	2,870,009	5.4%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Table 3.3.2 below shows population change by age (again for the 2011-18 period). This generally identifies the greatest increases to be in older age groups (aged 65 and over) along with some notable population increases in the 50-54 and 55-59 age groups. The county also saw some population declines, particularly those aged 40-44.

**Table 3.3.2: Population change by 5-year age bands in Oxfordshire, 1991-2018**

	Population (2011)	Population (2018)	Change (2011- 18)	% change (2011-18)
0-4	41,150	39,398	-1,752	-4.3%
5-9	36,257	42,783	6,526	18.0%
10-14	37,303	40,453	3,150	8.4%
15-19	41,788	40,021	-1,767	-4.2%
20-24	47,641	49,678	2,037	4.3%
25-29	46,654	44,772	-1,882	-4.0%
30-34	43,991	43,131	-860	-2.0%
35-39	43,545	45,310	1,765	4.1%
40-44	47,869	41,766	-6,103	-12.7%
45-49	48,424	46,432	-1,992	-4.1%
50-54	41,605	48,411	6,806	16.4%
55-59	35,992	43,672	7,680	21.3%
60-64	37,933	36,270	-1,663	-4.4%
65-69	30,761	33,692	2,931	9.5%
70-74	24,163	33,070	8,907	36.9%
75-79	19,828	23,221	3,393	17.1%
80-84	15,021	17,597	2,576	17.1%
85+	14,866	17,847	2,981	20.1%
All Ages	654,791	687,524	32,733	5.0%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

This information has been summarised into three broad age bands in Table 3.3.3 to ease comparison between areas. Table 3.3.3 is for the whole county. This shows an increase in the number of children living in the county (increasing by about 6%) along with a small increase in the 'working-age' population (1%). The key driver of population growth has therefore been in the 65 and over age group, which between 2011 and 2018 saw a population increase of about 20,800 people: this age group increasing in size by 20% over the 7-year period. The modest growth in the core working-age population is a potential constraint on economic performance.

**Table 3.3.3: Population change by broad age group in Oxfordshire, 2011-18**

	Population (2011)	Population (2018)	Change (2011- 18)	% change (2011-18)
Under 16	122,334	130,136	7,802	6.4%
16-64	427,818	431,961	4,143	1.0%
65+	104,639	125,427	20,788	19.9%
All ages	654,791	687,524	32,733	5.0%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Table 3.3.4 below shows the same information for each local authority. All areas have seen a notable increase in the population aged 65 and over, most notably in Cherwell (23% increase). Vale of White Horse saw the largest increases in the number of people aged under 16 and also in the 16-64 age group – this will be linked to this area seeing the highest overall increase in housing delivery and associated population since 2011. In contrast, both Oxford and West Oxfordshire saw small declines in the number of people

aged 16-64 although the data does suggest a notable increase (of about 9%) in the population aged under 16 in the City.

**Table 3.3.4: Population change by broad age group for local authorities, 2011-18**

	Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxon	VoWH	West Oxon
Under 16	4.7%	8.6%	3.3%	11.3%	4.3%
16-64	0.6%	-0.1%	0.0%	5.7%	-1.0%
65+	22.9%	12.4%	19.1%	22.0%	21.4%
All ages	4.9%	2.7%	4.1%	9.7%	4.1%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

### 3.4 Comparing estimates of population growth

The analysis above has focussed on using data from the ONS mid-year population estimates. It is worthwhile comparing estimates of population change with those from an alternative source (the Patient Register (PR)). The PR data is provided by ONS with their MYE releases by way of a comparator tool spreadsheet.

It should be noted that it is not recommended to use the PR data to establish the size of the population at a point in time: this is because this source does tend to overstate population as some people may be registered with a GP in more than one location – this tends to particularly impact on areas with larger numbers of younger people and student populations. However, the PR data can be a useful cross-checking tool in looking at the likely accuracy of population change as shown in the MYE. Table 3.4.1 shows estimated population change from each of these sources over the 2011-18 period.

**Table 3.4.1: Comparison of ONS MYE with population estimates from the Patient Register**

		2011	2018	Change	% change
Cherwell	MYE	142,270	149,150	6,880	4.8%
	<i>Patient Register</i>	146,750	160,410	13,660	9.3%
Oxford	MYE	150,300	154,340	4,040	2.7%
	<i>Patient Register</i>	173,730	198,220	24,490	14.1%
South Oxon	MYE	134,970	140,540	5,570	4.1%
	<i>Patient Register</i>	138,630	147,620	8,990	6.5%
VoWH	MYE	121,890	133,740	11,850	9.7%
	<i>Patient Register</i>	125,250	137,950	12,700	10.1%
West Oxon	MYE	105,460	109,770	4,310	4.1%
	<i>Patient Register</i>	105,900	111,660	5,760	5.4%
Oxfordshire	MYE	654,890	687,540	32,650	5.0%
	<i>Patient Register</i>	690,260	755,860	65,600	9.5%
South East	MYE	8,652,820	9,133,630	480,810	5.6%
	<i>Patient Register</i>	8,937,030	9,602,900	665,870	7.5%
England	MYE	53,107,200	55,977,180	2,869,980	5.4%
	<i>Patient Register</i>	55,312,750	59,456,460	4,143,710	7.5%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Initially focussing on Oxfordshire, the MYE data has estimated a population growth of 5%, however the PR data puts this at closer to 10%, this may suggest that the MYE data has underestimated past population growth to some extent. It does however need to be noted for both the South East and nationally that the PR data does suggest a much higher level of population

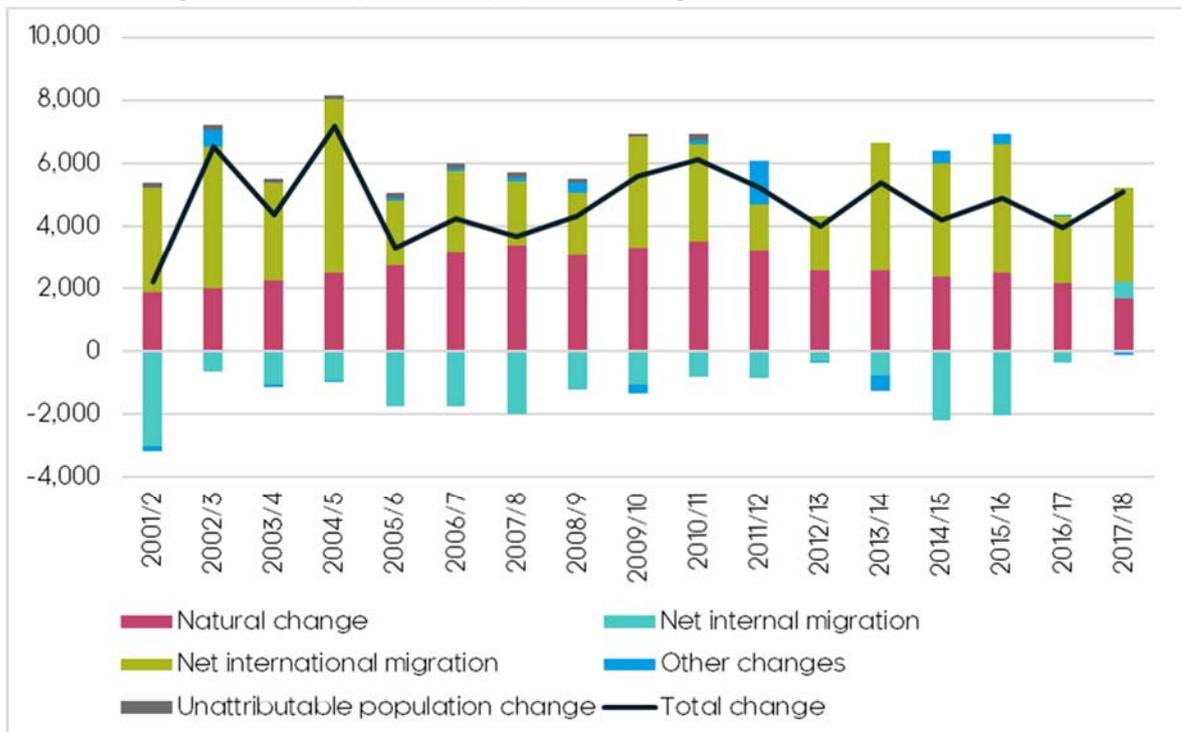
growth (albeit a lower difference between sources than shown in Oxfordshire) meaning that the patient register data is likely to over-estimate overall population growth (as some people move away from the area and do not re-register doctors).

When looking at individual local authorities, the differences between the sources are more notable. In particular, it can be observed that whilst the MYE showed population growth of 3% in Oxford (the lowest in the county) the PR data shows an increase of 14% (the highest in the county). In Vale of White Horse, which had the highest population increase in the MYEs, the difference between MYE and PR changes is relatively small. The high degree of difference in Oxford in particular suggests that Oxford’s population growth could have been under-estimated in the MYEs.

### 3.5 Components of population change

Population change is largely driven by natural change (births minus deaths) and migration, although within ONS data there is also a small ‘other changes’ category (mainly related to armed forces and prison populations) and an ‘unattributable population change’ (UPC) category. UPC is an adjustment made by ONS to mid-year population estimates where Census data suggests that population growth had either been over- or under-estimated in the period between the 2001 and 2011 Census. Because UPC links back to Census data, a figure is only provided for 2001 to 2011.

Figure 3.5.1: Components of population change in Oxfordshire, 2001-18



Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

As shown in Figure 3.5.1 above and Table 3.5.1 below, natural change has been positive in Oxfordshire throughout the period, averaging a positive growth of around 2,400 people over the past 7-years. However, natural change has been falling over this period, due to a combination of both a

reduction in the number of births and an increase in deaths. This is influenced by changes in the population age structure.

International migration is positive for all years studied and can be quite variable over time. For the past 7-years net international migration has averaged 2,900 people per year. In contrast, internal (domestic) migration has generally been negative, in other words more people move from Oxfordshire to other parts of the Country than move to Oxfordshire. It is notable that the last year for which data exists (2017-18) is the only year to show a positive net domestic migration.

**Table 3.5.1: Components of population change in Oxfordshire, 2001-18**

Year	Natural change	Net internal migration	Net international migration	Other changes	Other (un-attributable)	Total population change
2001/2	1,895	-3,016	3,338	-163	160	<b>2,214</b>
2002/3	1,981	-659	4,543	530	145	<b>6,540</b>
2003/4	2,249	-1,056	3,117	-66	137	<b>4,381</b>
2004/5	2,496	-926	5,517	-54	123	<b>7,156</b>
2005/6	2,715	-1,730	2,091	96	133	<b>3,305</b>
2006/7	3,142	-1,758	2,608	87	142	<b>4,221</b>
2007/8	3,397	-2,004	2,038	99	160	<b>3,690</b>
2008/9	3,058	-1,208	2,014	307	140	<b>4,311</b>
2009/10	3,297	-1,052	3,564	-288	72	<b>5,593</b>
2010/11	3,513	-807	3,088	125	184	<b>6,103</b>
2011/12	3,223	-851	1,467	1,379	0	<b>5,218</b>
2012/13	2,566	-318	1,756	-15	0	<b>3,989</b>
2013/14	2,567	-753	4,071	-506	0	<b>5,379</b>
2014/15	2,366	-2,189	3,644	392	0	<b>4,213</b>
2015/16	2,507	-2,018	4,075	330	0	<b>4,894</b>
2016/17	2,157	-374	2,176	1	0	<b>3,960</b>
2017/18	1,673	544	2,985	-122	0	<b>5,080</b>

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Other changes are quite small and variable over time, whilst the data shows a modest (and positive) level of UPC. The positive UPC suggests that previous ONS components of change data may have under-estimated population growth in the county between 2001-11, although the numbers involved are not substantial (and they are also now somewhat historic). Similar tables have been produced for the individual local authorities in Oxfordshire. These can be found in *Appendix A: Components of Population Change by Local Authority*.

As noted above, there was also a considerable amount of movement within Oxfordshire. Table 3.5.2 shows a matrix of moves between the different local authorities in the county (on a per annum basis for the 5-year period to mid-2018), while Table 3.5.3 summarises this into overall in- and out-flows for each local authority. Table 3.5.2 shows for example that an average of 1,168 people moved from Oxford to Cherwell in the period, with 493 moving in the other direction (net migration to Cherwell of 675 people).

When the matrix data is summarised (Table 3.5.3), it can be seen that there is a substantial net out-migration from Oxford to other parts of the county (also a

more modest net out-migration from South Oxfordshire). Net migration was strongest to Vale of White Horse and Cherwell.

**Table 3.5.2: Origin and destination of population moving local authority within Oxfordshire, 2013-18**

		Origin				
		Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxon	VoWH	West Oxon
Destination	Cherwell	-	1,168	290	278	503
	Oxford	493	-	557	778	314
	South Oxon	207	939	-	790	124
	VoWH	261	1,641	1,109	-	361
	West Oxon	566	647	160	433	-

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

**Table 3.5.3: Moves to and from each local authority in Oxfordshire (moves within Oxfordshire only), 2018**

	Origin	Destination	Net moves to LA
Cherwell	1,527	2,239	712
Oxford	4,394	2,141	-2,253
South Oxon	2,116	2,060	-56
VoWH	2,279	3,371	1,092
West Oxon	1,301	1,806	504

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

A similar analysis can be carried out using 2011 Census data. This has the advantage of being a more complete data set, but the disadvantage that the information is more dated. Generally, the patterns of migration are the same, with net movements from Oxford and South Oxfordshire, along with net moves to the other three local authority areas. The volume of moves shown in the Census is slightly somewhat lower than recorded by ONS in the 2013-18 period.

**Table 3.5.4: Origin and destination of population moving local authority within Oxfordshire, 2011**

		Origin				
		Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxon	VoWH	West Oxon
Destination	Cherwell	-	959	232	263	464
	Oxford	614	-	706	950	372
	South Oxon	215	667	-	612	161
	VoWH	185	1,078	841	-	370
	West Oxon	443	556	199	422	-

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

**Table 3.5.5: Moves to and from each local authority in Oxfordshire (moves within Oxfordshire only) 2011**

	Origin	Destination	Net moves to LA
Cherwell	1,457	1,918	461
Oxford	3,260	2,642	-618
South Oxon	1,978	1,655	-323
VoWH	2,247	2,474	227
West Oxon	1,367	1,620	253

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Using the Census source, it is also possible to look at the origins and destinations of migrants to and from Oxfordshire. Table 3.5.6 below shows moves to/from the county from neighbouring authorities plus details for all regions in the United Kingdom. In the period considered in the Census (2010-11) it can be seen that migration was virtually in balance (30,081 people moved to Oxfordshire and 30,082 moved out).

**Table 3.5.6: Locations of migrants moving to and from Oxfordshire, 2011**

<b>Local authorities</b>	Moved from Oxfordshire to...	Moved to Oxfordshire from...	Net migration to Oxfordshire
Cotswold	430	369	-61
Swindon	712	410	-302
Stratford-on-Avon	334	340	6
South Northamptonshire	561	497	-64
Aylesbury Vale	846	843	-3
Reading	689	656	-33
West Berkshire	558	566	8
Wokingham	284	351	67
Wycombe	479	693	214
<b>Regions and other</b>	Moved from Oxfordshire to...	Moved to Oxfordshire from...	Net migration to Oxfordshire
East	1,934	2,609	675
Rest of East Midlands	1,911	1,718	-193
London	5,709	5,301	-408
North East	482	479	-3
North West	1,278	1,407	129
Northern Ireland	156	217	61
Scotland	736	955	219
Rest of South East	4,214	4,977	763
Rest of South West	4,374	3,522	-852
Wales	1,024	897	-127
Rest of West Midlands	2,199	2,068	-131
Yorkshire and The Humber	1,172	1,206	34
Total UK moves	30,082	30,081	-1
Moved from abroad	N/A	11,537	N/A

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Looking locally, the data suggests a relatively strong move of people to Swindon and stronger net in-migration from Wycombe. The analysis tends to show an east/west population movement – i.e. people generally moving from authorities to the east and moving out to the west. Looking more widely, the analysis shows quite a strong net migration from the East of England region and also the rest of the South East (i.e. excluding neighbouring authorities). The main net out migration is to the rest of the South West region, and there was also a modest level of net migration to London.

Analysis of the Census data also show (as per earlier components of change data) that the vast majority of international migrants move to Oxford City (58% of all in-migrants). Generally, the profile of the countries people come from is similar in different locations although the data does show a number of trends:

- A high proportion of Polish and American (USA) migrants to Cherwell

- A high level of international migrants to Oxford, from a range of international locations
- A high proportion of German migrants to Vale of White Horse

In interpreting this data it does need to be remembered that the information is from 2011 and could well have changed slightly in more recent years, it is also possible that there could be further changes impacting on the study area such as Global Talent Research Visas. Levels of international migration should therefore be monitored, including through any new releases of data from ONS.

**Table 3.5.7: Previous location of international migrants to Oxfordshire, 2011**

	Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxon	VoWH	West Oxon	Oxfordshire
Ireland	35	151	36	35	17	<b>274</b>
France	45	416	71	117	63	<b>712</b>
Germany	110	443	58	304	38	<b>953</b>
Italy	26	172	32	16	12	<b>258</b>
Spain	70	281	65	49	60	<b>525</b>
Poland	172	199	71	25	41	<b>508</b>
Other EU	200	857	210	227	151	<b>1,645</b>
Other Europe	39	394	48	50	23	<b>554</b>
Africa	85	334	62	96	39	<b>616</b>
Middle East	38	226	50	54	37	<b>405</b>
China	28	324	14	13	16	<b>395</b>
Other Eastern Asia	33	325	29	38	20	<b>445</b>
India	75	262	29	29	6	<b>401</b>
Other Southern Asia	35	231	24	44	14	<b>348</b>
South-East Asia	49	404	54	58	41	<b>606</b>
USA	259	840	114	112	57	<b>1,382</b>
Canada	16	252	21	42	30	<b>361</b>
Other North/Central/South America/Caribbean	20	223	34	39	15	<b>331</b>
Australia	65	295	70	102	68	<b>600</b>
New Zealand	25	105	26	27	19	<b>202</b>
Other Australasian/Oceania	6	5	0	4	1	<b>16</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,431</b>	<b>6,739</b>	<b>1,118</b>	<b>1,481</b>	<b>768</b>	<b>11,537</b>

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

**Table 3.5.8: Previous location of international migrants to Oxfordshire (% of total), 2011**

	Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxon	VoWH	West Oxon	Oxfordshire
Ireland	2.4%	2.2%	3.2%	2.4%	2.2%	<b>2.4%</b>
France	3.1%	6.2%	6.4%	7.9%	8.2%	<b>6.2%</b>
Germany	7.7%	6.6%	5.2%	20.5%	4.9%	<b>8.3%</b>
Italy	1.8%	2.6%	2.9%	1.1%	1.6%	<b>2.2%</b>
Spain	4.9%	4.2%	5.8%	3.3%	7.8%	<b>4.6%</b>
Poland	12.0%	3.0%	6.4%	1.7%	5.3%	<b>4.4%</b>
Other EU	14.0%	12.7%	18.8%	15.3%	19.7%	<b>14.3%</b>
Other Europe	2.7%	5.8%	4.3%	3.4%	3.0%	<b>4.8%</b>

Africa	5.9%	5.0%	5.5%	6.5%	5.1%	<b>5.3%</b>
Middle East	2.7%	3.4%	4.5%	3.6%	4.8%	<b>3.5%</b>
China	2.0%	4.8%	1.3%	0.9%	2.1%	<b>3.4%</b>
Other Eastern Asia	2.3%	4.8%	2.6%	2.6%	2.6%	<b>3.9%</b>
India	5.2%	3.9%	2.6%	2.0%	0.8%	<b>3.5%</b>
Other Southern Asia	2.4%	3.4%	2.1%	3.0%	1.8%	<b>3.0%</b>
South-East Asia	3.4%	6.0%	4.8%	3.9%	5.3%	<b>5.3%</b>
USA	18.1%	12.5%	10.2%	7.6%	7.4%	<b>12.0%</b>
Canada	1.1%	3.7%	1.9%	2.8%	3.9%	<b>3.1%</b>
Other North/Central/South America/Caribbean	1.4%	3.3%	3.0%	2.6%	2.0%	<b>2.9%</b>
Australia	4.5%	4.4%	6.3%	6.9%	8.9%	<b>5.2%</b>
New Zealand	1.7%	1.6%	2.3%	1.8%	2.5%	<b>1.8%</b>
Other Australasian/Oceania	0.4%	0.1%	0.0%	0.3%	0.1%	<b>0.1%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

### 3.6 Relationship between housing and migration

The final analysis in this chapter considers the relationship between housing completions and net migration. Logically, additional homes would enable increased migration into an area and so there might be expected to be some relationship between the two. Table 3.6.1 and Table 3.6.2 below look at completions and migration over the 7-year period 2011-18.

They show the number of completions in each area and net migration (as recorded by MYE and to include both internal and international migration) respectively. Overall, it can be seen that net additions to the stock are definitely in an upward direction, with net migration also being generally upward (although with some year-on-year variation).

**Table 3.6.1: Housing completions (net additions to dwelling stock) 2011-18**

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Cherwell	356	340	410	946	1,425	1,102	1,387
Oxford	228	213	215	332	440	435	373
South Oxon	508	475	484	600	608	722	936
VoWH	346	268	578	740	1,133	1,615	1,573
West Oxon	359	278	186	395	246	518	556
<b>Oxfordshire</b>	<b>1,797</b>	<b>1,574</b>	<b>1,873</b>	<b>3,013</b>	<b>3,852</b>	<b>4,392</b>	<b>4,825</b>

Source: Oxfordshire councils, Justin Gardner Consulting.

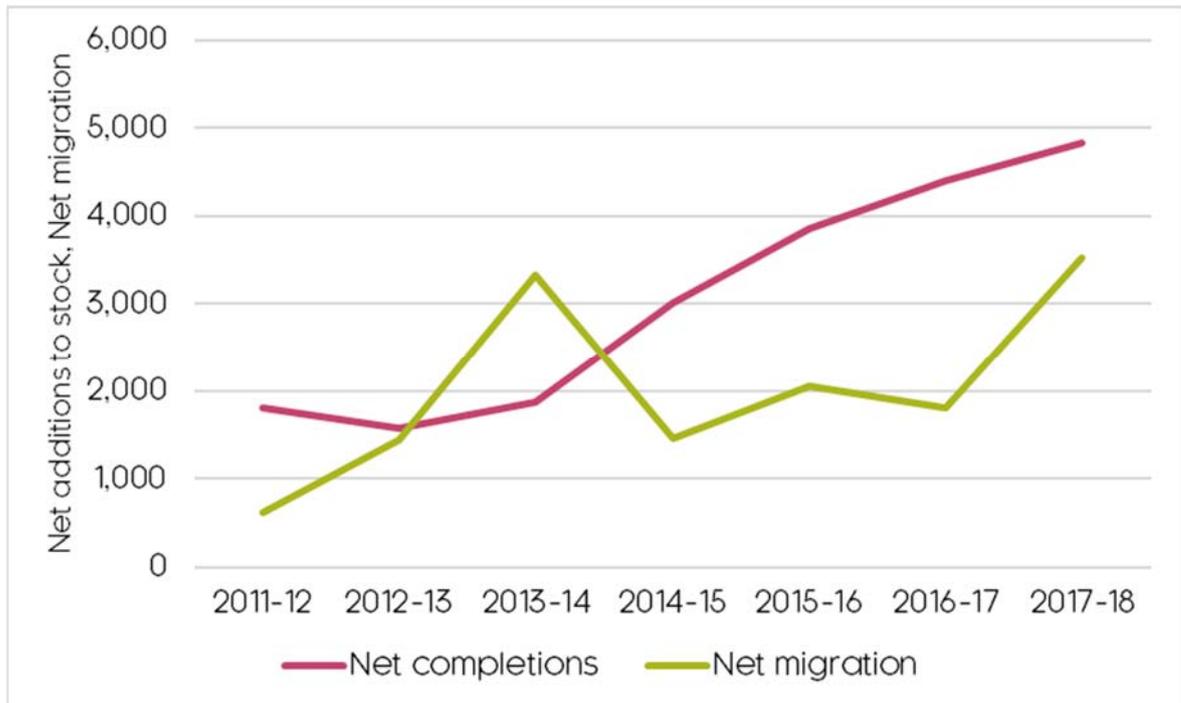
**Table 3.6.2: Net migration by local authority, 2011-18**

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Cherwell	-141	57	409	182	271	402	1,039
Oxford	96	-45	1,180	-853	-401	-1,492	-936
South Oxon	247	377	648	455	507	303	630
VoWH	5	633	892	1,505	1,695	2,101	2,190
West Oxon	409	416	189	166	-15	488	606
<b>Oxfordshire</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>1,438</b>	<b>3,318</b>	<b>1,455</b>	<b>2,057</b>	<b>1,802</b>	<b>3,529</b>

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Figure 3.6.1 shows the same data in graphical form (for the whole of the county). Whilst the relationship between completions and migration is far from perfect, it is clear that both are generally in an upwards trend. Were the local authorities continue to provide additional dwellings at the higher levels seen recently, then migration could also be expected to run at a higher level than typically seen in the past. This could be expected to support resident workforce growth (i.e. residents in employment).

**Figure 3.6.1: Housing completions and net migration in Oxfordshire, 2011-18**



Source: Oxfordshire Councils, ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

### 3.7 Official population projections

Having studied a range of data about past trends, the next stage is to consider future projections. The latest (2018-based) set of subnational population projections (SNPP) were published by ONS in March 2020. The projections provide estimates of the future population of local authorities, assuming a continuation of recent local trends in fertility, mortality and migration which are constrained to the assumptions made in the ONS 2018-based national population projections.

The 2018-based SNPP contain a number of assumptions that have been changed from the 2016-based version, these assumptions essentially filter down from changes made at a national level. The key differences are:

- ONS' long-term international migration assumptions have been revised upwards to 190,000 per annum compared to 165,000 in the 2016-based projections. This is based on a 25-year average;
- The latest projections assume that women will have fewer children, with the average number of children per woman expected to be 1.78 compared to 1.84 in the 2016-based projections; and

- Life expectancy increases are less than in the 2016-based projections as a consequence of the continued limited growth in life expectancy over the last two years.

Table 3.7.1 below shows projected population growth from 2018 to 2043<sup>16</sup> in Oxfordshire and a range of comparator areas. The data shows that the population of the county is projected to increase by around 9%; this is slightly higher than projected across the South East but below the national average growth (10%) – this is despite past trends typically showing similar patterns across these three areas. The average level of population growth in the projections is an increase of about 2,500 people per annum; substantially lower than seen over the past 7-years (average growth recorded by MYE of 4,700 people per annum).

**Table 3.7.1: Projected population growth in Oxfordshire, 2018-43 (2018-based SNPP)**

	Population, 2018	Population, 2043	Change in population, 2018-43	% change in population, 2018-43
Oxfordshire	687,524	750,634	63,110	9.2%
South East	9,133,625	9,933,760	800,135	8.8%
England	55,977,178	61,744,108	5,766,930	10.3%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

The equivalent figures for individual Oxfordshire authorities are shown in Table 3.7.2 below. This also shows the projected population growth to 2050.

**Table 3.7.2: Projected population growth in Oxfordshire, 2018-50 (2018-based SNPP)**

	2018	2020	2043	2050	% change, 2018-43	% change, 2020-50
Cherwell	149,161	150,862	162,278	165,325	8.8%	9.6%
Oxford	154,327	153,580	147,326	147,005	-4.5%	-4.3%
South Oxon	140,504	141,840	149,938	152,581	6.7%	7.6%
VoWH	133,732	137,175	156,825	160,545	17.3%	17.0%
West Oxon	109,800	110,391	114,068	115,483	3.9%	4.6%
<b>Oxfordshire</b>	<b>687,524</b>	<b>693,848</b>	<b>730,435</b>	<b>740,939</b>	<b>6.2%</b>	<b>6.8%</b>

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

As well as providing a principal projection, ONS has developed a number of variants. In all cases the projections use the same fertility and mortality rates with differences being applied in relation to migration. The key variants in terms of this assessment can be described as:

- principal projection
- an alternative internal migration variant
- a 10-year migration variant

In the principal projection, data about internal (domestic) migration uses data for the past 2-years and data about international migration from the past 5-years. The use of 2-years data for internal migration has been driven by ONS changing their methodology for recording internal moves, with this data being available from 2016 only. In particular the change in methodology seeks to

<sup>16</sup> The ONS 2018-based SNPP run to 2043.

better account for the moves of graduates when they finish studying at university.

The alternative internal migration variant uses data about migration from the last 5-years (2013-18), as well as also using 5-years of data for international migration. This variant is closest to replicating the methodology used in the 2016-based SNPP although it does mean for internal migration that data used is collected on a slightly different basis.

The 10-year migration variant (as the name implies) uses data about trends in migration over the past decade (2008-18). This time period is used for both internal and international migration.

Table 3.7.3 below shows a comparison of the projected levels of population growth in each of these variants. For comparison data has also been provided from the last SNPP (2016-based). The data looks at a 23-year period from 2018-41 as this is the longest period for which data is available from both projections. This shows that there is a notable difference in the projected level of growth depending on the variant studied; the principal projection showing the highest projected growth. The 2016-based SNPP also showed a lower level of projected growth than the principal variant, but a level in line with the 2018-based alternatives.

**Table 3.7.3: Projected population growth in Oxfordshire, 2018-41**

	Population, 2018	Population, 2041	Change in population, 2018-41	% change in population, 2018-41
2016-based	684,300	728,100	43,800	6.4%
2018 (principal)	687,524	746,578	59,054	8.6%
2018 (alternative internal)	687,524	727,497	39,973	5.8%
2018 (10-year trend)	687,524	732,058	44,534	6.5%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

### 3.8 Developing an adjusted baseline

An adjusted baseline projection has been developed by JGC taking account of the demographic analysis above. In particular this recognises the analysis from the Patient Register that suggests the population of Oxford may have been substantially underestimated over the past 7-years (2011-18). Given the potential under-estimation, this would imply that there has been an underestimate of the level of migration to the City (and to a lesser extent other areas).

To develop an adjusted baseline the following key assumptions have been made.

- Base population from the 2018-based subnational population projections (SNPP) – the alternative internal migration variant. This has been chosen as it is considered that the principal SNPP has too short a data period when looking at internal migration whilst the 10-year alternative is not thought likely to reflect recent changes seen in Oxfordshire such as a general uplift in housebuilding;
- Projections run from 2020 to 2050 to align with the timeframes of the Oxfordshire Plan;

- Population data for 2018 fixed by reference to estimates made from mid-year population estimates (MYE) and Patient Register (PR) data. Given previous analysis, both the MYE and PR are taken into account with population levels essentially assumed to be around the average growth in these two sources applied to 2011 MYE data (which was informed by the 2011 Census);
- Population to 2020 derived from estimating potential population change given the number of net housing completions (2018-20);
- Fertility and mortality rates (by age and sex) as per the 2018-based SNPP – where rolled forward from 2043 to 2050 this assumes a continuation of any trends identified in the SNPP;
- The migration profile (by age and sex) in the same proportions as the 2018-based SNPP – where rolled forward from 2043 to 2050 this assumes a continuation of any trends identified in the SNPP; and
- Future migration is estimated based on the likely uplift in migration needed to achieve the level of population estimated for 2018.

Table 3.8.1 below shows the estimated level of population growth with this adjusted baseline and how it compares with the last official projections (2018-43) – this period being used as 2043 is the latest date for which SNPP data is available to allow the results to be compared with the published SNPP data.

This shows that the adjusted baseline projection has population growth which is some way above any of the variants, showing a population growth over the 2018-43 period of 15%. The resultant Oxfordshire population grows to 796,400 in 2043 compared to 750,600 in the 2018-based SNPP. It will also be noted that the adjustments to the base population for 2018 increases the estimated number of people by around 5,600.

**Table 3.8.1: Projected population growth in Oxfordshire – adjusted baseline, 2018-2043**

	Population, 2018	Population, 2043	Change in population, 2018-43	% change in population, 2018-43
2018 (principal)	687,524	750,633	63,109	9.2%
2018 (alternative internal)	687,524	730,436	42,912	6.2%
2018 (10-year trend)	687,524	735,435	47,911	7.0%
<b>Adjusted baseline total</b>	<b>693,082</b>	<b>796,380</b>	<b>103,299</b>	<b>14.9%</b>

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

The resultant population growth in Oxfordshire, and its constituent local authority areas, to 2043 and 2050 in the adjusted baseline projections are shown in Table 3.8.2 below.

**Table 3.8.2: Projected population growth in Oxfordshire – adjusted baseline, 2018-2050**

	2018	2020	2043	2050	% change, 2018-43	% change, 2020-50
Cherwell	150,263	156,459	175,226	180,217	16.6%	15.2%
Oxford	160,483	163,856	189,401	199,061	18.0%	21.5%
South Oxon	140,752	147,161	159,186	162,471	13.1%	10.4%
VoWH	132,048	138,745	153,570	155,100	16.3%	11.8%
West Oxon	109,535	114,339	118,997	120,171	8.6%	5.1%
<b>Oxfordshire</b>	<b>693,082</b>	<b>720,560</b>	<b>796,380</b>	<b>817,020</b>	<b>14.9%</b>	<b>13.4%</b>

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

### 3.9 Age structure changes

With the overall change in the population will also come changes to the age profile. The tables below summarise findings for key (5 year) age groups with the 2018-based SNPP (principal projection) and also the adjusted baseline.

Looking at the SNPP it is clear that the largest growth will be in people aged 65 and over; in 2043 it is projected that there will be 189,800 people aged 65 and over, this is an increase of 64,400 from 2018, representing growth of 51%. The population aged 85 and over is projected to increase by an even greater proportion, 109%. Looking at the other end of the age spectrum the data shows that there is projected to be a reduction in the number of children (those aged Under 15), with increases or decreases shown for other age groups.

**Table 3.9.1: Population change 2018-2043 by five-year age bands in Oxfordshire (2018-based SNPP)**

	Population, 2018	Population, 2043	Change in population, 2018-43	% change in population, 2018-43
Under 5	39,398	38,927	-471	-1.2%
5-9	42,783	38,634	-4,149	-9.7%
10-14	40,453	39,049	-1,404	-3.5%
15-19	40,021	42,984	2,963	7.4%
20-24	49,678	50,579	901	1.8%
25-29	44,772	47,044	2,272	5.1%
30-34	43,131	45,953	2,822	6.5%
35-39	45,310	42,745	-2,565	-5.7%
40-44	41,766	39,916	-1,850	-4.4%
45-49	46,432	42,886	-3,546	-7.6%
50-54	48,411	44,309	-4,102	-8.5%
55-59	43,672	44,008	336	0.8%
60-64	36,270	43,798	7,528	20.8%
65-69	33,692	39,114	5,422	16.1%
70-74	33,070	41,252	8,182	24.7%
75-79	23,221	39,893	16,672	71.8%
80-84	17,597	32,277	14,680	83.4%
85+	17,847	37,260	19,413	108.8%
Total	687,524	750,634	63,110	9.2%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Using the adjusted baseline, there is still a significant ageing of the population but the increase in the population aged under 65 is more notable. The change in the under 65 age group relative to older groups reflects the migration assumptions, migration being largely concentrated in typical working-age groups (and their associated children).

**Table 3.9.2: Population change 2018-2043 by five-year age bands in Oxfordshire (adjusted baseline)**

	Population, 2018	Population, 2043	Change in population, 2018-43	% change in population, 2018-43
Under 5	39,670	41,173	1,503	3.8%
5-9	41,428	41,257	-171	-0.4%

10-14	40,220	42,482	2,262	5.6%
15-19	41,442	47,175	5,733	13.8%
20-24	50,025	56,350	6,325	12.6%
25-29	48,427	50,805	2,379	4.9%
30-34	46,135	47,551	1,416	3.1%
35-39	45,990	45,062	-928	-2.0%
40-44	43,130	44,941	1,811	4.2%
45-49	47,163	46,132	-1,031	-2.2%
50-54	47,762	49,220	1,458	3.1%
55-59	42,693	47,657	4,964	11.6%
60-64	36,832	44,803	7,971	21.6%
65-69	33,567	40,674	7,107	21.2%
70-74	31,458	42,255	10,797	34.3%
75-79	22,702	39,653	16,952	74.7%
80-84	17,137	31,656	14,519	84.7%
85+	17,302	37,535	20,234	116.9%
Total	693,082	796,380	103,299	14.9%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Table 3.9.3 below compares population change in each of the 2018-based SNPP and the adjusted baseline. This confirms that the key differences between the projections are higher numbers of younger people in the adjusted baseline – notably in the 30-44 age groups.

**Table 3.9.3: Population change 2018 to 2043 by five-year age bands, Oxfordshire (2018-based SNPP and adjusted baseline)**

	2018-based SNPP (principal) population change, 2018-43	Adjusted baseline population change, 2018-43	Difference in population change, 2018-43
Under 5	-471	1,503	1,974
5-9	-4,149	-171	3,978
10-14	-1,404	2,262	3,666
15-19	2,963	5,733	2,770
20-24	901	6,325	5,424
25-29	2,272	2,379	107
30-34	2,822	1,416	-1,406
35-39	-2,565	-928	1,637
40-44	-1,850	1,811	3,661
45-49	-3,546	-1,031	2,515
50-54	-4,102	1,458	5,560
55-59	336	4,964	4,628
60-64	7,528	7,971	443
65-69	5,422	7,107	1,685
70-74	8,182	10,797	2,615
75-79	16,672	16,952	280
80-84	14,680	14,519	-161
85+	19,413	20,234	821
Total	63,110	103,299	40,189

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

### 3.10 Household formation

Household projections are developed by applying age/ sex specific household representative rates (HRRs) to the projected growth in population. HRRs can be described in their most simple terms as the number of people who are counted as heads of households (or in this case the more widely used Household Reference Person, HRP).

The latest HRRs are as contained in the ONS 2016-based Subnational Household Projections (SNHP) which were published in September 2018. In these latest projections, the HRR is projected for different age/sex cohorts based on trends seen between 2001 and 2011. Trends over this period are projected forwards to 2021, with the HRR then held constant at the 2021 level thereafter.

The methodology used is different to that in previous sets of household projections, which had projected trends in household formation (by age/sex) based on trends arising since the 1971 Census. ONS have set out that the change of HRP definition means it is no longer possible to use the 1971, 1981 and 1991 Census data used in the previous methodology in the production of the 2016-based household projections. Household data from these previous censuses used the eldest male definition of HRP, therefore, to include data from them in the methodology would require complex adjustments to be made to derive projections.

It would be fair to say that the 2016-based SNHP have come under some criticism, largely because they are based only on data in the 2001-11 Census period, using just two data points, and they arguably build in the suppression of household formation experienced in that time being based on a period in which housing affordability deteriorated relatively rapidly restricting in particular the ability of younger households to form.

Because of the criticisms of the 2016-based SNHP, and the fact that these have driven the Government to consult on reviewing their use in Standard Method, it is considered prudent in this report to look at both the 2016-based and 2014-based figures (the 2014-based figures being of the set of projections which the Government advises should be used in the Standard Method).

Figure 3.10.1 below compares HRRs in the 2014-based and 2016-based SNHP. The trends show essentially the proportion of a particular age group that is considered to be the 'head of household' (HRP as described above). The analysis shows that for many age groups the two projections are really quite different. When looking at some of the younger age groups (particularly 25-34) it is notable that the HRRs in the 2014-based projections are somewhat higher. This does suggest in Oxfordshire (as nationally) that there may be some degree of suppression being built into the 2016-based projections, or certainly not a positive improvement in the formation rates of younger people.

The Government's advice that the 2014-based Household Projections should be used in the Standard Method takes this into account; the Government having set out<sup>17</sup> that the lower household formation in more recent projections has been influenced by housing supply constraints which have inhibited households from forming and there is a case for public policy to support

<sup>17</sup> MHCLG (2018) *Technical consultation on updates to national planning policy and guidance*

housing delivery in excess of the household projections, with the ONS itself indicating that if more homes are built, the increased availability of homes may result in more household forming.<sup>18</sup>

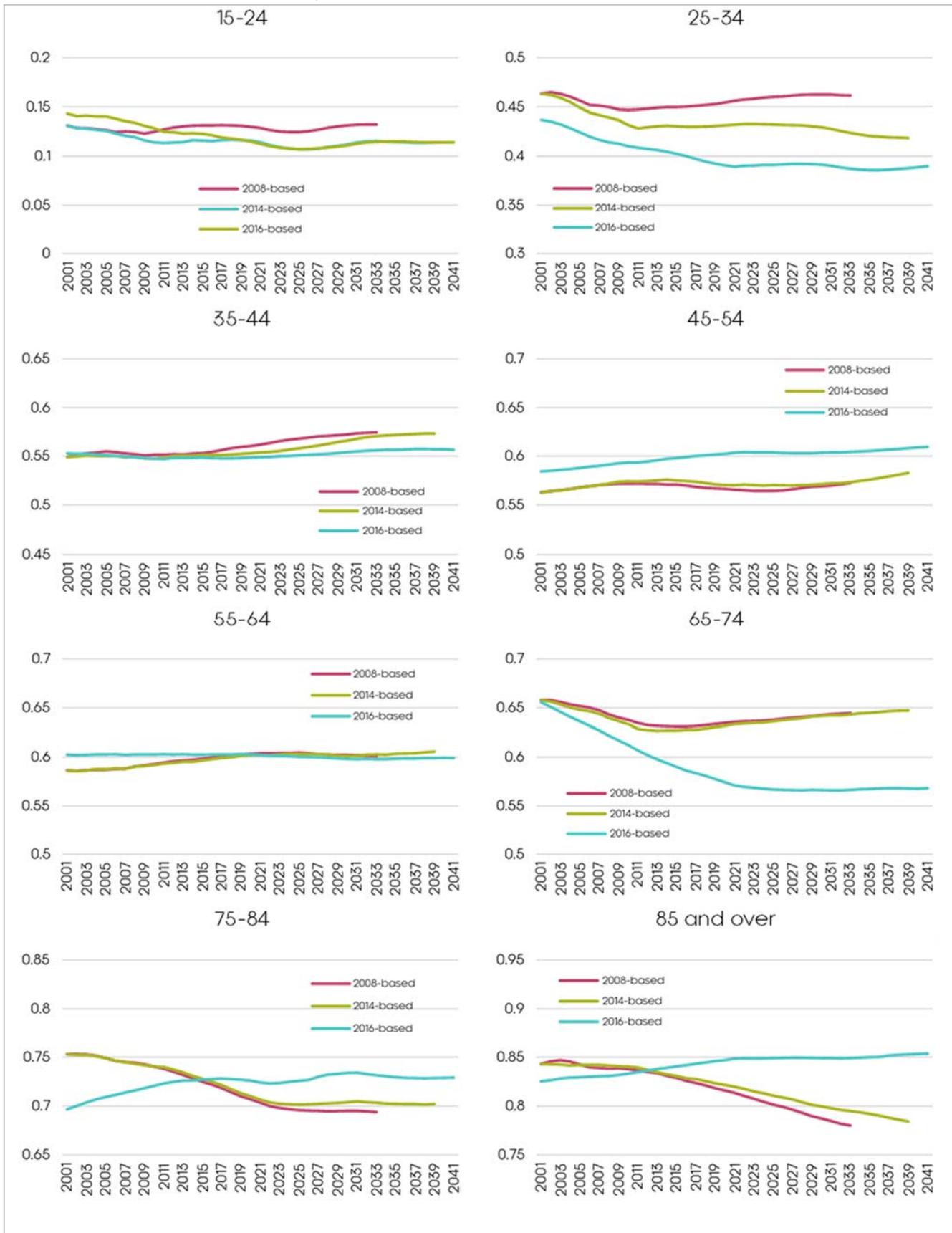
The 2016-based projections are also notable for showing an increasing formation rate in the 75-84 age group, and also for people aged 85+. Given improvements to life expectancy, it might be expected in reality that these rates would go down (as people live together as couples for longer). A decreasing rate was projected in the 2014-based projections and this is a further reason why the 2014-based figures might be considered as more robust.

Figure 3.10.1 below also shows the same information from the 2008-based SNHP. Generally, for younger age groups these older projections show a more positive level of household formation and whilst they are quite dated, they are a source that is regularly used to develop scenarios with a more positive view about household formation of younger people.

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<sup>18</sup> ONS (2018) *What our household projections really show*

**Figure 3.10.1: Projected Household Representative Rates by age of head of household in Oxfordshire, 2001-2041**



Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Taking into consideration the significant difference between the household formation assumptions in the 2014- and 2018-based SNHP, the reports has modelled scenarios which examine the implications of both sets of assumptions.

### 3.11 Household growth and housing need

Table 3.11.1 and Table 3.11.2 below show estimates of household growth with each of the HRR scenarios, as well as the estimate of the number of additional dwellings expected to be needed. The figures firstly link to population growth in the 2018-based SNPP (alternative internal migration variant) and then using the adjusted baseline.

To convert households into dwellings the analysis includes an uplift to take account of vacant homes. For the purposes of analysis, it has been assumed that the number of vacant homes in new stock would be 3% higher than the number of occupied homes (which is taken as a proxy for households) and hence household growth figures are uplifted by 3% to provide an estimate of housing need. This figure is a fairly standard assumption when looking at vacancy rates in new stock and will allow for movement within the housing stock.

When linked to the 2018-based SNPP, the analysis shows an overall housing need for 1,453 dwellings per annum across the county when using the 2016-based SNHP as the underlying household projection. This figure increases to 1,552 dwellings per annum with the previous (2014-based) HRR figures.

Linked to the adjusted baseline the figures are somewhat higher with a need for 2,522 dwellings per annum based on the 2014-based household representative rates.

**Table 3.11.1: Projected housing need for Oxfordshire associated with 2018-based SNPP with alternative Household Representative Rate assumptions**

	Households, 2018	Households, 2043	Change in households, 2018-43	Change in households p.a., 2018-43	Dwellings needed p.a., 2018-43
2016-SNHP HRRs	272,301	307,565	35,264	1,411	1,453
2014-SNHP HRRs	276,216	313,887	37,670	1,507	1,552

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

**Table 3.11.2: Projected housing need for Oxfordshire associated with adjusted population baseline with alternative Household Representative Rate assumptions**

	Households, 2018	Households, 2043	Change in households, 2018-43	Change in households p.a., 2018-43	Dwellings needed p.a., 2018-43
2016-SNHP HRRs	273,752	332,100	58,348	2,334	2,404
2014-SNHP HRRs	277,537	338,754	61,217	2,449	2,522

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Iceni has taken into account that the Government has expressed significant reservations regarding the 2016-based Household Projections in its Technical consultation on updates to national planning policy and guidance (MHCLG, Oct 2018) and the Statement released from ONS on these projections which outlined that:

*“They [the 2016-based Household Projections] do not take account of how many people may want to form new households, but for whatever reason aren’t able to, such as young adults wanting to move out of their parents’ house, or people wanting to live on their own instead of in a house share. Therefore, household projections are not a measure of how many houses would need to be built to meet housing demand; they show what would happen if past trends in actual household formation continue.”*

*“Although the latest household projections are lower than the previously published projections, this does not directly mean that fewer houses are needed in the future than thought. This is because the projections are based on recent actual numbers of households and are not adjusted to take account of where homes have been needed in recent years but have not been available. Therefore, if more homes are built, the increased availability of homes may result in more households forming. The opposite is also true – if fewer homes are built then fewer households are able to form.”*

The 2018-based SNHP adopt a consistent methodology to household formation as the 2016-based set of projections.

ONS similarly state alongside the release of the 2018-based Household Projections that:

*“Household projections are not a prediction or forecast of how many houses should be built in the future. Instead, they show how many additional households would form if assumptions based on previous demographic trends in population growth and household formation were to be realised.”*

Given these criticisms of the methodology used in the 2016- and 2018-based SNHP it is considered that drawing conclusions about the level of housing need linked to official population projections are more robustly based on looking at the previous (2014-based) set of SNHP. These earlier projections looked at longer term trends in household formation and are therefore less likely to build in any of the suppression/constraints faced by households since the early 1990s. This is consistent with the approach recommended by the Government in its Planning Practice Guidance which specifically advocates the use of the 2014-based projections in the Standard Method.

When considering alternative scenarios for housing need based on economic trends, there is a case for adjusting household formation amongst younger households to ensure that Government’s ambitions to improve affordability are realised. This is considered further later in the report in modelling the demographic implications of alternative scenarios for housing need.

### **3.12 Conclusions**

Oxfordshire has a population of 687,500 in 2018 and has a higher proportion of young people than wider benchmarks. It has seen population growth over the 2011-18 period which has been below the regional and national average; and has resulted in a virtually unchanged position in terms of the core working age population aged 16-64 which has grown by just 1% over this period.

The latest official projections, which are 2018-based, project substantially lower population growth than has been seen in Oxfordshire in recent years.

The review of demographic data undertaken indicates that it is likely that Oxford's population has been under-estimated. This has been recognised in previous evidence base documents in Oxfordshire which have considered housing need.

To address these issues, revised demographic projections have been developed to provide a revised baseline assessment of the demographic need for housing informed by past population trends. These show population growth of 14.9% between 2018-43 compared to 9.2% in the ONS 2018-based SNPP, with the county's population growing to 817,000 in 2050.

The analysis shows that to ensure the calculations are not projecting forward suppressed formation of households seen in recent years, the headship rates from the 2014-based Household Projections should be applied to this in projecting household growth. These revised projections feed into the analysis of the starting point Local Housing Need in *Chapter 7*, the economic implications of which are also considered in *Chapter 8*.

## 4 Oxfordshire's Housing Market

### 4.1 Introduction

Oxfordshire's housing market is dynamic and complex. This chapter explores housing market dynamics and affordability in Oxfordshire, with a view to understanding key drivers of the housing market. It considers dynamics in the sales market, private renting and the affordable housing sector. This understanding of market dynamics and affordability pressures provides an important grounding for considering future housing need.

Housing demand over the plan period is likely to be influenced particularly by population and economic trends: changes in the size and structure of the population directly influence the need for housing; whilst factors such as how Oxfordshire's economy performs and the growth in its universities can be expected to influence the movement of people in and out of the county.

At a more local level, the relative demand and pricing of homes in different places will be influenced by factors such as the existing housing stock, quality of place and accessibility to employment centres. Places with concentrations of higher paid jobs – such as Oxford City – typically have higher house prices, as both demand for housing is stronger, and earnings influence what people can afford.

Changes in housing costs over time tell us about the supply/demand balance for housing. When supply is not keeping pace with effective demand, prices rise (and visa-versa). Demand is influenced by both macro-economic factors such as the wider economic outlook (which influences buyers' investment decisions) and interest rates (which affect the affordability of mortgage repayments), but also by local factors including the levels of employment growth in an area.

Oxfordshire constitutes a single functional housing market area.<sup>19</sup> As such there are inter-relationships between dynamics in different parts of the county and people move home across administrative boundaries within Oxfordshire. This chapter thus seeks to understand dynamics across Oxfordshire, but also in different parts of the county.

### 4.2 Trends in house prices and sales

#### Trends in house prices

As of June 2019, the median house price in Oxfordshire was £350,000. This is 9% higher than South East England (£322,000) and 46% higher than across England (£240,000).<sup>20</sup>

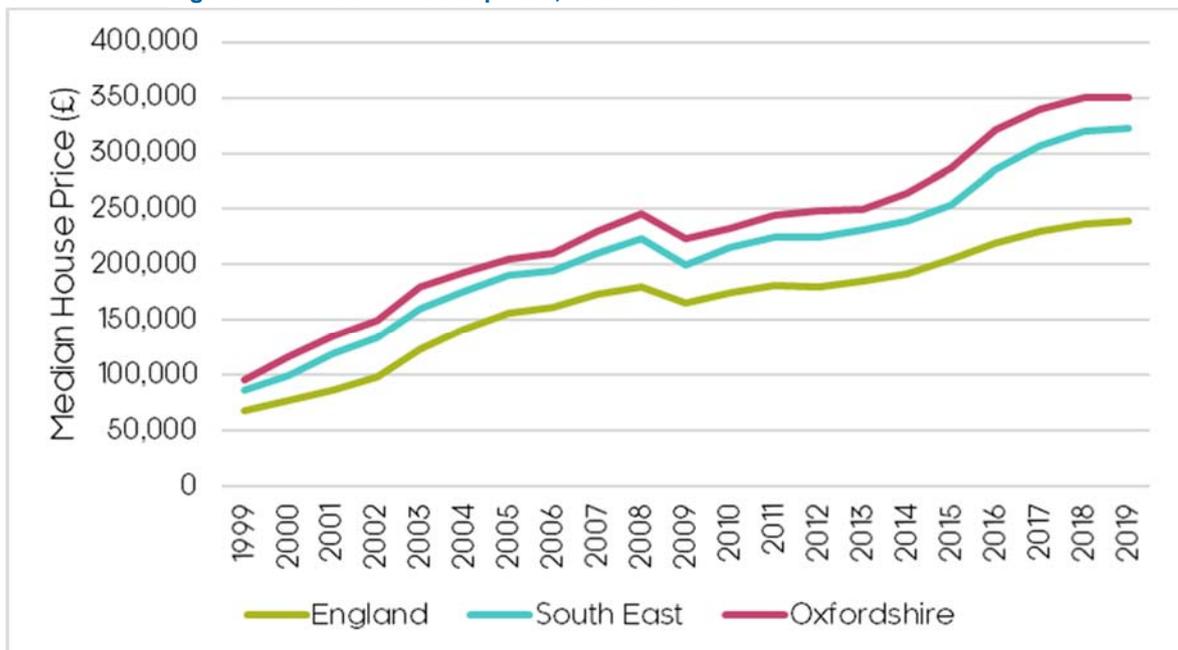
As Figure 4.2.1 shows, although house prices in Oxfordshire have been above the regional and national average, there has been a relative increase in the house price differential over recent years. This is indicative of stronger comparative demand and a more substantive supply/demand imbalance than is the case nationally. Icení's analysis indicates that:

<sup>19</sup> The evidence base for this is set out in the 2014 Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment

<sup>20</sup> ONS (2019) – HPSSA Dataset 9

- Median house prices in Oxfordshire have grown by a substantial £126,000 over the last decade (2009-2019).
- This has substantially outstripped house price growth over this period at a national level (£75,000) and indeed is slightly above the growth seen across the SE region (£122,000);
- Median house prices in Oxfordshire at £350,000 are now £250,000 (249%) above where they were in 1999 with the growth in prices driving a notable deterioration in the affordability of market housing;
- There has been particularly sharp recent house price growth, with the median house price increasing by £86,000 over just a five year period between 2014-19, influenced by an upturn in demand. The evidence suggests that strong economic performance plus Government support for the housing market have driven demand in this period, and what whilst supply has increased over this period it did not fully meet demand at an Oxfordshire level.

Figure 4.2.1: Median house prices, 1999-2019



Source: ONS, Icen Projects.

As identified in the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) Baseline Economic Review<sup>21</sup>, price dynamics can be segmented into three phases: the first from 2000 to early 2007 when prices grew rapidly fuelled by a strong national economy, high levels of real wage growth, strong mortgage finance availability and a growing population.

Between early 2008 and late 2013 the market was generally flat influenced by the global financial crisis and weakened mortgage finance availability. Between 2013-19 the market picked up, but it is notable that price performance in Oxfordshire has diverged notably from the national average over this period.

<sup>21</sup> Section 3.7.

This aligns with strong economic performance in Oxfordshire, which the evidence suggests has driven the divergence from wider trends at a regional/national level, together with a period of increased mortgage availability and Government support for the market through the Help-to-Buy Scheme. Uncertainties associated with Brexit and affordability issues led to some weakening of house price growth in 2018-19.

The Covid-19 pandemic is likely to impact further on market housing demand in the short-medium term, particularly with the emergence of increasing unemployment, some reduction in the range and choice of mortgage deals and weakening market sentiment. Further consideration to the impacts of the pandemic are addressed in the *Covid-19 Impacts Addendum*.

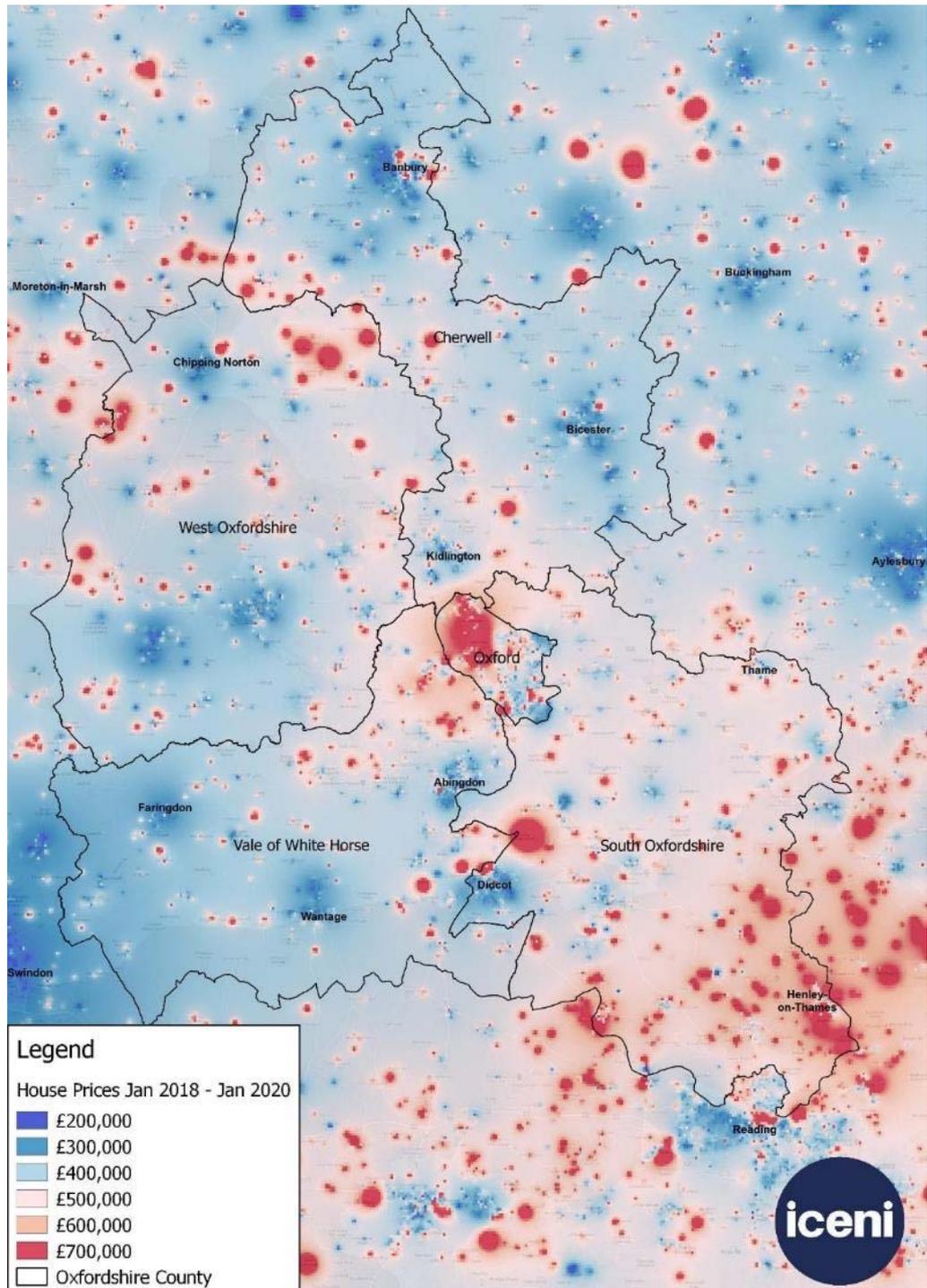
**Table 4.2.1: Median house price changes, 1999-2019**

	1999	2004	2009	2014	2019
Oxfordshire	£96,000	£193,000	£224,000	£264,000	£350,000
<i>Growth in Previous 5 Years</i>		£97,000	£31,000	£40,000	£86,000
South East	£86,000	£176,000	£200,000	£240,000	£322,000
<i>Growth in Previous 5 Years</i>		£90,000	£24,000	£40,000	£82,000
England	£68,750	£142,000	£165,000	£191,995	£240,000
<i>Growth in Previous 5 Years</i>		£73,250	£23,000	£26,995	£48,005

Source: ONS, Icen Projects.

Figure 4.2.2 plots the house price geography across Oxfordshire. It shows there are variations across the county and within local authority areas, with a concentration of higher values in Oxford, in areas close to the A34 “*Knowledge Spine*” running through the centre of the county, and in the southern part of South Oxfordshire including within settlements located in the North Wessex Downs and Chiltern Hills AONBs. This is influenced by the geography of and accessibility to employment opportunities; and also by differences in the profile of sales (with higher sales of larger and more expensive homes in rural areas).

Figure 4.2.2: Oxfordshire median house price heat map, 2018-20



Source: ONS, IcenI Projects.

As the composition and mix of sales is an influence on average prices, consideration is given to the prices for similar products. This provides a clearer view of house price differentials between areas. HM Land Registry data on average prices and sales volumes across Oxfordshire in 2019 are shown in Table 4.2.2. It shows that the greatest proportion of all sales of homes in local authorities outside of Oxford City was of detached houses.

- For houses (as opposed to flats), sales values are highest in Oxford itself by some margin. Beyond Oxford, South Oxfordshire has relatively

high values, followed by West Oxfordshire then Vale of White Horse; with the lowest values for houses in Cherwell.

- For flats, the highest values achieved are in South Oxfordshire and Oxford (over £315,000); with values of between £200,000 - £230,000 in West Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse; and of nearing £170,000 in Cherwell.

**Table 4.2.2: Mean sale price and volume of sales in Oxfordshire, 2019**

	Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxon	VoWH	West Oxon	Oxfordshire Total
Detached	£457,029	£831,369	£689,509	£503,146	£532,381	<b>£550,617</b>
<i>No. of sales</i>	681	89	618	801	497	<b>2,686</b>
Semi-det	£307,734	£521,208	£391,985	£332,395	£355,757	<b>£370,983</b>
<i>No. of sales</i>	533	336	516	561	391	<b>2,337</b>
Terraced	£274,382	£486,222	£352,640	£288,436	£317,905	<b>£337,489</b>
<i>No. of sales</i>	486	315	361	318	309	<b>1,789</b>
Flat/Mais	£168,978	£316,467	£345,444	£229,831	£201,585	<b>£257,457</b>
<i>No. of sales</i>	161	225	187	241	158	<b>972</b>
Total average	<b>£341,652</b>	<b>£490,656</b>	<b>£487,682</b>	<b>£383,449</b>	<b>£393,932</b>	<b>£411,095</b>
<i>Total sales</i>	<b>1,861</b>	<b>965</b>	<b>1,682</b>	<b>1,921</b>	<b>1,355</b>	<b>7,784</b>

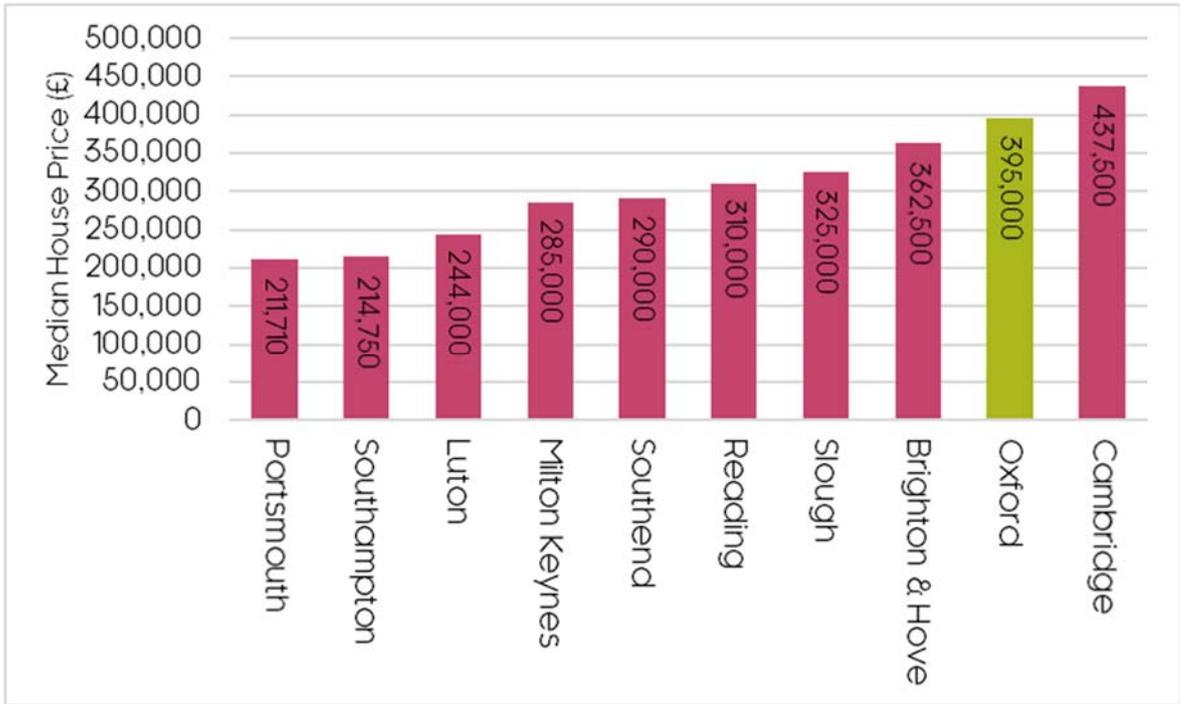
Source: HM Land Registry, Icenic Projects.

The premium in Oxford compared to Oxfordshire is 51% for detached houses, 40% for semi-detached, 44% for terraced and 23% for flats/maisonettes. This contrasts with Cherwell where house prices are between 17-19% below the Oxfordshire average for houses and 34% lower for flats/maisonettes.

Median house prices in Oxford compared to other towns in the Greater South East are set out in Figure 4.2.3 below benchmarks median house prices in Oxford City compared to other large towns and cities across the Greater South East with a population of over c. 150,000. Cambridge and Oxford have the highest median house prices.

Over the last 20 years, house price growth has been strongest in absolute terms in Oxford and South Oxfordshire, with values increasing by over £280,000 (Figure 4.2.4). In the other Oxfordshire authorities, values have increased by between £230,000 - £240,000. Growth in values was strongest over the 1999-2004 period, supported by economic stability and increased availability of mortgage finance; and in the more recent 5 year period from 2014-19.

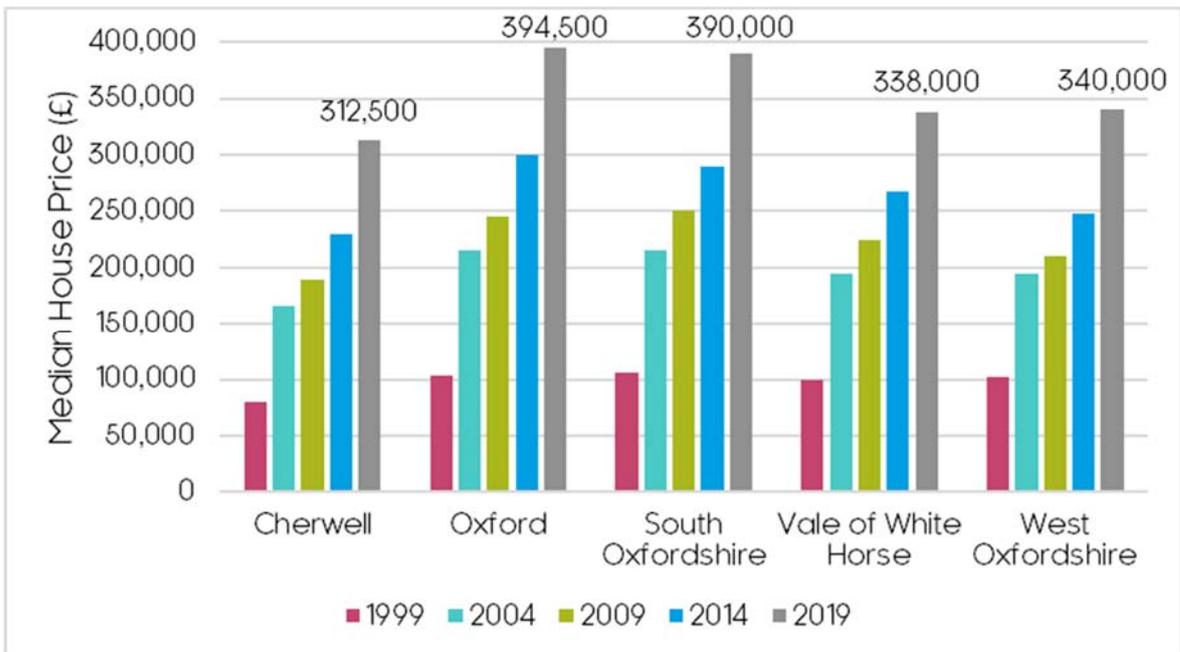
**Figure 4.2.3: Median house prices in Oxford compared to other towns in the Greater South East, 2019**



Source: ONS, Icen Projects.

Growth in this more recent period has been supported by an improvement in the availability of mortgage finance following the credit crunch, low interest rates, and the Government’s Help-to-Buy scheme together with the strong performance of the Oxfordshire economy (as considered in *Chapter 5*). The impact of Covid-19, both directly on the housing market and on the wider economy, is likely to influence price dynamics in the short-term moving forwards.

**Figure 4.2.4: 5-yearly house price change by local authority in Oxfordshire, 1999-2019**



Source: ONS, Icen Projects.

**Table 4.2.3: Median house prices by local authority in Oxfordshire, 1999-2019**

	1999-2004	2004-2009	2009-2014	2014-2019	Total increase 1999-2019
Cherwell	+£87,000 (+109%)	+£22,500 (+14%)	+£41,125 (+22%)	+£82,375 (+36%)	<b>+£233,000</b> <b>(+293%)</b>
Oxford	+£112,000 (+109%)	+£30,000 (+14%)	+£54,999 (+22%)	+£94,501 (+32%)	<b>+£291,500</b> <b>(+283%)</b>
South Oxfordshire	+£109,000 (+103%)	+£35,000 (+16%)	+£40,000 (+16%)	+£100,000 (+34%)	<b>+£284,000</b> <b>(+268%)</b>
Vale of White Horse	+£95,050 (+95%)	+£30,000 (+15%)	+£42,000 (+19%)	+£71,000 (+27%)	<b>+£238,050</b> <b>(+238%)</b>
West Oxfordshire	+£93,000 (+91%)	+£15,000 (+8%)	+£37,950 (+18%)	+£92,050 (+37%)	<b>+£238,000</b> <b>(+233%)</b>
<b>Oxfordshire</b>	<b>+£97,000</b> <b>(+101%)</b>	<b>+£31,000</b> <b>(+16%)</b>	<b>+£40,000</b> <b>(+18%)</b>	<b>+£86,000</b> <b>(+33%)</b>	<b>+£254,000</b> <b>(+265%)</b>
South East England	+£90,000 (+104%)	+£24,000 (14%)	+£40,000 (+20%)	+£82,000 (+34%)	+£236,000 (+274%)

Source: ONS, Icen Projects.

If a comparison is undertaken of changes in median house prices since the 2014 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was prepared, a growth in house prices across Oxfordshire of £100,000 (28.5%) is evident over a period of 6-7 years.

The strongest total house price growth has been in Oxford (+£104,500) closely followed by South Oxfordshire (+£103,025), with notably weaker growth seen in Vale of White Horse (+£68,000). When compared with new housing delivery over this period, it is notable that there have been stronger levels of housing delivery in Vale of White Horse, with lower relative housing delivery in Oxford.

**Table 4.2.4: Changes in median house prices since the 2014 SHMA, 2012-19**

	Year to June 2019	Year to Sept 2012 (SHMA Table 7)	Absolute difference, 2012-19
Cherwell	£312,500	£216,500	£96,000
Oxford	£394,500	£290,000	£104,500
South Oxfordshire	£390,000	£286,975	£103,025
Vale of White Horse	£338,000	£270,000	£68,000
West Oxfordshire	£340,000	£245,000	£95,000
<b>Oxfordshire</b>	<b>£350,000</b>	<b>£250,000</b>	<b>£100,000</b>

Source: ONS, 2014 Oxfordshire SHMA, Icen Projects.

The absolute growth in house prices in this period has been similar to that seen across the South East region (where the median price has increased by £97,000 over the period June 2012 - June 2019) and much higher than the price growth seen nationally (which have increased by £60,000 over the period June 2012 - June 2019).

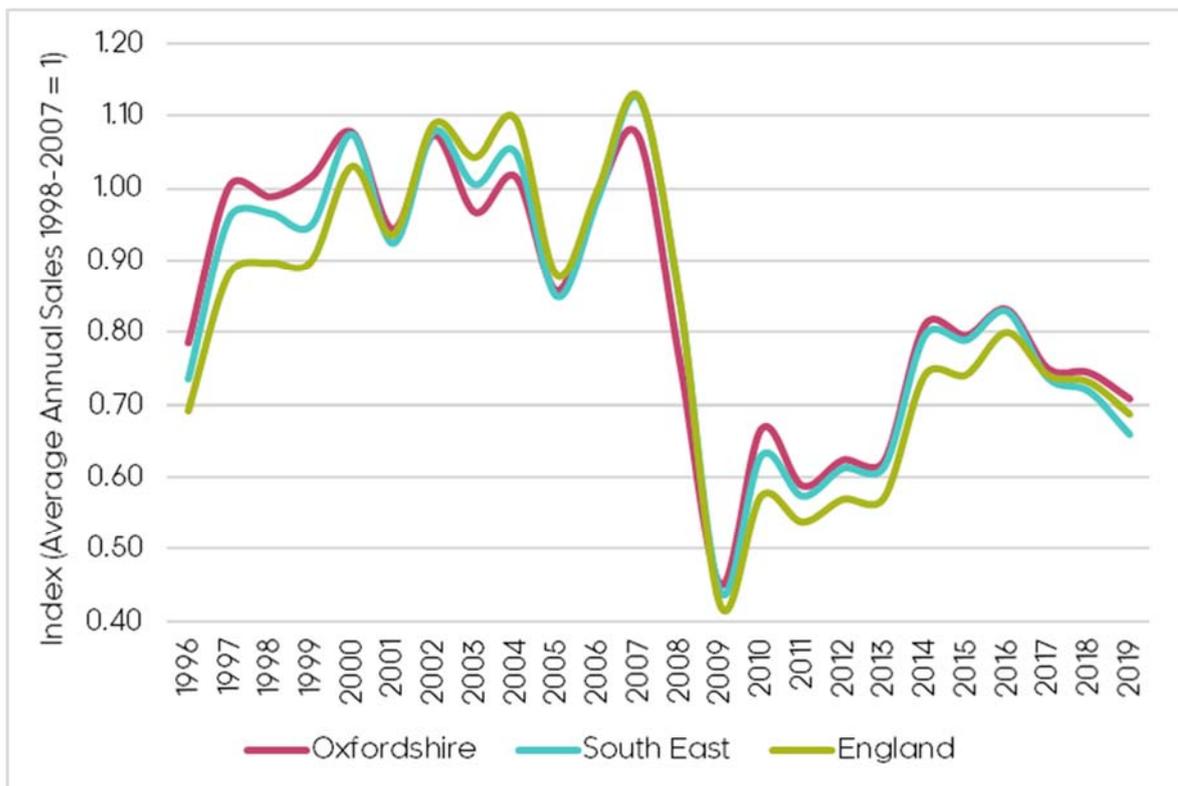
## Trends in house sales

Icen has analysed sales trends over time in the Oxfordshire local authorities and compared these to trends over the pre-recession decade (1998-2007) to understand the timing and pace of market recovery from the last recession (Figure 4.2.5).

The analysis highlights the impact of macro-economic factors on the housing market. It indicates how an increase in interest rates dampened demand in 2005. In 2008-9 it shows the very substantial impact of the credit crunch and subsequent recession on demand, which resulted in a fall of sales volumes to 45% of the pre-recession average in 2009.

A substantive recovery in sales did not really kick-in until late 2013, with sales in Oxfordshire recovering to almost 80% of the pre-recession average by 2016. However since 2016 housing market activity has been affected by economic uncertainties associated with the nature of future relationship with the EU as the UK's largest existing trading partner.

**Figure 4.2.5: Indexed analysis of sales trend, 1996-2019**



Source: ONS, Icen Projects.

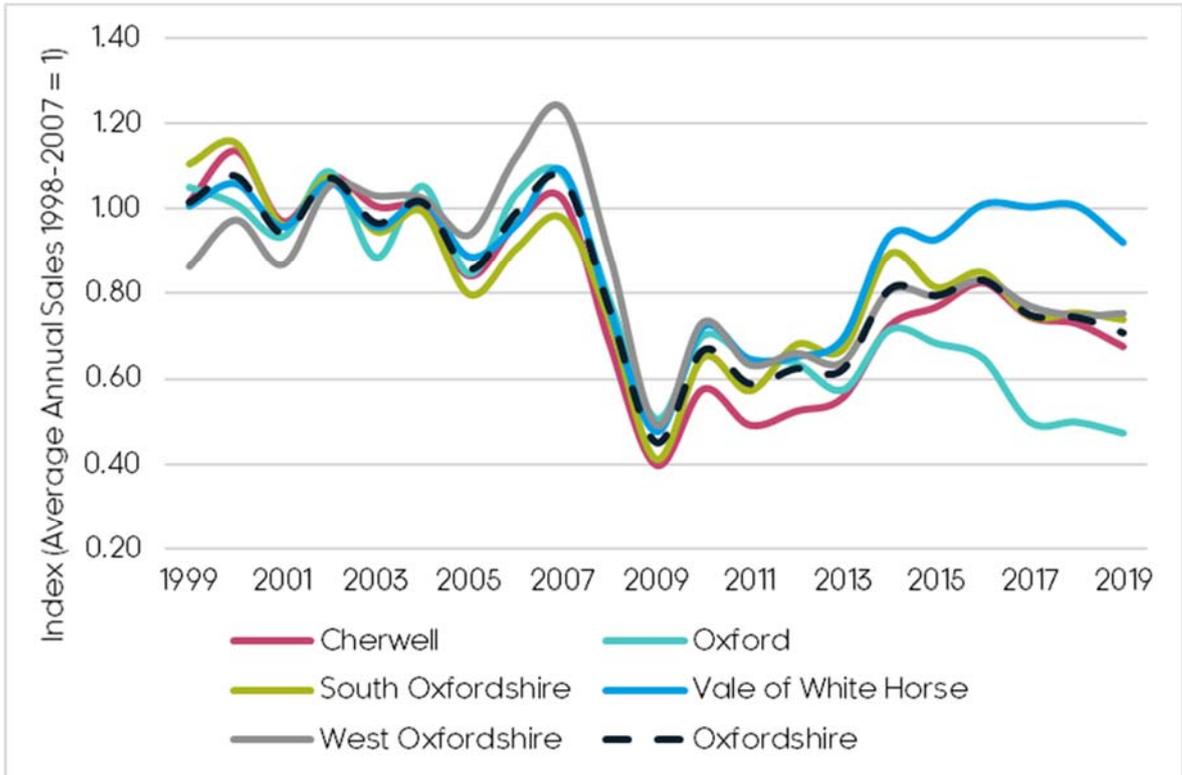
The data points to sales volumes in Oxfordshire over the year to June 2019 of 71% of the pre-recession average; a level of performance which exceeds that at a regional (66%) or national (69%) level.

Undertaking a similar analysis for the individual Oxfordshire authorities (Figure 4.2.6) shows an interesting pattern whereby a recent divergence from wider trends is observed in Vale of White Horse and Oxford in particular. Sales volumes in Oxford did not recover as strongly as other areas between 2012-14 with sales volumes remaining well below (47%) the pre-recession trend. This is likely to have been influenced in part by the higher relative affordability pressures.

Sales volumes in the Vale of White Horse are notable in having been affected to a lesser degree than other areas – this correlates with lower average sales values and higher new-build supply. Sales volumes over the year to June 2019 were 92% of the pre-recession average, substantially out-performing

other areas. The evidence shows that strong levels of new-build development in the Vale have contributed to this.

**Figure 4.2.6: Indexed analysis of sales trends in Oxfordshire, 1999-2019**



Source: ONS, Icenii Projects.

The subdued housing market activity over much of the last decade is notable. There are a complex set of factors which appear to have contributed to this, including: a low inflation environment such that inflation is not reducing the value of debt in real terms as it did in previous decades (pre-2000); longer mortgage terms; an ageing population who typically move infrequently; and a policy focus on caring for older persons in their home (resulting in fewer moves).

Added to this have been increasing transactional costs of moving, particularly associated with the costs of Stamp Duty, which have affected both home owners and investors (with 3% additional Stamp Duty applicable to investment purchases from April 2016). These transactional costs have affected higher value markets to a greater degree and act as disincentive for households to move. They have influenced sales trends in Oxford to a greater extent than other areas. These are structural issues with the market which mean that it is unlikely there will be a return to sales volumes achieved in the 1998-2007 decade in the short-term.

### 4.3 Trends in the affordability of home ownership

The Government has clearly articulated its view that housing supply needs to increase in order to improve housing affordability. There is clear evidence that rising house prices have contributed to declining home ownership –

particularly amongst younger households – and Government has set out its ambition to address this.<sup>22</sup>

The most common measure of affordability issues is house price to earnings ratios. These ratios form an input to the Standard Method for calculating local housing need, with the theory behind this being that new housing provision should be responsive to ‘market signals’ of which relative affordability is a key indicator.

Affordability ratios are calculated by dividing house prices by the annual workplace-based earnings. Lower ratios indicate greater affordability with higher ratios indicating lower affordability.

Figure 4.3.1 below shows that median affordability ratios stood at 10.42 times workplace-based earnings in Oxfordshire in 2019<sup>23</sup>, compared with 10.12 in South East England and 7.83 times in England.<sup>24</sup> Although Oxfordshire has both above average prices and above average earnings, this points to significant affordability pressures across the county. Oxfordshire is the 6<sup>th</sup> worst county in England for affordability and 5<sup>th</sup> worst affordability ratio in the region behind Surrey (12.43), Buckinghamshire (11.73), West Sussex (11.27) and East Sussex (10.49).

Research undertaken by Centre for Cities indicates that as of 2019, the housing affordability ratio for the Oxford Principal Urban Area (which extends beyond Oxford’s administrative boundary) is significantly worse at 17.23.<sup>25</sup>

**Figure 4.3.1: Median house price to workplace-based earnings ratios, 1999-2019)**



Source: ONS, Icen Projects.

<sup>22</sup> HM Government (2017) *Housing White Paper* and HM Government (2020) *Planning for the Future*

<sup>23</sup> These were the latest available figures at the time of writing. Figures for 2020 (released March 2021) are provided in *Appendix E: Standard Method Appendix*.

<sup>24</sup> ONS (2019) House price to workplace-based earnings ratio.

<sup>25</sup> Available at <https://www.centreforcities.org/city/oxford/>. This uses the HM Land Registry mean house prices for Jan-Nov 2019 and ASHE workplace-based earnings for individuals

There is a clear correlation between trends in affordability in Oxfordshire and those across the wider South East region. Affordability deteriorated rapidly over the decade to 2008, improved over the subsequent recession and was relatively stable over the period to 2013. It then deteriorated over the period from 2013-17 and has remained relatively stable from 2017-19. Over the 2013-17 period, affordability in Oxfordshire and the South East more widely has deteriorated to a greater degree than nationally.

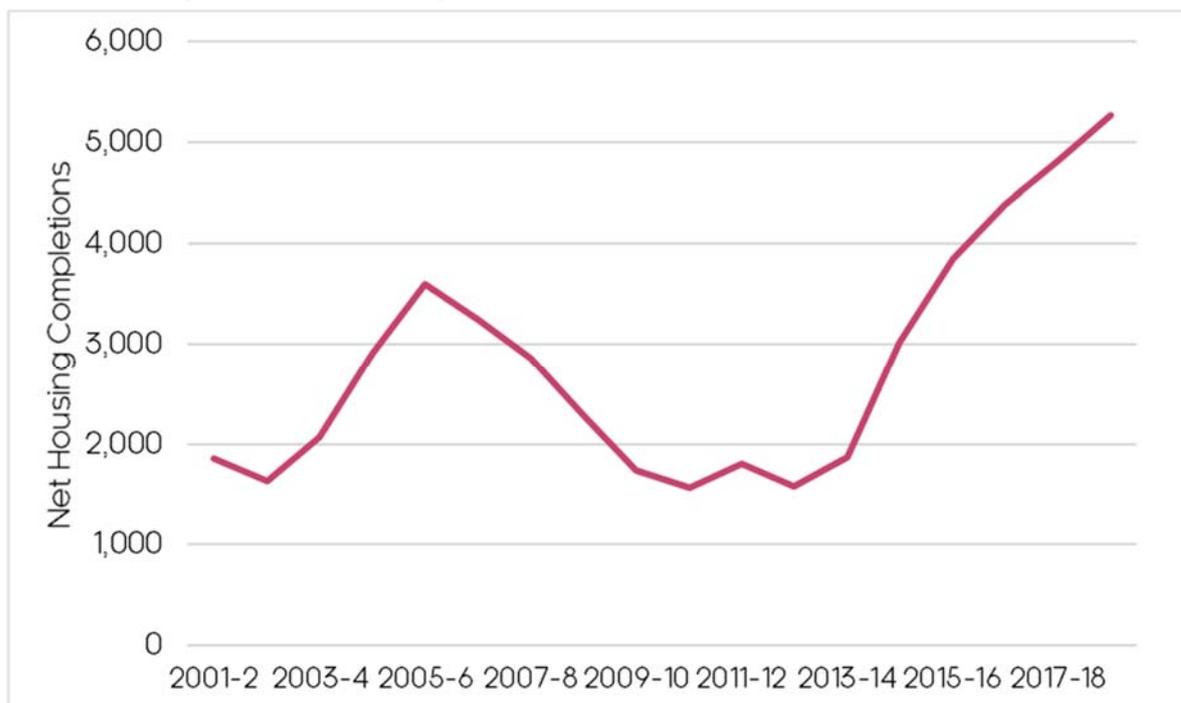
The deterioration in affordability over the 2013-17 period has been driven by growth in house prices relative to wages. Price growth over this period has been influenced by improved availability of mortgage finance, low interest rates, and Government support for the housing market through the Help-to-Buy Scheme. These factors helped to stimulate demand; with a time-lag before housing supply could respond which has driven house price growth over this period.

The evidence, in respect of the similarity between price trends in Oxfordshire and the wider South East region, indicates that housing costs are influenced by wider regional housing market dynamics.

Figure 4.3.2 below shows, net housing completions in Oxfordshire have increased rapidly over the period since 2017. However the 2014 SHMA identified a need for 5,000 homes per annum across Oxfordshire to meet demand and the evidence in *Chapter 5* indicates that the period between 2013-16 saw particularly strong growth in employment in Oxfordshire.

It is only in 2018/19 that this level of housing provision has been achieved; and set against this it is quite reasonable to have seen affordability deteriorate over the 2014-17 period as both the SHMA and house price trend point to a supply/demand imbalance over this period.

**Figure 4.3.2: Net housing completions in Oxfordshire, 2001-18**



Source: LPA Completions Data, Icen Projects.

As Table 4.3.1 shows, out of the five Oxfordshire local authorities, South Oxfordshire had the highest median affordability ratio at 12.36 times workplace-based earnings in 2018. Cherwell had the lowest lower quartile affordability ratio standing at 9.73.

The largest deterioration in affordability (i.e. increase in affordability ratio) over the 15 years up to 2018 has been in South Oxfordshire where the ratio increased from 7.82 in 2003 to 12.36 in 2018.

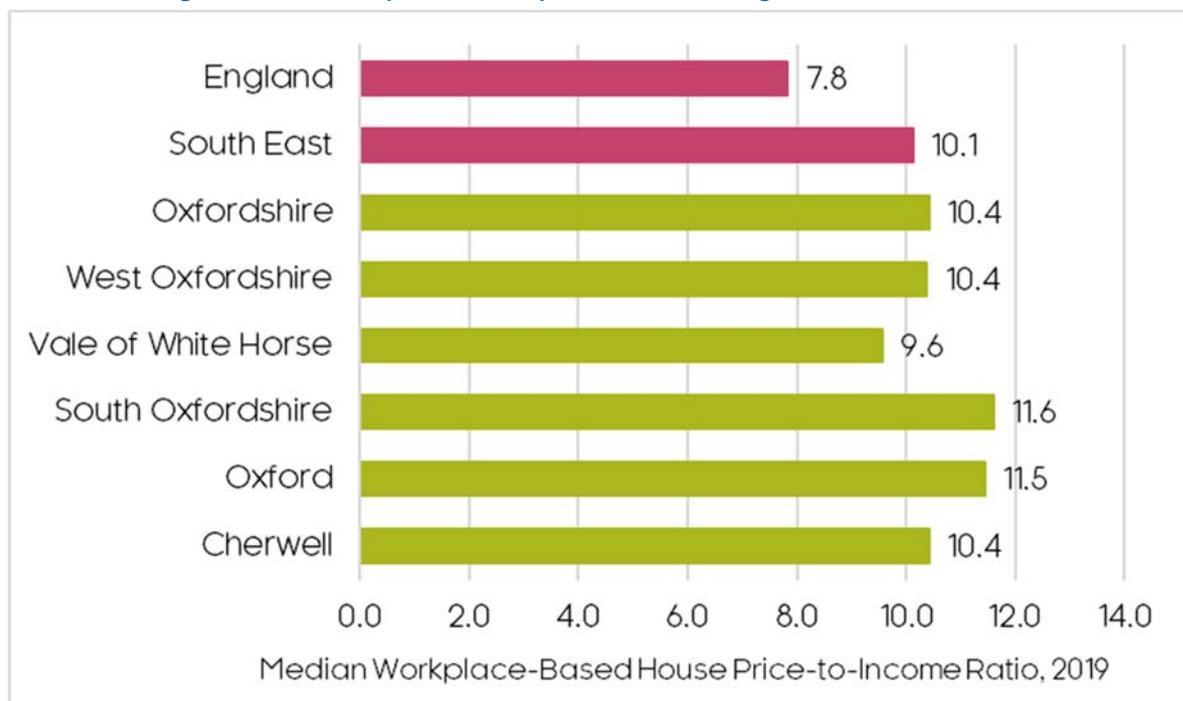
**Table 4.3.1: Median affordability ratios, 2003-18**

	2003	2008	2013	2018	Increase, 2003-2018
England	5.91	6.96	6.76	8.00	+2.09
South East	7.22	8.22	8.26	10.38	+3.16
<b>Oxfordshire</b>	<b>7.85</b>	<b>9.10</b>	<b>8.61</b>	<b>10.44</b>	<b>+2.59</b>
<i>Cherwell</i>	7.06	8.54	8.46	9.73	+2.67
<i>Oxford</i>	8.84	9.69	9.69	11.12	+2.28
<i>South Oxfordshire</i>	7.82	9.71	10.49	12.36	+4.54
<i>Vale of White Horse</i>	7.49	8.35	7.50	9.85	+2.36
<i>West Oxfordshire</i>	8.48	9.35	9.36	11.56	+3.08

Source: ONS house price to workplace-based earnings ratios, Icen Projects.

Data for 2019 was released in March 2020 and shows a modest improvement with the median affordability ratio across Oxfordshire between 2018-19, with the median house price-to-income ratio declining slightly to 10.42. The 2019 data is shown in Figure 4.3.3.

**Figure 4.3.3: House price-to-workplace-based earnings ratio, 2019**



Source: ONS, Icen Projects.

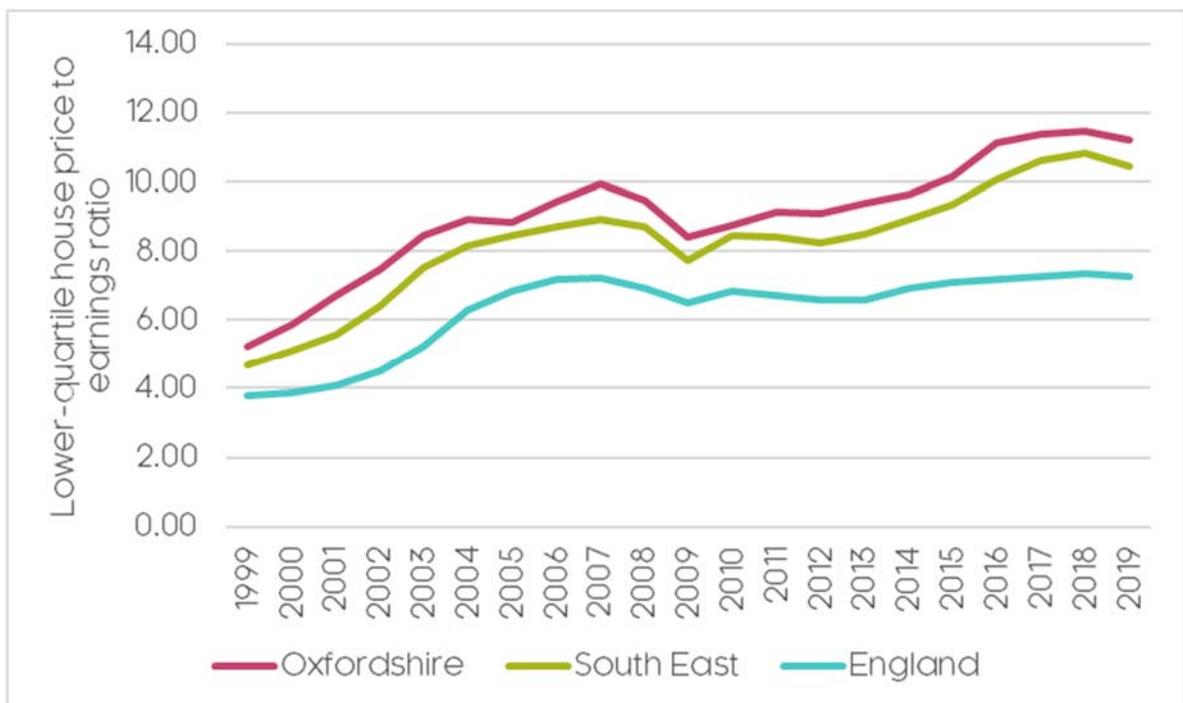
Affordability on this metric is similar to those in other similar locations in the Greater South East, but is below those in Inner Home Counties areas such as Surrey, Hertfordshire or Buckinghamshire which are closer to London.

Other data sources highlight particular affordability issues in Oxford. Research by Lloyds Banking Group identifies average house prices of £460,000 in Oxford in 2018 based on the Halifax House Price database which was 12.6 times average annual earnings, making Oxford the UK's least affordable city. This compares to an average ratio of 10.3 in Greater London. The difference between this and the ONS data above is the source of the house price data.

Iceni has also considered ONS data on lower quartile affordability ratios (illustrated in Figure 4.3.4), which appraise the cost of entry-level housing relative to earnings of younger households. Lower quartile affordability ratios are now 11.47 times workplace-based earnings in Oxfordshire, compared with 10.81 in South East England and 7.29 times in England. Out of the local authorities, South Oxfordshire again has the highest lower quartile affordability ratio, standing at 13.93 times workplace-based earnings. Cherwell has the lowest lower quartile affordability ratio standing at 11.14.

The lower quartile affordability ratio of 11.2 in 2019 represents a notable further worsening of the position relative to when the SHMA was prepared, which recorded a figure of 9.0 for 2012. This is as a result of house prices growing more strongly than earnings for the reasons explained above. There has been a modest improvement between 2018-19.

**Figure 4.3.4: Lower quartile house price to workplace-based earnings ratios, 1999-2019**



Source: ONS, Iceni Projects.

The workplace-based house price to income ratio is the preferred metric considered in this report as it considers affordability for people working within an area. In Oxfordshire, the affordability of housing for residents is generally better than that for workers (as some higher paid residents commute out of the area to work).

As shown in Table 4.3.2, Oxford is the exception where the median residence-based affordability ratio is higher than the median workplace-based affordability ratio, albeit the difference is not substantive. South Oxfordshire

has the greatest difference between the two ratios (likely influenced by its stronger accessibility to the M4 Corridor and London). The residence-based measure reflects earnings of those living in Oxfordshire rather than those working within it.

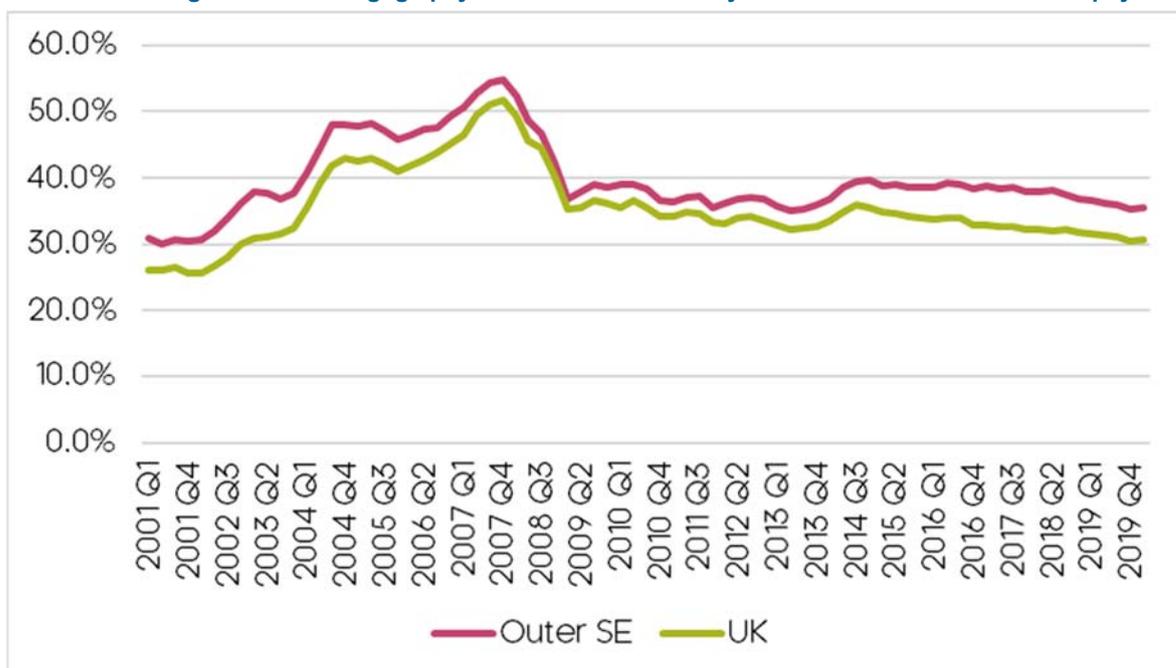
**Table 4.3.2: Difference between median workplace-based and residence-based affordability ratios, 2019<sup>26</sup>**

	Workplace-based ratio <sup>27</sup>	Residence-based ratio <sup>28</sup>	Absolute difference
England	7.83	7.70	0.13
South East England	10.12	9.74	0.38
<b>Oxfordshire</b>	<b>10.42</b>	<b>10.11</b>	<b>0.31</b>
<i>Cherwell</i>	10.43	10.16	0.27
<i>Oxford</i>	11.45	12.55	1.19
<i>South Oxfordshire</i>	11.60	10.16	1.44
<i>Vale of White Horse</i>	9.57	9.06	0.51
<i>West Oxfordshire</i>	10.38	9.75	0.63

Source: ONS, Icen Projects.

Affordability ratios provide an indication of the affordability of market housing to buy. However households ability to buy is also influenced by their savings/equity, interest rates and the ability to access mortgage finance. Nationwide publishes data first-time buyer affordability, considering the cost of mortgage payments as a percentage of mean take home pay. In 2019 the average first time buyer was spending 36% of take-home pay on mortgage costs in the Outer South East. Whilst this is below towards the peak of the last market cycle, it is notably above the England average of 31%.

**Figure 4.3.5: Mortgage payments for first-time buyers as a % of mean take-home pay**



Source: Nationwide, Icen Projects.

<sup>26</sup> Workplace-based earnings refer to the earnings recorded for the area in which the employee works, whereas the residence-based earnings refer to the area in which the employee lives.

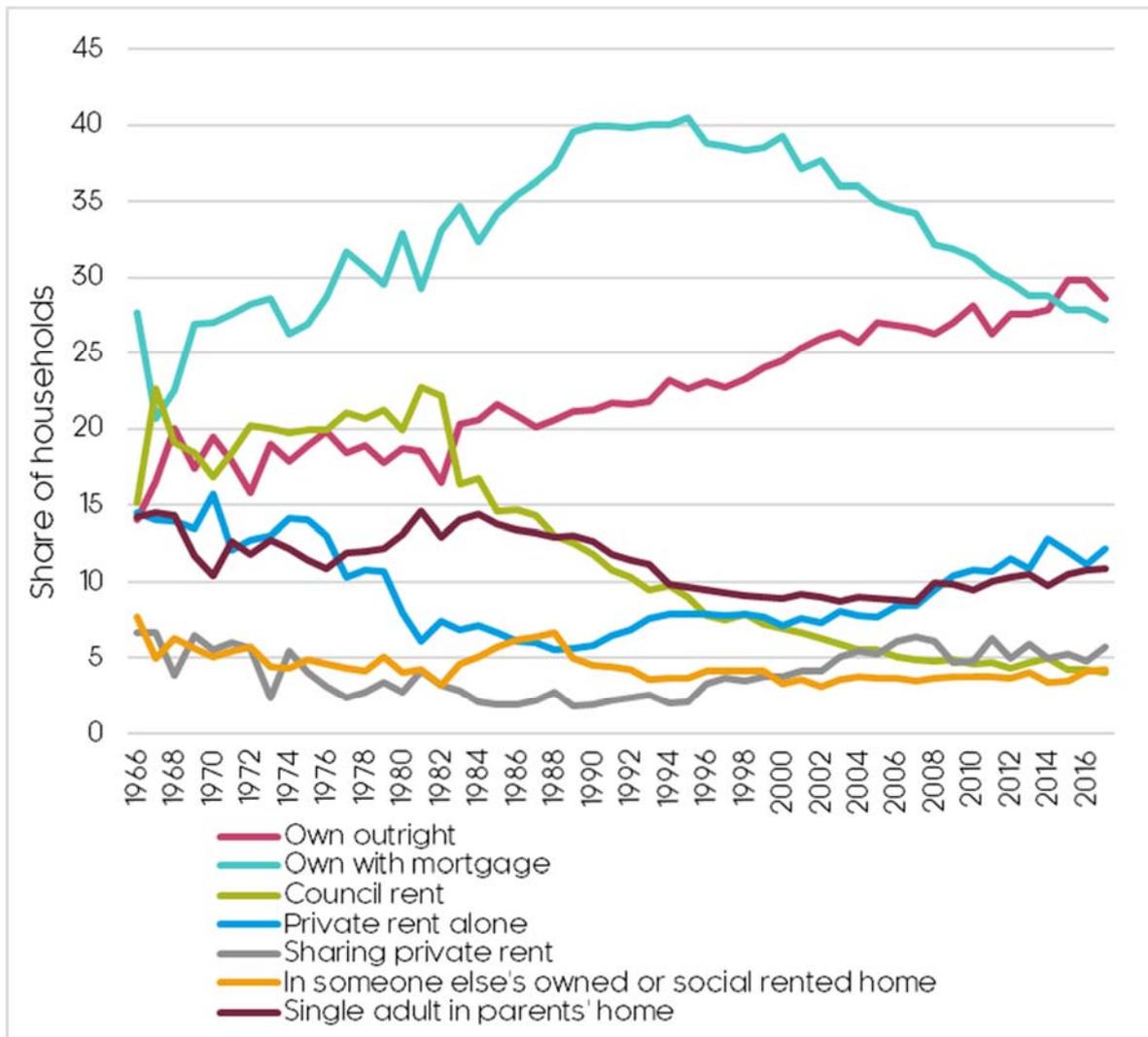
<sup>27</sup> ONS (2020) House price to workplace-based earnings ratio.

<sup>28</sup> ONS (2020) House price to residence-based earnings ratio.

Many younger households who may be able to afford mortgage repayments however find that that the ‘stress testing’ now undertaken in applying for mortgages; and the deposit requirements necessary to secure a home are particular barriers. With lower quartile house prices in Oxfordshire standing at £275,000 in 2019, households would need savings of £27,500 to put down a 10% deposit. Many younger households do not have this level of savings.

The effects of affordability pressures are real and significant. Research by the Resolution Foundation has tracked trends in households living arrangements by region, shown in Figure 4.3.6. Home ownership in the South East region peaked at 64% in 2003 but has since fallen to a figure of 56% in 2017 (an 8-percentage point drop).

**Figure 4.3.6: Share of households by living circumstances (1966-2017) – South East England**



Source: Resolution Foundation.

The number of households living alone in the Private Rented Sector has increased over this period by 5 percentage points, as has those sharing homes in the sector (up from 4.1% to 5.7% over this period). 10.9% of households now comprise single adults living within their parents’ home. Whilst comparable data is not available at an Oxfordshire level, given the similarity in price and affordability trends, a similar picture is likely.

Poor housing affordability can provide a deterrent to young professionals hoping to live and work in Oxfordshire, and the ability of businesses to recruit staff to fill positions including in high-tech and innovative business sectors. This was identified as a particular issue in the LIS Economic Review which identified that it could weaken Oxfordshire's competitiveness.

The results of the stakeholder engagement undertaken as part of the Economic Review are summarised in appendices of that report, and state that:

*“Stakeholders are confident that Oxfordshire’s attractiveness as a place to work (and for postgraduate research) has been constrained by the high cost of living.*

*The evidence around Oxfordshire’s cost of living challenge is well documented in this review and other local reports. Oxfordshire now has an unwanted reputation as being one of the most expensive places to live in the UK. Stakeholders have clearly voiced that they felt this is a factor which is having a material impact on their research and business activities in Oxfordshire. Stakeholders have suggested that this is deterring individuals from considering local roles – and in turn in impacting innovation, research and productivity levels (and therefore, ultimately Oxfordshire’s GVA and future growth potential. Individual organisations, such as the University of Oxford, are now seeking to explore putting in place their own measures which help to address this challenge for their key personnel (in this case, postgraduate researchers).*

*Stakeholders have also suggested that this problem (to date) has not been taken seriously enough in planning and policy discussions at a local and national level.”<sup>29</sup>*

It is clear that affordability issues are having a real impact not just on young people in Oxfordshire, but also its business community; and unaddressed this could hold back future economic growth potential.

#### **4.4 Trends in the private rental market**

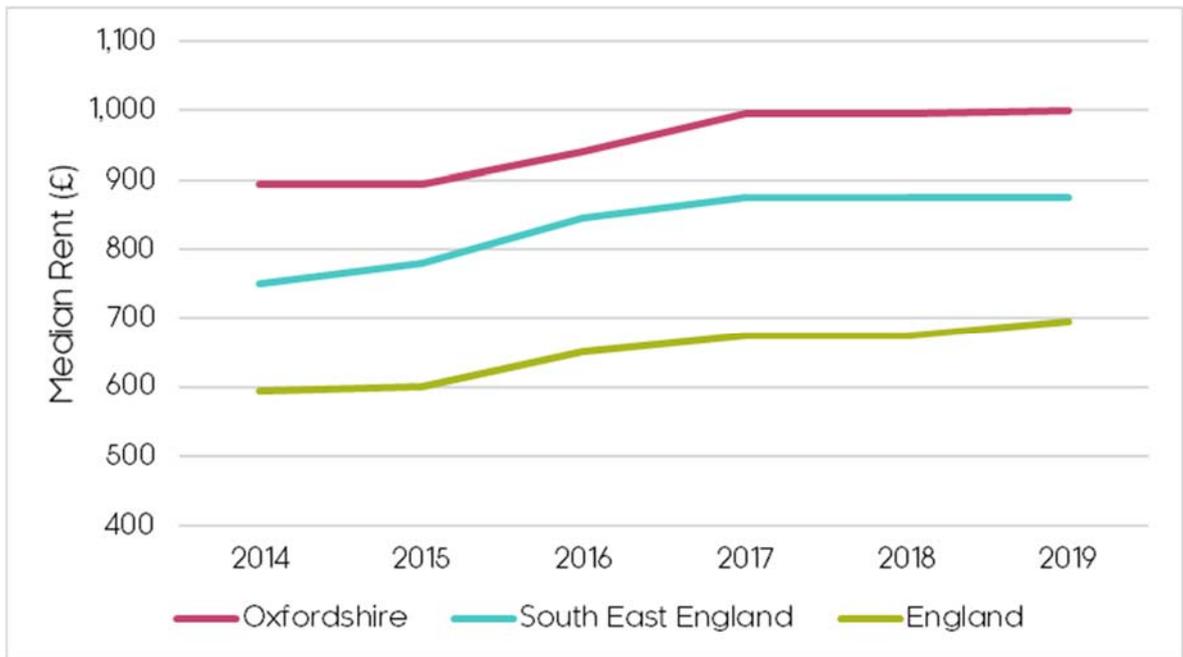
For the year to 31 March 2019, the overall median rent across Oxfordshire was £1,000 per calendar month (PCM)<sup>30</sup>. This is 44% higher than the median rent in England (£695) and 14% higher than the median rent in the South East of England (£875). This points to strong relative rental demand and suggests particular affordability pressures within both the sales and rental markets.

Since 2014, median rents have increased by £105 PCM or 12% in Oxfordshire (Figure 4.4.1). This growth rate is lower than the regional and national averages which have both grown by 17% over the same period, but rents remain above wider benchmarks.

<sup>29</sup> LIS 2018 Economic Review: Baseline, p. 63

<sup>30</sup> VOA (2019) - Private rental market summary statistics: April 2018 to March 2019

Figure 4.4.1: Median rental costs, 2014-19



Source: VOA, Icen Projects.

Table 4.4.1 compares rental costs by property size at the local authority, county, regional and national levels and Figure 4.4.2 shows the average rent for all property types. Monthly rents at an Oxfordshire level are on average 14% above the South East average. Indicatively based on current rental costs, households would need to earn over £32,000 annually to afford the average 2-bed property in Oxfordshire without financial support.

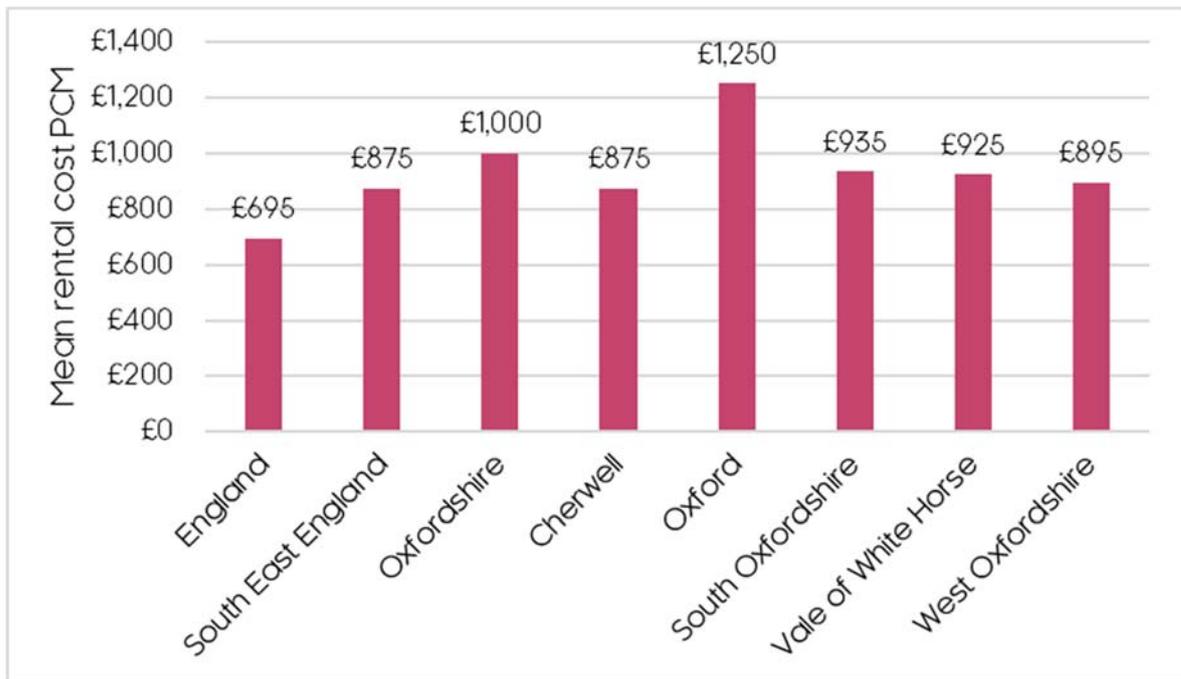
Oxford City has significantly higher rental costs than the other local authorities, with Cherwell having the lowest in Oxfordshire. Rental costs in each of the local authorities for all property sizes are higher than the national averages, and mostly higher than the regional averages. Oxford, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse are the authorities with rents much higher than the regional average – in Oxford’s case the average rent is a substantial 42% above the South East average. Rents in West Oxfordshire are also above the regional average.

Table 4.4.1: Median rental cost by property size, 2019

	Room	Studio	One-Bed	Two-Bed	Three-Bed	Four+ Bed	All
England	£390	£575	£615	£675	£760	£1,320	£695
South East England	£412	£570	£700	£875	£1,095	£1,650	£875
<b>Oxfordshire</b>	<b>£550</b>	<b>£606</b>	<b>£800</b>	<b>£953</b>	<b>£1,225</b>	<b>£1,950</b>	<b>£1,000</b>
<i>Cherwell</i>	£450	-	£725	£875	£1,000	£1,395	£875
<i>Oxford</i>	£600	£765	£950	£1,200	£1,400	£2,250	£1,250
<i>South Oxfordshire</i>	-	£600	£750	£925	£1,250	£1,750	£935
<i>Vale of White Horse</i>	£625	-	£790	£900	£1,175	£1,800	£925
<i>West Oxfordshire</i>	£430	£595	£748	£875	£1,098	£1,575	£895

Source: VOA Private Rental Market Statistics, Icen Projects.

Figure 4.4.2: Median rental cost (all property types), 2019



Source: VOA, Icen Projects.

#### 4.5 Conclusions

Oxfordshire, like many parts of the greater South East, is characterised by high housing costs and particular affordability pressures. Median house prices have risen from £100,000 to £350,000 in the county over the last 20 years. Affordability issues appear particularly acute in Oxford, followed by South Oxfordshire. Whilst current low interest rates means that mortgage finance is currently relatively cheap, lenders undertake stress testing and the absolute cost of homes to buy means that there are households need significant savings to be able to buy a home. These affordability issues have influenced levels of first-time buyers.

More broadly, transactions volumes have been affected by the high levels of Stamp Duty payable on many transactions in Oxfordshire; wider demographic issues with a growing older population which is less likely to move and more likely to receive care – if they need it – at home; and the additional Stamp Duty applicable to investment purchases from April 2016. High Stamp Duty costs appear to have particularly affected the Oxford market.

Against this context, the Government's Help-to-Buy Scheme has been important in helping to support the market in recent years; and the short-term Stamp Duty holiday introduced by Government in July 2020 will help to support the market.

The long-term structural issue is however of a need to improve affordability, both to address the Government's ambitions to support homeownership and to increase fluidity in the wider market enabling households to move home to a property that better suits their needs. Additional housing supply will be important to enabling this.

It is clear that affordability issues are having a real impact not just on young people in Oxfordshire, but also its business community. If left unaddressed

this could hold back future economic growth potential. Poor housing affordability can provide a deterrent to young professionals hoping to live and work in Oxfordshire, which affects the ability of businesses to recruit staff to fill positions, including in high-tech and innovative business sectors which are significant in the Oxfordshire economy. The effect of these issues on development needs are explored in *Part B* of this report.

## 5 Recent Economic Performance

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a concise overview of Oxfordshire’s recent economic performance. It considers the headline economic trends that are shaping the Oxfordshire economy, and how local performance compares to comparator areas and the national average.

This provides a foundation for Part B’s *Chapter 8*, which explores Oxfordshire’s potential growth trajectories and implications for economic development and housing need. The below summary supplements the extensive evidence reviewed for the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (LIS), which goes into much greater detail on the Oxfordshire economy.

### 5.2 Overview of Recent Growth and its Drivers

The Oxfordshire LIS emphasises Oxfordshire’s status as *“a trailblazer for the UK economy”* and *“one of the strongest economies”* in the country. This is largely reinforced by the data, as Figure 5.2.1 shows; nationally, Oxfordshire’s economy was one of the fastest growing (3<sup>rd</sup>, of 38 Local Enterprise Partnership, LEP, areas) during the recovery from the 2008-09 recession.<sup>31</sup>

Alongside this, Oxfordshire’s robust labour market has been creating jobs at an unprecedented pace; since 2010, on average more jobs had been created in Oxfordshire than any other equivalent period in the last 50 years (approximately 6,000 per annum). As of 2018, the Oxfordshire economy contributes an estimated £21.2 billion to UK plc, and supports some 410,000 jobs and 37,000 businesses.

According to the LIS, Oxfordshire’s growth performance has been driven by its *“significant assets in research and development (‘R&D’) being home to the top performing university in the world, the University of Oxford, as well as Oxford Brookes, a leading university in the UK for teaching and research. These anchor institutions support an international brand that draws talent and investment.”*

<sup>31</sup> As measured by balanced Gross Value Added, GVA(b), in real terms (2016 prices)

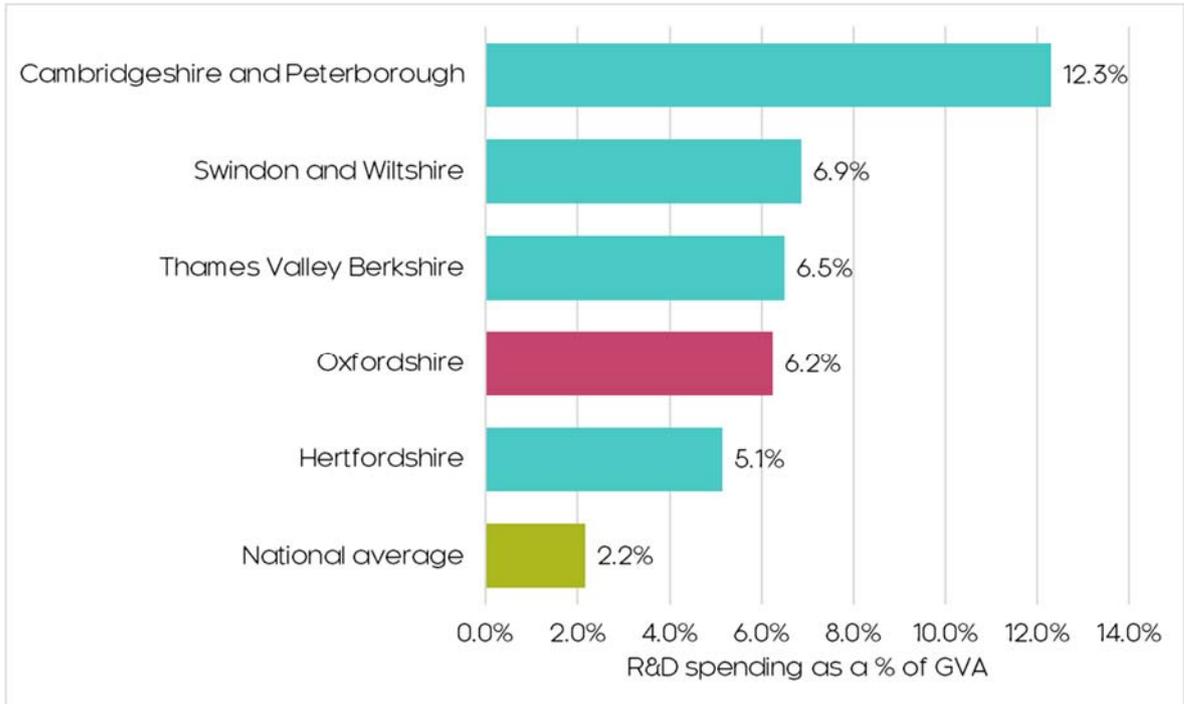
Figure 5.2.1: Overview of Oxfordshire’s recent GVA (above) and jobs (below) growth



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Figure 5.2.2 highlights Oxfordshire’s knowledge-intensive economy, with its research capacity – measured by R&D spend as a proportion of GVA - amongst the highest (4<sup>th</sup>, of 38 LEP areas) in the country, and indeed within Europe.

Figure 5.2.2: Oxfordshire’s research intensity compared to peers, 2017

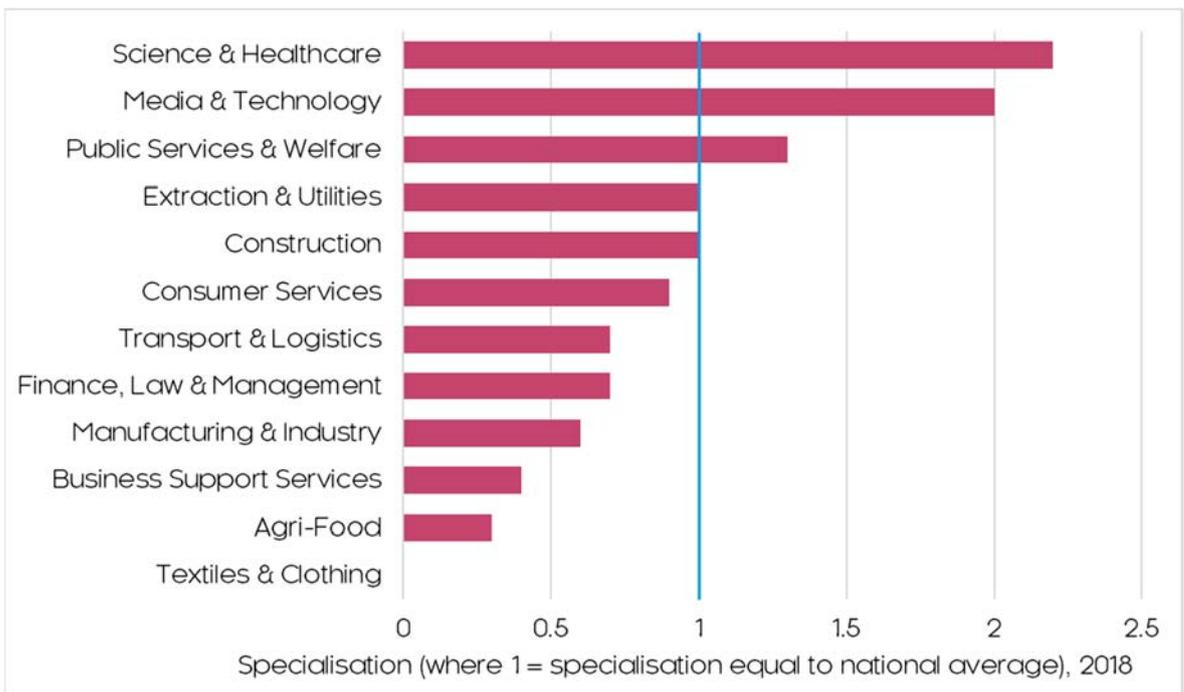


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

It also refers to the role played by Oxfordshire’s “vibrant sectoral mix” and the “dynamic nature of companies” in the county. Figure 5.2.3 Oxfordshire’s current sub-sectoral specialisations relative to the national average; notable strengths and concentrations are evident within media & technology, science & healthcare and public services & welfare.

When looking only at research-intensive industries, Oxfordshire has the 5<sup>th</sup> highest sectoral specialised diversity in the country. This diverse but research-

Figure 5.2.3: Oxfordshire’s sub-sectoral specialisations (relative to the national average), 2018

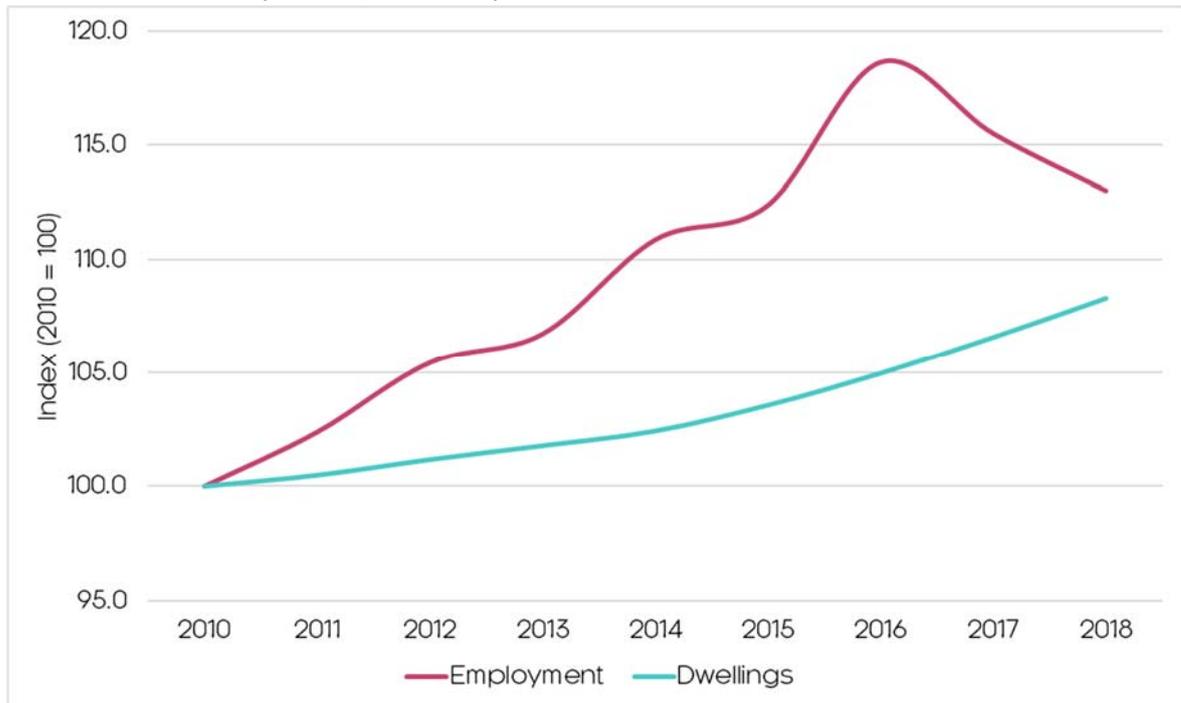


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

focused sectoral mix has underpinned Oxfordshire’s research-driven growth performance.

Yet the LIS also acknowledges “*despite Oxfordshire’s many strength’s*” it does have some recognised weaknesses, such as “*low productivity relative to many peers*”, and an increasing “*strain on the county’s infrastructure. Housing is becoming increasingly unaffordable and rail, road and energy infrastructure are not sufficient to meet rising demand.*”

**Figure 5.2.4: Oxfordshire’s employment growth relative to net dwelling completions, 2010-18 (indexed, 2010 = 100)**



Source: MHCLG, ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

For instance, Figure 5.2.4 shows Oxfordshire’s dwelling stock has not necessarily kept pace with economic growth over recent years. Pre-recession, the growth in Oxfordshire’s dwelling stock rarely diverged by more than 1.5x the growth in employment; since 2010, the average divergence has been 6.5x – that is, employment growth has on average been 6.5x the growth in dwellings.

Also notable from Figure 5.2.4 is a pronounced easing in Oxfordshire’s employment growth, from 2016 onwards. Some of this will be attributable to the UK’s decision to leave the European Union (‘Brexit’), though it is unlikely to be exclusively responsible as a trend of such magnitude has not been observed in other EU-dependent areas.

Rather, the fact local (i.e. sub-regional) employment trends, based on survey-derived data (from the ONS<sup>32</sup>), can be volatile and noisy, means this dip is likely being overestimated, if being estimated correctly at all. In fact, when accounting for the relative confidence intervals, it could be that pre-2016 growth was being overestimated, whilst post-2016 has been underestimated.

<sup>32</sup> Specifically, [ONS Business Register and Employment Survey \(BRES\)](#)

And when scrutinizing the ‘dip’ further, it is apparent that it is being driven by notoriously volatile and hard to measure parts of local economies, with notable falls in the self-employed and double-jobbers in Oxfordshire over this time. By taking a longer-term perspective (such as decade averages shown in Figure 5.2.1) a more reflective and informative trend of employment growth be inferred, rather than volatile year to year movements.

And to help explain what has driven Oxfordshire’s longer-term growth performance, the change in an areas GVA – when adjusted for population i.e. GVA per capita/head - can be broken down into drivers of interest to help articulate the longer run determinants and drivers of growth within an area. Specifically, it can be decomposed using the following identity:

$$\frac{GVA_{wp}}{Population_{res}} = \frac{GVA_{wp}}{Jobs_{wp}} \times \frac{Workers_{res}}{WAP_{res}} \times \frac{Jobs_{wp}}{Workers_{res}} \times \frac{WAP_{res}}{Population_{res}}$$

GVA per capita = Labour Productivity x Employment Rate x Jobs per Worker x Working-Age Share

**Table 5.2.1: Composition of GVA per capita growth, 1992-2018**

	Oxfordshire	UK
GVA per capita, 2018 (£2016 prices)	<b>£29,800</b>	£27,500
GVA per capita growth pa, 1992-2018, of which attributable to:	<b>1.4%</b>	1.8%
<i>Labour Productivity</i>	<b>58.5%</b>	79.3%
<i>Jobs per Worker</i>	<b>9.8%</b>	7.8%
<i>Employment Rate</i>	<b>44.6%</b>	16.4%
<i>Working-Age Share</i>	<b>-12.9%</b>	-3.6%

Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Table 5.2.1 applies this analysis and shows the change in GVA per capita and its drivers between 1992-2018 in Oxfordshire and the UK (i.e. the national average). As the data shows, GVA per capita – which is regarded as a broad indicator of an areas prosperity and living standards – is much higher (some 8%) in Oxfordshire than the national average, though growth has been marginally slower over recent years.

For Oxfordshire, productivity growth has accounted for the majority (two-thirds) of growth in its GVA per capita. This share however is much lower than the national average, where over three-quarters of growth in GVA per capita has been driven by productivity improvements. This reflects, as the LIS identified, Oxfordshire’s comparatively weaker productivity performance.

Instead, Oxfordshire has been much more dependent on wider labour market improvements to support its growth, especially in terms of residents entering and staying in employment. In fact, the share of growth attributable to jobs per worker and the employment rate in Oxfordshire has been almost twice that of the national average, reflecting the robustness of the local labour market.

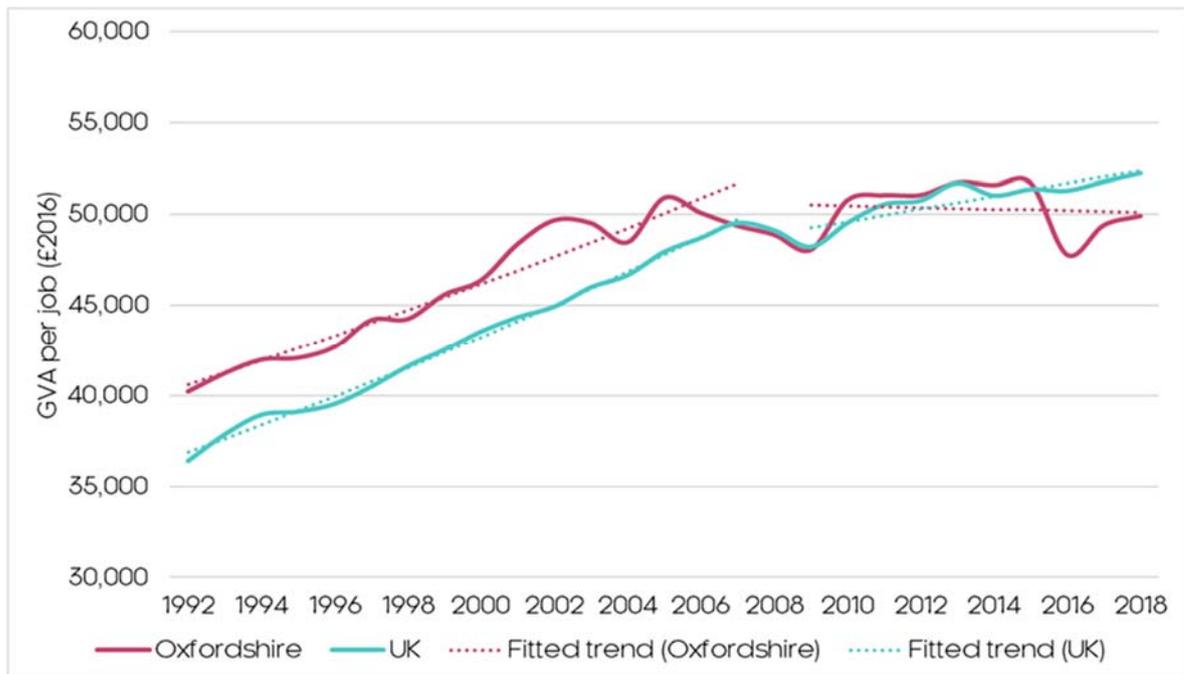
Both Oxfordshire and the rest of the country have failed to benefit from a ‘demographic dividend’, as reflected in growth attributable to its working age population. Given the potentially negative fiscal, labour market and consumer effects of a declining working age population, such factors appear to be acting as a stronger drag on growth in Oxfordshire than elsewhere in the country.

The rest of this chapter looks in more detail at some of these factors and what may be driving their higher-level trends.

### 5.3 Productivity in Oxfordshire

Analysis in Table 5.2.1 showed productivity (specifically in this case labour productivity, represented by; GVA / Jobs) is an important determinant of longer-term growth, yet according to the LIS Oxfordshire’s “workers are not particularly productive. Output is high, but so are the number of hours worked.”

**Figure 5.3.1: Productivity (GVA per job) trends in Oxfordshire and the UK, 1992-2018**



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

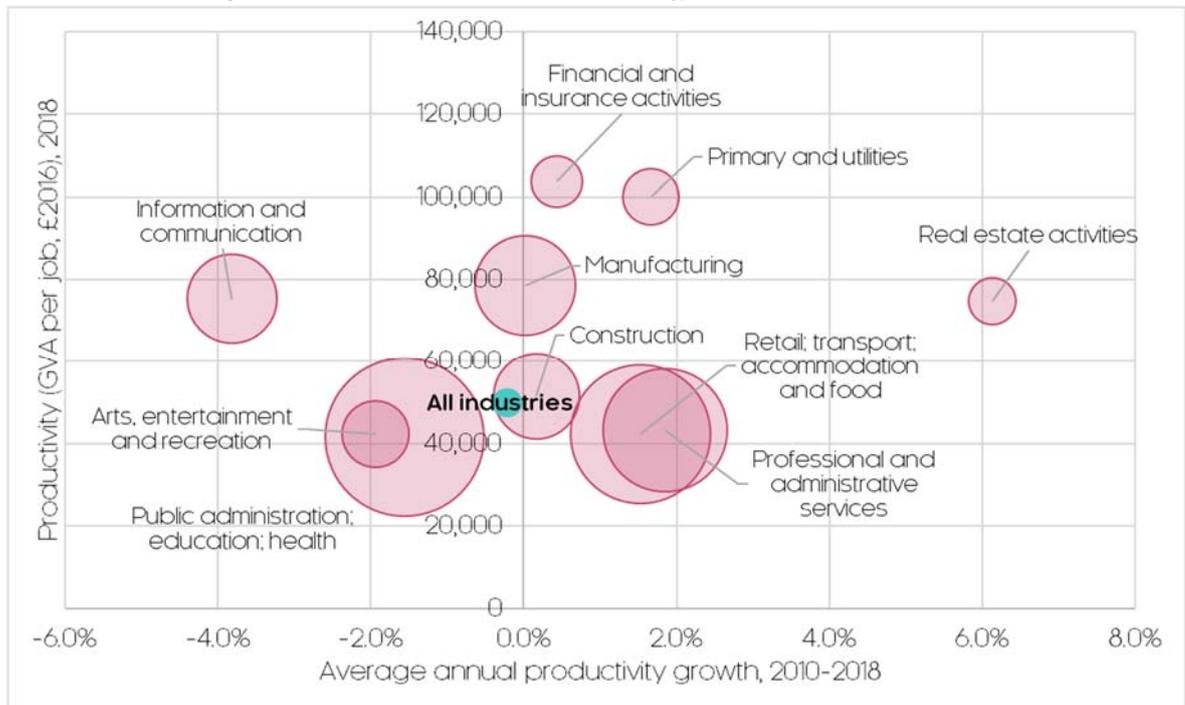
As Figure 5.3.1 shows, this is a relatively new phenomena, having only really been an occurrence following the 2008/09 recession, where productivity growth in Oxfordshire has slowed and since stalled in comparison to the national average and historic trends.

This wider slowdown in productivity has been popularly referred to as a ‘productivity puzzle’, and though affecting many advanced economies across the world – including that of the UK - it is evidently being more keenly felt within Oxfordshire.

The cost of this ‘puzzle’ is significant and increasing; if the average Oxfordshire worker had followed their pre-recession trend rate of productivity growth, productivity would be almost 18% higher than what it is now, increasing GVA by an additional £3.7 billion.

Figure 5.3.2 shows the broad impact of the ‘puzzle’ at the headline sectoral level. As with the rest of the UK, there is no clear or overriding factor behind Oxfordshire’s productivity slowdown, although service-based sectors appear to be the most affected.

**Figure 5.3.2: Headline sectoral productivity trends in Oxfordshire (note: size of bubble corresponds to sectors current share of GVA), 2010-18**



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Oxfordshire's LIS analysis of the five foundations of productivity reveals its comparative strengths and weaknesses in a productivity context though. The five foundations are the thematic areas of the UK economy that underpin the Government's ambition to boost productivity through its National and Local Industrial Strategies:

1. **Ideas:** the world's most innovative economy
2. **People:** good jobs and greater earning power for all
3. **Infrastructure:** a major upgrade to the UK's infrastructure
4. **Business Environment:** the best place to start and grow a business
5. **Places:** prosperous communities across the UK

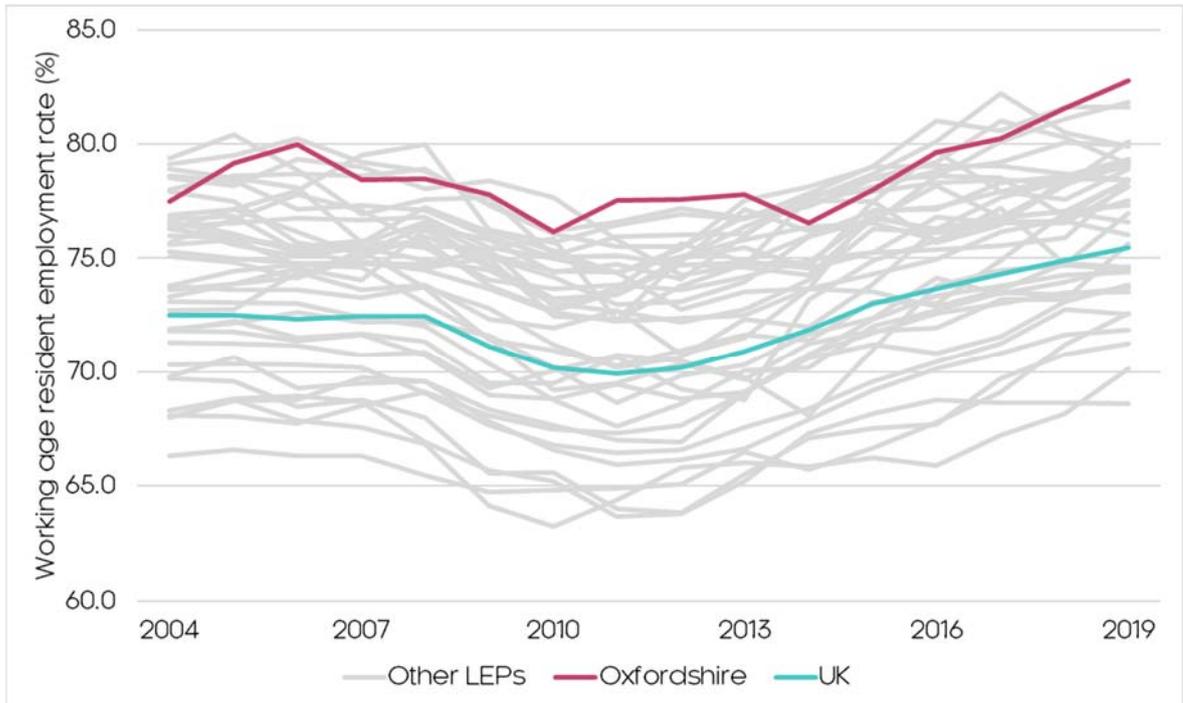
LIS analysis showed Oxfordshire performed strongly and had recognised assets across most of the foundations, particularly Ideas, Business Environment and People. Infrastructure and Places had a more mixed performance though (the latter, particularly in terms of housing affordability), which may be impacting on productivity, whilst even Oxfordshire's more positive foundations may not be representative of the whole theme or area e.g. pockets of deprivation and wage disparity.

Recognising Oxfordshire's poor recent productivity performance, the LIS acknowledges that *"the ultimate objective of this Local Industrial Strategy is to raise productivity."*

## 5.4 Oxfordshire's labour market

Oxfordshire has one of the strongest labour markets in the country; according to the most recent data (2019), Oxfordshire currently has the highest employment rate out of 38 LEP areas (see Figure 5.4.1), with some 82.8% of working age residents in active employment, comfortably eclipsing the national average of 75.5%.

Figure 5.4.1: Working age employment rate across 38 LEP areas, 2004-19



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Oxfordshire's unemployment rate meanwhile is estimated to be as low as 1.6%, compared to the national average of 4.1%. Since 2010, an additional 32,900 residents have entered work, whilst some 26,500 residents have moved out of unemployment or economic inactivity.

Though a high and increasing share of those in employment are in full-time work (78.1% in Oxfordshire, national average 75.3%), Oxfordshire does have a slightly higher incidence of residents in non-permanent (including 'zero hours') employment than the national average (6.2% in Oxfordshire, national average 4.5%).

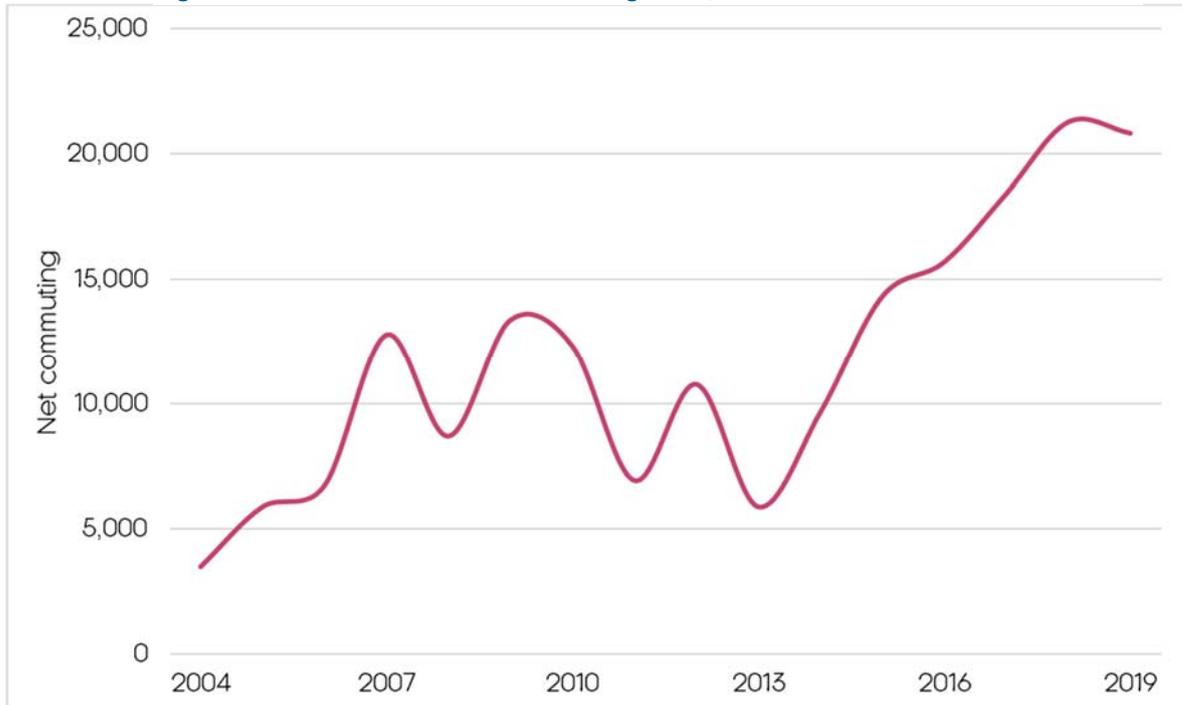
Census data shows most residents (85%) work in the county, though this may now be higher given the tightness of the local labour market, which has also seen an increase in people commuting into Oxfordshire.

Figure 5.4.2 shows Oxfordshire's net commuting has rapidly increased over recent years (its highest since records began in 1981) as people working in the county exceeds residents in employment; since 2010, the number of people working in Oxfordshire has increased by 41,400, whilst the number of residents in work has increased by only 32,900.

This is a factor which is likely to have influenced house price growth; the relationship between commuting and affordability is explored in greater detail in *Chapter 12 Commuting and Affordability Implications*. Likewise, with more

people travelling into Oxfordshire, and travelling further, this has likely had implications for journey times, congestion and emissions in Oxfordshire.

**Figure 5.4.2: Oxfordshire's net commuting flows, 2004-19**



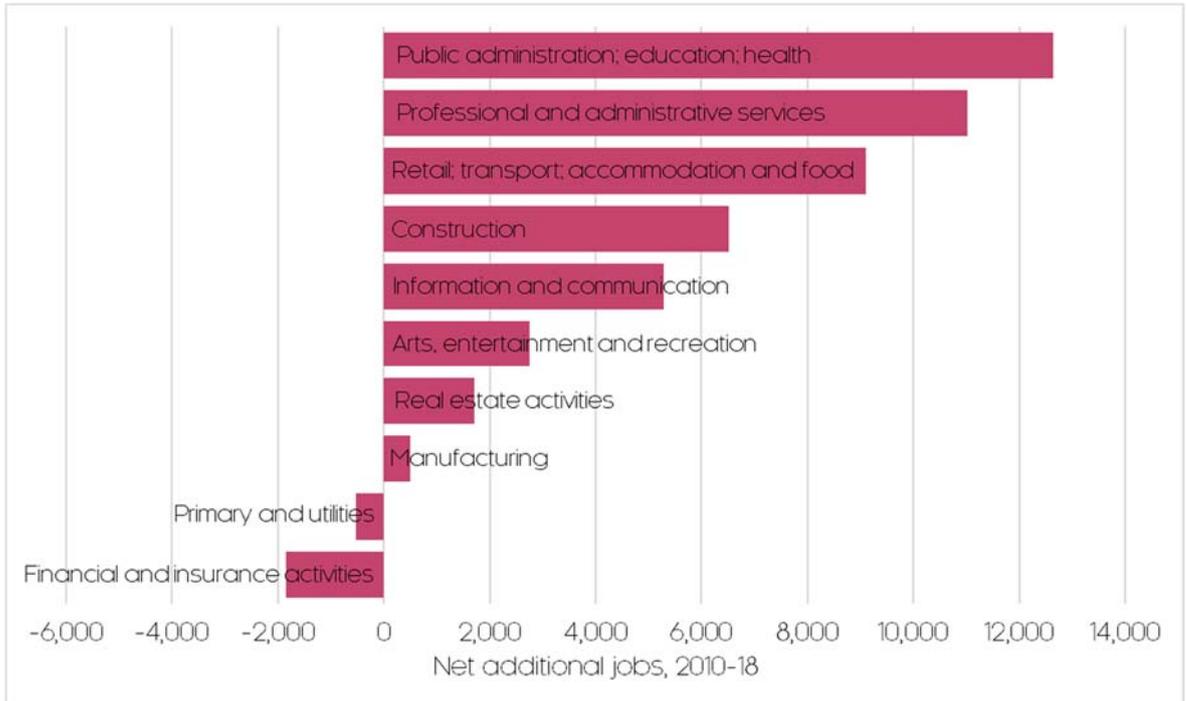
Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

This trend has been driven by the high and unprecedented rates of job creation as highlighted previously in Figure 5.2.1. Since 2010, an estimated 47,200 additional jobs have been created by employers in Oxfordshire.<sup>33</sup> As Figure 5.4.3 shows, at the headline sectoral level growth has been dominated by business and consumer services, which have accounted for around 86% of all additional jobs.

Only a handful of sectors have failed to show positive headline jobs growth over this time; the cyclical agriculture and primary industries, and the recession-impacted finance and insurance sectors. In contrast to many areas in the South East, Oxfordshire's manufacturing workforce has marginally grown.

<sup>33</sup> The number of jobs exceeds to the number of people working in Oxfordshire because a person can have more than one job ("double-jobbers")

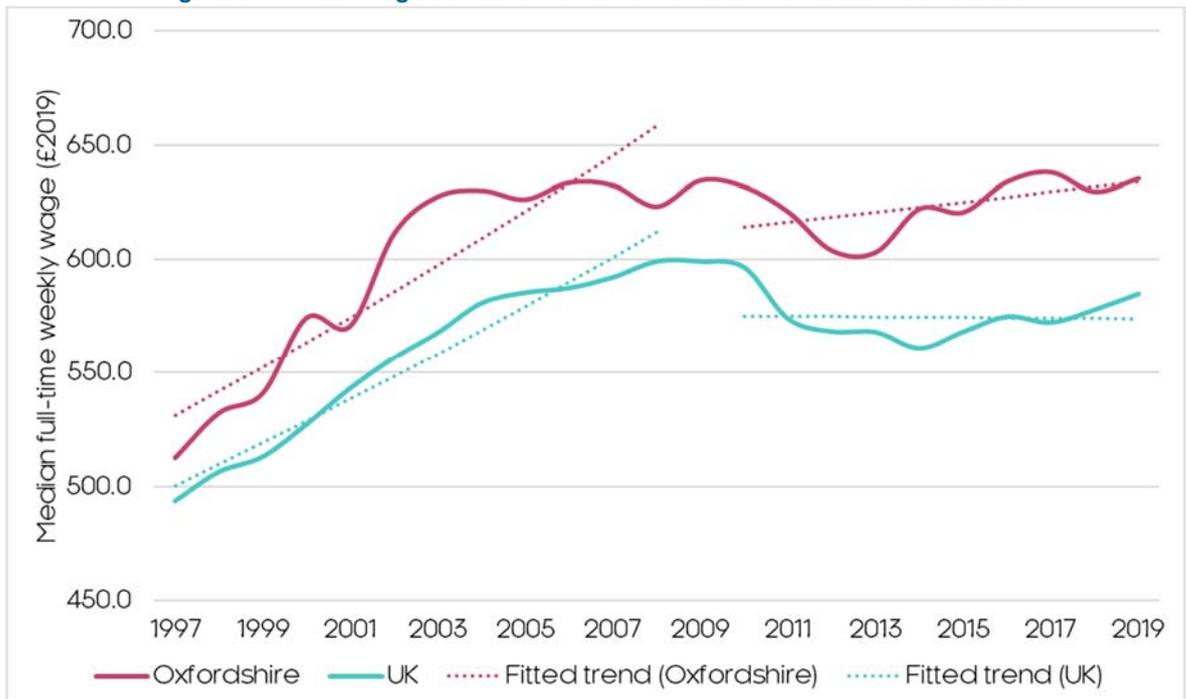
**Figure 5.4.3: Sectoral composition of jobs growth in Oxfordshire 2010-2018**



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

This buoyant labour market performance has however been against a backdrop of subdued wage growth. As Figure 5.4.4 shows, after peaking in 2006 median full-time wages in Oxfordshire had contracted by 4.8% in real terms by 2013. Positively wage growth has since started to accelerate, averaging 0.9% since 2013, almost double the national average of 0.5%, though it took almost a decade for the median wage to pass its pre-recession peak.

**Figure 5.4.4: Real wage trends for full-time workers in Oxfordshire and the UK**



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

When looking at the distribution of earnings, the gap between the highest and lowest-earners in Oxfordshire is marginally lower than the national average, though since 2013 low earners in Oxfordshire have seen slower real wage growth than equivalents elsewhere (4.7% in Oxfordshire, 6.4% national average), and the median for the county.

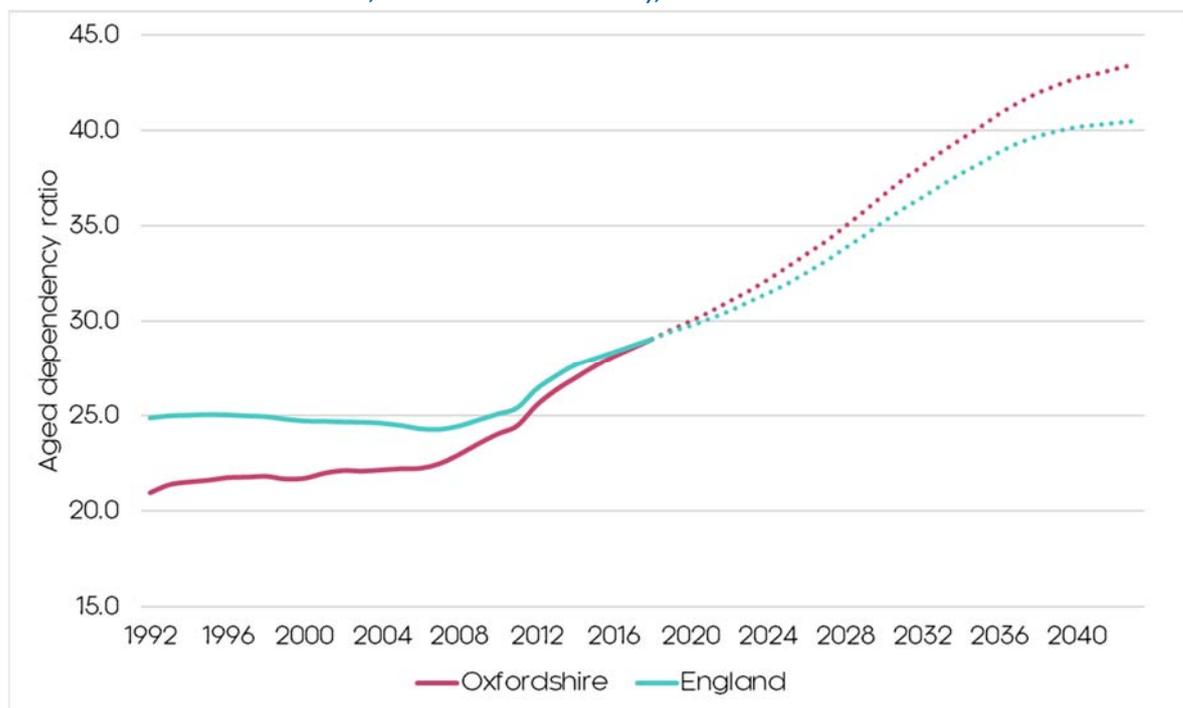
As explored in *Chapter 4*, this challenging environment for wage growth post-recession has been against a backdrop of a resurgent housing market, adding to affordability pressures in Oxfordshire.

## 5.5 Oxfordshire's working age population

Since 2008, Oxfordshire's working age population share (currently 62.8%, compared to a national average of 62.6%) has decreased by 3.5 percentage points (p.p.), and is expected to decrease further to 58.5% by 2050. The aged dependency ratio<sup>34</sup> highlights the scale of such trends and their potential impact on the local economy.

As the ratio narrows, it *“places increasing pressure on those of working age to provide for those not in work – whether directly or through taxes.”*<sup>35</sup> It can also restrict labour supply and exacerbate skills gaps and shortages,<sup>36</sup> not least in an already tight labour market like Oxfordshire's.

**Figure 5.5.1: Aged dependency trends in Oxfordshire and the UK (note: dotted line denotes forecasts, from 2018-based SNPP), 1992-2040**



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Figure 5.5.1 shows the aged dependency ratio in Oxfordshire and England overtime. Though the current ratio of 29 dependents per 100 working age

<sup>34</sup> The ratio of aged dependents (those aged 65+) for every 100 working age persons (those aged 16-64)

<sup>35</sup> World Economic Forum (2015), What are the economic implications of ageing populations?

<sup>36</sup> CIPD (2015), Labour supply and the ageing workforce

residents is the 14<sup>th</sup> lowest of 38 LEP areas, it is rising quickly and diverging from the national average.

In fact, by 2040 the ratio is expected to increase at an unbridled pace to 43 dependents per 100 working age residents, higher than the national average of 40. At this point, it is expected 1 in 4 of Oxfordshire's residents will be of retirement age. This clearly has implications for the sustainability of local government finances.

## 5.6 Conclusions

Oxfordshire has been one of the country's fastest growing economies in recent years, and sustained jobs growth of some 6,000 per year over the 2010-18 period. It has notable strengths in research-intensive activities including media and technology, science and healthcare, and public services. Whilst employment growth has been strong, productivity improvements have however stalled in recent years.

The evidence suggests that jobs growth over the 2010-18 period has outpaced growth in housing in Oxfordshire, and set against strong levels of economic participation, in-commuting to the county has therefore increased. Drawing together the analysis in *Chapters 4 and 5*, it is clear that Oxfordshire's strong economic performance has led to a supply/demand imbalance which has supported a further deterioration in housing affordability.

## 6 Commercial Market Dynamics

### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter gives consideration to commercial property market dynamics in Oxfordshire, focusing on dynamics for the types of uses – offices, research and development, industrial and warehouse/distribution development – and related employment activities which typically take place on ‘employment sites’.

By reviewing recent trends in floorspace, rents and take-up changes, it provides greater understanding of supply and demand issues specific to Oxfordshire. This chapter also summarises views of commercial agents regarding the local commercial property market. The analysis then informs the consideration of future employment land needs which is addressed in *Chapter 11*.

However, it is important to note that there is significant employment in Oxfordshire, which would ordinarily fall within use class E(g)(i) Office or E(g)(ii) Research but where associated planning permissions are for use class D1 Non-Residential Institutions. This is particularly the case with the economy of Oxford, where there has been significant jobs growth in hospitals and universities.

### 6.2 Stock of commercial property

There is a total of 6.5 million sq.m of commercial floorspace in Oxfordshire as at March 2019 (Table 6.2.1). Industrial floorspace makes up 54% of the total, retail and office each make up 17% whilst 11% is accounted for by other commercial floorspace (which includes amongst others education, health and utilities).

**Table 6.2.1: Stock of commercial floorspace (sq.m), 2019**

	Retail	Office	Industrial	Other	Total
<b>Oxfordshire</b>	<b>1,134,000</b>	<b>1,134,000</b>	<b>3,532,000</b>	<b>700,000</b>	<b>6,500,000</b>
<b>% of total stock</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Cherwell	338,000	192,000	1,215,000	172,000	1,917,000
% county total	30%	17%	34%	25%	29%
Oxford	360,000	370,000	317,000	168,000	1,215,000
% county total	32%	33%	9%	24%	19%
South Oxfordshire	160,000	192,000	589,000	124,000	1,065,000
% county total	14%	17%	17%	18%	16%
Vale of White Horse	144,000	274,000	850,000	127,000	1,395,000
% county total	13%	24%	24%	18%	21%
West Oxfordshire	132,000	106,000	560,000	110,000	908,000
% county total	12%	9%	16%	16%	14%

Source: VOA, Iceni Projects.

Oxford has almost a third of retail and office floorspace in the county. Vale of White Horse also stands out as having a larger concentration of office floorspace than other areas at 274,000 sq.m likely influenced by the significant concentration at Milton Park, Didcot. The proportion of office and retail floorspace in West Oxfordshire is comparatively modest.

Of the total 3.5 million sq.m of industrial floorspace, the largest concentration is in Cherwell (34%) influenced by the location of its main towns close to the M40. This is followed by Vale of White Horse; with Oxford having a notably low level of industrial floorspace. The level of industrial floorspace in Cherwell is more than twice that in South Oxfordshire or West Oxfordshire.

The stock of commercial floorspace in Oxfordshire has grown by 339,000 sq.m over the last 15 years, as shown in Table 6.2.2. However, there has been relatively modest growth in both industrial floorspace (+ 51,000 sq.m) and office floorspace (+ 63,000 sq.m) over this time.

Over the last five years, industrial floorspace has grown by 63,000 sq.m and office floorspace by a modest 3,000 sq.m influenced by losses through Permitted Development Rights (PDR) changes of use to residential.

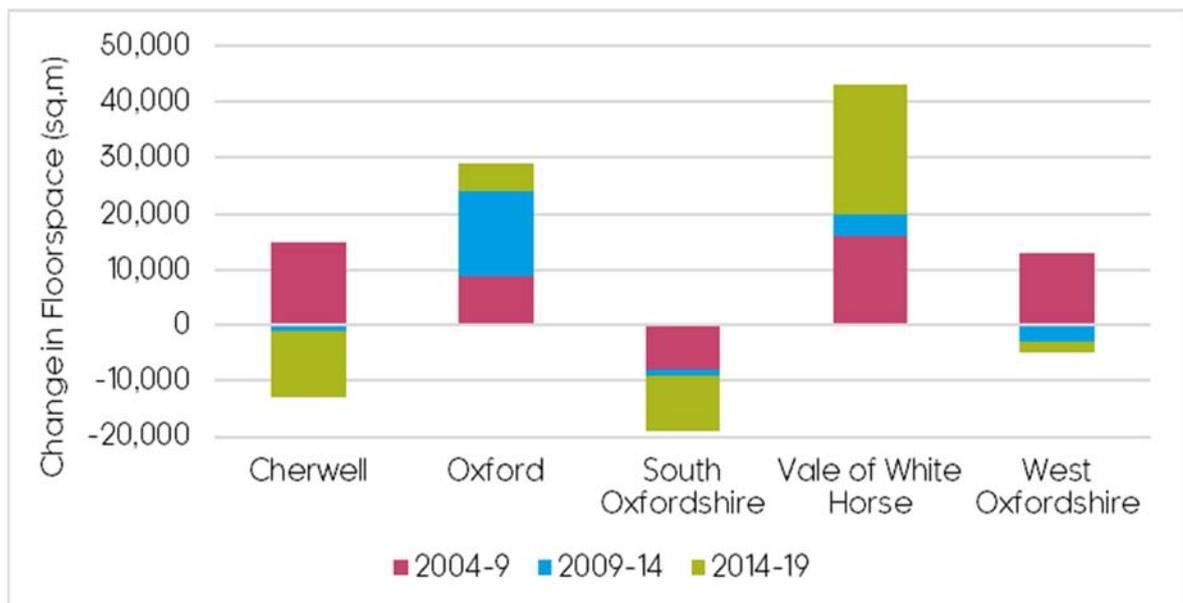
**Table 6.2.2: Net change in commercial floorspace (sq.m) in Oxfordshire, 2004-19**

	2004-09	2009-14	2014-19	Total	% Change, 2004-19	% Change, 2014-19
Industrial	-26,000	14,000	63,000	51,000	1.5%	1.8%
Office	45,000	15,000	3,000	63,000	5.9%	0.3%
Retail	21,000	22,000	58,000	101,000	9.8%	5.4%
Other	66,000	12,000	46,000	124,000	21.5%	7.0%

Source: VOA, Icen Projects.

Vale of White Horse and Oxford have seen the strongest growth in office floorspace, as illustrated in Figure 6.2.1. In contrast, the recent trend over the last decade has been of a decline in net terms in office floorspace in the other Oxfordshire local authorities.

**Figure 6.2.1: Changes in office floorspace in Oxfordshire, 2004-2019**

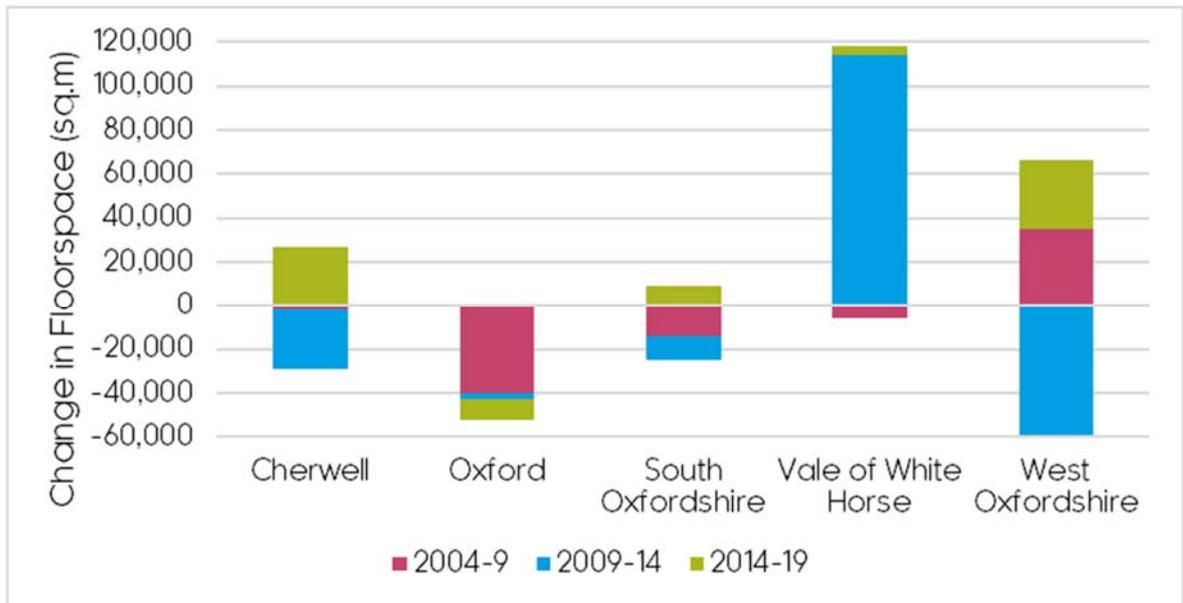


Source: VOA, Icen Projects.

A similar analysis for industrial floorspace, presented in Figure 6.2.2, points to the strongest overall growth of 112,000 sq.m (2004-19) being in Vale of White Horse. West Oxfordshire has seen modest growth over the 15-year period (7,000 sq.m) whilst in the other authorities, the quantum of industrial floorspace has fallen in net terms.

The more recent trend (2014-19) has seen of growth in industrial floorspace in West Oxfordshire and Cherwell in particular, the floorspace quantum increasing by 31,000 sq.m and 27,000 sq.m respectively. Modest growth of 9,000 sq.m has been seen in Vale of White Horse and 4,000 sq.m in South Oxfordshire; with a decline of -9,000 sq.m seen in Oxford.

**Figure 6.2.2: Changes in industrial floorspace in Oxfordshire, 2004-19**



Source: VOA NDR Business Floorspace Tables, IcenI Projects.

### 6.3 Oxfordshire's office market

IcenI has reviewed office market dynamics in Oxfordshire, taking account of published research by local and national surveys; together with additional analysis of take-up and availability based on Estates Gazette data (EGi) and CoStar.

Oxfordshire has been highly resilient to wider economic uncertainty in recent years, in part due to the county's focus on the knowledge sectors which have been driving demand for commercial property. Analysis by Carter Jonas suggests the main constraints on recent take-up have been on the supply side rather than demand<sup>37</sup>, which have adversely impacted on transaction levels in the office and research & development (R&D) sector.

The latest commercial property market updated by VSL<sup>38</sup> indicates that transactions across Oxfordshire in the office and industrial market have fallen significantly from the high levels recorded in 2017 (Figure 6.3.1). A total of 28 office transactions were recorded in 2019 compared with 52 in 2017.

Reflecting a shortage of supply, headline rents across the county have increased. Prime office rents have reached highs of £40 per sq.ft in central Oxford and £35 per sq.ft around the Oxford Ring Road. Rents have also increased over the last 5 years in Milton Park and Abingdon (as shown below)

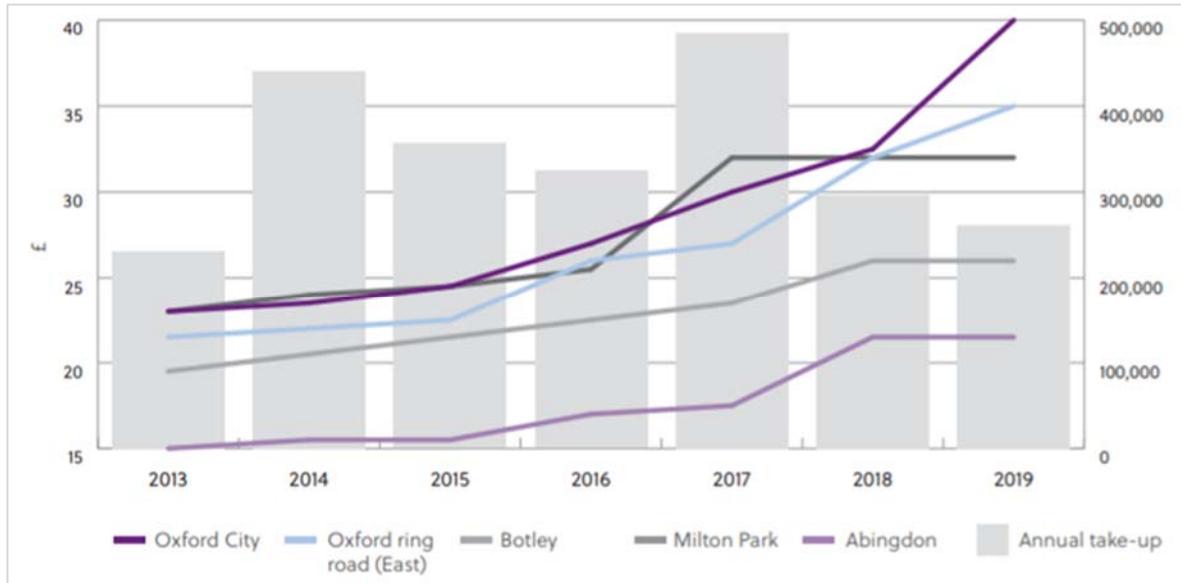
<sup>37</sup> Carter Jonas (2019) Commercial Edge Oxfordshire

<sup>38</sup> VSL (2019) Oxfordshire A34 Commercial Property Market Update 2019

but fall below those in Oxford. Rising rents are indicative of a supply/demand imbalance.

VSL predict that rental levels will rise further as the availability of the best office space continues to shrink.

**Figure 6.3.1: Headline office rents and office floorspace take-up in Oxfordshire, 2013-19**



Source: VSL.

VSL's Market Update indicates that the supply of office space has remained static and there is little speculative development expected to come forwards in 2020. As a result, existing refurbished office stock will continue to support the market.

Notwithstanding this, the office market sentiment in Oxfordshire is relatively strong, evidenced for instance by Legal & General's £4 billion investment with the University of Oxford to deliver a series of science & innovation districts with modern workspace and research facilities over the next decade.

In December 2019 Oxford City Council also approved the Oxford North planning application for the Northern Gateway area around the intersection of the A40 and A34, which is set to provide up to 87,300 sq.m of B1 floorspace providing 4,500 new jobs (including high quality workspace for start-ups), 480 new homes as well as shops, bars and restaurants.

An optimistic office market outlook was shared by Savills in Autumn 2019.<sup>39</sup> Their 2019 research cites expected growth of 8-9% growth in 'professional, scientific & tech' employment over the next 5 years. The top three office sectors in Oxford are identified as Technology, Media & Telecoms (28% of floorspace take-up), Energy & Utilities (18%), Biosciences (18%). Savills suggest that Oxford is poised to deliver significant new commercial floorspace in the coming years, which will drive prosperity.

However, the challenge will be accommodating companies in buildings they aspire to be in. As such, the City will need to provide the best quality and quantum of commercial floorspace. They cite that availability of office-type

<sup>39</sup> Savills (2019) Spotlight: Oxford Offices. [https://www.savills.co.uk/research\\_articles/229130/288957-0](https://www.savills.co.uk/research_articles/229130/288957-0)

space (including laboratories) has been on a downward trend for the past decade. As the market had moved towards a (pre-Covid) 'new normal' of 500,000 sq.ft take-up pa in the past few years, the current supply level of around 900,000 sq.ft shows less than two years of supply in the market.

Savills Oxford Offices Spotlight, prepared in September 2020<sup>40</sup>, indicates that despite lower take-up in the 1<sup>st</sup> half of 2020 and the effects of a shift towards home-working driven by the Covid-19 pandemic, there is a good pipeline of supply under offer in Q3, particularly of laboratory space, and a continuing contraction in the level of available space. They expect prime office rents in Oxford to rise to £45 per sq.ft in 2020 commenting:

*“Occupier appetite is strong and will continue to strengthen. If the supply was available, particularly in the city centre, take-up would be much higher. The resulting effect has been a doubling of rents in the past six years and they are expected to top £45 this year and grow going forward. Tenant incentives have also come under downward pressure.”*

As a result take-up in the Oxford market in 2020 is forecast at 380,000 sq.ft, similar to the 2019 outturn. Take-up continues to be dominated by science- and technology-related occupiers. Set against this, the availability of space has continued to contract and stood at 65,000 sq.ft in Q2 2020 equating to less than 1.5 years' supply based on recent trends. This can be expected to provide further rental growth.

Whilst Covid-19 has had notable effects on office markets in other areas, the science and R&D focus in Oxfordshire has had different effects. Oxfordshire has been at the forefront of work to find a vaccine for Covid-19, both in terms of research and manufacturing, with plans for a 7,500 sq.m footprint Vaccines Manufacturing and Innovation Centre (VMIC) at Harwell Campus fast-tracked to help deliver this.

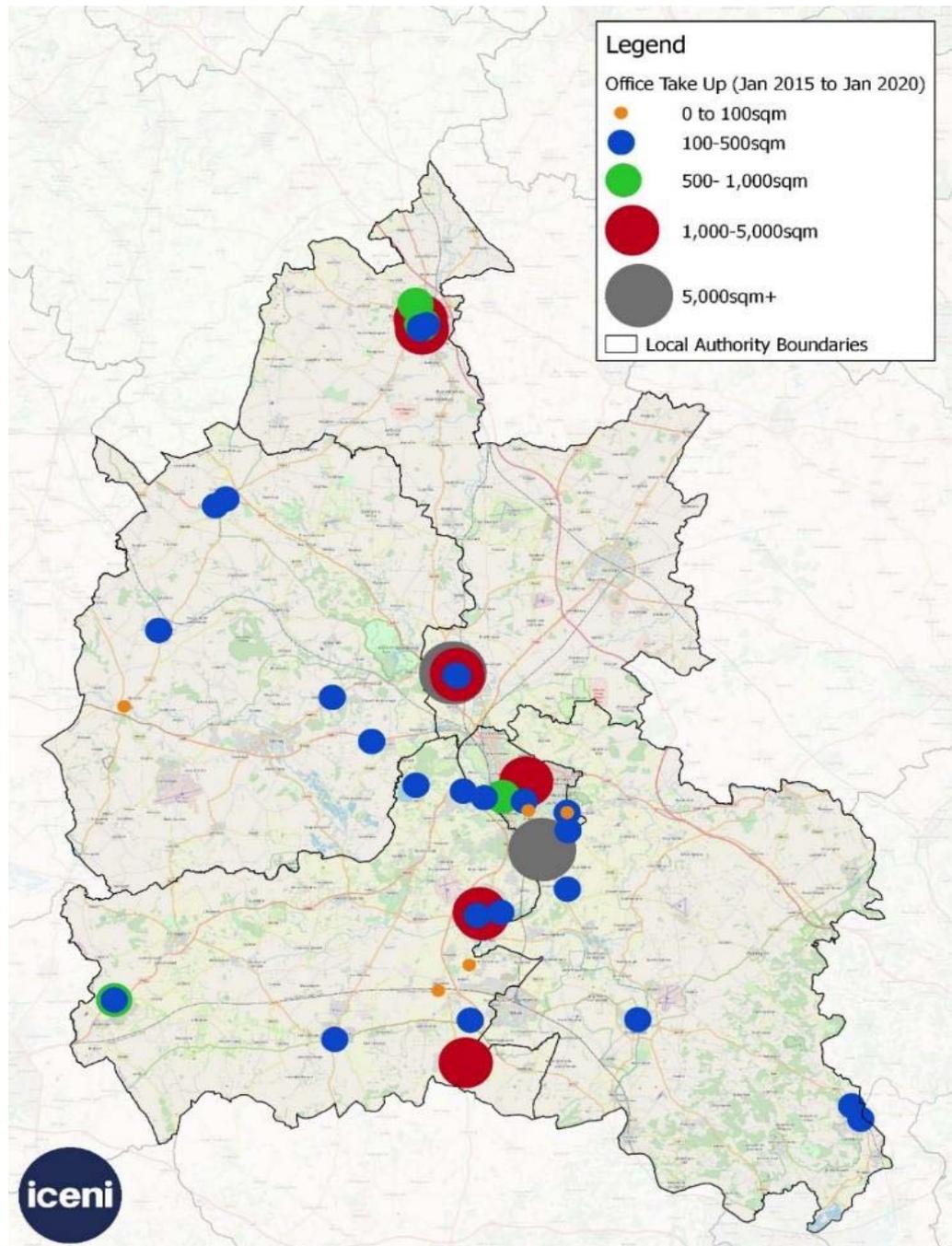
Iceni has undertaken its own analysis of office floorspace take-up and availability based on Estates Gazette (EGi) data on recorded deals and available space which is currently being marketed.

Figure 6.3.2 below shows the spatial distribution of office take-up across Oxfordshire based on the occupational deals available through EGi for January 2015 to January 2020.<sup>41</sup> It shows a strong concentration of office and R&D market activity in/around Oxford, and along the “*Knowledge Spine*” stretching from Banbury in the north to Didcot/Milton Park in South Oxfordshire. There is a notable lack of office take-up in Bicester and Witney.

<sup>40</sup> Savills (2019) Spotlight: Oxford Offices. Available at [https://www.savills.co.uk/research\\_articles/229130/304865-0](https://www.savills.co.uk/research_articles/229130/304865-0)

<sup>41</sup> Egi - Radius Data Exchange

Figure 6.3.2: Office take-up across Oxfordshire, 2015-20



Source: EGi, Icen Projects.

Turning to availability, as of January 2020, there were 541 available office premises as recorded by EGi Radius within Oxfordshire.<sup>42</sup> The size and spatial distribution of these premises are illustrated on Figure 6.3.3 below. It is notable that the spatial distribution shows a strong level of supply around Oxford and in the southern parts of Oxfordshire. However, it is worth noting there is limited supply of Grade A office space in Oxford<sup>43</sup>.

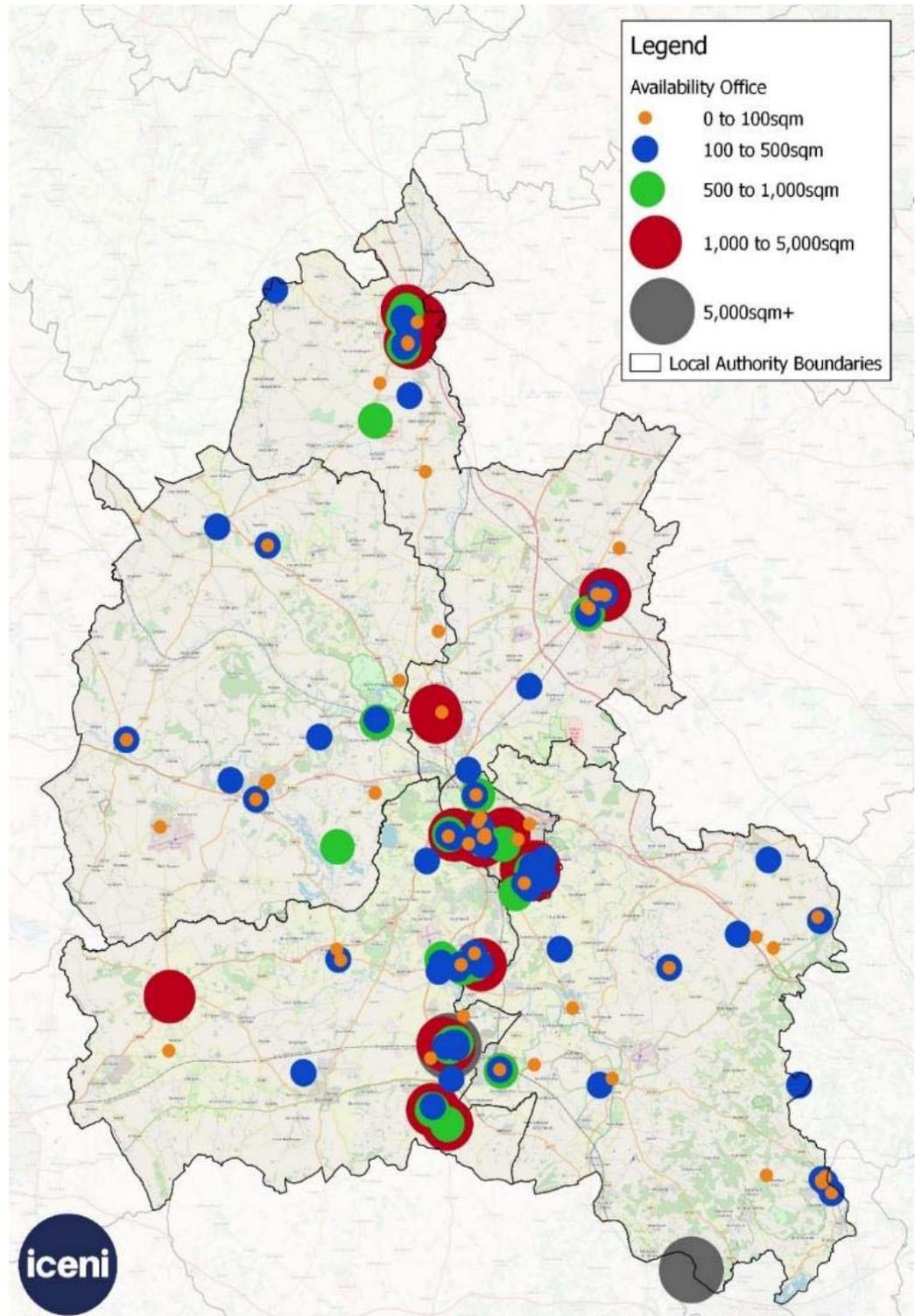
Larger office premises of over 1,000sqm are available in both town centres and along the A34 corridor (broadly corresponding to the 'Knowledge Spine'

<sup>42</sup> EGi, Radius Data Exchange

<sup>43</sup> Savills (2019) Spotlight: Oxford Offices - [https://www.savills.co.uk/research\\_articles/229130/288957-0](https://www.savills.co.uk/research_articles/229130/288957-0)

outlined in the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy), with numerous smaller office premises below 500sqm spread across the county.

**Figure 6.3.3: Office availability across Oxfordshire, January 2020**



Source: EGi, Icen Projects.

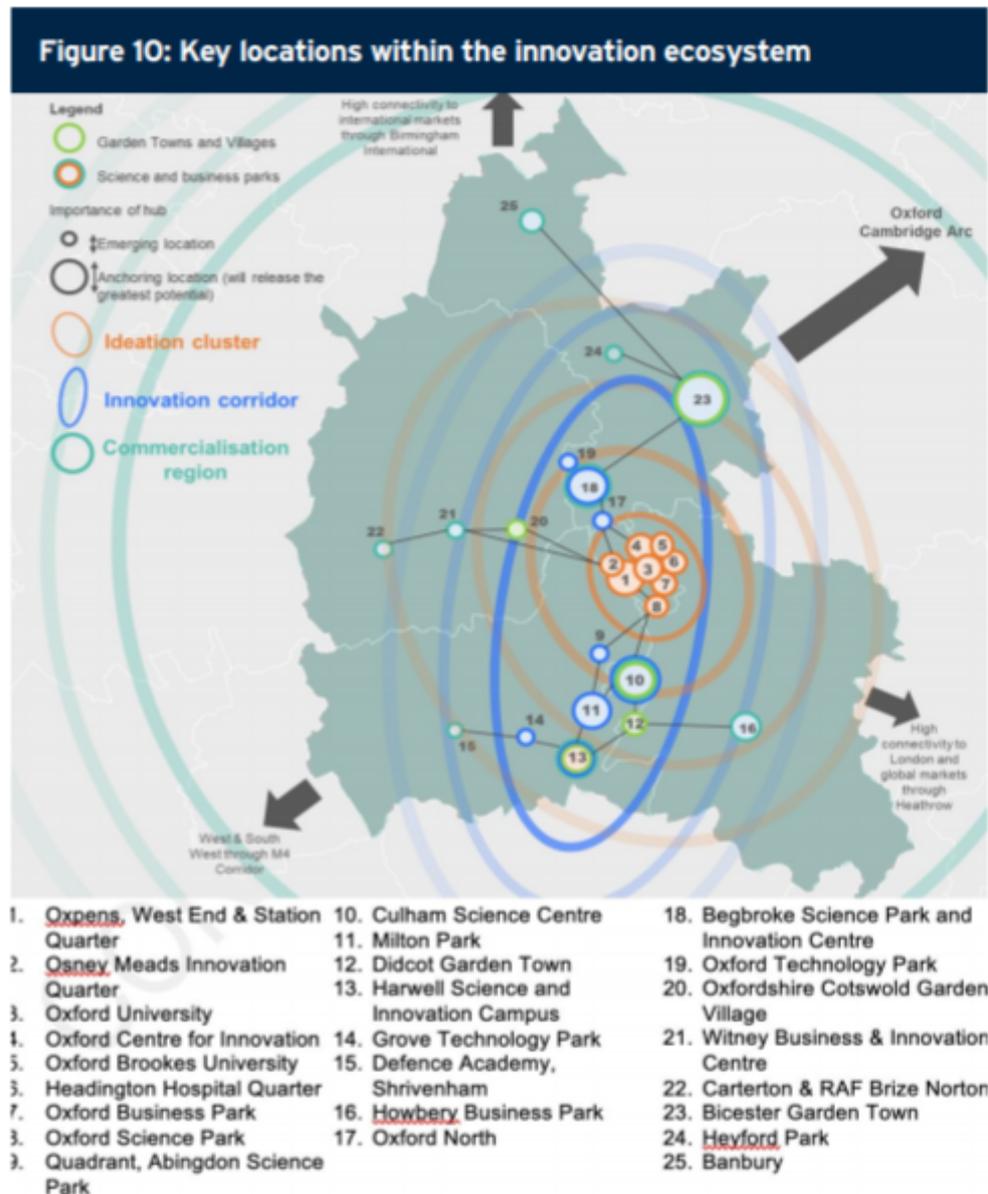
Figure 6.2.2 shows office take-up in both town/ city centre and business park locations. Demographics, working practices and staff preferences pre-Covid were reinforcing the appeal of town and city centres as locations which were amenity rich and supported social activity. However business parks have continued to play an important role, and research by Knight Frank has shown

that they have accounted for three quarters of space acquired by pharmaceutical, manufacturing and technology firms across the South East since 2000. These are important sectors to Oxfordshire’s economy.

The business park model has also been changing, with newer schemes seeking to design places which enable social and creative interactions through provision of amenities and investment in creating business eco-systems.

As the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy<sup>44</sup> highlights, the county has one of the highest concentrations of innovation assets in the World with a strong concentration of science, technology and business parks. The majority of knowledge intensive economic activity is clustered in/ around Oxford and along the Knowledge Spine. Key existing science and business park locations are provided in Figure 6.3.4 below.

Figure 6.3.4: Key science and business parks in Oxfordshire



Source: Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (LIS).

<sup>44</sup>Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (2019) Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership

Despite this strong existing stock of science and business parks, Oxfordshire faces a challenge with constraints on innovation space. Many of the science and business parks across the region are at capacity, particularly new laboratory facilities, clean rooms and flexible science working spaces.

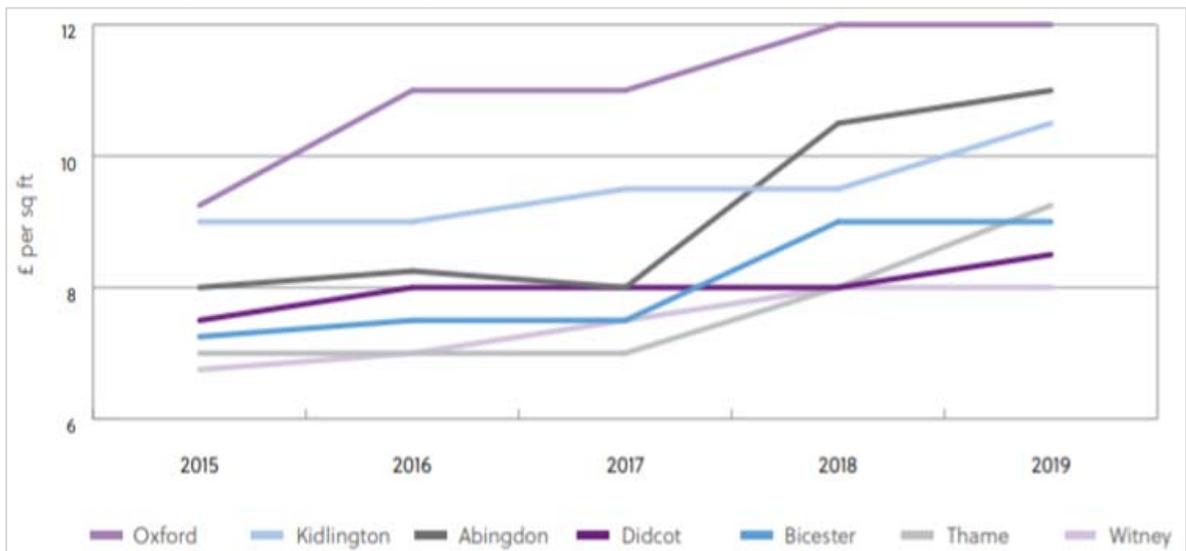
### 6.4 Oxfordshire’s industrial market

The industrial market geography within Oxfordshire differs from that for office/ R&D space, with Bicester and Banbury sitting within an M40 market (and Banbury relating in part towards the South Midlands); alongside an Oxford market which includes major manufacturers such as BMW Mini’s Cowley plant. There are also local concentrations of activity elsewhere, including in Witney.

Prime industrial rents in Oxfordshire have remained on an upwards trajectory albeit at more subdued levels than in recent years, as shown in Figure 6.4.1. A lack of development opportunities and supply shortages have partly driven rents, with activity now increasingly focused on the second-hand market<sup>45</sup>. 2019 saw a lower volume of industrial transactions at 35 relative to the 49 deals in 2017.

Bicester has recorded sustained rents over £8 per sq.ft for the first time with the letting of 120,000 sq.ft to Arrival Ltd, whilst prime science and technology industrial rents generally remaining between £15 and £16 per sq.ft. VSL’s statistics for industrial prime rents across Oxfordshire are replicated below<sup>46</sup>. Oxford sees the strongest rents (followed by Abingdon) indicative of stronger comparative demand.

Figure 6.4.1: Industrial prime rents in Oxfordshire, 2015-19



Source: VSL.

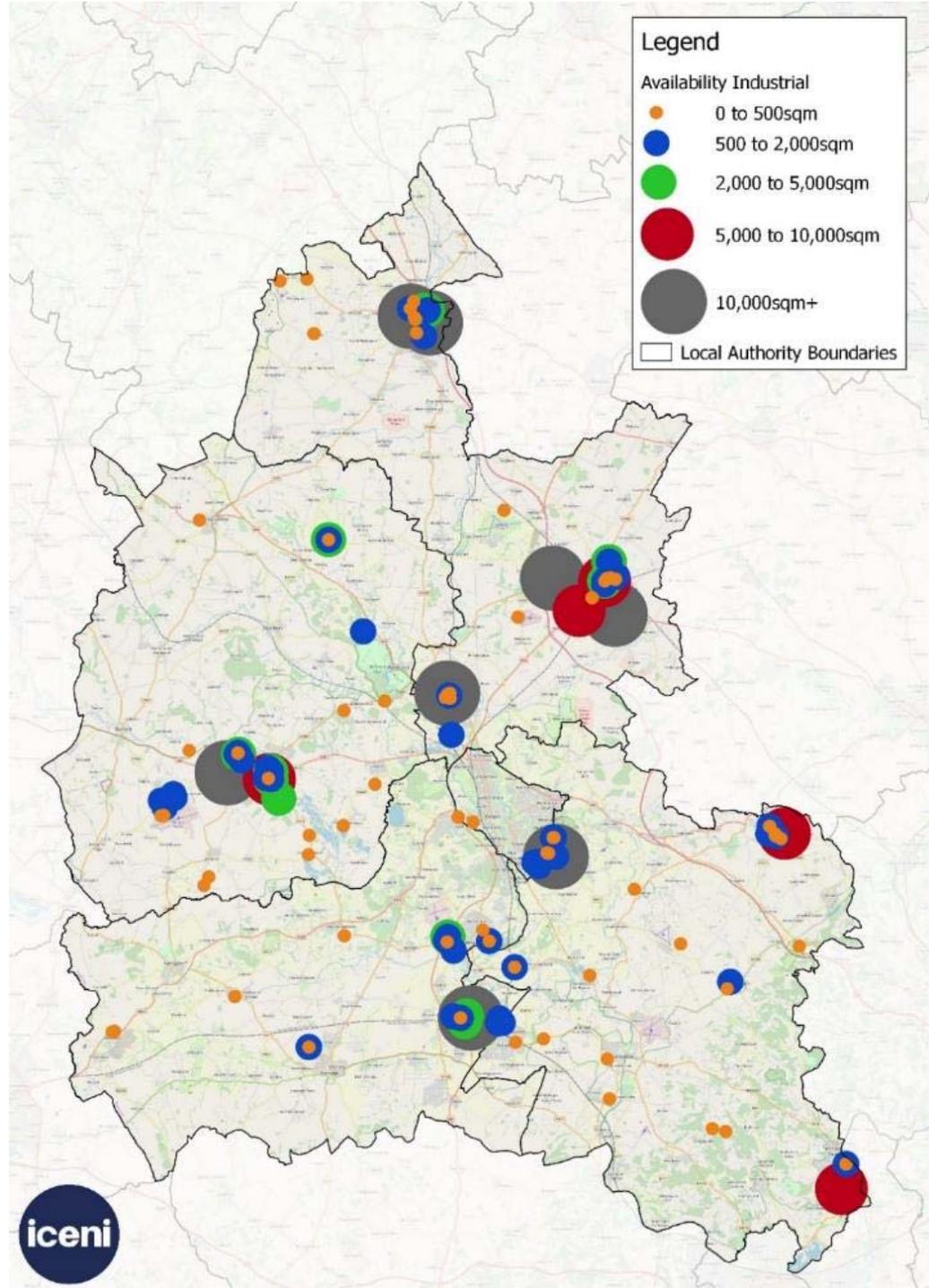
VSL’s market update states industrial supply has increased by 64% with speculative development set to accelerate in 2020 which will further add to the available industrial supply.

<sup>45</sup> Carter Jonas (2019) Commercial Edge Oxfordshire

<sup>46</sup> VSL (2019) Oxfordshire A34 Commercial Property Market Update 2019

In terms of industrial premises, the occupational deals available through EGi for January 2015 to January 2020<sup>47</sup> are shown in Figure 6.4.3 below. The take-up of larger premises (5,000sqm+) were focussed on Didcot, Bicester and Banbury which are located closer to the M40 and M4 motorways. There is a noticeable lack of larger industrial take-up around Oxford, with smaller premises occupied in the surrounding towns across the centre of Oxfordshire.

**Figure 6.4.2: Availability of industrial floorspace across Oxfordshire, 2015-20**

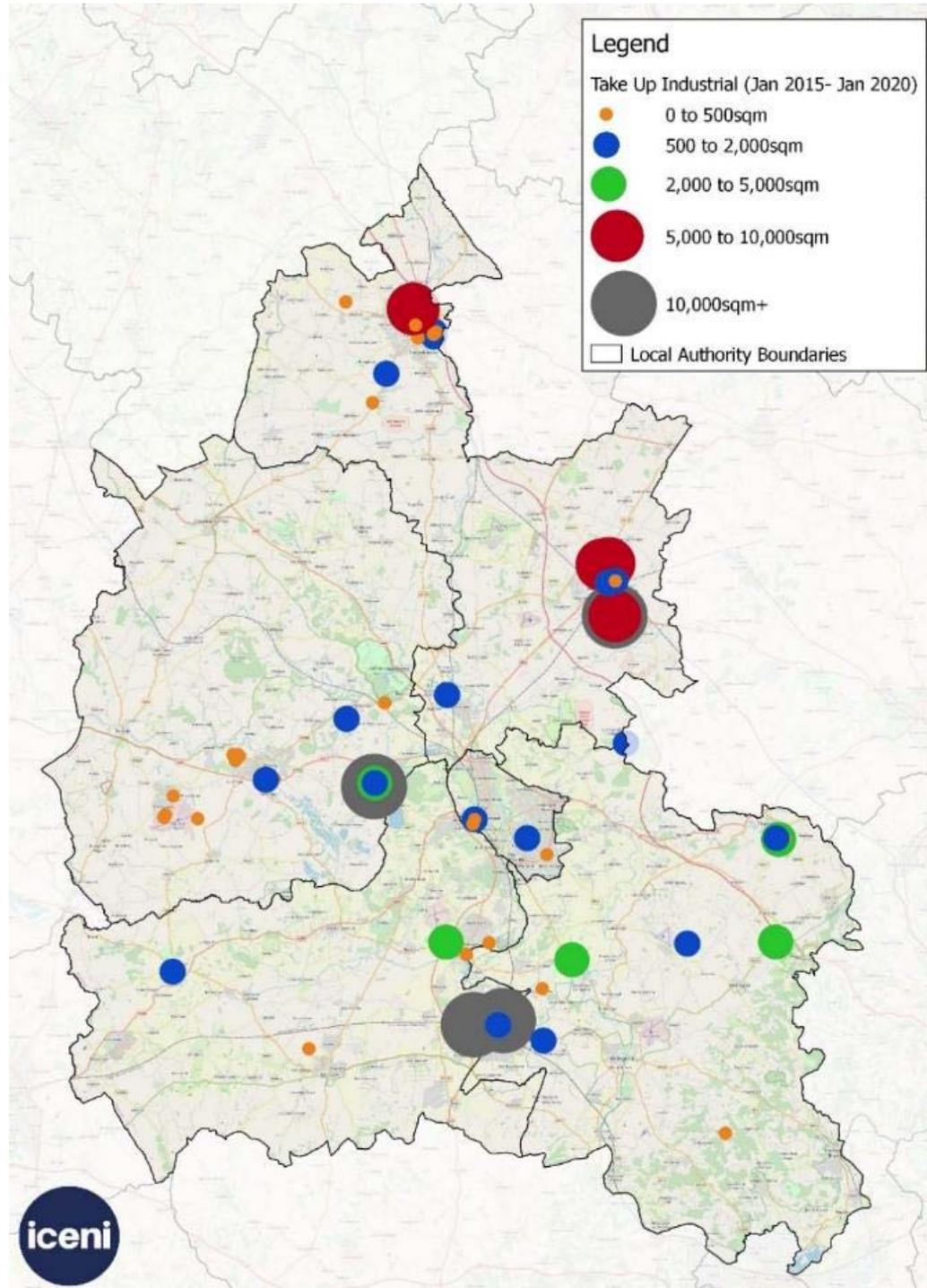


Source: EGi, Icen Projects.

<sup>47</sup> EGi, Radius Data Exchanges

The spatial distribution of identified industrial supply (Figure 6.4.2) is not too dissimilar to the geography of past take-up. However, it is notable that larger industrial units are available towards the eastern boundary of Oxfordshire in Henley-on-Thames and Thame, as well as Witney. Also noticeable is the large amount of industrial speculative development taking place due to the release of land in Bicester.

**Figure 6.4.3: Industrial floorspace take-up across Oxfordshire, 2015-20**



Source: EGi, Icen Projects.

## 6.5 Conclusions

Analysis in this chapter has shown office take-up and availability is generally concentrated in Oxford and southwards along the 'Knowledge Spine', including Milton Park. Take-up and availability of industrial floorspace is more spread out across Oxfordshire, with noticeable amounts of speculative developments to the northeast of the county where there is good access to the M40.

Looking forwards, commercial agents are generally optimistic about the future of the local commercial property market. It is evident that there are short-term supply constraints in the office market, particularly in the Oxford area and for Grade A space, which is likely to drive further rental growth. Many of the area's science and business parks are at capacity. The evidence also points to a healthy market for industrial space.

The demand analysis forms part of the evidence base which should be used to develop the strategy for employment land provision in the Oxfordshire Plan. This includes in *Chapter 11*, which provides a forward-looking overview of the quantitative scale of employment land needs in Oxfordshire.

# Part B: Exploring Oxfordshire's Future Growth Needs

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## 7 Oxfordshire's Housing Need Using the Standard Method

### 7.1 Introduction

Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) sets out a "Standard Method" for calculating the minimum local housing need for a local authority.

This is intended to provide a minimum local housing need figure ("a *minimum baseline*") using an approach which is simpler, quicker and more transparent than previous methods; and in doing so has removed much of the scope for professional judgement or debate about the minimum level for future housing provision.

In this chapter, IcenI has set out the current Standard Method calculations for Oxfordshire.

Note that the calculations presented here were estimated utilising affordability data for 2019 (released March 2020). Consideration of more recent affordability data (for 2020, released March 2021) is provided in *Appendix E: Standard Method Appendix*.

### 7.2 Standard Method minimum local housing need

The Standard Method is structured around three core stages, as illustrated in Figure 7.2.1:

**Figure 7.2.1: Overview of the Standard Method (2018) for calculating local housing need**



Source: IcenI Projects.

The first step in the Standard Method takes the projected household growth from trend-based household projections over the next 10 years. Given the Oxfordshire Plan period begins in 2020, household growth over the period from 2020-2030 has been used. For Oxfordshire the Government's official (2014-based) household projections show growth of 2,387 households per year, adding together the figures for the five local authorities.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> The Standard Method was designed around the use of 2014-based Household Projections. Whilst a 2016-based set of household projections were published in 2018 and a 2018-based set in 2020, these adopt a different methodology and show a notably lower level of housing need across England. Government

The second stage applies an uplift to this to take account of affordability based on the latest house price to income ratio figure. The detailed calculations are set out in Figure 7.1.2, with the adjustments applied to the household growth separately for each local authority based on its affordability position as published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).<sup>49</sup> The combined effect of this across Oxfordshire is to increase the housing need by 42% relative to the household projections, generating an (uncapped) need for 3,383 homes a year across Oxfordshire.

In the third step in the Standard Method the affordability uplift is capped in some circumstances which reduces the minimum number generated by the method, but does not reduce housing need itself. The cap was designed to ensure that the method produces figures which were ‘as deliverable as possible.’ Where a plan has been adopted or reviewed in the last five years, the cap is set at 40% above the relevant housing requirement figure set out in existing policies. Where there is not an up-to-date plan, the cap is set at either 40% above the household growth projected, or 40% above the housing requirement, whichever is the higher.

Of the Oxfordshire authorities, it is only Oxford’s figures which are affected by the cap which is set at 40% above the projected household growth. The effect of this is to reduce the minimum figure for local housing need which might be applied in the short-term (to 3,348 homes a year).

Planning Practice Guidance however sets out that the cap does not affect the underlying level of housing need and areas which progress plans based on the cap would need to be reviewed in the short-term “*to ensure that any housing need above the capped level is planned for as soon as is reasonably possible.*” Given that the Oxfordshire Plan is looking to 2050, Icenic consider that the cap has a limited bearing on considering how many homes to plan for on this basis.

The fourth step in the methodology, introduced in late 2020, applies a cities and urban centres uplift to the top 20 local authorities (ranked by population size) across England. This does not include Oxford or any other Oxfordshire authorities and therefore does not affect figures for Oxfordshire.

Planning Practice Guidance<sup>50</sup> states that the Standard Method generates an annual number, based on a 10-year baseline, which can be applied to the whole plan period. Table 7.2.1 below shows the implications of doing this. The Standard Method generates a minimum local housing need for 33,350 homes over the 2020-2030 period.

The uncapped need would be slightly higher at 33,830 homes to 2030. If notionally the Standard Method was applied to the whole plan period to 2050, it would generate a need for 101,490 homes; however most plans do not have a 30 year timeframe instead looking 15-20 years into the future.

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has indicated that the use of the 2016-based Household Projections in the Standard Method is not consistent with its aims to deliver 300,000 homes a year by the mid-2020s and revised Planning Practice Guidance in February 2019 to indicate that the 2014-based Household Projections should be used in the Standard Method. The same position would apply to the 2018-based Household Projections.

<sup>49</sup> ONS house price to workplace-based earnings ratio data, published March 2020

<sup>50</sup> ID: 2a-012-20190220

**Table 7.2.1: Standard Method local housing need for Oxfordshire**

	2020-30	2030-40	2040-50	2020-50
Local housing need (uncapped)	33,830			
Minimum uncapped need (capped)	33,350	33,830	33,830	101,490

Source: Icen Projects.

The detailed calculations are shown in the Table 7.2.2 below. Local authority level figures are used as building blocks to generate the baseline housing need at an Oxfordshire level. It is for the Oxfordshire Plan to consider how housing provision is distributed within the county.

**Table 7.2.2: Standard Method local housing need for Oxfordshire (2014 Household Projections)**

	Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxon	Vale of White Horse	West Oxon	Oxfordshire
<b>Step 1: Setting the Baseline</b>						
Households 2020	62,135	61,621	58,246	54,642	47,462	<b>284,106</b>
Households 2030	67,526	67,046	62,369	59,545	51,489	<b>307,975</b>
Change in households	5,391	5,425	4,123	4,903	4,027	<b>23,869</b>
Per annum change	539	543	412	490	403	<b>2,387</b>
<b>Step 2: Affordability Adjustment</b>						
Affordability ratio, 2019	10.43	11.45	11.6	9.57	10.38	-
Adjustment factor	40%	47%	48%	35%	40%	-
Step 2 housing need figure (dwellings per annum)	756	795	608	661	563	<b>3,383</b>
<b>Step 3: Capping</b>						
40% above household growth	755	760	577	686	564	<b>3,342</b>
40% above plan requirement	1,142	762	766	1,439	924	-
Cap figure to be applied	1,599	762	766	1,439	924	-
Cap applicable	No	Yes	No	No	No	-
<b>Minimum local housing need (dwellings per annum)</b>	<b>756</b>	<b>762</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>661</b>	<b>563</b>	<b>3,350</b>

Source: Justin Gardner Consulting, Icen Projects.

The Standard Method is sensitive to both the household projections and annual changes in affordability. Plan-making authorities are expected to review the figures on the release of new data; and thus the figures generated by the Standard Method may well change between now and the point of submission of the Oxfordshire Plan. Planning Practice Guidance states that

the figures are then fixed and can be relied upon for a period of 2 years from the submission of the Plan.<sup>51</sup>

### 7.3 Implications of the adjusted demographic baseline projections

The Standard Method figures set out above, which use the 2014-based Household Projections, form a starting point for considering housing need. The analysis undertaken in *Chapter 2* of this report however indicated that there are notable issues with the demographic data for Oxford in particular, where past population growth appears to have been under-estimated.

It is reasonable that these revised demographic projections which are based on a more detailed interrogation of demographic trends in Oxfordshire and have been prepared to provide a more reasonable trend-based analysis of demographic growth should be used as a baseline in the Standard Method.

If these 'adjusted baseline' demographic projections are fed into the Standard Method, the resultant local housing need rises slightly to 3,386 dwellings per annum. The calculations for individual authorities are set out in Table 7.3.1 below. The district-level breakdown is set out for illustrative purposes only to show how the Oxfordshire total is derived.

**Table 7.3.1: Standard Method local housing need in Oxfordshire (adjusted demographic baseline projections)**

	Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxon	VoWH	West Oxon	Oxfordshire
Households 2020	64,191	59,992	60,150	56,834	47,832	<b>288,999</b>
Households 2030	70,227	64,969	64,554	62,668	50,506	<b>312,923</b>
Change 2020-30	6,036	4,976	4,404	5,834	2,674	<b>23,924</b>
Change 2030-30 per annum	604	498	440	583	267	<b>2,392</b>
Affordability ratio (2019)	10.43	11.45	11.6	9.57	10.38	-
Affordability Uplift	40%	47%	48%	35%	40%	-
Local Housing Need	846	729	650	786	374	<b>3,386</b>

Source: Justin Gardner Consulting, Icen Projects.

Applied over a 30-year period (2020-50), these would show these would show a notional need for 101,580 homes.

### 7.4 The demographic implications of the standard method

Having established the projected household growth from the Standard Method, a projection has been developed by JGC and Icen where the population and number of households increases such that these dwellings would be filled. The purpose of this is to consider with this level of housing provision, what level of workforce and economic growth would be supported. It uses the figures set out in Table 7.4.2 above based on the 'adjusted baseline' demographic projections.

<sup>51</sup> ID: 2a-008-20190220

The methodology adopted essentially takes the latest 2018-based subnational population projections ('SNPP') as a start point along with data about household formation from the 2014-based subnational household projections ('SNHP') – this latter source is used as it is considered that the 2016-based SNHP may include an increased degree of suppressed household formation, something the Standard Method is specifically designed to address.

Adjustments are also made to the 2014-based SNHP data to reflect any suppression within that source through modelling a 'part return to trend' towards those in the (pre-recession) 2008-based Household Projections for those aged 25-34 and 35-44. This approach was widely used prior to the publication of the ONS 2016-based Household Projections and was recommended by the Local Plans Expert Group to Government in its 2016 Report.<sup>52</sup>

The method used is considered to be consistent with suggestions in the PPG which is clear that the increase in household growth implied by the Standard Method will arise due to both a) increases in household formation (where this is constrained by supply) and b) the possibility that people are not able to live in a particular area due to a lack of housing. The wording of the PPG (2a-006) is as follows:

*“An affordability adjustment is applied as household growth on its own is insufficient as an indicator of future housing need because:*

- *household formation is constrained to the supply of available properties – new households cannot form if there is nowhere for them to live; and*
- *people may want to live in an area in which they do not reside currently, for example to be near to work, but be unable to find appropriate accommodation that they can afford.*

*The affordability adjustment is applied in order to ensure that the Standard Method for assessing local housing need responds to price signals and is consistent with the policy objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. The specific adjustment in this guidance is set at a level to ensure that minimum annual housing need starts to address the affordability of homes.”*

Within the modelling, migration assumptions have been changed so that across the county (and individual local authorities) the increase in households matches the Standard Method local housing need (including a 3% vacancy allowance). Household formation assumptions have also been raised to support improved household formation as affordability improves.

The changes to migration have been applied on a proportionate basis; the methodology assumes that the age/sex profile of both in- and out-migrants is the same as underpins the 2018-based SNPP (alternative internal migration assumptions) with adjustments being consistently applied to both internal

<sup>52</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/508345/Local-plans-report-to-government.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/508345/Local-plans-report-to-government.pdf)

(domestic) and international migration. Adjustments are made to both in- and out-migration (e.g. if in-migration is increased by 1% then out-migration is reduced by 1%). In summary the method includes the following assumptions:

- Base population from the 2018-based subnational population projections (SNPP) – the alternative internal migration variant
- Projections run from 2020 to 2050
- Population data for 2018 fixed by reference to estimates made from mid-year population estimates (MYE) and Patient Register (PR) data
- Population to 2020 derived from estimating potential population change given the number of net housing completions (2018-20)
- The migration profile (by age and sex) in the same proportions as the 2018-based SNPP – where rolled forward from 2043 to 2050 this assumes a continuation of any trends identified in the SNPP
- Fertility and mortality rates (by age and sex) as per the 2018-based SNPP – where rolled forward from 2043 to 2050 this assumes a continuation of any trends identified in the SNPP
- Household Representative Rates (HRRs) from the 2014-based subnational household projections (SNHP) and a part-return to trend method for the 25-34 and 35-44 age groups
- Vacancy rate of 3% to convert households into dwellings

Table 7.4.1 below shows how the population might be expected to change under this scenario (for the whole of the county). This shows particularly strong changes in older age groups and more modest increases for younger groups. However, when compared with the 2018-based SNPP as published (and rolled forward to 2050) there is projected to be notably higher growth in younger age groups (see further analysis below). Overall, it is projected that the population would grow by around 25% in the 30-year period (an additional 183,000 people in total).

**Table 7.4.1: Population change in Oxfordshire, by five-year age bands under the Standard Method (adjusted baseline), 2020-50**

	Population, 2020	Population, 2050	Change in population, 2020-50	% change in population, 2020-50
Under 5	40,380	49,394	9,014	22.3%
5-9	42,576	49,462	6,886	16.2%
10-14	42,281	49,069	6,788	16.1%
15-19	42,962	52,258	9,296	21.6%
20-24	53,436	62,246	8,810	16.5%
25-29	50,449	56,950	6,501	12.9%
30-34	47,097	54,747	7,650	16.2%
35-39	48,447	56,046	7,599	15.7%
40-44	44,329	53,804	9,474	21.4%
45-49	46,513	50,010	3,498	7.5%
50-54	48,298	52,300	4,001	8.3%
55-59	45,919	52,647	6,727	14.7%
60-64	38,988	50,052	11,064	28.4%

65-69	33,591	47,391	13,801	41.1%
70-74	33,453	42,152	8,699	26.0%
75-79	24,871	40,815	15,943	64.1%
80-84	18,386	37,131	18,746	102.0%
85+	18,583	47,086	28,503	153.4%
Total	720,560	903,558	182,998	25.4%

Source: Justin Gardner Consulting.

Table 7.3.1 below compares the projected population growth in the 2018-based SNPP (as rolled forward to 2050) with the data above. It can be seen that by linking to the Standard Method there is a much higher level of population growth projected and that this additional growth is within some of the younger age groups.

**Table 7.4.2: Population change in Oxfordshire, by five-year age bands, comparing the 2018-based SNPP with the Standard Method (adjusted baseline), 2020-50**

	2018-based SNPP	Standard Method (adjusted baseline)	Absolute difference
Under 5	337	9,014	8,677
5-9	-3,322	6,886	10,208
10-14	-3,153	6,788	9,942
15-19	999	9,296	8,297
20-24	1,140	8,810	7,669
25-29	-1,279	6,501	7,780
30-34	668	7,650	6,982
35-39	46	7,599	7,553
40-44	791	9,474	8,684
45-49	-6,217	3,498	9,715
50-54	-7,359	4,001	11,360
55-59	-4,263	6,727	10,990
60-64	2,647	11,064	8,416
65-69	8,023	13,801	5,778
70-74	3,743	8,699	4,956
75-79	11,750	15,943	4,193
80-84	16,266	18,746	2,480
85+	26,276	28,503	2,226
Total	47,093	182,998	135,905

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

For individual local authorities, Table 7.4.3 below shows the overall population growth projected in each of the 2018-based SNPP and when linking delivery to the Standard Method. This shows in all cases that there is a substantial difference between the two figures. This is particularly the case for Oxford where the difference in population growth over the 30-year period is approaching 50,000 people.

Of particular significance to considering the inter-relationship between housing and economic growth is what level of economic growth these levels of housing provision might support. These issues are considered further in *Chapter 10*.

**Table 7.4.3: Population change in Oxfordshire, comparing the 2018-based SNPP with the Standard Method and Standard Method (adjusted baseline), 2020-50**

		Population, 2020	Population, 2050	Change in population, 2020-50	% change in population, 2020-50
Cherwell	<i>2018-SNPP</i>	150,862	165,325	14,463	9.6%
	<i>Standard Method</i>	156,459	194,088	37,629	24.1%
	<i>Standard Method (adjusted)</i>	156,459	200,694	44,235	28.3%
Oxford	<i>2018-SNPP</i>	153,580	147,005	-6,575	-4.3%
	<i>Standard Method</i>	163,856	206,811	42,954	26.2%
	<i>Standard Method (adjusted)</i>	163,856	204,506	40,649	24.8%
South Oxon	<i>2018-SNPP</i>	141,840	152,581	10,741	7.6%
	<i>Standard Method</i>	147,161	179,394	32,233	21.9%
	<i>Standard Method (adjusted)</i>	147,161	182,666	35,505	24.1%
VoWH	<i>2018-SNPP</i>	137,175	160,545	23,371	17.0%
	<i>Standard Method</i>	138,745	173,336	34,591	24.9%
	<i>Standard Method (adjusted)</i>	138,745	183,421	44,675	32.2%
West Oxon	<i>2018-SNPP</i>	110,391	115,483	5,093	4.6%
	<i>Standard Method</i>	114,339	146,795	32,455	28.4%
	<i>Standard Method (adjusted)</i>	114,339	132,272	17,933	15.7%
Oxfordshire	<b><i>2018-SNPP</i></b>	<b>693,847</b>	<b>740,940</b>	<b>47,093</b>	<b>6.8%</b>
	<b><i>Standard Method</i></b>	<b>720,560</b>	<b>900,423</b>	<b>179,863</b>	<b>25.0%</b>
	<b><i>Standard Method (adjusted)</i></b>	<b>720,560</b>	<b>903,558</b>	<b>182,998</b>	<b>25.4%</b>

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting

## 7.5 Conclusions

The Government's Standard Method provides a minimum assessment of an area's local housing need. The minimum local housing need generated applying Government Planning Practice Guidance is for 3,350 dwellings per annum in Oxfordshire. The figures for Oxford are however subject to a cap. The uncapped need is for 3,383 dwellings per annum which notionally equates to 101,490 dwellings if applied over the 30-year plan period for the Oxfordshire Plan (2020-50).

The demographic analysis in this report identified issues with an under-counting of historical population growth, particularly in Oxford. An 'adjusted baseline' demographic projection was this developed which if used within the Standard Method formula generates a moderately higher need for 3,386 dwellings per annum. Icenis would advise that the minimum or baseline level of provision to be considered for the Oxfordshire Plan would be the 'uncapped need' for 3,386 dwellings per annum or notionally 101,580 homes over the plan period to 2050.

## 8 Oxfordshire's Economic Trajectories

### 8.1 Introduction

As noted in previous chapters, there is evidence to suggest that the particular economic characteristics and wider strategic context of Oxfordshire are such that additional consideration is required to assess the compatibility of the Standard Method of housing need assessment with wider growth ambitions for the sub-region, or whether significant differences exist.

This chapter therefore identifies the economic ambition for Oxfordshire, as laid out in Oxfordshire's Local Industrial Strategy (LIS), updated for 2020 with CE's own local sectoral modelling, using additional years of data and updated assumptions about UK national and regional growth potential.

This then provides the basis for an appraisal of a realistic economic ambition for Oxfordshire, its implications for employment demand, and the subsequent level of commercial space and residential property development that would be required to facilitate such growth.

This chapter is not intended to judge the desirability of any particular growth path, but simply quantify these differences between different visions for the county in a robust and transparent manner.

Starting with an overview and interrogation of the LIS and its sectoral vision, the chapter outlines CE's modelling assumptions and approach, before presenting three potential economic trajectories for Oxfordshire.

### 8.2 The Oxfordshire LIS and its sectoral vision

Oxfordshire's LIS sets out an ambitious economic strategy for the county up to 2040. Innovation-led and sector driven, it outlines how and where Oxfordshire LEP's (OxLEP's) sectoral ambitions and growth aspirations will be delivered.

To inform and enable robust, policy-aligned projections up to 2050, CE has scrutinised and interrogated the information presented in the LIS and its supporting evidence base, specifically sector-based projections of employment, output and productivity.

One of the recurring themes of the Oxfordshire LIS is to *"position Oxfordshire as one of the top three global innovation ecosystems by 2040"*. This has driven the adoption of eight **"breakthrough sectors"** in the LIS, adapted from activities previously outlined in the Oxfordshire Science and Innovation Audit.

The eight sectors are:

- Quantum computing
- Life sciences and digital health
- Space-led data applications
- Robotics and Autonomous Systems
- Automotive and motorsport
- Creative and digital
- Cryogenics
- Energy

According to the LIS, these breakthrough sectors are currently “*shaping the twenty first century and expect rapid growth in the coming decades*” and will “*provide jobs for generations, providing a sustainable economic base for Oxfordshire and the country*”.

The use of “*breakthrough*” terminology to define these sectors reflects analysis from the LIS evidence base, which utilised detailed business analytics to segment Oxfordshire businesses into two distinct but interrelated groups:

- Cornerstone businesses “*are the backbone of the economy and provide the platform for economic growth*” (e.g. public administration, education, construction)
- Breakthrough businesses “*are riskier, operate in markets where innovation is critical for survival and have the potential to become world leaders in their industry*” (e.g. those activities outlined in the LIS)

**Table 8.2.1: Employment (jobs) in LIS sectors within Oxfordshire, 2018**

	Employee jobs <sup>53</sup> , 2018	% of total Oxfordshire employee jobs	Employee jobs growth, 2009-2018	Employee jobs % growth, 2009-2018	Location quotient (LQ), 2018	aGVA <sup>54</sup> (2016, £m), 2018
Robotics and Autonomous Systems	17,050	4.7%	5,600	48.9%	3.1	£1,000
Life sciences and digital health	11,700	3.2%	5,900	101.7%	1.5	£245
Space-led data applications	825	0.2%	695	534.6%	0.6	£27
Quantum computing	8,095	2.2%	1,685	26.3%	4.4	£251
Automotive and motorsport	10,125	2.8%	1,855	22.4%	1.5	£635
Creative and digital	26,420	7.2%	2,370	9.9%	1.2	£1,822
Energy	3,700	1.0%	660	21.7%	0.9	£321
<i>Total 'breakthrough sectors'<sup>55</sup></i>	<i>60,070</i>	<i>16.5%</i>	<i>12,860</i>	<i>27.2%</i>	<i>1.4</i>	<i>£3,305</i>
<i>Total 'cornerstone sectors'</i>	<i>304,485</i>	<i>83.5%</i>	<i>35,360</i>	<i>13.1%</i>	<i>0.9</i>	<i>-</i>
<b>Total Oxfordshire economy</b>	<b>364,555</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>48,220</b>	<b>15.2%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Source: Oxfordshire LIS, ONS, Cambridge Econometrics

As Table 8.2.1 shows, the sectoral narrative within the LIS is well-founded; across almost all breakthrough sectors<sup>56</sup> Oxfordshire displays high degrees of specialisation and growth potential. Currently, the activity of breakthrough businesses in Oxfordshire supports some 60,100 highly skilled jobs and £3.5bn of approximate GVA (aGVA). This equates to 17% of all jobs within Oxfordshire, significantly higher than the 12% average elsewhere in the country.

This breakthrough business base is also more vibrant in Oxfordshire than elsewhere in the country; its jobs growth of 27% since 2009 (equating to some 12,900 additional jobs) eclipses the national average of 20%. It is also double

<sup>53</sup> Employee jobs exclude the self-employed, armed forces personnel and government supported trainees

<sup>54</sup> Approximate GVA. It is a measure of the income generated by businesses less their expenditure. Data for Oxfordshire is available [here](#).

<sup>55</sup> Not a sum of totals as excludes the double-counting of activities included in more than one sector

<sup>56</sup> Data for cryogenics cannot be estimated using currently available data. At a nationwide level, the sector supports some £324 of GVA, whilst cryogenic technologies underpin around 17% of the UK economy

(Source: Oxfordshire LIS)

the growth (13%) of the “cornerstone” business sector in Oxfordshire, with a quarter of all additional jobs in Oxfordshire since 2009 being within breakthrough sectors.

Drawing on this baseline evidence, the LIS goes on to present two sector-led, spatially considerate growth trajectories for the county, relating to contrasting scenarios for the Oxfordshire economy:

- **A “do nothing” scenario**, which *“outlines key outcomes in a future where the economy continues on its baseline trajectory without the implementation of the Oxfordshire Industrial Strategy or other initiatives to manage the growth trajectory”.*
- **A “go for growth” scenario**, that *“assess[es] the impact of future policy interventions in Oxfordshire’s economy from now until 2040 to identify what Oxfordshire’s economy might look like in the future. This highlights the potential for Oxfordshire to double its GVA by 2040 to be worth £46 billion”.*

The scenarios, and associated projections were prepared independently for the LIS by external consultants PwC utilising a Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) model. Importantly, PwC’s assumptions for the “go for growth” scenario *“incorporate the planned interventions outlined in the final Oxfordshire Industrial Strategy document which are expected to bring about a step-change in economic growth”.* This includes interventions and longer-term trends related to infrastructure, connectivity, housing, labour markets and innovation, as presented in the final LIS document.

Under this scenario, PwC outlines that the Oxfordshire economy could grow at an average annual rate of 2.9% in real terms until 2040, some 0.9p.p. higher than its baseline trajectory (what PwC calls its ‘do nothing’ scenario), equivalent to Oxfordshire’s economy doubling in size (+£23 billion). This growth will be innovation-led, driven by a 2% increase in productivity per annum as well as 108,000 new jobs.

The LIS expects businesses within both categories to drive this “go for growth”, *“growth will be driven by innovation and higher productivity – both in those emerging sectors which will harness transformative technologies, and in sectors that have historically driven the economy”.* Spatially, the vision emphasises a *“polycentric network of innovation clusters”* (as highlighted in Figure 6.3.4/Figure 10 in the LIS) that *“illustrates the preferred spatial pattern of growth that should take place over the next decades.”*

The evidence and ambitions presented in the LIS, which have been agreed by key stakeholders and endorsed by Government, should be a central consideration of any spatial vision for Oxfordshire. In the following chapters, this is taken one step further with the evidence and accompanying methodology – specifically PwC’s sectoral trajectories of jobs, GVA and employment – scrutinized to ensure robustness and alignment with policy expectations and CE’s understanding of Oxfordshire’s economic drivers.

### 8.3 Approaches to modelling economic growth

CE utilised its bespoke Local Economy Forecasting Model (LEFM) component of its MDM-E3 model to provide sector-led baseline and aspirational projections of employment, GVA and productivity for Oxfordshire. In terms of

basic structure, purpose and coverage, there are broad similarities between PwC’s CGE model and CE’s equivalent MDM-E3 model.

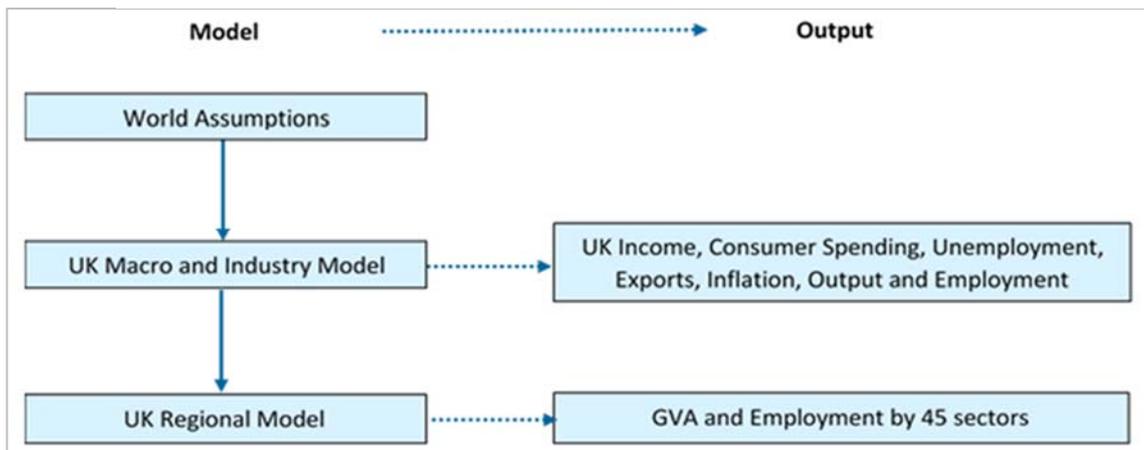
For instance, both are based on a consistent national accounting framework and make use of similar data sources and structure. However, beneath the surface there are substantial differences in modelling approach, and it is important to be aware of this when interpreting model results.

The two types of model come from distinct economic backgrounds; while generally consistent in their accounting, identity balances, they differ substantially in their treatment of behavioural relationships. Ultimately this comes down to assumptions about optimisation. The CGE model favours fixing behaviour in line with economic theory, by assuming that individuals act instantaneously and rationally in their own self-interest, allowing markets to clear; in this way demand automatically adjusts to meet potential supply.

Within the LIS, PwC acknowledges that this is an issue with the CGE approach to modelling; *“in the Oxfordshire housing market we know that this [supply meeting demand] is not true. In fact, it is not true in any of the key markets in Oxfordshire.”* In contrast, models such as CE’s MDM-E3 interrogate historical data sets to try to determine behavioural factors on an empirical basis.

This means CE’s MDM-E3 can fully assess both short and long-term impacts and is not limited by many of the restrictive assumptions common to CGE models, allowing for more robust and integrated projections. For instance, CE’s MDM-E3 does not assume optimising behaviour and full utilisation of resources. It therefore includes real-world features such as involuntary unemployment, ‘endogenous money’, and the adoption of new technologies. This has important practical implications for scenario analysis.

**Figure 8.3.1: Links between Cambridge Econometrics’ suite of models**



Source: Cambridge Econometrics.

Another important feature of this modelling approach is the link to CE’s wider modelling suite, ensuring any local area forecasts are consistent with CE’s world, UK national and UK regional forecasts and assumptions, as Figure 8.3.1 shows. This modelling suite is typically updated twice annually; the most recent update available for the OGNA, in July 2019, incorporates the impact of the UK’s decision to leave the European single market (‘Brexit’).

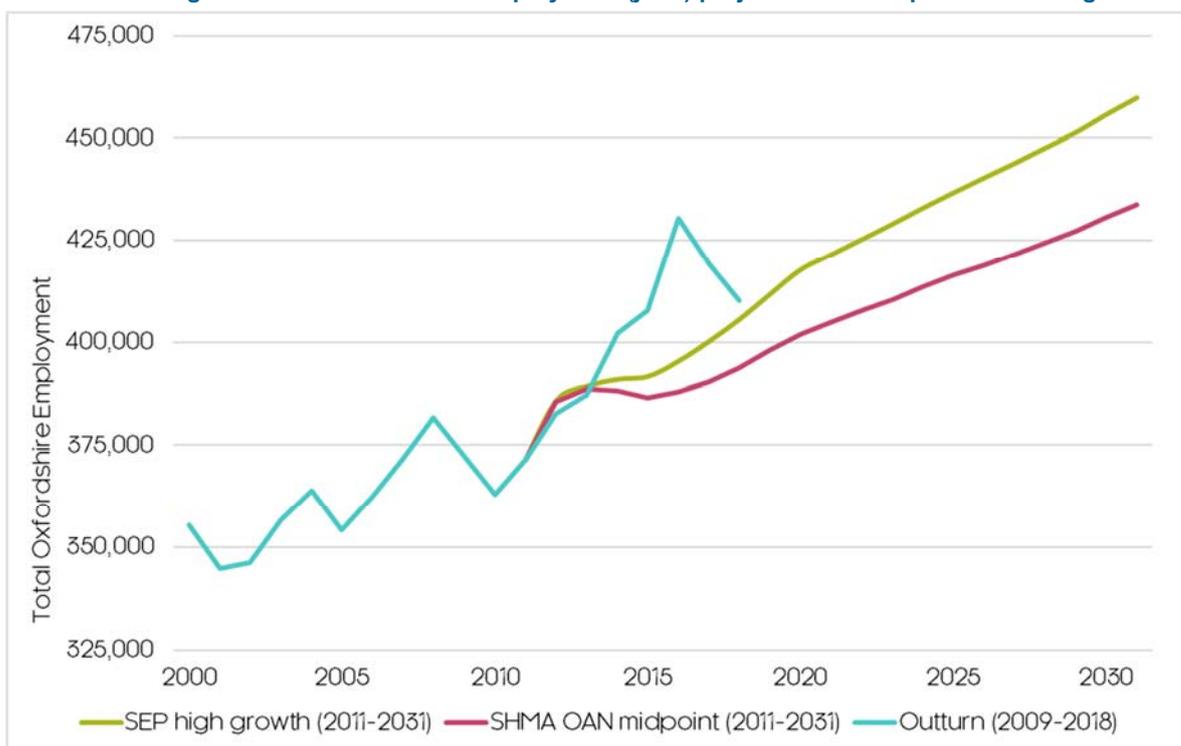
Therefore, CE's headline UK forecasts are developed within the context of the changing nature of the UK's trading relationship with the European Union. These national level impacts are then systematically distributed to regions and local areas, based on historic sectoral relationships. Resultantly, the forecasts that have been developed for the OGNA account for the potential impact of Brexit on Oxfordshire's sectors and economy.

#### 8.4 Oxfordshire's past growth projections

In developing its projections, CE also interrogated Oxfordshire's performance against previous growth projections, such as those presented in its 2014 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and 2014/16 Strategic Economic Plan (SEP, also prepared by OxLEP). This has enabled CE to produce empirically sound trajectories for the area, by gauging Oxfordshire's ability to deliver against – and in some cases go beyond - previous policy aspirations and baseline projections.

Figure 8.4.1 depicts the SHMA Committed Economic Growth Scenario employment projection produced by CE in 2014 (pink line) on which the conclusions on objectively assessed housing need were primarily based. The out-turn (i.e. actual data) is shown in light blue.

**Figure 8.4.1: Oxfordshire's employment (jobs) projections under previous strategies**



Source: Oxfordshire strategic documents, Cambridge Econometrics.

As of the most recent year of data in 2018, the outturn exceeds the SHMA Committed Economic Growth Scenario from 2014 (by around 16,200 additional jobs), and in fact more closely aligns with the SEP's higher growth scenario. As such, Oxfordshire's economy has demonstrated an ability to generate employment at an accelerated rate, and this performance could provide a suitable indication of the Oxfordshire's central trajectory for future employment growth.

## 8.5 Oxfordshire's economic trajectories

CE has prepared three sector-led growth trajectories for the Oxfordshire economy (set within its MDM-E3 macroeconomic model). One of these trajectories, the **business as usual** trajectory, is the extension of Oxfordshire's recent trend of accelerated growth, as observed in Figure 8.4.1.

The **Standard Method (adjusted)** trajectory presents an estimate of the level of employment growth enabled by the level of housing growth calculated using the Standard Method, adjusted for the revised demographic baseline explored in *Chapter 3 Demographic Trends*.

The **transformational** trajectory is a straightforward update to the LIS "go-for-growth" trajectory. The latter two projections sit either side of the **business as usual** trajectory, representing relatively more constrained or unconstrained versions of future growth prospects.

The three trajectories, and the broad assumptions underpinning them (a detailed modelling methodology is provided in 8.3), are as follows:

- **Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory:** backwards calculated from the Standard Method calculation of housing need, with an adjustment for the revised demographic baseline. The Standard Method calculation of future housing need has been converted to the level of employment facilitated (backwards calculated), by making a number of assumptions relating to economic activity rates, commuting, double jobbing and unemployment. The detailed modelling assumptions are explained in *Chapter 9*.
- **Business as usual trajectory:** this trajectory represents a continuation of Oxfordshire's recent economic performance, taking particular account of the growth delivered during the recovery from the 2008-09 recession (see Figure 8.4.1). It represents a best approximation as to the future rate at which Oxfordshire will be able to deliver employment growth based on the latest trend data.
- **Transformational trajectory:** this trajectory is broadly the equivalent of the LIS "go for growth" scenario, but updated and adjusted for 2020. Certain targeted sectors are assumed to see strong growth, others grow as a result of anticipated corresponding population growth and increased economic activity.

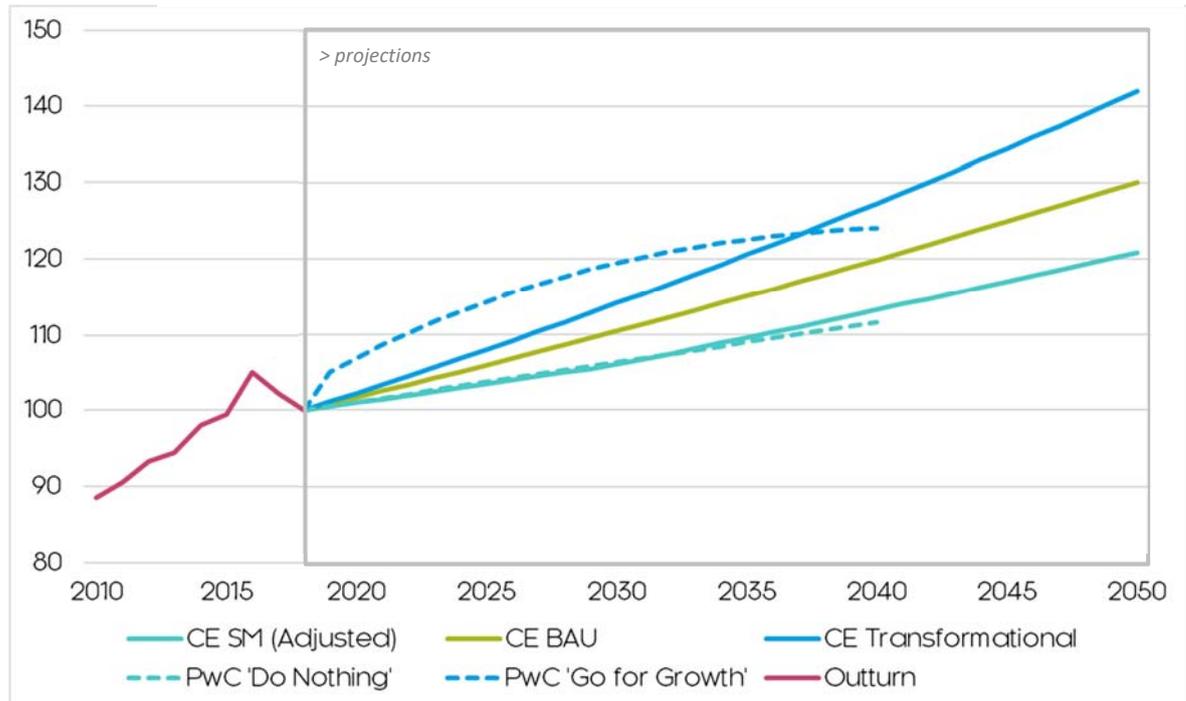
### Employment

Figure 8.5.1 shows the headline employment (jobs) projections produced by CE (derived from the June 2019 run of MDM-E3) and PwC (as utilised in the LIS, published in July 2019). To allow for convenient comparisons across the two projections, the employment level is indexed to the base year of 2018, which is also the baseline for PwC's projections. It should be noted that CE's projections extend to 2050 to cover the Oxfordshire Plan period, beyond PwC's 2040 forecast horizon.

At this headline level CE's and PwC's baseline employment projections share an almost identical trajectory to 2040. This shows both models broadly agree on Oxfordshire's fundamental characteristics, and its likely trajectory under a 'baseline' context. Likewise, the additional growth in PwC's "go for growth" scenario does not look unrealistic and again aligns reasonably well with CE's

aspirational trajectories. The unusual shape of this growth curve, however, is difficult to explain, even when reconciled with LIS aspirations.

**Figure 8.5.1: Employment (jobs) projections for Oxfordshire (2010=100)**



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

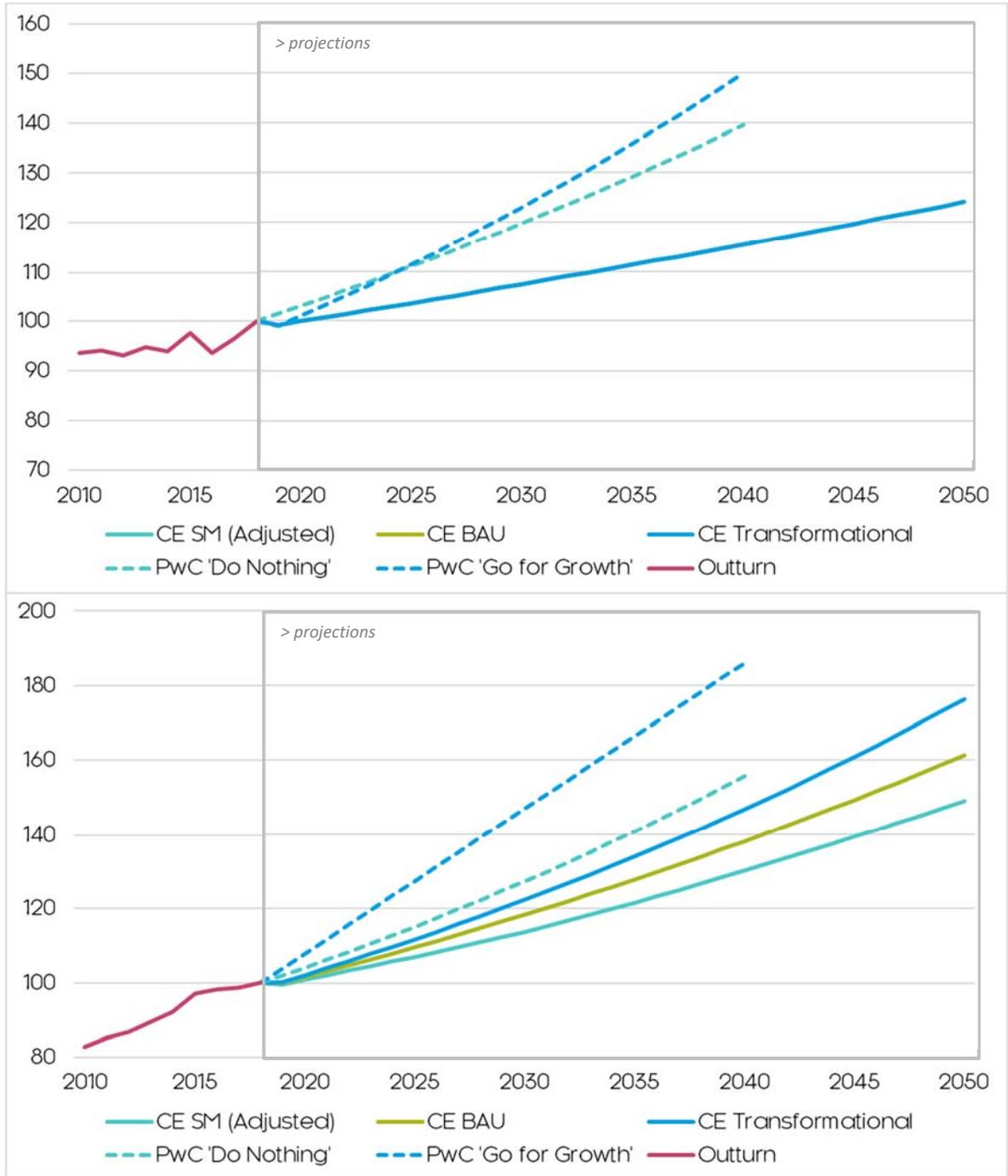
In particular, the expected sudden and rapid acceleration away from recent trends over the next five years (at a time of anticipated uncertainty in the national economy and an already tight and easing labour market in Oxfordshire), followed by a levelling off over the period 2030-2040 appears unlikely and is not necessarily reflective of Oxfordshire's recent economic performance and short-term policy landscape.

Instead, an initially slow divergence from the baseline scenario may be anticipated – as Oxfordshire's labour market continues to grow, albeit slowly due to its relative tightness (Figure 5.4.1 showed Oxfordshire currently has the highest employment rate in the country) - followed by greater divergence in the 2030s - as local, regional and national policy interventions (including those outlined in the LIS and other strategic policy documents e.g. East-West Rail, Garden Towns) begin to take effect. This is the approach that CE has taken to develop its above-baseline trajectories, utilising the LIS and its associated evidence base as a foundation.

As observed and interrogated in *Chapter 5*, the outturn in Figure 8.5.1 shows a decline in Oxfordshire's employment between 2016-18. Though partially attributable to Brexit, the analysis in *Chapter 5* concluded the volatile nature of survey-derived employment estimates means this drop has probably been overestimated. CE does not regard this as a longer-term trend, though easing labour market performance is likely over the latter part of the 2010's/early 2020's. This raises further questions over the anticipated quick ascent in employment under the PwC "go for growth" scenario.

subsequently GVA (in real terms, £2016 prices). These are shown in Figure 8.5.2.

Figure 8.5.2: Productivity (above) and GVA (below) projections for Oxfordshire (2010=100)



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

The left-hand chart shows how CE’s projection for productivity is significantly below that of both trajectories from the LIS, which emphasise unprecedented levels of productivity growth in Oxfordshire. Due to the so-called “*productivity puzzle*”, bullish projections of upswings in productivity growth made over the past decade have repeatedly proven to be inaccurate, to the extent that both ONS and the Bank of England now consider a national productivity baseline growth rate of 0.7% p.a. to be a realistic guide.

Although Oxfordshire has the potential to outperform the national productivity growth rate, this is unlikely to be maintained at a greater than standard deviation rate above national performance, not least given the greater incidence of the “*productivity puzzle*” locally, as seen in the *Chapter 5 Recent Economic Performance*.

For these reasons, and for wider ease of interpretation, CE has adopted only one productivity trajectory across the three trajectories. Even then, this expectation remains optimistic, and is reliant on the productivity-boosting realisation of LIS-related initiatives.

For GVA, CE’s relative downgrading of productivity growth potential over the time period leads to some quite pronounced differences between the trajectories, as shown in Figure 8.5.2. For instance, even PwC’s “*Do Nothing*” GVA trajectory exceeds CE’s higher trajectories.

CE anticipates a gentler upward trend to both productivity and GVA, but with stronger growth built into the higher trajectories. This stronger growth reflects the potential delivery of LIS related ambitions, particularly those related to innovation, which typically have a longer-term effect and realisation on productivity and growth.

## Sector growth trajectories

CE’s trajectories for employment, productivity and GVA have all been prepared on an individual sector-by-sector basis, to best capture the sectoral ambitions of the LIS and reflect the sectoral impact of current and projected macroeconomic trends, such as automation, demographic pressures and environmental change.<sup>57</sup>

At the sectoral level, the differences between the shape of CE’s and PwC’s trajectories become increasingly noticeable, largely due to the different assumptions and modelling approaches (particularly relating to individual sectors).

One-page summaries of these sector trajectories are provided in *Appendix B: Oxfordshire’s Sector Growth Trajectories*, which include a detailed overview of CE’s results along with an interrogation and comparison with PwC’s scenarios. A brief overview is provided for each sector below (note that these overviews include interactive links to the detailed one-page summaries in the Appendix):

1. **Employment in primary and utilities:** Oxfordshire’s long-term decline in primary sector employment is set to ease and totals will remain roughly constant moving forward, though automation may result in lower-skilled employment losses. GVA growth is to be driven by improvements to productivity and the adoption of innovative technologies, supporting higher-skilled employment growth.
2. **Employment in manufacturing:** automation, digitisation and outsourcing will likely continue the decline in Oxfordshire’s manufacturing workforce, particularly for lower and mid-skilled workers, though new technologies and innovations could fuel growth in the

<sup>57</sup> CE’s detailed sectoral modelling assumptions and results for the UK are presented and summarised in *Working Futures 2017-2027: Long-run labour market and skills*, which provides detailed overview of such factors individual sector impacts;

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/863886/Working\\_Futures\\_Headline\\_Report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/863886/Working_Futures_Headline_Report.pdf)

higher trajectories. GVA growth will be driven by productivity improvements, underpinned by the adoption of frontier technologies.

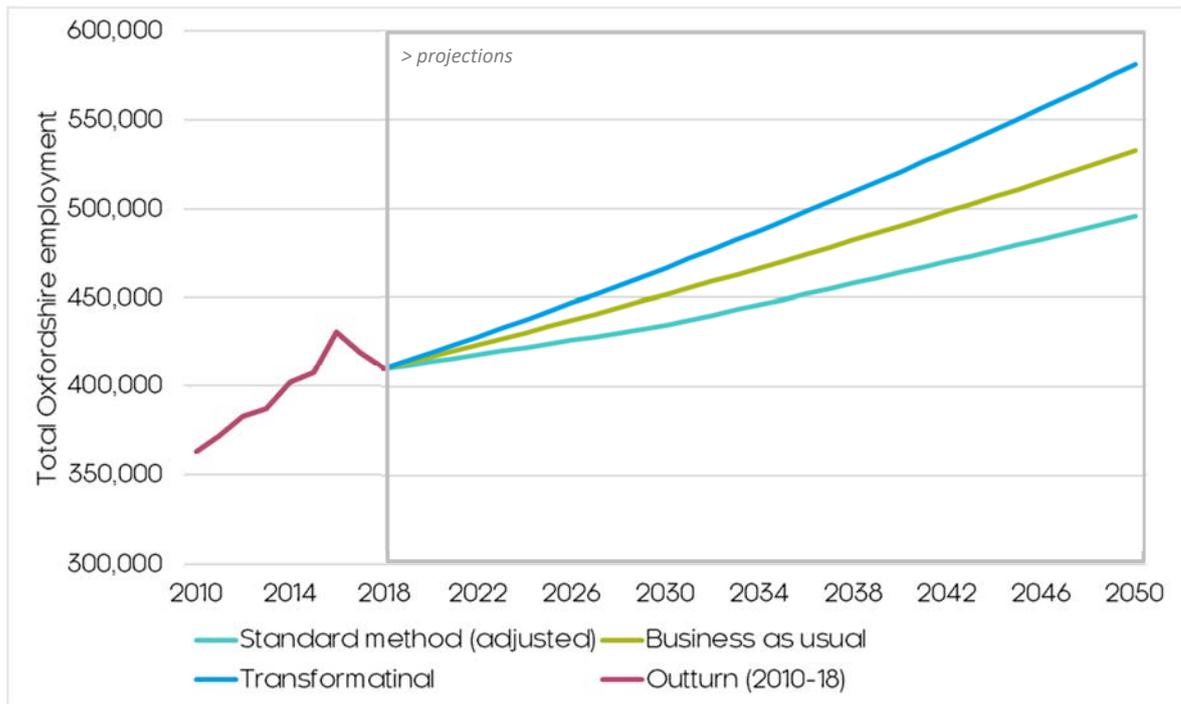
3. **Employment in construction:** continued economic growth alongside ambitious policy aspirations around housing delivery, infrastructure and commercial space will see Oxfordshire's construction workforce grow strongly over coming decades. Though this may be tempered by skills-shortages, an aging workforce and migration pressures. Productivity growth will remain stable given the sectors SME-dominated business population.
4. **Employment in retail; transport; accommodation and food:** given strong projected economic and household growth in Oxfordshire, the demand for consumer services is expected to increase, and as such employment and GVA will continue to grow strongly. Productivity growth will be driven by automation and digitisation, though consequently this may cause some employment losses and shifting.
5. **Employment in information and communication:** underpinned by a strong research base and skilled workforce, this sector has been an engine for employment growth and this is expected to continue. Though at the forefront of the "*productivity puzzle*", productivity growth is expected to rebound with the development and adoption of new technologies (which will also diffuse through the wider economy).
6. **Employment in financial and insurance activities:** the ongoing contraction in the sectors workforce, driven largely by automation, digitisation and out-sourcing, is anticipated to continue over both the short and long term. High productivity will continue to improve, driven by fintech innovations, supporting wider GVA growth.
7. **Employment in real estate activities:** the sector's workforce has grown strongly over the past decade, partly reflecting Oxfordshire active resident and commercial property markets. This rate of growth should continue given the need to expand to manage and oversee an expected increase in residential and commercial property demand.
8. **Employment in professional and administrative services:** Oxfordshire has shaped a strong comparative advantage in this sector, particularly around science and R&D, and there is an expectation of further growth. Accounting for a quarter of all "*breakthrough*" jobs, strong employment growth is expected, especially in the higher trajectories. This will drive strong GVA growth, whilst productivity should also improve after subdued growth.
9. **Employment in public administration, education and health:** amongst Oxfordshire's most resilient sectors, demand and thus employment is anticipated to rise further over the next few decades, particularly in the health (aging population) and education sector (demand for high-level and technical skills). Opportunities for health-related innovation and a higher-value education offer could drive much needed productivity growth.
10. **Employment in arts, entertainment and recreation:** the sector largely depends on activity in the wider economy, particularly that related to households and incomes. Relatively strong employment

growth is therefore expected, with the sectors labour-intensive nature and consumer dependency making it more resilient to automation and associated changes.

## 8.6 What the trajectories mean for employment in Oxfordshire

Table 8.6.1 and Figure 8.6.1 outline the potential impact on total employment (jobs) in Oxfordshire under CE's three respective trajectories.

**Figure 8.6.1: Employment (jobs) projections for Oxfordshire under the different trajectories**



**Table 8.6.1: Employment (job) projections for Oxfordshire under the different trajectories**

	Employment at 2018 (baseline)	2030	2040	2050	Change in employment, 2018-50	Change in employment p.a., 2018-50
Standard Method (adjusted)	410,066	434,538	464,179	495,555	85,489	<b>2,672</b>
Business as usual	410,066	451,742	490,234	532,517	122,451	<b>3,827</b>
Transformational	410,066	466,804	520,636	581,254	171,188	<b>5,350</b>

Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Under the adjusted Standard Method approach, CE expects just over 85,400 net additional jobs to be created in Oxfordshire between 2018 and 2050, equating to an average increase of 2,700 per annum. This would result in a total of 495,600 jobs in the county by 2050. This could be regarded the 'minimum' level of growth Oxfordshire should aspire to under current conditions.

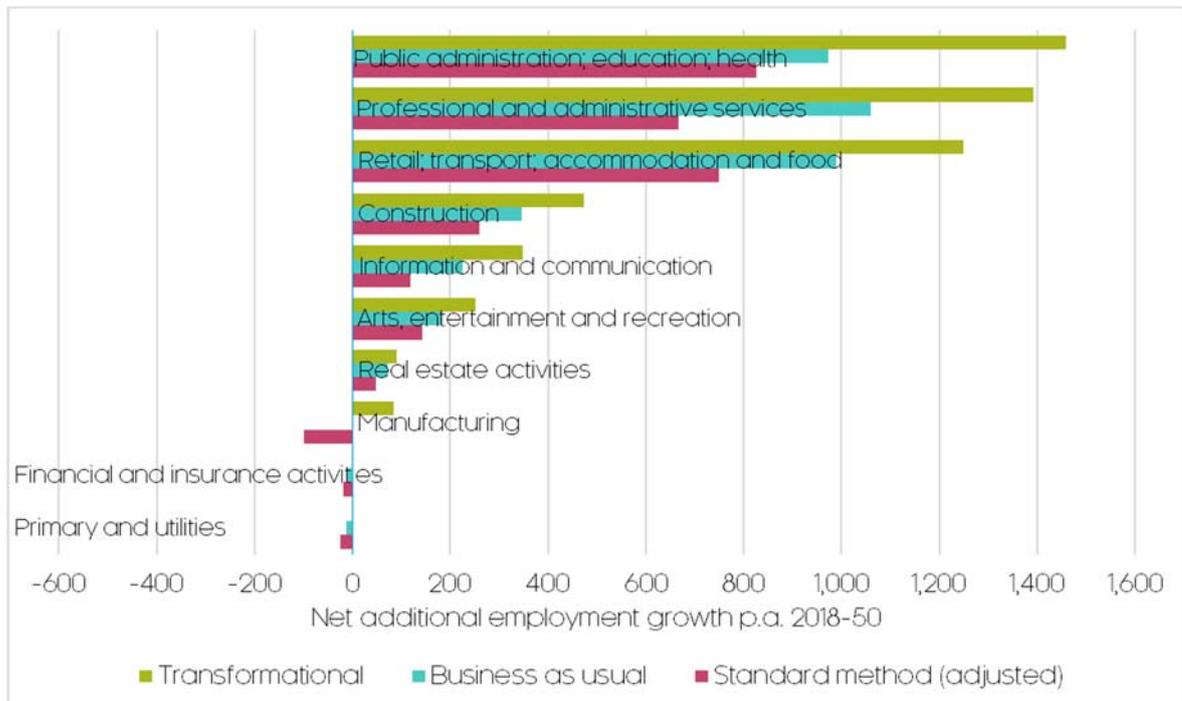
At the business as usual level, the rate of delivery increases to 122,500 additional jobs by 2050, an increase of some 3,800 per annum. At this pace of growth, Oxfordshire will have continued along its past high-growth trajectory, as outlined in its 2014 SHMA and SEP, and achieved some of its LIS-related ambitions.

And at the transformational level, delivery accelerates to over double that of the Standard Method (adjusted), with a potential 171,200 additional jobs to be

created between 2018 and 2050, equating to an average increase of 5,400 per annum. This transformational level of growth assumes many of the aspirations outlined in the LIS are achieved and have their desired effect.

Figure 8.6.2 provides an overview of the sectoral composition of the projections. Rather than being constant and scaled to the trajectory total, they vary across the respective trajectories, largely reflecting the realisation of LIS-related ambitions in the higher trajectories.

**Figure 8.6.2: Sectoral composition of employment projections for Oxfordshire under the different trajectories**



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics

For instance, under baseline (standard method adjusted) projections, manufacturing employment is expected to decline, yet under the transformational trajectory - dependent on the realisation of LIS aspirations and interventions - manufacturing employment has the potential to grow.

A more detailed interrogation of sector trajectories (covering employment, GVA and productivity) and accompanying assumptions are provided in *Appendix B: Oxfordshire's Sector Growth Trajectories*.

The following chapters proceed with these employment figures and consider the potential county-wide implications for commercial space and housing if the prospective employment trajectory were achieved. This will help to inform and calculate the commercial space requirements and local housing need for Oxfordshire's growth ambitions, including those outlined and presented in the LIS.

## 8.7 Conclusions

The Oxfordshire LIS has set out a vision for Oxfordshire to be one of the top three global innovation systems by 2040, to be driven by Oxfordshire's "breakthrough" sectors and assets. This chapter has scrutinized and explored

a range of supporting economic trajectories for growth of the Oxfordshire economy.

The Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory shows the potential for 85,400 additional jobs between 2018-50, modelling the employment growth that could be expected to be supported by delivery of housing in line with the Standard Method calculations (using the adjusted baseline demographic assumptions).

The business as usual trajectory models a continuation of Oxfordshire's recent economic performance over the robust growth period of the past decade. This would support 122,500 additional jobs over the period to 2050.

The highest scenario, the transformational trajectory, models the equivalent of the achieving many of the aspirations set out in the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy, and would see 171,200 additional jobs over the period to 2050.

The three scenarios present alternative visions of how Oxfordshire's economy might perform. In all scenarios, employment growth is expected to be concentrated in service-based activities, but with the potential for more sectorally diverse growth under the higher trajectories.

## 9 Economic-led Scenarios for Housing Need

### 9.1 Introduction

The following analysis takes the employment-led growth trajectories prepared by Cambridge Econometrics in the preceding *Chapter 8* and seeks to test what level of population and housing growth might be needed so that the resident labour-supply increases sufficiently for the employment (jobs) figures to be met.

The analysis also considers what change to the resident labour-supply (economically active population) might be expected under different demographic scenarios, this can then be compared with changes need to meet economic (jobs) growth.

The analysis aims to calculate projected housing need based on the various employment-led growth trajectories. This can then be compared to the need shown by the Standard Method.

The inter-relationship between economic growth and housing need is influenced by a number of factors including:

- The scale of economic growth envisaged, and growth in productivity which will influence the relationship between growth in GVA and jobs;
- The relationship between jobs and people, taking into account that some people have more than one job;
- What proportion of people are in employment, including growth in women in the workforce and increases in older persons in employment taking account of improved health and changes to State Pension age; and
- The spatial relationship between where people live and work, as borne out in commuting dynamics.

The economic trajectories set out in *Chapter 8* already build in assumptions that productivity improvements are achieved moving forwards. Productivity improvements, which moderate the need for workers, are thus built into each of the trajectories considered.

The analysis in this chapter then models improvements in economic participation; albeit it is notable that economic participation in Oxfordshire was already relatively strong at the base point of the modelling in 2018.

The modelling in this chapter also seeks to achieve a balanced position between those living and working in Oxfordshire to limit the need to travel, consistent with wider planning policy objectives, modelling commuting to return to the balance in Oxfordshire in 2011.

Whilst there is potential for commuting to flex (as it has done in Oxfordshire recently, as seen in Figure 5.4.2), given changing working patterns and the inter-relationship between where people live and work is unclear, in preparing the Oxfordshire Plan the Councils need to plan for an approach which facilitates a balance between jobs and homes. Any assumption of increased

in-commuting to Oxfordshire in relative terms would impact the housing need in surrounding areas and would therefore need to be agreed with them.

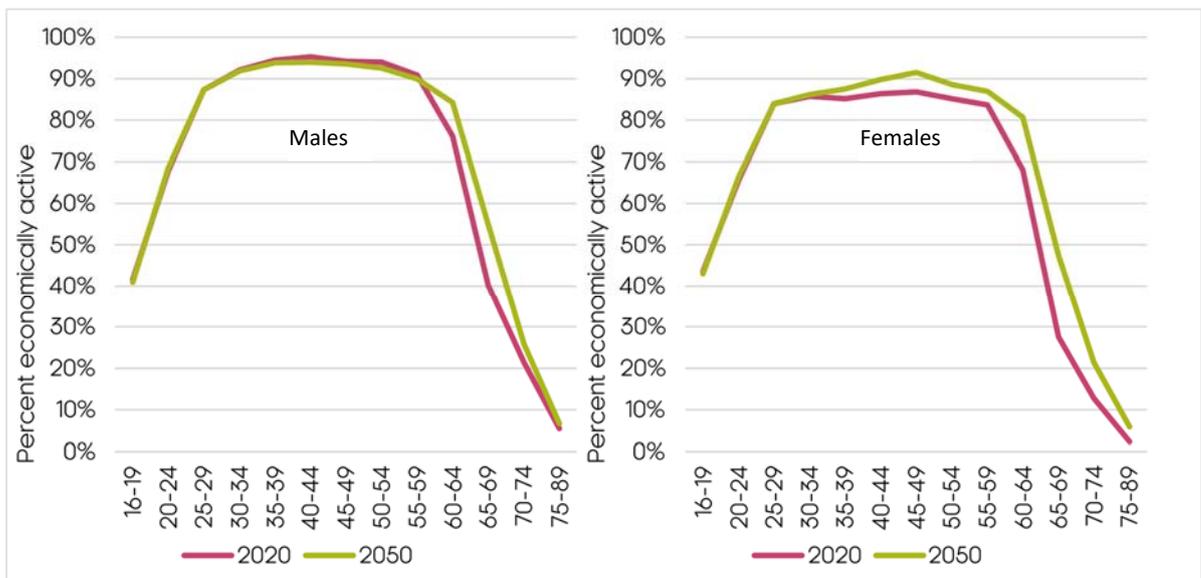
## 9.2 Economic participation assumptions

The first principal consideration is how economic participation is likely to change amongst people in different age groups.

The approach taken in this report is to derive a series of age and sex specific economic activity rates and use these to estimate how many people in the population will be economically active as projections develop. This is a fairly typical approach with data being drawn in this instance from the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) July 2018 Fiscal Sustainability Report.

Figure 9.2.1 and Table 9.2.1 below illustrate the assumptions made. The analysis shows that the main changes to economic activity rates are projected to be in the 60-69 age groups – this will to a considerable degree link to changes to State Pension age, as well as general trends in the number of older people working for longer (which in itself is linked to general reductions in pension provision). Growth in women in work is also assumed.

Figure 9.2.1: Projected changes to economic activity rates (2020 and 2050) in Oxfordshire



Source: Justin Gardner Consulting (based on OBR and Census (2011) data).

Table 9.2.1: Projected changes to economic activity rates in Oxfordshire, 2020-50

	Male economic activity rate			Female economic activity rate		
	2020	2050	Change	2020	2050	Change
16-19	41.6%	40.9%	-0.7%	43.6%	43.0%	-0.5%
20-24	67.9%	68.6%	0.7%	65.6%	66.3%	0.8%
25-29	87.3%	87.3%	0.0%	83.9%	84.0%	0.0%
30-34	92.1%	91.9%	-0.2%	85.7%	86.2%	0.4%
35-39	94.5%	93.8%	-0.6%	85.2%	87.5%	2.3%
40-44	95.3%	94.0%	-1.3%	86.4%	89.8%	3.4%
45-49	94.2%	93.6%	-0.6%	86.8%	91.5%	4.7%
50-54	94.0%	92.6%	-1.4%	85.2%	88.6%	3.4%
55-59	90.9%	89.9%	-1.0%	83.7%	86.9%	3.2%
60-64	76.1%	84.2%	8.1%	68.1%	80.7%	12.6%

65-69	40.1%	54.9%	14.8%	27.6%	47.4%	19.8%
70-74	21.4%	25.8%	4.4%	12.8%	21.4%	8.6%
75-89	5.5%	6.7%	1.2%	2.4%	5.9%	3.5%

Source: OBR, ONS, Justin Garden Consulting.

### 9.3 Linking employment growth and changes to the resident labour force

The number of resident and non-resident workers required to support the change in employment (jobs) will differ depending on three main factors:

- Commuting patterns – where an area sees more people out-commute for work than in-commute it may be the case that a higher level of increase in the economically active population would be required to provide a sufficient workforce for a given number of jobs (and vice versa where there is net in-commuting);
- Double jobbing – some people hold down more than one job and therefore the number of workers required will be slightly lower than the number of jobs; and
- Unemployment – if unemployment were to fall then the growth in the economically active population would not need to be as large as the growth in jobs (and vice versa).

#### Commuting patterns

Table 9.3.1 below shows summary data about commuting to and from Oxfordshire from the 2011 Census. Overall, the data shows that the county sees a small level of out-commuting for work with the number of people resident in the area who are working being about 3% higher than the total number who work in the area. This number is shown as the commuting rate in the final row of the table and is calculated as the number of people living in an area (and working) divided by the number of people working in the area (regardless of where they live).

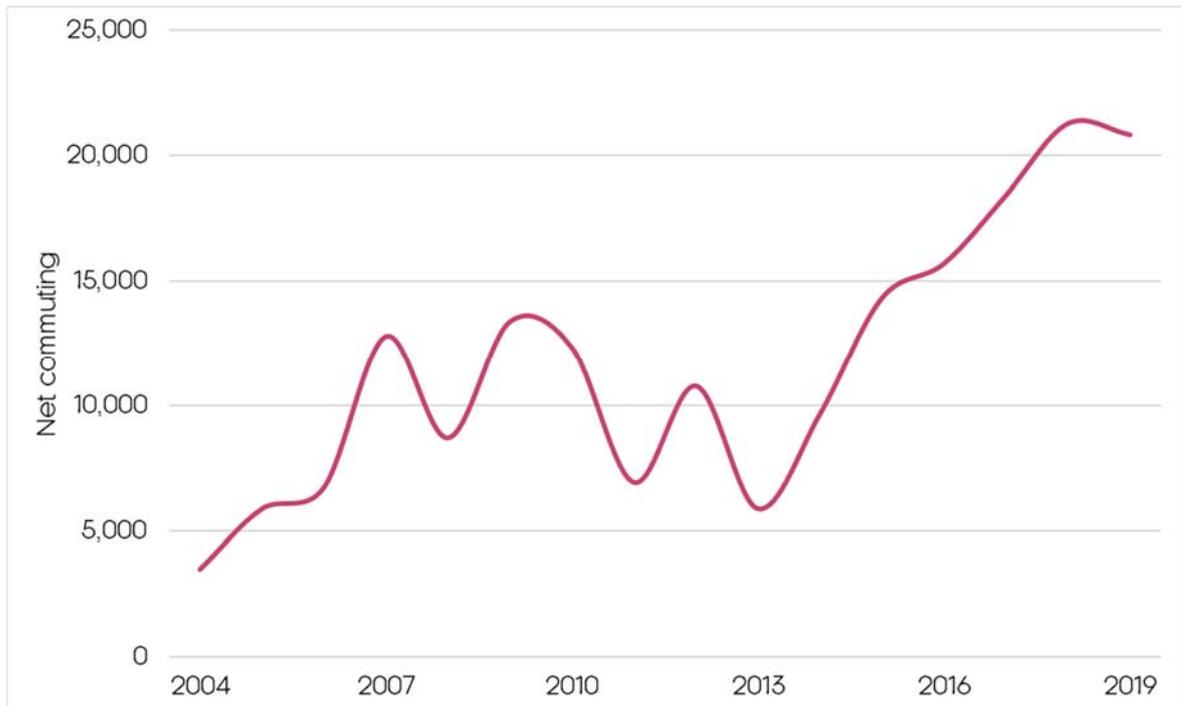
**Table 9.3.1: Commuting patterns in Oxfordshire, 2011**

	Number of people
Live and work in county	221,160
Home workers	42,738
No fixed workplace	24,862
In-commute	57,447
Out-commute	48,170
Total working in county	346,207
Total living in county (and working)	336,930
Commuting rate	1.03

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

More recent data drawn from the Annual Population Survey (APS, as seen in Figure 9.3.1) does however suggest that this commuting rate may have increase slightly (up to about 1.06). This means that more people (in net terms) are now commuting into Oxfordshire for work. Whilst the APS data should be treated with some degree of caution due to error margins, a consistent upward trend in net commuting into Oxfordshire is quite apparent.

Figure 9.3.1: Oxfordshire's net commuting flows, 2004-19



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

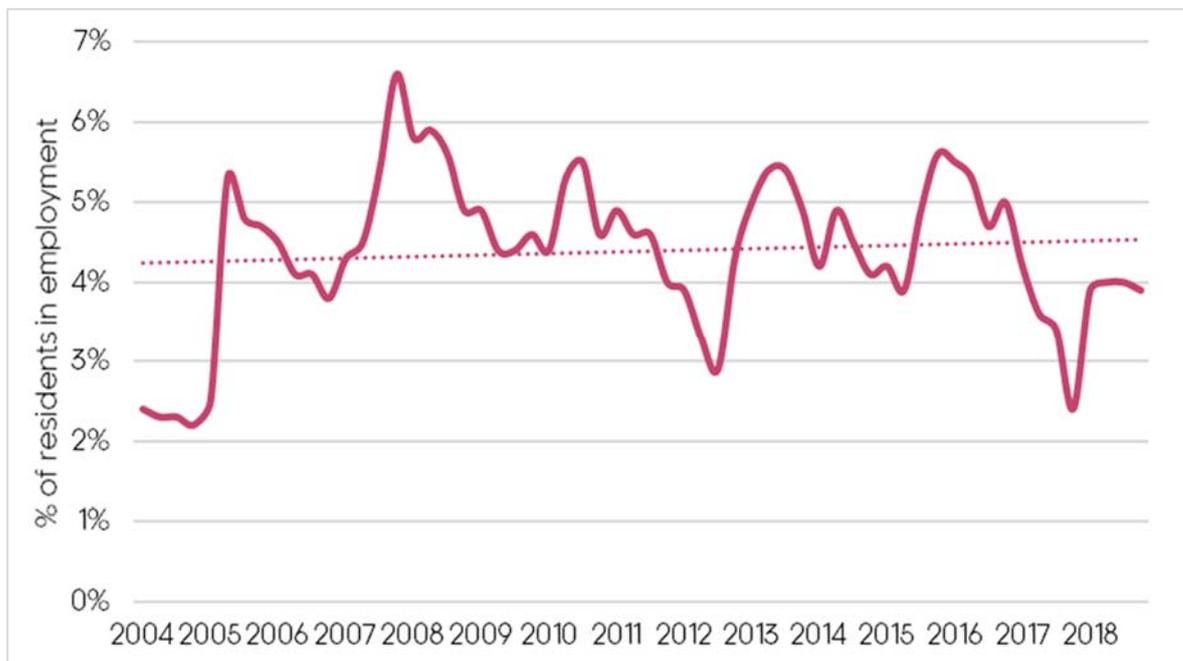
The evidence presented thus far in the Growth Needs Assessment indicates that there has been an imbalance between economic growth and housing delivery in recent years, influenced by the very strong economic growth which has been seen in Oxfordshire. The commuting data indicates that this has led to a growth in net-commuting into Oxfordshire. This relationship between commuting and housing is explored in greater detail in *Chapter 12 Commuting and Affordability Implications*.

It is appropriate however to look to address the imbalance which has arisen. The modelling therefore assumes that that the commuting rate starts at 1.06 (the current estimate) before falling back to 1.03 (the Census figure) by 2030. After 2030, it has been assumed that the ratio remains at 'normal levels' of 1.03. Returning the rate back to the Census figure will essentially reduce net commuting and bring back a greater degree of balance between where people work and where they live.

### Double-jobbing

The analysis also considers that a number of people may have more than one job (double-jobbing). This can be calculated as the number of people working in an area divided by the number of jobs in that area. Data from the APS (Figure 9.3.2) suggests across the county typically between about 4.5% of workers have a second job – levels of double jobbing have been variable over time (mainly due to the accuracy and volatility of data at a local level) although the data does appear to point in a very slightly upward direction.

**Figure 9.3.2: Percentage of all Oxfordshire residents in employment who have a second job, 2004-18**



Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

For the purposes of this assessment it has been assumed that around 4.5% of people will have more than one job moving forward. A double jobbing figure of 4.5% gives rise to a ratio of 0.955 (i.e. the number of jobs supported by the workforce will be around 4.5% higher than workforce growth). It has been assumed in the analysis that the level of double jobbing will remain constant over time, although the apparent upward slight trend should be noted.

## Unemployment

The final element of the analysis is to consider whether there is potential to reduce unemployment from the position in the base year, and for this to contribute to accommodating employment growth. Essentially, this is considering if there is any latent labour force that could move back into employment to take up new jobs.

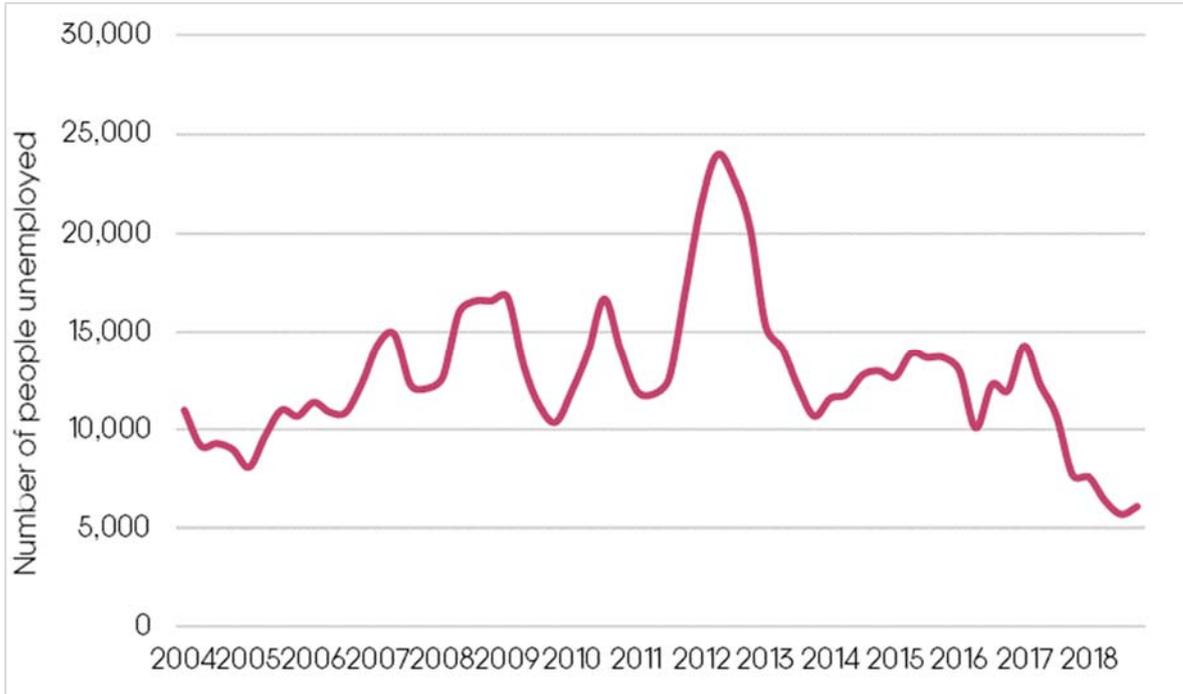
Figure 9.3.3 below shows the number of people who are unemployed and how this has changed since 2004. The analysis shows a clear increase in unemployment from 2004 to 2012 and that since 2012, the number of people unemployed has dropped notably – by 2018, the number of unemployed people was lower than the level observed in 2004.

Unemployment clearly changes throughout an economic cycle. The analysis would indicate that there may be limited scope for further improvements in unemployment relative to the base position in 2018 and for the purposes of analysis in this report it has been assumed that there are no changes to the number of people who are unemployed moving forward from 2020 to 2050.

While unemployment may rise in the short-term over the projection period as a result of the economic shock provided by the Covid-19 pandemic, considered over the period modelled the key issue is whether there is scope for a reduction in unemployment at the base point in 2018 to reduce and for unemployed persons to therefore contribute to addressing the net jobs growth

over the period modelled. The tight labour market conditions and low unemployment in 2018 suggest little potential for this.

**Figure 9.3.3: Number of people unemployed in Oxfordshire, 2004-18**



Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

### 9.4 Required change to resident labour supply

Bringing together the assumptions on jobs growth, the proportion of people with more than one job and commuting, Table 9.4.1 to Table 9.4.3 below set out what growth in resident labour supply would be needed to support each of the economic trajectories set out in *Chapter 8*.

Taking the first table as an example, it can be seen that the number of jobs is forecast to increase by 81,600. Given that some people will have more than one job the labour supply needed reduces this number to around 77,900.

However, because it is assumed that commuting will return to 2011 (Census) levels the resident labour supply needed is higher than this (at around 86,500 people). Therefore, to meet jobs growth of 81,600, the modelling assumes that the number of economically active residents needs to increase by 86,500 people.

**Table 9.4.1: Estimated jobs and economically active residents under the Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory, 2020-50**

	2020	2030	2040	2050	Change, 2020-50
Jobs	413,970	434,538	464,179	495,555	81,585
Double-jobbing adjustment	395,341	414,984	443,291	473,255	77,913
Commuting adjustment	372,964	402,897	430,379	459,471	86,507

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, Justin Gardner Consulting.

**Table 9.4.2: Estimated jobs and economically active residents under the business as usual trajectory, 2020-50**

	2020	2030	2040	2050	Change, 2020-50
Jobs	416,872	452,633	491,462	533,622	116,751
Double-jobbing adjustment	398,113	432,265	469,347	509,609	111,497
Commuting adjustment	375,578	419,674	455,676	494,766	119,188

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, Justin Gardner Consulting.

**Table 9.4.3: Estimated jobs and economically active residents under the transformational trajectory, 2020-50**

	2020	2030	2040	2050	Change, 2020-50
Jobs	419,162	467,762	521,997	582,520	163,358
Double-jobbing adjustment	400,300	446,713	498,507	556,307	156,007
Commuting adjustment	377,642	433,702	483,988	540,104	162,462

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, Justin Gardner Consulting.

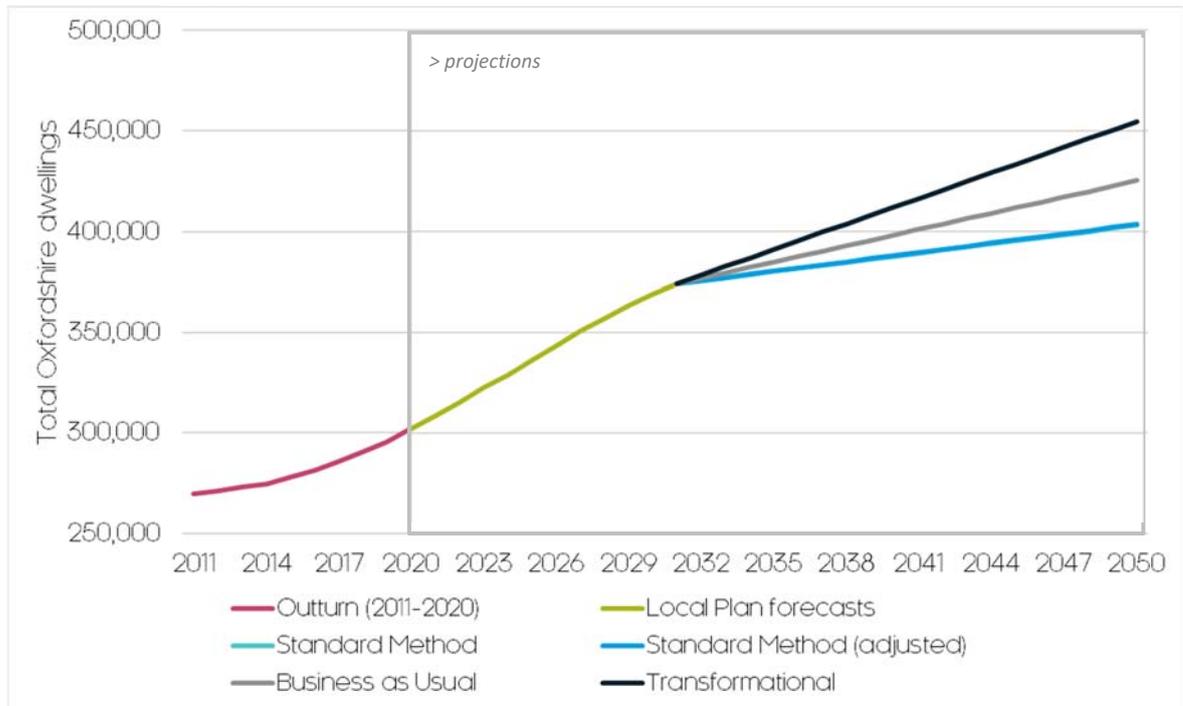
## 9.5 Housing need linked to Oxfordshire's economic trajectories

Table 9.5.1 and Figure 9.5.1 below show the estimates of implied housing need set against the employment (job) trajectories presented in *Chapter 8*. For clarity, the key assumptions used in modelling are as follows:

- Base population from the 2018-based subnational population projections (SNPP) – the alternative internal migration variant
- Projections run from 2020 to 2050
- Population data for 2018 fixed by reference to estimates made from mid-year population estimates (MYE) and Patient Register (PR) data
- Population to 2020 derived from estimating potential population change given the number of net housing completions (2018-20)
- Household Representative Rates (HRRs) from the 2014-based subnational household projections (SNHP) and a part-return to trend method for the 25-34 and 35-44 age groups
- Vacancy rate of 3% to convert households into dwellings
- Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) economic activity rates (adjusted for local situation in Oxfordshire (from 2011 Census data) – July 2018 Fiscal Sustainability Report figures
- Commuting rate from Annual Population Survey analysis and the 2011 Census. The modelling assumes a commuting rate of 1.06 in 2020, returning to 1.03 by 2030 and remaining at 1.03 thereafter;
- Double jobbing ratio from the Annual Population Survey (APS) – ratio of 0.955 used
- Assume no changes to unemployment from 2020 onwards

The demographic model is re-run with these assumptions. It includes upward adjustments to household formation amongst those aged 25-44 on the assumption that affordability improves; and adjustment to net migration to Oxfordshire to support the trajectories for economic growth.

**Figure 9.5.1: Projected housing need in Oxfordshire from the economic trajectories, 2020-50**



**Table 9.5.1: Projected housing need in Oxfordshire from the economic trajectories, 2020-50**

	Households, 2020	Households, 2050	Change in households, 2020-50	Change in households p.a., 2020-50	Dwellings required p.a., 2020-50
Standard Method (adjusted)	288,999	387,591	98,592	3,286	3,386
Business as usual	288,999	408,806	119,807	3,994	4,113
Transformational	288,999	437,328	148,329	4,944	5,093

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, IcenI Projects, Justin Gardner Consulting

The analysis shows that to support the Standard Method (with the adjusted demographic baseline) trajectory, a total housing provision of 101,580 dwellings (3,386 dwellings per annum) would be required between 2020-50.

The business as usual trajectory would require housing provision of 123,390 dwellings (4,113 dwellings per annum) between 2020-50, whilst to support the higher transformational trajectory housing provision of 152,790 dwellings (5,093 dwellings per annum) would be required between 2020-50.

Note that until 2031, the modelling assumes the same path of housing need (regardless of the trajectory). This ensures alignment with the forecast net completions outlined in Oxfordshire local authorities’ Local Plans. These forecasts are available for all local authorities in a consistent format and

approach for the 2020-31 period, and have been aggregated to a county-wide level.<sup>58</sup>

After 2031, the projections follow the modelled rate of remaining forecast need, according to the respective economic trajectory. The modelling assumes an even path of housing delivery throughout the period 2031-50, and does not specifically take account of the phasing of housing delivery or other constraints.

The modelling undertaken focuses on C3 housing needs. It does not assume any growth in absolute terms in the population aged under 75 living in institutions, but assumes that the proportion of those aged over 75 living in institutions remains stable (but allows for growth in the absolute numbers) consistent with the approach in MHCLG's 2014-based Household Projections.

## 9.6 Conclusions

This chapter of the report has appraised the implications of Oxfordshire's potential trajectories for employment growth on housing need. The baseline position (from the Standard Method, adjusted, trajectory) is of a need for 101,580 homes over the plan period (3,386 dwellings per annum). The modelling indicates that could be expected to support employment growth of around 81,600 (0.6% pa CAGR) over the 30-year plan period.

The business as usual trajectory, which would see employment grow by 116,800 over the plan period, would require provision of 123,390 homes (4,113 dwellings per annum). This is around 21% higher than the Standard Method figures.

And under a transformational trajectory of the Oxfordshire's economy, which is aligned to the Local Industrial Strategy, higher housing provision of 152,790 homes would be required over the 2020-50 plan period (5,093 dwellings per annum). This is around 50% greater than the Standard Method minimum housing need, but is relatively similar to the 20 year requirement of 100,000 homes (equivalent to 5,000 dwellings per annum) which underpins the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal and currently adopted Local Plans in Oxfordshire.

Despite the application of a robust methodology and evidence base, there are clearly uncertainties associated with predicting the future economic performance of a local area, which heightens as the forecasts look further into the future.

However, the growth trajectories considered are reasonable parameters for growth when set against Oxfordshire's historic economic performance and employment growth trends over previous economic cycles, with Oxfordshire displaying particularly robust growth over the most recent economic cycle.

<sup>58</sup> Local authorities in Oxfordshire forecast 72,100 net additions to the dwelling stock over 2020-31 (6,600 net additions p.a.) Source: Oxford City Council, Cherwell District Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council

## 10 Affordable Housing Need

### 10.1 Introduction

This chapter proceeds to consider the scale of need for affordable housing in Oxfordshire.

Affordable housing is defined in the NPPF as housing for sale or rent, for those who need are not met by the market, including housing which provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers. It includes affordable housing for rent, including at both social rents and affordable rents, discounted market sale homes – which would include First Homes – as well as other forms of low cost market housing, including shared ownership housing and affordable private rented housing.

Both the Standard Method and (economic-led) trajectories for housing need presented in *Chapter 9* relate to the need for all types of homes including both market and affordable housing.

These show that housing need could vary from between 123,390 homes, based on the (adjusted) Standard Method, and 152,790 homes to 2050 if the authorities plan to deliver the transformational level of growth. A consideration for the Councils in appraising what level of housing provision to plan for within this spectrum is how different levels of housing provision will contribute to the delivery of affordable housing.

Affordable housing delivery is influenced by both public funding available to support delivery, including through both the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal and the Government's Affordable Homes Programme; and the level of overall housing development in a context in which much affordable housing is secured through Chapter 106 Agreements on mixed-tenure development sites. Taking account of the latter, the Planning Practice Guidance outlines that:

*“ The total affordable housing need can then be considered in the context of its likely delivery as a proportion of mixed market and affordable housing developments, taking into account the probable percentage of affordable housing to be delivered by eligible market housing led developments. An increase in the total housing figures included in the plan may need to be considered where it could help deliver the required number of affordable homes.”<sup>59</sup>*

In these terms, the effect on the delivery of affordable housing is a consideration for the Oxfordshire authorities in deciding whether to plan for higher housing provision than the minimum level indicated by the Standard Method.

In this chapter, we therefore consider what scale of affordable housing need there is in Oxfordshire; and what impact different scenarios for overall housing provision might have on affordable housing delivery.

The analysis herein should be read alongside *Chapter 12* which considers the implications of different potential scenarios for housing provision on the

<sup>59</sup> Reference ID: 2a-024-20190220

affordability of market housing in Oxfordshire over the period to 2050. As the affordability of market housing influences the scale of affordable housing need, it is important that these are considered together.

## 10.2 Stock of affordable housing

The evidence suggests that despite worsening affordability of market housing (as shown in *Chapter 4*), the stock of affordable housing (comprising local authority owned, registered providers and other public sector housing) has been declining in absolute terms across Oxfordshire over the last decade (2009-2018), with a net growth in stock seen only in Cherwell District (Figure 10.2.1 and Table 10.2.1).

Figure 10.2.1: Trends in social housing stock in Oxfordshire, 2009-18

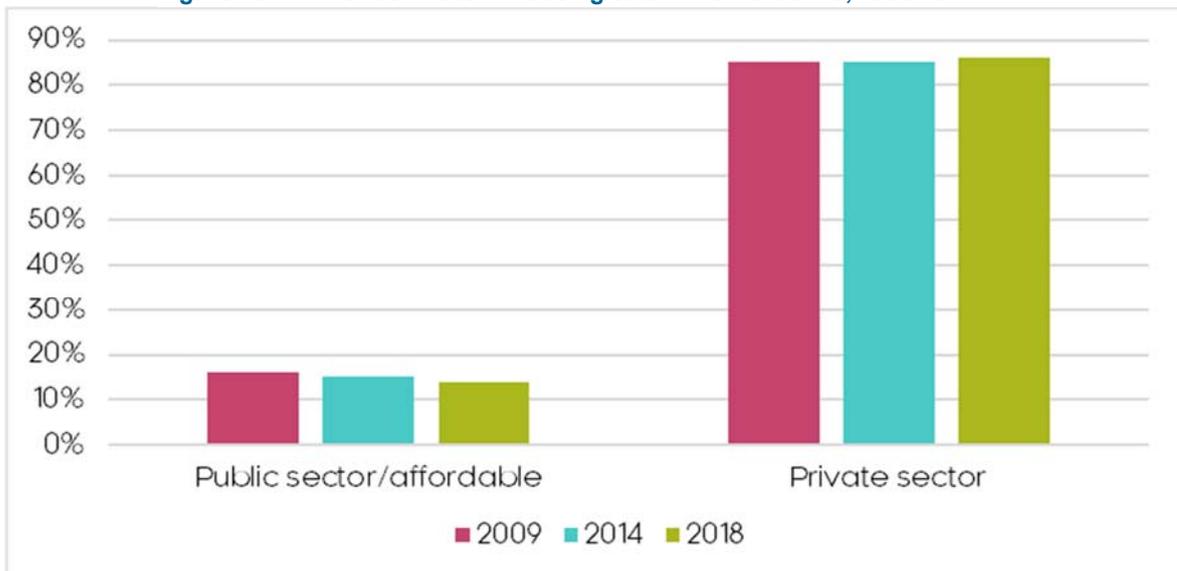


Table 10.2.1: Trends in social housing stock in Oxfordshire, 2009-18

	2009	2014	2018	Change, 2009-18	% change, 2009-18
Cherwell	7,457	7,840	8,520	1,063	14%
Oxford	13,737	13,240	12,750	-987	-7%
South Oxfordshire	7,036	7,300	7,020	-16	0%
Vale of White Horse	7,675	6,590	7,420	-255	-3%
West Oxfordshire	6,426	6,440	5,870	-556	-9%
<b>Oxfordshire</b>	<b>42,331</b>	<b>41,400</b>	<b>41,570</b>	<b>-761</b>	<b>-2%</b>
England	4,088,589	4,140,000	4,174,000	85,411	2%

Source: MHCLG, Icen Projects.

## 10.3 Housing waiting lists

The limited available affordable housing stock has resulted in a significant build-up of those with an affordable housing need, as shown in Table 10.3.1. There are substantial numbers of households (almost 9,600) on Council housing waiting lists across Oxfordshire as of April 2019. This potentially under-estimates the affordable housing need as households do not register for housing where there is limited prospect of them being allocated a home. The

housing registers are also focused on those seeking rented affordable housing, and there will be additional households who have an affordable housing need who aspire to home ownership but require support to do so.<sup>60</sup>

As of March 2019, West Oxfordshire has the highest total number of households on the housing waiting list with 2,684, whilst Cherwell has the lowest with 1,179. These differences may however reflect differences in how waiting lists are managed as opposed to the true underlying relative need.

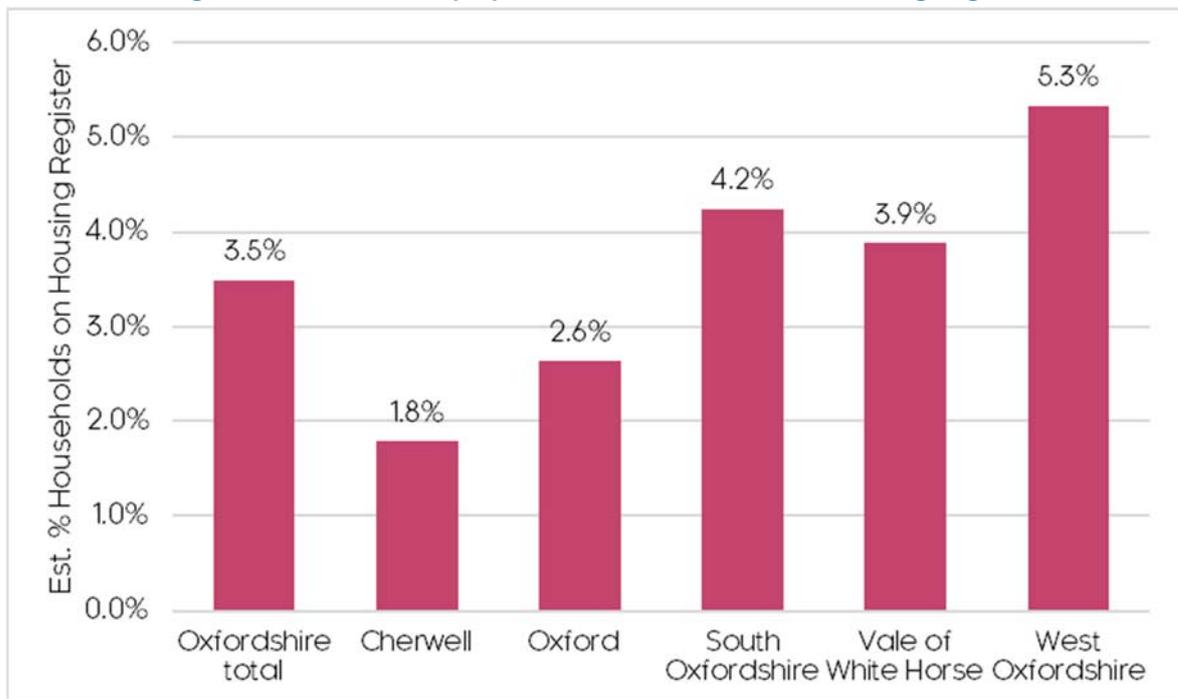
**Table 10.3.1: Housing waiting lists in Oxfordshire, April 2019**

	Total households on the housing waiting list	How many bedrooms did these households require?					Unspecified or those on the register more than once
		1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	3+ bedrooms		
<b>Oxfordshire</b>	<b>9,589</b>	<b>4,991</b>	<b>2,888</b>	<b>1,238</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>3</b>	
Cherwell	1,084	550	315	165	54	0	
Oxford	1,421	648	441	249	80	3	
South Oxfordshire	2,421	1,303	708	307	103	0	
Vale of White Horse	2,175	1,178	630	248	119	0	
West Oxfordshire	2,488	1,312	794	269	113	0	

Source: Local Authority Housing Statistics (LAHS), Icen Projects.

Figure 10.3.1 below provides an estimate of the proportion of households in each Oxfordshire local authority on the Housing Register. It is lowest in relative terms in Cherwell and highest in West Oxfordshire; but the differentials potentially highlight differences in how the housing register is managed in each authority rather than the underlying needs position.

**Figure 10.3.1: Estimated proportion of households on the Housing Register, 2019**



Source: Local Authority Housing Statistics (LAHS), Icen Projects.

<sup>60</sup> MHCLG (2019) Local authority housing data

## 10.4 Need for affordable housing

Households have traditionally been identified as having an affordable housing need where they cannot afford to rent *or* buy housing without support – this has been termed here as a ‘narrow’ definition of the need for affordable housing. This would align with the approach used in the 2014 Oxfordshire SHMA.

The 2019 NPPF has widened the definition of affordable housing need, essentially to include households who can afford to rent a home but aspire to buy, and need support to do so. The analysis here therefore assesses the wider need for affordable housing responding to the 2019 NPPF definition, which includes households who for instance might be able to rent privately without financial support, but aspire to buy a home and need support to do so. This widened definition thus fully captures the need for affordable home ownership products.

Iceni’s analysis shows a need for 3,200 affordable homes per year across Oxfordshire over the period to 2030 adopting this wider definition to align with the 2019 NPPF.

The method for assessing affordable housing need, as set out in Planning Practice Guidance, is a point-in-time assessment which is influenced by the relationship between housing costs and incomes at the point of the assessment and the available supply of affordable housing. The assessment uses a 2018 baseline, as it takes account of the current need and the relationship between housing costs and incomes at that point. Needs have been considered over the period to 2030, as shown in Table 10.4.1.

**Table 10.4.1: Affordable housing need in Oxfordshire, 2018-30**

	Per Annum	Total, 2018-30
Narrow definition	1,714	22,269
NPPF-19 definition	3,198	41,574

Source: Iceni Projects.

The detailed analysis used to build up the assessment of the need for affordable housing in Oxfordshire is set out in *Appendix C: Affordable Housing Need Appendix*. This follows the methodology set out in Planning Practice Guidance.

## 10.5 Interpreting the affordable housing need

The evidence within this Growth Needs Assessment has pointed to particular issues with the affordability of market housing in Oxfordshire; and a situation in which this has deteriorated in recent years as housing demand – influenced by strong employment growth - have exceeded housing supply. This deterioration in market housing costs will have contributed to a growing number of households in need of affordable housing.

The need is also influenced by the existing supply of affordable housing, which in turn has been influenced by the availability of funding for affordable housing provision in recent decades together with losses, such as through right-to-buy sales.

These factors together have led to a situation where a significant affordable housing need exists. It is clear that the scale of affordable housing need is

significant, with the total need shown notionally equating to 94% of the overall housing need identified in the Standard Method or 63% of the overall need shown in the transformational trajectory.

To deliver the annualised affordable housing need in full assuming 40% affordable housing provision would notionally require total housing provision of 7,995 homes a year in Oxfordshire; whilst at 50% affordable housing provision, it would require almost 6,400 homes a year to meet the affordable housing need in full.

It is clear therefore that the extent to which affordable housing need will be met will be sensitive to both the proportion of homes delivered as affordable housing, which is influenced by funding availability and what level of provision is viable on mixed tenure schemes; together with what overall housing requirement is set and the ability of the market to deliver this.

Over the past 15 years, affordable housing delivery in the county has fluctuated greatly (Table 10.5.1).<sup>61</sup> On average, the lowest rates of affordable housing delivery as a proportion of total dwellings has been in Vale of White Horse and West Oxfordshire with an average of 23% over the past 15 years. The highest average rates were in South Oxfordshire with 27% of all dwellings delivered as affordable, whilst the greatest affordable housing delivery in absolute terms has been in Cherwell with 2,937 affordable homes delivered between 2003-19.

Table 10.5.1 below however shows the total number of affordable housing completions have increased in recent years, particularly in Cherwell, Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire. This demonstrates how higher housing requirements can positively influence the delivery of affordable housing.

**Table 10.5.1 Affordable housing delivery in Oxfordshire, 2003-19**

	Oxford		Cherwell		Vale of White Horse		South Oxfordshire		West Oxfordshire	
	Affordable completions	% of total delivery								
2003/04	141	26	84	21	50	17	80	41	75	13
2004/05	186	28	32	5	20	3	40	21	53	8
2005/06	167	18	61	6	90	14	30	14	218	30
2006/07	267	33	166	19	30	6	30	18	113	14
2007/08	73	14	133	29	100	22	150	29	186	22
2008/09	231	35	87	20	10	3	40	16	94	16
2009/10	192	75	97	22	N/A	N/A	70	37	22	6
2010/11	105	53	96	26	198	59	40	19	163	38
2011/12	18	8	204	57	63	18	194	38	181	50
2012/13	90	42	113	33	143	53	143	30	28	10
2013/14	0	0	140	34	67	12	187	39	41	22
2014/15	17	5	191	20	250	34	114	19	103	26
2015/16	164	37	322	23	326	29	180	30	75	37
2016/17	20	5	278	25	336	21	172	24	123	24
2017/18	27	7	426	31	311	19	259	28	158	28
2018/19	105	30	507	34	392	31	382	28	N/A	N/A
Total	1803	26	2937	25	2386	23	2111	27	1633	23

<sup>61</sup> Annual Monitoring Reports (where available), MHCLG (2019) Housing supply: net additional dwellings.

Source: Annual Monitoring Reports, MHCLG.

In deciding on what level of housing provision should be planned for in the Oxfordshire Plan, the contribution to the delivery of affordable housing is clearly therefore a relevant consideration.

As the affordable housing needs model, as set out in the Planning Practice Guidance, is very sensitive to the relationship between housing costs and incomes, and to what supply of affordable housing is available to meet needs, it is not really suitable for considering affordable housing needs in the longer-term beyond 2030.

Furthermore the affordable housing needs evidence considers not just the needs arising from overall growth in households, but also the needs of existing households in unsuitable housing, such as current households who require an alternative size or tenure of home (such as overcrowded households or those in the private rented sector who are identified as having an affordable housing need). Such households do not need additional housing per se. Instead the modelling thus partly indicates an imbalance between the current tenure profile and that needed (see *Appendix C: Affordable Housing Need Appendix*).

Given the length of the plan period, Icen consider that it is important that the inter-relationship between affordable need and overall housing delivery is therefore not looked at solely in a mechanistic or numerical way. The affordable housing need figures are sensitive to changes in the relationship between housing costs and incomes over time. The evidence in this report has shown that market housing affordability has worsened in recent years as demand (driven by economic growth) exceeded housing delivery.

However housing delivery performance has been increasing rapidly in recent years, and as Local Plans have progressed in recent years, there are strong prospects for significant levels of housing delivery – amongst some of the highest in the South East region - to be sustained in the short- and medium-term through to 2031. This could in time affect housing affordability.

For the purposes of the Oxfordshire Plan, planning for higher levels of housing provision provides greater potential both to deliver affordable housing; and a greater likelihood of improving the affordability of market housing over the plan period to 2050. This is considered further as part of the analysis in *Chapter 12*. The solution to increasing affordable housing delivery is however not just about overall housing numbers.

Within Oxfordshire, the Housing and Growth Deal includes funding elements specifically to increase affordable housing delivery, including £60 million funding from the Government for affordable homes. The Oxfordshire Affordable Housing Programme is to deliver a programme that, over time, will make a significant contribution and the initial programme aims to deliver at least 1,320 affordable units by March 2021.

There are also other initiatives which could be considered to boost affordable housing delivery. A research paper published by the Association for Public Service Excellence<sup>62</sup> discusses how the government must help councils return to their historic role as a provider of homes, recognising that the private sector alone cannot meet the shortfall of housing supply. The report outlines 10

<sup>62</sup> APSE (2018) Delivering affordable homes in a changing world

recommendations for unlocking the potential of local authority house building and partnership delivery, which include redirecting existing subsidies for private market housing towards supply-side measures, enabling councils to retain 100% of their Right to Buy receipts to reinvest into building new affordable housing and ensuring *“councils have the confidence, backed by a comprehensive package of tools, in order to deliver that step change in the provision of social and affordable housing”*.

A 2016 report by the Local Government Association<sup>63</sup> sets out recommendations for how local and national government can work together to build more homes and includes many similar themes. Some of the recommendations include developing routes for councils to *“directly deliver new homes of all tenures through innovative delivery vehicles, including joint delivery vehicles across areas”*, using surplus public land strategically and provide additional powers to speed up land assembly.

Oxford City Council’s wholly owned delivery vehicle Oxford City Housing Limited, plans to provide 530 affordable homes between 2019 and 2023. Similarly, Build! was created by Cherwell District Council in 2012 to look at alternative ways for delivering affordable homes. To date Build! has provided over 260 homes across Cherwell and more homes are in the pipeline. This shows the impacts which specific Council initiatives can have. Vale of White Horse District Council has set out an ambition to explore a council-owned holding company/vehicle in its Corporate Plan 2020-24.

It is however clear that a concerted effort is needed both to improve both affordable housing delivery and affordability of market housing (which in turn will reduce the affordable need). These are relevant considerations, alongside capacity and environmental impacts of different levels of development, in determining what level of housing provision should be planned for.

## 10.6 Conclusions

The evidence points to a very significant scale of need for affordable housing in Oxfordshire whereby almost 3,200 affordable homes would be required each year to 2030 to meet affordable housing needs in full. This includes needs arising from both additional households and from existing households who require a different size or tenure of accommodation.

The scale of affordable housing need has built up over time and is sensitive to the market housing costs and the available supply of affordable housing. The scale of need shown points to a need to significantly boost the delivery of affordable housing. For the purposes of the Oxfordshire Plan, planning for higher levels of housing provision than the Standard Method provides greater potential both to deliver affordable housing; and a greater likelihood of improving the affordability of market housing over the plan period to 2050. This is considered further as part of *Chapter 12*.

The solution to increasing affordable housing delivery is however not just about overall housing numbers and the creation of public sector delivery vehicles, use of public sector land can also contribute to supporting delivery

<sup>63</sup> LGA (2016) Building our homes, communities and future

and funding support from Central Government can also contribute to boosting affordable housing supply.

# 11 Employment Land Requirements

## 11.1 Introduction

In this chapter the report moves on to consider future employment land needs across Oxfordshire over the period from 2020-2050, using an approach which responds to the Planning Practice Guidance in considering different modelling techniques to consider future employment land needs, including past development trends and modelling of what the economic trajectories (as set out in *Chapter 8*) would imply regarding the need for employment land.

There are relative benefits and disbenefits of different forecasting approaches which need to be understood in interpreting modelling results. For example, economic forecasts are based on predictions of trends in jobs, but do not take account of the need for better quality floorspace or replacement of out-dated stock. Past take-up trends tell us about the actual delivery of employment development in the past, but do not tell us whether these trends have been constrained by supply (for instance acknowledging Green Belt constraints around Oxford) or tell us about the implications of future economic dynamics.

Productivity improvements may also change the relationship between floorspace needs and job numbers in a way which is difficult to accurately predict. For some sectors this may mean that forecasts can over-state future needs; whilst for others it may under-estimate them. For office floorspace in particular, changing working patterns and growth in home-based working, a trend which has been accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic, may also influence the demand for office space but it is difficult to precisely quantify the impacts at the current time. Additional consideration has been given to this question in the *Covid-19 Impacts Addendum*.

It is thus important to consider different forecasting approaches, to consider forecasts alongside 'market signals' as explored earlier in this report, and to ensure that there is a clear framework for the ongoing monitoring and review of market dynamics and employment land policies.

## 11.2 Labour demand modelling approach

The labour demand modelling considers the employment land implications of the business as usual and transformational economic trajectories. The Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory is a labour-demand scenario and does not have a specific profile of employment growth by sector associated with it.

The economic trajectories developed provide forecasts for growth in employment at a 10-sector level across Oxfordshire to 2050. The following key steps have been used to calculate employment land needs:

### 1. Forecasting growth in full-time equivalents

The first stage involves converting forecasts for total jobs into numbers for 'full-time equivalent' employment as standard employment densities are based on this metric. To estimate FTE employment, Icenis has examined the split between full-time and part-time employment in Oxfordshire using 2018 BRES data at a 3-digit SIC level and then aggregated this to the 10 sectors used in the forecasts. This generates a ratio of full-time to total employment which varies from 80% for distribution, transport, accommodation and food to 98%

for construction. This is then applied to the forecasts for total employment to generate FTE figures.

## 2. Relating economic sectors to use classes

The second stage in the modelling involves estimating the proportion of employment in each sector which is likely to take place on employment land. Icení's modelling looks at the following different use classes:

- Office and R&D (Classes E(g)(i) and E(g)(ii))
- F1a Education
- Industrial (Class EG(iiii) light industrial and B2 General Industrial)
- Warehousing (Class B8 Storage and Distribution)
- Other Industrial Activities

The inclusion of the F1 sector takes into account the specific potential in Oxfordshire for employment growth in research and development activities associated with the universities and science sector.

Other industrial activities include utilities, waste and recycling, trade counter uses, motor vehicle sale and repair, which typically take place on employment sites but may fall outside of the B-class uses.

Icení has calibrated its employment land model to reflect the specific nature of the Oxfordshire economy. For each of the 10 sectors the proportion of jobs which are likely to take place in each of the above use class categories has been estimated. This is informed by consideration of baseline employment at a 3-digit SIC level using 2018 BRES employment data. By applying the ratios of the estimated proportion of jobs by use class in each sector to the sectoral forecasts, forecast of jobs by use to 2050 has been calculated.

## 3. Applying employment densities

The next stage of the modelling is to apply employment densities to estimate the net change in floorspace by use class for each of the economic trajectories. Employment densities describe the typical level of floorspace per FTE employee. The following employment density assumptions have been applied:

- Office: 12 sqm GEA per FTE job
- Education/Training: 40 sqm GEA per FTE job
- Industrial: 40 sqm GEA per FTE job
- Warehouse: 74 sqm GEA per FTE job

These are blended figures derived from the HCA Employment Densities Guide (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Nov 2015). They include conversion, where appropriate, of densities for net internal areas to Gross External Area (GEA) figures.

The employment densities are average figures, and there will clearly be instances where the density of use of space is both above and below the average.

By applying the density assumptions to the forecasts of employment by use class, the modelling generates estimates of the net change in floorspace to 2050.

#### 4. Adjustments for losses of employment land

The data provided by Oxfordshire local authorities indicates that there have been losses on average of 26,900 sq.m of employment space per annum over the 2011-18 period. Part of this will be due to redevelopment of vacant employment space; but there will also be some businesses which are displaced through redevelopment of employment space.

It is assumed that it is appropriate to replace 50% of the space lost and use this to model future gross requirements for new employment floorspace. There is some potential for changes made by Government to what constitutes permitted development to influence future losses. Trends in losses (and committed losses) will need to be monitored over time and this may require reconsideration of what replacement provision is necessary if there is a significant variance from the past trends shown herein.

#### 5. Margin to provide flexible supply of land

The final stage of the modelling has been to include a margin to ensure that a flexible supply of employment land is maintained. The inclusion of this takes into account:

- The potential error margin associated with the forecasting process. Econometric forecasting is not an 'exact science';
- The need to provide a choice of sites both to take into account that business needs are not homogenous (i.e. different businesses have different requirements in terms of location and site characteristics) and to facilitate competition between developers in a healthy functioning property market;
- The need to ensure flexibility in land of allow for delays in individual sites coming forward; and
- The need to facilitate movement within the property market including the replacement of aged property through development of existing employment premises to provide more modern commercial floorspace. Net forecasts for employment to not take account of this ongoing level of property market churn.

Iceni consider that it is normally reasonable to make provision for a 5-year margin based on past (gross) employment land take-up over a typical 20-year plan period. The longer-term nature of the Oxfordshire Plan would justify a higher margin, and have therefore made provision for a margin of 7.5 years.

### 11.3 Labour demand forecasts for employment land

The level of FTE employment expected in different use class activities is shown in Table 11.3.1 below. Around 41% of employment growth is expected to occur in activities which typically take place on employment land under the Standard Method trajectory, rising to 48% in business as usual and transformational trajectories.

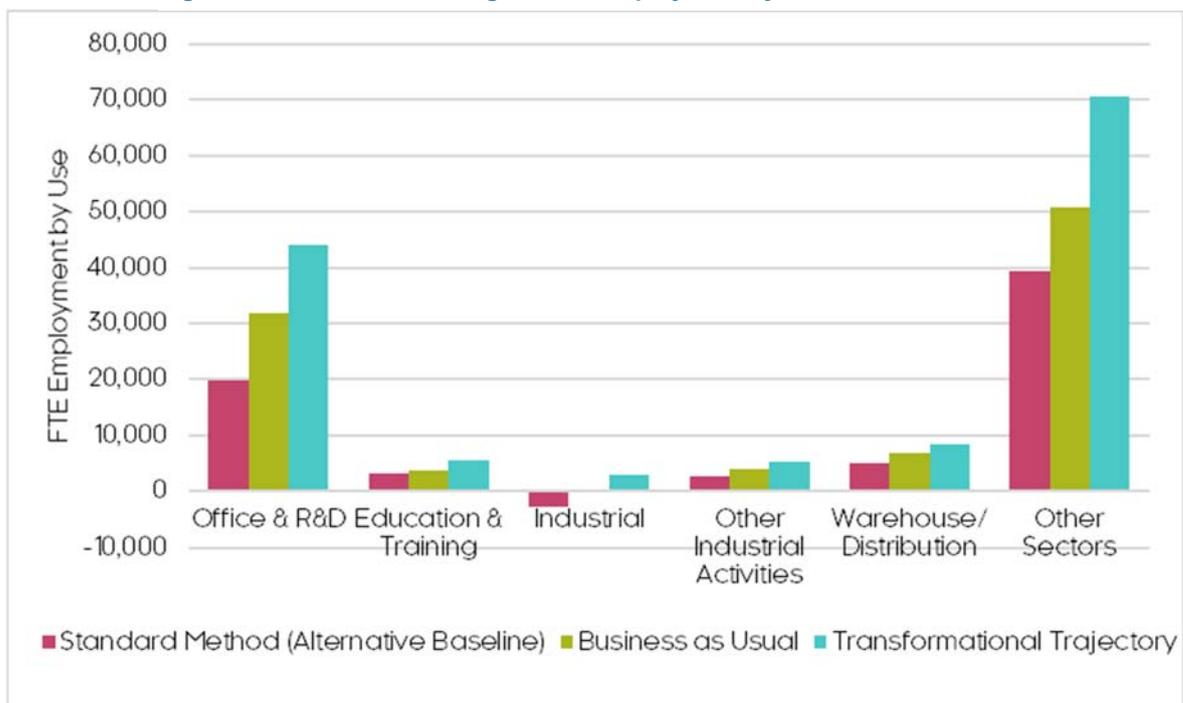
In all cases, a significant proportion of employment growth is expected to occur in other parts of the economy, such as in education, health, accommodation and food, and other service activities.

**Table 11.3.1: Forecast FTE employment (jobs) by use class in Oxfordshire, 2020-50**

	Office	D1 Education & Training	B1c/B2 Industrial	Other Industrial Activities	B8 Warehouse	Other Sectors	Total
Standard Method (adjusted)	19769	3090	-2709	2710	5056	39526	67442
Business as usual	31,960	3,626	188	3,848	6,646	50,802	97,070
Transformational	44,013	5,433	2,746	5,161	8,412	70,675	136,440

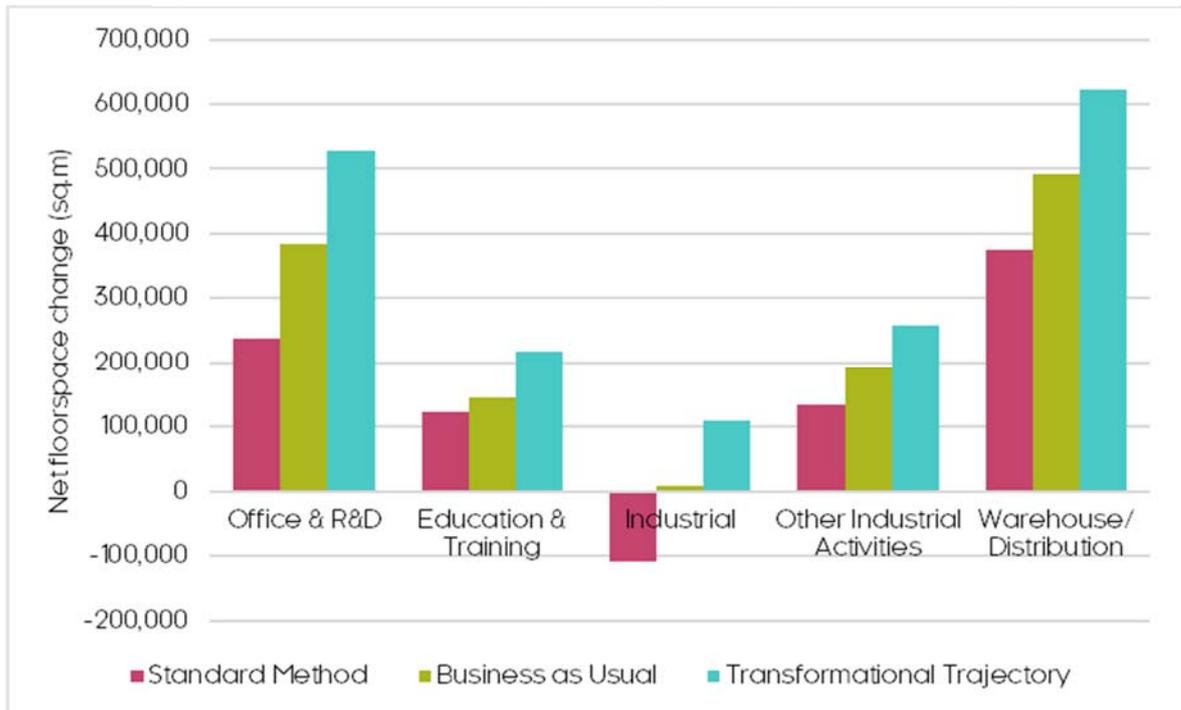
Source: Cambridge Econometrics, IcenI Projects.

As can be seen from Figure 11.3.1 below, the strongest growth is expected to be in office-based activities. A decline in industrial employment is forecast in the Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory, but employment is expected to grow under the business as usual and transformational trajectories.

**Figure 11.3.1: Forecast change in FTE employment by use class in Oxfordshire, 2020-50**

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, IcenI Projects.

Applying employment density assumptions to this (Figure 11.3.2 and Table 11.3.2), IcenI forecasts a net change in employment floorspace of 1.22 million sq.m in the business as usual trajectory and 1.74 million sq.m in the transformational trajectory. Reflecting relatively high employment densities, the greatest need shown is for B8 warehousing floorspace, followed by office and R&D floorspace.

**Figure 11.3.2: Forecast net floorspace change in floorspace in Oxfordshire, 2020-50****Table 11.3.2: Forecast net floorspace change in floorspace in Oxfordshire, 2020-50**

	Office & R&D	Education & Training	Industrial (B1c/B2)	Other Industrial Activities	Warehouse	Total
Standard Method (adjusted)	237,231	123,598	108,366	135,476	374,137	762,076
Business as usual	383,522	145,047	7,502	192,401	491,772	1,220,244
Transformational	528,154	217,315	109,820	258,069	622,501	1,735,859

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, IcenI Projects.

To these figures, IcenI consider that it would be appropriate to add an allowance for losses. As set out previously, this is based on an expectation of losses in line with recent trend data (2011-18) and a replacement rate of 50%. Also included is a margin for choice and flexibility of supply, based on 7.5 years' gross take-up, again based on trends seen over the 2011-18 period.

The resultant levels of gross employment land arising are shown in Table 11.3.3 to Table 11.3.5 below. This assumes a 0.4 plot ratio for industrial and warehouse development. For office and R&D floorspace, it assumes 40% of space is delivered at town centre development densities at a plot ratio of 2; with 60% delivered on business and science parks with a plot ratio of 0.4. It stands at almost 780 ha in the business as usual trajectory and just over 1,000 ha in the transformational trajectory.

**Table 11.3.3: Gross employment floorspace and land needs in Oxfordshire – Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory, 2020-50**

	Office & R&D	Education & Training	Industrial	Other Industrial Activities/ Mixed B-Class	Warehouse/ Distribution	Total
Net employment floorspace growth	237,231	123,598	-108,366	135,476	374,137	762,076

Replacement of losses (sq.m)	92,008	42,711	104,297	8,892	155,391	403,299
Margin for Choice & Flexibility (sq.m)	163,429	16,321	145,923	250,866	119,349	695,888
Gross Floorspace Requirement (sq.m)	492,668	182,631	141,855	395,234	648,876	1,861,262
Land Requirement (ha)	108	40	35	99	162	445

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, IcenI Projects.

**Table 11.3.4: Gross employment floorspace and land needs in Oxfordshire – business as usual trajectory, 2020-50**

	Office & R&D	Education & Training	Industrial	Other Industrial Activities/ Mixed B-Class	Warehouse/ Distribution	Total
Net employment floorspace growth	383,522	145,047	7,502	192,401	491,772	1,220,244
Replacement of losses (sq.m)	92,008	42,711	104,297	8,892	155,391	403,299
Margin for Choice & Flexibility (sq.m)	163,429	16,321	145,923	250,866	119,349	695,888
Gross Floorspace Requirement (sq.m)	638,959	204,079	257,723	452,159	766,511	2,319,431
Land Requirement (ha)	141	45	64	113	192	555

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, IcenI Projects.

**Table 11.3.5: Gross employment floorspace and land needs in Oxfordshire – transformational trajectory, 2020-50**

	Office & R&D	Education & Training	Industrial	Other Industrial Activities/ Mixed B-Class	Warehouse/ Distribution	Total
Net employment floorspace growth	528,154	217,315	109,820	258,069	622,501	1,735,859
Replacement of losses (sq.m)	92,008	42,711	104,297	8,892	155,391	403,299
Margin for Choice & Flexibility (sq.m)	163,429	16,321	145,923	250,866	119,349	695,888
Gross Floorspace Requirement (sq.m)	783,591	276,347	360,041	517,827	897,240	2,835,046
Land Requirement (ha)	172	61	90	129	224	677

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, IcenI Projects.

## 11.4 Past completions projections

IcenI has also modelled a projection of past gross completions of employment floorspace. Oxfordshire local authorities have provided data on gross employment floorspace completions seen by local authority over the 2011-18 period. This is shown in Table 11.4.1 below.

**Table 11.4.1: Gross completions of employment floorspace in Oxfordshire, 2011-18**

	Business B1	Business offices B1a	B1b R&D	B1c Light Industrial	Industrial B2	Storage & Distribution B8	Mixed B-Class	D1	Total
West Oxon.	10,546	3,389	117	7,626	749	3,478	111	-	26,016

South Oxon	-	3,779	9,999	8,508	8,188	34,095	13,100	-	77,669
VoWH	0	32,320	31,011	6,040	12,777	26,536	32,823	-	141,507
Oxford	7,755	13,136	3,928	1,356	544	2,851	-	15,233	44,803
Cherwell	6,025	28,652	1,877	21,304	69,103	167,181	65,358	-	359,500
<b>Oxfordshire</b>	<b>24,326</b>	<b>81,276</b>	<b>46,932</b>	<b>44,834</b>	<b>91,361</b>	<b>234,141</b>	<b>111,392</b>	<b>15,233</b>	<b>649,495</b>

Source: Oxfordshire local authorities, IcenI Projects.

For the purposes of developing a projection, B1 and B1a categories have been joined together to provide figures for Offices; B1b and D1 figures to provide figures for R&D and education floorspace, and B1c and B2 figures which relate to industrial floorspace (Table 11.4.2). Also included is a consistent margin to the labour demand scenarios to provide flexibility of supply.

**Table 11.4.2: Trend-based assessment of gross employment floorspace & land needs in Oxfordshire, 2020-50**

	Office	R&D & Education	Industrial	B8 Storage and Distribution	Mixed B-Class	Total
Gross completions p.a.	15,086	8,881	19,456	33,449	15,913	92,785
Floorspace Projection 2020-50 (sq.m)	452,579	266,421	583,693	1,003,463	477,394	2,783,551
Floorspace Projection with 7.5yr Margin	565,724	333,027	729,616	1,254,329	596,743	3,479,438
Land Requirement (ha)	102	60	182	314	149	807

Source: IcenI Projects.

## 11.5 Drawing the evidence together

For the purposes of considering what volume of land to allocate for employment uses, IcenI consider that it is sensible to group together Office and R&D Uses (Classes E(g)(i) and E(g)(ii) and R&D activities associated with education which might fall within Use Class F1a. These types of activities typically take place in town and city centres, and on business and science parks within Oxfordshire.

Equally it is sensible to group together more general industrial land which can cater for both light and heavy industrial uses (Classes EG(iii) and B2) as well as storage and distribution (Use Class B8). Table 11.5.1 below brings together the results of the labour demand modelling and the projections of gross floorspace completions on this basis.

**Table 11.5.1: Comparison of land requirements (total hectares, ha) in Oxfordshire, 2020-50**

	Office, R&D and Education	Industrial, Warehousing & Other	Total
Standard Method (adjusted)	149	296	445
Business as usual	185	369	555
Transformational	233	444	677
Completions projection	162	645	807

Source: Icení Projects.

Icení consider that for office, R&D and education uses the labour demand trajectories provide an appropriate basis for considering the level of employment land provision which should be made within the Oxfordshire Plan.

However for the broad industrial use category, there is a weaker relationship between jobs and floorspace or land requirements. This reflects a range of factors including productivity improvements and the need for additional floorspace to replaced out-dated existing premises. Put simply, whilst a manufacturing business could grow and require additional space but driven by productivity improvements, its employee headcount could be falling.

Equally for warehousing and distribution, a significant proportion of the gross need is likely to arise from replacement of older dated warehousing stock together with changes in the size of units required (with a shift towards larger units which can provide greater economies of scale). Icení consider that greater weight should therefore be afforded to the completions projection scenario which suggests a need for almost 650 ha of industrial land for the 30-year plan period.

## 11.6 Conclusions

Icení has considered the implications of different forecasting techniques on the demand for employment space. In drawing conclusions, Icení consider that greater weight should be given to the labour demand modelling for office and R&D activities, and that greater weight should be given to past completions trends in considering future requirements for industrial land.

On this basis, the modelling indicates a need for between 149 – 233 ha of land for office and R&D floorspace to 2050, but that provision should be made for almost 650ha of industrial land.

## 12 Commuting and Affordability Implications

### 12.1 Introduction

Having explored the potential scale of economic growth (*Chapter 8*) and housing delivery (*Chapter 9*) in Oxfordshire, this chapter brings the two together to consider the resultant implications for both commuting and housing affordability in the county.

Given the externalities related to the increasing strain on Oxfordshire's transport network, and growing affordability pressures in local markets, it is increasingly important that local policymakers are able to understand the potential payoffs and implications of particular development paths and growth trajectories.

The following analysis begins with an overview of the interaction between employment, housing and commuting in Oxfordshire, and how this could change over the trajectories. It then takes a nationwide analysis of local affordability and its drivers, before scrutinizing and applying an approach to appraise the affordability implications of Oxfordshire's growth trajectories.

### 12.2 The relationship between employment, housing and commuting in Oxfordshire

Employment (i.e. jobs) and housing growth can act as relative push and pull factors for commuting by facilitating potential change in the number of employed persons working (workplace employed) and living (employed residents) in an area. Within commuting analysis, it is important to distinguish the difference between these employment identities:

- *Workplace employed*: refers to employed persons by the location of their workplace, regardless of the location of their residence (e.g. someone working in Oxford but living in Reading). This measure is closely related to the number of jobs in an area, but is typically lower because a person can have more than one job (“double-jobbing”).
- *Employed residents*: refers to employed persons by the location of their residence, regardless of the location of their work (e.g. someone living in Bicester but working in London). When reflected as the proportion of the population, this is known as the employment rate.

Generally, the number of workplace employed in an area is informed by the amount and concentration of economic activity in that area (which will correspond to the number of businesses and jobs in an area). The number of employed residents meanwhile will be shaped by the availability of housing and other labour market and demographic factors (e.g. labour market activity/inactivity rates).

At the intersection of these two variables is the concept of net commuting, which is simply:

$$\text{net commuting} = \text{workplace employed} - \text{employed residents}$$

Therefore, areas with a higher number of workplace employed relative to employed residents will experience net in-commuting (i.e. a positive net commuting value); consider for instance areas with town/city centres, business parks and other large employment sites.

Meanwhile, areas with a higher number of employed residents relative to workplace employed will experience net out-commuting (i.e. a negative net commuting value); consider for instance suburban estates, villages/dormitory settlements and other housing-led settlements.

### 12.3 Implications of the growth trajectories for commuting

As Table 12.3.1 shows, Oxfordshire currently has a net commuting inflow of 20,500 people (that is, 20,500 additional people commute into Oxfordshire for work relative to residents that commute out of Oxfordshire for work). This reflects the strength and attractiveness of Oxfordshire's labour market and its high employment density.

As noted in *Chapter 5*, this number has rapidly increased over recent years as people reporting to work in the county continues to exceed the number of employed residents. With more people commuting into the county, and commuting a further distance, this has had implications for journey times, congestion and emissions in Oxfordshire.

Between 2011 and 2018, the number of people working in Oxfordshire is estimated to have increased by 36,100, whilst the number of employed residents increased by only 25,200. With some 82.8% of working age residents in active employment (the highest employment rate in the country), Oxfordshire's already tight labour market has been reliant on workers residing outside the county to sustain its economic growth.

Resultantly, net commuting has more than doubled over this timeframe, from 9,000 to 20,500 daily inward commuters.

**Table 12.3.1: Current and potential net commuting flows in Oxfordshire**

		<i>Employed residents (linked to housing growth)</i>					
			2011	2018	2050 - SMa	2050 - BAU	2050 - Trans
<i>Workplace employed (linked to employment growth)</i>		-	336,900	361,700	449,600	483,700	527,900
	2011	345,900	<b>9,000</b>	-	-	-	-
	2018	382,200	-	<b>20,500</b>	-	-	-
	2050 - SMa	461,600	-	-	<b>12,000</b>	<b>-22,100</b>	<b>-66,300*</b>
	2050 - BAU	496,600	-	-	<b>47,000</b>	<b>12,900</b>	<b>-31,300</b>
	2050 - Trans	541,900	-	-	92,300*	<b>58,300</b>	<b>14,100</b>

Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics. Note: \* denotes unlikely combinations.

As discussed in *Chapter 9*, the calculation of housing demand across the three trajectories ('Standard Method adjusted' – 'SMa', 'business as usual' – 'BAU', and 'transformational' – 'Trans') includes an assumption that the housing provision should be sufficient that the proportion of Oxfordshire workers living outside the county returns to previous levels.

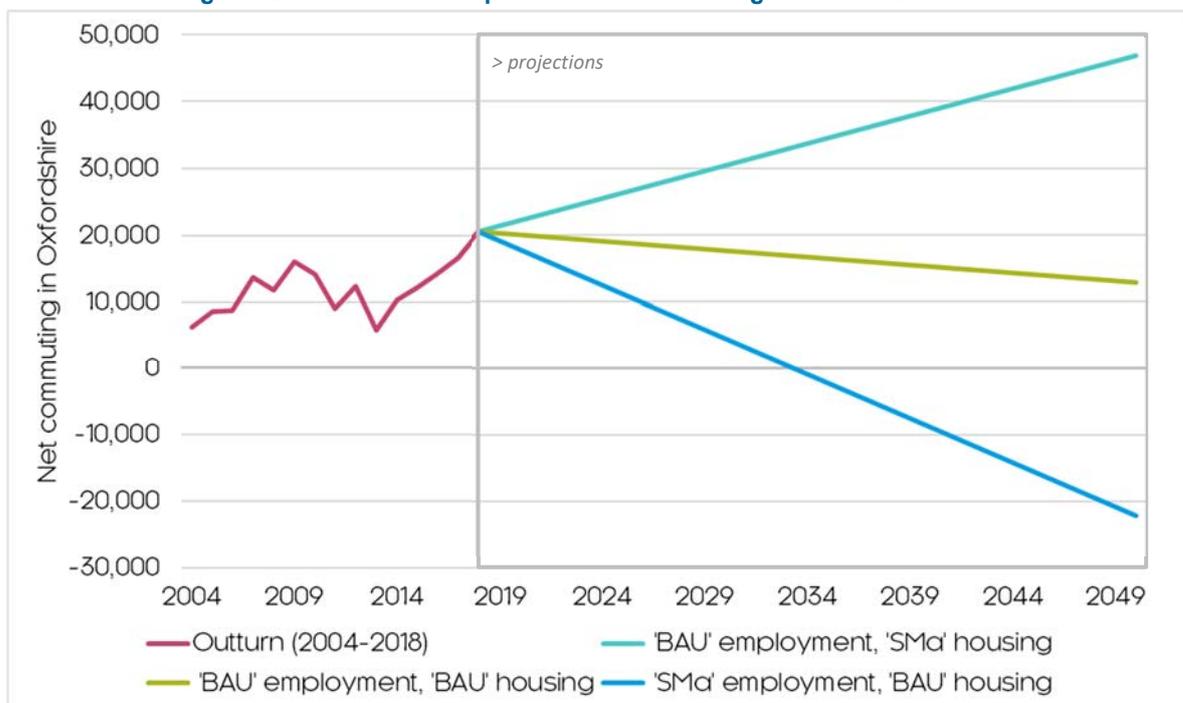
Therefore, under each of the matched projections (highlighted in bold in Table 12.3.1) there is a notable reduction in the number of net in-commuters by 2050, despite growing employment, fulfilling the realisation of this assumption. For instance, even the transformational level of employment growth, if matched with the accompanying transformational housing delivery, could see net commuting decline to approximately 14,100 by 2050.

Although employment growth is strongly linked to housing delivery – whereby housing delivery both facilitates and encourages employment growth – this relationship is not exact. The off-diagonal elements explore the net-commuting implications of a ‘mis-match’ between housing delivery and employment growth, including some less likely combinations of employment and housing.

For instance, the results show that if housing supply remains constrained whilst employment growth continues to grow at pace, then rather than shrinking, net in-commuting to the county will continue to grow, with the possibility of net inward commuting figures doubling or even tripling from current levels. These numbers are shown in red. These projections would broadly be a continuation of Oxfordshire’s recent trends.

Conversely, if growth in employment is lower than anticipated and housing supply grows strongly, then net commuting may fall further, and even turn negative – meaning Oxfordshire becomes a net exporter of workers to neighbouring regions. Historic data (the 1981 and 1991 Census) shows this was a position Oxfordshire once fulfilled. These numbers are shown in blue. In reality, it is unlikely many of the additional dwellings under such a trajectory would be built, given the comparatively low employment growth.

**Figure 12.3.1: Current and potential net commuting flows in Oxfordshire**



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Figure 12.3.1 further illustrates some of the hypothetical commuting scenarios to 2050 suggested in Table 12.3.1, given the associated trajectory-mix, and how this relates to Oxfordshire’s recent net commuting trajectory. For instance:

- A lower employment growth trajectory relative to higher housing growth (the blue line) could see a reduction in Oxfordshire's net commuting, potentially below historic (pre-1991) levels. This would mean there are more residents than jobs in the county, so residents commute out for work.
- A higher employment growth trajectory relative to lower housing growth (the turquoise line) could see an increase in Oxfordshire's net commuting, above current record-highs. This would mean there are more jobs than residents in the county, so out of county residents commute in for work.
- A similar employment and housing growth trajectory (the green line) would see a steady decline in Oxfordshire's net commuting as it returns to 'normal' levels. The number of jobs is still marginally higher than the number of residents in the county, reflecting the built-in assumptions explored in *Chapter 9*.

## 12.4 Affordability implications: summary of approach

As with net commuting levels and directions, a 'mis-match' between housing delivery and employment growth also has implications for changes to house prices and housing affordability. This is consistent with the analysis in *Chapter 4* and the exploration of affordable housing need in *Chapter 10*.

As part of its approach to appraise the affordability implications of Oxfordshire's economic trajectories and implied housing need, CE has undertaken a detailed, nationwide analysis of local house price and affordability dynamics to inform and build a robust methodology and accompanying model.

This approach has been scrutinized and developed as part of CE's national research agenda into housebuilding and affordability, utilising CE's novel long-run series which contains more than 50 years' worth of local housing market related data.

The main methodology has been built around the identification of a statistically and economically significant relationship between the ratio of employment growth to housing delivery at a functional spatial level, and the subsequent impact the interaction of these variables has on house prices and affordability. In summary, it finds that:

- housing delivery above that required to sustain the associated level of employment growth will likely result in an improvement in housing affordability.
- housing delivery below that required to sustain the associated level of employment growth will likely result in a deterioration in housing affordability.

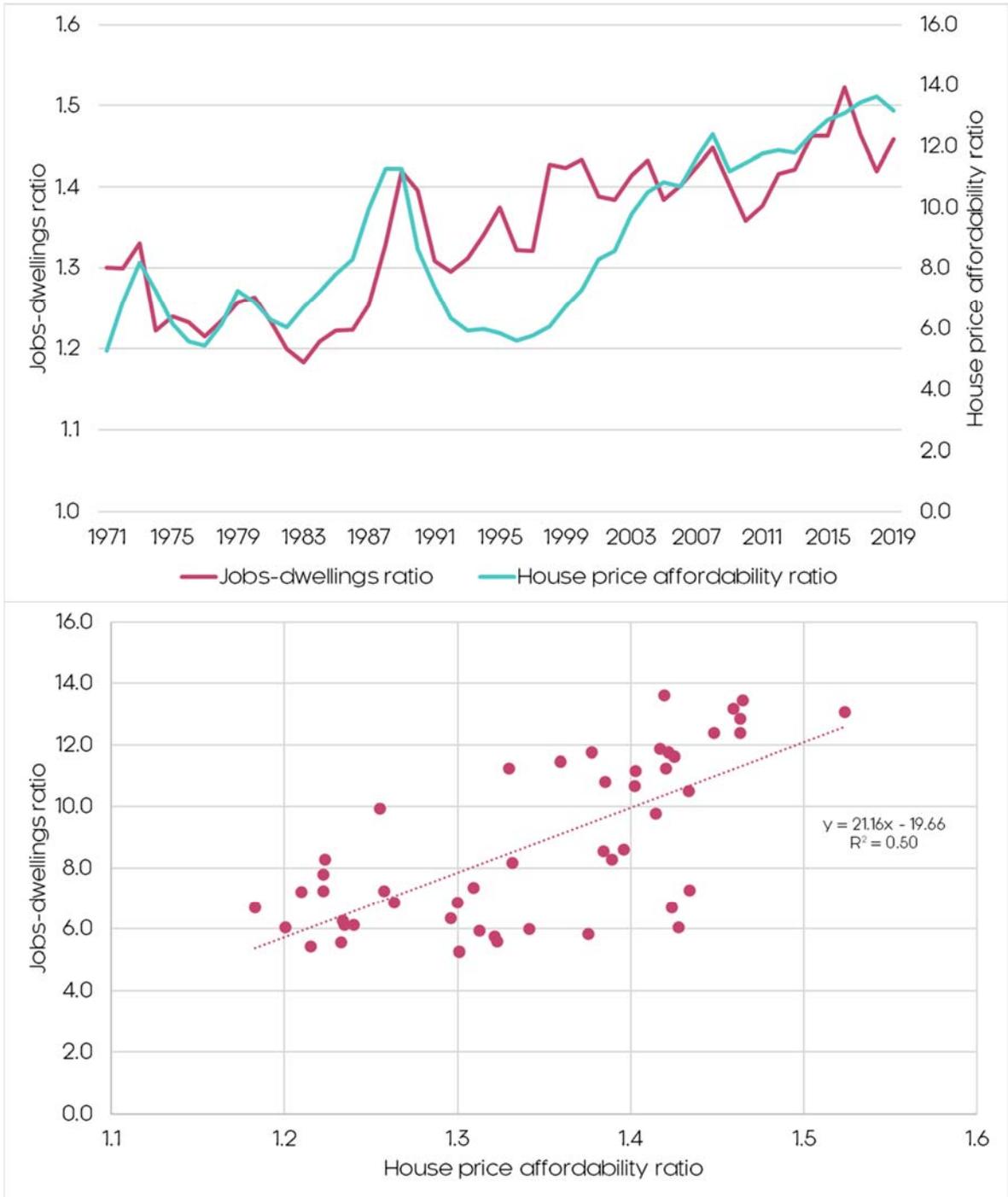
A detailed summary of the methodology and supporting analysis is provided in *Appendix D: Approach to Understanding Affordability Implications*, which should be read alongside this analysis.

The rest of this analysis scrutinizes and applies this approach for Oxfordshire to gauge the potential affordability implications of its growth trajectories and the accompanying housing need.

### 12.5 Designing a methodology for Oxfordshire

The analysis in *Appendix D: Approach to Understanding Affordability Implications* – having reviewed almost 50 years of local housing market data - identified a clear and significant causal relationship between the interaction of local employment growth and housing delivery in contributing to the affordability of local housing markets.

**Figure 12.5.1: Jobs-dwellings ratio and house price affordability ratio in Oxfordshire, 1971-2019**



Source: ONS, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics.

This chapter aims to build on this evidence and the identified relationship to articulate and refine an empirically-sound methodology that can be applied for Oxfordshire.

As Figure 12.5.1 above shows, within Oxfordshire the relationship between the interaction of employment growth and housing delivery (the jobs-dwellings ratio; that is the number of jobs relative to the number of dwellings) in contributing to affordability in the county is highly significant.

And this relationship holds overtime; as the scatter plot shows (where each plot equates to a year), between 1971 and 2019, in years when Oxfordshire had a higher job to dwellings ratio, its housing affordability ratio was resultantly higher (i.e. housing was less affordable). This relationship can be captured using the following identity:

$$Y = f(L/K)$$

Where:

- $Y$  = local housing affordability
- $L$  = local employment growth
- $K$  = local housing delivery

As the above equation simplifies, housing affordability in Oxfordshire can therefore be broadly defined and modelled as a function of the interaction between local housing growth and employment growth (i.e. its jobs-dwellings ratio). Of course, this is a conscious oversimplification – as observed in *Appendix D: Approach to Understanding Affordability Implications* previously other local and non-local factors can impact an areas affordability.

Amenity values, for instance – capturing locally-specific factors such as school quality, transport, air quality, natural landscape etc. - may not always be represented in the aforementioned variables, but are acknowledged as significant house price, and thus affordability, determinants. Likewise, exogenous factors, such as interest rates, will also determine current and future prices.

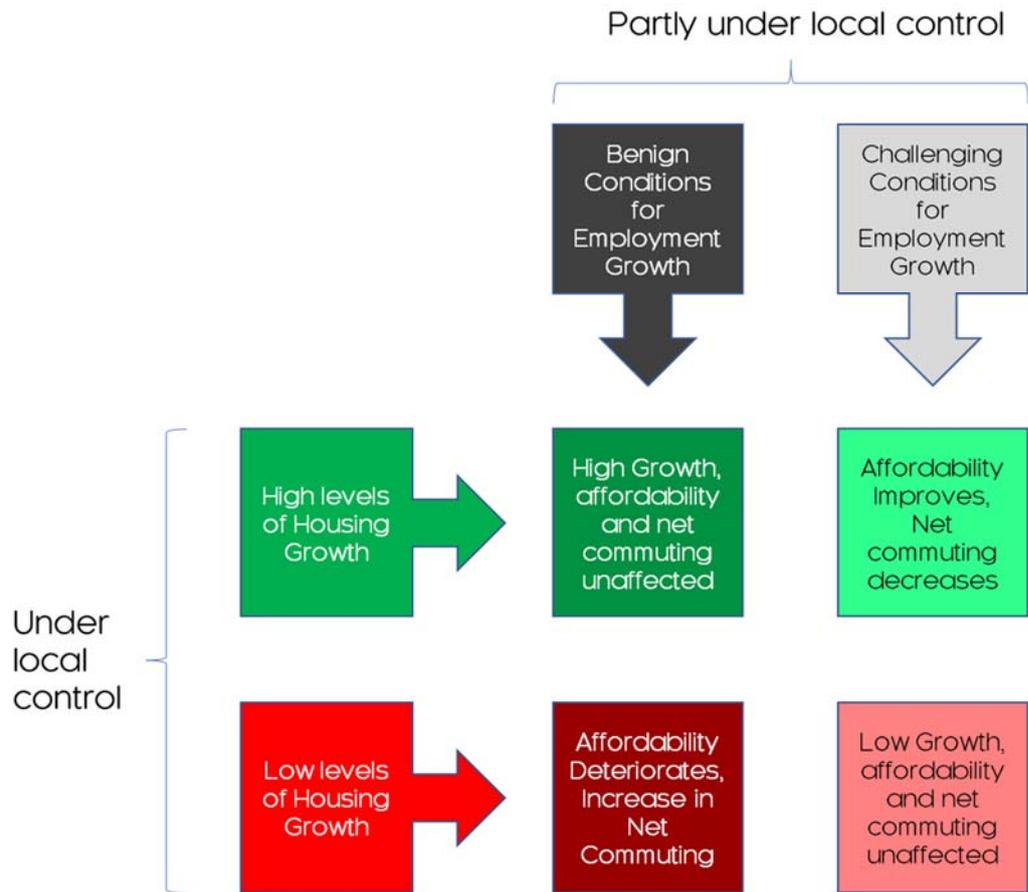
However, it is prudent to consider such factors are already captured in local prices and their share can be assumed to hold constant over a longer timeframe. Likewise employment growth, already included in the methodology, is often highly correlated with both amenity values and interest rates.

To help consider the impact of this relationship, Figure 12.5.2 presents a simplified framework for addressing affordability and housing need in local areas. It reiterates the importance of considering both the role of housing and economic development in addressing local affordability, but also the relatively limited control local policymakers may have over the economic drivers. This emphasises the importance of a sound evidence and understanding of local economic conditions to inform effective housing delivery.

It also notes the relationship between local affordability and net commuting, which implicitly arises through the interaction of the jobs-dwellings ratio; for instance, areas with a higher jobs-dwelling ratio (and thus lower affordability) typically experience high net commuting, as an increasing number of workers have to live further from their place of work. Additional research on this subject has also highlighted the relationship between house prices and the quality and

cost of (particularly public) transport infrastructure; for some high performing areas, house prices have continued to rise despite transport costs not falling.<sup>64</sup>

Figure 12.5.2: Illustrative housing delivery and affordability framework



Source: Cambridge Econometrics.

## 12.6 Implications of the growth trajectories for affordability

Having reviewed the evidence and prepared a concise and empirically-sound methodology for appraising local affordability, this chapter aims to apply this approach to Oxfordshire’s economic trajectories.

Table 12.6.1: Current and potential jobs-dwelling ratios in Oxfordshire

	Employment (columns)	2019 - baseline	2050 -SMA	2050 -BAU	2050 -Trans
Dwellings (rows)	-	429,100	495,600	532,500	581,300
2019 - baseline	295,500	<b>1.45</b>	-	-	-
2050 - SMA	403,600	-	<b>1.23</b>	1.32	1.44*
2050 - BAU	425,400	-	<b>1.16</b>	<b>1.25</b>	1.37
2050 -Trans	454,800	-	1.09*	<b>1.17</b>	<b>1.28</b>

Source: ONS, MHCLG, Icen Projects, Justin Gardner Consulting, Cambridge Econometrics. Note: \* denotes unlikely combination.

Table 12.6.1 provides a recap of the potential mix of employment and dwelling trajectories for Oxfordshire to 2050, and the resulting implications for jobs-

<sup>64</sup> See research by Miles (2018) for instance

dwelling ratios. Notably, across the three matched trajectories for employment and housing growth ('Standard Method adjusted' – 'SMa', 'business as usual' – 'BAU', and 'transformational' – 'Trans'), there is expected to be a moderate decline in Oxfordshire's jobs-dwelling ratio.

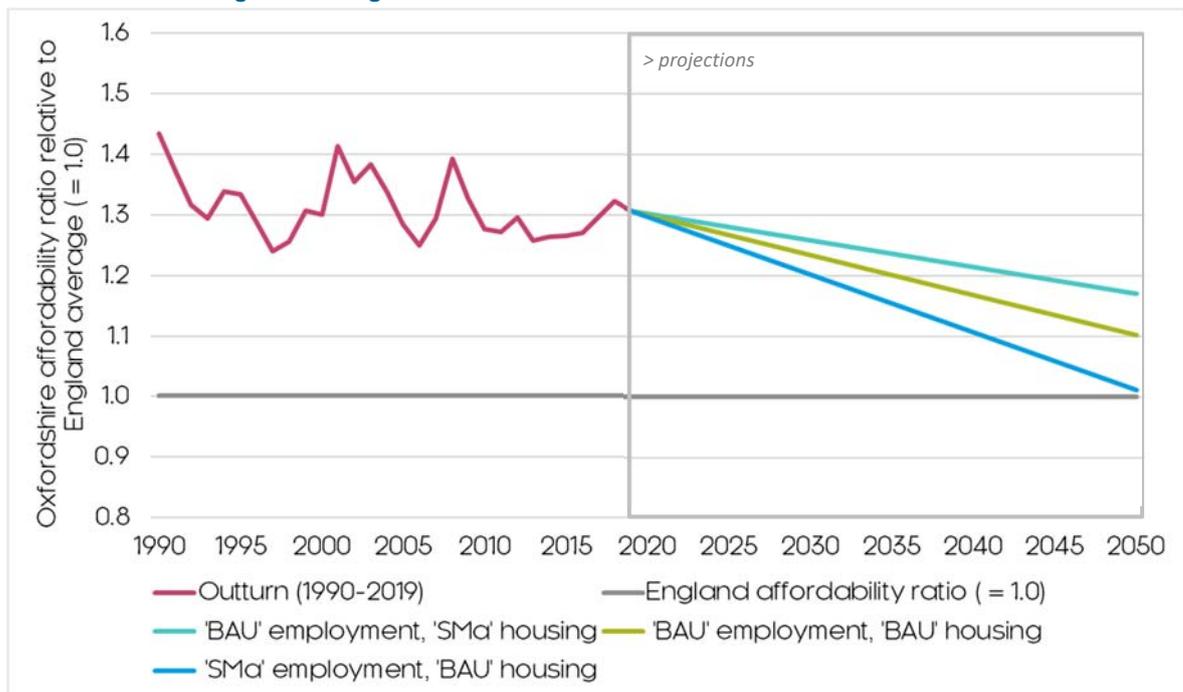
In these 'matched' outcomes (highlighted in bold), Oxfordshire's jobs-dwelling ratio could decline from its current near-record high of 1.45 to a more sustainable value of around 1.23 -1.28 by 2050 – a level last consistently maintained in the 1970's and 1980's. This is a result of the deliberate decisions taken in *Chapter 9* to provide sufficient housing delivery to accompany each employment growth trajectory to reduce the necessity of wide-scale net in-commuting into the county.

Of course, this varies given the potential outcome-mix, but in all but one of the combinations is Oxfordshire expected to see a significant decline in its jobs-dwellings ratio relative to current totals. The off-diagonal elements explore the implications of a 'mis-match' between housing delivery and employment growth, including some less likely combinations of employment and housing.

For instance, the results show that if housing supply remains constrained whilst employment growth continues to grow at pace, then the jobs-dwellings ratio will decrease (shown in red, i.e. there will be fewer jobs relative to housing). Conversely, if growth in employment is lower than anticipated and housing supply grows strongly, then the jobs-dwellings ratio will increase (shown in blue i.e. there will be more jobs relative to housing).

Taking this analysis, Figure 12.6.1 and Table 12.6.2 present estimates of Oxfordshire's house price affordability ratio (relative to the England average<sup>65</sup>) to 2050 given the potential mix of employment and dwelling trajectories for the

**Figure 12.6.1: Current and potential house price affordability in Oxfordshire, relative to the England average**



<sup>65</sup> Where the England average = 1.0. Currently (2019), affordability in Oxfordshire relative to the England average is 1.31; that is, Oxfordshire's affordability ratio (13.2) is .31x higher than the England average (10.1).

**Table 12.6.2: Current and potential house price affordability in Oxfordshire, relative to the England average**

	<i>Employment (columns)</i>	2019 - baseline	2050 -SMa	2050 -BAU	2050 -Trans
<i>Dwellings (rows)</i>	-	429,100	495,600	532,500	581,300
2019 - baseline	295,500	<b>1.31</b>	-	-	-
2050 - SMa	403,600	-	<b>1.08</b>	1.17	1.29*
2050 - BAU	425,400	-	<b>1.01</b>	<b>1.10</b>	1.22
2050 -Trans	454,800	-	0.93*	<b>1.02</b>	<b>1.13</b>

Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics. Note: \* denotes unlikely combination.

county. These estimates of affordability have been calculated using the methodology and approach outlined in *12.5 Designing a methodology for Oxfordshire*.

Utilizing this approach, it is expected that across the three matched trajectories for employment and housing growth ('Standard Method adjusted' – 'SMa', 'business as usual' – 'BAU', and 'transformational' – 'Trans') Oxfordshire could become notably more affordable relative to the national average.

Currently, Oxfordshire's house price affordability ratio is 1.3x the national average, yet under each of the 'matched' outcomes (highlighted in bold) this is expected to decline to an average of approximately 1.1x by 2050. For instance, even the transformational level of employment growth, if matched with the accompanying transformational housing delivery, could see Oxfordshire's relative affordability ratio decline to approximately 1.13x by 2050.

Though this means housing in Oxfordshire will remain less affordable than the national average (though the last time housing affordability was less than 1.2x the national average in Oxfordshire was the early 1970's) there is the potential for this gap to close given the right policy combination. Under a hypothetical mix of high ('transformational') housing growth and comparatively lower ('business as usual') employment growth, affordability could almost match the national average in Oxfordshire.

Conversely, current affordability pressures could be maintained, but this is only evident under one policy combination; a hypothetical mix of high ('transformational') employment growth and comparatively lower ('Standard Method adjusted') housing growth. Positively, none of the policy-combinations point towards a further deterioration in affordability in Oxfordshire. To summarise, the results show that:

- A lower employment growth trajectory relative to higher housing growth (the blue line in Figure 12.6.1) would see a significant reduction in Oxfordshire's affordability ratio relative to the England average. This could result in housing in Oxfordshire being as affordable as elsewhere in the country.
- A higher employment growth trajectory relative to lower housing growth (the turquoise line) would see a steadier reduction in Oxfordshire's affordability ratio relative to the England average. Housing would still be around 1.2x less affordable in Oxfordshire than elsewhere in the country though.

- A similar employment and housing growth trajectory (the green line) would still see a notable reduction in Oxfordshire's affordability ratio relative to the England average. This could result in housing in Oxfordshire being marginally less affordable than elsewhere in the country.

It should be emphasised that these indicative affordability distributions are intended to be high-level only and are effectively 'policy neutral' because the analysis does not take into account specific constraints, policy interventions or development sites related to affordable development in Oxfordshire.

## 12.7 Conclusions

As observed in previous chapters, over the past decade, relative to the supply of housing, employment growth has accelerated in Oxfordshire. This has had implications for both net commuting and housing affordability. Analysis presented in this chapter has identified a statistically significant relationship between the balance of housing and employment growth in local areas, and the implications for commuting levels and affordability.

The analysis shows housing delivery above that required to sustain the associated level of employment growth will likely result in a reduction of net commuting and an improvement in housing affordability within Oxfordshire. Yet housing delivery below that required to sustain the associated level of employment growth will likely result in an increase in net commuting and a deterioration in housing affordability.

The intention of the three economic and housing trajectories is to ensure the delivery of employment and housing growth in Oxfordshire will become more aligned. The trajectories address this by incorporating a lowering of the ratio between the number of jobs relative to the number of dwellings in Oxfordshire, demonstrating how a balance of future housing and economic growth can stabilise and lower affordability and commuting pressures.

Such outcomes are increasingly desirable given the high welfare and inequality costs of unaffordable housing, and the growing strain on Oxfordshire's transport network from increased commuting (and associated externalities, notably, environmental and emissions effects, particularly in light of the desire to attain net zero).

# Part C: Conclusions and Appendices

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## 13 Conclusions

This conclusions chapter seeks to highlight and draw out the key findings and observations presented in the Phase 1 Report, particularly those regarding housing need, economic growth and employment land requirements, alongside accompanying high-level commuting and affordability implications.

### Oxfordshire today

Oxfordshire, like many parts of the greater South East, is characterised by high housing costs and particular affordability pressures. Median house prices have risen from £100,000 to £350,000 in the county over the last 20 years. Whilst current low interest rates mean that mortgage finance is currently relatively cheap, lenders undertake stress testing and the absolute cost of homes to buy means that there are households that need significant savings to be able to buy a home.

Across Oxfordshire the median cost of a home was 10.4 times income in 2019, and Oxford has been ranked as one of the UK's least affordable cities. Influenced by the high cost of homes to buy and rent, there is a very significant need for affordable housing which has been estimated here as being almost 3,200 affordable homes per year across Oxfordshire to 2030.

It is clear that affordability issues are having a real impact not just on young people in Oxfordshire, but also its business community. If left unaddressed this could hold back future economic growth potential. Poor housing affordability can provide a deterrent to young professionals hoping to live and work in Oxfordshire, which affects the ability of businesses to recruit staff to fill positions, including in high-tech and innovative business sectors.

These issues are partly a function of Oxfordshire's economic success. Oxfordshire has been one of the country's fastest growing economies in recent years, and sustained jobs growth of around 6,000 per year over the 2010-18 period. It has notable strengths in research-intensive activities including media and technology, science and healthcare, and public services. Whilst employment growth has been strong, productivity improvements have however stalled in recent years. The ability of companies to recruit and retain skilled staff is one component of this.

The evidence suggests that whilst rates of housing delivery have been rising, jobs growth over the 2010-18 period outpaced growth in housing and labour supply in Oxfordshire. Between 2011-18 the working-age population age 16-64 increased by just 1% (7,800 persons). A supply-demand imbalance for housing has resulted, contributing to both house price growth and growth in net in-commuting into Oxfordshire.

### The minimum local housing need

Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) sets out a "*Standard Method*" for calculating the minimum local housing need taking projected household growth and then applying an upward adjustment to improve affordability based on the median house price-to-income ratio.

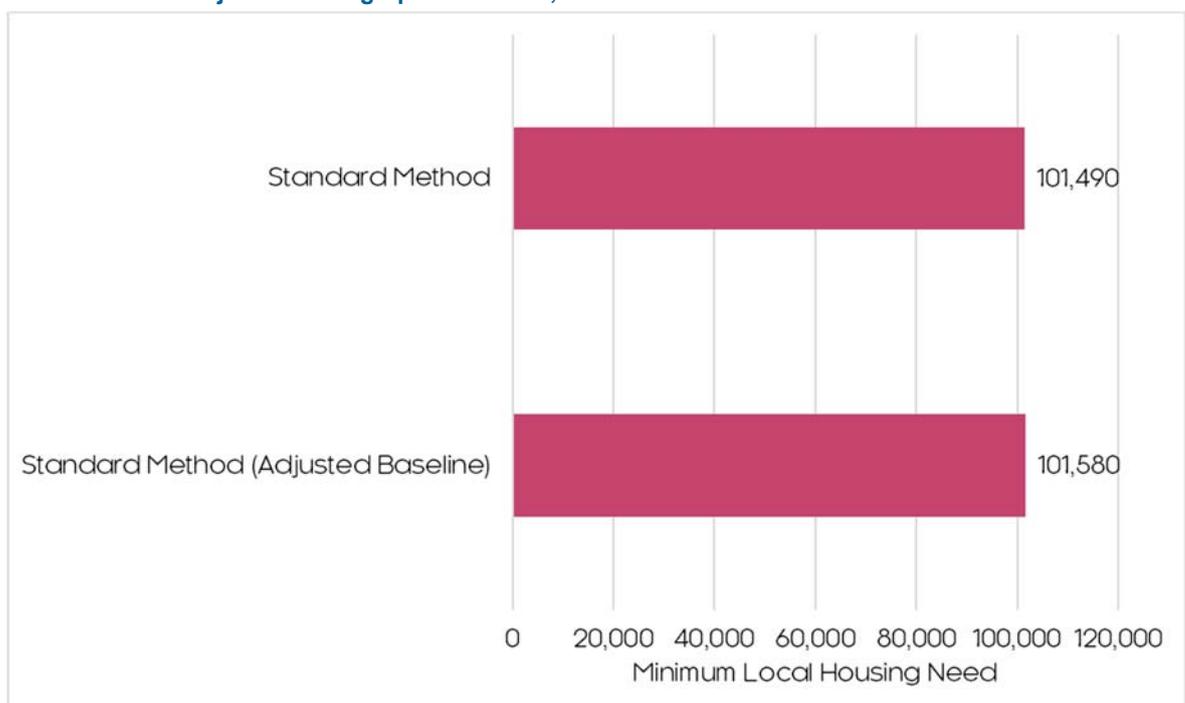
The Standard Method calculation, following the Planning Practice Guidance at the time of preparation of this report, indicated a minimum local housing need for Oxfordshire of 3,383 dwellings per annum which would equate to a

baseline level of provision of 101,490 homes over the 2020-50 plan period. This is based on 2014-based Household Projections.

The review of demographic data undertaken as part of this report indicates that it is likely that Oxford's population has been under-estimated. To address these issues, revised demographic projections have been developed to provide a revised baseline assessment of the demographic need for housing informed by past population trends.

With appropriate assumptions on household formation, the revised demographic projections presented in the report result in a marginally higher need for 3,386 dwellings per annum equivalent to 101,580 homes over the plan period (as shown in Figure 12.7.1 below).

**Figure 12.7.1: Standard Method minimum local housing need for Oxfordshire, and with an adjusted demographic baseline, 2020-50**



Source: Justin Gardner Consulting, Icen Projects.

This level of housing provision would support population growth of 25.4% across Oxfordshire over the 30-year plan period (equivalent to an additional 183,000 persons).

The Standard Method local housing need changes over time, and the latest data for 2021 (as explored in *Appendix E: Standard Method Appendix*) shows a slightly lower need for 3,358 dwellings per annum (using the 2014-based Household Projections) and 3,291 dwellings per annum (using the adjusted projections). The latter would equate to a need for 98,730 homes over the period to 2050.

### Oxfordshire's economic trajectories

Government policy sets out that the conditions where other growth levels should be considered, and which are relevant to the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan. Extensive evidence considered in this report in particular demonstrates an important inter-relationship between economic performance and growth potential and housing need.

Resultantly, the report has modelled three alternative economic trajectories to 2050 to consider potential housing and employment land need:

- **Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory:** backwards calculated from the Standard Method calculation of housing need, with an adjustment for the revised demographic baseline.
- **Business as usual trajectory:** this trajectory represents a continuation of Oxfordshire's recent (pre-Covid) economic performance, taking particular account of the robust growth delivered during the recovery from the 2008-09 recession.
- **Transformational trajectory:** this trajectory is broadly the equivalent of the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy's (LIS) aspirational "*go for growth*" scenario, but updated and adjusted to 2020.

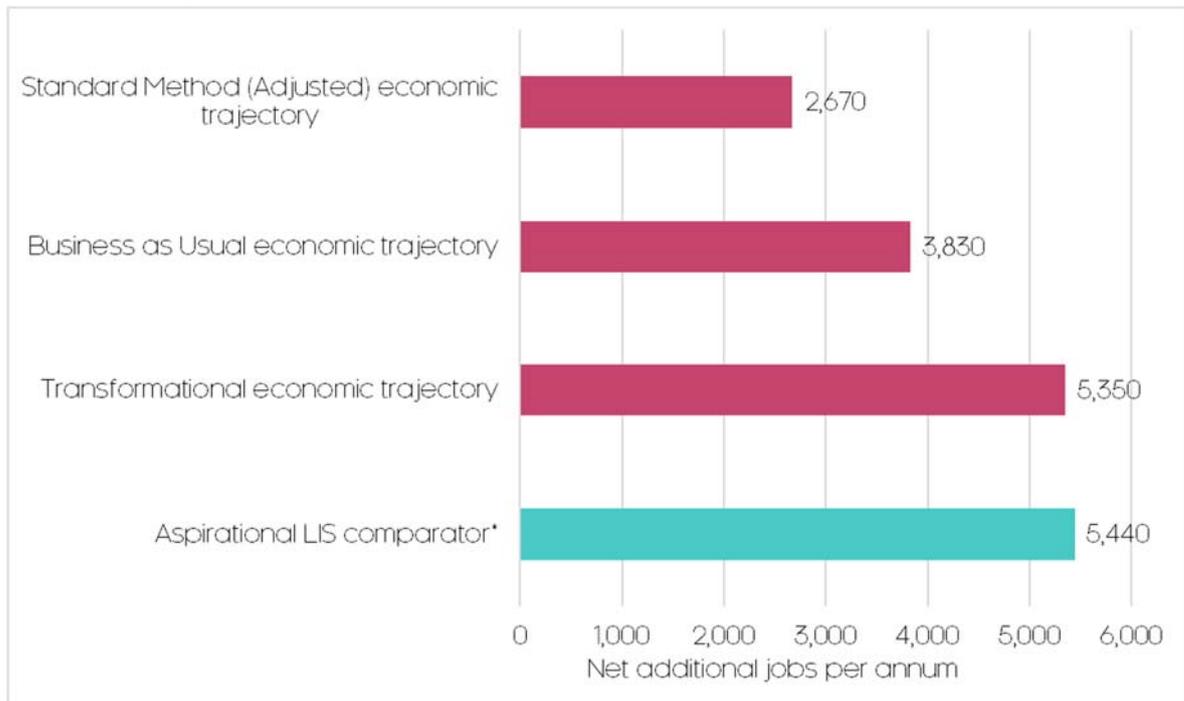
All of the trajectories have a baseline of 2018, the latest available year of data at the time of writing.

From this baseline, the Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory shows 85,400 additional jobs in Oxfordshire by 2050, modelling the level of economic activity that could be expected to be supported by delivery of housing in line with the Standard Method calculations (using the adjusted baseline demographic assumptions).

The business as usual projection models a continuation of Oxfordshire's recent (pre-Covid) robust growth. This shows 122,500 additional jobs in Oxfordshire over the period to 2050. At this pace of growth, Oxfordshire is expected to have continued along its recent growth trajectory, and achieved some of its LIS-related ambitions.

The highest scenario, the transformational trajectory, models the equivalent of delivering many of the aspirations set out in the Oxfordshire LIS, and results in 171,200 additional jobs in Oxfordshire over the period to 2050. The Oxfordshire LIS sets out an ambitious vision for Oxfordshire to be one of the top three global innovation systems by 2040.

The results of the three economic trajectories, shown in terms of employment, are presented in Table 12.7.1 and Figure 12.7.2 below (the latter of which includes the Oxfordshire LIS' jobs aspiration as a comparator, shaded in turquoise). They present alternative assumptions of how Oxfordshire's economy might perform.

**Figure 12.7.2: Employment (jobs) trajectories for Oxfordshire, 2018-50**

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, PwC. Note: \* LIS comparator corresponds to 2017-40 only.

**Table 12.7.1: Employment (jobs) trajectories for Oxfordshire**

	Employment (jobs) at 2018 (baseline)	2030	2040	2050	Net additional employment (jobs), 2018-50	Net additional employment (jobs) p.a., 2018-50
Standard Method (adjusted) economic trajectory	410,066	434,538	464,179	495,555	85,489	<b>2,672</b>
Business as usual economic trajectory	410,066	451,742	490,234	532,517	122,451	<b>3,827</b>
Transformational economic trajectory	410,066	466,804	520,636	581,254	171,188	<b>5,350</b>

Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Despite the application of a robust methodology and evidence base, there are clearly uncertainties associated with predicting the future economic performance of a local area, which heightens as the forecasts look further into the future.

However, the growth trajectories considered are reasonable parameters for growth when set against Oxfordshire's historic economic performance and employment growth trends over previous economic cycles, with Oxfordshire displaying particularly robust growth over the most recent economic cycle.

The report has then proceeded to model what level of housing provision might be needed to accommodate these levels of growth, taking into account factors such as the changes in the age structure of the population and the proportion of people of different ages in work.

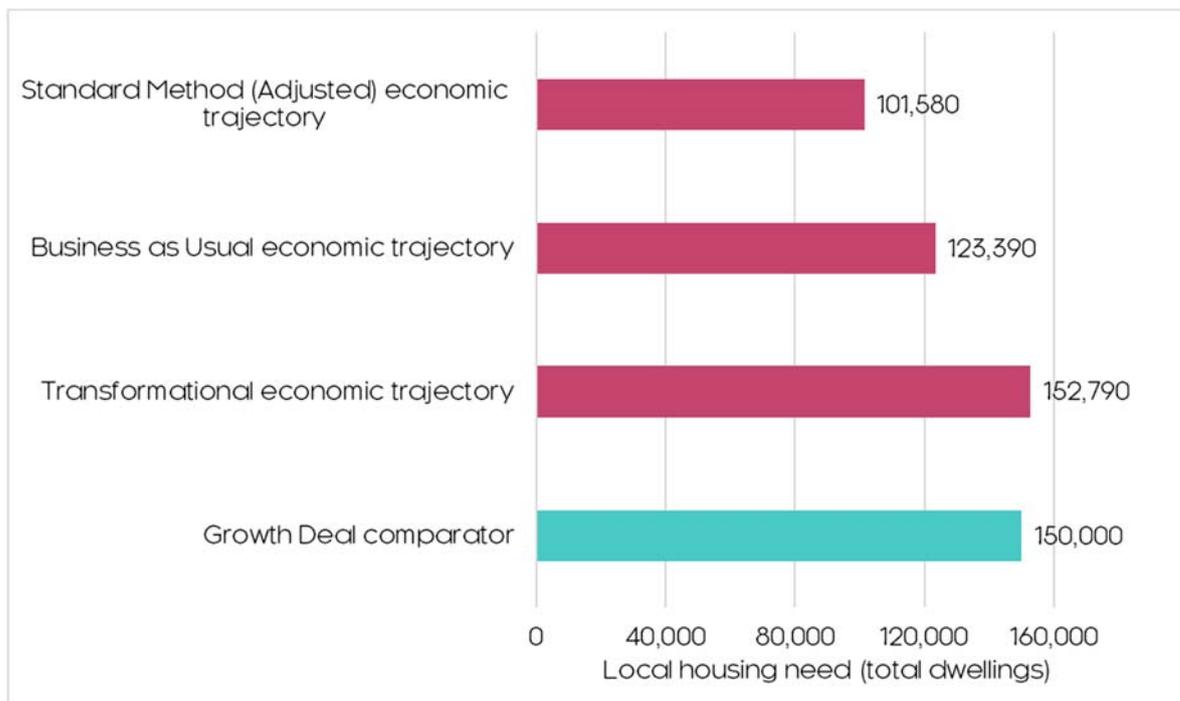
The results of the housing need accompanying the economic trajectories are shown in Table 12.7.2 and Figure 12.7.3 below (the latter of which includes

the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal housing aspiration as a comparator, shaded in turquoise. The Deal provides funding for affordable housing and infrastructure improvements to support the ambition of building 100,000 homes between 2011-31 to address the county's severe housing shortage and support economic growth).

The analysis shows that to meet the Standard Method (adjusted) level of need over 2020-50, Oxfordshire would require around 3,400 dwellings each year; with the business as usual level of growth this increases to 4,100 dwellings per annum, with a transformational figure approaching 5,100 dwellings per annum, dependent on the realisation of LIS-related ambitions.

These figures can be compared with the Standard Method housing need (unadjusted, across the whole of Oxfordshire) of 3,400 dwellings per annum over the period 2020-50.

**Figure 12.7.3: Projected housing need in Oxfordshire from the economic trajectories, 2020-50**



Source: Justin Gardner Consulting, Icen Projects. Note: the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal however only runs to 2031 however, and has been extrapolated using per annum rates of delivery.

**Table 12.7.2: Projected housing need in Oxfordshire from the economic trajectories, 2020-50**

	Households at 2020	Households at 2050	Change in households, 2020-50	Change in households p.a., 2020-50	Local housing need (dwellings) p.a., 2020-50
Standard Method (adjusted) economic trajectory	288,999	387,591	98,592	3,286	<b>3,386</b>
Business as usual economic trajectory	288,999	408,806	119,807	3,994	<b>4,113</b>
Transformational economic trajectory	288,999	437,328	148,329	4,944	<b>5,093</b>

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting, Icen Projects.

For the purposes of the Oxfordshire Plan, planning for higher levels of housing provision than the Standard Method provides greater potential both to support economic growth and deliver affordable housing; and a greater likelihood of improving the affordability of market housing over the plan period to 2050.

This report however does not however recommend one trajectory over another but provides a set of parameters for growth. In determining the appropriate strategy and how much development to plan for, the evidence in the assessment needs to be brought together with broader factors including the capacity to accommodate growth and environmental consequences of different levels of growth.

## Employment land provision

There is a healthy market for commercial property in Oxfordshire. Office take-up and availability is generally concentrated in Oxford and southwards along the 'Knowledge Spine', including Milton Park and Harwell Campus. Take-up and availability of industrial floorspace is more spread out across Oxfordshire, with noticeable amounts of speculative developments to the northeast of the county where there is good access to the M40.

It is evident that there are short-term supply constraints in the office market, particularly in the Oxford area and for Grade A space. Many of the area's science and business parks are at capacity. The evidence also points to a healthy market for industrial space.

The report has modelled the implications of the jobs growth arising in each of the employment projections for employment land and floorspace. This has been compared to projections of past employment floorspace completions based on trends over the 2011-18 period.

For the purposes of considering the amount of land to allocate for employment uses, it is sensible to group together Office and Research and Development uses. These types of activities typically take place on business and science parks within Oxfordshire and can also take place in central parts of towns and cities including town and city centres.

Equally it is sensible to group together more general industrial land which can cater for both light and heavy industrial uses (Classes EG(iii) and B2) as well as storage and distribution (Use Class B8) which are less likely to take place in central areas.

Table 12.7.1 below brings together the results of the labour demand modelling and the projections of gross floorspace completions on this basis. This includes an allowance for replacement of losses and some supply-side flexibility.

**Table 12.7.3: Gross additional employment land needs (total hectares, ha) in Oxfordshire, 2020-50**

	Office, R&D and Education need (ha), 2020-50	Industrial, Warehousing & Other need (ha), 2020-50	Total employment land (ha) needed, 2020-50
Standard Method (adjusted) economic trajectory	149	296	<b>445</b>
Business as usual economic trajectory	185	369	<b>555</b>

Transformational economic trajectory	233	444	<b>677</b>
Completions projection	162	645	<b>807</b>

Source: Icenii Projects.

For office, R&D and education uses the report concludes labour demand trajectories provide an appropriate basis for considering the level of employment land provision which should be made within the Oxfordshire Plan. This demonstrates a need for provision of between 149-233 ha of land for these uses to 2050 (depending on the growth trajectory taken forwards).

However, for the broad industrial use category, there is a weaker relationship between jobs and floorspace or land requirements given productivity improvements and demand arising for replacement of older dated stock.

The report therefore considers that greater weight should therefore be afforded to the completions projection scenario for industrial land (which is based on past gross development trends) which suggests a need for almost 650 ha of industrial land for the 30 year plan period.

Overall, the evidence suggests that the scale of employment land needed across Oxfordshire could be up to 807 ha. The precise scale will be influenced by decisions on what growth scenario to take forward in the Plan.

### Commuting and affordability implications

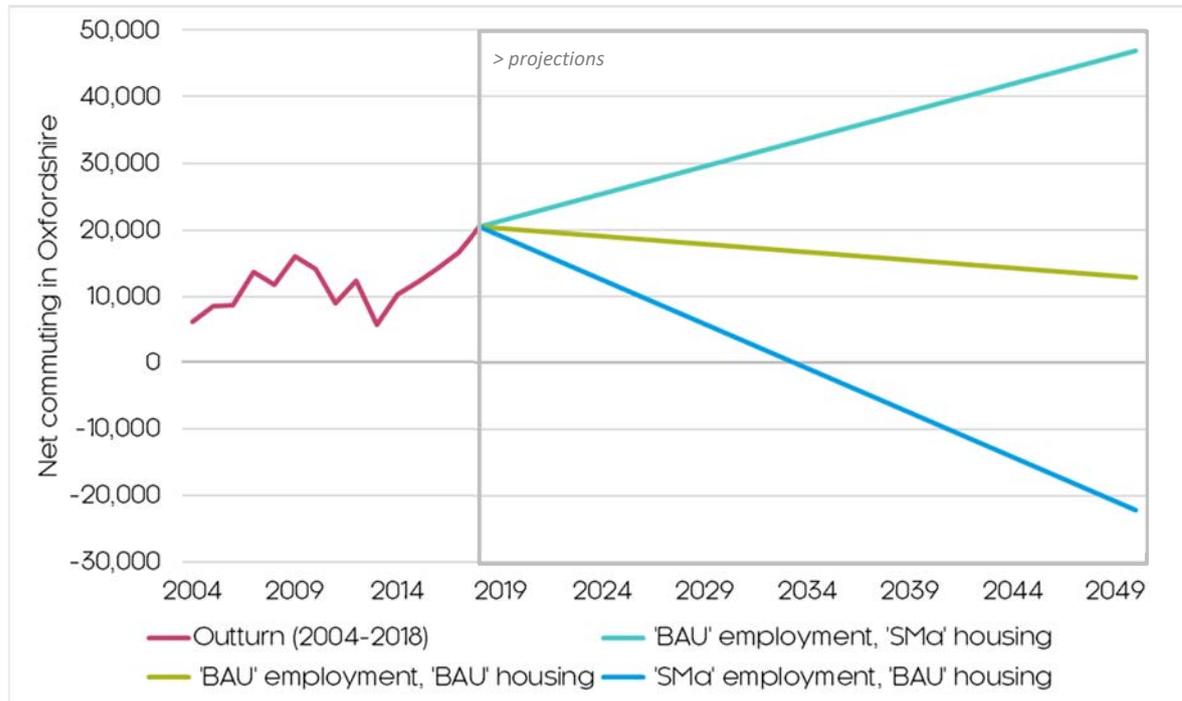
Over the past decade, relative to the supply of housing, employment growth has accelerated in Oxfordshire. This has had implications for both net commuting and housing affordability, which have both increased significantly in the county over this time. Analysis presented in this report has identified a statistically significant relationship between the balance of housing and employment growth in local areas, and the implications for commuting levels and affordability.

The analysis shows housing delivery above that required to sustain the associated level of employment growth will likely result in a reduction of net commuting and an improvement in housing affordability within Oxfordshire. Yet housing delivery below that required to sustain the associated level of employment growth will likely result in an increase in net commuting and a deterioration in housing affordability.

The intention of the three economic and housing trajectories is to ensure the delivery of employment and housing growth in Oxfordshire will become more aligned. The trajectories address this by incorporating a lowering of the ratio between the number of jobs relative to the number of dwellings in Oxfordshire, demonstrating how a balance of future housing and economic growth can stabilise and lower affordability and commuting pressures.

Such outcomes are increasingly desirable given the high welfare and inequality costs of unaffordable housing, and the growing strain on Oxfordshire's transport network from increased commuting (and associated externalities, notably, environmental and emissions effects, particularly in light of the desire to attain net zero).

Figure 12.7.4: Current and potential net commuting flows in Oxfordshire

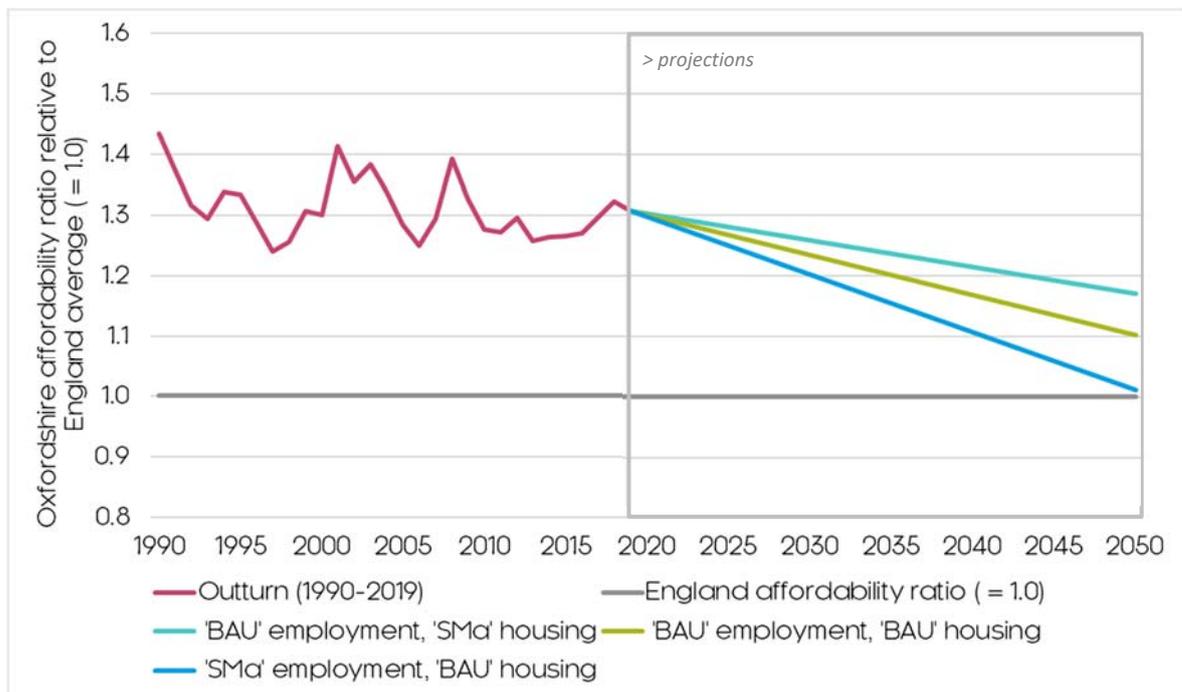


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Figure 12.7.4 above demonstrates how the balance of future housing and economic growth can impact upon net commuting in Oxfordshire:

- A lower employment growth trajectory relative to higher housing growth (the blue line) could see a reduction in Oxfordshire's net commuting, potentially below historic (pre-1991) levels. This would mean there are more residents than jobs in the county, so residents commute out for work.
- A higher employment growth trajectory relative to lower housing growth (the turquoise line) could see an increase in Oxfordshire's net commuting, above current record-highs. This would mean there are more jobs than residents in the county, so out of county residents commute in for work.
- A similar employment and housing growth trajectory (the green line) would see a steady decline in Oxfordshire's net commuting as it returns to 'normal' levels. The number of jobs is still marginally higher than the number of residents in the county, reflecting Oxfordshire's historically higher commuting ratio.

**Figure 12.7.5: Current and potential house price affordability in Oxfordshire, relative to the England average**



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics. Note: a ratio of 1.0 would equate to an affordability ratio exactly the same as the England average.

Figure 12.7.5 above demonstrates how the balance of future housing and economic growth can impact upon affordability (relative to the England average) in Oxfordshire:

- A lower employment growth trajectory relative to higher housing growth (the blue line) would see a significant reduction in Oxfordshire's affordability ratio relative to the England average. This could result in housing in Oxfordshire being as affordable as elsewhere in the country.
- A higher employment growth trajectory relative to lower housing growth (the turquoise line) would see a steadier reduction in Oxfordshire's affordability ratio relative to the England average. Housing would still be around 1.2x less affordable in Oxfordshire than elsewhere in the country though.
- A similar employment and housing growth trajectory (the green line) would still see a notable reduction in Oxfordshire's affordability ratio relative to the England average. This could result in housing in Oxfordshire being marginally less affordable than elsewhere in the country.

### Links to other OGNA work

Following on from the analysis and evidence presented in this report, the **Phase 2 Report** proceeds with the next stage of the OGNA. The second phase of the OGNA broadly comprises three stages of work:

- The first involves identifying and assessing the Oxfordshire Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA), including the definition of functionally meaningful sub-areas. This will allow for more precise, in-depth

exploration and illustration of employment and housing distributions to accompany the *Phase 1 Report* trajectories.

- The second stage seeks to provide this analysis, distributing the Oxfordshire-wide employment projections (derived and presented here in the *Phase 1 Report*) by functional sub-area to 2050. For housing, five theoretical spatial scenarios, informed by the functional sub-areas, have also been developed and tested to distribute the housing need presented here in the *Phase 1 Report*.
- Finally, the third stage, bringing together the evidence and analysis of the previous stages, considers the implications for commuting and transport use (including differences in modal share and private vehicle trips) of the employment and housing distribution scenarios.

The period of the construction of this report has also coincided with the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020 and 2021. It is clear that the pandemic and some of its long-lasting effects have the potential to impact upon the findings of this report, and as such additional consideration has been given to this question. This analysis can be found in the **Covid-19 Impacts Addendum** that accompanies this report.

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## Appendix A: Components of Population Change by Local Authority

The tables below provide data on international migration trends for individual local authorities, as referenced in *Chapter 3 Demographic Trends*.

Of note is the observation that the four authorities excluding the City tend to see a level of net domestic in-migration, whereas the City constantly sees notable levels of net out-migration.

However, the City does see substantial international in-migration when compared with any of the other locations. This pattern is characteristic of cities and larger urban areas with a younger population structure.

**Table 12.7.1: Components of population change (2001-18) – Cherwell**

Year	Natural change	Net internal migration	Net international migration	Other changes	Other (un-attributable)	Total change
2001/2	569	-110	427	-40	-248	<b>598</b>
2002/3	642	152	447	390	-240	<b>1,391</b>
2003/4	612	279	264	69	-254	<b>970</b>
2004/5	805	-58	443	-16	-245	<b>929</b>
2005/6	875	-83	762	-17	-254	<b>1,283</b>
2006/7	871	-422	771	-32	-227	<b>961</b>
2007/8	951	-97	665	27	-226	<b>1,320</b>
2008/9	767	-354	526	116	-194	<b>861</b>
2009/10	804	-68	502	-8	-194	<b>1,036</b>
2010/11	950	-316	430	-17	-132	<b>915</b>
2011/12	829	-263	122	-4	0	<b>684</b>
2012/13	702	-145	202	127	0	<b>886</b>
2013/14	511	-5	414	-222	0	<b>698</b>
2014/15	583	-245	427	269	0	<b>1,034</b>
2015/16	690	-292	563	120	0	<b>1,081</b>
2016/17	512	284	118	53	0	<b>967</b>
2017/18	560	766	273	-40	0	<b>1,559</b>

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

**Table 12.7.2: Components of population change (2001-18) – Oxford**

Year	Natural change	Net internal migration	Net international migration	Other changes	Other (un-attributable)	Total change
2001/2	436	-1,966	2,313	-12	345	<b>1,116</b>
2002/3	568	-1,218	3,557	52	333	<b>3,292</b>
2003/4	578	-1,653	2,468	-51	334	<b>1,676</b>
2004/5	750	-1,340	4,038	-10	352	<b>3,790</b>
2005/6	855	-1,951	-128	-7	361	<b>-870</b>
2006/7	851	-1,991	455	-10	370	<b>-325</b>
2007/8	1,051	-1,830	662	-7	369	<b>245</b>
2008/9	1,116	-1,650	1,216	7	356	<b>1,045</b>
2009/10	1,069	-1,547	2,590	-22	339	<b>2,429</b>
2010/11	1,195	-1,316	2,102	17	340	<b>2,338</b>
2011/12	1,136	-1,123	1,219	0	0	<b>1,232</b>
2012/13	963	-1,544	1,499	11	0	<b>929</b>
2013/14	1,067	-1,570	2,750	11	0	<b>2,258</b>
2014/15	897	-3,075	2,222	8	0	<b>52</b>
2015/16	971	-2,765	2,364	6	0	<b>576</b>
2016/17	821	-2,827	1,335	-39	0	<b>-710</b>
2017/18	681	-3,082	2,146	0	0	<b>-255</b>

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

**Table 12.7.3: Components of population change (2001-18) – South Oxfordshire**

Year	Natural change	Net internal migration	Net international migration	Other changes	Other (un-attributable)	Total change
2001/2	387	-205	106	-27	186	<b>447</b>
2002/3	415	-410	-13	-10	184	<b>166</b>
2003/4	457	-186	-2	-17	187	<b>439</b>
2004/5	398	-240	365	10	158	<b>691</b>
2005/6	497	-530	499	-1	161	<b>626</b>
2006/7	493	-299	563	29	164	<b>950</b>
2007/8	605	51	177	-10	162	<b>985</b>
2008/9	420	244	-26	52	165	<b>855</b>
2009/10	520	-235	117	-119	166	<b>449</b>
2010/11	530	141	-58	255	178	<b>1,046</b>
2011/12	431	212	35	83	0	<b>761</b>
2012/13	306	397	-20	-77	0	<b>606</b>
2013/14	408	418	230	93	0	<b>1,149</b>
2014/15	322	218	237	-77	0	<b>700</b>
2015/16	369	170	337	103	0	<b>979</b>
2016/17	330	121	182	-22	0	<b>611</b>
2017/18	180	472	158	-73	0	<b>737</b>

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

**Table 12.7.4: Components of population change (2001-18) – Vale of White Horse**

Year	Natural change	Net internal migration	Net international migration	Other changes	Other (un-attributable)	Total change
2001/2	346	-807	392	-34	-104	<b>-207</b>
2002/3	220	8	429	12	-100	<b>569</b>
2003/4	359	-189	310	-33	-106	<b>341</b>
2004/5	426	52	537	1	-101	<b>915</b>
2005/6	326	-123	643	63	-90	<b>819</b>
2006/7	555	-366	633	62	-99	<b>785</b>
2007/8	454	-464	362	25	-87	<b>290</b>
2008/9	450	145	192	54	-99	<b>742</b>
2009/10	527	191	283	-62	-142	<b>797</b>
2010/11	516	163	529	-36	-104	<b>1,068</b>
2011/12	439	-58	63	375	0	<b>819</b>
2012/13	304	528	105	-150	0	<b>787</b>
2013/14	405	429	463	-173	0	<b>1,124</b>
2014/15	350	985	520	58	0	<b>1,913</b>
2015/16	406	1,187	508	18	0	<b>2,119</b>
2016/17	460	1,725	376	13	0	<b>2,574</b>
2017/18	299	1,895	295	16	0	<b>2,505</b>

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

**Table 12.7.5: Components of population change (2001-18) – West Oxfordshire**

Year	Natural change	Net internal migration	Net international migration	Other changes	Other (un-attributable)	Total change
2001/2	157	72	100	-50	-19	<b>260</b>
2002/3	136	809	123	86	-32	<b>1,122</b>
2003/4	243	693	77	-34	-24	<b>955</b>
2004/5	117	660	134	-39	-41	<b>831</b>
2005/6	162	957	315	58	-45	<b>1,447</b>
2006/7	372	1,320	186	38	-66	<b>1,850</b>
2007/8	336	336	172	64	-58	<b>850</b>
2008/9	305	407	106	78	-88	<b>808</b>
2009/10	377	607	72	-77	-97	<b>882</b>
2010/11	322	521	85	-94	-98	<b>736</b>
2011/12	388	381	28	925	0	<b>1,722</b>
2012/13	291	446	-30	74	0	<b>781</b>
2013/14	176	-25	214	-215	0	<b>150</b>
2014/15	214	-72	238	134	0	<b>514</b>
2015/16	71	-318	303	83	0	<b>139</b>
2016/17	34	323	165	-4	0	<b>518</b>
2017/18	-47	493	113	-25	0	<b>534</b>

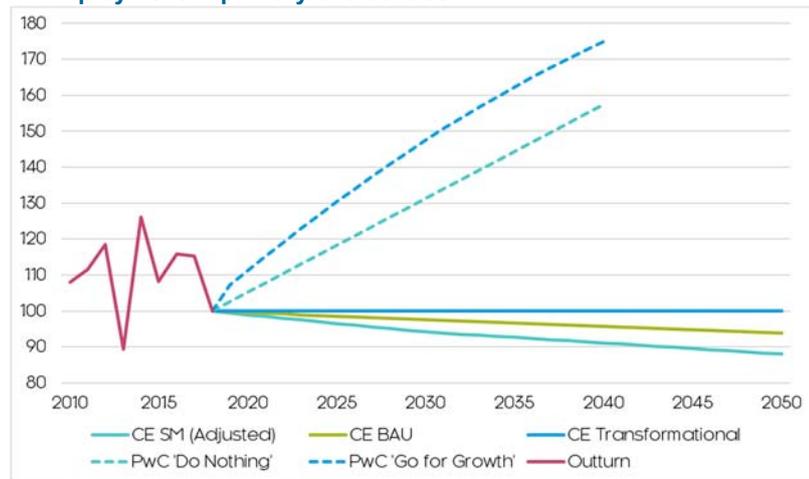
Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

## Appendix B: Oxfordshire’s Sector Growth Trajectories

### Primary and utilities

Employment in agriculture, mining, and utilities has been on a downward trend in Oxfordshire over the past decade, and at the national level this is expected to continue in light of consumer, environmental and economic pressures, with the sector also having significant potential for future automation.

Figure 12.7.1: Employment in primary and utilities

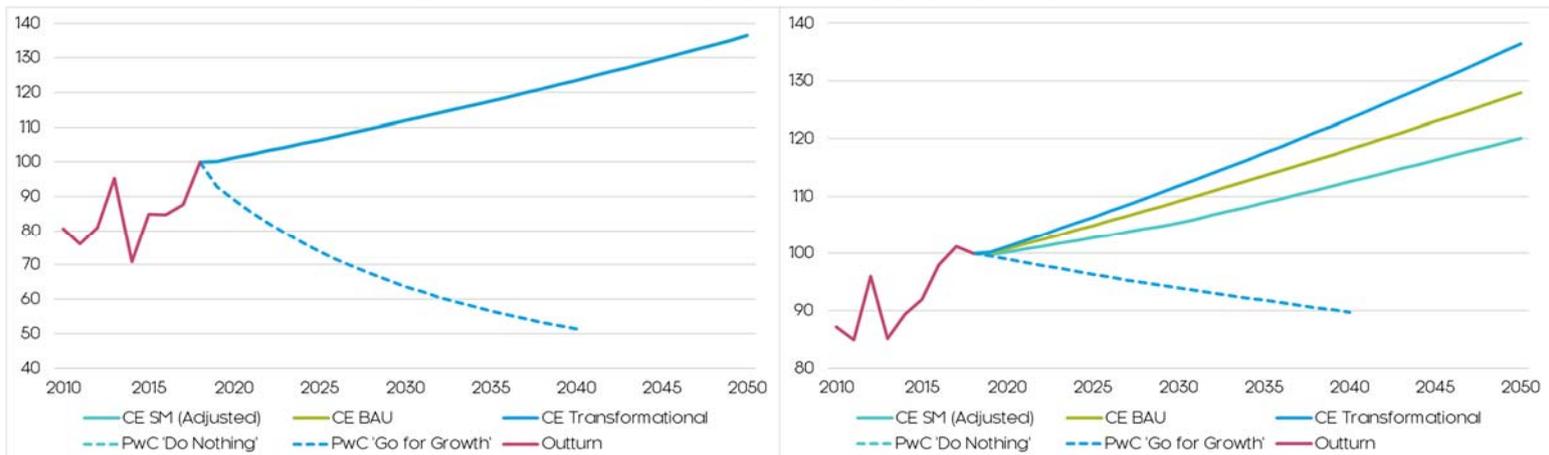


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

It is unlikely Oxfordshire would reverse this trend, yet both PwC’s projections point towards robust growth for the sector. Though Energy is a “breakthrough sector”, the LIS notes Oxfordshire’s greatest strengths/assets are in energy-related research, ideation and consultancy, rather than the front-end generation/distribution captured here. Therefore, CE expects employment in the sector to either decline or remain roughly constant over the long term.

For productivity, PwC assumes a dramatic and sudden decline, in contrast to CE’s upward trajectory. Combined with easing employment, CE therefore expects a steady increase in GVA at the baseline but accelerating growth in other trajectories, driven by improved productivity and innovation take-up.

Figure 12.7.2: Productivity (left) and GVA (right) in primary and utilities

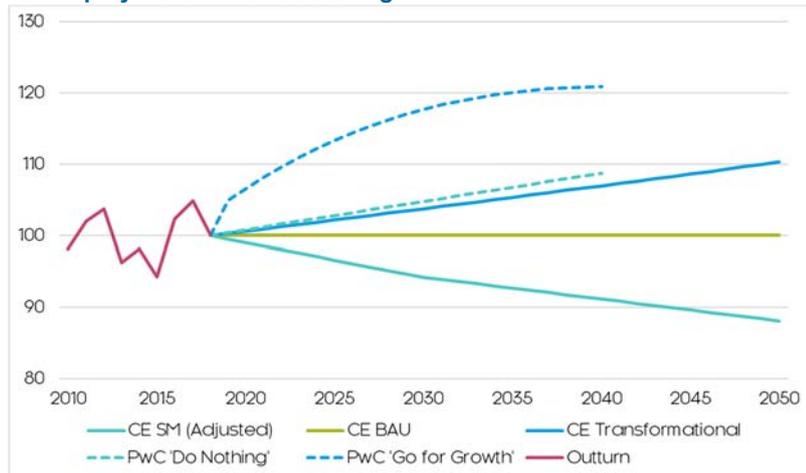


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

## Manufacturing

With the ongoing expansion of globalisation, automation and digitisation, the manufacturing workforce in the UK is expected to continue to decline in the long term, even as GVA and productivity increase. It is likely that the sector in Oxfordshire either follows this trend, or otherwise remains at current levels. However, if aspirations outlined in the LIS are realised, then positive employment growth could be seen. Both PwC’s baseline and “go for growth” scenarios outline strong employment growth for the sector.

Figure 12.7.3: Employment in manufacturing

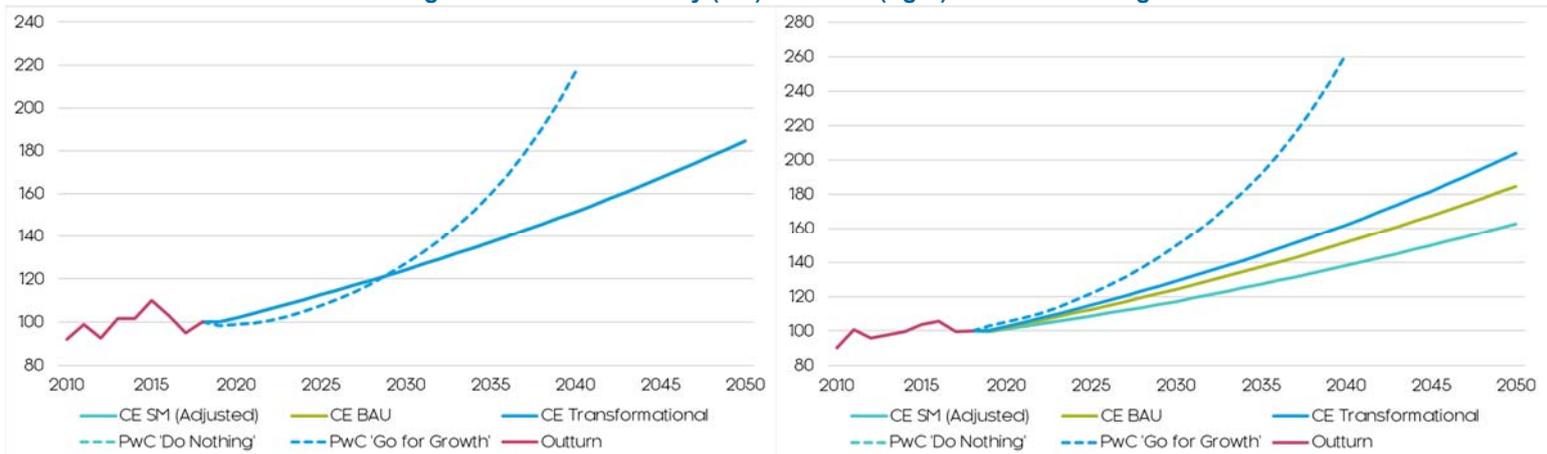


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

Though the LIS correctly emphasises Oxfordshire’s manufacturing specialisms - such as robotics, automotive and quantum computing - and their growth potential, CE’s view is that even with ambitious growth in such sub-sectors, manufacturing as a whole is unlikely to grow its workforce with such rapidity (in fact, “breakthrough sectors” currently account for only a quarter of the manufacturing workforce).

However, as such activities form a central and justified part of the LIS, we build in moderate employment growth into the higher trajectories. Productivity growth, underpinned by the adoption of frontier technologies (e.g. 3D printing, plastic electronics) will continue to be robust and drive GVA, though not as rapid as PwC’s, which expects productivity to more than double by 2040.

Figure 12.7.4: Productivity (left) and GVA (right) in manufacturing

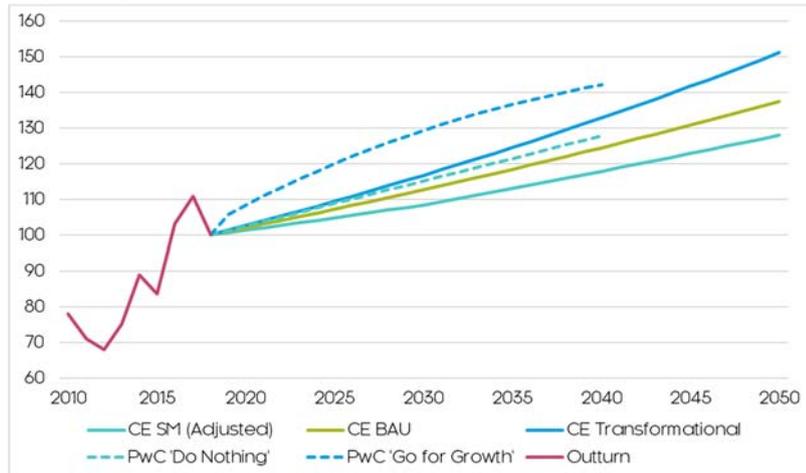


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

## Construction

The performance of the construction sector is largely dependent on the amount of activity in the wider economy. When combined with ambitious policy aspirations around housing delivery (e.g. Garden Towns) infrastructure (e.g. East-West rail) and commercial space (e.g. Culham Science Centre, Milton Park, Oxford North and Oxford Science Park etc.), it is likely demand for construction workers in Oxfordshire’s will continue to grow strongly over the coming decades.

**Figure 12.7.5: Employment in construction**

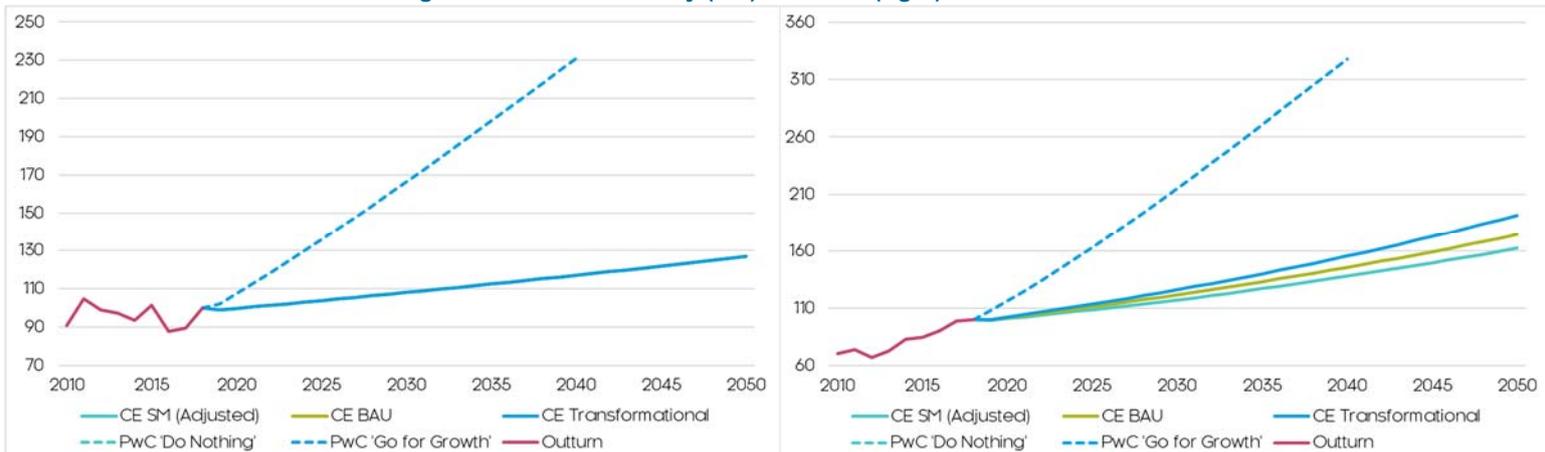


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

There are however some potential restraints to this growth, which has been factored into CE’s slightly more modest projection. For instance, skills shortages are prevalent and could be exacerbated by an aging workforce and restrictions on migration. Alongside employment, PwC also expects sector productivity to surge, doubling by 2040, which is ambitious given its sluggish performance over the past decade due to low levels of investment and skills shortages.

Although it is possible that offsite manufacturing methods will significantly improve the productivity of new build construction, a significant component of this sector will remain small firms and self-employed contractors. CE therefore expects more stable productivity, and thus GVA, growth in the long term, but with the potential for faster growth in the higher trajectories.

**Figure 12.7.6: Productivity (left) and GVA (right) in construction**

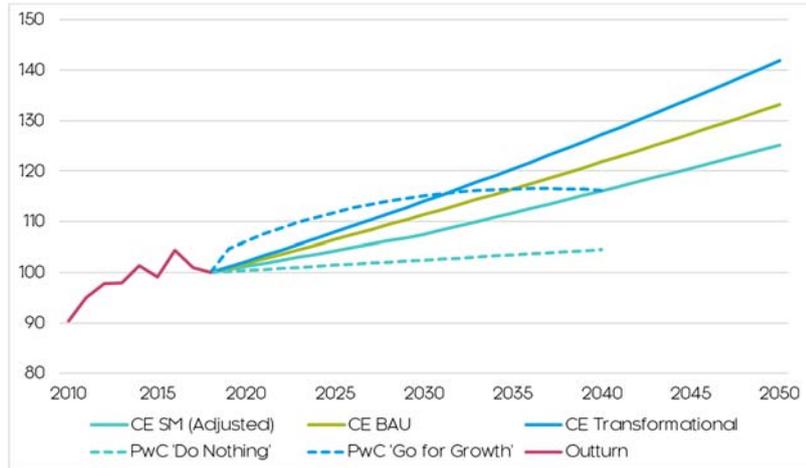


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

### Retail; transport; accommodation and food

Although diverse in composition, the demand for consumer services (i.e. retail; transport; accommodation and food) is largely dependent on the amount of activity in the wider economy. Given strong projected economic and household growth in Oxfordshire, the demand for consumer services, and therefore employment, is expected to increase.

**Figure 12.7.7: Employment in retail; transport; accommodation and food**

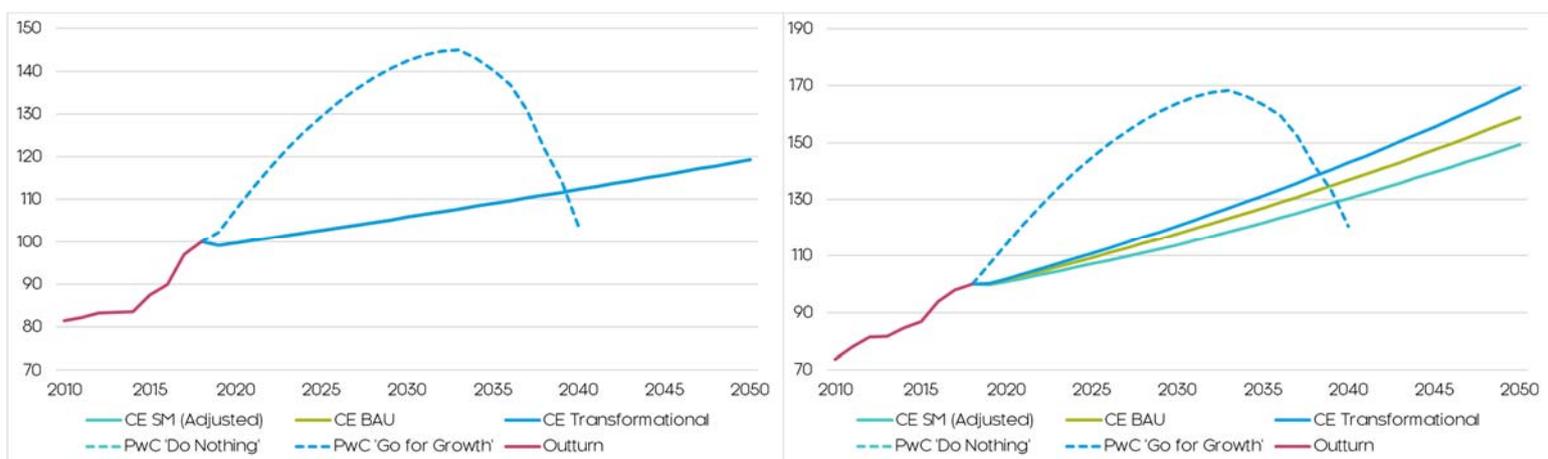


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

There is significant uncertainty as to the extent automation will impact on labour demand, which may be reflected in PwC’s slightly less-optimistic employment projections, particularly at the baseline. Likewise, changing consumer patterns (e.g. online shopping) will cause some employment displacement and shifting within the sector.

CE expects sector productivity to grow at a constant increasing trend overtime, as it has done over the past decade. In contrast, PwC emphasises very strong (potentially automation-led) productivity growth over the next decade, before a surprising levelling off and then decline in the mid-2030’s. This is also reflected in the overall GVA projection, which in contrast CE expects to maintain a steady upward trend.

**Figure 12.7.8: Productivity (left) and GVA (right) in retail; transport; accommodation and food**

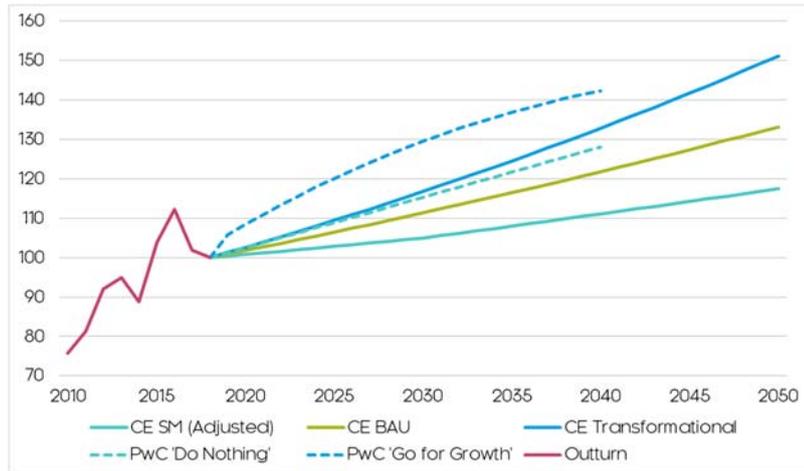


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

### Information and communication

As outlined in the LIS, Oxfordshire has a clear comparative advantage within information and communications, particularly relating to Digital and Creative, which accounts for almost half of all “breakthrough” activity in Oxfordshire. Underpinned by a strong research base and a skilled workforce, the sector has been an engine for employment growth over recent decades and is expected to continue creating highly-value employment opportunities.

Figure 12.7.9: Employment in information and communication

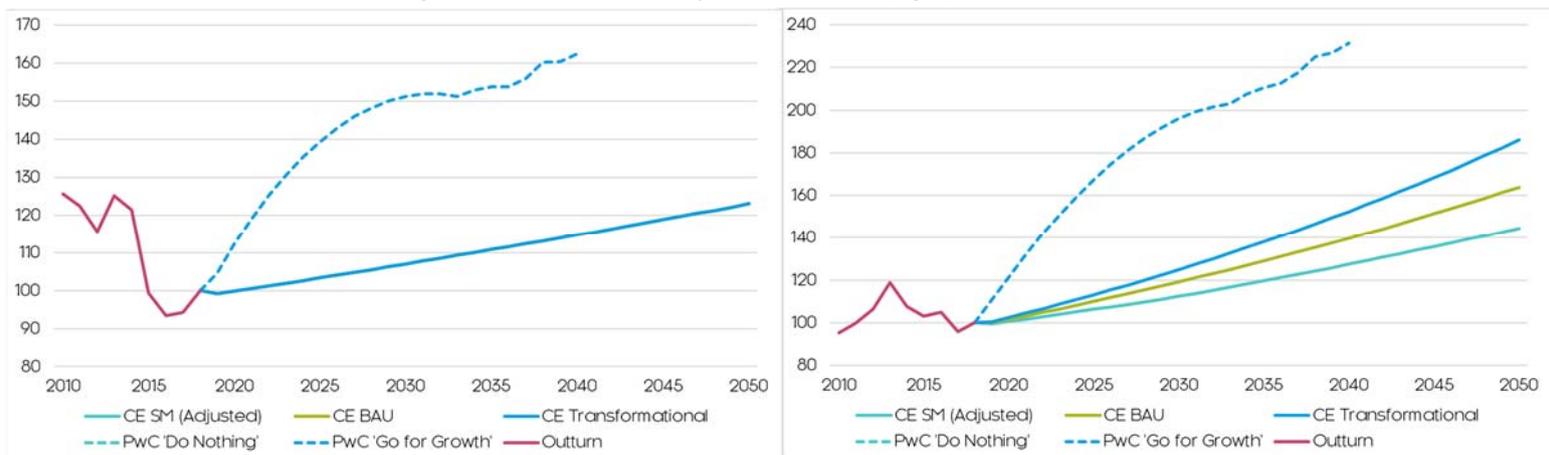


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

There are however potential restraints to growth, including skills shortages, labour supply pressures (especially relating to migration), and investment uncertainty. Because of this, CE’s baseline projection for employment is somewhat lower than PwC’s, but with the potential for faster growth in the higher trajectories.

Though sectoral productivity growth has been disappointing over the past decade, CE does expect this to rebound with the development and adoption of new technologies (which will also diffuse throughout the wider economy). Though this growth is not to the extent envisaged by PwC, which expects a doubling of GVA by 2040.

Figure 12.7.10: Productivity (left) and GVA (right) in information and communication

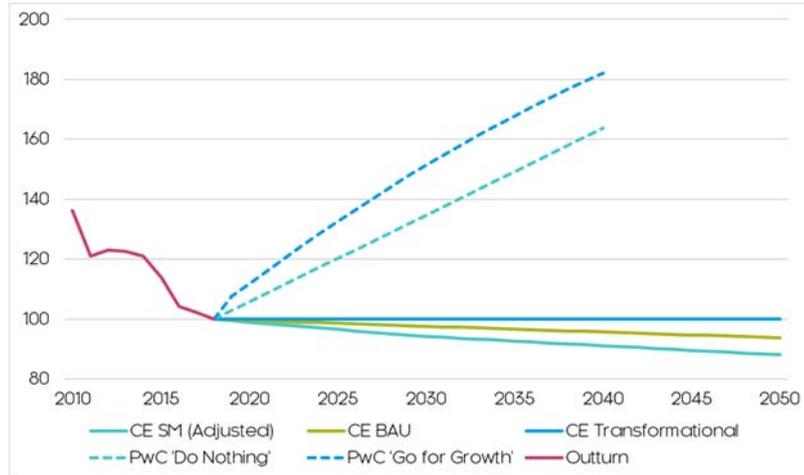


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

### Financial and insurance activities

The finance and insurance sector has experienced an ongoing contraction in its workforce both nationally and locally over the past decade, driven largely by automation, digitisation and out-sourcing, which accelerated given pressures post-2008/09 recession. This trend is anticipated to continue over both the short and long term.

**Figure 12.7.11: Employment in financial and insurance activities**

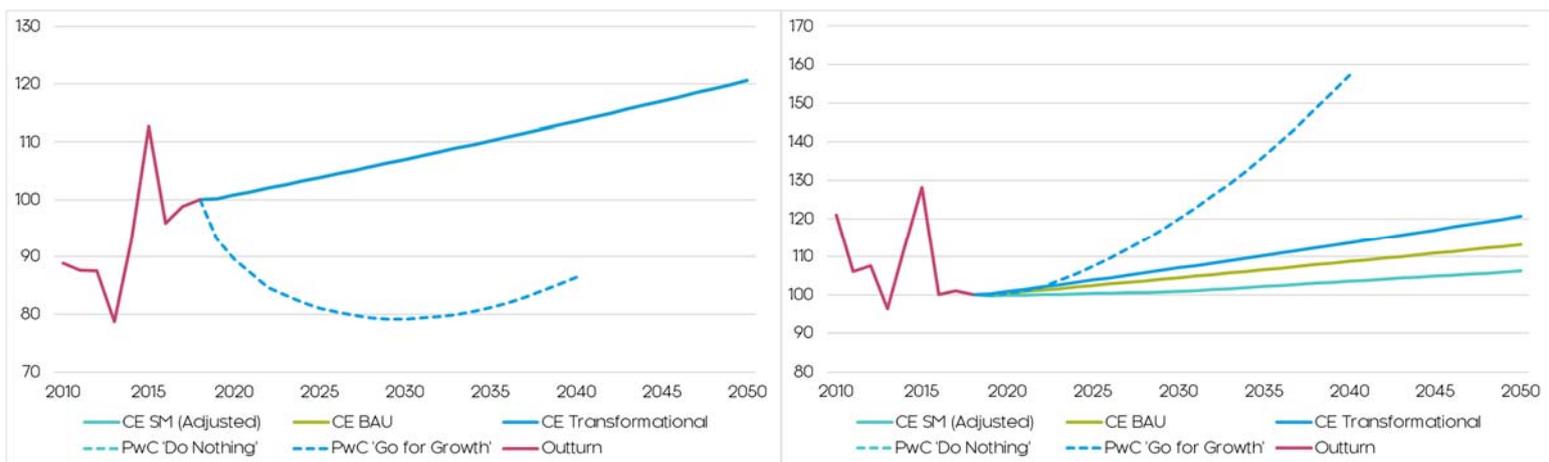


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

Alongside these pressures, uncertainty surrounding the position of the financial services and investment banking sector post-Brexit makes it difficult to predict a sudden upsurge in employment, either locally or nationally, as suggested by PwC, even under its baseline.

Despite this decline in employment, already high sector productivity is expected to grow strongly in future, driven by fintech and associated technological innovations. This contributes to relatively robust GVA growth. Though this aligns with PwC’s projections for GVA, they place the emphasis on employment-led growth due to declining productivity, which is largely counter to trends of the past decade.

**Figure 12.7.12: Productivity (left) and GVA (right) in financial and insurance activities**

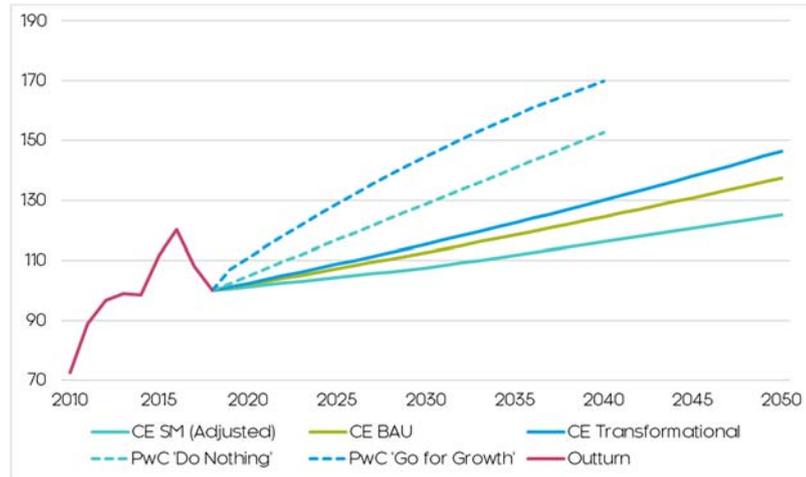


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

### Real estate activities

The demand for real estate services is closely related to the activity of the construction sector as well as the health of the broader financial and insurance markets. Given both are expected to grow output strongly, it is likely the real estate workforce in Oxfordshire will need to expand to manage and oversee such an increase in demand.

Figure 12.7.13: Employment in real estate activities

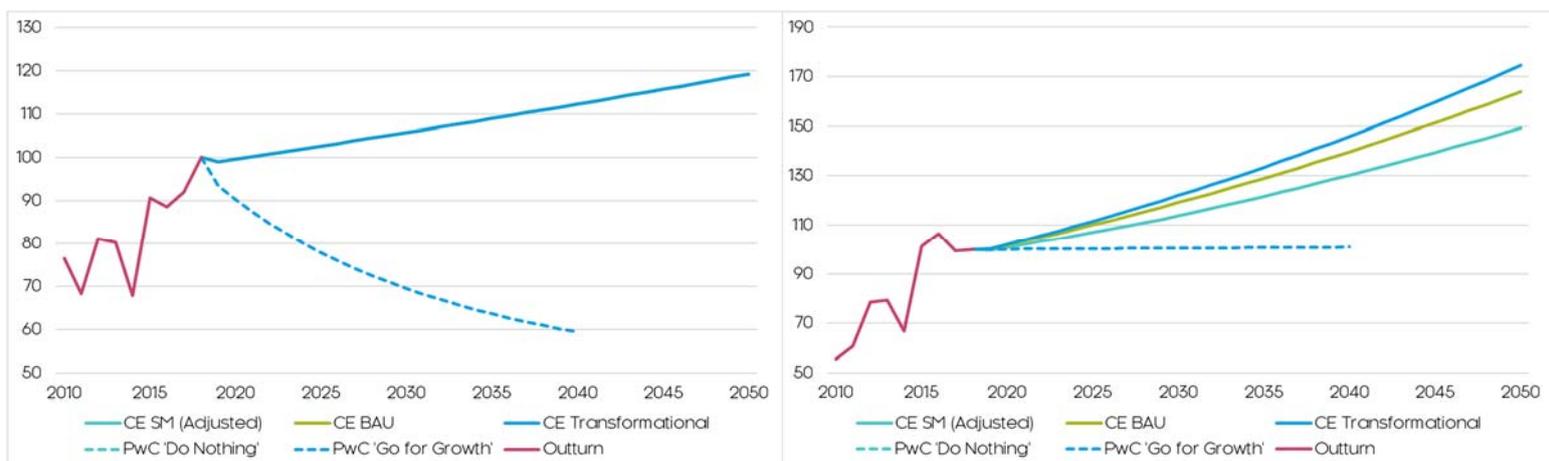


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

The sector’s workforce has grown strongly over the past decade, partly reflecting Oxfordshire active resident and commercial property markets, and PwC expects this rate of growth to continue even under its baseline scenario. CE meanwhile expects a slightly lower pace of growth, but with the potential for accelerating growth under the higher trajectories.

The sector’s productivity growth has been robust over the past decade, and CE expects this to continue moving forward, as its workforce becomes increasingly high-skilled, and the process of real estate marketing and selling becomes increasingly digitised. PwC however expects a pronounced contraction in sectoral productivity, contributing to a flatlining of GVA to 2040.

Figure 12.7.14: Productivity (left) and GVA (right) in real estate activities

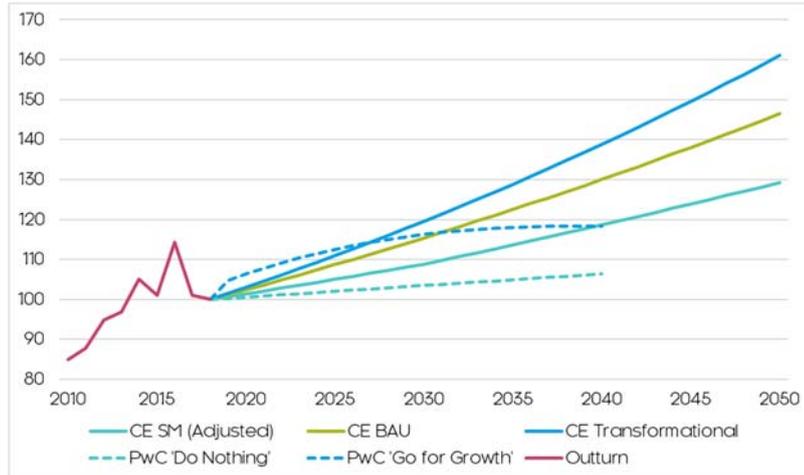


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

### Professional and administrative services

Professional and administrative services cover a wide range of activities, from lawyers, engineers and research scientists, to cleaners and security guards. Over the past decade, there has been significant growth in the sector, with the UK and indeed Oxfordshire shaping a strong comparative advantage, and there is an expectation of further growth to come.

Figure 12.7.15: Employment in professional and administrative services

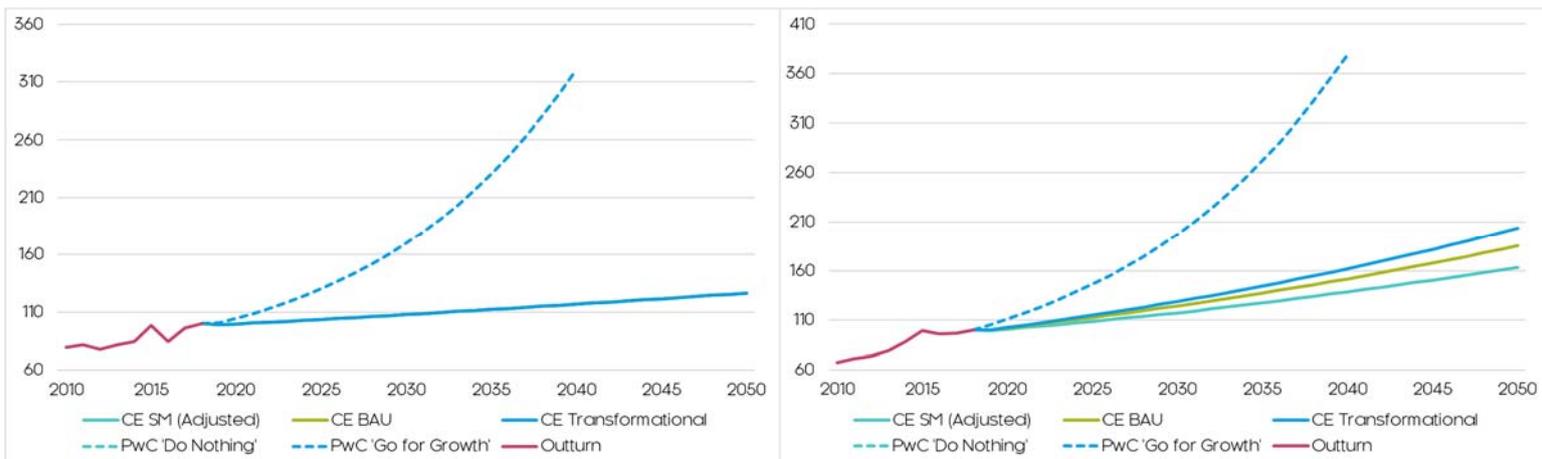


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

Some of these activities correspond to or closely compliment LIS “breakthrough” specialisms, which account for a quarter of all jobs in the sector. Likewise, the sector is an important enabler of growth, representing valued “cornerstone” activities. As such, we anticipate strong growth in employment demand in high trajectories.

In contrast, PwC expects lower employment growth, but productivity to treble by 2040, which is ambitious compared to historic trends and CE’s outlook. In fact, CE expects more stable productivity growth, which given strong employment growth, results in robust (rather than PwC’s exponential) GVA growth.

Figure 12.7.16: Productivity (left) and GVA (right) in professional and administrative services

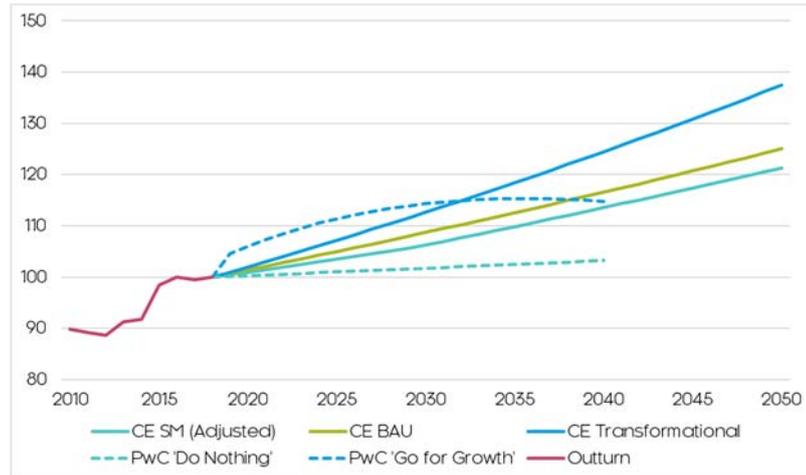


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

### Public administration, education and health

Public administration, education, and health are amongst Oxfordshire’s most resilient sectors, and demand is anticipated to rise further over the next few decades, particularly in the health (aging population) and education sector (demand for high-level and technical skills).

Figure 12.7.17: Employment in public administration, education and health

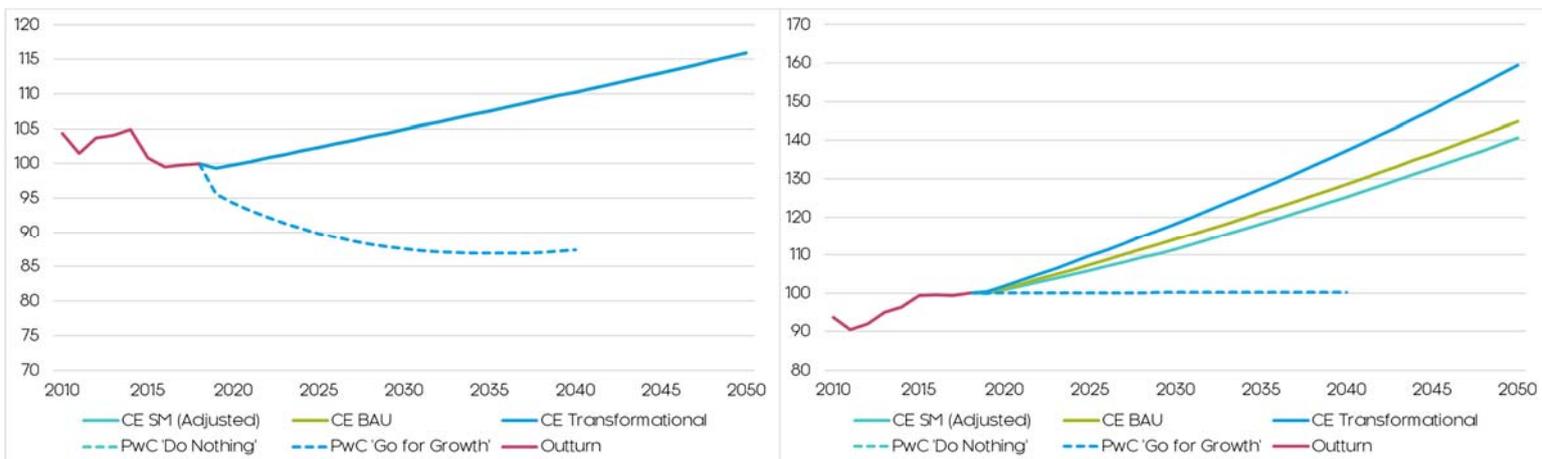


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

CE therefore expects a slightly higher baseline rate of employment growth than that suggested by PwC, which remains low given historic trends (even when accounting for fiscal austerity post-2010). And even a potential decline in public administration will likely be offset by growth in Oxfordshire’s education (given its two universities’ growth plans) and health sectors.

Alongside sluggish employment growth, PwC also expects declining productivity in the sector, resulting in a near flatting of GVA. Though this reflects the poor productivity growth in the sector over the past decade, given the opportunities for health-related innovation and a higher-value education offer, we believe there is potential for moderate productivity growth in this sector.

Figure 12.7.18: Productivity (left) and GVA (right) in public administration, education and health

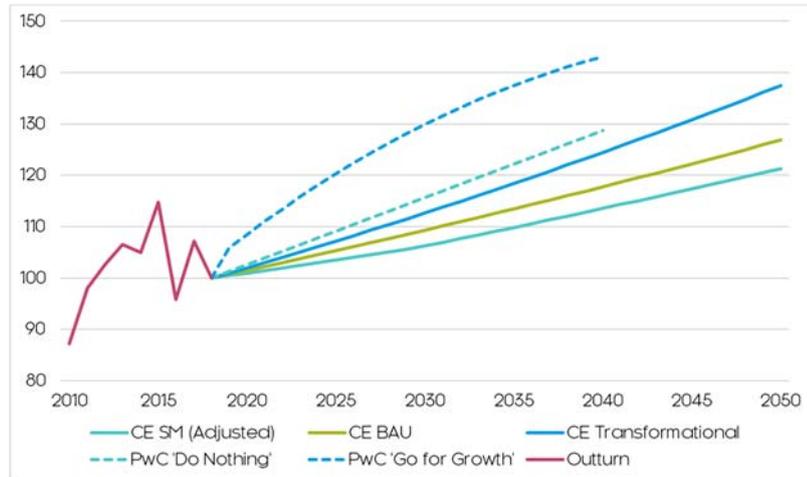


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

### Arts, entertainment and recreation

The recreation and other services sector accounts for a diverse range of activities, from tourism and culture to hairdressing and funeral parlours. Like consumer services, the sector largely depends on the amount of activity in the wider economy, particularly that related to households and their incomes. Relatively strong employment growth is therefore expected over the coming decades, with the sectors labour-intensive nature and consumer dependency making it more resilient to automation and associated changes.

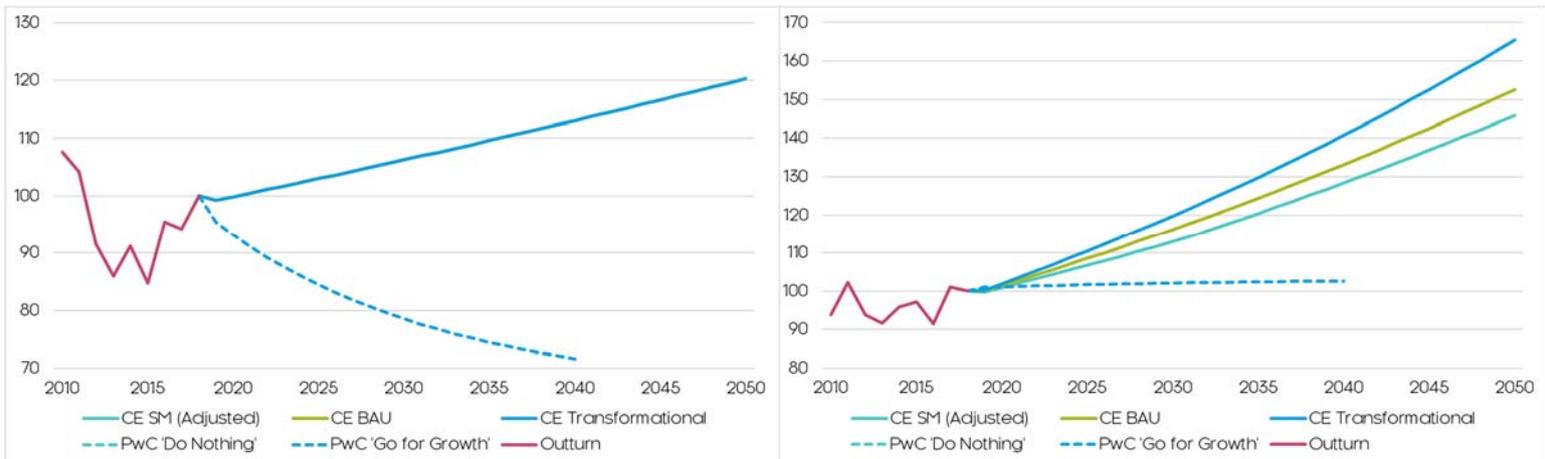
Figure 12.7.19: Employment in arts, entertainment and recreation



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

CE expects a gentler pace of growth at its baseline, but with capacity for faster growth in higher trajectories. Productivity growth in the sector has been subdued of late, but CE expects this to return to trend over the long term, contributing to strong overall GVA growth. This is in contrast to PwC, who predict a continued, long-term decline in productivity, stunting overall GVA growth.

Figure 12.7.20: Productivity (left) and GVA (right) in arts, entertainment and recreation



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

## Appendix C: Affordable Housing Need Appendix

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Provided below is a copy of the Affordable Housing Need Appendix produced by Icen Projects Limited on behalf of the Oxfordshire Growth Board in July 2019, referenced in *Chapter 10 Affordable Housing Need*.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEED

Affordable housing is defined in Annex 2 of the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The revised NPPF definition is slightly wider than the previous NPPF definition; in particular a series of 'affordable home ownership' options are considered to be affordable housing together with discounted private rents.

A methodology is set out in Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) to look at affordable need. In the analysis herein we have considered the needs of households who require support to meet their basic housing needs; and the needs of households who require support in accessing home ownership.

### 1. Approach and Data Sources

The method for studying the need for affordable housing has been enshrined in Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Practice Guidance for many years, with an established approach to look at the number of households who are unable to afford market housing (to either rent or buy).

The analysis below follows the methodology and key data sources in the Planning Practice Guidance and can be summarised as:

- Current need (an estimate of the number of households who have a need now and based on a range of data modelled from local information);
- Projected newly forming households in need (based on projections developed for this project along with an affordability test to estimate numbers unable to afford the market);
- Existing households falling into need (based on studying the types of households who have needed to access social/affordable rented housing and based on study past lettings data);
- These three bullet points added together provide an indication of the gross need (the current need is divided by 13 so as to meet the need over the 2018-31 period);
- Supply of affordable housing (an estimate of the likely number of letting that will become available from the existing social housing stock – drawing on data from CoRe<sup>66</sup> and the Council); and
- Subtracting the supply from the gross need provides an estimate of the overall (annual) need for affordable housing

Each of these stages is described below. In addition, much of the analysis requires a view about affordability to be developed. This includes looking at house prices and private rents along with

<sup>66</sup> The continuous recording of lettings and sales in social housing in England (referred to as CoRe) is a national information source that records information on the characteristics of both private registered providers and local authority new social housing tenants and the homes they rent

estimates of local household incomes. The following chapters therefore look at different aspects of the analysis.

## 2. Local Prices and Rents

An important part of the affordable needs model is to establish the entry-level costs of housing to buy and rent. The affordable housing needs assessment compares prices and rents with the incomes of households to establish what proportion of households can meet their needs in the market, and what proportion require support and are thus defined as having an 'affordable housing need'.

The analysis below considers the entry-level costs of housing to both buy and rent across the county. The approach has been to analyse Land Registry and Valuation Office Agency (VOA) data to establish lower quartile prices and rents – using a lower quartile figure is consistent with the PPG and reflects the entry-level point into the market.

Data from the Land Registry for the year to September 2018 (i.e. Q4 of 2017 and Q1-Q3 of 2018) shows estimated lower quartile property prices in the county by dwelling type. The data shows that entry-level costs to buy are estimated to start from about £176,000 for a flat and rising to £380,000 for a detached home. Looking at the lower quartile price across all dwelling types, the analysis shows a lower quartile 'average' price of £270,000.

### 2.1. Lower Quartile Cost of Housing to Buy – year to September 2018 – Oxfordshire

	Lower quartile price
<b>Flat/maisonette</b>	£176,000
<b>Terraced</b>	£250,000
<b>Semi-detached</b>	£285,000
<b>Detached</b>	£380,000
<b>All dwellings</b>	£270,000

Source: Land Registry

A similar analysis has been carried out for private rents using Valuation Office Agency (VOA) data – this covers a 12-month period to September 2018. For the rental data, information about dwelling sizes is provided (rather than types); the analysis shows an average lower quartile cost (across all dwelling sizes) of £810 per month.

### 2.2. Lower Quartile Market Rents, year to September 2018 – Oxfordshire

	Lower Quartile rent, PCM
<b>Room only</b>	£468
<b>Studio</b>	£578

<b>1-bedroom</b>	£695
<b>2-bedrooms</b>	£850
<b>3-bedrooms</b>	£995
<b>4-bedrooms</b>	£1,510
<b>All properties</b>	£810

Source: Valuation Office Agency

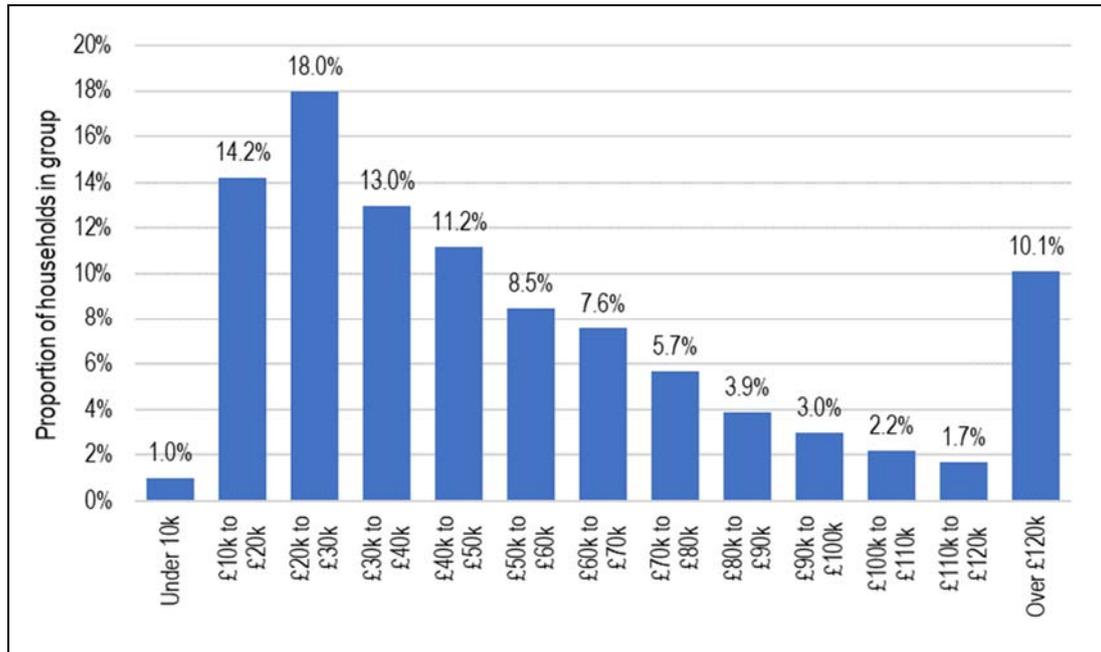
A household is considered able to afford market rented housing in cases where the rent payable would constitute no more than a particular percentage of gross income. Rent levels in Oxfordshire are relatively high in comparison to those seen nationally (a lower quartile rent of £525 per month across England). Taking account of likely residual income and to reflect that the cost of living in Oxfordshire is likely to be higher than nationally, it has been estimated that a threshold of 35% would be appropriate – this is consistent with the assumption made in the Oxfordshire SHMA. This is used in assessing the ability of households to afford private rented housing.

### **3. Income Levels and Affordability**

Household incomes have been based on ONS modelled income estimates, with additional data from the English Housing Survey (EHS) being used to provide information about the distribution of incomes. The analysis indicates that around a sixth (15%) of households in Oxfordshire have incomes below £20,000 with a further third in the range of £20,000 to £40,000. Overall the average (mean) income is estimated to be around £56,800, with a median income of £43,200; the lower quartile income of all households is estimated to be £25,000.

To assess affordability in the initial analysis, a household's ability to afford private rented housing without financial support has been studied. The distribution of household incomes is then used to estimate the likely proportion of households who are unable to afford to meet their needs in the private sector without support, on the basis of existing incomes. This analysis brings together the data on household incomes with the estimated incomes required to access private sector housing.

Different affordability tests are applied to different parts of the analysis depending on the group being studied (e.g. recognising that newly forming households are likely on average to have lower incomes than existing households (this has consistently been shown to be the case in the English Housing Survey and the Survey of English Housing)). Assumptions about income levels for specific elements of the modelling are the same as in previous assessments of affordable need.

**Figure A3.1** Distribution of Household Incomes in Oxfordshire, mid-2018

Source: Derived from EHS and ONS data

#### 4. Need for Social Rented and Affordable Rented Housing

An initial assessment of affordable housing need has been undertaken, considering the needs from households who require financial support to access housing to buy or rent in the market. This uses a narrow definition of affordable housing, consistent with that in the 2012 NPPF and 2014 Oxfordshire SHMA.

##### Current Affordable Housing Need

In line with Paragraph 2a-023 in the PPG, the current need for affordable housing has been based on considering the likely number of households with one or more housing problems. The table below sets out the categories in the PPG and the sources of data being used to establish numbers. The PPG also includes a category where households cannot afford to own despite it bring their aspiration – this category is considered separately later in this chapter.

It should be noted that there may be some overlap between categories (such as overcrowding and concealed households, whereby the overcrowding would be remedied if the concealed household moved). The data available does not enable analysis to be undertaken to study the impact of this and so it is possible that the figures presented include a small element of double counting. Additionally, some of the concealed households may be older people who have moved back in with their families and might not be considered as in need.

#### 4.1. Main Sources for Assessing Current Unmet Need for Affordable Housing

	Source	Notes
<b>Homeless households (and those in temporary accommodation)</b>	CLG Live Table 784	Total where a duty is owed but no accommodation has been secured PLUS the total in temporary accommodation
<b>Households in overcrowded housing</b>	Census table LC4108EW	Analysis undertaken by tenure and updated by reference to national changes (from the English Housing Survey (EHS))
<b>Concealed households</b>	Census table LC1110EW	Number of concealed families (with dependent or non-dependent children)
<b>Existing affordable housing tenants in need</b>	Modelled data linking to past survey analysis	Excludes overcrowded households – tenure estimates updated by reference to the EHS
<b>Households from other tenures in need</b>	Modelled data linking to past survey analysis	

Source: PPG Para 2a-023

The table below shows the initial estimate of the number of households within the county living in unsuitable housing. These figures are before any consideration of affordability has been made. The analysis suggests that there are currently some 19,300 households living in unsuitable housing (or without housing).

#### 4.2. Estimated Households living in Unsuitable Housing – Oxfordshire

Category of 'need'	Households
<b>Homeless households</b>	177
<b>Households in overcrowded housing</b>	8,630
<b>Concealed households</b>	2,871
<b>Existing affordable housing tenants in need</b>	827
<b>Households from other tenures in need</b>	6,841
<b>Total</b>	19,346

Source: CLG Live Tables, Census (2011) and data modelling

From the overall number in unsuitable housing, households living in affordable housing are excluded (as these households would release a dwelling on moving and so no net need for affordable housing will arise). The analysis also excludes 90% of owner-occupiers under the assumption (which is supported by analysis of survey data) that the vast majority will be able to afford housing once savings and equity are taken into account. A final adjustment is to slightly reduce the unsuitability figures in the private rented sector to take account of student-only households – such households could technically be overcrowded/living in unsuitable housing but would be unlikely to be considered

as being in affordable housing need (student households rarely qualify for affordable housing). This results in a revised estimate of households living in unsuitable housing, which is shown in Table A3.5 below.

#### 4.3. Revised Assessment of Households in Unsuitable Housing by Tenure, Oxfordshire

	In unsuitable housing	Number to take forward for affordability testing
<b>Owner-occupied</b>	4,585	459
<b>Affordable housing</b>	3,505	0
<b>Private rented</b>	8,208	7,882
<b>No housing (homeless/concealed)</b>	3,048	3,048
<b>Total</b>	19,346	11,388

Source: CLG Live Tables, Census (2011) and data modelling

However, a number of these households might be able to afford market housing without the need for subsidy. An affordability test has therefore been applied. The income data has been used, with the distribution adjusted to reflect a lower average income amongst households living in unsuitable housing – for the purposes of the modelling an income distribution that reduces the level of income to 88% of the figure for all households has been used to identify the proportion of households whose needs could not be met within the market (for households currently living in housing). A lower figure of 42% has been used to apply an affordability test for the concealed/homeless households who do not currently occupy housing. These two percentage figures have been based on a consideration of typical income levels of households who are in unsuitable housing (based mainly on estimates in the private rented sector) along with typical income levels of households accessing social rented housing (for those without accommodation). These figures are considered to be best estimates, and likely to approximately reflect the differing income levels of different groups with a current housing problem.

Overall, just under half of households with a current need are estimated to be likely to have insufficient income to afford market housing and so the estimate of the total current need is of 5,100 households across the county.

#### 4.4. Estimated Current Affordable Housing Need

	In unsuitable housing (taken forward for affordability test)	% Unable to Afford Market Housing (without subsidy)	Revised Gross Need (including Affordability)
<b>Oxfordshire</b>	11,388	44.8%	5,107

Source: CLG Live Tables, Census (2011), data modelling and affordability analysis

## Newly-Forming Households

The number of newly-forming households has been estimated through demographic modelling with an affordability test also being applied. This has been undertaken by considering the changes in households in specific 5-year age bands relative to numbers in the age band below, 5 years previously, to provide an estimate of gross household formation.

In assessing the availability of newly-forming households to access market housing, data has been drawn from a range of survey data including the English Housing Survey at a national level. This establishes that the average income of newly-forming households is around 84% of the figure for all households. The analysis has therefore adjusted the overall household income data to reflect the lower average income for newly-forming households. The adjustments have been made by changing the distribution of income by bands such that average income level is 84% of the all household average. In doing this it is possible to calculate the proportion of households unable to afford market housing without any form of subsidy (such as LHA/HB).

The assessment suggests that overall around two-fifths of newly-forming households will be unable to afford market housing (to rent) and that a total of 1,881 new households will have a need on average in each year to 2031.

### 4.5. Estimated Annual Affordable Housing Need from Newly-forming Households

	<b>No. of new households</b>	<b>% unable to afford</b>	<b>Total in need</b>
<b>Oxfordshire</b>	5,016	37.5%	1,881

Source: Projection Modelling and Affordability Analysis

### Existing Households Falling into Affordable Housing Need

The second element of newly arising need is existing households falling into need. To assess this, information from CoRe has been used. This looked at households who have been housed over the past three years. This group will represent the flow of households onto the Housing Register over this period. From this newly forming households (e.g. those currently living with family) have been discounted as well as households who have transferred from another social/affordable rented property. An affordability test has also been applied. This method for assessing existing households falling into need is consistent with the 2007 SHMA Guidance.

The analysis through suggests a need arising from 840 existing households each year from 2018 to 2031.

## Supply of Affordable Housing

The future supply of affordable housing is the flow of affordable housing arising from the existing stock that is available to meet future need. Our initial analysis focusses on the annual supply of social/affordable rent relets.

The Practice Guidance suggests that the estimate of likely future relets from the social rented stock should be based on past trend data which can be taken as a prediction for the future. Information from the CoRe system has been used to establish past patterns of social housing turnover, along with data from the Council about past lettings (to provide sub-area estimates). The figures include general needs and supported lettings but exclude lettings of new properties and exclude an estimate of the number of transfers from other social rented homes. These exclusions are made to ensure that the figures presented reflect relets from the existing stock. We have based estimates on supply data over the last three years (2015-18).

On the basis of past trend data it has been estimated that 1,401 units of social/affordable rented housing are likely to become available each year moving forward in Oxfordshire.

### 4.6. Estimated Supply of Social/ Affordable Rented Housing per Annum

	<b>General needs</b>	<b>Supported housing</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Total lettings</b>	2,149	852	3,001
<b>% as non-new build</b>	69.5%	93.7%	76.4%
<b>Lettings in existing stock</b>	1,494	798	2,293
<b>% non-transfers</b>	60.7%	61.9%	61.1%
<b>Total lettings to new tenants</b>	907	494	1,401

Source: CoRe

The PPG model also includes the bringing back of vacant homes into use and the pipeline of affordable housing as part of the supply calculation. These have however not been included within the modelling in this report. Firstly, there is no evidence of any substantial stock of vacant homes (over and above a level that might be expected to allow movement in the stock). As of 2017, CLG data shows 238 vacant general needs homes in the county. Secondly, with the pipeline supply, it is not considered appropriate to include this as to net off new housing would be to fail to show the full extent of the need, although in monitoring it will be important to net off these dwellings as they are completed.

### Net Need for Social and Affordable Rented Housing

The table below shows the overall calculation of affordable housing need. This excludes supply arising from sites with planning consent (the 'development pipeline'). The analysis shows that there is a need for 1,700 dwellings per annum to be provided – a total of 22,300 over the 13-year period (2018-31). The net need is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Net Need} = \text{Current Need} + \text{Need from Newly-Forming Households} + \text{Existing Households falling into Need} - \text{Supply of Affordable Housing}$$

#### 4.7. Estimated Net Annual Need for Social/ Affordable Rented Housing in Oxfordshire

	Per annum	2018-31
<b>Current need</b>	393	5,107
<b>Newly forming households</b>	1,881	24,453
<b>Existing households falling into need</b>	840	10,925
<b>Total Gross Need</b>	3,114	40,486
<b>Re-let Supply</b>	1,401	18,217
<b>Net Need</b>	1,713	22,269

## 5. Need for Affordable Home Ownership Housing

The above analysis points to a net need for around 1,700 homes per annum from households requiring social or affordable rented housing from households who cannot meet their own needs in the housing market. This represents the need for subsidised housing at a cost below that to access the private rented sector (i.e. for households unable to access any form of market housing without some form of subsidy).

The revised NPPF introduces a new category of household in affordable housing need and widens the definition of affordable housing (see Annex 2) to include a range of types of affordable housing which support households into home ownership. This includes shared ownership, discounted market sale housing and starter homes. This chapter considers the level of need for these types of dwellings in Oxfordshire.

The NPPF states “Where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the homes to be available for affordable home ownership, unless this would exceed the level of affordable housing required in the area, or significantly prejudice the ability to meet the identified affordable housing needs of specific groups.” (NPPF2, para 64).

The Planning Policy Guidance of September 2018 confirms a widening definition of those to be considered as in affordable need; now also including *'households which can afford to rent in the private rental market, but cannot afford to buy despite a preference for owning their own home'*. However, at the time of writing, there is no guidance about how the number of such households should be measured.

The methodology used in this report therefore draws on the current method, and includes an assessment of current needs, projected need (newly forming and existing households) and an estimate of the supply of housing. The key difference is that in looking at affordability an estimate of the number of households in the 'gap' between buying and renting is used. To study current need, an estimate of the number of household living in the Private Rented Sector (PRS) has been established, along with the same (rent/buy gap) affordability test.

For the supply of affordable home ownership, analysis of Land Registry has been undertaken with the supply figure taken to be the number of homes sold at below lower quartile prices. However, it is the case that market housing is not allocated in the same way as social/affordable rented homes (i.e. anyone is able to buy a home as long as they can afford it and it is possible that a number of lower quartile homes would be sold to households able to afford more, or potentially to investment buyers). A broad further assumption has been used that around half of the lower quartile homes would be available to meet the needs of households with an income in the gap between buying and renting.

In looking at current need, the start point is the number of households living in private rented accommodation. As of the 2011 Census there were some 45,207 households living in the sector. Data from the Survey of English Housing (EHS) suggests that since 2011, the number of households in the PRS has risen by about 26% - if the same proportion is relevant to Oxfordshire then the number of households in the sector would now be around 56,960. Additional data from the EHS suggests that 60% of all PRS households expect to become an owner at some point (34,176 households if applied to Oxfordshire) and of these some 25% (8,544 households) would expect this to happen in the next 2-years. The figure of 8,544 is therefore taken as the number of households potentially with a need for affordable home ownership before any affordability testing. The remaining households who expect to buy, but in a period of more than 2-years are picked up in the modelling as existing households falling into need (again with an affordability test applied).

The table below shows that following the stages of analysis there is an estimated need for around 1,500 units of affordable home ownership per annum. This figure should be seen as indicating the potential demand for such accommodation, as it should be remembered that all of the households picked up in this analysis will be able to afford market housing in the Private Rented Sector without subsidy.

### 5.1. Estimated Need for Affordable Home Ownership Homes – Oxfordshire

	<b>Per annum</b>	<b>2018-31</b>
<b>Current need</b>	233	3,025
<b>Newly forming households</b>	1,881	24,453
<b>Existing households falling into need</b>	735	9,561
<b>Total Gross Need</b>	2,849	37,039
<b>Re-let Supply</b>	1,364	17,734
<b>Net Need</b>	1,485	19,305

Source: Range of data sources as described

It should be noted that the finding of a 'need' for affordable home ownership does not have a specific direct impact on the overall need for housing. As is clear from both the NPPF and PPG, the additional group of households in need is simply a case of seeking to move households from one tenure to another (in this case from private renting to owner-occupation); there is therefore no specific net change in the total number of households or the number of homes required. However, Planning Practice Guidance does require consideration of an increase in housing provision where it will help to deliver the affordable housing needed.

## Appendix D: Approach to Understanding Affordability Implications

This Appendix provides the supporting methodology and outline for the analysis in *Chapter 12 Commuting and Affordability Implications*.

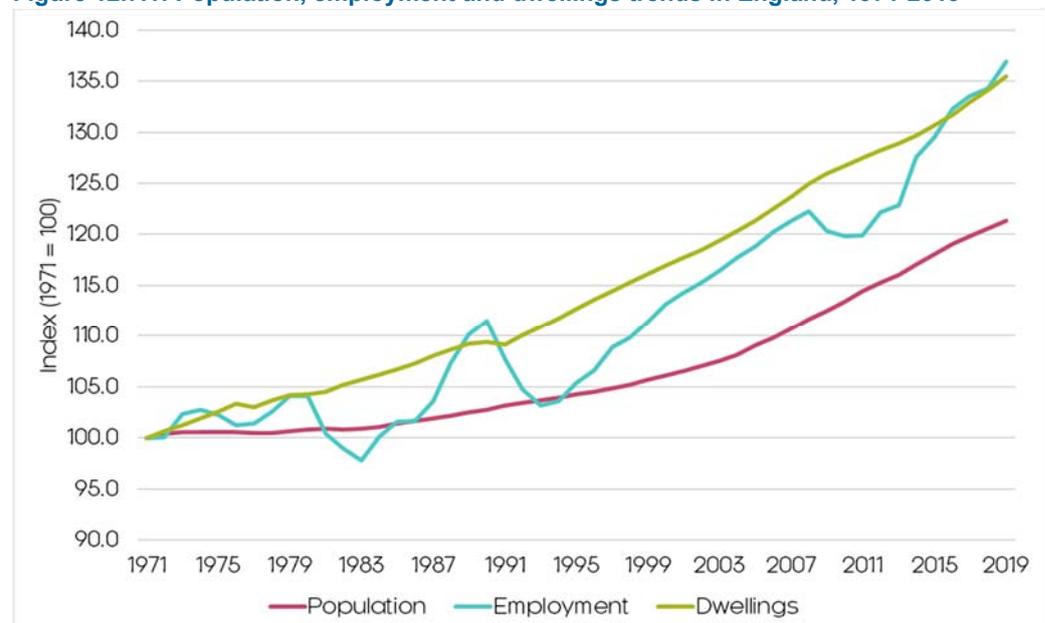
As part of its approach to understanding the implications for housing affordability in Oxfordshire from the economic trajectories and spatial scenarios, CE has undertaken a detailed, nationwide analysis of local house price and affordability dynamics to inform and build a robust methodology and accompanying model. This is summarised below.

Ultimately, by refining and applying this approach for Oxfordshire, CE will be able to clearly assess and test the potential affordability implications of the three economic and fifteen housing (three trajectories, each with an additional five contrasting spatial scenarios) projections.

### Understanding the national affordability context

Before proceeding with the local analysis, it is beneficial to explore the national context around house prices and affordability, highlighting some its perceived determinants and drivers whilst considering the associated policy challenges and opportunities. This is increasingly important given the policy context around housing, with the UK's housing market having been referred to as “*broken*” in recent years facilitated by a “*housing crisis*” which has stymied housing delivery in many local markets.<sup>67</sup>

**Figure 12.7.1: Population, employment and dwellings trends in England, 1971-2019**



**Table 12.7.1: Population, employment and dwellings trends in England, 1971-2019**

	At 1971	At 2019	Change, 1971-2019	% change, 1971-2019
Population	46,412,100	56,309,300	9,897,200	21.3%

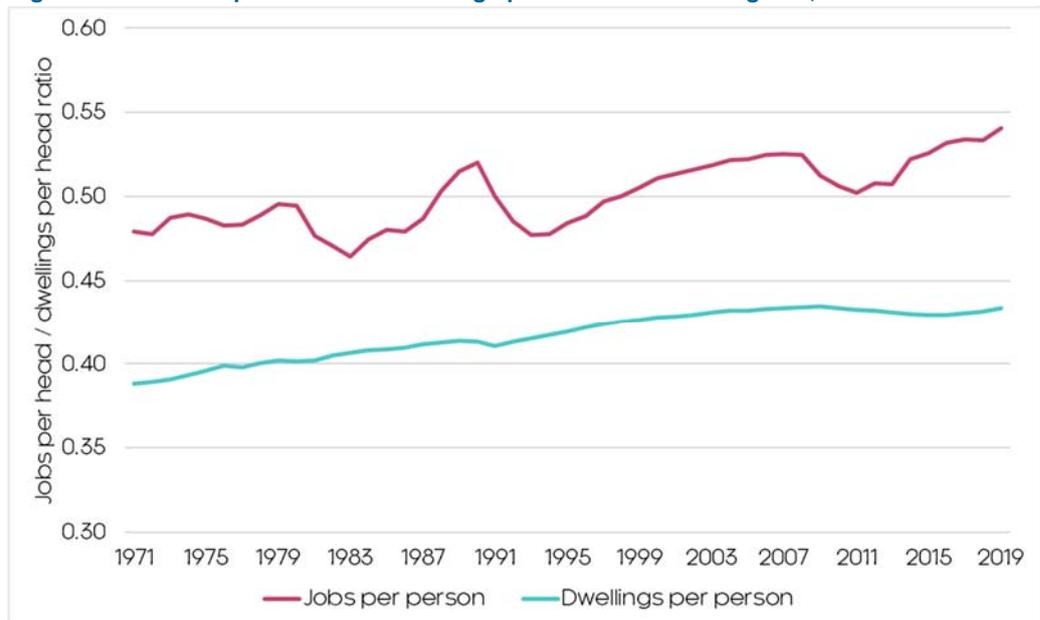
<sup>67</sup> See for instance the Government's housing white paper '[Fixing our broken housing market](#)' (2017)

Employment	22,237,400	30,438,700	8,201,300	36.9%
Dwellings	18,018,000	24,412,100	6,394,100	35.5%

Source: ONS, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics.

Figure 12.7.1 and Table 12.7.1 highlight the long run trends around three key housing market inputs: the total population, total employment (or 'jobs') and total stock of dwellings (or 'housing'). Since 1971, housing delivery<sup>68</sup> in England has actually grown consistently faster than its population since 1971, whilst employment – which understandably is much more sensitive to the economic cycle – has also outpaced population growth and has grown marginally faster than housing delivery.

**Figure 12.7.2: Jobs per head and dwellings per head ratios in England, 1971-2019**



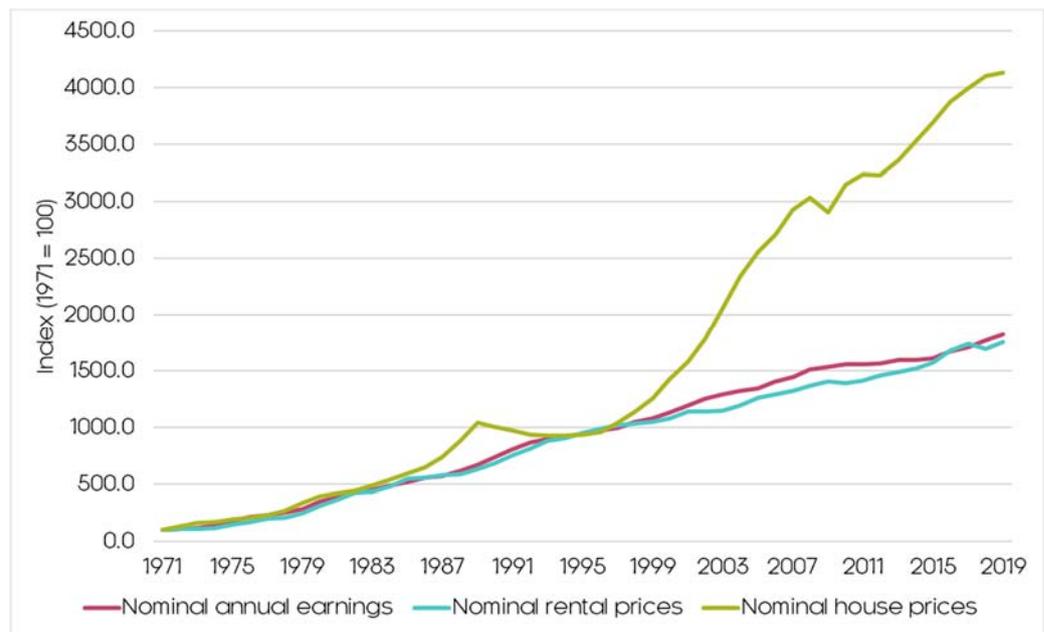
**Table 12.7.2: Jobs per head and dwellings per head ratios in England, 1971-2019**

	At 1971	At 2019	Change, 1971-2019	% change, 1971-2019
Jobs per head	0.48	0.54	0.06	12.8%
Dwellings per head	0.39	0.43	0.05	11.7%

Source: ONS, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics.

The result of this is that there are now both more homes and more jobs per person in England than ever before, as Figure 12.7.2 and Table 12.7.2 show. Again, whilst employment has trended upwards it has followed a more volatile path in line with the economic cycle. Dwellings per person has trended upwards much more smoothly, though with somewhat limited change since 2000 alongside a notable slowdown after the 2008 financial crisis.

<sup>68</sup> Note this particular definition refers to net additional dwellings, rather than the narrower housebuilding definition; unlike the former, the latter only considers gross dwelling additions and excludes demolitions, change of use, extensions/additions etc.

**Figure 12.7.3: Earnings, rental prices and house prices in England, 1971-2019****Table 12.7.3: Earnings, rental prices and house prices in England, 1971-2019**

	At 1971	At 2019	Change, 1971-2019	% change, 1971-2019
Nominal average (annual) earnings	£1,700	£30,200	£28,500	1717.5%
Nominal average (annual) rental prices	£50	£860	£810	1651.0%
Nominal average house prices	£7,400	£304,500	£297,100	4026.7%

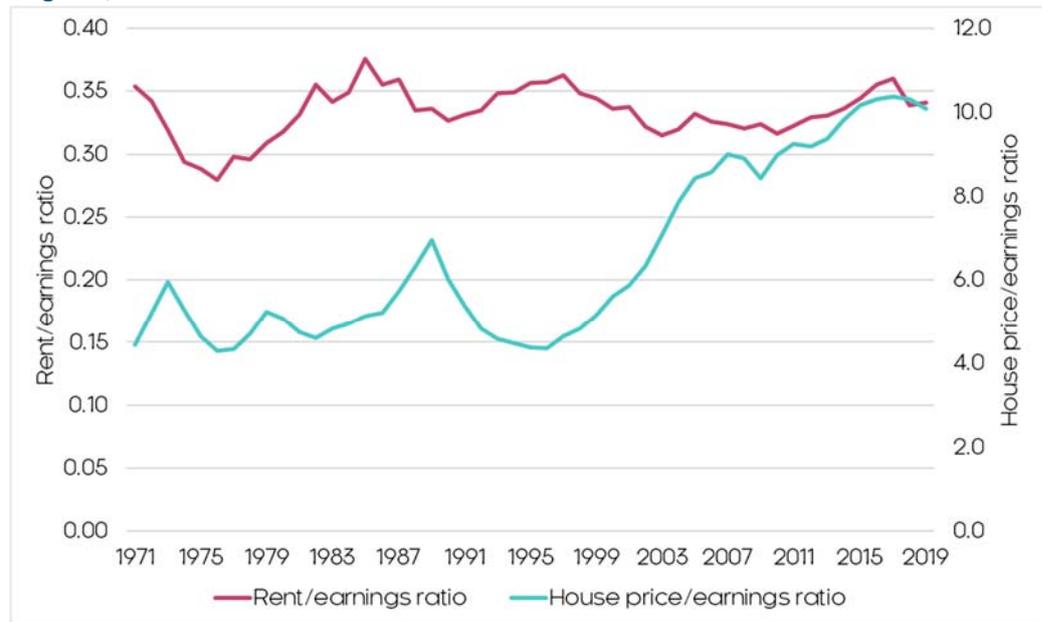
Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Figure 12.7.3 and Table 12.7.3 consider the long run trends around the two alternative costs of housing – the cost of buying a home (house prices) and the cost of renting a home (rental prices)<sup>69</sup> – alongside average annual earnings. Since 1971, (nominal) house price growth has significantly outstripped (nominal) growth in rental prices. After being reasonably well aligned up to the late 1990's, the two have decoupled drastically; since 1971, the average house price has increased a substantial 40x over, more than twice the increase of the average rental price.

Wage growth and rental price growth (in nominal terms) meanwhile have been highly correlated, both increasing 17x over since 1971. The only notable decoupling of this relationship was a period during the late 1990's-2000's, where growth in wages actually eclipsed that of rental prices up until the 2008-09 recession, where it has since returned to trend. Understanding rental prices is important within housing affordability analysis, as economic theory suggests that they represent the 'true cost' of housing for consumers - and are therefore the most sensitive to changes in demand and supply.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Note that these particular measures of house and rental prices are not hedonically priced, in that they do not account for changes in housing quality or composition over the time series

<sup>70</sup> For a summary overview of this theory and relationship see [Wren-Lewis \(2018\)](#). For more detailed explanations and additional references, see [UK Centre for Collaborative Housing Evidence \(2018\) p.p. 14-18](#) and [Oxford Economics pp. 16-18 \(2016\)](#)

**Figure 12.7.4: Rental affordability (left axis) and house price affordability (right axis) in England, 1971-2019****Table 12.7.4 Rental price affordability and house price affordability in England, 1971-2019**

	At 1971	At 2019	Change, 1971-2019	% change, 1971-2019
Rent/earnings ratio; 'rental affordability' <sup>71</sup>	0.35	0.34	-0.01	-3.7%
Price/earnings ratio; 'house price affordability' <sup>72</sup>	4.44	10.08	5.64	127.1%

Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics

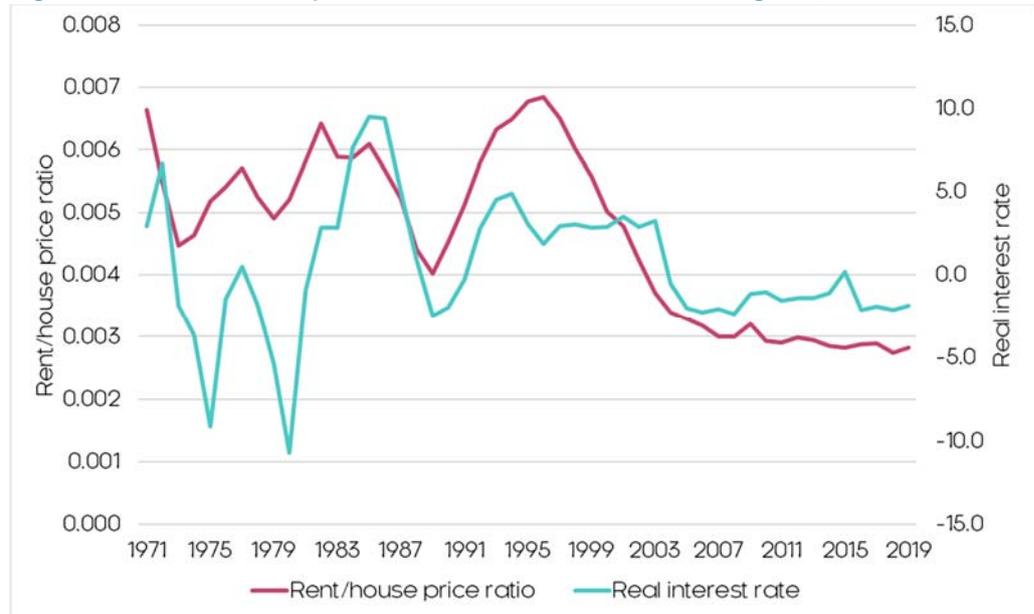
Bringing these three variables together, Figure 12.7.4 and Table 12.7.4 present the relative affordability ratios (price relative to earnings) for house and rental prices. Since 1971, rental affordability has stayed relatively constant at around a third of annual earnings, with few significant deviations, though it had been trending upwards for the decade after the financial crisis. Housing affordability meanwhile was relatively stable from the 1970's to 1990's at around 4x annual earnings before accelerating sharply in the 2000's to an unprecedented 10x annual earnings.

Clearly the relative growth in house prices over the past 20 years has presented a significant challenge to aspiring homeowners, and is widely considered as a candidate example of the UK's 'broken' housing market. However, when both the ratio of dwellings per person and rental affordability has stayed so consistent over this timeframe, it is hard to justify calling this a housing 'crisis' – at least at the aggregate, national level.

So what is driving the divergence in house prices and rental costs, especially considering the latter is supposed to represent the 'true cost' of housing?

<sup>71</sup> In line with ONS guidance, rental affordability has been calculated as; annualized average rental price / annualized average workplace earnings. Average here refers to the mean. The median is typically preferred, but data is unavailable over the timeframe required.

<sup>72</sup> In line with ONS guidance, house price affordability has been calculated as; average house sale price / annualized average workplace earnings. Average here refers to the mean. The median is typically preferred, but data is unavailable over the timeframe required.

**Figure 12.7.5: Rent-house price ratio and real interest rates in England, 1971-2019****Table 12.7.5: Rent-house price ratio and real interest rates in England, 1971-2019**

	At 1971	At 2019	Change, 1971-2019	% change, 1971-2019
Rent/house price ratio	0.01	0.00	0.00	-57.6%
Real interest rate	2.96	-1.86	-4.82	-162.7%

Source: ONS, Bank of England, Cambridge Econometrics

As highlighted in Figure 12.7.5 and Table 12.7.5, one candidate explanation<sup>73</sup> is that the persistent decline in interest rates (in both nominal and real terms) during the 1990's and early 2000's, and sharply accelerated following the 2008-09 recession, has contributed and since maintained inflated house prices whilst subduing rental prices. In theory, this can happen for a variety of reasons; in a low interest rate environment:

- Landlords have to charge less to cover their mortgage costs, **reducing rental prices**
- It is easier and more affordable for potential house buyers to get a mortgage, hence the demand for renting decreases, **reducing rental prices and increasing house prices**
- Housing becomes a better and more attractive investment option, for both consumers and investors (both domestic and international), **increasing house prices**

Of course, this has implications for price/affordability-focused housebuilding strategies; with house prices increasingly sensitive to and determined by a centralised monetary system, even the most substantial and well targeted strategies may not deliver the desired change in prices/increase in affordability. However, this also means that the correct and effective targeting of independent, locally-specific factors becomes ever more important for local policymakers – which are considered in the next chapter.

<sup>73</sup> For instance, as observed by the [OECD \(2011\)](#) and [Oxford Economics \(2016\)](#)

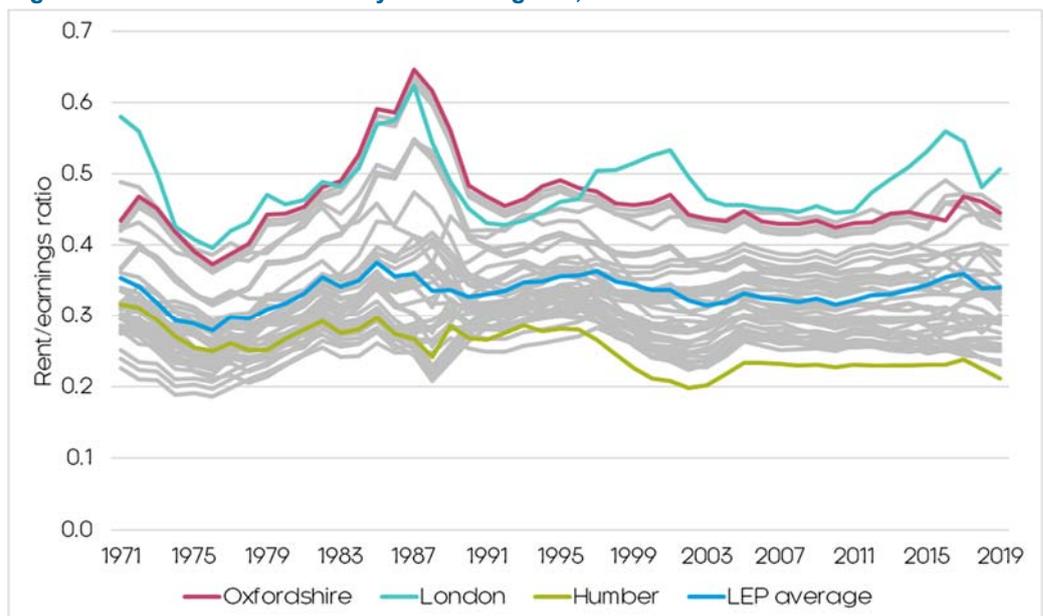
## Building the local evidence

Having considered the national context and established some of the key drivers and determinants of house prices and affordability, it is important to consider how these correspond at the subnational level, and what role local effects play in determining local prices and affordability. Notably, at this level much greater variability and functionality can be seen in some of the aforementioned variables, reflecting independent, locally-specific characteristics and factors driving and determining local markets.

Though housing market data is available for regional markets (e.g. the South East NUTS1 Region), which are relatively functional and widely reported in subnational analysis, these geographies often fail to capture the unique and localised markets – and thus affordability challenges - within them; for instance, though both within the North West region, Manchester’s housing market and affordability challenge is markedly different from Cumbria’s.

Therefore, the following analysis considers the evidence at the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) level<sup>74</sup>, which comprises 38 intra-regional areas broadly analogous to functional economic areas (which often overlay with functional housing market areas). Though more detailed geographies are available (e.g. Unitary and Local Authority areas), these often map poorly to functional housing market areas, and decrease data quality and availability.

**Figure 12.7.6: Rental affordability across England, 1971-2019**



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics

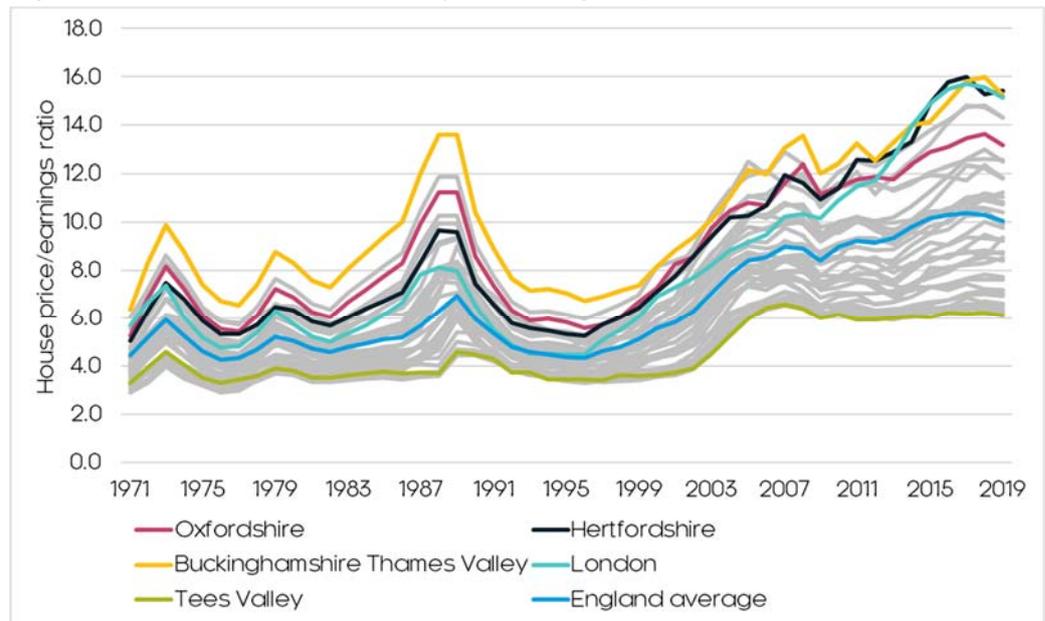
To begin with, Figure 12.7.6 considers the rental affordability ratios of the 38 LEP areas. Unsurprisingly, London is a relative outlier, with the highest rental affordability ratio (least affordable for renting) in the country; the average London worker can expect to spend at least half their gross earnings on rent. This is underscored by the Humber, which has the lowest rental affordability ratio (most affordable for renting) in the country; the average Humber worker could expect to spend only a fifth of their earnings on rent.

<sup>74</sup> Defined here as excluding overlap areas

However, what is most notable from the data is that for most if not all LEP areas, current rental affordability ratios are not unusually high or trending notably upwards when compared across the whole period – even London for instance had lower rental affordability in the early 1970s and mid-1980s than what it does today. Again, when considering rental costs are supposed to represent the ‘true cost’ of housing for consumers, it is hard to justify the current prescription of a “housing crisis”, even in less affordable parts of the country such as London and the South East.

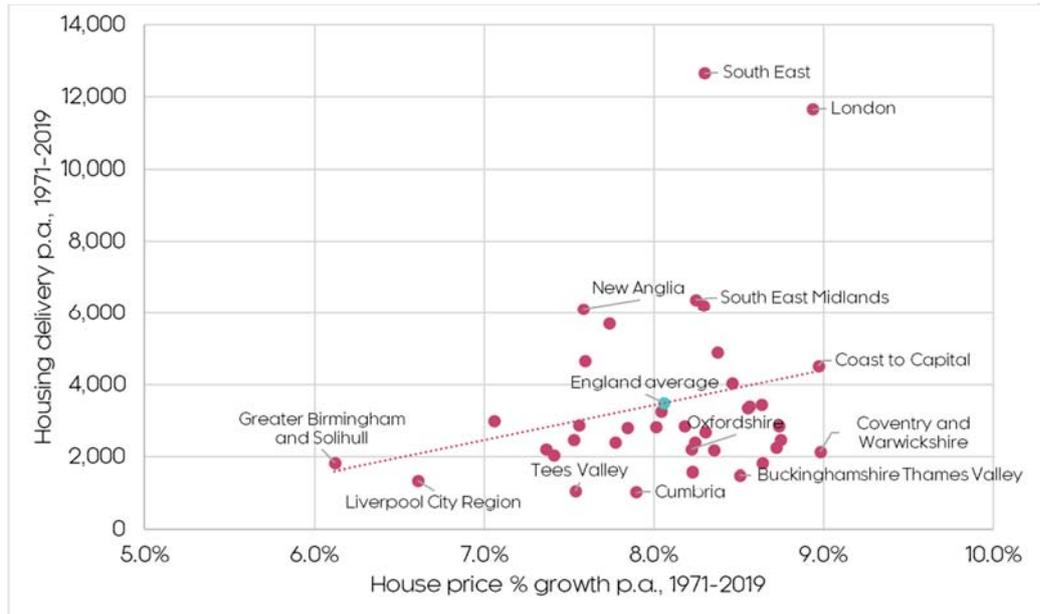
Figure 12.7.7 replicates this analysis but for housing affordability. Here we see much greater regional variance and dispersion in affordability ratios; the average worker in London, Hertfordshire, and Buckinghamshire for instance can expect to spend 15x their annual earnings on purchasing a home. For the average worker in the Tees Valley, this more than halves to 6x times annual earnings. As with rental affordability though, what is of particular interest is the movement in these ratios over time.

**Figure 12.7.7: House price affordability across England, 1971-2019**



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics

Whereas a number of ‘Home County’ LEP areas have had persistently high housing affordability ratios, London was only mid-ranking until the early 2000’s. Many areas saw their fastest increase in housing affordability ratios (i.e. a decrease in affordability) over the late 1990’s to early 2000’s, but since the 2008-09 financial crisis, affordability ratios have stayed stubbornly high for almost all areas (even those weaker performing economically), which is in contrast to previous recession and recoveries e.g. early 1990’s recession, early 1980’s recession and mid-1970’s recession.

**Figure 12.7.8: Housing delivery and house price growth across England, 1971-2019**

Source: ONS, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics

One frequently proposed solution to counteract or at least subdue rapid local house price growth and decreasing affordability is to increase local housing delivery. However, as Figure 12.7.8 shows, it should be emphasised that there is actually a positive correlation between housing delivery and house price growth: the LEP areas that have built the most houses are also amongst those to have experienced the fastest growth in house prices.

Of course, this doesn't mean that building more homes will increase the rate of house price growth and further decrease affordability - high house prices likely attract and incentivise further housing growth, though the relationship is probably bi-directional. But this doesn't help the argument that increased local housing delivery it is an effective method of reversing or even slowing it – as with many things, it is much more complicated than that.

Figure 12.7.10: Housing delivery and employment growth across England, 1971-2019

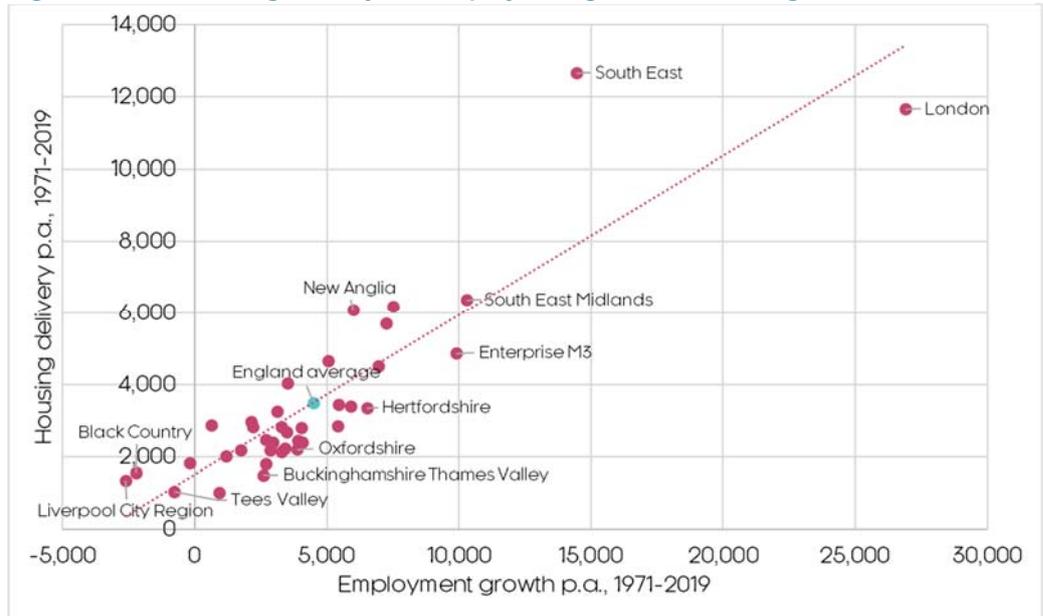
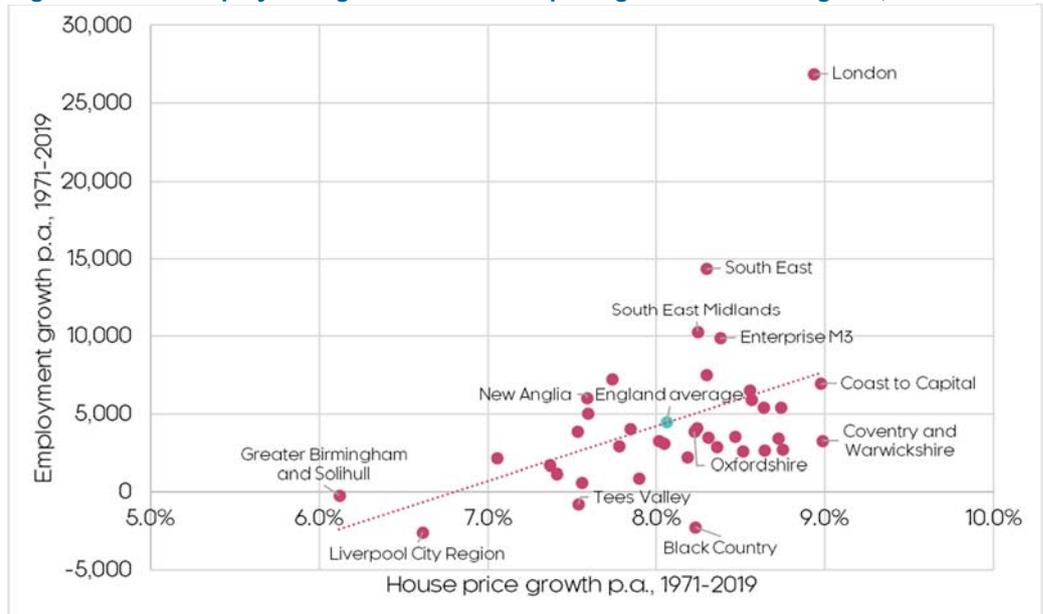


Figure 12.7.10: Employment growth and house price growth across England, 1971-2019

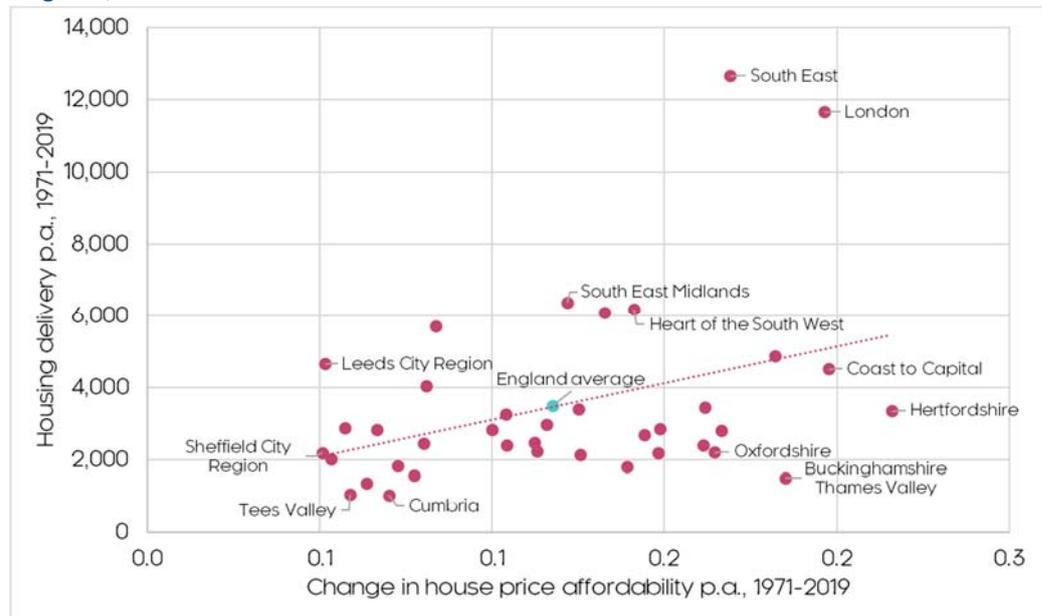


Source: ONS, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics

One of the reasons for this is because housing delivery tends to correlate with employment growth (as shown in Figure 12.7.10), and employment growth correlates strongly with house price growth (as shown in Figure 12.7.10). Broadly speaking, more housing means more people, leading to a growth in both labour supply and demand for local services. Both of these are then likely to stimulate additional employment growth.

For instance, when looking at the relationship between employment growth and house price growth (Figure 12.7.10) it is likely that additional employment growth drives additional demand for housing in the area, putting upward pressure on house prices. Thus the downward pressure created by additional supply coming onto market, is likely to be partly, or maybe even wholly, cancelled out by this upward pressure.

**Figure 12.7.11: Housing delivery and changes in house price affordability across England, 1971-2019**



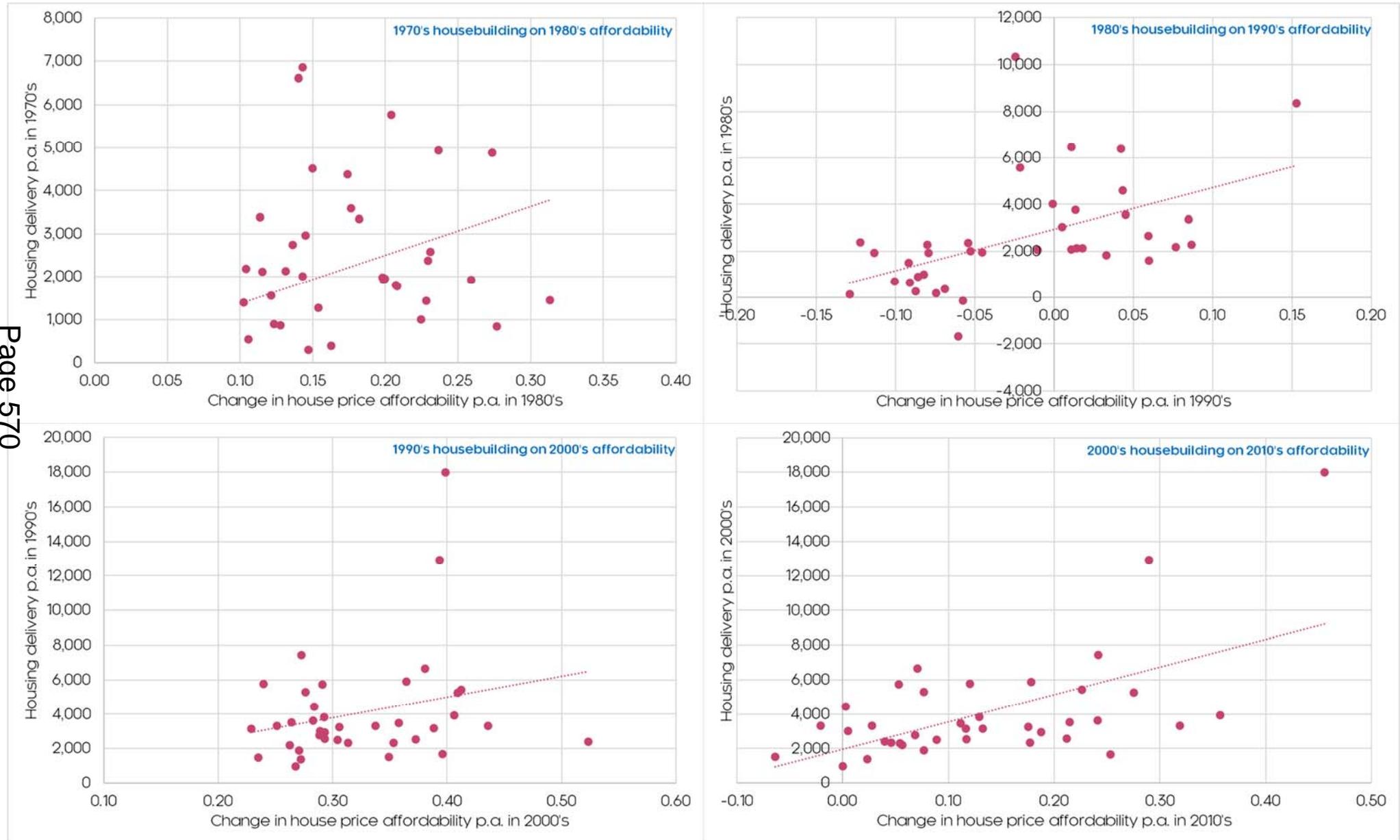
Source: ONS, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics

As Figure 12.7.11 shows, the same positive correlation that is seen between an areas housing delivery and house price growth is also seen between an areas housing delivery and its change in affordability (ratios); LEP areas that have built more homes have typically seen a greater increase in affordability ratios (decrease in affordability). Again, this shows us that within local areas, housebuilding alone will not be sufficient to tackle affordability pressures.

Of course, housebuilding at time  $t$  is not an immediate input into house prices at time  $t$  – there is often a lagged effect. To try and better understand potential causality of this relationship, Figure 12.7.12 (presented over the following page; 194) considers the lagged relationship between housing delivery and affordability changes a decade later – do the LEP areas that build the most houses see affordability ratios deteriorate (i.e. the area becomes more affordable) the following decade?

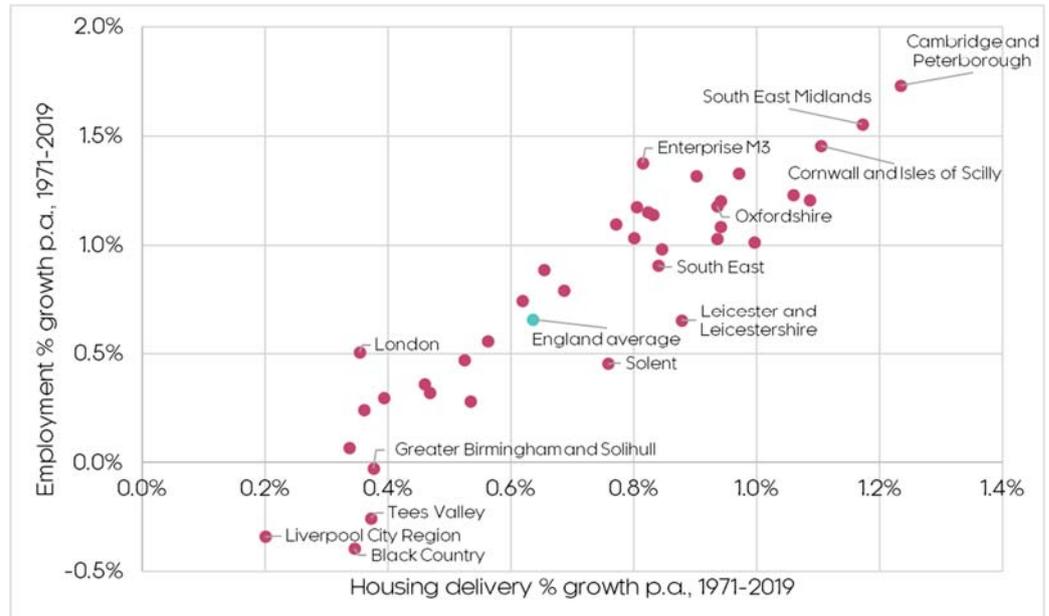
Across the time series, we continue to see a clear and positive relationship between higher housing delivery in an area and an increase in housing affordability ratios (a decrease in affordability). Generally, this relationship has also become more significant over time, though this has not been a continuous process, with the relationship weakening slightly in the 1990's and 2000's – a time where many areas saw rapid increases in their affordability ratios, as housing and financial markets became increasingly liberalised.

Figure 12.7.12: The lagged relationship between housing delivery and changes in house price affordability across England, 1970's-2010's



Source: ONS, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics

**Figure 12.7.13: Employment growth and housing delivery growth across England, 1971-2019**



Source: ONS, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics

As we have seen previously, there is a strong correlation between housing growth and employment growth. So what areas have grown the fastest since 1971, and how might this have impacted on affordability? As Figure 12.7.13 shows, Cambridge and Peterborough and neighbouring South East Midlands have emerged as the two fastest growing areas. Notably, Southern or rural LEP areas have seen faster growth than Northern or urban LEP areas, whilst London has actually grown comparatively slowly over this time period.

**Figure 12.7.14: Employment growth and housing delivery growth across England, 2009-2019**



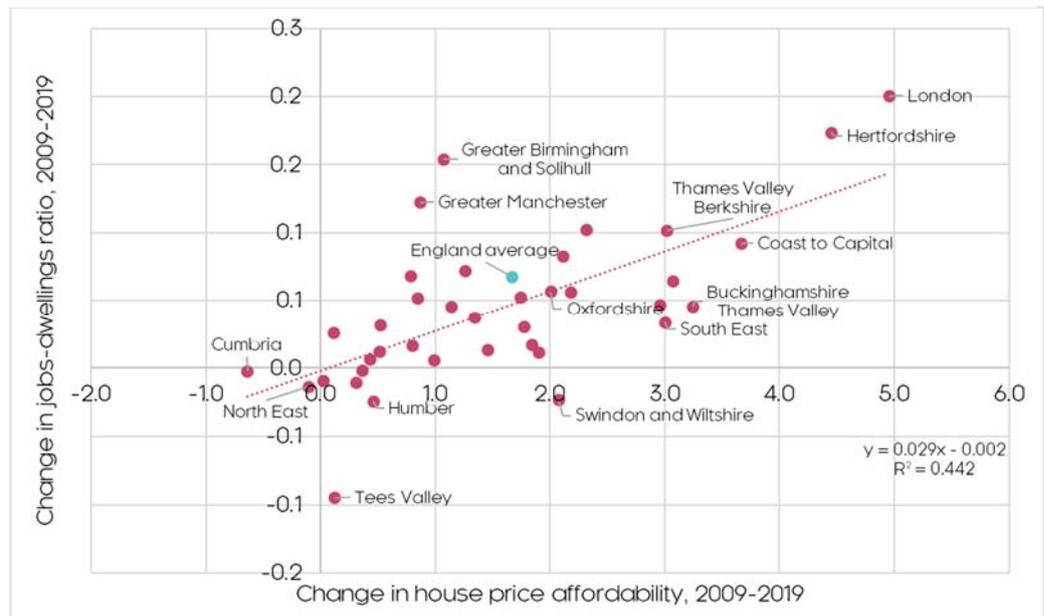
Source: ONS, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics

Most of these trends still hold even when looking at just look at the last decade, as shown in Figure 12.7.14. Now Cambridge and Peterborough and the South East Midlands are joined by Oxfordshire as the fastest growing LEP

areas in England. Southern and rural LEP areas are still typically growing faster than Northern and urban LEP areas. Growth in London has also accelerated, particularly in employment. Some Midland and Northern LEP areas have also seen robust employment growth, but slower housing growth.

However, this scatter plot is notably less tightly bound over the shorter time period, raising the question of whether differences in the ratio of housing delivery to job creation affect affordability?

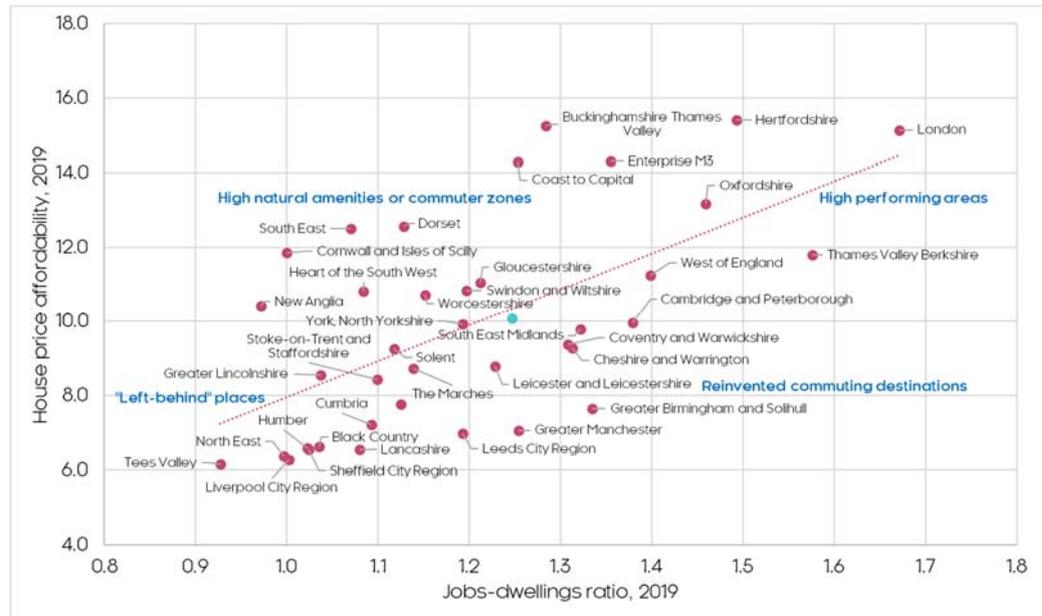
**Figure 12.7.15: Changes to jobs-dwellings ratios and house price affordability across England, 2009-2019**



Source: ONS, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics

Indeed, as shown in Figure 12.7.15, LEP areas that have created jobs faster than they have built houses over the past decade have on average seen an increase their affordability ratio (that is, a decrease in affordability). Therefore, when considering the role of local effects in determining prices, it is the interaction between employment growth and housing delivery that can contribute to determining the affordability of an area. Therefore, even given the trends identified at the national level, local economic context still matters for affordability.

Figure 12.7.16: Jobs-dwellings ratios and house price affordability across England, 2019



Source: ONS, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics

Reflecting the strength of this relationship, areas with similar characteristics and fundamentals also largely cluster together – as shown in Figure 12.7.16 - enabling thematic groupings to be identified:

- **‘Left-behind’ places:** areas experiencing long-term economic underperformance (low-growth, high unemployment, low skills), driving down prices (relative to wages) and jobs densities. Dwelling totals can appear inflated due to a higher proportion of vacant dwellings. Examples include Tees Valley, Liverpool City Region, and Humber.
- **High natural amenities or commuter zones:** typically rural and/or coastal areas with relatively low jobs densities but higher than expected prices. The latter is driven by higher local amenity values in these areas (often proxied by high tourism activity) and/or commuting proximity to major urban centres. Examples include Dorset, South East, and New Anglia.
- **Reinvented commuting destinations:** a diverse grouping of areas, historically stable or underperforming, now reinvented as leading regional economic centres with high rates of in-commuting. This results in higher jobs densities but comparatively lower – but often increasing – prices (relative to wages). Examples include Greater Manchester, Greater Birmingham and Solihull, and South East Midlands.
- **High performing areas:** areas with highly successfully and competitive economies, typically regional commuting centres, resulting in very high jobs densities. This drives substantial demand for dwellings, which alongside typically high local amenity values, results in higher prices (relative to wages). Largely found in the South, examples include London, Oxfordshire, and Hertfordshire.

Such categorisations can be beneficial for understanding local housing markets, and resultantly the effective shaping of local housing strategies.

## Appendix E: Standard Method Appendix

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Provided below is a copy of the Standard Method Appendix produced by Icen Projects Limited in March 2021, referenced in *Chapter 7 Oxfordshire's Housing Need Using the Standard Method*.

## OXFORDSHIRE'S MINIMUM LOCAL HOUSING NEED

The Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment (OGNA) has been principally prepared in 2020 and early 2021. On 25th March 2021, updated affordability ratios for 2020 were published by the Office for National Statistics. This short note explores the implications of these affordability ratios on the standard method local housing need in Oxfordshire, and the constituent authorities within it, updating the standard method calculations in the OGNA to take account of the latest data

The OGNA Phase 1 Report sets out in Section 7 that the standard method generated a minimum housing need for 3,350 dwellings per annum across Oxfordshire, and an uncapped need for 3,350 dwellings per annum (Table 7.2.2). It however identifies some issues with the input demographic projections, which result in a slight adjustment to this. It concludes on this basis by identifying a minimum need for 3,386 dwellings per annum using the adjusted baseline demographic projections in the standard method calculation (Table 7.3.1). The report then goes on to overlay scenarios for economic growth.

The local housing need figure derived from the standard method changes annually in accordance with the first two steps of the standard method calculation including (1) the 10 year period over which to assess household growth and (2) the median workplace-based affordability ratio, which is published in or around March each year. This note addresses the implications of these factors and in particular considers the effect of using the latest affordability ratio data.

The Table below sets out the latest local housing need figure for Oxfordshire using the current year to calculate the projected average annual household growth over a 10 year period - in line with step one of the standard method – and then applying the latest median workplace-based affordability ratios which were published on 25th March 2021 in line with step two.

	Cherwell	Oxford	South Ox	White Horse	West Ox	County
Step One: Setting the Baseline						
Household Growth (avg., p.a.), 2021-2031 (2014-based)	537	556	412	486	402	2,393
Step Two: Affordability Adjustment						
Median Workplace-Based Affordability Ratio, 2020	9.3	11.42	12.07	8.94	10.81	
Adjustment Factor	133%	146%	150%	131%	143%	
Minimum Local Housing Need (uncapped)	715	814	620	636	573	3,358

The standard method (using the 2014-based Household Projections) now generates a lower baseline need than that shown in the OGNA. However given the OGNA's conclusions regarding the demographic projections, greater emphasis should be given to the calculations using the adjusted baseline demographic projections. These are set out in the table below.

	Cherwell	Oxford	South Ox	White Horse	West Ox	County
Step One: Setting the Baseline						
Household Growth (avg., p.a.), 2021-2031 (Adjusted Baseline)	589	526	424	557	261	2356
Step Two: Affordability Adjustment						
Median Workplace-Based Affordability Ratio, 2020	9.3	11.42	12.07	8.94	10.81	
Adjustment Factor	133%	146%	150%	131%	143%	
Minimum Local Housing Need (uncapped)	784	769	637	729	372	3291

The OGNA Phase 1 Report treats the calculation using the adjusted demographic projections as the core standard method scenario in drawing conclusions. The updated data points to a very modest difference in the scale of need in this scenario – 3291 dwellings per annum compared to 3386 dwellings per annum, a difference of 3% - representing a scale of difference which does not represent a meaningful or statistically significant change. Icen consider on this basis that there is no substantive impact of the latest data on the OGNA's findings.

Oxfordshire Growth Board

# Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment

## Phase 2 Report



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## Introduction and Purpose

The Oxfordshire Councils<sup>1</sup> are working together to prepare the Oxfordshire Plan which will set out a development strategy for Oxfordshire to 2050.

To support the preparation of the Plan, the Oxfordshire Councils have commissioned Cambridge Econometrics and Icen Projects to prepare the Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment (OGNA). The OGNA is intended to provide an integrated evidence base to help the Oxfordshire Councils identify the appropriate level and distributions of housing and employment over the period to 2050. The core objectives of the OGNA are:

- To identify a strategic level, long-term, robust and transparent methodology for assessing Oxfordshire's housing needs over the period to 2050
- To provide a detailed commentary (including the baseline position) on Oxfordshire's housing and employment market, including demographic and economic dynamics and any other key drivers of housing need and how this may change in the period to 2050.
- To identify a range of credible and robust housing need scenarios for Oxfordshire.
- To establish an informed understanding of the implications for sustainable housing growth in Oxfordshire, of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc and of any other strategically significant infrastructure and growth strategies, including proposals for strategic growth in other areas which are likely to have a significant impact in Oxfordshire.
- To identify an appropriate functional economic market area and provide an assessment of employment land requirements.
- To advise on how the Oxfordshire Plan should respond to the uncertainty associated with long-term planning for strategic housing and employment provision.

The methodology adopted, which considers scenarios for future growth in Oxfordshire, responds to this and in particular the strategic and long-term nature of the Oxfordshire Plan.

### 1.1 Context and nature of the Assessment

The Oxfordshire Plan will be a joint statutory spatial plan which covers a 30-year plan period from 2020 to 2050. The Plan is intended to be strategic, focusing on matters such as an overall spatial strategy for development, the integration of new development and investment in infrastructure, and how these can help to improve the quality of life for everyone.

<sup>1</sup> The commissioning authorities comprise Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council.

The Plan differs from those being prepared in many other areas across England, in particular:

- The Oxfordshire Plan is a strategic plan which is being prepared on a cross-boundary basis spanning the county of Oxfordshire;
- It is looking at a much longer timeframe – a 30-year period to 2050 - than many Local Plans which typically look 15-20 years into the future. This raises issues regarding the reliability of traditional approaches to assessing development needs in some instances;
- It considers the inter-relationship between the economy and spatial planning activities;
- Oxfordshire falls within the Oxford-Milton-Keynes-Cambridge Arc which has been identified by the National Infrastructure Commission and supported by Government. There is a need for the Oxfordshire Plan to consider the strategic context provided by this, including the emerging spatial framework for the Arc, along with other Government growth initiatives and policy. Preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan also provides the opportunity to influence the Arc and shape the future strategy for this strategic corridor.

In addition, one of the major advantages of looking long-term and strategically at the strategy for development and growth is the ability to properly coordinate new development and infrastructure investment and consider what strategic infrastructure might be needed to support growth in the long-term.

These particular circumstances provide a background to the OGNA to which the Assessment seeks to respond, and are explored in greater detail in the *Phase 1 Report*.

## 1.2 This report

To ensure the preparation and analysis of an integrated evidence base that effectively addresses the core objectives of the OGNA, the Assessment has been divided into three complementary reports, broadly corresponding to three phases of work.

The **Phase 1 Report** provides overall growth need figures for housing and employment in Oxfordshire to 2050. It profiles local housing market, demographic, economic and commercial property market dynamics, all within the strategic policy environment. These factors are then brought together to provide trajectories for future housing and employment land needs, and resultant high-level implications for commuting and affordability.

Following on from this, the **Phase 2 Report**, presented here, considers a range of high-level scenarios for the distribution of housing and employment across Oxfordshire. The purpose of this is to aid decision-makers in understanding of the implications of alternative spatial choices. It does not seek to identify specific options or priorities for development, but rather explores the potential scale and implications of different approaches.

Finally, to reflect the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic during the development of the OGNA, a **Covid-19 Impacts Addendum** has been produced. The Addendum gauges the probable impact and legacy of the

pandemic on Oxfordshire, and the resultant implications for the evidence and observations presented in the OGNA (which largely predate the pandemic).

Therefore, it is recommended that the analysis presented in this report is read alongside the other supporting documentation of the OGNA, given their complementary coverage and interconnectedness.

In addition, a stand-alone **Executive Summary**, which highlights and brings together the key observations and messages from the three respective reports, has also been produced.

### 1.3 Report structure

Following on from the evidence and analysis presented in the *Phase 1 Report*, the second phase of the OGNA broadly comprises three stages of work:

- The first involves identifying and assessing the Oxfordshire Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA), including the definition of functionally meaningful sub-areas ('Zones'). This allows for more precise, in-depth exploration and illustration of employment and housing distributions to accompany the *Phase 1 Report* trajectories.
- The second stage has sought to provide this analysis, distributing the Oxfordshire-wide employment projections (derived and presented in the *Phase 1 Report*) by functional sub-area to 2050. For housing, five theoretical spatial scenarios, informed by the functional sub-areas, have also been developed and tested to distribute housing need from the *Phase 1 Report*.
- Finally, the third stage, bringing together the evidence and analysis of the previous stages, considers the implications for commuting and transport use (including differences in modal share and private vehicle trips) of the employment and housing distribution scenarios.

The remainder of this report is broadly structured around these three stages, starting with a definition and overview of the Oxfordshire FEMA and its functional sub-areas, followed by an exploration of the potential spatial distributions of economic and housing growth within the FEMA, before considering the potential implications for commuting and transport at a detailed spatial level. A summary conclusion and the accompanying appendices can be found at the end of the report.

## 2 The Oxfordshire Functional Economic Market Area

### 2.1 Introduction

Functional Economic Market Areas (FEMAs) are designed to capture the wider spatial level at which an economic market operates, given that economic activity typically extends beyond local administrative boundaries. A universal definition of FEMAs does not exist, as each local economy has different characteristics that are more relevant for inclusion in the definition of a functional economic geography.

Factors that could be considered and combined to define FEMAs include commuting patterns and the transport network; labour, housing and retail markets; supply chains; administrative areas; catchment areas of facilities providing cultural and social well-being.

This chapter presents the methodology used to define the Oxfordshire FEMA and describes the different spatial levels within it, followed by an overview of the main characteristics and trends of the FEMA. This provides a foundation for a more precise and in-depth exploration of potential spatial distributions of economic growth and housing need in Oxfordshire.

### 2.2 What is a Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA)?

When considering local and regional economies, one of the key features of interest is the spatial distribution of the economy, or the way in which different economic interactions are transacted at different spatial scales. There is an appetite within the economic and public policy spheres to define, measure and categorise these interactions as being associated with discrete spatial areas, and as such the notion of a “*Functional Economic Market Area*” or “*FEMA*”, originates.

The Government’s Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) on FEMAs identifies no standard approach to defining a functional economic market area. However, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG, now MHCLG) previously provided more complete guidance on identifying a Functional Economic Market Area<sup>2</sup>, which they define in simple terms as being “*the area over which the local economy and its key markets operate*”.

Although this theoretical definition of a FEMA is clear, the pragmatic steps required to identify one empirically are ambiguous. As the DCLG guidance goes on to say (page 3):

*“There is no universal approach to defining FEMAs. A city’s labour market area and hospital catchment area, for example, are unlikely to have similar boundaries. Ideally, FEMAs would be defined on the basis of several markets or catchment areas which best reflect the drivers of the local economy.”*

<sup>2</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government. (2010). Functional Economic Market Areas: An economic note

DCLG goes on to propose four key markets that need to be considered:

- Labour Markets
- Housing Markets
- Service Markets
- Firm to Firm Supply Chains

Transport networks are also identified by the DCLG as a relevant consideration. Nevertheless, there is an argument that a transport network is not an economic market and to include it would be to introduce an element of double counting of its influence – as transport networks will influence the distribution of the four primary markets, rather than contributing directly to the local economy. These thematic areas also reflect those identified in the Planning Practice Guidance.

Any definition of a regional or city-scale FEMA must be understood both within the context of the presence of nationally significant tradable sectors within the economy and their position within larger national and international markets, and also to the extent that it will necessarily contain a series of smaller clusters of activity within which more localised transactions take place.

However, there is no single spatial scale around which this can be defined in a straightforward manner, but rather as a hierarchy of scales, over which the separate spatial patterns of transactions between workers, firms and consumers play out.

In order to construct an overall spatial definition of a FEMA, a judgement call is required as to the relative weightings of the four markets and their particular spatial characteristics. In reality, all local economic areas operate within multiple economic markets simultaneously, and any solid line drawn on a map must be understood as a useful approximation within this context.

Finally, the 2010 DCLG note recognises the importance of being able to approximate FEMAs to existing administrative boundaries where possible for reasons of strategy and policy design and implementation. A further consideration is data availability and quality, which are often if not exclusively produced along administrative boundaries.

### 2.3 Defining the Oxfordshire FEMA

#### Spatial areas within Oxfordshire

Definition of the FEMA starts by identifying the economic and residential centre of the county of Oxfordshire, which constitutes two concentric spatial areas, as shown in Figure 2.3.4:

- **Oxford City Centre:** the area with the highest concentration of economic activity, as well as central urban amenities.
- **Oxford City Fringe:** the area surrounding the City Centre, characterised by moderate employment and population density, a high degree of integration with and connectivity to the City Centre, and the presence of important urban fringe sites, such as science parks and large suburbs.

The remaining portion of the County is currently shown as the *Wider County*. This is characterised as the spatial area with stronger economic links to Oxford City Centre and City Fringe than to any other neighbouring settlement, for example Reading, Swindon or Milton Keynes. The following analysis

describes in more detail how the different spatial levels within Oxfordshire are defined.

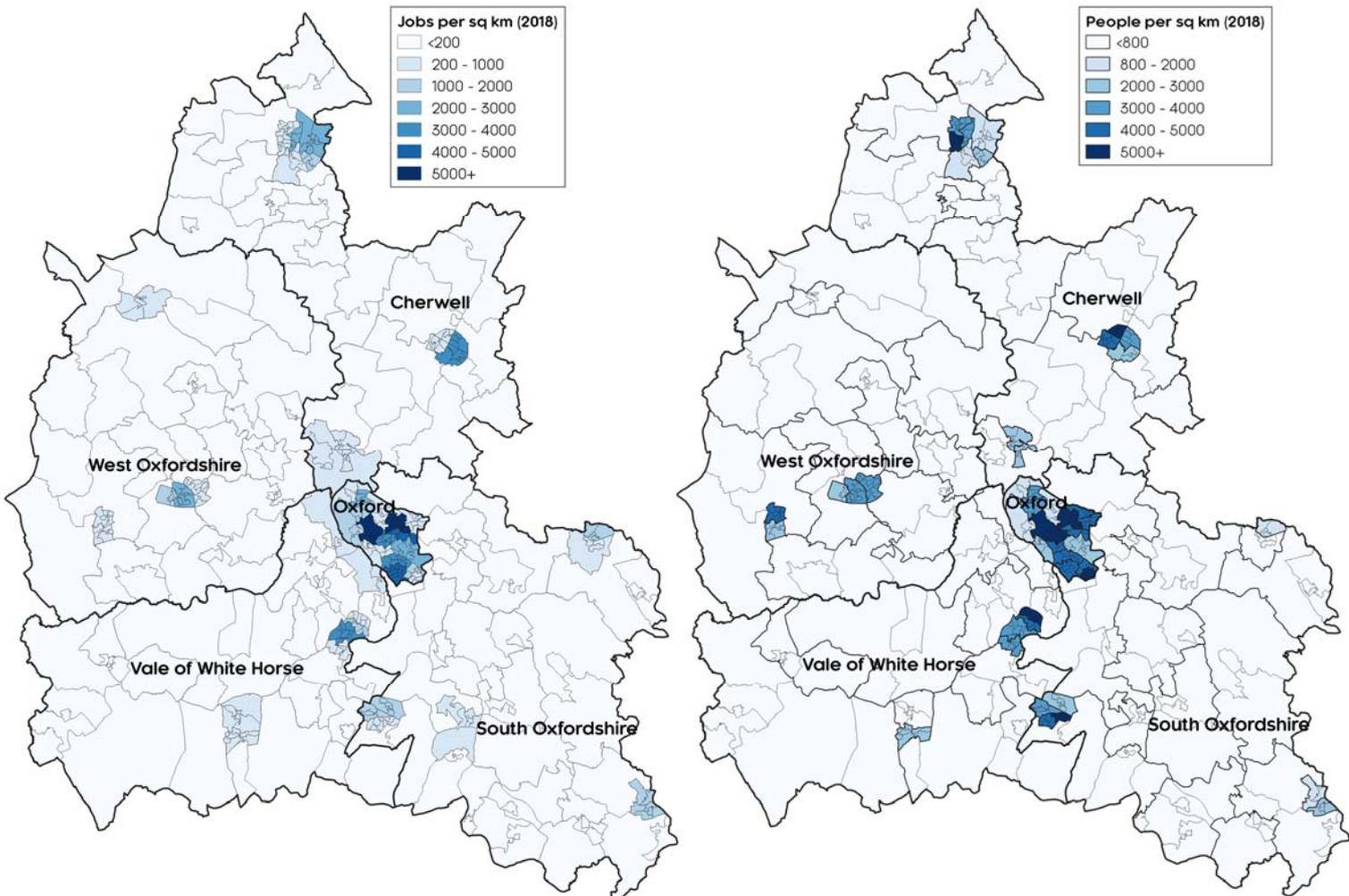
*Population and employment density in Oxfordshire*

Figure 2.3.1 maps population and employment density by Lower Super Output Area (LSOA – broadly equivalent to a neighbourhood<sup>3</sup>) in Oxfordshire. It is evident that the Oxford local authority district (LAD) is the economic and residential centre of the county, while smaller settlements with (relatively) high concentrations of either/both economic and residential activity include:

- Bicester and Banbury in Cherwell
- Witney and Carterton in West Oxfordshire
- Abingdon in the Vale of White Horse
- Didcot in South Oxfordshire<sup>4</sup>

Figure 2.3.1 also shows that employment is more concentrated and less evenly distributed in Oxfordshire compared to population, with fewer high-density areas outside the Oxford LAD. These are also located primarily in or close to the main urban centres listed above.

**Figure 2.3.1: Population and employment density by LSOA in Oxfordshire, 2018**



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

<sup>3</sup> For an overview of how these geographies are defined see: [ONS Census geography](#)

<sup>4</sup> Note that Didcot's main employment area, Milton Park, is located in Vale of White Horse

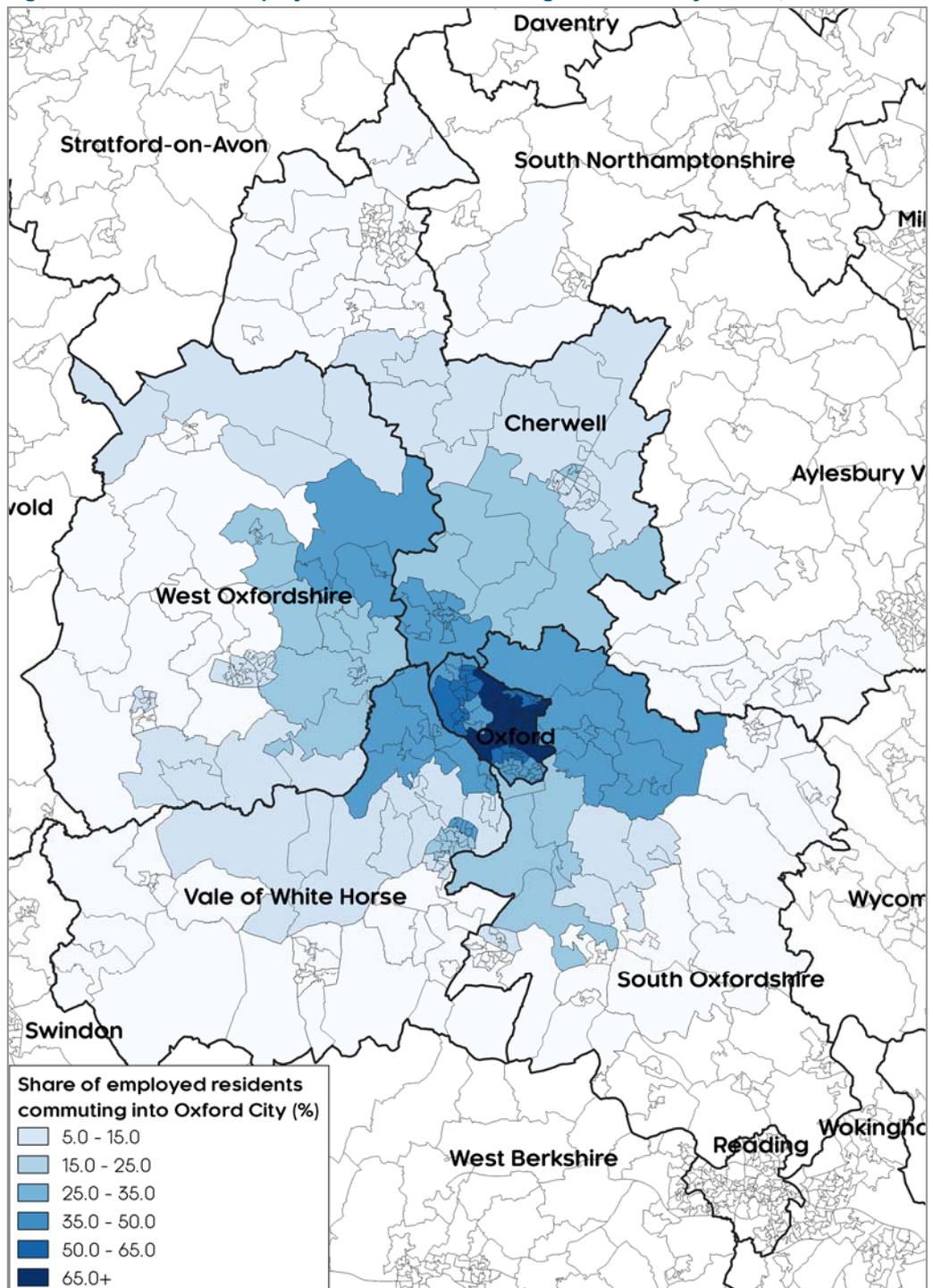
*Definition of the City Centre*

Based on the above analysis, the City Centre has been defined as the combination of contiguous LSOAs within the Oxford LAD with an employment density of at least 3,000 jobs per km<sup>2</sup>. A map of the City Centre’s extent is presented in Figure 2.3.4.

*Definition of the City Fringe*

Figure 2.3.2 shows the share of employed residents that work in the Oxford City Centre for each LSOA within Oxfordshire. This provides the baseline for defining the City Fringe, with areas of high connectivity to the City Centre – defined as LSOAs with at least 15% of employed residents commuting to the City Centre for work – providing the initial scope for the City. Note that Census 2011 data is the most recently available source of detailed origin-destination

**Figure 2.3.2: Share of employed residents commuting to Oxford City Centre, 2011**



Source: ONS (Census 2011), Cambridge Econometrics.

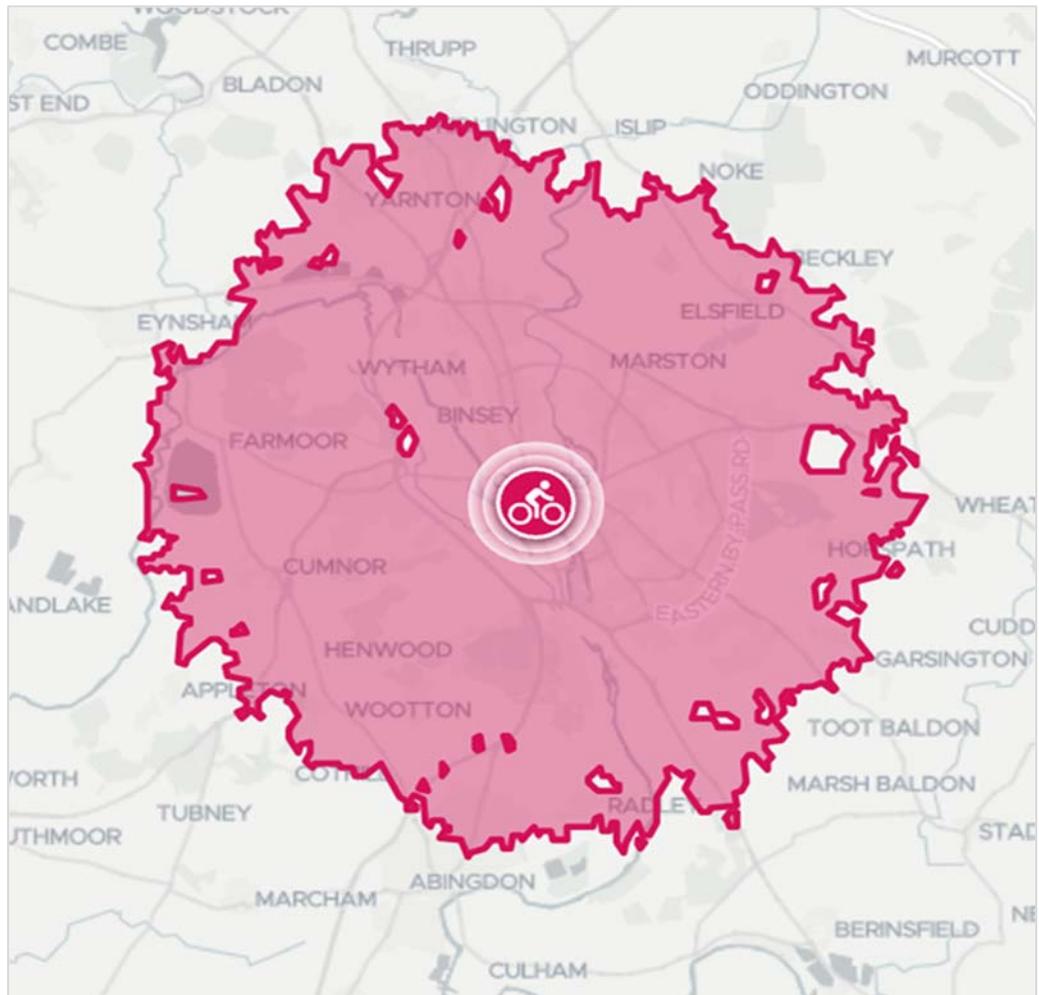
commuting data, though significant jumps or changes in the data are rare between Census years.

In order to further enhance understanding of areas with high accessibility to the central market in Oxford, Figure 2.3.3 shows the areas that are within a radius of 30 minutes cycling from the City Centre. This is a simple proxy meant to capture areas that are intrinsically close to the City Centre, rather than well-connected to it.

Notably, this area within this radius stretches beyond the contiguous urban area to include some significant portions of green belt land, alongside several important urban assets in and around Oxford City Centre, including the:

- University of Oxford
- Oxford University Hospitals (notably John Radcliffe and Churchill)
- Westgate Oxford Shopping Centre
- Oxford Railway Station
- Oxford Parkway Station
- Oxford Brookes University
- Oxford Science Park
- Oxford Business Park
- MINI Manufacturing Plant
- Begbroke Science Park
- London-Oxford Airport

**Figure 2.3.3: Area within 30 minutes cycling of the centre of Oxford**

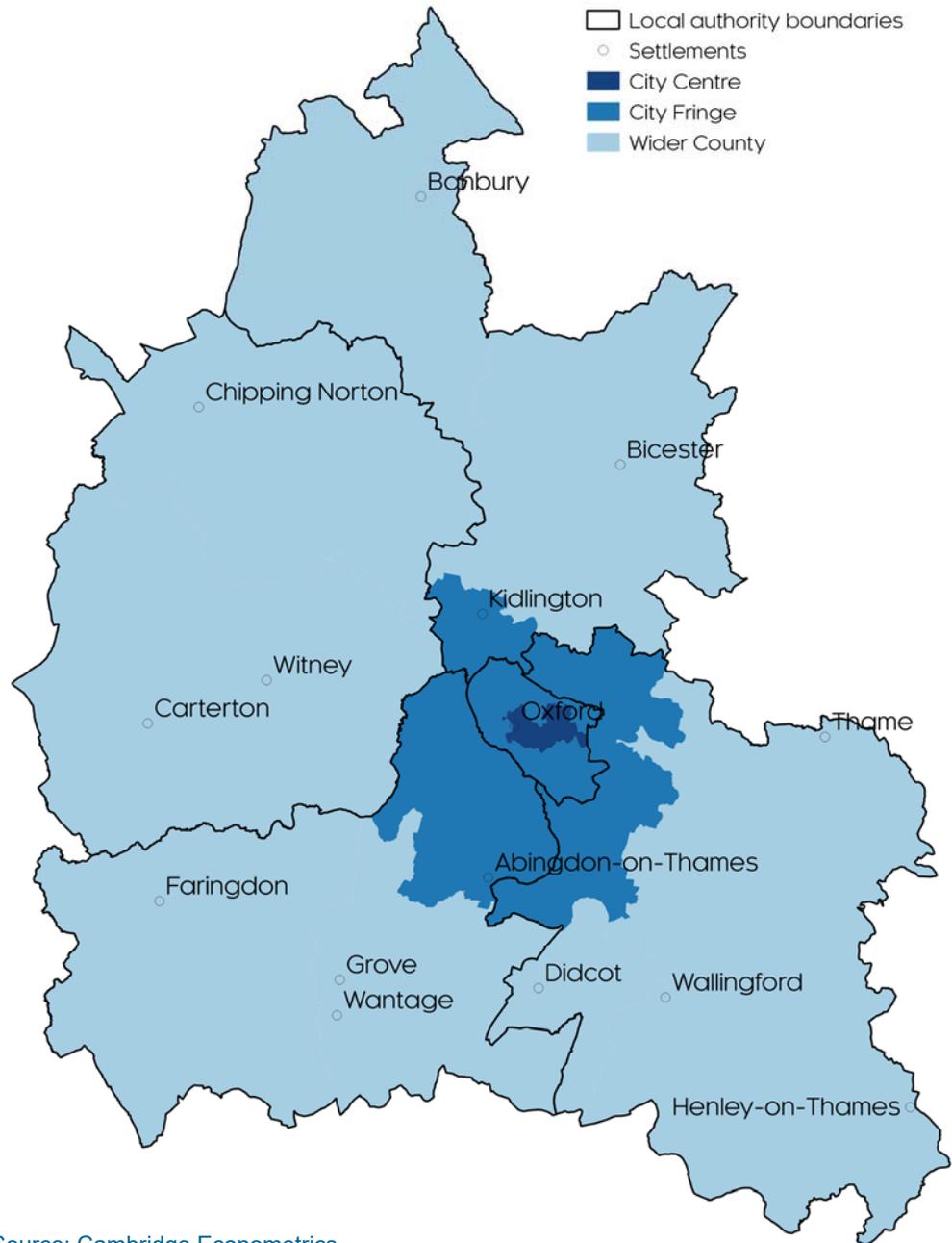


Source: Cambridge Econometrics, [app.traveltimeplatform.com](http://app.traveltimeplatform.com).

Based on Figure 2.3.3, the set of areas is expanded to include in the baseline City Fringe definition (informed by Figure 2.3.2) to include five LSOAs in the Vale of White Horse and one LSOAs in South Oxfordshire. This incorporates the wider functional urban area of the Oxford economy.

Figure 2.3.4 illustrates the primary spatial levels within Oxfordshire; the City Centre and City Fringe - as defined above - and the Wider County – encompassing the areas within Oxfordshire not included in the first two definitions. This broadly covers the dependent economic hinterland surrounding Oxford.

**Figure 2.3.4: Primary spatial levels of the Oxfordshire FEMA**



Source: Cambridge Econometrics.

**Local markets analysis**

Defining the Oxford City Centre and City Fringe has been the first step to identifying the Oxfordshire FEMA. The definition of the FEMA is also based on analysis of the local labour and housing markets, as well as the availability

and distribution of public services around Oxford City, which are explored in more detail below.

*Labour market*

Obtaining a grasp of the extent of the local labour market is key when defining a FEMA. This can be achieved by analysing commuting flows of employees between different areas. A high level of commuting flows between areas is an indication that they belong to the same labour market.

Figure 2.3.2 illustrated commuting flows from each Oxfordshire LSOA into Oxford City. Apart from some LSOAs in the periphery parts of Oxfordshire, there is a significant degree of commuting into Oxford City from all around the county – for many areas outside the City Fringe, on average at least 1 in 10 residents commute into the City Centre. As expected, commuting numbers drop as the distance and travel time to Oxford City increases; however, the decline is quite smooth.

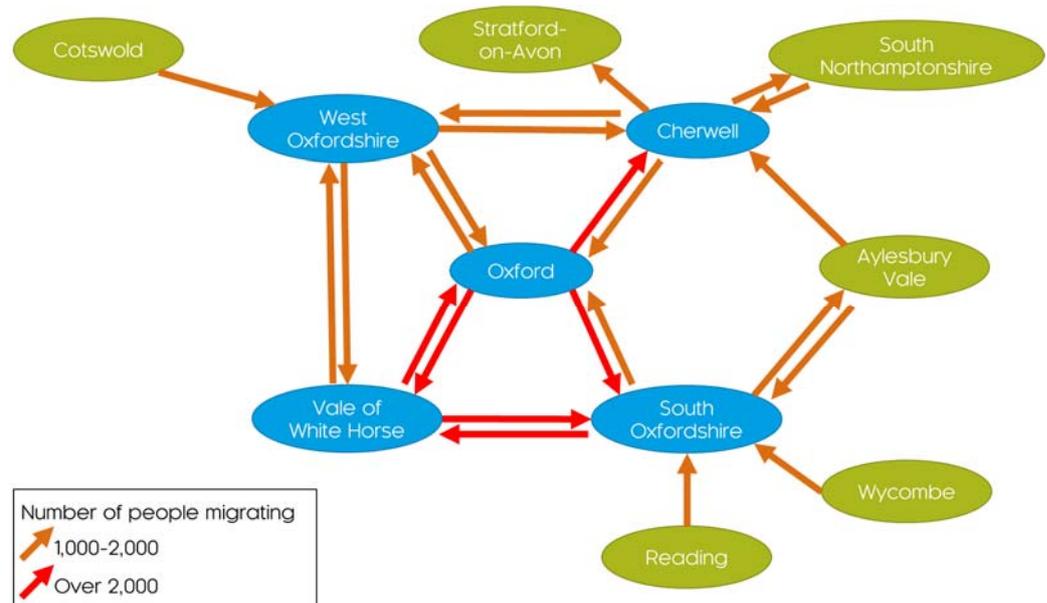
It is evident that most commuting to Oxford City occurs from within Oxfordshire, with few LSOAs having more than a 5% threshold outside the County. Hence, the Oxfordshire labour market seems to extend to most of Oxfordshire and few surrounding areas, providing an indication that the County could be a suitable approximation of the Oxfordshire FEMA.

Chapter 5 goes into greater detailed on commuting patterns within Oxfordshire, beyond that required to define the FEMA.

*Housing market*

High levels of migratory movements between two adjacent LADs indicates that those districts have a particularly strong functional connection as part of the same overall housing market. To gauge the extent of the housing market, consideration has been given to internal migration patterns between LADs in Oxfordshire and neighbouring LADs for the period 2016-18 – the most recently available years of data, averaged over two years to smooth any outliers and fluctuations.

**Figure 2.3.5: Internal migration flows between Local Authority Districts in Oxfordshire, 2018**



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

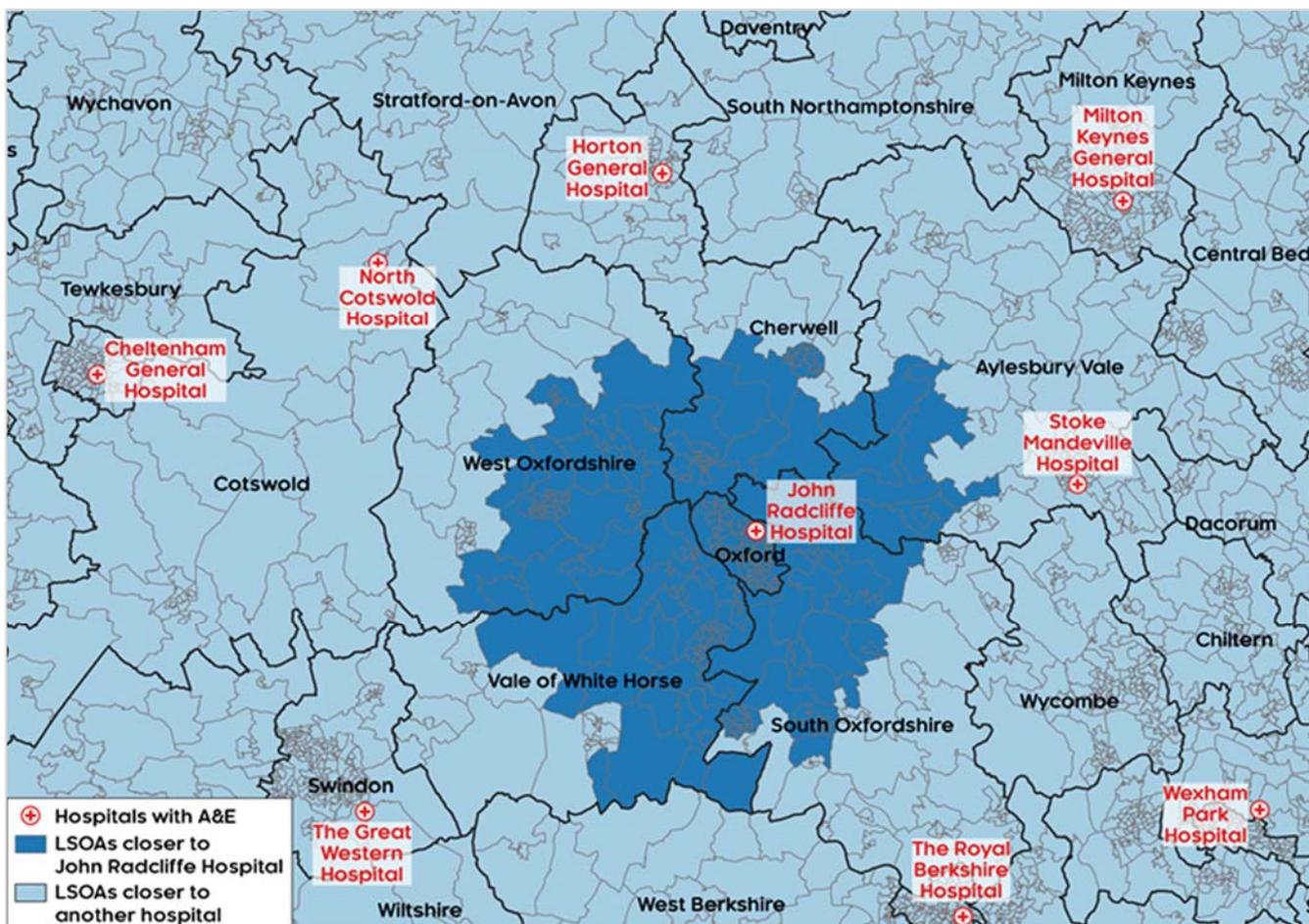
These are depicted in Figure 2.3.5. The data shows flows (both inflows – entering Oxfordshire, and outflows – leaving Oxfordshire) between LADs within Oxfordshire are more frequent and larger in size compared to flows outside the County. This corroborates the findings from the *Phase 1 Report* migratory analysis and that of the labour market analysis, namely that a largely self-contained economic market operates within Oxfordshire.

Externally to Oxfordshire, flows of greater than 1,000 people per annum were found from Cotswold, Stratford-on-Avon, South Northamptonshire, Aylesbury Vale, Wycombe and Reading – areas which typically shared a contiguous border with Oxfordshire. Other areas nearby, such as Milton Keynes or Swindon, had flows of less than 1,000 people and hence are not shown on the schematic.

**Public services** Access to public services is an important tool to identifying a FEMA. As the DCLG suggests: “Although mobility rates have increased considerably, the principle that people access services at their nearest location still largely holds. This leads to the presence of a large number of frequently used services, and a smaller number of higher order services. On this basis FEMAs can be identified by analysing travel patterns to higher order services, which have a wider catchment area”<sup>5</sup>

As a proxy for the location of higher-order services, consideration has been given to the location of hospitals with an Accident and Emergency (A&E) unit.

**Figure 2.3.6: Location of hospitals with full A&E in Oxfordshire and surrounding areas**



Source: Cambridge Econometrics.

<sup>5</sup> DCLG (2010), p. 6.

As noted above, the area near a hospital with A&E responsibility is likely to be at a well-connected centre close to other services as well, such as leisure and entertainment facilities, retail markets and other public services (particularly 'blue light' services, which themselves are typically located close to the aforementioned assets).

Figure 2.3.6 above shows the location of hospitals with a full A&E unit in Oxfordshire and surrounding areas. The dark blue shaded area consists of the LSOAs that are closer to the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford City rather than any other hospital and represents the hospital's catchment area. This area covers both the Oxford City Centre and Fringe, as well as many LSOAs of the Wider County, while the outer edges of the county seem to be better served by other hospitals. Furthermore, except for two LSOAs in Aylesbury Vale, most of the catchment area is included within Oxfordshire.

### What is the extent of the Oxfordshire FEMA?

As also pointed out by the DCLG in the same document, economic flows and markets often overlap administrative boundaries. Hence, the Oxfordshire FEMA could extend beyond the Oxfordshire County limits. Furthermore, a degree of overlap between FEMAs may exist, as certain areas within a FEMA could have significant connections to neighbouring FEMAs as well.

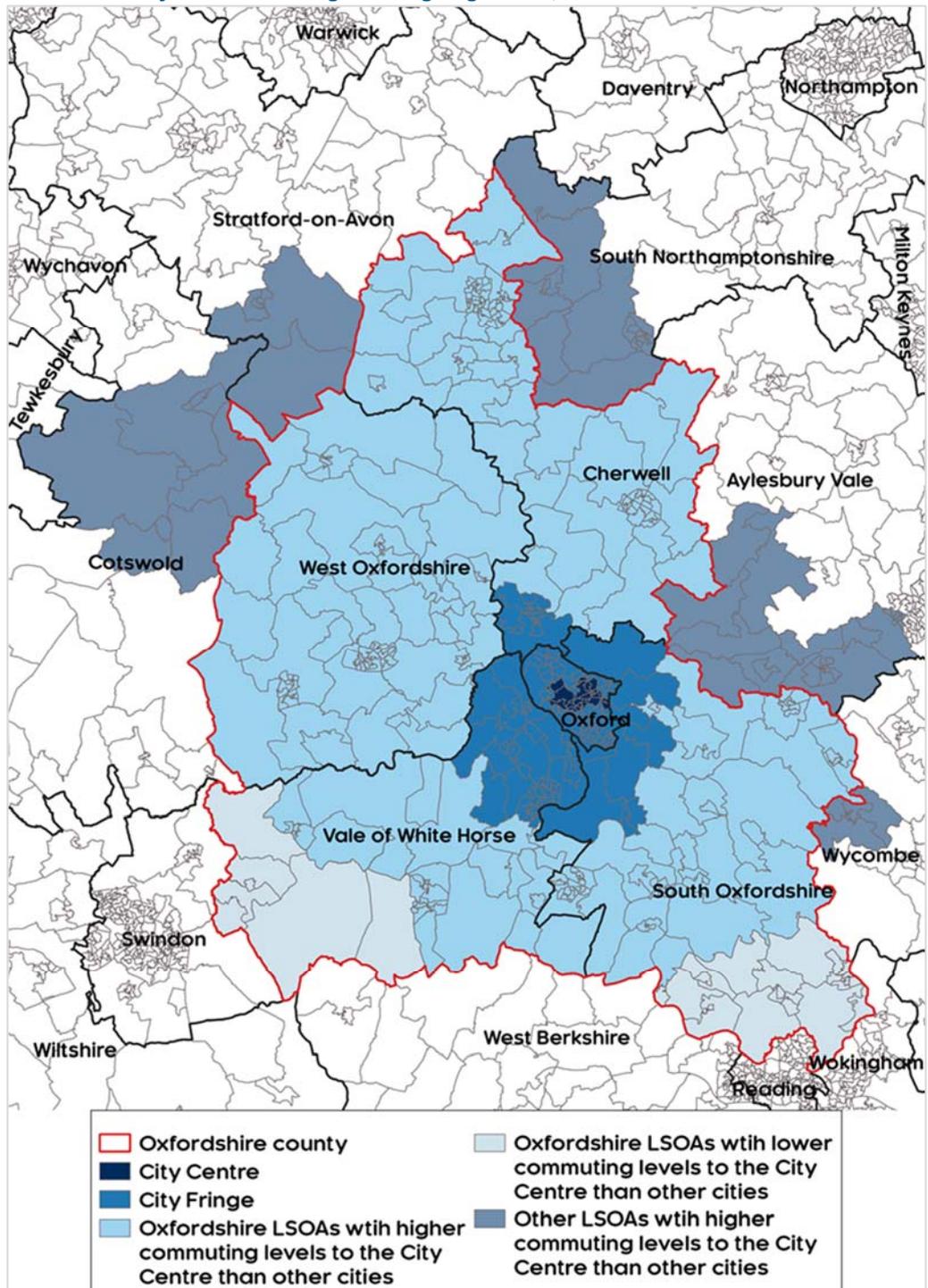
To address this, analysis has been undertaken looking at commuting patterns to/from neighbouring local authorities that contain important settlements and economic markets; namely Milton Keynes, Reading and Wokingham (combined, as they constitute a single labour market) and Swindon. These will function as proxies for the corresponding FEMAs.

Figure 2.3.7 below depicts LSOAs where the share of employed residents commuting to Oxford City is higher than the share commuting to the local authorities listed above. The vast majority of LSOAs within Oxfordshire have a higher share of their employed residents commuting into Oxford City rather than any of the neighbouring FEMAs, with the exceptions of five LSOAs in South Oxfordshire and one in the Vale of White Horse.

Furthermore, there are few LSOAs outside Oxfordshire that satisfy this condition and have at least 2% of their residents commuting into Oxford City, though the levels of commuting for these LSOAs are quite low (always less than 10%).

As Figure 2.3.7 reiterates, the local labour market of the Oxfordshire FEMA is therefore largely confined within the boundaries of the county of Oxfordshire. A small number of LSOAs strictly outside the FEMA may have more functional ties to Oxford (though this is marginal – with no more than 1 in 10 employed residents in these areas commuting into Oxford), but this is counterbalanced by a handful of LSOAs to the south of the county who overlap other FEMAs (though again, the commuting shares are marginal).

**Figure 2.3.7: Areas with a higher share of employed residents commuting into Oxford City rather than neighbouring large cities, 2011**



Source: ONS (Census 2011), Cambridge Econometrics.

**Definition of the Oxfordshire FEMA**

Based on the analysis in this chapter thus far, it can be determined that the county of Oxfordshire is an accurate proxy for the Oxfordshire FEMA. An added benefit of using this definition of the FEMA is ensuring data availability and quality for further analysis of the economic performance of the FEMA, as many indicators (critically, those relating to economic performance and welfare) are consistently available only at more aggregated spatial levels.

Functional Market areas tend to be relatively stable over time, expanding, stretching and contracting only as the result of changes in the relative growth

of different urban cores or significant infrastructure interventions. The growth of the Oxfordshire FEMA is constrained in several directions by neighbouring urban centres, and in others by a lack of infrastructural provision.

The full opening of East-West Rail could see the FEMA extend further to the east into the Aylesbury Vale district; however the overall shape and size of the FEMA is unlikely to shift significantly over the coming decades. Likewise, many of the aforementioned indicators used to infer FEMA scope remain relatively stable overtime.

## 2.4 Spatial levels of the Oxfordshire FEMA

The three main spatial levels of the Oxfordshire FEMA identified in 2.3 *Defining the Oxfordshire FEMA* were Oxford City Centre, Oxford City Fringe and the Wider County (see Figure 2.3.4). In order to obtain a more refined spatial classification and to facilitate more-detailed analysis of the FEMA, additional subdivisions (or ‘Zones’) have been identified and defined.

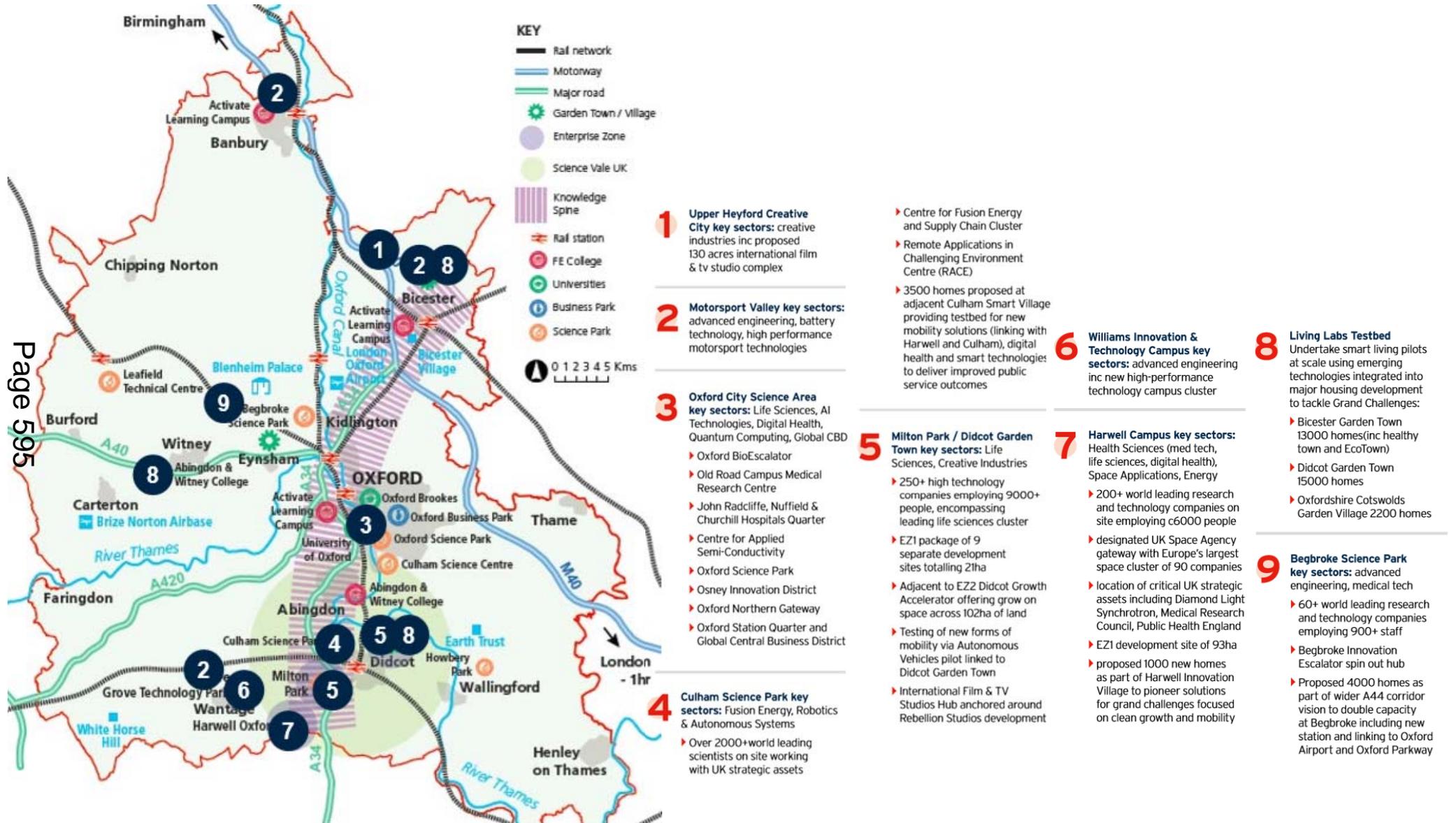
The first of these is based on the presence of the “*Knowledge Spine*” within Oxfordshire, an area of high, globally recognised innovation and knowledge activity, identified in the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (LIS).<sup>6</sup> This “*Knowledge Spine*” runs through the centre of the FEMA, largely along the A34 corridor, incorporating Didcot, Abingdon, Oxford, Kidlington, and finally Bicester.

The LIS regards the area as one of strategic importance for the county, being “*home to several science, innovation, technology and business parks that form a spine of knowledge intensive economic activity.*”<sup>7</sup> Figure 2.4.1, taken directly from the LIS, highlights the distribution of the “*Knowledge Spine*” within Oxfordshire and its key knowledge assets. Over two-thirds (63%) of the FEMA’s total employment is located within this “*Knowledge Spine*”.

<sup>6</sup> HM Government (2019), Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy

<sup>7</sup> Oxfordshire LIS (2018), Economic Baseline, p. 52

Figure 2.4.1: Knowledge activity and assets in Oxfordshire



Source: Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy.

Given that the Knowledge Spine covers a large and diverse part of the FEMA, and crosses the previously defined City Centre and City Fringe spatial areas, additional subdivisions have been identified. This has been achieved by drawing on the distribution of activity in Figure 2.4.1 and additional LIS analysis<sup>8</sup> to differentiate between its characteristic parts:

- Oxford City Centre and Fringe: This part corresponds to the Oxford City Centre and the City Fringe, with Oxford and Abingdon-on-Thames the primary settlements. It has the highest concentration of innovation and knowledge assets, including the University of Oxford, Oxford Science Park, Begbroke Science Park, Culham Science Campus and the Oxford University Hospitals.
- Knowledge Spine North: The area to the north-northeast of Oxford City, with Bicester being the largest settlement, while the Bicester Innovation Centre and the Cherwell Innovation Centre are the main knowledge assets. A key connectivity hub in Oxfordshire, this area includes access to the M40, A34/A41 and East-West rail.
- Knowledge Spine South: This part of the Spine largely corresponds to the area identified as the “*Science Vale*” in strategic documents and commercial brochures (including Local Plans and the LIS), a “*grouping of internationally-recognised science and research facilities*”.<sup>9</sup> Didcot and Wantage are the main settlements, and knowledge assets include Milton Park, the Harwell Innovation Centre, and Grove Technology Park.

To further aid the analysis of the Oxfordshire FEMA, the Wider County that remains outside both the Knowledge Spine and City Centre and Fringe has been split into three roughly equal parts (‘Zones’) of comparable employment levels and economic functionality, the latter of which has been derived from commuting flows and self-containment rates. Applying this analysis, the following areas have been derived:

- County East: comprising the farthest eastern and southern parts of the county. This area includes rural areas as well as the settlements of Thame, Henley, and parts of Wallingford.
- County North: incorporating the largely rural north west of the county, including the larger settlement of Banbury, and the market towns of Chipping Norton and Charlbury.
- County West: including the settlements along the A40 to the west, such as Witney, Carterton and Burford, and the rural south west of the county, around Faringdon.

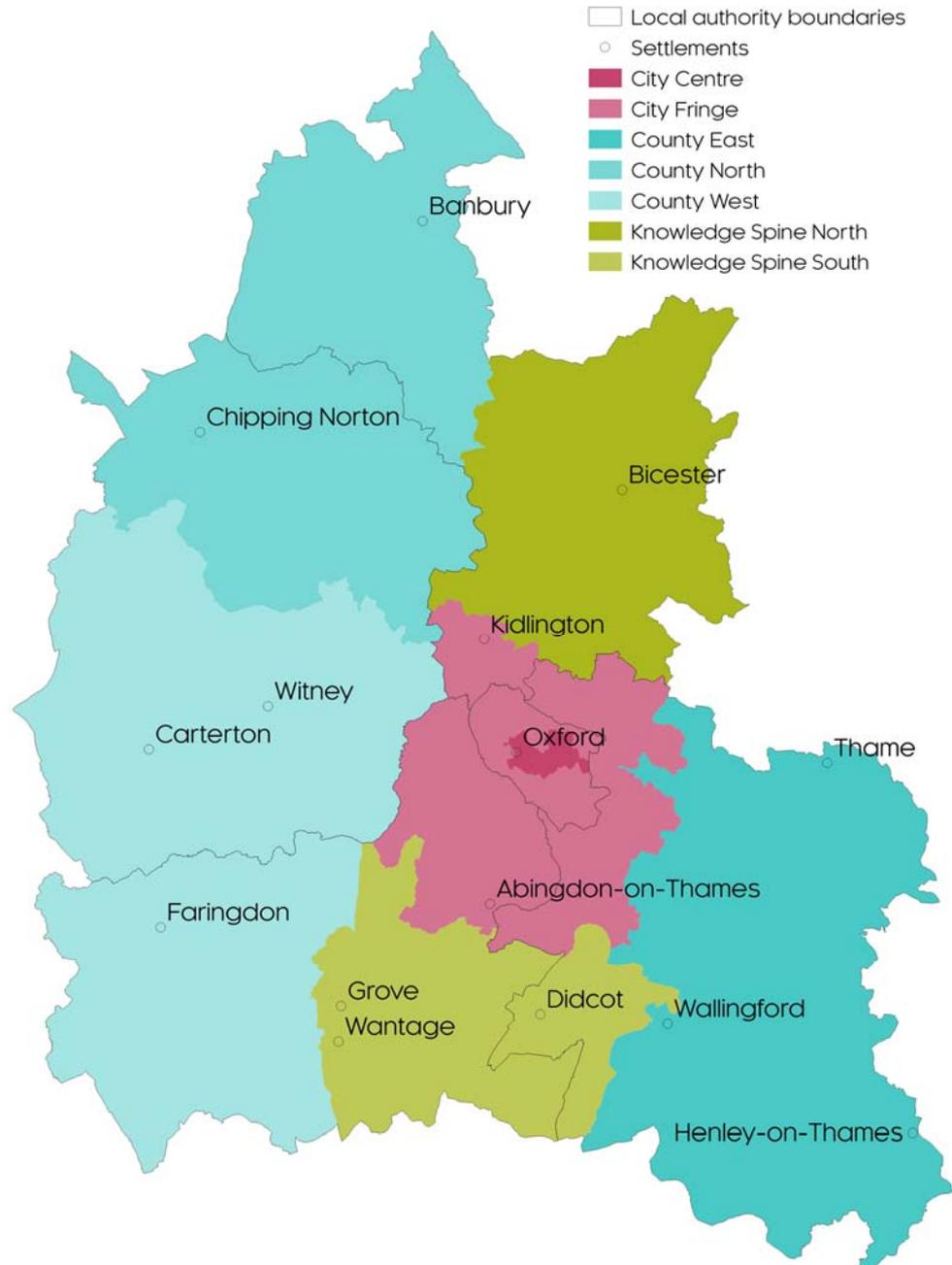
Figure 2.4.2 illustrates the different Zones of the Oxfordshire FEMA, which have been based on the methodology and approach of the previous analysis. It should be emphasised that the designation of these subdivisions are not intended to suggest these areas are fundamentally dissimilar or unconnected in any way, nor that the characteristics upon which they are based are in any way fixed.

<sup>8</sup> Notably Section 5.2 *The Spatial Vision* from the Oxfordshire LIS’ Future State Assessment (2018)

<sup>9</sup> Oxfordshire LIS, Future State Assessment, p. 11

Because of this, administrative boundaries have not been taken into account (though are included in the figure for reference). It should be also be noted that these Zones are purely illustrative, to allow for a better spatial understanding of housing need in relation to economic trends, and they do not represent specific options or priorities for the distribution of development.

**Figure 2.4.2: Spatial levels of the Oxfordshire FEMA**



Source: Cambridge Econometrics.

## 2.5 Characteristics and trends within the Oxfordshire FEMA

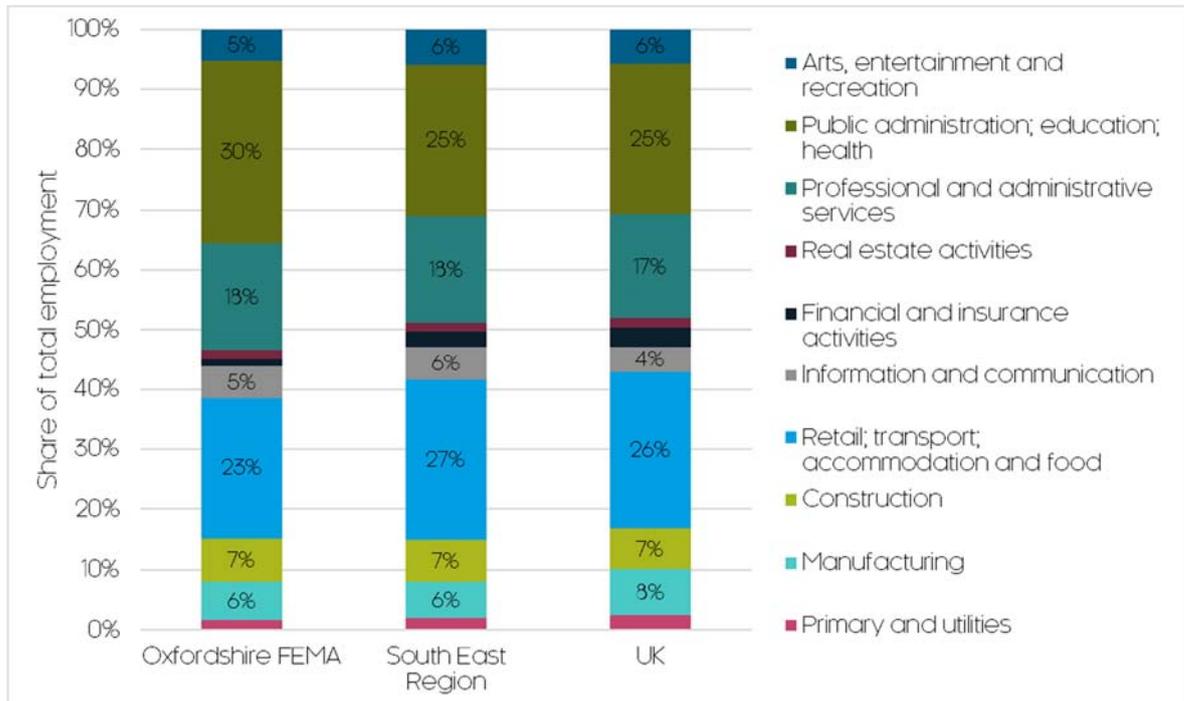
The *Phase 1 Report* goes into extensive detail on the characteristics and recent performance of the Oxfordshire economy and housing market. This analysis is presented primarily at the county level, which corresponds to the definition of the Oxfordshire FEMA explored earlier in the chapter.

The following analysis therefore provides a summary, high-level overview of the corresponding trends at the Zonal level within the Oxfordshire FEMA - to complement the extensive higher-level analysis of the *Phase 1 Report* - looking specifically at the sectoral structure, employment trends, and housing growth within the FEMA's Zones.

### Sectoral structure of the FEMA

Figure 2.5.1 provides an overview of the broad sectoral structure of employment (i.e. jobs) in the Oxfordshire FEMA in 2018 (the most recently available year of data), compared to that of both regional (the South East region) and national (UK) averages.

Figure 2.5.1: Sectoral structure of the Oxfordshire FEMA, and relative to peers, 2011



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Of the 410,000 jobs currently located in the Oxfordshire FEMA, the majority (over two-thirds) can be found in three of these broadly defined sectors - public administration; education; health (30% of total jobs), retail; transport; accommodation and food (23%), and professional and administrative services (18%).

Beyond these three activities, no other sector surpasses a greater than 10% share of employment, with the remaining shares ranging from 2% to 7%. The four smallest sectors in terms of employment, with shares below 2%, are primary and utilities (including agriculture), financial and insurance activities, and real estate activities.

It should be noted that these broad sectoral shares are not significantly dissimilar from regional and national averages. The Oxfordshire FEMA does deviate from these averages for some sectors though. Most notable is that of public administration; education; health, which has a significantly higher employment share than both the regional and national average.

Other overrepresented activities include knowledge-intensive services, such as professional and administrative services and information and communication, as well as construction. The remaining sectors are, relatively

speaking, underrepresented, with the largest shortfall within retail; transport; accommodation and food, broadly covering consumer services.

Analysis of sectoral employment trends within the Oxfordshire FEMA over the period 2011-18, presented in Table 2.5.1, show that:

- Three sectors experienced an employment decline, thereby decreasing their share of employment in the Oxfordshire FEMA. Notably, all three of these sectors declined at a faster rate than that of the regional (South East) average.
- Three sectors experienced positive employment growth, increasing their contribution to the FEMA, though this growth was slower than that of the regional average.
- Four sectors experienced further positive employment growth, increasing their contribution to the FEMA, and grew at a rate above that of the regional average.

**Table 2.5.1: Changes in the sectoral structure of the Oxfordshire FEMA relative to the regional average, 2011-18**

Share of FEMA employment	Change in employment (jobs)	Sector	Employment (jobs) growth rate (%)
Decreased	More than regional average	Primary and utilities	-10.4%
		Manufacturing	-2.0%
		Financial and insurance activities	-17.4%
	Less than regional average	None	-
<b>Oxfordshire FEMA average</b>			<b>10.4%</b>
Increased	Less than regional average	Retail; transport; accommodation and food	5.3%
		Professional and administrative services	13.9%
		Arts, entertainment and recreation	1.9%
	More than regional average	Construction	41.1%
		Information and communication	22.9%
		Real estate activities	12.4%
		Public administration; education; health	12.0%

Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

The *Phase 1 Report* goes into greater detail exploring the drivers and longer-term trends shaping Oxfordshire FEMAs changing structural structure. It also considers the future trajectory of the FEMA sectors and employment, and the potential implications for housing and employment land needs.

### *Sectoral structure of FEMA Zones*

The analysis below replicates the previous headline analysis for each of the FEMAs respective Zones.<sup>10</sup> Figure 2.5.2 considers the relative Zonal sectoral structures within the FEMA, whilst Figure 2.5.3 compares the Zonal shares of

<sup>10</sup> Zonal employment data has been primarily derived from [ONS BRES](#) employment estimates (which are available to LSOA/LSOA), but with an adjustment for self-employment, HM Armed Forces, and government supported trainees, to align with the FEMA-wide employment estimates presented in the *Phase 1 Report*.

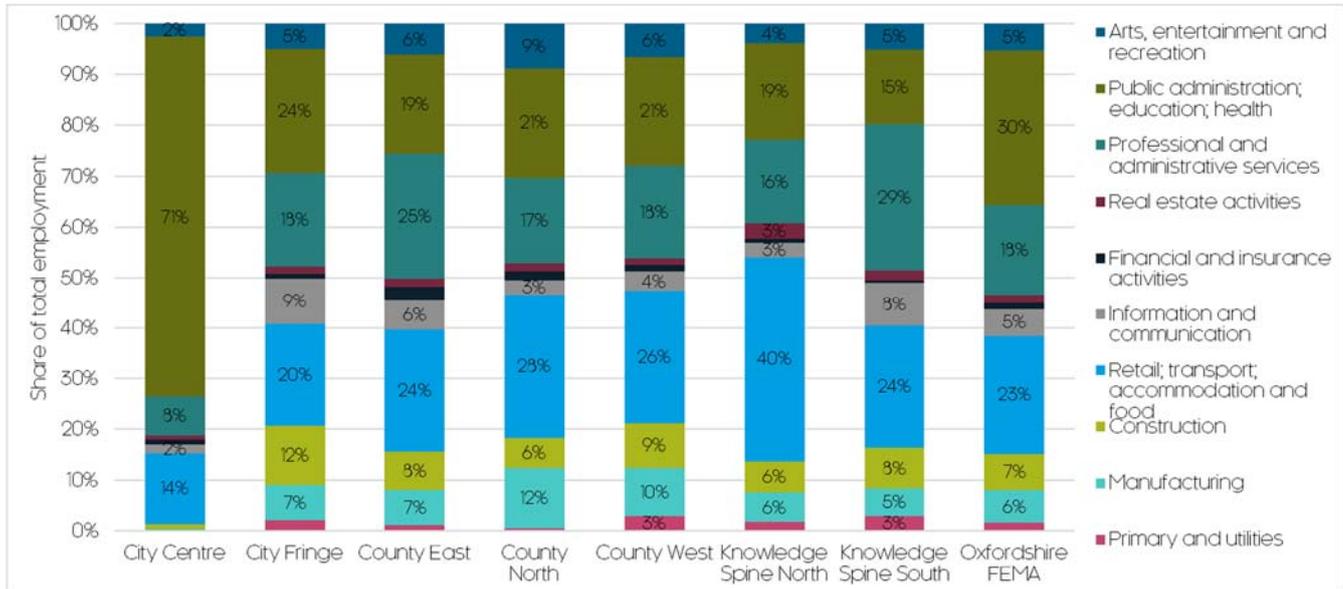
the FEMAs sectoral and total employment. Here, local sectoral specialisms become apparent. The key characteristics for each Zone are:

- **City Centre:** is dominated by public administration; education; health, which accounts for almost three-quarters (71%) of total employment in the Zone. Retail; transport; accommodation and food, and professional and administrative services are the only other sectors with shares exceeding 2%. *19% of total FEMA employment (76,500 jobs) is located in this Zone.*
- **City Fringe:** has arguably the most diverse sectoral structure, with no sector accounting for more than a quarter of employment. Public administration; education; health (24%) and retail; transport; accommodation and food (20%) account for the highest shares. Professional and administrative services (25%) form part of the sizeable KIBS<sup>11</sup> sector in the Zone. It also has the largest information and communication share (9%) in the FEMA. *26% of total FEMA employment (108,000 jobs) is located in this Zone.*
- **County East:** two sectors account for almost half of total employment in this Zone – professional and administrative services (25%) and retail; transport; accommodation and food (24%). Forming part of its extensive KIBS sector, the Zone also has the highest share of finance and insurance activities (3%). *12% of total FEMA employment (47,500 jobs) is located in this Zone.*
- **County North:** has high employment shares for and retail; transport; accommodation and food (28%), and public administration; education; health (21%). Notably, within the FEMA this Zone has the highest shares of manufacturing activity (12%) and of the arts, entertainment, recreation and other services (9%). *13% of total FEMA employment (55,300 jobs) is located in this Zone.*
- **County West:** has a sectoral structure that deviates the least from the FEMA-average of all Zones. Retail; transport; accommodation and food (26%), and public administration; education; health (21%) are therefore its largest sectors. Manufacturing (10%) and construction (9%) remain sizeable, whilst it also has the joint-highest share of primary (agricultural) and utilities (3%). *12% of total FEMA employment (50,400 jobs) is located in this Zone.*
- **Knowledge Spine North:** as part of the Knowledge Spine, 20% of jobs are KIBS-based. Yet the highest employment share is for the sizeable retail; transport; accommodation and food sector (40%), which is centred around Bicester Village. The share for this sector is almost twice the FEMA average. *7% of total FEMA employment (30,100 jobs) is located in this Zone.*
- **Knowledge Spine South:** encompassing the Science Vale area, an impressive two-fifths of Zonal employment is in the KIBS sector. The largest of these is professional and administrative services (29% - twice the FEMA average), followed by information and communication

<sup>11</sup> [Knowledge Intensive Business Services](#). An aggregate of the *Professional, scientific and technical, Finance and insurance* and *Information and communication* sectors. Abbreviated as KIBS.

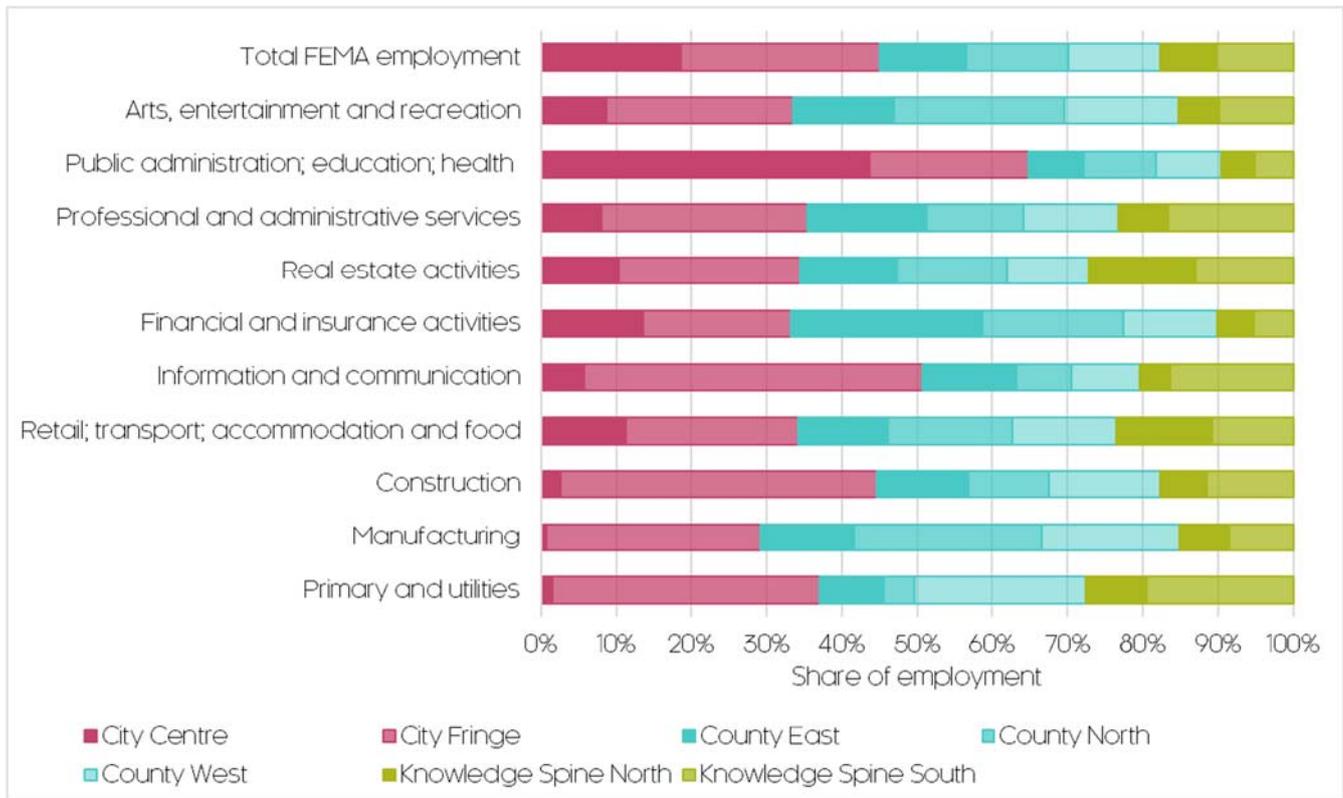
(8%). Retail; transport; accommodation and food remains significant (24%). 10% of total FEMA employment (42,300 jobs) is located in this Zone.

Figure 2.5.2: Sectoral structure of the Oxfordshire FEMA Zones, 2018



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Figure 2.5.3: Zonal shares of sectoral employment (jobs) in the Oxfordshire FEMA, 2018



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

## Employment trends

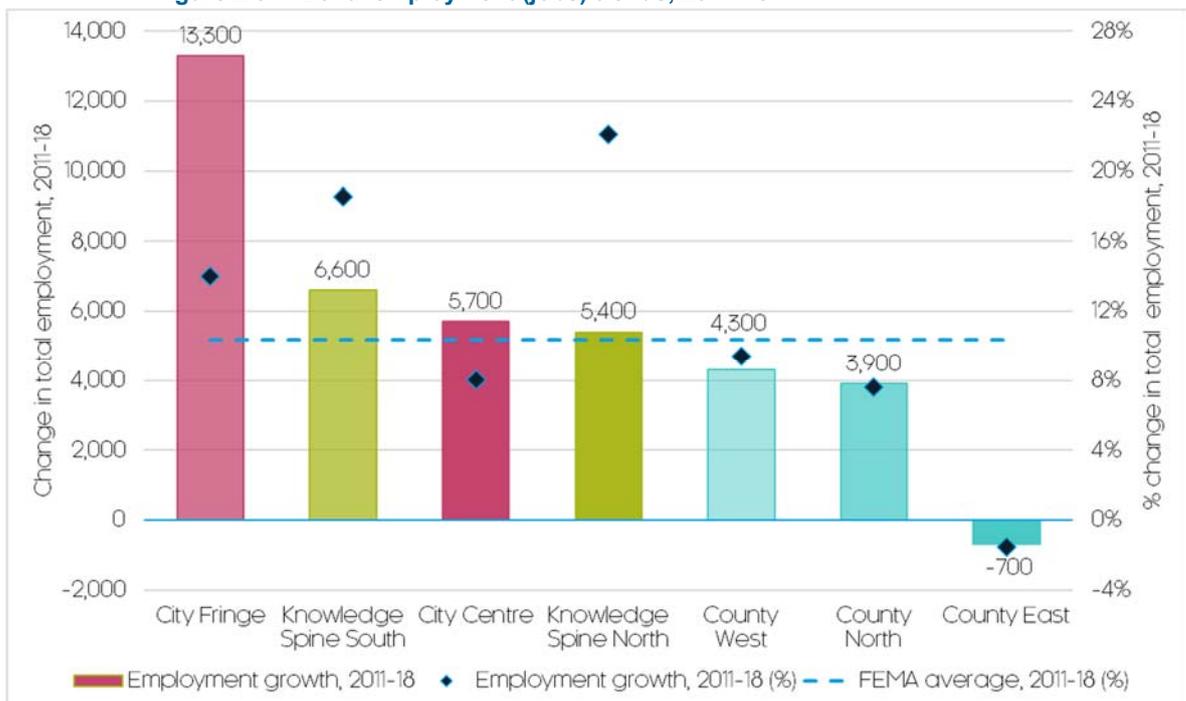
Figure 2.5.4 illustrates the trend in employment (jobs) growth across the FEMA Zones over the period 2011-18. As the *Phase 1 Report* notes, this has been a period of robust employment growth across the FEMA; since 2010, on average more jobs had been created in Oxfordshire than any other equivalent

period in the last 50 years (approximately 6,000 per annum), whilst (as of 2019) Oxfordshire currently has the highest employment rate out of 38 LEP areas, with some 82.8% of working age residents in active employment.

Within the FEMA, the City Fringe has driven the majority share of this robust employment growth, with a net additional 13,300 jobs created in the Zone between 2011-18. Yet the Knowledge Spine has been the fastest growing in percentage terms, with employment growth accelerating by over 20% in Knowledge Spine South. In total, a net additional 12,000 jobs were created in the two Knowledge Spine Zones.

This means that the Knowledge Spine as whole (including Oxford City Centre and Fringe) delivered some 31,000 jobs between 2011-18, the majority share of the FEMA's employment growth. County West and North saw similar levels and rates of employment growth, though both were below the FEMA average. Surprisingly, County East saw a marginal (-700) contraction in employment between 2011-18, in contrast to the wider FEMA's buoyant performance.

**Figure 2.5.4: Zonal employment (jobs) trends, 2011-18**



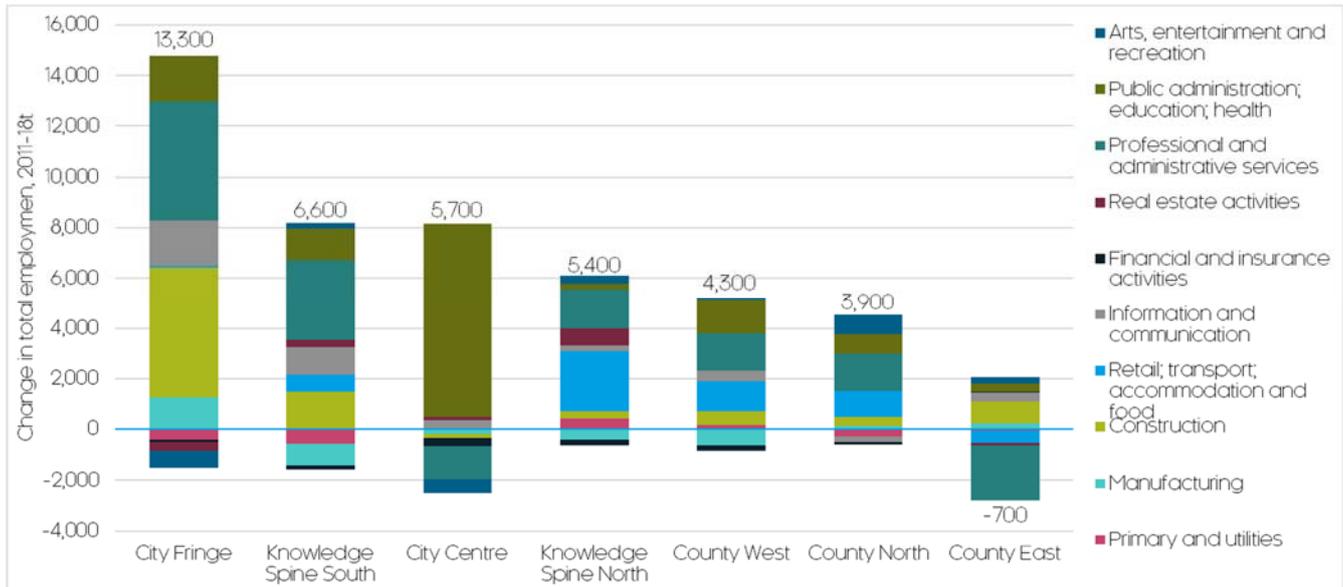
Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Figure 2.5.5 looks at the sectoral composition and drivers of these trends. Employment growth in the City Fringe has been driven by KIBS (notably professional and administrative services), as well as construction-related activity, whilst manufacturing employment growth was the strongest in the FEMA. The City Centre's employment growth meanwhile was derived almost exclusively from its largest sector - public administration; education; health.

In Knowledge Spine South, like the City Fringe, growth was oriented around KIBS activity (information and communication particularly), alongside construction and public administration; education; health. Knowledge Spine North meanwhile saw a similar, if slightly lesser focus on KIBS activity, though it was the retail; transport; accommodation and food sector – centred on Bicester village - which drove the majority of growth.

County West and North saw similar patterns of growth, driven by professional and administrative services, and retail; transport; accommodation and food. County North also saw the FEMAs strongest growth in arts, entertainment, recreation and other services. County East did see growth in most sectors, though this was marginal beyond construction. A large drop in professional and administrative services dragged down its headline rate of employment growth, with such activity potentially shifting elsewhere in the FEMA.

**Figure 2.5.5: Sectoral composition of employment (jobs) growth by Zone, 2011-18**



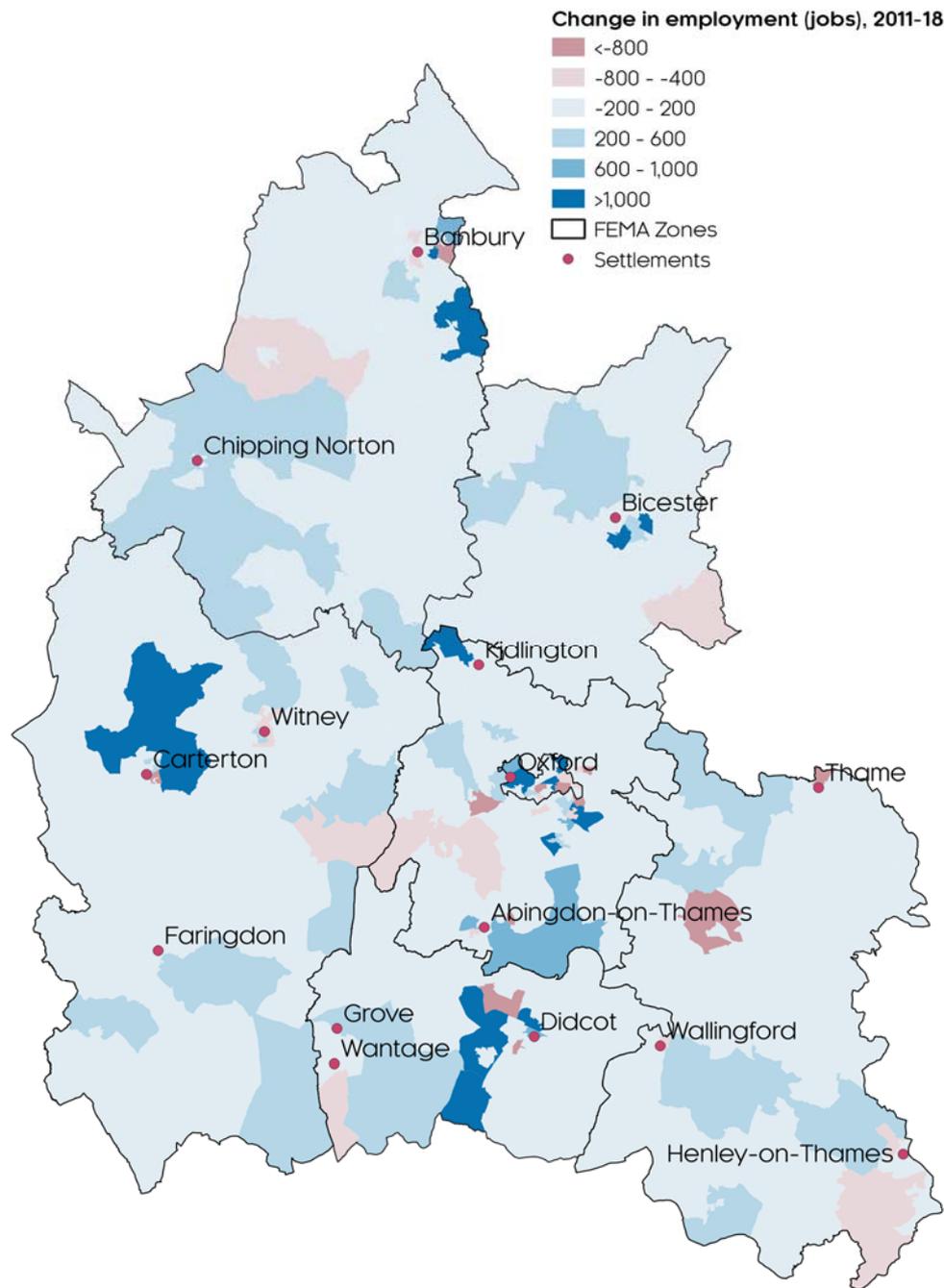
Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Figure 2.5.6 provides a more spatially detailed overview (to LSOA level) of the employment growth within the Oxfordshire FEMA over 2011-18. Pockets of robust growth are particularly notable at either end of the Knowledge Spine, specifically around Didcot and its neighbouring science parks (comprising the “*Science Vale*”) in the south, and around Bicester to the north.

Growth has also been strong in and around Oxford, particularly at Oxford Science Park within the City Fringe. Rural and market towns have also seen pockets of strong growth, specifically in and around Banbury, Carterton and Chipping Norton in the north and west of the county. Slower or contractionary growth has however been evident around Henley and Thame in the east.

It should be noted that, at this detailed spatial level, the data – which are survey-based - can become increasingly ‘noisy’ and volatile, and less precise. Caution should therefore be urged when interpreting these trends.

Figure 2.5.6: Employment (jobs) trends within the Oxfordshire FEMA, 2011-18



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

### Housing trends

Figure 2.5.7 illustrates the current (2020) distribution of housing across the Oxfordshire FEMA, and how this compares to the distribution of employment (in 2018). As with employment, the majority of Oxfordshire’s 302,100 dwellings are located within the City Fringe (29% of total dwellings). Notably, the City Centre has a lower share of housing (5%) relative to jobs, reflecting high in-commuting. The Knowledge Spine has a similar housing share (19%) to that of employment, whilst the Wider County accounts for almost half (47%) of Oxfordshire’s dwellings, higher than its share of employment, reflecting high out-commuting from these areas.

**Figure 2.5.7: Zonal housing and employment (jobs) shares, 2018-20 (2020 for housing, 2018 for employment)**



Source: VOA, MHCLG, ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

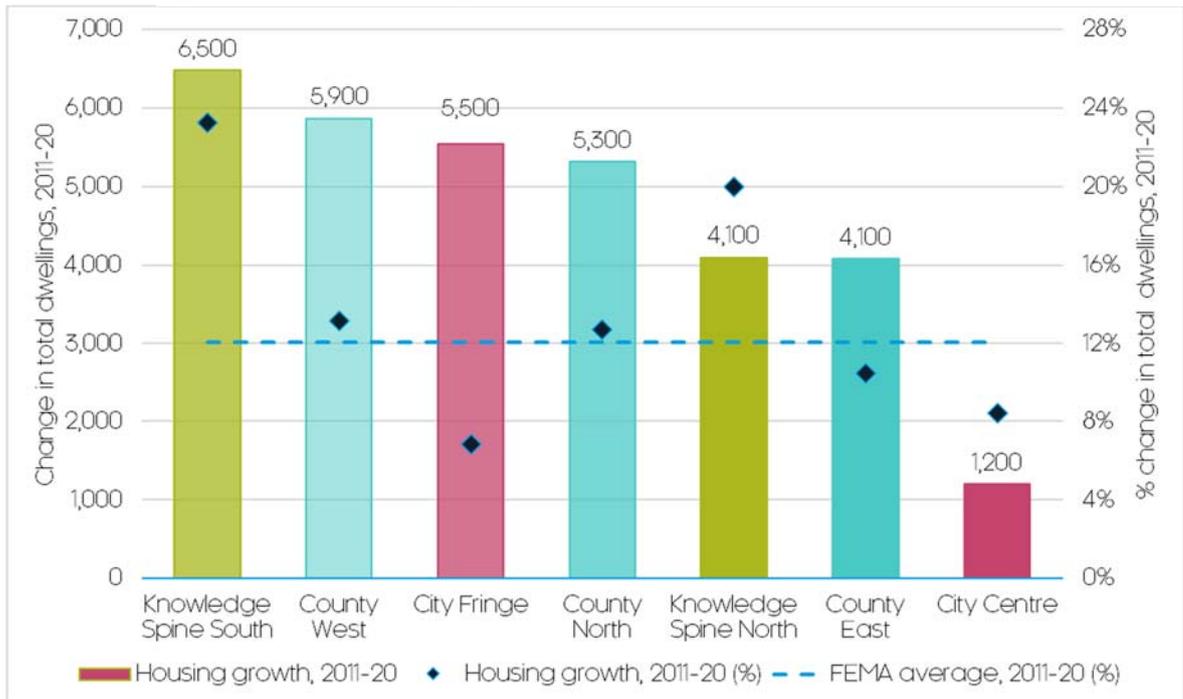
Figure 2.5.8 explores the distribution of estimated housing growth within the FEMA over the 2011-20 period.<sup>12</sup> As the *Phase 1 Report* noted, housing completions within the Oxfordshire FEMA have increased rapidly recently, particularly since 2017. However, with the 2014 SHMA identifying a delivery for 5,000 homes per annum, only from 2018/19 onwards has this level of housing provision been achieved.

Within the FEMA, as with employment, the Knowledge Spine has seen accelerated delivery, with a combined 10,600 net completions over 2011-20, with both areas exceeding 20% growth. Knowledge Spine South has driven the majority share, with an estimated 6,500 net completions in the Zone between 2011-20, the highest in the FEMA.

This was closely followed by County West, with 5,900 net completions, whilst County North showed an almost identical rate of delivery (13% increase), with 5,300 net completions. Alongside County East 4,100 net completions, this means the Wider County accounted for a combined 15,300 net completions over the 2011-20 period. Rates of delivery in Oxford City, including the Centre (8%) and Fringe (7%), were below the FEMA average, though there was still a combined 6,700 completions over the period.

<sup>12</sup> Zonal housing data has been primarily derived from the [VOAs Council Tax: stock of properties](#) housing estimates (which are available to LSOA/LSOA), but with an adjustment to align with [MHCLGs Live tables on dwelling stock \(including vacants\)](#), which are derived from local authority monitoring and returns (AMR's). This ensures Zonal estimates also align with the FEMA-wide housing estimates presented in the *Phase 1 Report*. Spatially detailed estimates may not precisely align with local authority AMR reporting, with deviations of 1-2% possible at the local authority level.

Figure 2.5.8: Zonal housing trends, 2011-20



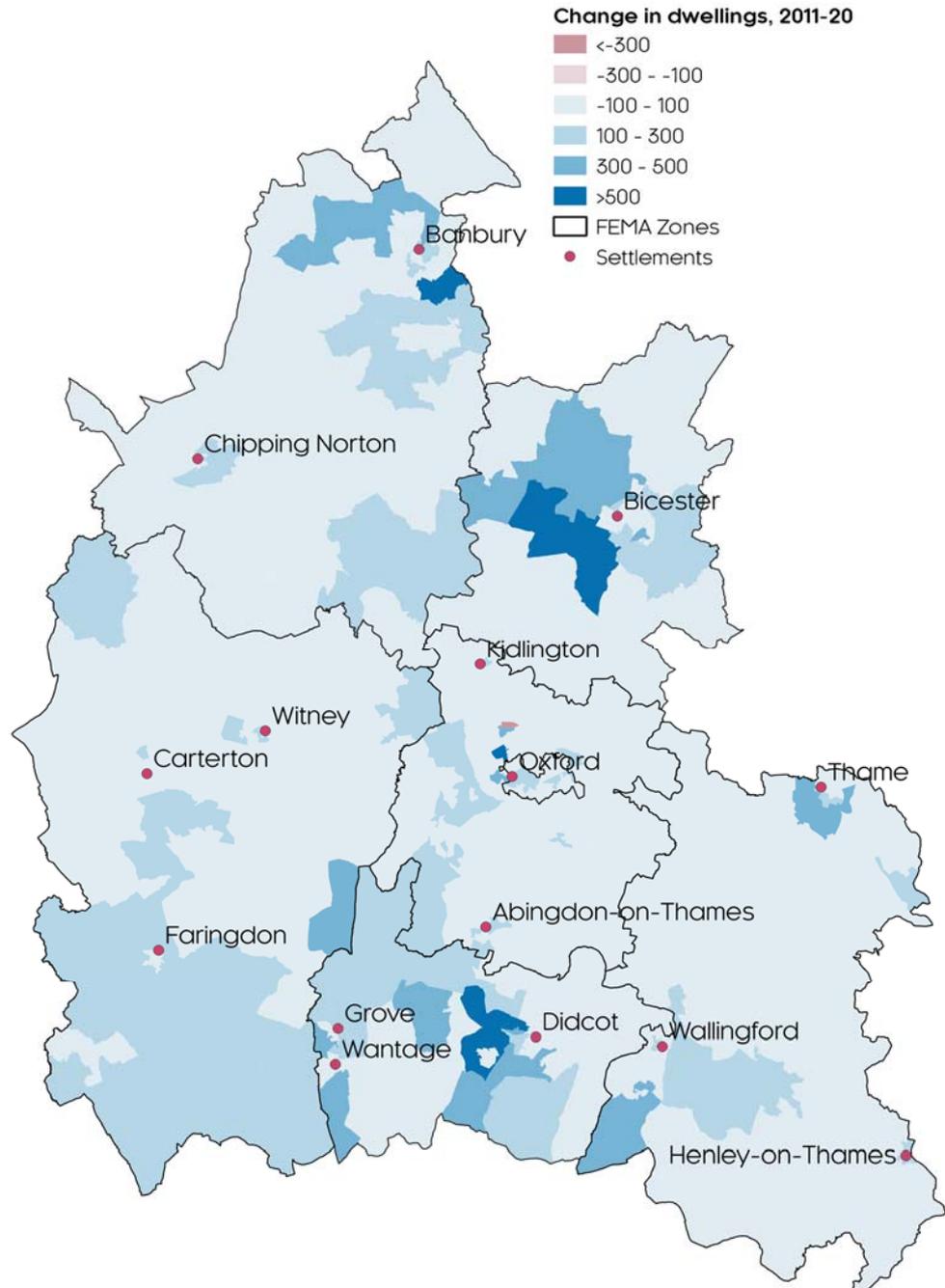
Source: VOA, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics.

Figure 2.5.9 provides a more spatially detailed overview (to LSOA level) of housing delivery within the Oxfordshire FEMA over the 2011-20 period. As with employment, delivery is particularly notable at either end of the Knowledge Spine, specifically around Didcot, Grove and Wantage to the south, and Bicester in the north.

Growth has also been strong within the Wider County, particularly in and around Banbury to the north, Faringdon to the west, as well as Wallingford and Thame to the east. Pockets of delivery are also evident within the City Fringe of Oxford, and to a lesser extent, the City Centre.

It should be noted that, at this detailed spatial level, the data – which are informed by the Council Tax register - can become increasingly ‘noisy’ and less precise. Caution should therefore be urged when interpreting these trends.

Figure 2.5.9: Housing trends within the Oxfordshire FEMA, 2011-20



Source: VOA, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics.

## 2.6 Conclusions

Functional Economic Market Areas (FEMAs) are designed to capture the extent and spatial distribution of a local economic market more accurately than administrative boundaries, which rarely reflect the true scale and reach of local economic markets and accompanying economic flows.

The analysis of several economic, demographic and social markets and indicators shows that the county of Oxfordshire is a reasonable approximation for the Oxfordshire FEMA, with Oxford at its centre.

Further spatial levels ('Zones') have been identified within the FEMA, crossing administrative boundaries. These include Oxford City Centre and Fringe, the Knowledge Spine, and the Wider County. Analysis shows the distinct characteristics and economic attributes of these areas.

The definition and understanding of the Oxfordshire FEMA provides a strong foundation for a more precise and in-depth exploration of the spatial distribution of housing need in relation to economic trends, and the accompanying implications and trade-offs.

## 3 The Oxfordshire FEMA and Phase 1 Employment Trajectories

### 3.1 Introduction

Building on the definition and analysis of the Oxfordshire FEMA and its constituent Zones in the previous chapter, this chapter proceeds to consider the spatial distribution of the three FEMA-wide employment trajectories (to 2050) prepared and presented in the *Phase 1 Report*.

Specifically, it scales projected employment growth from the *Phase 1 Report* across the FEMA's seven constituent Zones. Understanding the potential spatial scale and pattern of employment growth is important for informing and testing potential housing distributions, and resultantly seeing how these impact factors such as commuting and transport use.

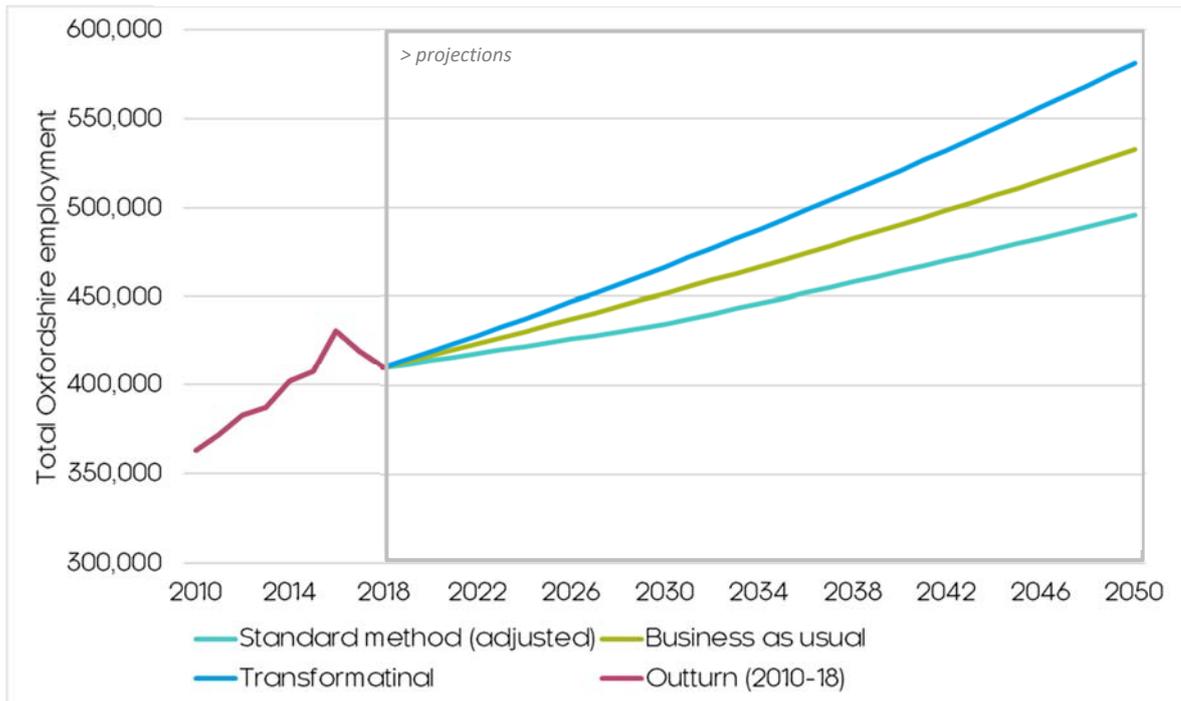
The following analysis starts with a recap of the Oxfordshire-wide employment projections, followed by an overview of the methodology used to distribute this to the Zones, before presenting and analysing the results.

### 3.2 Recap of the Phase 1 Report employment trajectories

Figure 3.2.1 and Table 3.2.1 provide a recap of the three Oxfordshire-wide employment (jobs) trajectories from 2018 (the baseline for the projections) to 2050, as prepared and presented in the *Phase 1 Report*. Reflecting the different levels of potential growth, each trajectory has been informed by a broad set of assumptions (these are explored in more detail in the *Phase 1 Report*):

- **Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory:** backwards calculated from the Standard Method calculation of housing need (which has been adjusted for a revised demographic baseline), by making a number of assumptions relating to economic activity rates, commuting, double jobbing and unemployment.
- **Business as usual trajectory:** this trajectory represents a continuation of Oxfordshire's recent economic performance, taking particular account of the growth delivered during the recovery from the 2008-09 recession. It represents a best approximation as to the future rate at which Oxfordshire will be able to deliver employment growth based on the latest trend data.
- **Transformational trajectory:** This trajectory is broadly the equivalent of the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy 'go for growth' scenario, but updated and adjusted for 2020. Certain targeted sectors are assumed to see strong growth, others grow as a result of anticipated corresponding population growth and increased economic activity.

The three scenarios present alternative visions of how Oxfordshire's economy might perform. Potential growth ranges from 85,400 net additional jobs under the Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory over the period 2018-50, to 122,500 under the central business as usual trajectory, peaking at a potential 171,200 additional jobs under the LIS-related transformational trajectory.

**Figure 3.2.1: Phase 1 employment (jobs) trajectories for Oxfordshire, 2018-50****Table 3.2.1: Phase 1 Report employment (jobs) trajectories for Oxfordshire, 2018-50**

	Employment (jobs) at 2018 (baseline)	Employment (jobs) at 2050	Employment (jobs) change, 2018-50	Employment (jobs) change p.a., 2018-50
Standard Method (adjusted)	410,100	495,600	85,500	2,700
Business as usual	410,100	532,500	122,500	3,800
Transformational	410,100	581,300	171,200	5,400

Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

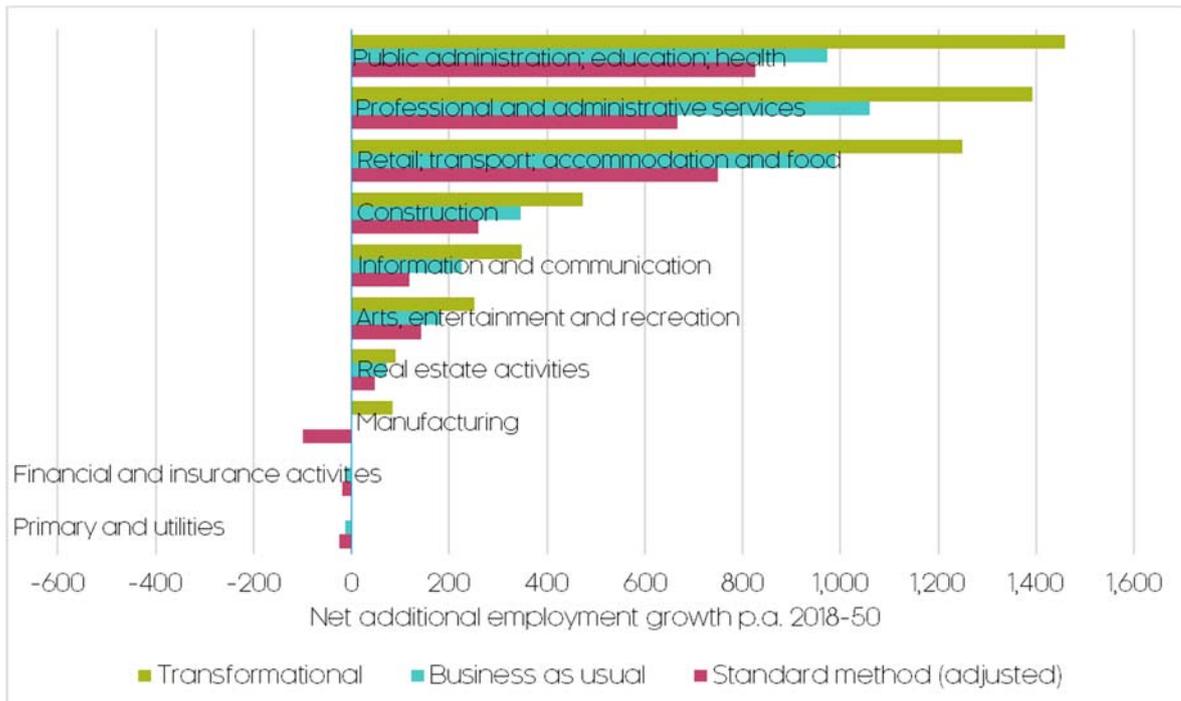
Figure 3.2.2 revisits the sectoral composition of the employment trajectories. As remarked in the *Phase 1 Report*, the LIS specifically emphasises growth in “breakthrough sectors”, which are typically tradeable sectors such as manufacturing, professional services and information and communication.

Therefore, rather than being a constant proportion, sectoral employment growth varies across the respective trajectories, largely reflecting the realisation of LIS-related ambitions in the higher trajectories.

For instance, under baseline (Standard Method adjusted) projections, manufacturing employment is expected to decline, yet under the transformational trajectory, dependent on the realisation of LIS aspirations and interventions, manufacturing employment has the potential to grow.

This is important for the following analysis as areas with a higher concentration of such fast-growing, tradable industries (as explored in 2.5 *Characteristics and trends within the Oxfordshire FEMA*) are likely to experience faster overall employment growth in the higher trajectories.

Figure 3.2.2: Sectoral composition of the employment (jobs) trajectories, 2018-50



Source: Cambridge Econometrics, Icen Projects, Justin Gardner Consulting.

### 3.3 Methodology overview

To estimate the Zonal distributions of jobs to 2050 for the three employment trajectories, the following steps were taken:

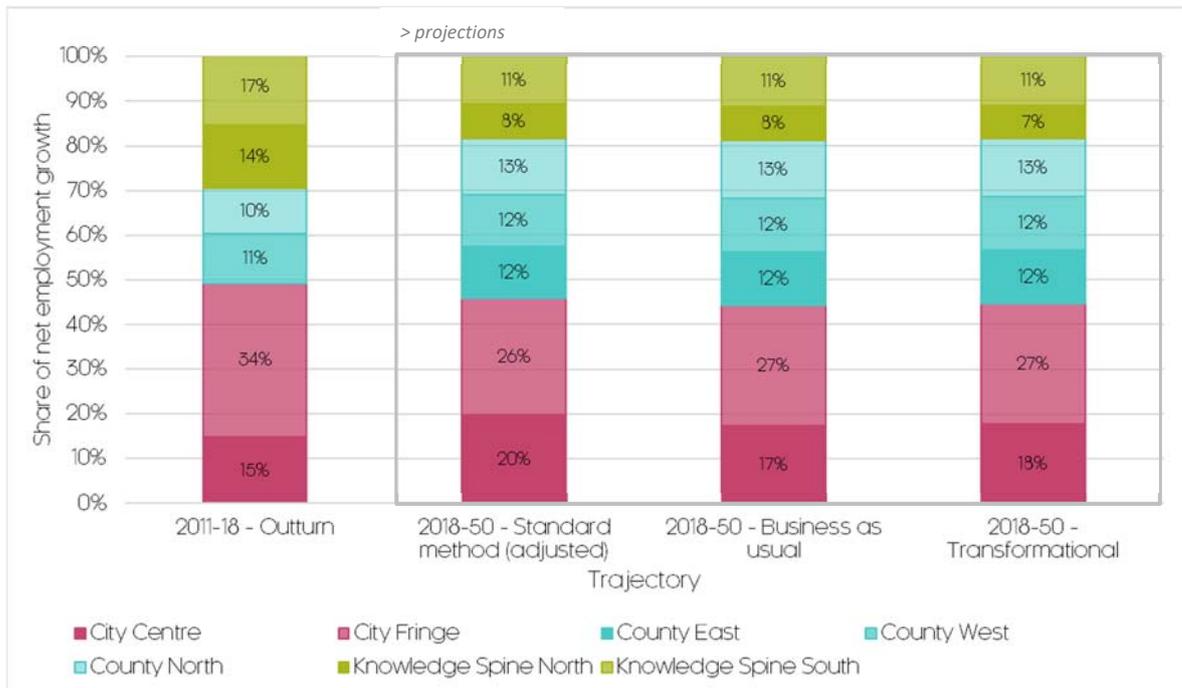
1. Firstly, LSOA-level (broadly equivalent to neighbourhood level) employee jobs data by sector (specifically, for the 10 sectors outlined in the *Phase 1 Report*) were extracted from BRES for the baseline years (2018 and 2011).
2. As BRES data excludes the self-employed (as well as HM armed forces and government supported trainees), a ratio (taken from CE's estimates of employee jobs and self-employed jobs at the county level, as used in the *Phase 1 Report*) was applied to the raw LSOA-level BRES data. This was undertaken on a sectoral basis.
3. Taking these converted and aligned employment values by LSOA and sector, these were scaled forward from 2018 to 2050 on a sectoral basis by taking sector growth rates from the FEMA-wide projections (for the three trajectories) and assuming these held for each LSOA area.
4. Therefore, the growth rate of the individual LSOA's between 2018-50 is reliant on its sectoral mix compared to the county as a whole under the respective scenarios. For the sake of simplicity, transparency, and neutrality, all sectors, regardless of Zone, are therefore assumed to grow at the same rate as the FEMA average.
5. These LSOA values are then checked to ensure they align with county wide totals, and were then summed to their respective economic Zones, which have been defined at the LSOA-level.

- Applying these steps provides complete, aligned and annualized estimates of employment by Zone, from 2018 to 2050, for the three employment trajectories.

### 3.4 Spatial distribution of employment growth

Figure 3.4.1 provides an overview of the potential spatial distribution of employment growth under the three trajectories, shown as the Zones share of total additional jobs to 2050 (not to be confused with the percentage growth rates of the Zones themselves).

**Figure 3.4.1: Spatial scenarios for Zonal distribution of employment (jobs) growth, 2011-18 and 2018-50**



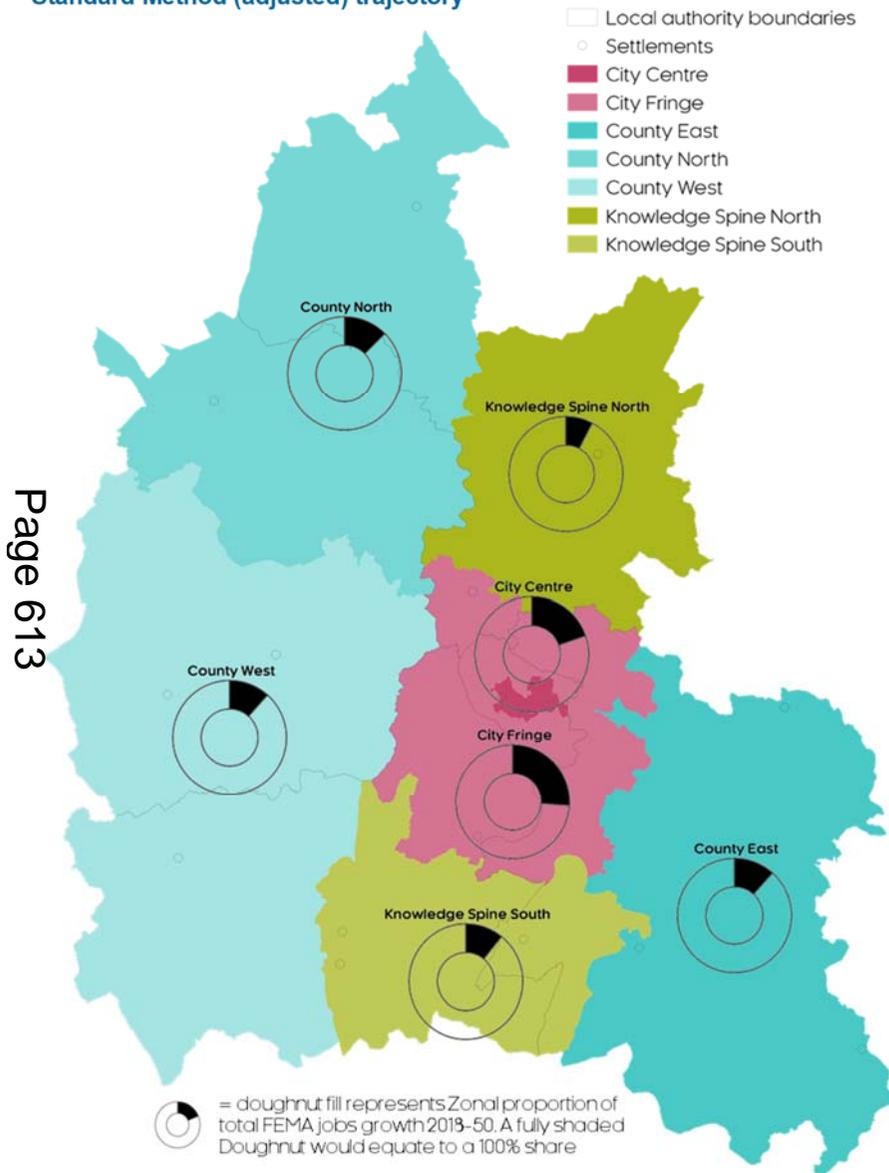
Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics. County East excluded from 2011-18 outturn due to negative employment growth.

The first thing to observe is the close similarity between the three different trajectories. This is a result of the FEMA-wide *Phase 1 Report* projections being scaled proportionally across existing Zonal sectoral employment shares (as explored in *3.3 Methodology overview*).

Secondly, there has been relatively spatially concentrated growth over recent years (2011-18), but assuming sectoral growth rates remain constant across the FEMA, this may not be the case over a longer timeframe, with a more spatially even pattern of growth potentially emerging.

It should be emphasised that the Zonal allocation of these trajectories does not reflect actual options or priorities for economic growth, and are hypothetical distributions. The following analysis proceeds to put absolute numbers against each of these three trajectories for the FEMA and its seven constituent Zones.

Figure 3.4.2: Stylized overview of employment (jobs) growth under the Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory



### Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory

The adjacent Figure 3.4.2 and Table 3.4.1 provide a spatial overview of Oxfordshire’s employment growth under the Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory, where some 81,600 net additional jobs are expected to be created between 2018-50.

Over the timeframe of this trajectory, a more balanced growth picture emerges, with Zonal growth rates only showing minor deviations from the FEMA average. Stronger growth is still expected along the Knowledge Spine (including Oxford City and Fringe), reflecting its favourable sectoral mix and high baseline employment shares, though it is unlikely this will be maintained at the pace of 2011-18.

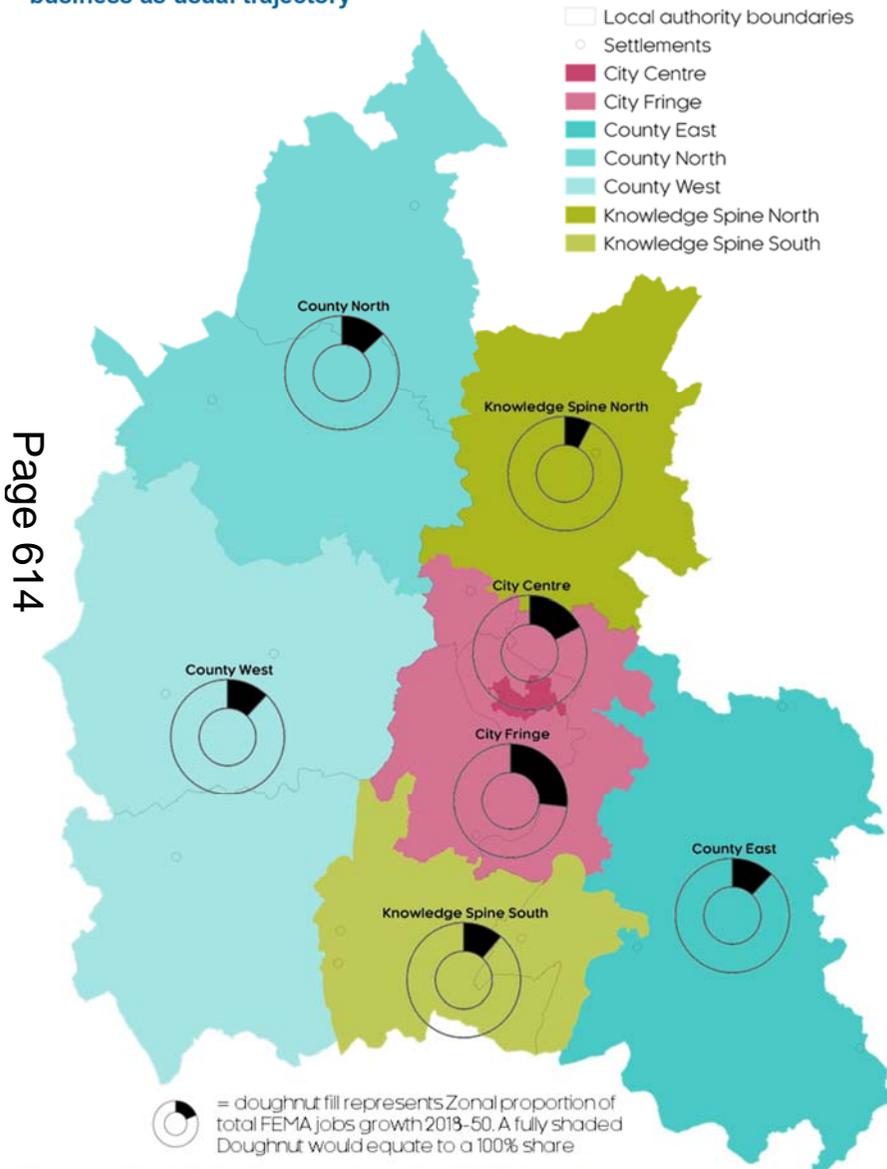
Growth is expected to be more apparent in the Wider County, particularly in and around market towns such as Banbury, Witney and Wallingford. The City and its Fringe is expected to remain the main driver of employment growth though, accounting for almost half (46%) of net new employment between 2018 and 2050.

Table 3.4.1: Overview of employment growth under the Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory

	Change in employment, 2018-50	Change in employment per annum, 2018-50	% share of FEMA change in employment, 2018-50
City Centre	16,800	500	19.7%
City Fringe	22,300	700	26.1%
<b>Oxford City and Fringe</b>	<b>39,200</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>45.8%</b>
County East	9,900	300	11.6%
County North	10,700	300	12.5%
County West	9,900	300	11.6%
<b>Wider County</b>	<b>30,500</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>35.7%</b>
Knowledge Spine North	6,600	200	7.7%
Knowledge Spine South	9,200	300	10.8%
<b>Knowledge Spine</b>	<b>15,800</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>18.4%</b>
<b>FEMA Total</b>	<b>85,500</b>	<b>2,700</b>	-

Source: Cambridge Econometrics. Note: FEMA totals may not sum due to rounding.

**Figure 3.4.3: Stylized overview of employment (jobs) growth under the business as usual trajectory**



### Business as usual trajectory

The adjacent Figure 3.4.3 and Table 3.4.2 provide a spatial overview of Oxfordshire’s employment growth under the business as usual trajectory, where some 115,800 net additional jobs are expected to be created between 2018-50.

Under this central trajectory, the spatial pattern of growth remains broadly similar to Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory, though the Wider County and Knowledge Spine (particularly Knowledge Spine South) close the gap with the City and Fringe in terms of the expected share of employment growth.

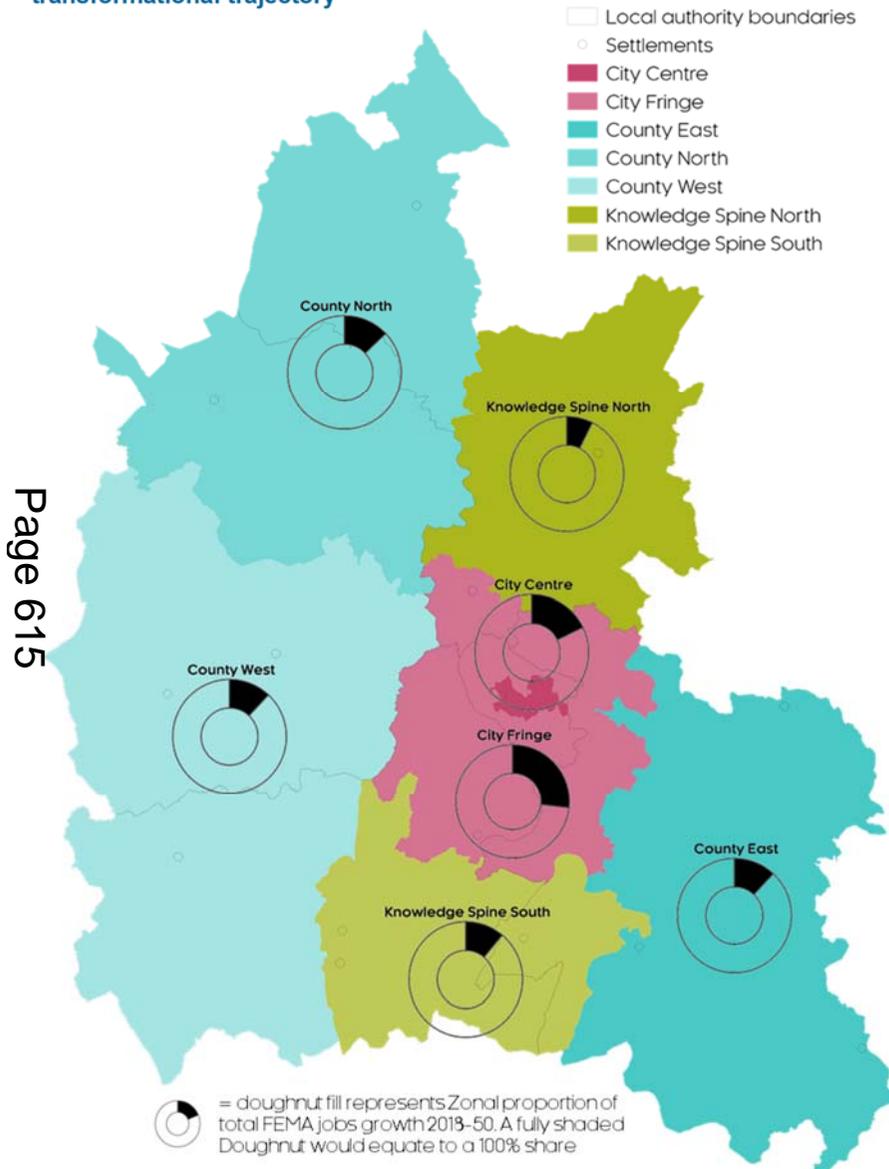
This is largely due to comparatively slower employment growth in the City Centre, which – dominated by industries such as education, public admin and retail – has a lower incidence of LIS high-growth sectors, which are more prevalent in the City Fringe, Knowledge Spine and parts of the Wider County.

**Table 3.4.2: Overview of employment growth under the business as usual trajectory**

	Change in employment, 2018-50	Change in employment per annum, 2018-50	% share of FEMA change in employment, 2018-50
City Centre	21,300	700	17.4%
City Fringe	32,800	1,000	26.8%
<b>Oxford City and Fringe</b>	<b>54,100</b>	<b>1,700</b>	<b>44.2%</b>
County East	14,700	500	12.0%
County North	15,800	500	12.9%
County West	14,700	500	12.0%
<b>Wider County</b>	<b>45,200</b>	<b>1,400</b>	<b>36.9%</b>
Knowledge Spine North	9,300	300	7.6%
Knowledge Spine South	13,800	400	11.3%
<b>Knowledge Spine</b>	<b>23,200</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>18.9%</b>
<b>FEMA Total</b>	<b>122,500</b>	<b>3,800</b>	-

Source: Cambridge Econometrics. Note: FEMA totals may not sum due to rounding.

Figure 3.4.4: Stylized overview of employment (jobs) growth under the transformational trajectory



### Transformational trajectory

The adjacent Figure 3.4.4 and Table 3.4.3 provide a spatial overview of Oxfordshire’s employment growth under the transformational trajectory, where some 162,300 net additional jobs are expected to be created between 2018-50.

The emphasis on faster growth in LIS-oriented (typically tradeable) sectors sees the Wider County retain a high share of total employment growth, given the concentration of such activities in these Zones. Under this trajectory, County North sees the largest employment share outside of Oxford City and Fringe.

The Knowledge Spine (including Oxford City and Fringe) – ranging from Didcot to Bicester – is expected to remain the significant employment generator though, accounting for over two-thirds of all net additional employment growth under this aspirational scenario, reflecting its favourable overall sectoral mix and high baseline employment shares.

Table 3.4.3: Overview of employment growth under the transformational trajectory

	Change in employment, 2018-50	Change in employment per annum, 2018-50	% share of FEMA change in employment, 2018-50
City Centre	30,500	1,000	17.8%
City Fringe	46,000	1,400	26.9%
<b>Oxford City and Fringe</b>	<b>76,500</b>	<b>2,400</b>	<b>44.7%</b>
County East	20,400	600	11.9%
County North	22,100	700	12.9%
County West	20,500	600	12.0%
<b>Wider County</b>	<b>63,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>36.8%</b>
Knowledge Spine North	12,700	400	7.4%
Knowledge Spine South	19,000	600	11.1%
<b>Knowledge Spine</b>	<b>31,600</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>18.5%</b>
<b>FEMA Total</b>	<b>171,200</b>	<b>5,300</b>	-

Source: Cambridge Econometrics. Note: FEMA totals may not sum due to rounding.

### 3.5 Conclusions

This chapter has sought to consider the spatial scale and pattern of projected employment growth within the Oxfordshire FEMA, across its seven constituent Zones. Over the longer timeframe of the *Phase 1* employment trajectories (to 2050), there is the potential for a more spatially balanced growth picture to emerge compared to recent (2011-18) trends.

Central Oxfordshire, encompassing the Knowledge Spine (including Oxford City and Fringe), is expected to remain a significant driver of economic activity though, accounting for a potential two-thirds of net additional employment growth in the FEMA to 2050.

Understanding the potential spatial scale and pattern of employment growth is important for informing, testing and illustrating housing distributions and their implications, which are considered further in the next chapter.

## 4 The Oxfordshire FEMA and Phase 1 Housing Need

### 4.1 Introduction

Having explored the spatial scale and pattern of potential employment growth within the Oxfordshire FEMA, this chapter considers a range of potential spatial distribution scenarios for the three FEMA-wide projections of housing need to 2050, as prepared and presented in the *Phase 1 Report*.

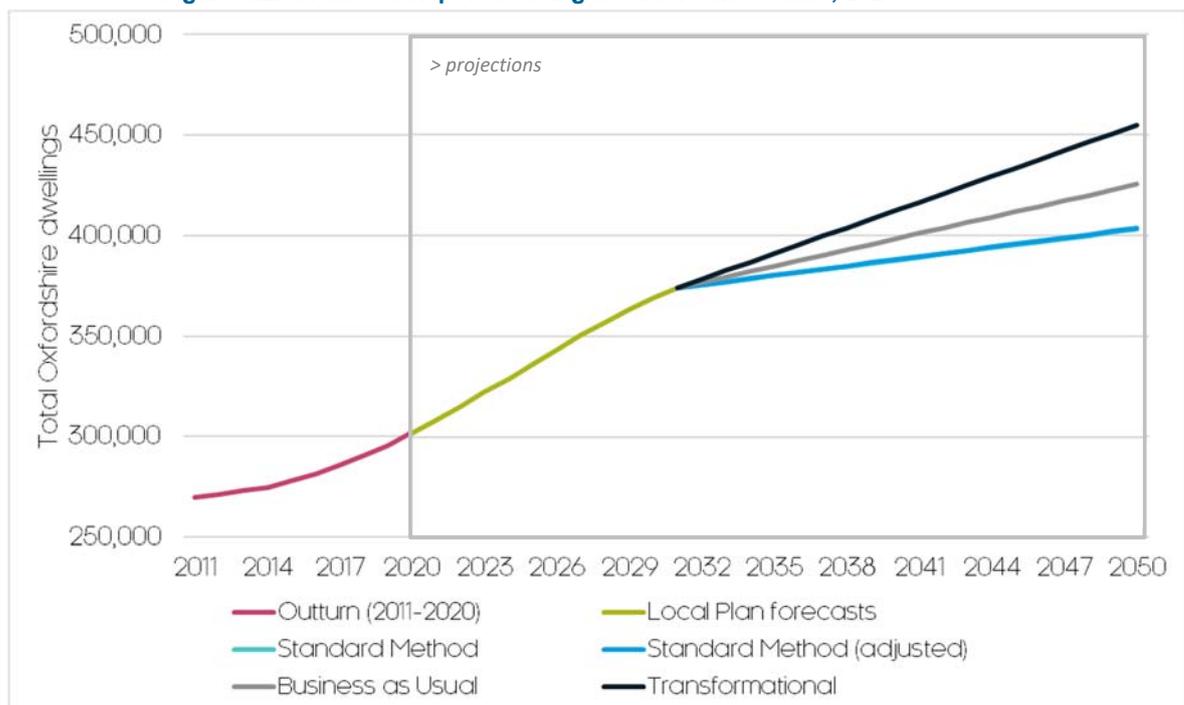
As with the previous chapter, it scales projected housing need from the *Phase 1 Report* across the Oxfordshire FEMA, utilising the seven Zones defined and analysed in *Chapter 2*. By taking the opportunity to quantify and test a range of contrasting housing distributions, the potential implications and trade-offs of different development choices can be identified and contrasted at a high-level.

The following analysis begins with a recap of the FEMA-wide housing need from the *Phase 1 Report*, followed by an overview of the methodology and assumptions used to distribute this to Zones, before presenting and analysing the results.

### 4.2 Recap of the Phase 1 Report housing need

Figure 4.2.1 and Table 4.2.1 provide a recap of the housing need prepared and presented in the *Phase 1 Report* (relative to the three accompanying economic trajectories). As with employment growth, the trajectories have been informed by a broad set of individual assumptions and methodologies, resulting in their contrasting levels of need.

Figure 4.2.1: Phase 1 Report housing need for Oxfordshire, 2020-50



**Table 4.2.1: Phase 1 housing need for Oxfordshire, 2020-50**

	Oxfordshire homes (dwellings) at 2020	Oxfordshire homes (dwellings) needed at 2050	Oxfordshire homes (dwellings) needed, 2020-50	Oxfordshire homes (dwellings) needed p.a., 2020-50
Standard Method	302,100	403,100	101,500	3,400
Standard Method (adjusted)	302,100	403,600	101,600	3,400
Business as usual	302,100	425,400	123,400	4,100
Transformational	302,100	454,800	152,800	5,100

Source: MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics, Icen Projects, Justin Gardner Consulting.

The Standard Method is based on National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) methodology and is intended to provide a minimum level of housing need “a *minimum baseline*” for the county. The adjusted Standard Method maintains this minimum need but applies a small adjustment to account for a revised demographic baseline.

The business as usual and transformational projections have been informed by demographic and economic forecasts, considering recent growth trends and the ambitions of the Oxfordshire LIS with a series of assumptions around commuting, employment rates and job/worker ratios. A full, stage-by-stage methodology for each trajectory is available in the *Phase 1 Report*.

The analysis shows that to meet the Standard Method (adjusted) level of need over 2020-50, Oxfordshire would require around 3,400 dwellings each year; with the business as usual level of growth this increases to 4,100 dwellings per annum, with a transformational figure approaching 5,100 dwellings per annum, dependent on the realisation of LIS-related ambitions.

These figures can be compared with the Standard Method housing need (unadjusted, across the whole of Oxfordshire) of 3,400 dwellings per annum over the period 2020-50.

Note that until 2031, all of the projections are assumed to follow the same path, that of Local Plan forecast net completions, which have been sourced directly from the respective Oxfordshire local authorities. These forecasts are available across the FEMA in a consistent format (and derived using the same methodology and sources) over the 2020-31 period. After 2031 the projections follow an annualised rate of remaining forecast need.

### 4.3 Methodology and scenario overview

To estimate the Zonal distributions of housing need, and thus need, to 2050 for the three aforementioned economic trajectories, the following steps were taken:

1. Firstly, dwellings data at LSOA level for 2020 were scaled up to their respective Zones, to provide corresponding baseline (2020) totals of the current number of dwellings in each Zone.
2. By attributing Local Plan forecast net completions to the individual Zones (see Table 4.3.1 for an overview of this process), Zonal-level projections of need have been estimated, per annum, to 2031. These

have been applied to the baseline (2020) totals to provide annualized 2020-2031 need by Zone. As mentioned previously, these Local Plan forecasts are fixed across the three projections up to 2031. This means that the need rates and the Zonal distribution assumptions 2020-2031 are based on planned development, whereas the rate of growth for the rest of the plan period 2031 to 2050 is simply an annualised rate of the remaining forecast need. The forecast net completions were sourced directly from the respective Oxfordshire local authorities, who input to a proforma coordinated by Iceni Projects.

3. For the 2031-2050 period, Zonal level trajectories are then estimated for each trajectory (Standard Method adjusted, business as usual and transformational) by **five intentionally-contrasting housing scenarios** which explore how need and need might be distributed between Zones. These scenarios and accompanying assumptions, which test different distributions over the 2031-2050 period *only*, are as follows:
  - i. **Evenly dispersed scenario** – the same % per annum growth rate is applied to all Zones from 2031 to 2050. This means housing need is allocated at an even *percentage* rate (not quantity) across the FEMA.
  - ii. **Continued trends scenario** – relative Zonal growth rates from 2031-2050 are matched to 2020-2031 relative growth rates (i.e. the scenario mirrors current concentrations of forecast net completions in Local Plans, extrapolating them from 2031 to 2050).
  - iii. **Employment-led scenario** – relative Zonal growth rates from 2031-2050 are matched to the distribution of projected Zonal employment growth, including growth in LIS-outlined key employment locations.
  - iv. **County-focussed scenario** – need across the Knowledge Spine is the same as the employment-led scenario. Need across Oxford City and Fringe is the same as the continued trends scenario. The remainder is allocated to the Wider County. This results in the highest proportion of need allocated to the Wider County.
  - v. **Centralised scenario** – need across the Knowledge Spine is the same as the continued trends scenario, Oxford City and Fringe is the same as employment-led scenario. The remainder is allocated to the Wider County. This results in the lowest proportion of need allocated to the Wider County.
4. Applying these steps provides complete, aligned and annualized estimates of housing need by Zone, from 2020 to 2050. These are available for the three higher level projections (Standard Method adjusted, business as usual, transformational) and a further five Zonal-specific scenarios, resulting in fifteen Zonal level projections in total.

Table 4.3.1 below provides an overview of the Local Plan-Zonal attribution process. With forecast net completions available across built up areas (BUA's) in Oxfordshire over 2020-31 (which are provided in *Appendix B: Local Plan Forecast Completions*), the table outlines how these have been attributed to their relative Zone. In some cases, BUA's overlap Zones, so additional adjustments have been made to the attributions (outlined in red, see table footnote for additional details).

**Table 4.3.1: Attributing forecast net completions from Local Plans to the FEMA Zones**

Local Plan	Built up Area (BUA)/locality	Reference Zone(s) – if BUA/locality is in more than one Zone, values are attributed according to current share of dwellings*			
Oxford City	Oxford City	<i>City Fringe</i>	<i>City Centre</i>		
		<i>75%</i>	<i>25%</i>		
Cherwell	Banbury BUA	<i>County North</i>			
	Bicester BUA	<i>Knowledge Spine North</i>			
	Former RAF Upper Heyford	<i>Knowledge Spine North</i>			
	CDC Partial Review Sites (Kidlington, Begbroke, Gosford and Water Eaton and Yarnton)	<i>City Fringe</i>			
	Other Cherwell (e.g. Rural)	<i>County North</i>	<i>Knowledge Spine North</i>	<i>City Fringe</i>	
		<i>50%</i>	<i>35%</i>	<i>15%</i>	
West Oxfordshire	Carterton BUA	<i>County West</i>			
	Witney BUA	<i>County West</i>			
	Eynsham SDA/ Cotswold Garden Village	<i>County West</i>			
	Other West (e.g. Rural)	<i>County West</i>	<i>County North</i>		
		<i>75%</i>	<i>25%</i>		
Vale of White Horse	Abingdon BUA	<i>City Fringe</i>			
	Faringdon BUA	<i>County West</i>			
	Wantage & Grove BUA	<i>Knowledge Spine South</i>			
	Botley (adjoins Oxford)	<i>City Fringe</i>			
South Oxfordshire	Didcot BUA	<i>Knowledge Spine South</i>			
	Henley-on-Thames BUA	<i>County East</i>			
	Thame BUA	<i>County East</i>			
	Wallingford BUA	<i>County East</i>			

Other South and Vale Rural	County East	Knowledge Spine South	County West	City Fringe
	35%	30%	25%	10%

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, Iceni Projects, Oxford City Council, Cherwell District Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council.

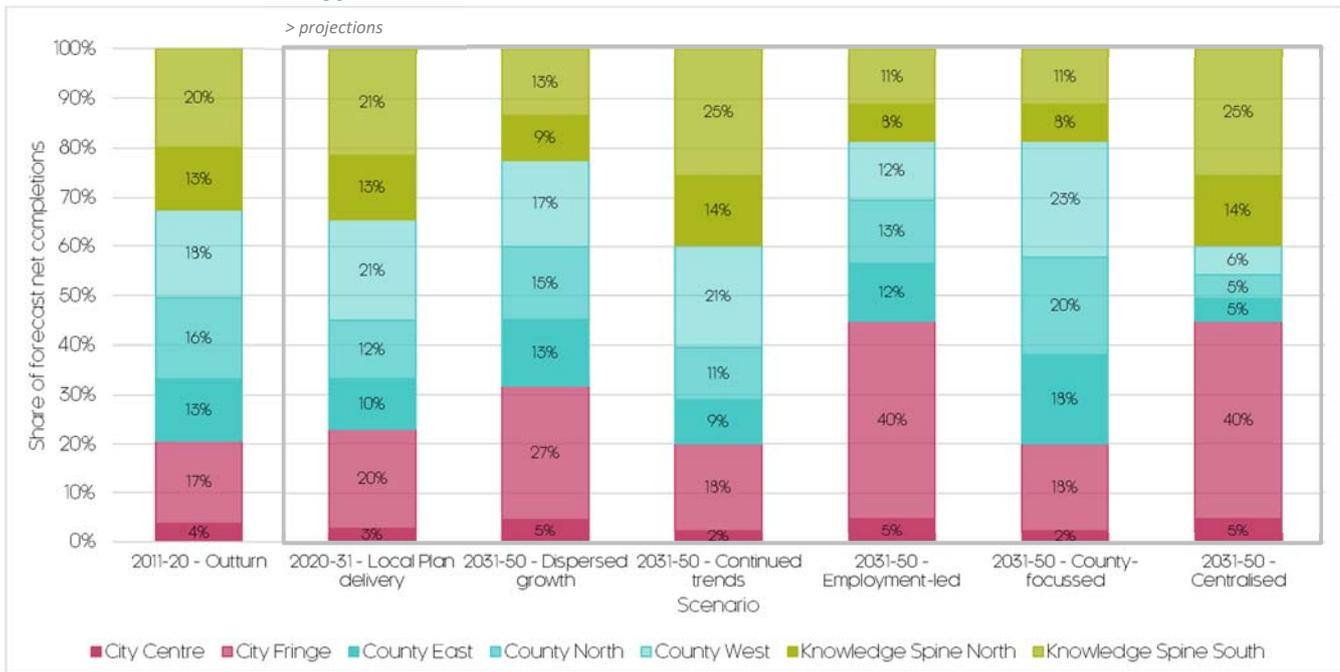
\*For BUA's that cover more than one Zone (e.g. Oxford City BUA), forecast completions to 2031 are attributed according to the approximate share of current dwelling stock (i.e. if 75% of dwellings in the Oxford City BUA area are currently located in the City Fringe, it is expected that 75% of Local Plan completions for the Oxford City BUA will also be in the City Fringe).

#### 4.4 Spatial distribution of housing need

Figure 4.4.1 presents distributions of the *Phase 1* housing need, and thus dwellings, across the Oxfordshire FEMA, based on the five spatial scenarios defined in *4.3 Methodology and scenario overview*. These are shown as the Zones share of total housing need to 2050 (not to be confused with the percentage growth rates of the Zones themselves).

Note that these do not reflect actual options or priorities for need, but are rather hypothetical distributions to better understand the implications and trade-offs of different development choices at a high level.

**Figure 4.4.1: Spatial scenarios for Zonal distribution of housing need, 2011-20 and 2020-50**



Source: MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics. Note: percentage shares for 2031-50 are an average of distributions across the three employment trajectories.

The 2011-2020 outturn (as explored in *2.5 Characteristics and trends within the Oxfordshire FEMA*), showed relatively high rates of delivery within the Knowledge Spine (31% of additional dwellings) and Wider County (49%). The City Centre and Fringe saw comparatively lower growth, accounting for 21% of additional dwellings over 2011-20.

Local Plan forecasts for completions over 2020-31 show a broadly similar pattern to the 2011-20 outturn, but with a slightly higher emphasis on the

Knowledge Spine (including the City Centre and Fringe), which together account for almost two-thirds of forecast completions over the 2020-31 period.

Looking further ahead to 2050, the main differentiating factor between the housing scenarios is the way 2031-2050 housing need (i.e. post Local Plan forecasts) is allocated across the three main groups of Zones. Up until 2031, the scenarios share the same Local Plan forecasts.

As it allocates housing growth rates equally across Zones, the **evenly dispersed** scenario sees housing distributed the most evenly between the Zones post-2031. The Wider County still has the highest absolute level of growth, as it starts with the highest number of initial dwellings at 2031.

The **continued trends** scenario, extrapolating 2020-31 Local Plan forecasts to 2050, sees significantly greater distribution to the Knowledge Spine, and marginally less allocated to the Wider County and City Centre and Fringe.

The **employment-led** scenario sees much greater distribution to Oxford City (specifically the City Fringe), and comparatively lower levels allocated to the Wider County and Knowledge Spine.

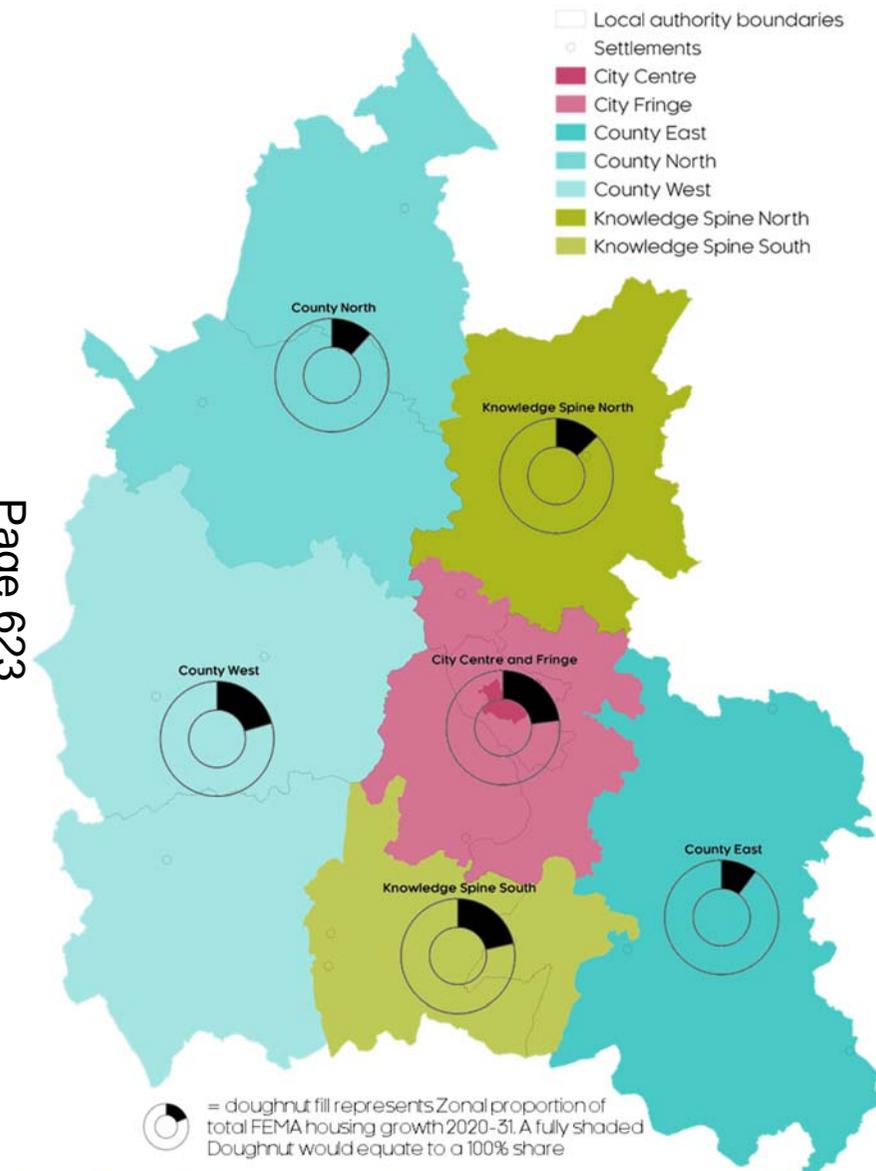
The **County-focussed** scenario combines the low City Centre and Fringe distribution from the *continued trends* scenario with the low distribution to Knowledge Spine from the *employment led* scenario. This scenario results in a very high relative allocation to the Wider County.

The **centralised** scenario reverses this process, with the high City Centre and Fringe distribution from the *employment-led* scenario paired with the high Knowledge Spine allocation from the *continued trends* scenario. This scenario results in a very low relative distribution to the Wider County.

As emphasised previously, these scenarios do not reflect actual options or priorities for need, but are purely hypothetical distributions. It should also be noted that these scenarios are intended to be high level only, and do not take into account specific site constraints, phased need, or development sites outside of the Local Plan period (2020-31).

The following analysis proceeds to put absolute numbers against each of these five scenarios under the three economic trajectories, resulting in fifteen Zonal housing distributions in total. To aid with the analysis and interpretation, stylized maps have been produced to indicate proportional Zonal distributions for the three 2050 employment trajectories.

Figure 4.4.2: Stylized overview of housing need under Local Plan forecasts



### Local Plan forecasts

The adjacent Figure 4.4.2 and Table 4.4.1 provide a spatial overview of the forecast net completions outlined in local authority Local Plans, with 72,100 net completions forecast across Oxfordshire between 2020-31.

During this time, there is expected to be an emphasis on central Oxfordshire, particularly within the City Fringe (including Abingdon) and Knowledge Spine South (notably Didcot). In fact, the Knowledge Spine, including Oxford City Centre and Fringe, is expected to account for over two-thirds of the FEMA completions over this Local Plan period.

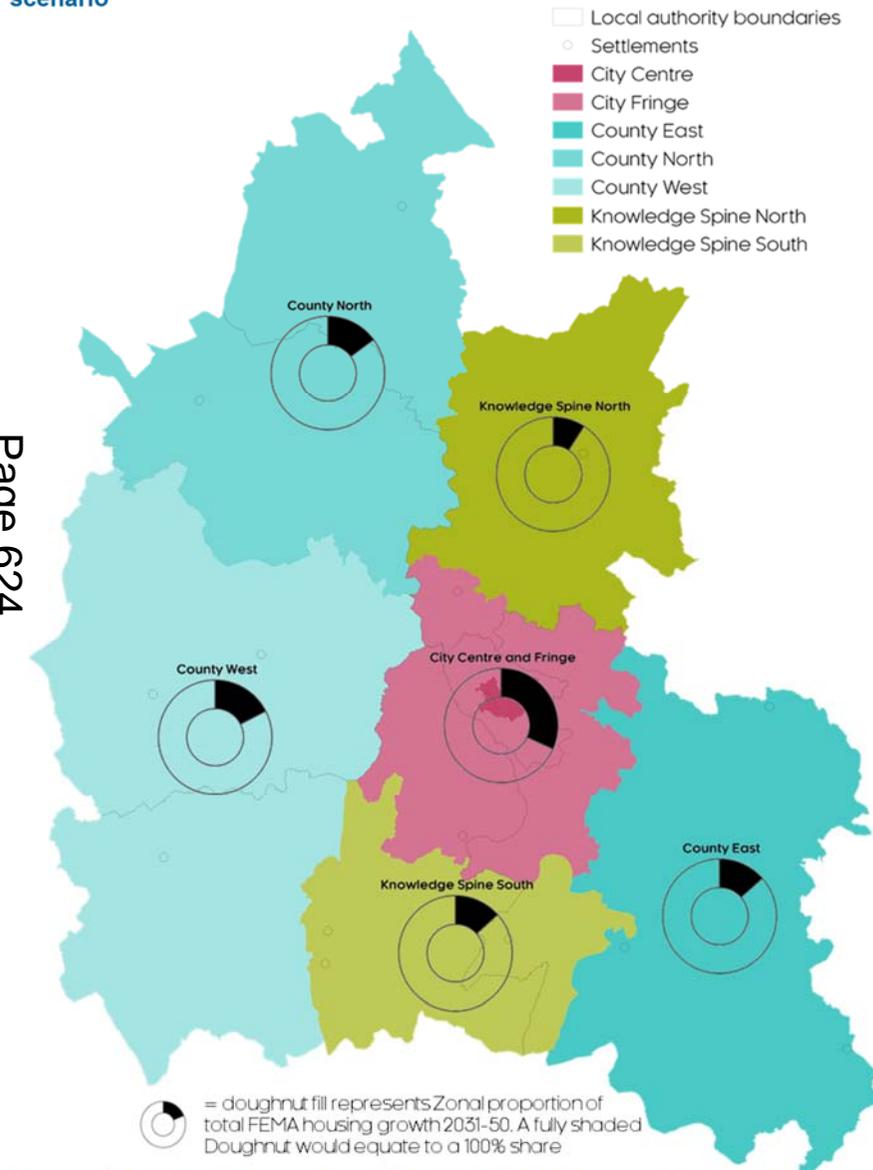
Completions are comparatively lower in the Wider County compared with recent (2011-20) trends, though County West accounts for roughly a fifth – a higher share than 2011-20 - with a notable emphasis on Witney and Carterton.

Table 4.4.1: Overview of 2020-31 Local Plan forecast net completions

	Current homes (dwellings), 2020	As a % of FEMA total, 2020	Local Plan forecast completions, 2020-31	As a % of FEMA total forecast completions, 2020-31
City Centre	15,400	5.1%	2,100	2.9%
City Fringe	86,800	28.7%	14,500	20.1%
<b>Oxford City and Fringe</b>	<b>102,200</b>	<b>33.8%</b>	<b>16,600</b>	<b>23.0%</b>
County East	43,100	14.3%	7,400	10.3%
County North	47,200	15.6%	8,500	11.8%
County West	50,400	16.7%	14,900	20.7%
<b>Wider County</b>	<b>140,700</b>	<b>46.6%</b>	<b>30,800</b>	<b>42.7%</b>
Knowledge Spine North	24,800	8.2%	9,300	12.9%
Knowledge Spine South	34,400	11.4%	15,500	21.5%
<b>Knowledge Spine</b>	<b>59,200</b>	<b>19.6%</b>	<b>24,800</b>	<b>34.4%</b>
<b>FEMA Total</b>	<b>302,100</b>	-	<b>72,100</b>	-

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, Oxfordshire local authorities. Note: FEMA totals may not sum due to rounding. City Centre merged with City Fringe in Figure due to comparatively low number of expected completions in the former.

Figure 4.4.3: Stylized overview of housing need under the evenly dispersed scenario



### Evenly dispersed scenario

The adjacent Figure 4.4.3 and Table 4.4.2 provide a spatial overview of Oxfordshire’s housing need under the evenly dispersed scenario 2031-50, for each of the three economic trajectories.

Under the evenly dispersed scenario, housing need grows at a proportionately even rate across the FEMA from 2031-onwards. Therefore the Wider County, which is expected to account for the majority share of total dwellings in the FEMA by 2031, will also account for the majority share of housing need 2031-50.

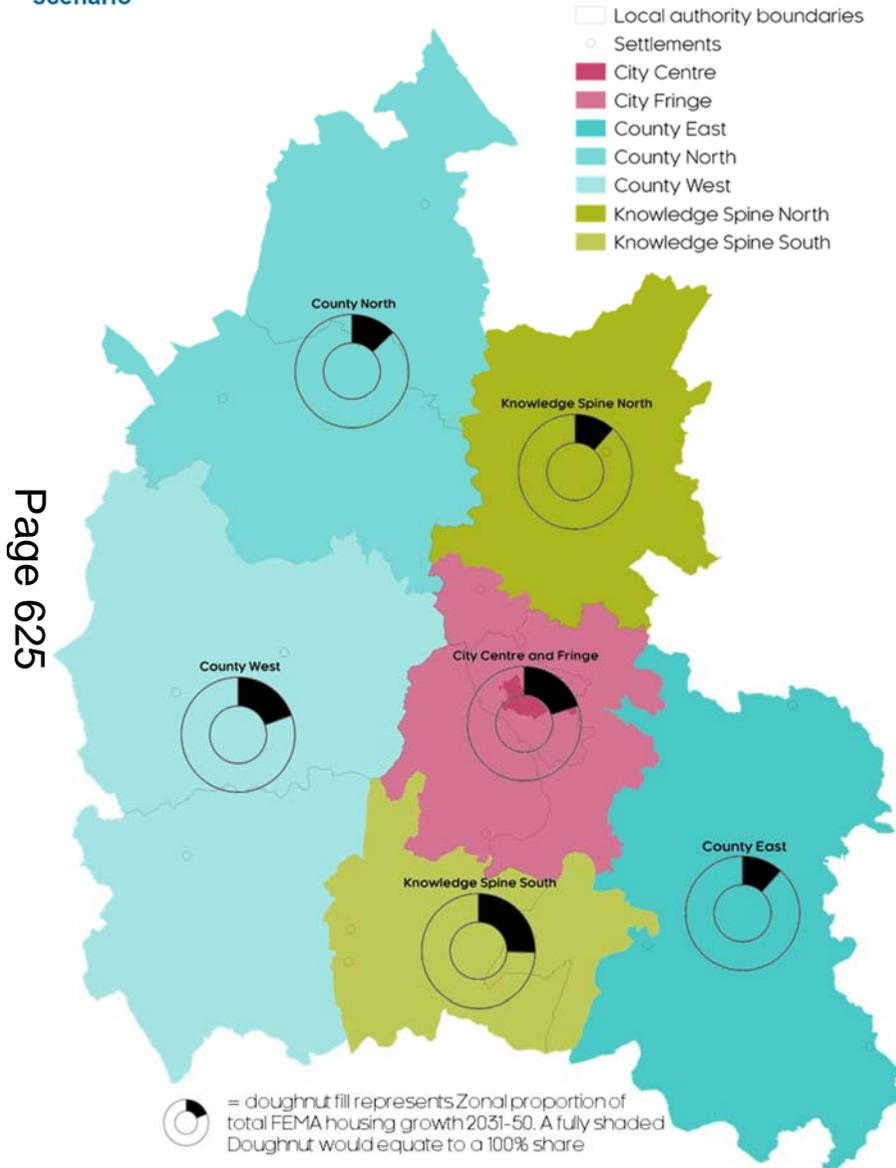
Oxford City, particularly the City Fringe, sees an increase in need - particularly relative to 2011-20 - due to the same reason. The Knowledge Spine, despite having the lowest share of dwellings in the FEMA, maintains a robust share of total housing need 2031-50.

Table 4.4.2: Overview of 2031-50 housing need under the evenly dispersed scenario

	Standard Method (adjusted), 2031-50 (and as % of FEMA total)		Business as usual, 2031-50 (and as % of FEMA total)		Transformational, 2031-50 (and as % of FEMA total)	
City Centre	1,400	4.7%	2,400	4.7%	3,800	4.7%
City Fringe	8,000	27.1%	13,900	27.1%	21,800	27.0%
<b>Oxford City and Fringe</b>	<b>9,400</b>	<b>31.9%</b>	<b>16,300</b>	<b>31.8%</b>	<b>25,600</b>	<b>31.7%</b>
County East	4,000	13.6%	6,900	13.5%	10,900	13.5%
County North	4,400	14.9%	7,600	14.8%	12,000	14.9%
County West	5,100	17.3%	8,900	17.3%	14,100	17.5%
<b>Wider County</b>	<b>13,500</b>	<b>45.8%</b>	<b>23,400</b>	<b>45.6%</b>	<b>37,000</b>	<b>45.8%</b>
Knowledge Spine North	2,700	9.2%	4,700	9.2%	7,400	9.2%
Knowledge Spine South	3,900	13.2%	6,800	13.3%	10,700	13.3%
<b>Knowledge Spine</b>	<b>6,600</b>	<b>22.4%</b>	<b>11,500</b>	<b>22.4%</b>	<b>18,100</b>	<b>22.4%</b>
<b>FEMA Total</b>	<b>29,500</b>	-	<b>51,300</b>	-	<b>80,700</b>	-

Source: Cambridge Econometrics. Note: FEMA totals may not sum due to rounding. City Centre merged with City Fringe in Figure due to comparatively low need in the former. Figure proportions are an average across the three employment trajectories.

Figure 4.4.4: Stylized overview of housing need under the continued trends scenario



### Continued trends scenario

The adjacent Figure 4.4.4 and Table 4.4.3 provide a spatial overview of Oxfordshire’s housing need under the continued trends scenario 2031-50, for each of the three economic trajectories.

The continued trends scenario sees housing need distributed in line with 2020-2031 Local Plan forecasts, maintaining this rate of need to 2050. This sees a notable increase in housing need attributed to the Knowledge Spine, particularly the South, reflecting the emphasis on the Science Vale area in Local Plans.

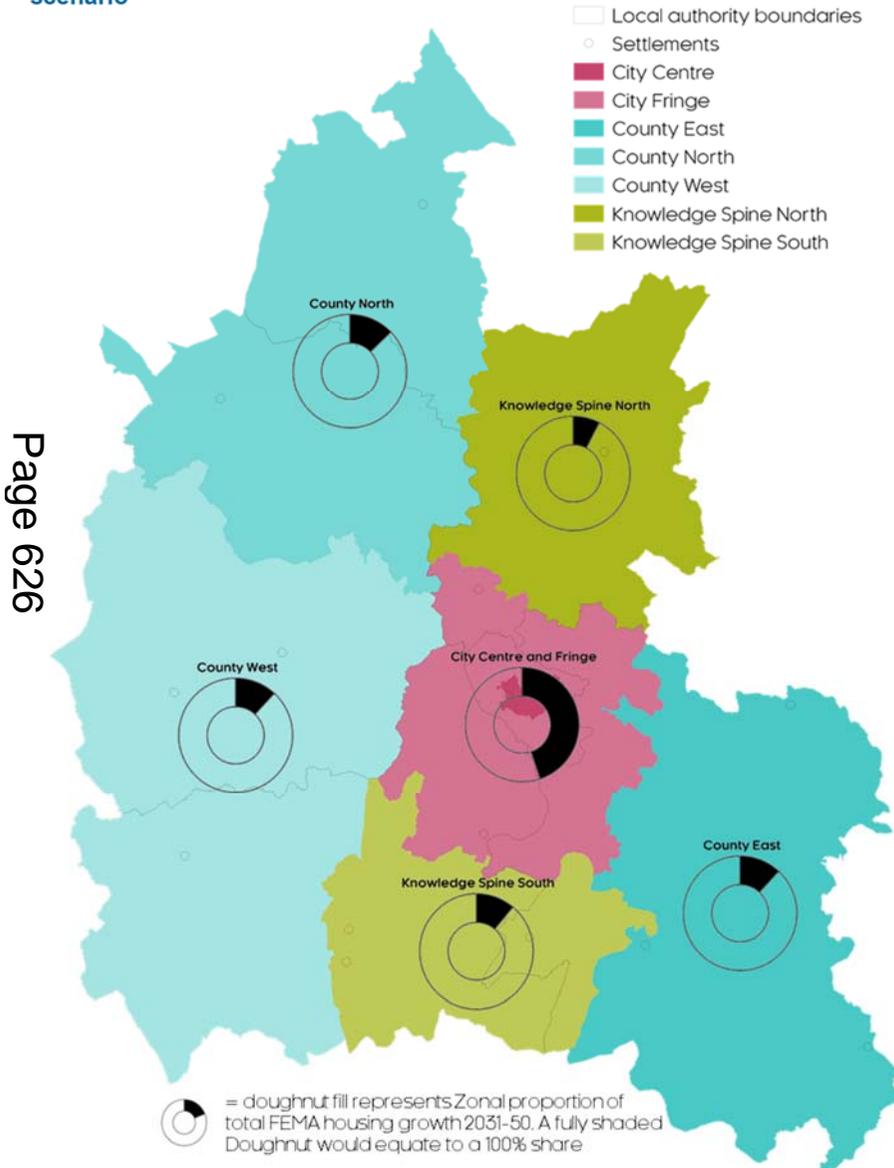
Housing need in the Wider County is resultantly lower but also less uniform, with the County West still expected to maintain high levels of need. Oxford City, specifically the City Fringe, sees an increase compared with recent (2011-20) trends, though still lower than some other scenarios.

Table 4.4.3: Overview of 2031-50 housing need under the continued trends scenario

	Standard Method (adjusted), 2031-50 (and as % of FEMA total)		Business as usual, 2031-50 (and as % of FEMA total)		Transformational, 2031-50 (and as % of FEMA total)	
City Centre	700	2.4%	1,300	2.5%	2,000	2.5%
City Fringe	5,200	17.6%	9,000	17.5%	14,100	17.5%
<b>Oxford City and Fringe</b>	<b>5,900</b>	<b>20.0%</b>	<b>10,300</b>	<b>20.1%</b>	<b>16,100</b>	<b>20.0%</b>
County East	2,600	8.8%	4,600	9.0%	7,200	8.9%
County North	3,100	10.5%	5,400	10.5%	8,500	10.5%
County West	6,100	20.7%	10,700	20.9%	16,800	20.8%
<b>Wider County</b>	<b>11,800</b>	<b>40.0%</b>	<b>20,700</b>	<b>40.4%</b>	<b>32,500</b>	<b>40.3%</b>
Knowledge Spine North	4,200	14.2%	7,300	14.2%	11,500	14.3%
Knowledge Spine South	7,500	25.4%	13,100	25.5%	20,500	25.4%
<b>Knowledge Spine</b>	<b>11,700</b>	<b>39.7%</b>	<b>20,400</b>	<b>39.8%</b>	<b>32,000</b>	<b>39.7%</b>
<b>FEMA Total</b>	<b>29,500</b>	-	<b>51,300</b>	-	<b>80,700</b>	-

Source: Cambridge Econometrics. Note: FEMA totals may not sum due to rounding. City Centre merged with City Fringe in Figure due to comparatively low need in the former. Figure proportions are an average across the three employment trajectories.

Figure 4.4.5: Stylized overview of housing need under the employment-led scenario



### Employment-led scenario

The adjacent Figure 4.4.5 and Table 4.4.4 provide a spatial overview of Oxfordshire’s housing growth under the employment-led scenario 2031-50, for each of the three economic trajectories.

Under the employment-led scenario, housing need 2031-onwards is assumed to correlate with projected Zonal employment growth, including growth in LIS-outlined key employment locations. Resultantly, this sees a substantial increase in housing need attributed to Oxford City Centre and Fringe.

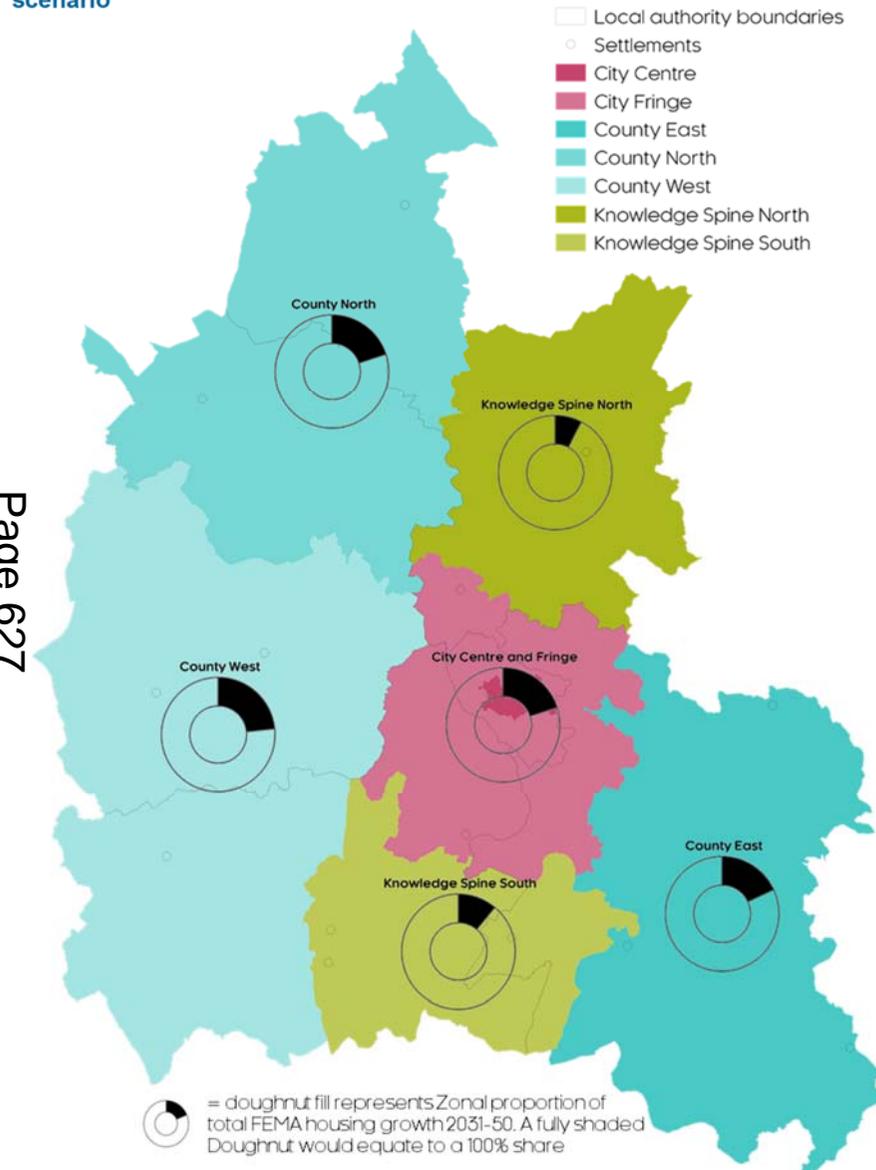
Resultantly, comparatively lower levels of housing need are expected in the Wider County, though it is still expected to account for the majority share. The Knowledge Spine also sees a slight reduction, slightly less so in the South given the potential for LIS-related employment growth in the Science Vale.

Table 4.4.4: Overview of 2031-50 housing need under the employment-led scenario

	Standard Method (adjusted), 2031-50 (and as % of FEMA total)		Business as usual, 2031-50 (and as % of FEMA total)		Transformational, 2031-50 (and as % of FEMA total)	
City Centre	1,400	4.7%	2,500	4.9%	3,900	4.8%
City Fringe	12,100	41.0%	20,100	39.2%	32,200	39.9%
<b>Oxford City and Fringe</b>	<b>13,500</b>	<b>45.8%</b>	<b>22,600</b>	<b>44.1%</b>	<b>36,100</b>	<b>44.7%</b>
County East	3,400	11.5%	6,200	12.1%	9,600	11.9%
County North	3,700	12.5%	6,600	12.9%	10,400	12.9%
County West	3,400	11.5%	6,100	11.9%	9,700	12.0%
<b>Wider County</b>	<b>10,500</b>	<b>35.6%</b>	<b>18,900</b>	<b>36.8%</b>	<b>29,700</b>	<b>36.8%</b>
Knowledge Spine North	2,300	7.8%	3,900	7.6%	6,000	7.4%
Knowledge Spine South	3,200	10.8%	5,800	11.3%	8,900	11.0%
<b>Knowledge Spine</b>	<b>5,500</b>	<b>18.6%</b>	<b>9,700</b>	<b>18.9%</b>	<b>14,900</b>	<b>18.5%</b>
<b>FEMA Total</b>	<b>29,500</b>	-	<b>51,300</b>	-	<b>80,700</b>	-

Source: Cambridge Econometrics. Note: FEMA totals may not sum due to rounding. City Centre merged with City Fringe in Figure due to comparatively low need in the former. Figure proportions are an average across the three employment trajectories.

Figure 4.4.6: Stylized overview of housing need under the County-focussed scenario



### County-focussed scenario

The adjacent Figure 4.4.6 and Table 4.4.5 provide a spatial overview of Oxfordshire’s housing growth under the County-focussed scenario 2031-50, for each of the three economic trajectories.

As the name suggests, this scenario sees a greater focus and emphasis on housing need in the Wider County. Resultantly, of the five scenarios this sees the highest share attributed to the Wider County, which under this scenario could account for over half of all need in the FEMA to 2050.

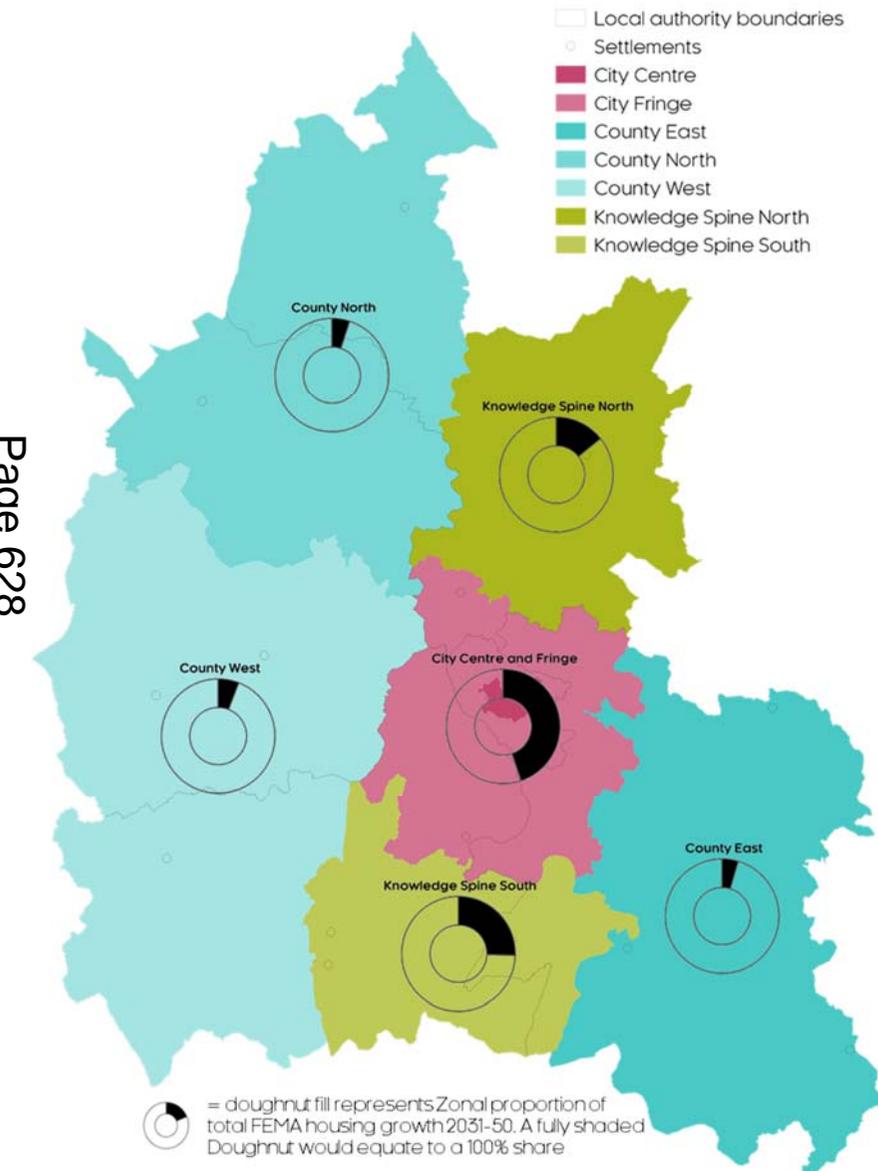
Remaining need is largely balanced between Oxford City Fringe and the Knowledge Spine, though this is the only scenario where the Knowledge Spine (including the City Centre and Fringe) does not account for the majority of need.

Table 4.4.5: Overview of 2031-50 housing need under the County-focussed scenario

	Standard Method (adjusted), 2031-50 (and as % of FEMA total)		Business as usual, 2031-50 (and as % of FEMA total)		Transformational, 2031-50 (and as % of FEMA total)	
City Centre	700	2.4%	1,300	2.5%	2,000	2.5%
City Fringe	5,200	17.6%	9,000	17.5%	14,100	17.5%
<b>Oxford City and Fringe</b>	<b>5,900</b>	<b>20.0%</b>	<b>10,300</b>	<b>20.1%</b>	<b>16,100</b>	<b>20.0%</b>
County East	5,300	18.0%	9,200	17.9%	14,600	18.1%
County North	5,900	20.0%	10,200	19.9%	16,100	20.0%
County West	6,900	23.4%	11,900	23.2%	18,900	23.4%
<b>Wider County</b>	<b>18,100</b>	<b>61.4%</b>	<b>31,300</b>	<b>61.0%</b>	<b>49,600</b>	<b>61.5%</b>
Knowledge Spine North	2,300	7.8%	3,900	7.6%	6,000	7.4%
Knowledge Spine South	3,200	10.8%	5,800	11.3%	8,900	11.0%
<b>Knowledge Spine</b>	<b>5,500</b>	<b>18.6%</b>	<b>9,700</b>	<b>18.9%</b>	<b>14,900</b>	<b>18.5%</b>
<b>FEMA Total</b>	<b>29,500</b>	-	<b>51,300</b>	-	<b>80,700</b>	-

Source: Cambridge Econometrics. Note: FEMA totals may not sum due to rounding. City Centre merged with City Fringe in Figure due to comparatively low need in the former. Figure proportions are an average across the three employment trajectories.

Figure 4.4.7: Stylized overview of housing need under the centralised scenario



### Centralised scenario

The adjacent Figure 4.4.7 and Table 4.4.6 provide a spatial overview of Oxfordshire’s housing growth under the centralised scenario 2031-50, for each of the three economic trajectories.

The centralised scenario sees a significant focus and emphasis on housing need throughout central Oxfordshire, covering the Knowledge Spine, City Centre and Fringe. This results in a very low relative allocation to the Wider County, with need almost half that of the County-focussed scenario.

Oxford City (specifically the City Fringe) and the Knowledge Spine (particularly the South) meanwhile see a substantial increase in housing need, well above recent trends and other scenarios. Over three-quarters of housing need in the FEMA could be located along this central ‘spine’ under this scenario.

Table 4.4.6: Overview of 2031-50 housing need under the centralised scenario

	Standard Method (adjusted), 2031-50 (and as % of FEMA total)		Business as usual, 2031-50 (and as % of FEMA total)		Transformational, 2031-50 (and as % of FEMA total)	
City Centre	1,400	4.7%	2,500	4.9%	3,900	4.8%
City Fringe	12,100	41.0%	20,100	39.2%	32,200	39.9%
<b>Oxford City and Fringe</b>	<b>13,500</b>	<b>45.8%</b>	<b>22,600</b>	<b>44.1%</b>	<b>36,100</b>	<b>44.7%</b>
County East	1,300	4.4%	2,400	4.7%	3,700	4.6%
County North	1,400	4.7%	2,700	5.3%	4,100	5.1%
County West	1,600	5.4%	3,200	6.2%	4,800	5.9%
<b>Wider County</b>	<b>4,300</b>	<b>14.6%</b>	<b>8,300</b>	<b>16.2%</b>	<b>12,600</b>	<b>15.6%</b>
Knowledge Spine North	4,200	14.2%	7,300	14.2%	11,500	14.3%
Knowledge Spine South	7,500	25.4%	13,100	25.5%	20,500	25.4%
<b>Knowledge Spine</b>	<b>11,700</b>	<b>39.7%</b>	<b>20,400</b>	<b>39.8%</b>	<b>32,000</b>	<b>39.7%</b>
<b>FEMA Total</b>	<b>29,500</b>	-	<b>51,300</b>	-	<b>80,700</b>	-

Source: Cambridge Econometrics. Note: FEMA totals may not sum due to rounding. City Centre merged with City Fringe in Figure due to comparatively low need in the former. Figure proportions are an average across the three employment trajectories.

## 4.5 Conclusions

Informed by a set of robust and varied scenarios, this chapter has sought to quantify, test and illustrate a range of different housing distributions for the Oxfordshire FEMA, allocating the three county-wide trajectories for housing need to 2050 from the *Phase 1 Report*.

The distribution scenarios cover a variety of contrasting development choices, ranging from an economic-led focus on distribution in central Oxfordshire (Oxford and the Knowledge Spine), to a more evenly dispersed approach across the county, to an emphasis on market towns in Wider County areas.

By taking the opportunity to quantify and test a range of different housing distributions, potential implications and trade-offs can be identified and contrasted. This is considered in the next chapter, which proceeds to look at the commuting and transport implications of the respective housing distributions.

## 5 Commuting Trends Within the Oxfordshire FEMA

### 5.1 Introduction

Having explored the potential scale and pattern of both economic growth and housing distribution within the Oxfordshire FEMA, this chapter brings the two together to consider the possible implications for commuting and transport use.

This has been undertaken at the Zonal level, aided by the development of an inter-Zonal commuting matrix for the FEMA, which is able to estimate the incremental commuting impacts of different housing and employment distributions. As before, the work considers the three alternative levels of FEMA-wide housing and employment growth laid out in the *Phase 1 Report*.

Given the increasing pressure on Oxfordshire's transport network and the associated externalities (notably, environmental effects), it is important to understand the potential implications for commuting and transport from particular distribution scenarios and growth trajectories.

The following analysis begins with an overview of the relationship between employment, housing and commuting in Oxfordshire, followed by a methodology overview before presenting and analysing the results.

### 5.2 The relationship between employment, housing and commuting in Oxfordshire

Employment (i.e. jobs) and housing growth can act as relative push and pull factors for commuting by facilitating potential change in the number of employed persons working (workplace employed) and living (employed residents) in an area. Within commuting analysis, it is important to distinguish the difference between these employment identities:

- *Workplace employed*: refers to employed persons by the location of their workplace, regardless of the location of their residence (e.g. someone working in Oxford but living in Reading). This measure is closely related to the number of jobs in an area, but is typically lower because a person can have more than one job (“double-jobbing”).
- *Employed residents*: refers to employed persons by the location of their residence, regardless of the location of their work (e.g. someone living in Bicester but working in London). When reflected as the proportion of the population, this is known as the employment rate.

Generally, the number of workplace employed in an area is informed by the amount and concentration of economic activity in that area (which will correspond to the number of businesses and jobs in an area). The number of employed residents meanwhile will be shaped by the availability of housing and other labour market and demographic factors (e.g. labour market activity/inactivity rates).

At the intersection of these two variables is the concept of net commuting, which is simply:

$$\text{net commuting} = \text{workplace employed} - \text{employed residents}$$

Therefore, areas with a higher number of workplace employed relative to employed residents will experience net in-commuting (i.e. a positive net commuting value); consider for instance areas with town/city centres, business parks and other large employment sites.

Meanwhile, areas with a higher number of employed residents relative to workplace employed will experience net out-commuting (i.e. a negative net commuting value); consider for instance suburban estates, villages/dormitory settlements and other housing-led settlements.

**Table 5.2.1: Current and potential net commuting flows in Oxfordshire**

		Employed residents (linked to housing growth)					
			2011	2018	2050 - SMa	2050 - BAU	2050 - Trans
Workplace employed (linked to employment growth)		-	336,900	361,700	449,600	483,700	527,900
	2011	345,900	9,000	-	-	-	-
	2018	382,200	-	20,500	-	-	-
	2050 – SMa	461,600	-	-	12,000	-22,100	-66,300*
	2050 – BAU	496,600	-	-	47,000	12,900	-31,300
	2050 – Trans	541,900	-	-	92,300*	58,300	14,100

Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics. Note: \* denotes unlikely combinations.

As Table 5.2.1 shows<sup>13</sup>, the Oxfordshire FEMA currently (2018) has a net commuting inflow of 20,500 people (that is, 20,500 additional people commute into the FEMA for work relative to residents that commute out of the FEMA for work). This reflects the strength and attractiveness of Oxfordshire’s labour market and its high employment density (particularly in Oxford).

As noted in the *Phase 1 Report*, this number has rapidly increased over recent years (from only 9,000 in 2011) to a record high, as people reporting to work in the county continues to exceed the number of employed residents (due to jobs growing faster than the number of new homes delivered, as discussed in *Phase 1 Report*).

Over 2011-18 for instance, the number of people working in the FEMA is estimated to have increased by 36,100, whilst the number of employed residents increased by only 25,200. With some 82.8% of working age residents in active employment (the highest employment rate in the country), Oxfordshire’s already tight labour market has been reliant on workers residing outside the FEMA to sustain its economic growth.

Resultantly, net in-commuting has more than doubled over this timeframe. Within the FEMA, the future of commuting in the FEMA will be shaped by how the Oxfordshire economy grows in future, and how housing supply responds to this growth. Even an alignment between housing and jobs growth at the

<sup>13</sup> ‘Standard Method adjusted’ = ‘SMa’, ‘business as usual’ = ‘BAU’, and ‘transformational’ = ‘Trans’

county level can result in drastic changes to commuting patterns at a detailed spatial level, given the spatial distribution of such growth.

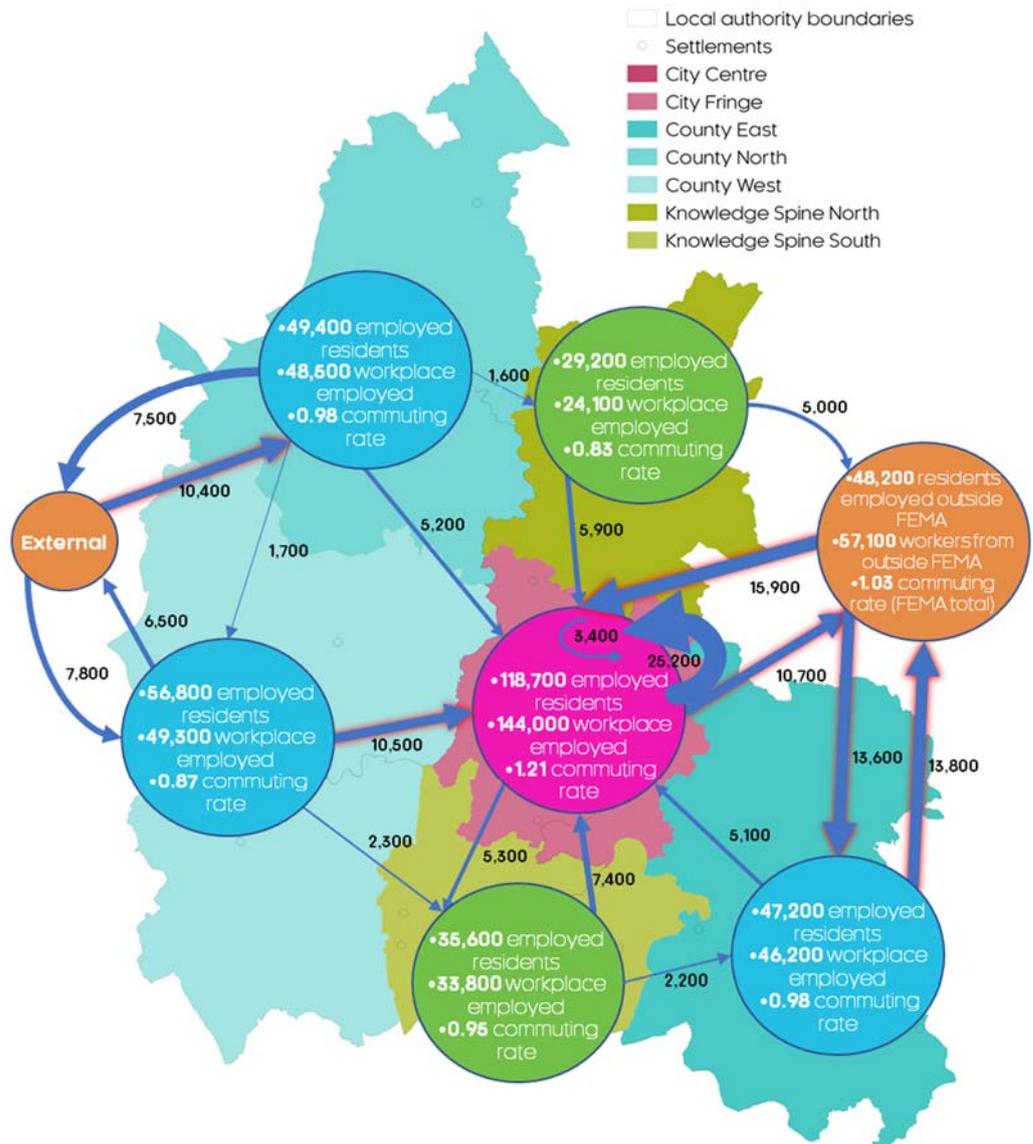
The following analysis looks in more detail at the relationship at this spatial level, considering firstly recent commuting trends within the Oxfordshire FEMA, before estimating how these might change over the respective trajectories and scenarios, and what impact this might have on modal shares and private vehicle trips. This supports extensive analysis in the *Phase 1 Report* which looks at the future relationship between housing, employment and commuting in Oxfordshire.

### 5.3 Recent FEMA commuting trends

#### 2011 Census baseline

Figure 5.3.1 summarises commuting patterns within the Oxfordshire FEMA according to data from the 2011 Census, the baseline for the inter-Zonal commuting analysis (as it is the most recently available source of reliable commuting data with detailed origin-destination flows i.e. where a commuting trip starts and ends).

Figure 5.3.1: Stylized overview of commuting flows in the Oxfordshire FEMA, 2011



Source: ONS (Census 2011), Cambridge Econometrics.

The map summarises key Zone characteristics (employed residents, workplace employed, and commuting rates<sup>14</sup>) and highlights significant inter-Zonal flows (flows exceeding 1,000 people, with flows over 10,000 shaded red) in the FEMA, which are highlighted using interconnected arrows<sup>15</sup>.

Flows are presented between the seven Zones alongside an External area – this captures all permanent residences and workplaces outside of the seven FEMA Zones (i.e. outside Oxfordshire). The accompanying origin-destination matrices, which provide Zone-by-Zone origin-destination flows, can be found in *Appendix A: Inter-Zonal Commuting Matrices*.

Census data showed the Oxfordshire FEMA displayed relatively high levels of self-containment, with 86% of residents working within the FEMA, and 83% of workers resident within the FEMA, giving an overall self-containment rate of 85%, well above the ONS self-containment threshold of 75% (and further highlighting the robustness of the FEMA-definition outlined in *Chapter 2*).

The proportion of residents working within the FEMA varies by Zone though, ranging from a high of 91% in the City Fringe to 71% in County East (the latter reflecting the greater commuting potential to and from the Thames Valley and Greater London labour markets). On average, almost two-thirds of FEMA residents worked within the Zone they resided in, though this ranged from a low of 53% (Knowledge Spine South) to a high of 67% (County North).

Unsurprisingly, inter-Zonal flows were largely focussed on Oxford (City Centre and Fringe), with the most significant flow being the 25,200 who made the short journey from the City Fringe to the City Centre. In terms of External commuting flows, these are greatest in County East, where a third of residents worked outside the FEMA and a third of workers resided outside the FEMA. Long distance commuting into Oxford (City Centre and Fringe) is relatively low, with only 11% of workers travelling from outside the FEMA.

Table 5.3.1 looks at the origin and destination of External flows to and from the FEMA in 2011, which were largely focussed on County East and North, and the City Fringe (together, these three Zones accounted for over two-thirds of External inflows and outflows respectively). Neighbouring Aylesbury Vale, South Northamptonshire and Swindon were the most popular origins, followed by Reading, West Berkshire and Wycombe to the east. The same areas also featured highly in terms of outflows, though central London was the most popular destination for those commuting out of the FEMA for work.

<sup>14</sup> The commuting rate is simply the ratio of workplace employed relative to employed residents; for instance, an area with 30,000 workplace employed and 28,000 employed residents would have a commuting rate of 1.07 ( $30,000 / 28,000 = 1.07$ ).

<sup>15</sup> With the arrow tip highlighting the destination and the arrow base the origin. Arrow width/boldness relates to the *proportionate* size of the flow within the FEMA.

**Table 5.3.1: Origin and destination of External commuter flows in the Oxfordshire FEMA, 2011**

Origin of external workers in Oxfordshire FEMA		Destination of Oxfordshire FEMA residents working externally	
Local Authority area	Inflow	Local Authority area	Outflow
Aylesbury Vale	6,700	Westminster and City of London	3,900
South Northamptonshire	5,400	Aylesbury Vale	3,900
Swindon	4,300	Reading	3,600
Reading	3,700	Wycombe	3,400
West Berkshire	3,100	West Berkshire	2,900
Wycombe	2,600	South Northamptonshire	2,600
Stratford-on-Avon	2,000	Swindon	2,200
Cotswold	1,900	Wokingham	1,600
Wokingham	1,900	Stratford-on-Avon	1,300
Wiltshire	1,300	Hillingdon	1,100

Source: ONS (Census 2011), Cambridge Econometrics.

In total, the FEMA had a net commuting inflow of 9,000 people (that is, 9,000 additional people were commuting into the FEMA for work relative to employed residents commuting out). This equated to an overall commuting rate of 1.03 (that is, there were 1.03 workplace employed relative to employed residents).

This was high compared to neighbouring areas of a similar size, such as Swindon and Wiltshire (0.94), Northamptonshire (0.94) and Buckinghamshire (0.88), reflecting both the high self-containment within the Oxfordshire FEMA, and the relative success and attractiveness of its labour market.

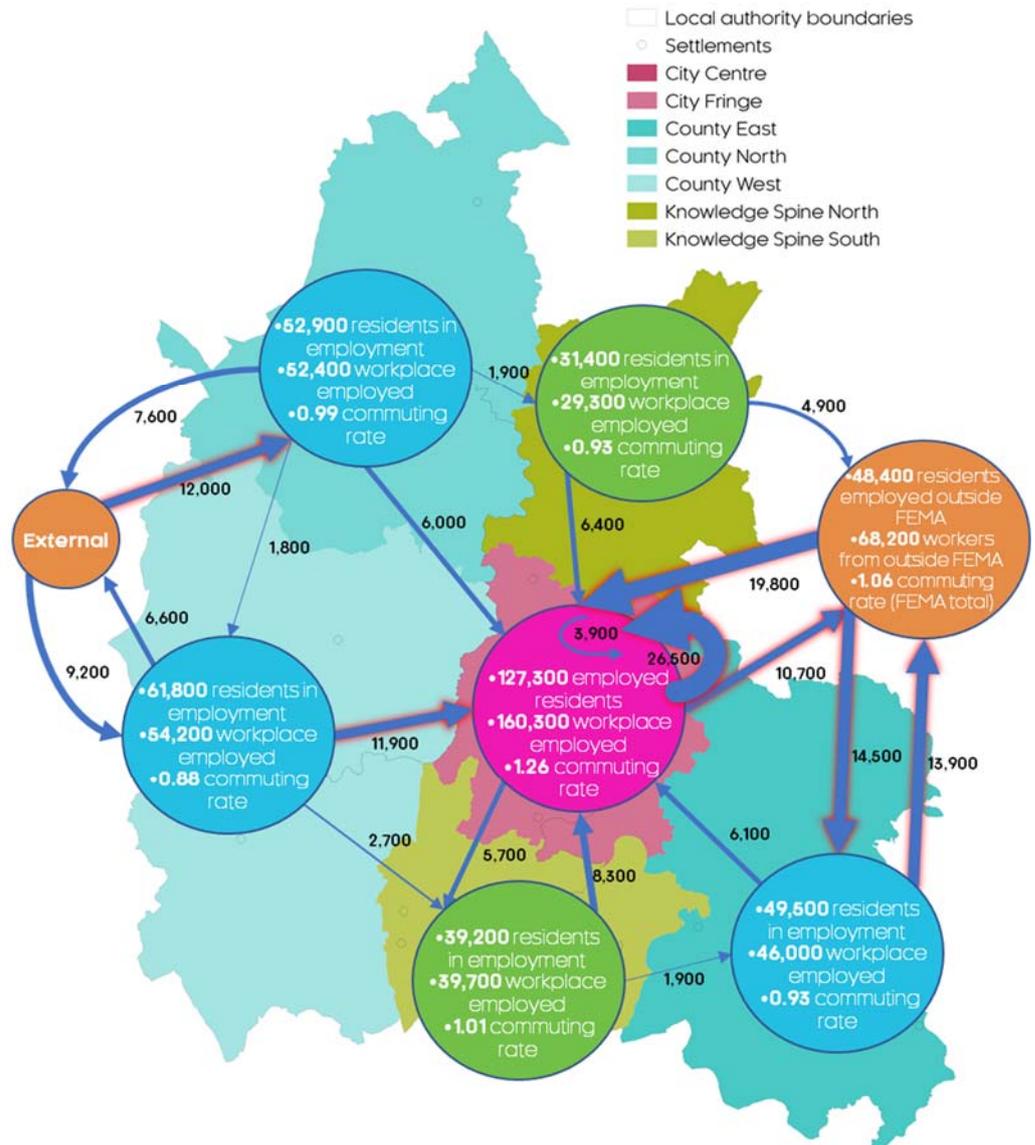
Naturally, this rate varied by Zone. Oxford City (Centre and Fringe) was the highest, with a commuting rate of 1.21. This was due to a higher number of workplace employed (i.e. jobs, given the agglomeration of the Oxford economy) relative to employed residents, resulting in high in-commuting.

Every other Zone had a commuting rate below 1.00, as a result of lower numbers of workplace employed (i.e. jobs) relative to employed residents. The lowest was County West, which resultantly was reliant on high levels of out-commuting (particularly to Oxford City Centre and Fringe).

**Recent trends (to 2018)**

Figure 5.3.2 presents estimates of Oxfordshire’s inter-Zonal commuting patterns for 2018, derived by applying and scaling Zonal employment and housing growth to the original Census estimates. The accompanying origin-destination matrices, which provide Zone-by-Zone origin-destination flows, can be found in *Appendix A: Inter-Zonal Commuting Matrices*.

**Figure 5.3.2: Stylized overview of commuting flows in the Oxfordshire FEMA, 2018**



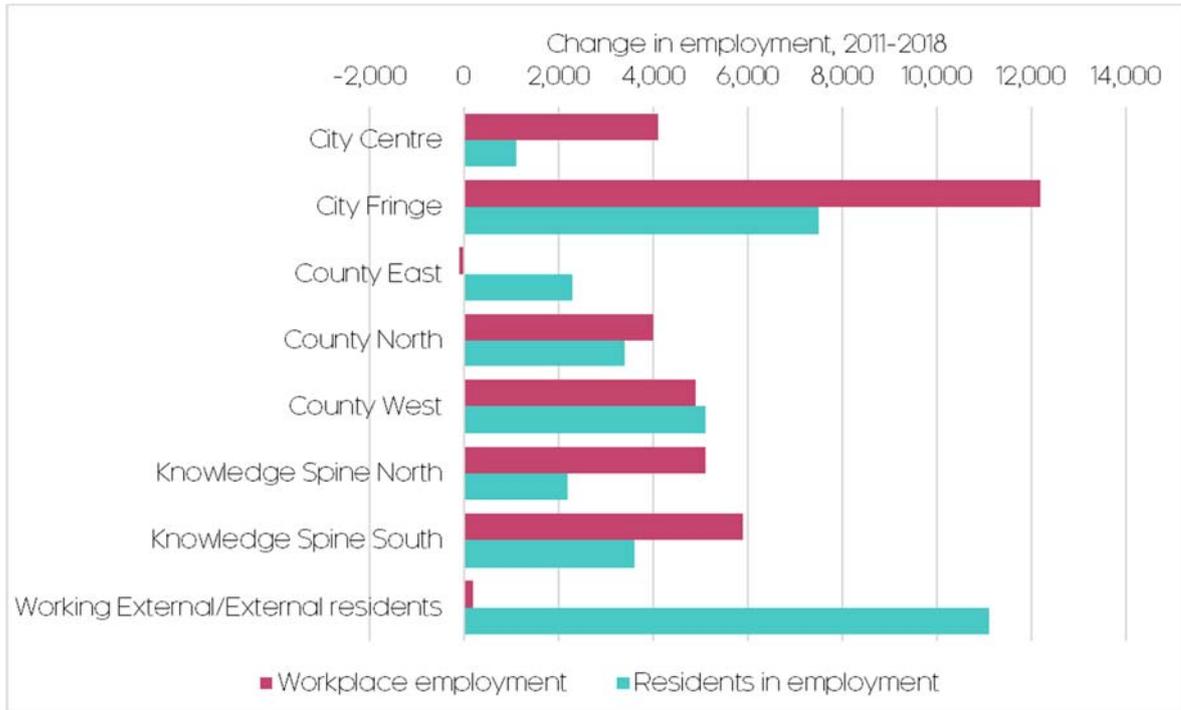
Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Most notable from these updated estimates is the significant increase in External inflows across all Zones over 2011-18. Previously, Census data showed Oxfordshire had a net commuting inflow of 9,000 people; between 2011-18, this is estimated to have more than doubled to a net inflow of 20,500 people (that is, 20,500 additional people were commuting into the Oxfordshire FEMA relative to those commuting out for work). This is the highest commuting rate (1.06) for the FEMA since comparable records began (the 1981 Census).

This was due to a particularly large increase in people residing outside the FEMA ('External' residents) commuting into the county for work (+11,100 since 2011). This trend has been corroborated by alternative labour market

data, as noted in the *Phase 1 Report*, and the pattern plays out relatively consistently at the Zonal level, with the majority of Zones experiencing faster growth in workplace employment (i.e. jobs) than growth in employed residents (i.e. people to fill those jobs), as Figure 5.3.3 shows.

**Figure 5.3.3: Change in workplace employment and residents in employment by Zone, 2011-18**



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Oxford City Centre experienced the largest discrepancy between the two, with workplace employment increasing 3.7 times that of the increase in employed residents, highlighting the increased agglomeration of jobs in the centre of Oxford relative to residents. Resultantly, all other Zones saw an increase in outflows to the City Centre.

Oxford's City Fringe experienced the largest increase in Externally-based workers, with +2,800 additional people commuting into the Zone from outside the FEMA. County East continues to have the highest dependency on External labour (approximately 14,500 External residents work in the Zone), though it actually saw a decline across all inflows from elsewhere in the FEMA, as total workplace employment in the Zone marginally contracted (the only in the FEMA to do so).

Other notable trends at the Zonal level include an increase in people both living and working within County North and West respectively, indicating reasonable alignment between housing and economic needs in these areas. The Knowledge Spine (particularly South) also saw a significant increase in workplace employment, some from outside the FEMA. The flow between the City Fringe and Centre saw the largest increase out of all inter-Zonal flows, with an additional 1,300 residents undertaking the journey since 2011.

Taking these results and findings, the following analysis details the process and results of inter-Zonal commuting estimates updated for 2050, to estimate the commuting impacts of the three employment and fifteen housing (three

economic trajectories, each with five contrasting spatial scenarios) trajectories within the Oxfordshire FEMA.

#### 5.4 Methodology overview

Inter-Zonal commuting matrices, detailing the origin and destination of commuting flows in the FEMA, have been estimated for the three Zonal employment trajectories and five housing scenarios in 2050. These matrices have been achieved by:

1. Firstly, applying Zonal growth rates from official employment data (such as BRES, accounting for double-jobbing etc.) to the Census 2011 totals of Zonal workplace employment (the destination) and Zonal residential employment (the origin) to estimate 2018 totals.
2. Extrapolating Zonal workplace employment (the destination) to 2050, by applying Zonal growth rates from the three economic trajectories (accounting for double-jobbing etc.) to the 2018 baseline of Zonal workplace employment.
3. Extrapolating zonal residential employment (the origin) to 2050 and beyond, by converting zonal estimates of housing need (for the 15 trajectory/scenario combinations) to Zonal residents in employment using population-dwelling ratios, economic activity and employment rates. These residential economic trajectories are aligned with the required commuting rate outlined in the *Phase 1 Report* (which is assumed to return to the 'normal' levels of 2011).
4. These estimates of residence employment and workplace employment by zone for 2018 and 2050 (aligned to *Phase 1 Report* Oxfordshire totals) are then entered into the Census 2011 inter-Zonal commuting matrix. A double-adjustment calculation is performed in which 2011 commuting shares are adjusted to reflect the effects of Zonal growth in residence in the origin, and workplace employment in the destination.
5. Once this double-adjustment is applied, the result is internally-consistent inter-zonal commuting predictions for 2018 and each trajectory/scenario combination for 2050. These estimates align with the headline projections of employment and dwellings growth presented in the *Phase 1 Report*.
6. Modal estimates have been estimated by entering 2011 shares into an origin-destination commuting matrix, where a double-adjustment calculation is performed in which 2011 modal shares are adjusted to reflect the effects of Zonal growth in residence in the origin, and workplace employment in the destination. Resultantly, modal shares will only change given the composition of residential and workplace employment (and the existing modal share of flows between these areas), and not because of exogenous factors such as behavioural change and infrastructure improvements.
7. Private vehicle commuting trips have then be calculated from these values, using Department for Transport trip rates data and matching commuting flows to Google Maps distance data. As with modal share, private vehicle commuting trips will only change given the composition of residential and workplace employment (and these existing trips rates

between these areas), and not because of exogenous factors such as behavioural change and infrastructure improvements.

## 5.5 Implications of the trajectories and scenarios for commuting

The following pages summarise the inter-Zonal commuting implications for the three Zonal employment and fifteen housing (three trajectories, each with five contrasting spatial scenarios) projections to 2050. These are presented for each housing scenario, to highlight the expected changes from the 2018 baseline and the differences between scenarios.

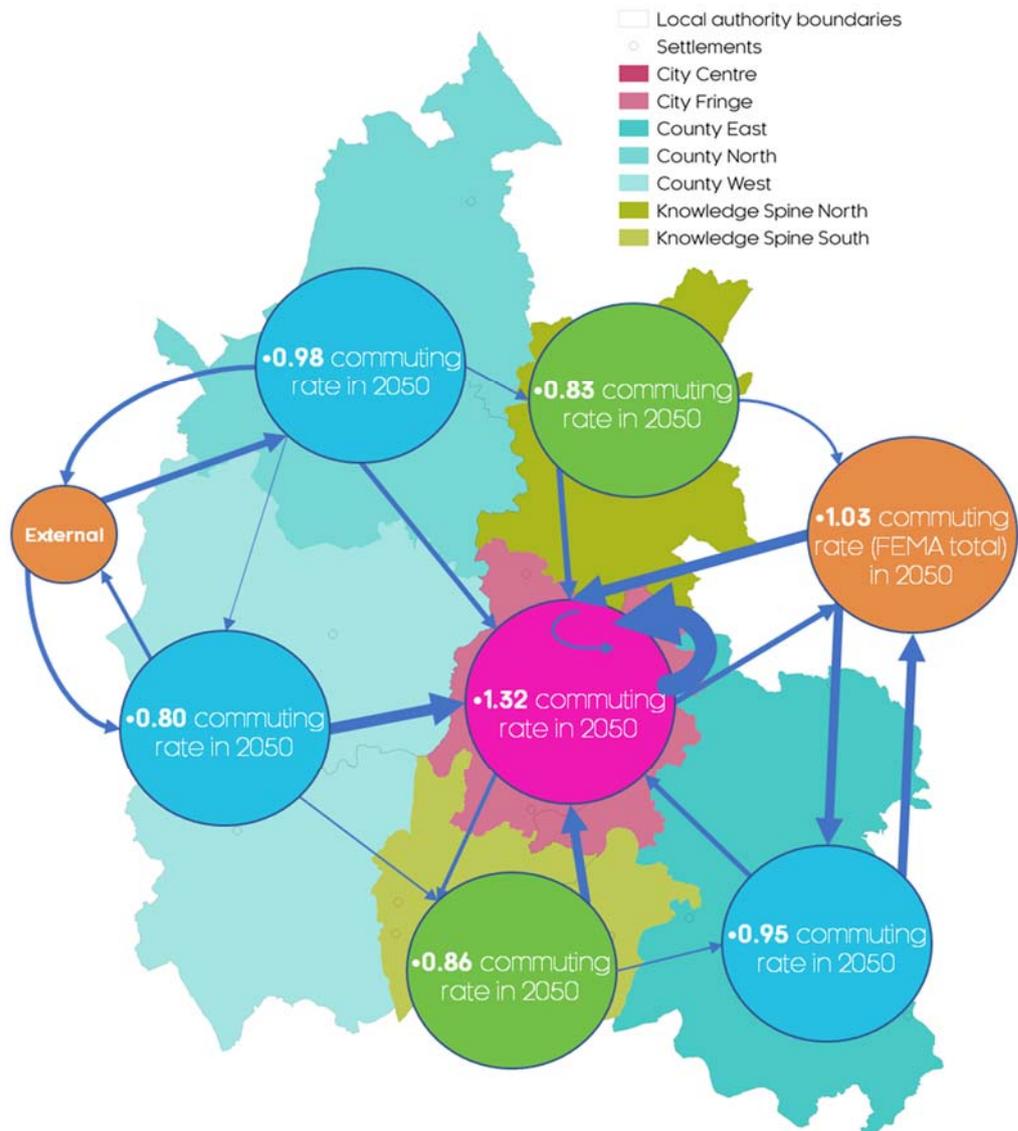
To aid with the analysis and interpretation, stylized maps have been produced. They include Zonal commuting rates (averaged across the three respective trajectories) and highlight proportionate commuting flows. The accompanying origin-destination matrices, which provide Zone-by-Zone origin-destination flows, can be found in *Appendix A: Inter-Zonal Commuting Matrices*.

It should be emphasised that these **scenarios were informed by and developed using trends and data predating the Covid-19 pandemic**. The substantial rise in homeworking during the pandemic, and its likely durability over the timeframe of the OGNA (to 2050), will likely impact some upon some of the following observations.

Though increased homeworking potential is accounted for in CE's econometric forecasting (based on changing occupational structure, and its amenability to homeworking), this may not reflect the extent of the Covid-19 induced change. The potential impacts of the pandemic on commuting, transport use and the OOGNA's wider observations are explored in greater detail in the *Covid-19 Impacts Addendum* accompanying this report.

## Evenly dispersed scenario

Figure 5.5.1: Stylized commuting flows, 2050, under the evenly dispersed scenario



Source: Cambridge Econometrics.

Figure 5.5.1 presents stylized estimates of Oxfordshire's inter-Zonal commuting patterns for 2050 under the evenly dispersed housing scenario. Given that this scenario sees housing delivered at a proportionately even rate across the FEMA (regardless of the location of employment growth), there is an increase in most inter-Zonal flows.

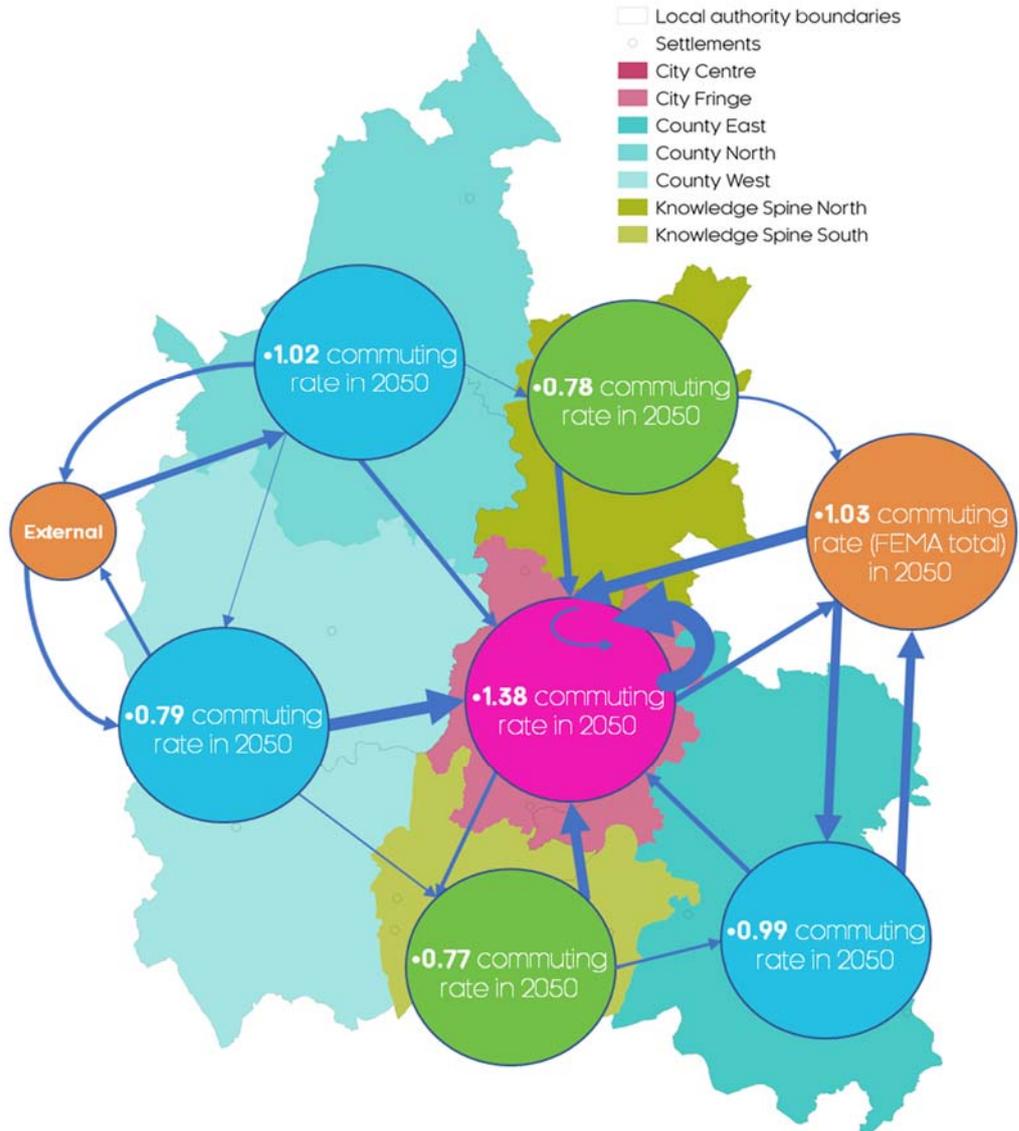
These additional flows largely focus on the Oxford (City Centre and Fringe), where the highest proportion of the FEMA's employment growth to 2050 (on average, 45%) is expected, increasing its commuting rate to 1.32. Flows originating from County West and Knowledge Spine South see particularly notable increases, decreasing the commuting rate in these areas.

Despite this, the scenario remains relatively self-contained with most additional residents working in the Zone they reside in, though this rate varies; for instance, in Knowledge Spine South, only half of new residents are expected to also work in the Zone, whilst in County North this increases to three-quarters.

Both the City Centre and Fringe see a large increase in residents both living and working in the Zone. External flows continue to focus on Oxford and County East. As the FEMAs net commuting rate returns to normal levels, there is a noticeable decline in external flows, particularly inflows.

**Continued trends scenario**

**Figure 5.5.2: Stylized commuting flows, 2050, under the continued trends scenario**



Source: Cambridge Econometrics.

Figure 5.5.2 presents stylized estimates of Oxfordshire’s inter-Zonal commuting patterns for 2050 under the continued trends housing scenario. This scenario sees housing delivered at a rate in line with 2020-2031 Local Plan forecasts up to 2050. This sees an increase in commuting flows from the County West and Knowledge Spine, where greater housing growth (and thus growth in employed residents) is expected, particularly relative to their workplace employment growth.

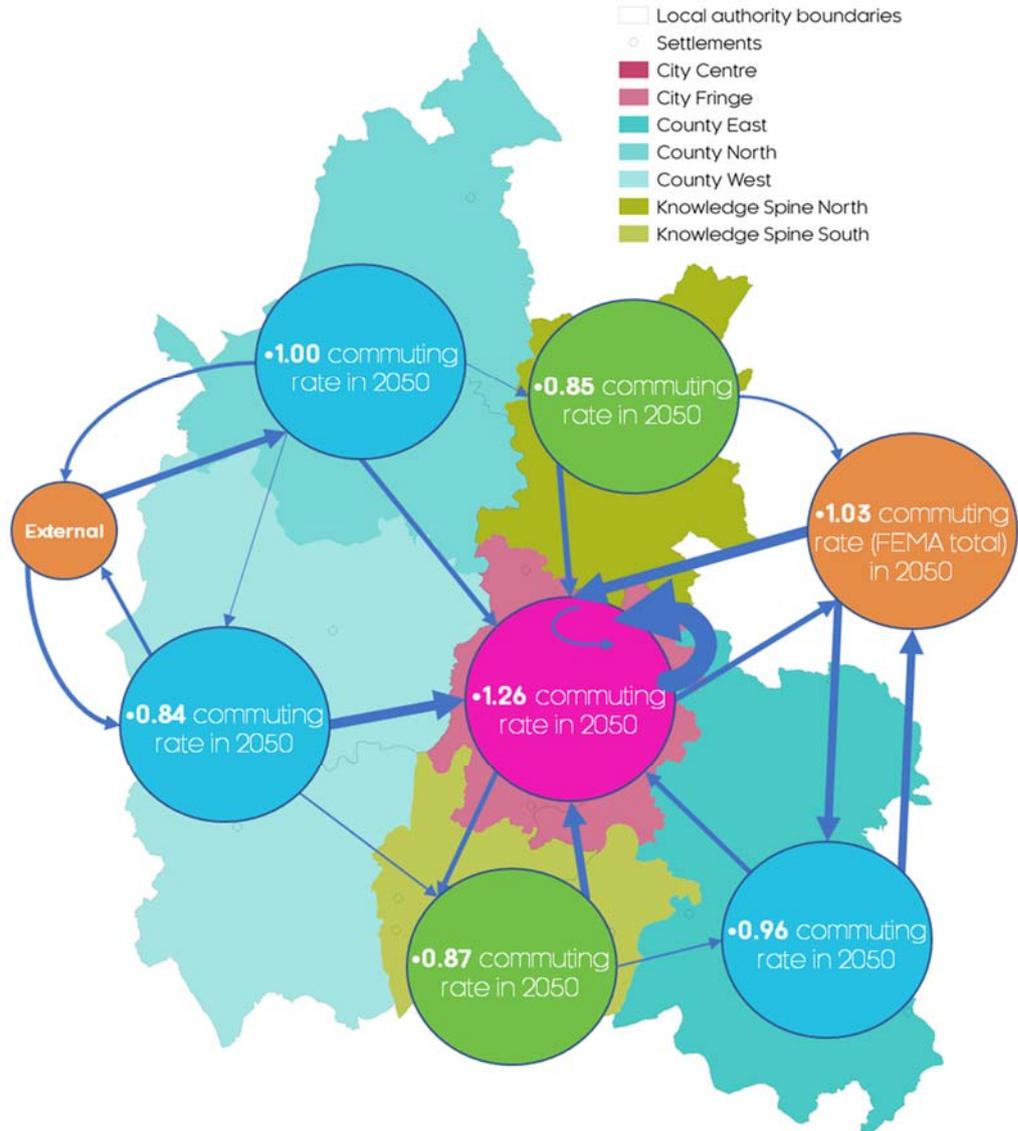
This drives down commuting rates in these areas, and increases the rate further in Oxford (to 1.38). Resultantly, continued trends is one of the less self-contained scenarios; on average, it is expected less than half of additional

residents in the County West and Knowledge Spine will work within their Zone, with the remainder largely commuting into Oxford area for work.

As with the other scenarios, as the FEMAs net commuting rate returns to normal levels, there is a noticeable decline in external flows, particularly inflows.

### Employment-led scenario

Figure 5.5.3: Stylized commuting flows, 2050, under the employment-led scenario



Source: Cambridge Econometrics.

Figure 5.5.3 presents stylized estimates of Oxfordshire’s inter-Zonal commuting patterns for 2050 under the employment-led housing scenario. Under this scenario housing need is assumed to correlate with the distribution of projected Zonal employment growth, including growth in LIS-outlined key employment locations.

Given the stronger alignment between employment and housing growth, inter-Zonal commuting – particularly into Oxford - increases at a much lower rate than alternative scenarios, with the majority of residents working in the Zone that they reside.

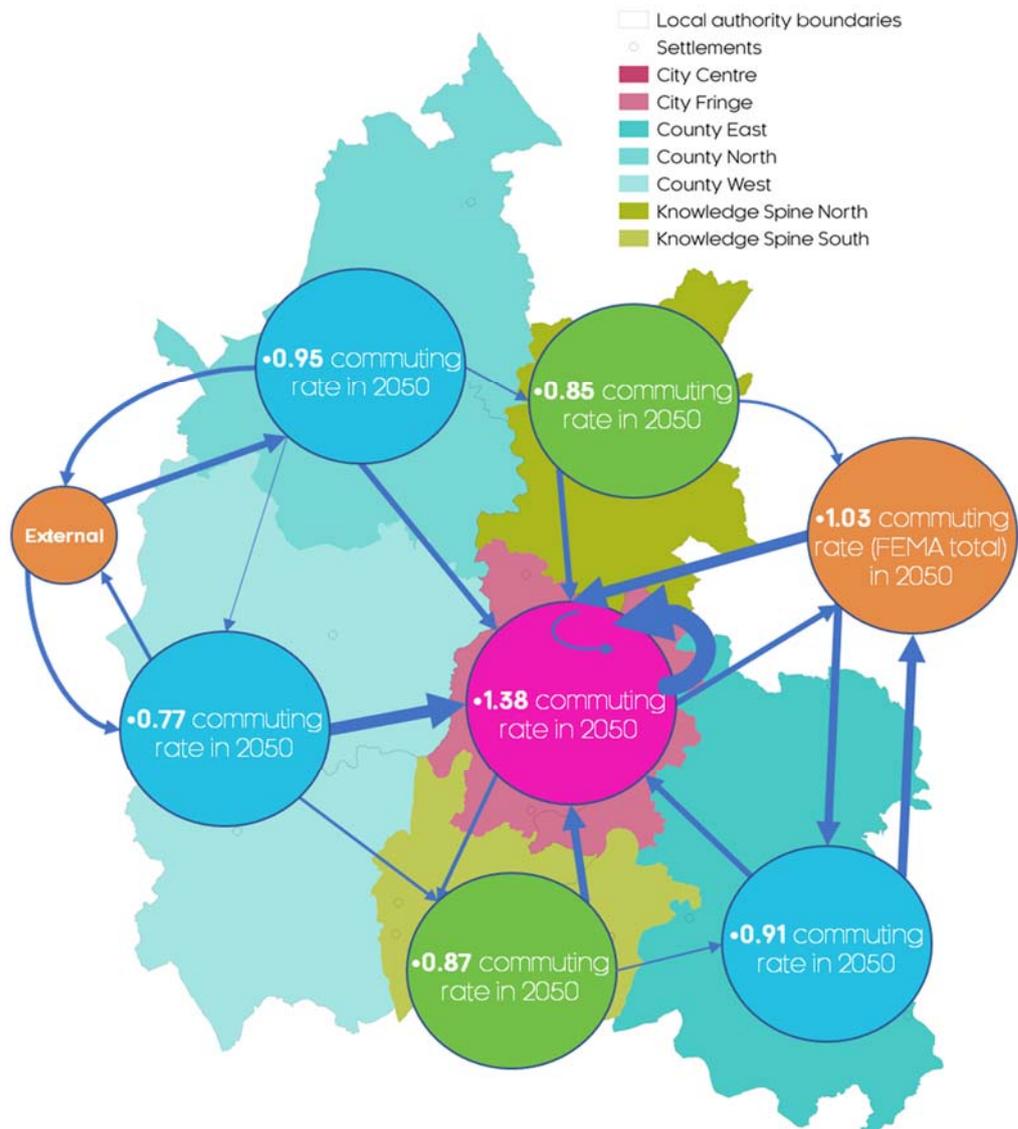
Lower relative flows into Oxford can be attributed to greater resident employment growth in this area, satisfying the higher levels of employment demand (thus a lower commuting rate – 1.26 – compared to other scenarios).

In fact, the greater emphasis on dwellings growth in Oxford even leads to an increase in flows out of the city, particularly into the Knowledge Spine, as the additional residents pursue employment opportunities outside Oxford. This increases the commuting rate in Wider County and Knowledge Spine Zones.

As with the other scenarios, as the FEMAs net commuting rate returns to normal levels, there is a noticeable decline in external flows, particularly inflows.

### County-focussed scenario

Figure 5.5.4: Stylized commuting flows, 2050, under the County-focussed scenario



Source: Cambridge Econometrics.

Figure 5.5.4 presents stylized estimates of Oxfordshire’s inter-Zonal commuting patterns for 2050 under the County-focussed housing scenario. With this scenario there is a greater focus and emphasis on dwellings growth in the Wider County. Resultantly, this sees a significant increase in commuting flows out of the Wider County, mostly into Oxford, but also with reasonable

flows into the Knowledge Spine and External (out of FEMA). This sees lower commuting rates for Wider County areas.

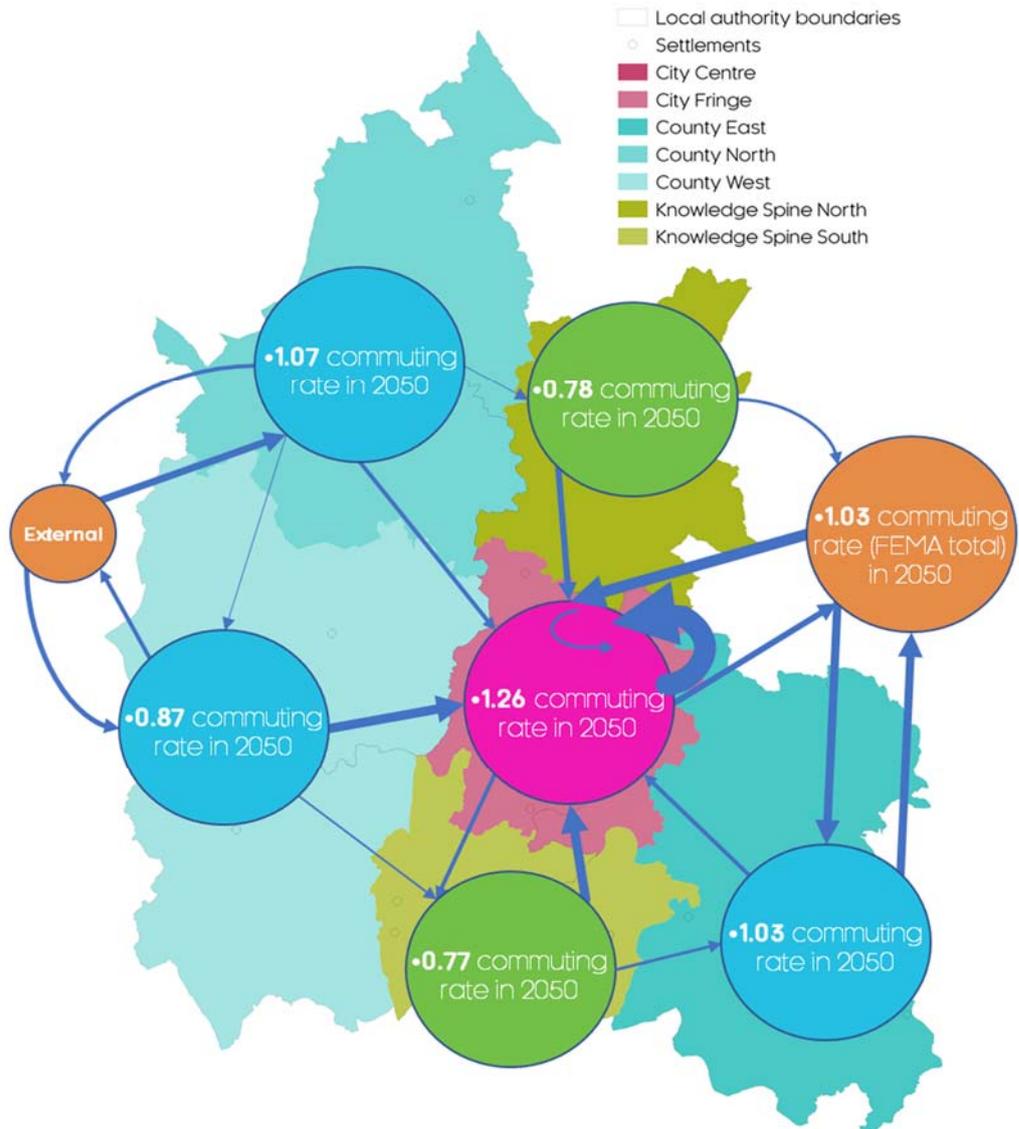
North-South commuting from the Knowledge Spine into Oxford is also noticeably lower, reflecting lower growth in employed residents. Under this scenario, it is estimated only two-thirds of additional Wider County residents will work in the Zone that they reside in, lower than the three-quarters in the employment-led scenario.

Compared with other scenarios, there are also noticeably lower levels of employed residents within Oxford, requiring higher in-commuting to satisfy employer demand (hence a very high net commuting rate of 1.38). There is also less commuting into the Wider County given the saturation of employed residents in these Zones.

As with the other scenarios, as the FEMAs net commuting rate returns to normal levels, there is a noticeable decline in external flows, particularly inflows.

**Centralised scenario**

**Figure 5.5.5: Stylized commuting flows, 2050, under the centralised scenario**



Source: Cambridge Econometrics.

Figure 5.5.5 presents stylized estimates of Oxfordshire’s inter-Zonal commuting patterns for 2050 under the centralised housing scenario. With this scenario a greater focus and emphasis is placed on dwellings growth throughout central Oxfordshire, covering the Knowledge Spine, City Centre and Fringe.

In terms of the commuting, this results in a sharp increase in North-South flows (from the Knowledge Spine) into Oxford and only a negligible change in East-West flows (from the Wider County) into the Knowledge Spine and Oxford.

Given lower relative employed residents in the Wider County, these areas become more self-contained compared with other scenarios, thus increasing their commuting rates.

The Knowledge Spine is expected to see a large increase in employed residents, less than half of whom will work in the Zone they reside, with many commuting into Oxford. The City Centre and Fringe also see a large increase in residents, though many will continue to work where they reside. Some seek employment opportunities further afield, particularly in the Wider County.

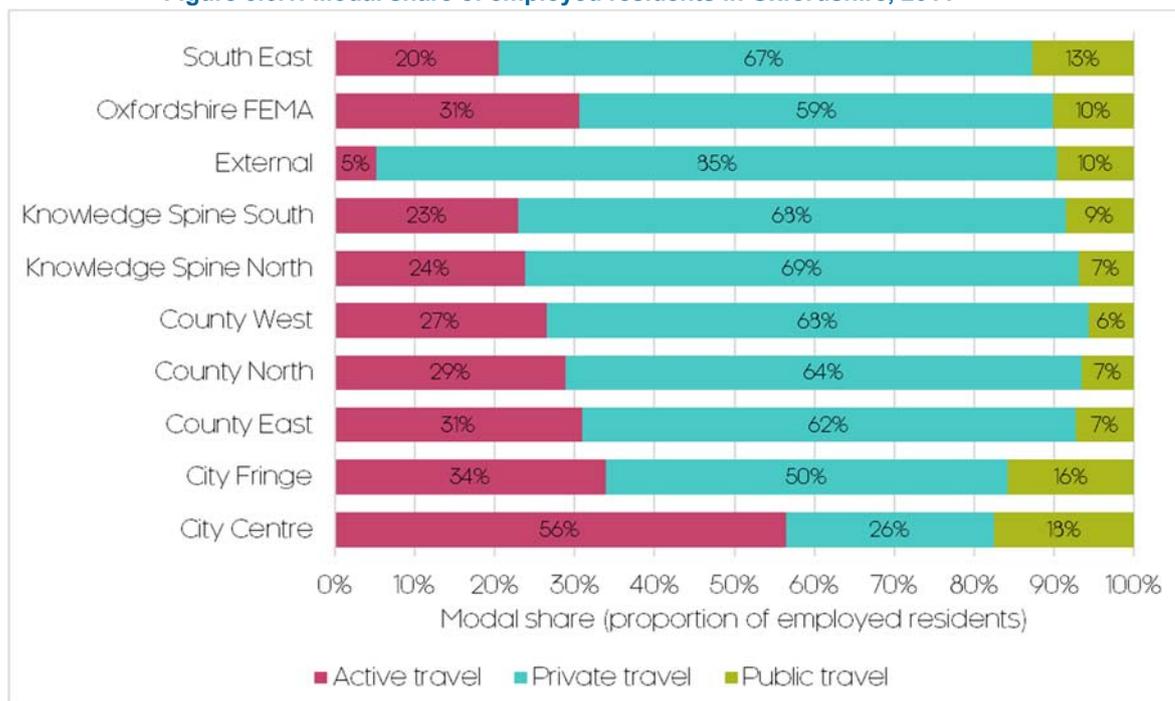
As with the other scenarios, as the FEMAs net commuting rate returns to normal levels, there is a noticeable decline in external flows, particularly inflows.

## 5.6 Implications for modal share

Alongside estimates of overall commuting flows to 2050, accompanying modal shares (that is, the mode of transport used by commuters) have also been calculated. To aid with the analysis and ensure maximal data quality at the required spatial level, modal shares have been aggregated by the following, based on Census mode of travel definitions:

- **Active travel:** this includes employed persons who work mainly at or from home, or travel to work by bicycle or on foot.
- **Private travel:** this includes employed persons who travel to work by car or van (driver or passenger), motorcycle, scooter or moped, or by taxi.
- **Public travel:** this includes employed persons who travel to work by Bus, minibus or coach, train, underground, metro, light rail or tram, or by another method of travel to work.

Figure 5.6.1 shows the modal share for employed residents across Oxfordshire and its constituent Zones, according to the Census (2011) baseline.

**Figure 5.6.1: Modal share of employed residents in Oxfordshire, 2011**

Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Compared with regional and national averages, the FEMA had a greater share of employed residents commuting by active travel, with 3 in 10 residents opting for this mode of travel (compared to 2 in 10 elsewhere in the South East). Resultantly, reliance on private and public transport (the former in particular) is comparatively lower.

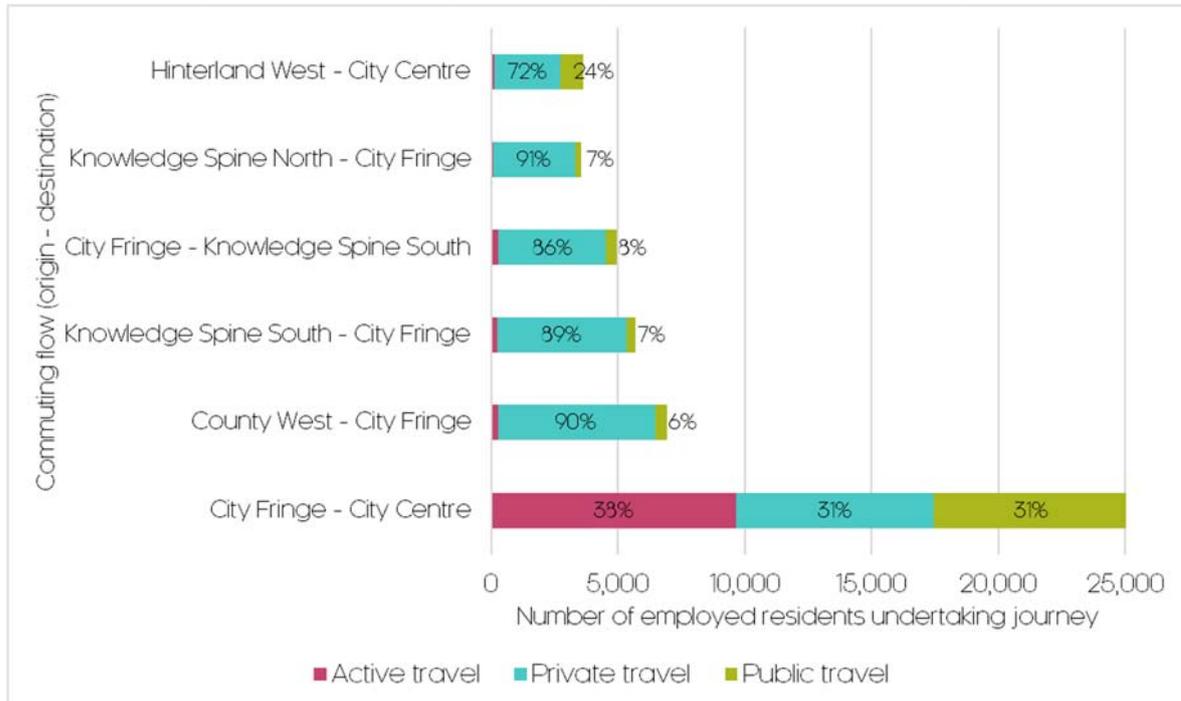
Naturally, this rate varied across the FEMA. Unsurprisingly given its urban density, active and public travel was most widespread in the Oxford (City Centre and Fringe) area, whilst employed residents in the Knowledge Spine had some of the highest reliance on private travel within the FEMA, at rates in line or exceeding the regional average.

Across all Zones in the FEMA though, active travel remained above the regional average. In contrast, public transport use was only above average within Oxford (City Centre and Fringe, and even then, this was somewhat marginal). Public travel was particularly low in Wider County.

Employed residents from outside the FEMA (External) commuting into Oxfordshire for work were the most likely to utilise private travel though, with 9 out of 10 External residents doing so.

Figure 5.6.2 shows the modal composition of the FEMAs most significant inter-Zonal commuting flows from the Census. There was a relatively even split in the preferred mode of transport for the 25,200 employed residents undertaking the short journey from the City Fringe to City Centre, with a small majority prioritising active travel.

Figure 5.6.2: Modal composition of significant inter-Zonal commuting flows, 2011



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

The remaining flows, largely from the adjacent Wider County and Knowledge Spine, saw a much higher reliance on private travel, with fewer than 1 in 10 employed residents making these journeys opting to use public transport. Interestingly, the flow from the County West to the City Centre was an exception, with almost a quarter of the 3,600 commuters utilising public transport.

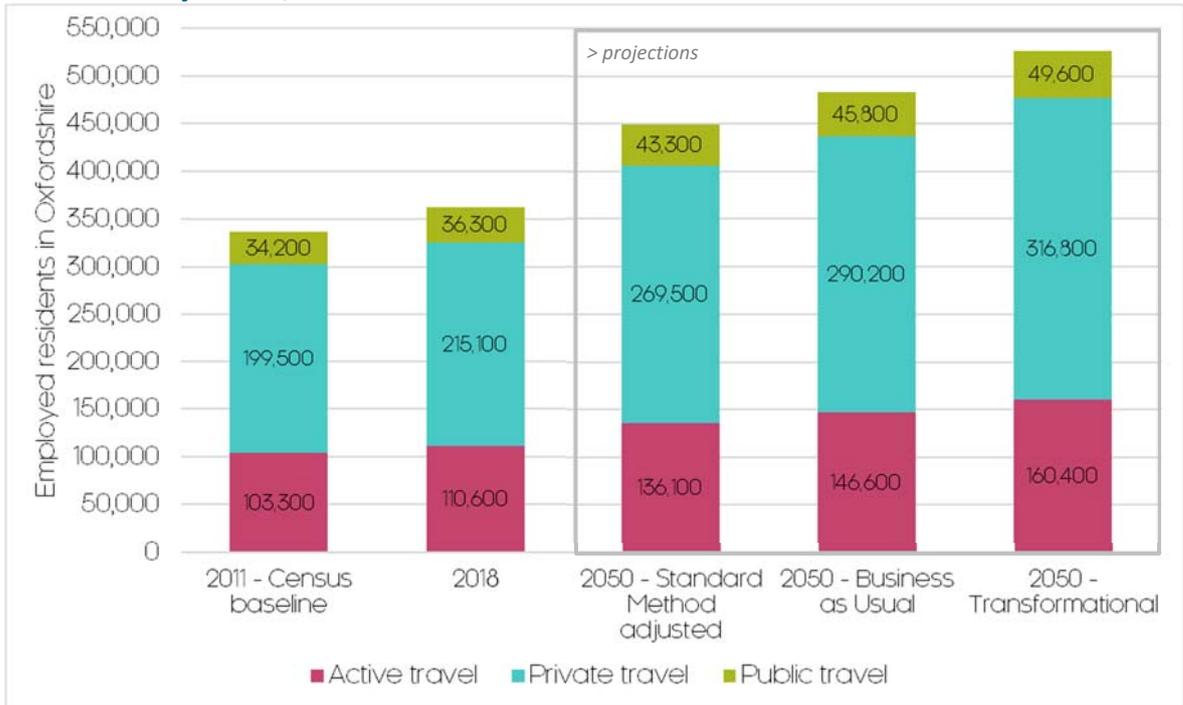
Looking ahead to 2050, Figure 5.6.3 highlights the potential change in absolute modal choice under the three economic trajectories for Oxfordshire. It should be emphasised that this has been taken using an **unconstrained / 'policy neutral' approach**, assuming that behavioural or infrastructure change is fixed.

Broadly speaking, this means current trends and patterns are extrapolated forward against future employment and housing growth without any major policy or infrastructure interventions. So greater housing growth in an area with currently high private travel reliance will resultantly be assumed to see an increase in private travel flows.

Taking such an approach, Figure 5.6.3 shows there could be an additional 49,000 employed residents utilising active travel means by 2050, under the transformational scenario, though twice this amount – 102,000 additional employed residents – could still be reliant on private travel means.

In fact, though all modes of transport are expected to see an increase in use in absolute terms, when looking at the proportion of this use (i.e. the actual modal share) there is much greater variability.

**Figure 5.6.3: Potential modal choice in Oxfordshire under the three employment trajectories, 2011-50**

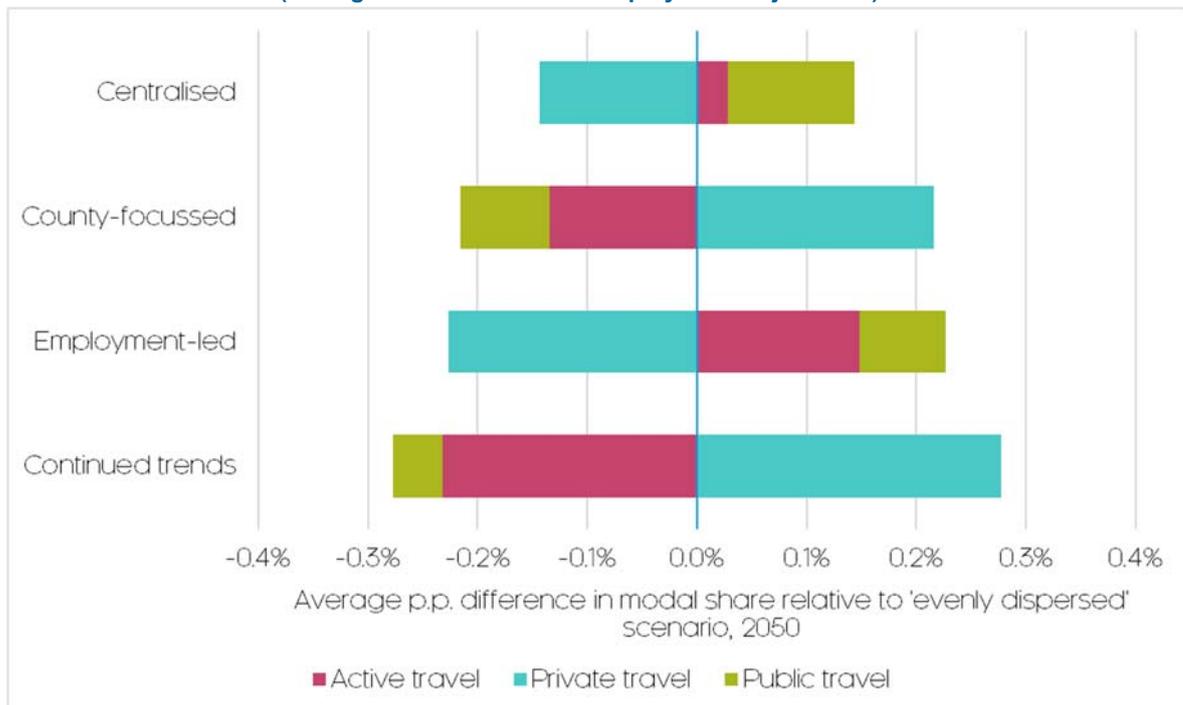


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

For instance, Figure 5.6.4 considers the impact of the previously considered spatial scenarios on modal choice. This is presented in terms of the proportional difference for each scenario relative to their modal share under the evenly dispersed scenario.

This is because the evenly dispersed scenario, which sees housing delivered at a proportionately even rate across Zones, maintains existing modal shares

**Figure 5.6.4: Potential impact on modal shares in Oxfordshire of the 2050 housing scenarios (averaged across the three employment trajectories)**



Source: Cambridge Econometrics.

(i.e. they are held constant to 2050). The evenly dispersed scenario can therefore be seen as a neutral baseline for modal share in 2050.

The **continued trends** scenario, aligning with 2020-31 Local Plan need, sees the biggest shift in modal shares relative to the neutral evenly dispersed baseline, with a large increase in the proportion of employed residents using private travel, reflecting the greater housing growth and thus flows from private travel reliant areas such as the Knowledge Spine.

The **employment-led** scenario, which aligns housing growth with employment growth, sees the largest decline in private travel out of all scenarios, and a modest increase in active and public travel, largely reflecting the increase in intra-Oxford flows. Resultantly, active and public travel are expected to increase.

The **County-focussed** scenario, which emphasises housing growth in the private travel reliant Wider County, unsurprisingly sees a shift to employed residents using private travel, whilst public travel – which fewer than 1 in 10 Wider County residents use - declines.

The **centralised** scenario, allocating high housing growth to the Knowledge Spine and City Centre and Fringe, sees a small decline in the proportion of employed residents using private travel, despite the Knowledge Spines high private travel use, with a marginal shift to active and public travel.

As emphasised previously, these scenarios are ‘policy-neutral’, and as such only reflect the continuation of past trends. It is likely modal shift away from private travel, for instance, could be even higher, particularly within areas with a high potential for public and active travel - such as the City Fringe and Knowledge Spine - which may not be captured in the previous analysis.

## 5.7 Implications for private vehicle trips

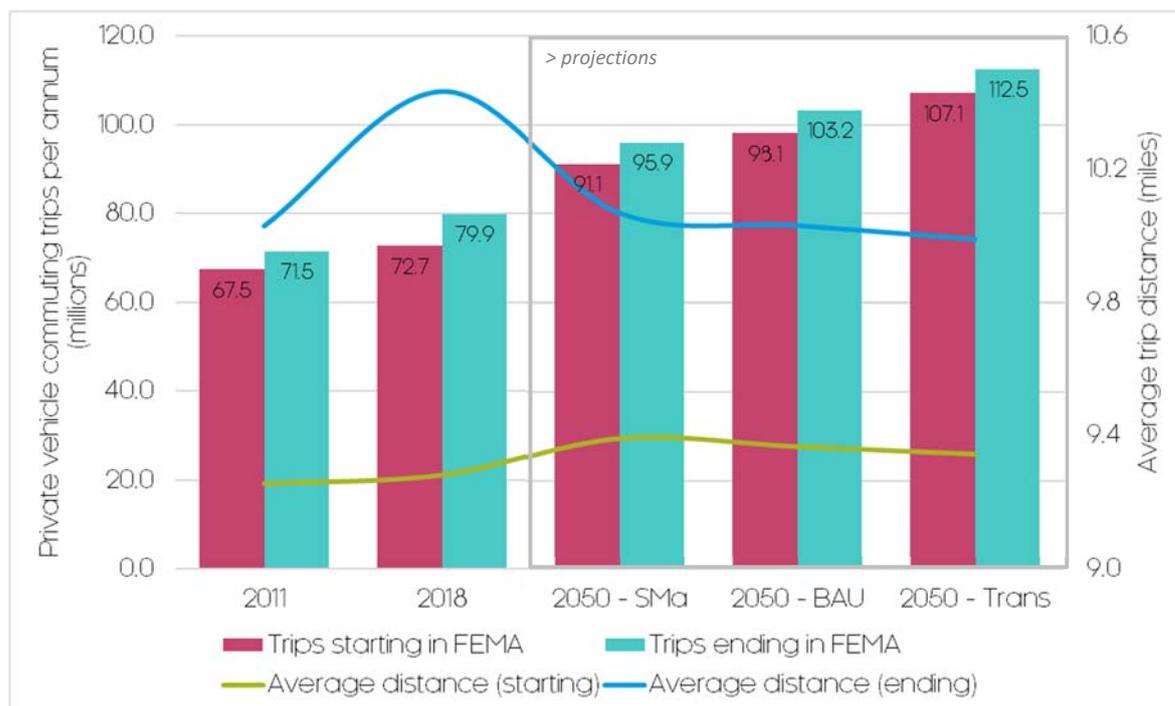
Given that the proportion of employed residents in the FEMA utilising private travel is expected to increase across almost all projections and scenarios, it is important to consider the potential impact on private vehicle trips – in terms of both their frequency and distance travelled - given this is what actually contributes to final infrastructure demand, and associated pressures and strains such as congestion and emissions.

As with modal share projections, it should be emphasised that future trip projections have been estimated using an **unconstrained / ‘policy neutral’ approach**, and therefore assume that behavioural or infrastructure change is fixed

Broadly speaking, current trends and patterns are extrapolated forward against future employment and housing growth. So greater housing growth in an area with currently high private vehicle reliance will resultantly see an increase in private vehicle trips originating in this location.

Figure 5.7.1 highlights the potential impact on private vehicle commuting trips starting and ending in the Oxfordshire FEMA, as well as the average distance of these trips. During 2018, there was estimated to be approximately 72.7 million private vehicle commuting trips starting in the Oxfordshire FEMA and 79.9 million ending in the FEMA.

**Figure 5.7.1: Total private vehicle trips (left hand side axis) and average trip distance (right hand side axis) in the Oxfordshire FEMA under the three employment trajectories, 2011-50**



Source: DfT, Google Maps, Cambridge Econometrics.

The number of trips ending was higher due to the positive rates of net commuting into the FEMA (that is, more people commute into the FEMA for work than those that commute out). Since 2011, the number of private vehicle commuting tips starting and ending in the FEMA has increased, though the former only by 8% whilst the latter has increased by 12%.

This larger increase for trips ending in the FEMA reflects the greater number of External residents commuting into Oxfordshire for work, which has increased substantially since 2011 (as observed in Figure 5.6.1). For 9 out of 10 External residents, private travel is the preferred mode of transport into the FEMA, driving this increase in private vehicle trips.

Over the timeframe to 2050, there is expected to be a continued steady increase in trips starting and ending in the FEMA, which could total an estimated 107.1 - 112.5 million respectively (per annum) under the transformational trajectory in 2050.

Notably, the proportional difference between trips starting or ending in Oxfordshire decreases and returns to 2011 levels, given the assumed decline in net commuting relative to 2018, as outlined previously and in the *Phase 1 Report*.

In terms of average distance, trips ending in the FEMA are usually longer; as of 2018, the average trip ending in Oxfordshire covered approximately 10.4 miles relative to the 9.3 miles for those starting in the FEMA.

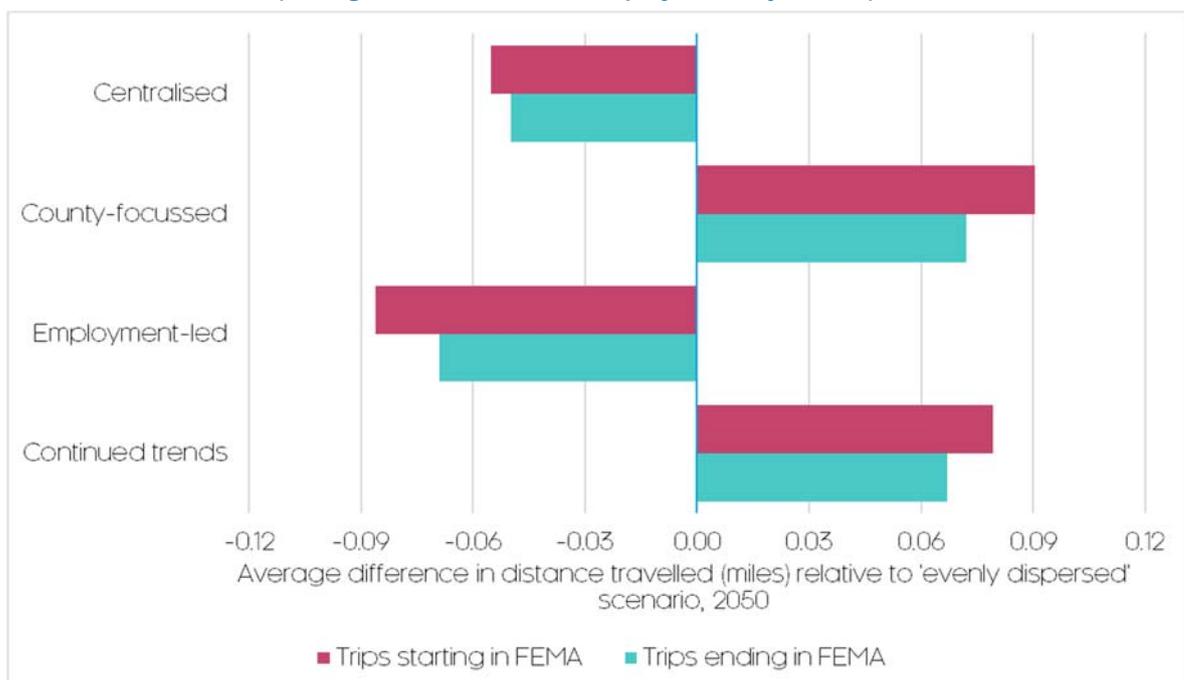
Again, this reflects the positive rates of net commuting into the FEMA and the high and increasing number of External residents commuting into the county for work, particularly relative to FEMA residents commuting out.

And as with total trips, since 2011 the average distance of trips ending in Oxfordshire has increased substantially, indicating not only are more trips being made from outside the FEMA, they are also being made over an increasingly longer distance. For trips starting in the FEMA, the average distance travelled has remained largely unchanged.

Looking ahead to 2050, the average distance of private vehicle trips ending in Oxfordshire is expected to decline, potentially below 2011 levels, largely reflecting the assumed decline in net commuting (and thus long-distance commuting by External residents) relative to 2018. For trips starting in Oxfordshire though, there is expected to be a gentle increase, as residents increase their reliance private travel over longer distances.

Of course, this pattern varies greatly when considering the impact of the aforementioned spatial scenarios, as shown in Figure 5.7.2. As with modal share, this is presented relative to the neutral evenly dispersed scenario, which assume a proportionately even increase in trips and distance across the FEMA.

**Figure 5.7.2: Potential impact on average trip distance in Oxfordshire of the 2050 housing scenarios (averaged across the three employment trajectories)**



Source: Google Maps, Cambridge Econometrics.

It should be emphasised that despite the differences in Figure 5.6. appearing marginal (as they reflect the average for each individual trip), at an aggregated, FEMA-wide level the impact can be substantial; for instance, a 0.1 decrease in the average trip length ending in the FEMA could reduce total vehicle miles travelled that year by 11.3 million.

Relative to the evenly dispersed baseline, the **continued trends** scenario, which sees the biggest modal shift towards private travel, results in a large increase in average trip distance, though this is slightly less than the County-focussed scenario, reflecting the proximity of the Knowledge Spine to Oxford.

The **employment-led** scenario, which aligns housing and employment growth and resultantly has the largest drop in private travel out of all scenarios, could actually result in a decline in average trip distance, below both 2011 and 2018 benchmarks.

The **County-focussed** scenario meanwhile, which emphasises housing growth in the private travel reliant Wider County, unsurprisingly sees the largest increase in average distance travelled out of all scenarios, regardless of whether the trips starts or ends in Oxfordshire.

Finally, the **centralised** scenario, allocating high housing growth to the Knowledge Spine and Oxford (City Centre and Fringe), also sees a decline in average trip distance, though not to the extent of the employment-led scenario.

## 5.8 Conclusions

This chapter has undertaken an extensive appraisal of commuting trends in the Oxfordshire FEMA, with a particular focus on understanding the implications for commuting trips, modal share and private vehicle miles within the FEMA as a result of the contrasting employment and housing distributions explored in previous chapters.

Analysis of recent trends has shown that, as a result of employment growth accelerating relative to the supply of housing, commuting into the Oxfordshire FEMA has more than doubled over the past decade. This means more people are commuting – and commuting further, typically using private transport - to work in the FEMA, exacerbating congestion and environmental impacts.

Though the scale of potential employment and housing growth in Oxfordshire will increase the absolute number of commuting trips within the FEMA, given certain development choices there is the potential for the length of these trips to decrease, for modal share to shift towards greener, more sustainable forms of transport, and for millions of private vehicles miles to be taken off Oxfordshire's roads by 2050.

Such outcomes are increasingly desirable given the growing pressure on Oxfordshire's transport network, associated externalities (notably, environmental and emissions effects), and the desire to attain net zero, and should therefore be considered in the appraisal of any future spatial development options for the FEMA.

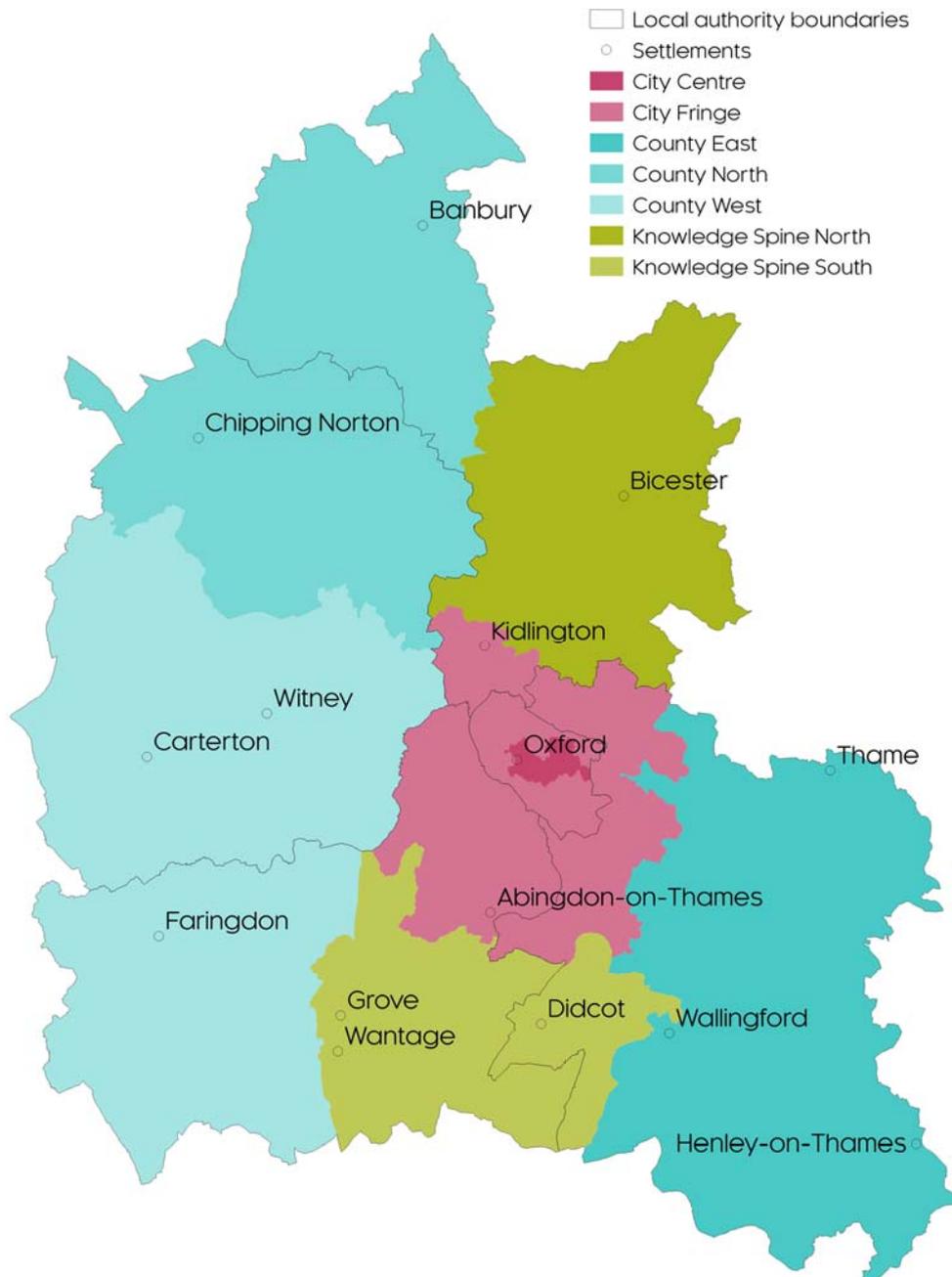
## 6 Conclusions

This conclusion chapter seeks to highlight and draw out the key findings and observations presented in the Phase 2 Report, particularly those regarding the definition and characteristics of the Oxfordshire FEMA, the scenarios for the distribution of housing and employment growth, and their resultant implications for commuting and transport use.

### The Oxfordshire Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA)

Functional Economic Market Areas (FEMAs) are designed to capture the extent and spatial distribution of a local economic market more accurately than administrative boundaries, which rarely reflect the true scale and reach of local economic markets and accompanying economic flows.

Figure 5.8.1: Spatial levels of the Oxfordshire FEMA



Source: Cambridge Econometrics

This report has sought to identify the extent and characteristics of the Oxfordshire FEMA, to enable a more precise and in-depth exploration of potential spatial distributions of economic growth and housing need in Oxfordshire.

The analysis of several economic, demographic, and social markets and indicators showed that the county of Oxfordshire is a reasonable approximation for the Oxfordshire FEMA, with Oxford at its centre. Further spatial levels ('Zones') have also been identified within the FEMA, each with their own distinct characteristics and economic attributes. Presented in Figure 5.8.1 above, these include:

- **Oxford City Centre:** the area with the highest concentration of economic activity, as well as central urban amenities, with a strong and growing services-led economy.
- **Oxford City Fringe:** the area surrounding the City Centre, characterised by a high degree of integration with and connectivity to the City Centre, and the presence of important urban fringe sites, such as science parks and large suburb, as well as the undeveloped Green Belt. An area of diverse and fast-growing economic activity.
- **The Knowledge Spine:** an area of globally-recognised knowledge activity that runs through the centre of the FEMA, largely along the A34 corridor. Straddling the City and Centre and Fringe, it comprises a **Northern** and a **Southern** part. Both areas have seen robust economic and housing growth of late.
- **The Wider County:** areas that remain outside both the Knowledge Spine and City Centre and Fringe. They comprise three roughly equal parts of comparable economic activity and functionality: **County East**, **County West** and **County North**. Pockets of high economic and housing growth can be found within these predominantly rural areas.

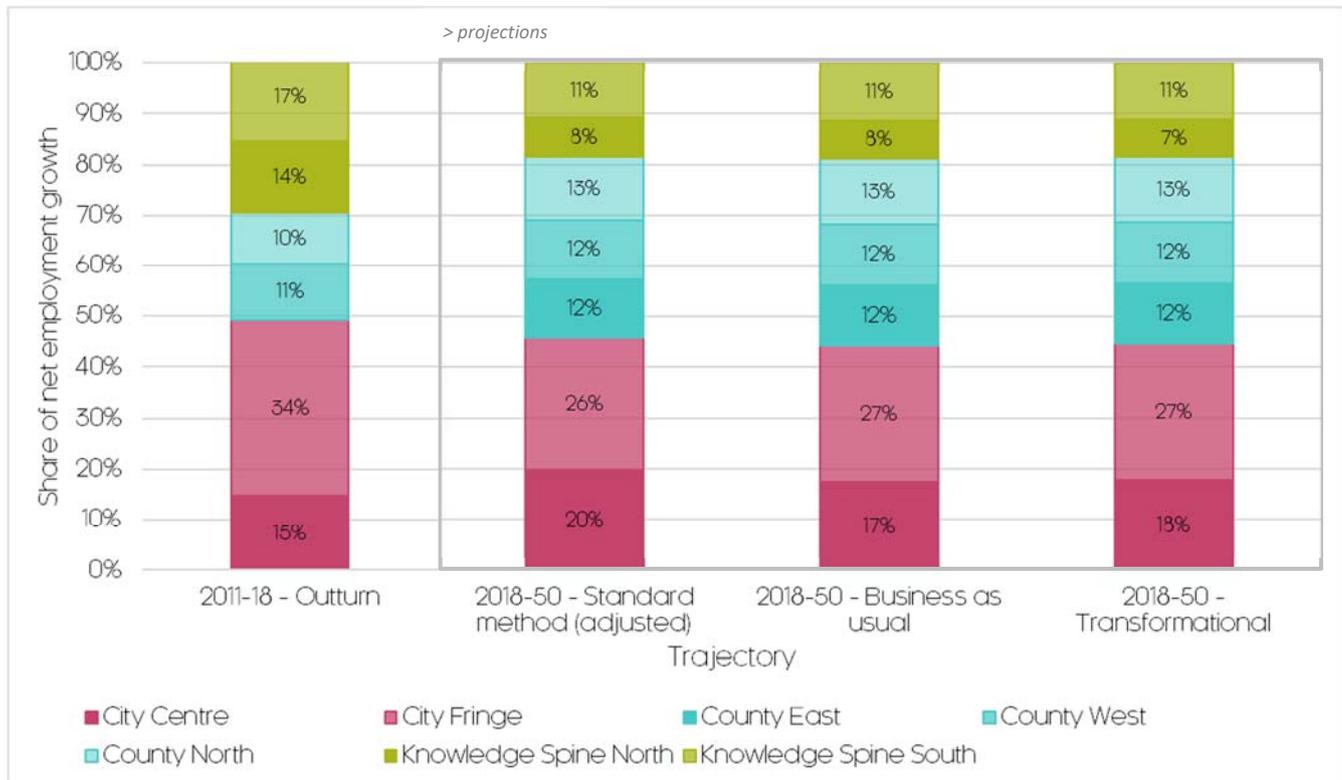
As emphasised in the report, these Zones are purely hypothetical, to allow for a better spatial understanding of housing need in relation to economic trends, and they should not be regarded as specific options or priorities for the distribution of development.

## Employment and housing need distributions to 2050

Understanding the potential spatial scale and pattern of employment growth is important for informing, testing and illustrating contrasting distributions for housing need. Drawing on the definition of the Oxfordshire FEMA and its constituent spatial levels ('Zones'), this report has explored the potential spatial distribution of the three Oxfordshire-wide employment trajectories to 2050 (as prepared and presented in the *Phase 1 Report*).

The distributions for employment growth are summarised in Figure 5.8.2 below. Over the longer timeframe of the *Phase 1* employment trajectories (to 2050), there is the potential for a more spatially balanced growth picture to emerge compared to recent (2011-18) trends.

Central Oxfordshire, encompassing the Knowledge Spine (including Oxford City and Fringe), is expected to remain a significant driver of economic activity, accounting for a potential two-thirds of net additional jobs in the FEMA to 2050.

**Figure 5.8.2: Spatial scenarios for Zonal distribution of employment (jobs) growth, 2011-18 and 2018-50**

Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics. County East excluded from 2011-18 outturn due to negative employment growth. . Percentage shares relate to Zones proportion of FEMA-wide jobs growth to 2050.

Having considered the scale and pattern of potential economic growth within the Oxfordshire FEMA, this report then proceeds to illustrate a range of spatial distribution scenarios for the FEMA-wide housing need to 2050 (as prepared and presented in the *Phase 1 Report*.)

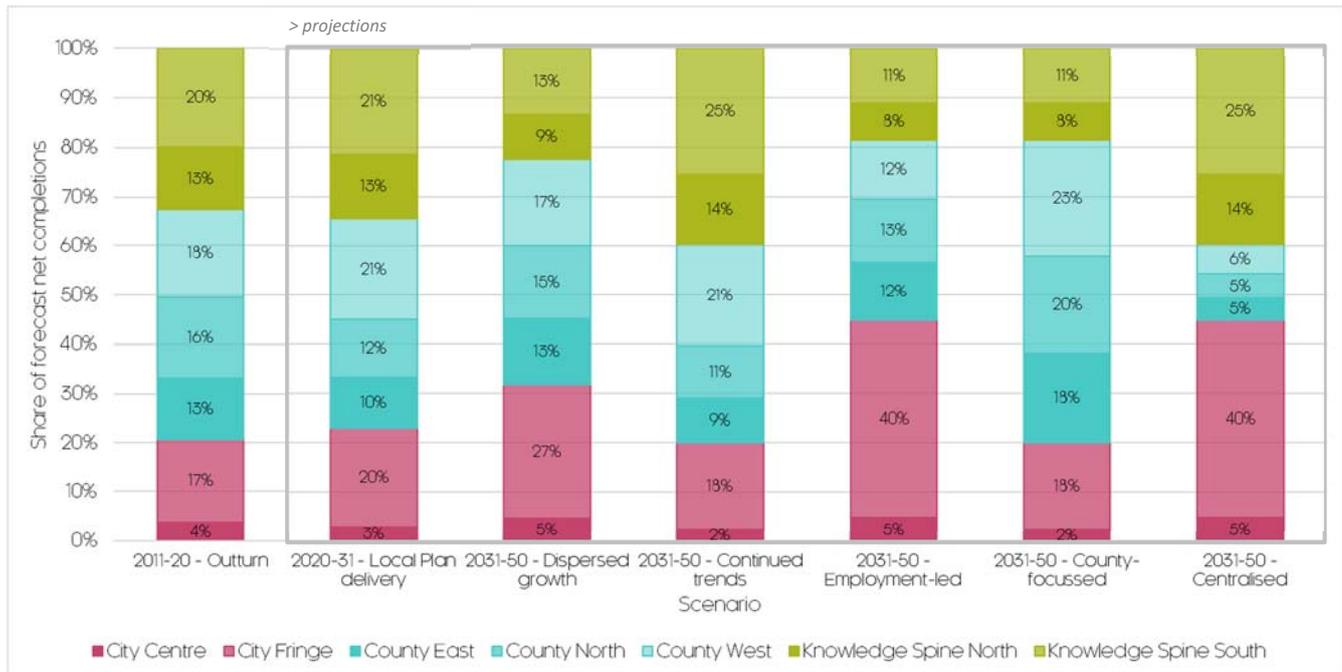
By taking the opportunity to quantify and test a range of different scenarios for housing distribution, the potential implications and trade-offs of different development choices can be identified and contrasted at a high-level.

The distributions of housing need have been informed by a set of robust and contrasting housing scenarios, with the results presented in Figure 5.8.3 below. The scenarios cover a variety of contrasting development choices for need after the 2020-31 period of Local Plan forecast completions. The scenarios include:

1. **An evenly dispersed scenario** – which sees housing need, and thus need, allocated at an even *percentage rate* (not quantity) across the FEMA.
2. **A continued trends scenario** – mirrors current concentrations of forecast net completions in Local Plans (which cover 202-31), extrapolating them over the additional 2031-50 period.
3. **An employment-led scenario** – sees need matched to the distribution of projected Zonal employment growth, including growth in LIS-outlined key employment locations.

4. **A County-focussed scenario** – focuses need on the Wider County, resulting in the lowest proportion of need allocated to Oxford City Centre and Fringe and the Knowledge Spine.
5. **A centralised scenario** – focuses need on central Oxfordshire, incorporating Oxford City Centre and Fringe and the Knowledge Spine. This results in the lowest proportion of need allocated to the Wider County.

**Figure 5.8.3: Spatial scenarios for Zonal distribution of housing need, 2011-20 and 2020-50**



Source: MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics. Note: percentage shares are an average of distributions across the three employment trajectories. Percentage shares relate to Zones proportion of FEMA-wide housing need to 2050.

As Figure 5.8.3 shows, the distribution scenarios cover a variety of contrasting development choices, ranging from an economic-led focus on distribution in central Oxfordshire (Oxford and the Knowledge Spine), to a more evenly dispersed approach across the county, to an emphasis on market towns in Wider County areas.

As it allocates housing growth rates equally across Zones, the **evenly dispersed** scenario sees housing distributed the most evenly between the Zones post-2031. The Wider County still has the highest absolute level of growth, as it starts with the highest number of initial dwellings at 2031.

The **continued trends** scenario, extrapolating 2020-31 Local Plan forecasts to 2050, sees significantly greater distribution to the Knowledge Spine, and marginally less allocated to the Wider County and City Centre and Fringe.

The **employment-led** scenario sees much greater distribution to Oxford City (specifically the City Fringe), and comparatively lower levels allocated to the Wider County and Knowledge Spine.

The **County-focussed** scenario combines the low City Centre and Fringe distribution from the *continued trends* scenario with the low distribution to

Knowledge Spine from the *employment led* scenario. This scenario results in a very high relative allocation to the Wider County.

The **centralised** scenario reverses this process, with the high City Centre and Fringe distribution from the *employment-led* scenario paired with the high Knowledge Spine allocation from the *continued trends* scenario. This scenario results in a very low relative distribution to the Wider County.

It should be emphasised that these scenarios do not reflect preferred options or priorities for economic growth or housing delivery, but are rather hypothetical distributions to better understand the implications and trade-offs of different development choices at a high level. It should also be noted that these scenarios do not take into account specific site constraints, phased need, or development sites outside of the Local Plan period (2020-31).

### Implications for commuting

By taking the opportunity to quantify and test a range of different economic and housing distributions, potential implications and trade-offs can be identified and contrasted. For the purpose of this report, this report has specifically focussed on understanding the consequences for commuting trips, modal share and private vehicle miles within the FEMA, particularly given their important role in attaining net zero ambitions for the county.

Analysis of recent trends has shown that, as a result of employment growth accelerating relative to the supply of housing, commuting into the Oxfordshire FEMA has more than doubled over the past decade. This means more people are commuting – and commuting further, typically using private transport - to work in the FEMA, exacerbating congestion and environmental effects.

Though the scale of potential employment and housing growth in Oxfordshire will increase the absolute number of commuting trips within the FEMA, the report finds that, given certain development choices, there is the potential for the length of these trips to decrease, for modal share to shift towards greener, more sustainable forms of transport, and for millions of private vehicles miles to be taken off Oxfordshire's roads by 2050.

Such outcomes are increasingly desirable given the growing pressure on Oxfordshire's transport network, associated externalities (notably, environmental and emissions effects), and the desire to attain net zero, and should therefore be considered in the appraisal of any future spatial development options for the FEMA.

### Links to other OGNA work

As referenced throughout, this report is directly informed by and relates to the extensive evidence prepared and analysed in the OGNA's *Phase 1 Report*. The *Phase 1 Report* addresses housing need, economic growth and employment land requirements for Oxfordshire – at the county-wide level - and appraises the accompanying high-level commuting and affordability implications

The development of the Phase 2 Report coincided with the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020 and 2021. It is clear that the pandemic and some of its long-lasting effects have the potential to impact upon the findings of this report, not least those relating to commuting. As such additional consideration has been given to this question. This analysis can be found in the **Covid-19 Impacts Addendum** that accompanies this report.

## 7 References

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DCLG (now MHCLG, 2010). Functional Economic Market Areas: An economic note. ([Link](#))

HM Government (2019). Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy. ([Link](#))

National Infrastructure Commission (2017). Partnering for Prosperity: a new deal for the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc. ([Link](#))

Oxfordshire LEP (2018). 2018 Economic Review: Baseline. ([Link](#))

Oxfordshire LEP (2018). 2018 Future State Assessment. ([Link](#))

## Appendix A: Inter-Zonal Commuting Matrices

The following tables comprise the detailed origin-destination inter-Zonal commuting matrices referenced during the analysis of *Chapter 5 Commuting Trends Within the Oxfordshire FEMA*.

To read the matrices; columns represent the location of the FEMAs employee’s residence, whilst rows the location of the FEMA employee’s workplace. Flows are presented between the seven Zones alongside an External region. Cells are shaded according to the size (i.e. significance) of that flow.

For 2018 onwards, the matrices include additional cells (which are accordingly shaded) showing the weighted percentage change in inter-Zonal flows relative to the 2011 or 2018 baseline. Cells are shaded between blue, which indicates a significant increase, or red, for a significant decrease.

### 2011 Census baseline

Table 5.8.1: Inter-Zonal commuting matrix, 2011

		Location of residence							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Location of work	City Centre	11,000	25,200	1,800	2,000	3,600	2,300	1,700	5,000
	City Fringe	3,400	54,400	3,300	3,200	6,900	3,600	5,700	10,900
	County East	300	2,600	26,200	200	500	500	2,200	13,600
	County North	200	1,400	100	33,000	1,700	1,500	100	10,400
	County West	200	2,600	200	1,700	34,700	500	1,600	7,800
	Knowledge Spine North	100	1,300	300	1,600	500	15,500	200	4,700
	Knowledge Spine South	300	5,000	1,500	300	2,300	300	19,400	4,700
	External	1,800	8,900	13,800	7,500	6,500	5,000	4,700	-

Source: ONS (Census 2011), Cambridge Econometrics

### 2018

Table 5.8.2: Inter-Zonal commuting matrix, 2018

		Location of residence							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Location of work	City Centre	11,300	26,500	2,200	2,300	3,900	2,500	1,900	6,100
	City Fringe	3,900	60,100	3,900	3,700	8,000	3,900	6,400	13,700
	County East	100	2,500	26,200	100	400	300	1,900	14,500
	County North	200	1,400	300	34,900	1,900	1,500	200	12,000
	County West	300	2,700	500	1,800	37,500	500	1,700	9,200

		300	1,600	600	1,900	800	17,300	400	6,400
	Knowledge Spine North	300	1,600	600	1,900	800	17,300	400	6,400
	Knowledge Spine South	500	5,200	1,900	600	2,700	500	22,000	6,300
	External	1,800	8,900	13,900	7,600	6,600	4,900	4,700	-
		Weighted % change 2011-18							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Weighted % change 2011-18	City Centre	0.1%	0.4%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.3%
	City Fringe	0.1%	1.7%	0.2%	0.1%	0.3%	0.1%	0.2%	0.8%
	County East	-0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-0.1%	-0.1%	0.3%
	County North	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.6%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%
	County West	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
	Knowledge Spine North	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.5%	0.1%	0.5%
	Knowledge Spine South	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.8%	0.5%
	External	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-

Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics

## 2050 – evenly dispersed scenario

Table 5.8.3: Inter-Zonal commuting matrix, 2050 under the Standard Method (adjusted): evenly dispersed scenario

		Location of residence							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Location of work	City Centre	13,400	31,600	2,800	2,800	5,800	3,700	3,500	5,300
	City Fringe	4,600	71,000	5,200	4,900	11,000	6,000	10,000	12,600
	County East	300	2,800	31,800	600	1,100	900	3,500	13,800
	County North	300	1,700	700	42,300	3,000	2,300	1,000	10,800
	County West	200	2,700	700	2,000	47,700	800	2,700	8,000
	Knowledge Spine North	200	1,600	900	2,300	1,400	23,200	1,100	5,000
	Knowledge Spine South	400	5,600	2,100	700	3,700	800	30,400	5,000
	External	1,500	8,800	14,000	7,600	6,700	5,100	5,200	-
		Weighted % change 2018-50							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Weighted % change 2018-50	City Centre	0.6%	1.5%	0.2%	0.2%	0.6%	0.4%	0.4%	-0.3%
	City Fringe	0.2%	3.2%	0.4%	0.4%	1.1%	0.6%	1.1%	-0.4%
	County East	0.1%	0.1%	1.6%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.5%	-0.4%
	County North	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	2.2%	0.4%	0.2%	0.2%	-0.5%
	County West	-0.1%	-0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%	2.0%	0.0%	0.2%	-0.9%
	Knowledge Spine North	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	1.7%	0.2%	-0.5%
	Knowledge Spine South	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.4%	0.1%	2.4%	-0.5%
	External	-0.2%	-0.2%	-0.1%	-0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%	0.0%	-

**Table 5.8.4: Inter-Zonal commuting matrix, 2050 under the business as usual: evenly dispersed scenario**

		Location of residence							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Location of work	City Centre	14,200	33,600	2,900	2,900	6,100	3,800	3,600	5,300
	City Fringe	5,000	76,800	5,800	5,400	12,000	6,600	10,900	13,000
	County East	400	3,100	34,600	800	1,300	1,100	4,000	14,200
	County North	400	1,800	800	45,700	3,300	2,700	1,100	11,100
	County West	300	2,900	800	2,100	51,500	900	3,000	8,000
	Knowledge Spine North	300	1,800	900	2,500	1,600	25,100	1,200	5,000
	Knowledge Spine South	400	6,400	2,500	800	4,200	800	33,000	5,000
	External	1,500	8,900	14,200	7,600	6,700	5,100	5,000	-
		Weighted % change 2018-50							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Weighted % change 2018-50	City Centre	0.9%	2.0%	0.2%	0.2%	0.7%	0.4%	0.5%	-0.3%
	City Fringe	0.3%	4.8%	0.6%	0.5%	1.4%	0.8%	1.3%	-0.3%
	County East	0.1%	0.2%	2.4%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.6%	-0.2%
	County North	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	3.1%	0.5%	0.4%	0.3%	-0.4%
	County West	-0.1%	-0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%	3.1%	0.0%	0.2%	-0.9%
	Knowledge Spine North	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%	2.2%	0.2%	-0.5%
	Knowledge Spine South	0.0%	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%	0.5%	0.1%	3.1%	-0.5%
	External	-0.2%	-0.1%	-0.1%	-0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%	0.0%	-

**Table 5.8.5: Inter-Zonal commuting matrix, 2050 under the transformational: evenly dispersed scenario**

		Location of residence							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Location of work	City Centre	15,500	36,900	3,300	3,300	6,700	4,300	4,000	5,300
	City Fringe	5,600	84,100	6,500	6,100	13,200	7,300	11,900	13,500
	County East	500	3,200	38,000	900	1,600	1,200	4,500	14,800
	County North	400	2,000	900	50,000	3,700	3,000	1,300	11,400
	County West	400	3,100	1,000	2,500	56,300	1,100	3,400	8,100
	Knowledge Spine North	300	1,900	1,100	2,900	1,800	27,300	1,400	5,000
	Knowledge Spine South	400	7,200	2,900	900	4,600	900	36,100	5,000
	External	1,400	9,000	14,600	7,600	6,700	5,100	4,900	-
		Weighted % change 2018-50							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Weighted	City Centre	1.2%	2.9%	0.3%	0.3%	0.9%	0.5%	0.6%	-0.3%
	City Fringe	0.5%	6.8%	0.7%	0.7%	1.7%	1.0%	1.6%	-0.2%

County East	0.1%	0.2%	3.3%	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%	0.7%	-0.1%
County North	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	4.3%	0.6%	0.4%	0.3%	-0.3%
County West	-0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	4.4%	0.1%	0.4%	-0.9%
Knowledge Spine North	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%	0.4%	2.8%	0.3%	-0.5%
Knowledge Spine South	0.0%	0.6%	0.3%	0.1%	0.6%	0.1%	4.0%	-0.5%
External	-0.2%	-0.1%	0.1%	-0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%	-0.1%	-

Source: Cambridge Econometrics

### 2050 – continued trends scenario

**Table 5.8.6: Inter-Zonal commuting matrix, 2050 under the Standard Method (adjusted): continued trends scenario**

		Location of residence							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Location of work	City Centre	13,200	31,000	2,700	2,700	6,000	4,000	4,000	5,400
	City Fringe	4,500	69,800	5,100	4,800	11,300	6,300	10,700	12,700
	County East	300	2,700	31,300	600	1,200	1,000	4,000	13,800
	County North	300	1,500	600	41,800	3,100	2,600	1,300	10,800
	County West	100	2,600	600	1,900	48,000	800	2,900	7,900
	Knowledge Spine North	200	1,500	700	2,000	1,400	23,700	1,300	5,000
	Knowledge Spine South	300	5,000	2,000	600	3,700	800	31,500	4,900
	External	1,400	8,700	13,900	7,500	6,800	5,100	5,600	-
		Weighted % change 2018-50							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Weighted % change 2018-50	City Centre	0.6%	1.3%	0.2%	0.1%	0.7%	0.4%	0.6%	-0.3%
	City Fringe	0.2%	2.9%	0.4%	0.3%	1.2%	0.7%	1.3%	-0.4%
	County East	0.1%	0.1%	1.5%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.6%	-0.4%
	County North	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	2.0%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	-0.5%
	County West	-0.1%	-0.1%	-0.1%	-0.1%	2.1%	0.0%	0.2%	-1.0%
	Knowledge Spine North	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	1.8%	0.2%	-0.5%
	Knowledge Spine South	-0.1%	-0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.4%	0.1%	2.7%	-0.5%
	External	-0.2%	-0.2%	-0.1%	-0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%	0.1%	-

**Table 5.8.7: Inter-Zonal commuting matrix, 2050 under the business as usual: continued trends scenario**

		Location of residence							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Location of work	City Centre	13,800	32,500	2,800	2,800	6,400	4,400	4,400	5,300
	City Fringe	5,000	74,800	5,600	5,300	12,400	7,200	12,000	13,100
	County East	300	2,800	33,800	700	1,500	1,300	4,700	14,300

		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge e Spine North	Knowledge e Spine South	External
	County North	300	1,600	700	44,800	3,500	3,100	1,700	11,100
	County West	100	2,600	700	1,900	52,100	900	3,400	7,900
	Knowledge Spine North	100	1,500	800	2,100	1,500	26,000	1,500	4,900
	Knowledge Spine South	300	5,400	2,000	600	4,100	900	35,000	4,900
	External	1,300	8,600	13,800	7,400	6,900	5,100	5,900	-
		Weighted % change 2018-50							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge e Spine North	Knowledge e Spine South	External
Weighted % change 2018-50	City Centre	0.7%	1.7%	0.2%	0.2%	0.8%	0.6%	0.7%	-0.3%
	City Fringe	0.3%	4.2%	0.5%	0.5%	1.5%	0.9%	1.6%	-0.3%
	County East	0.1%	0.1%	2.1%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.8%	-0.2%
	County North	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	2.9%	0.6%	0.5%	0.4%	-0.4%
	County West	-0.1%	-0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%	3.2%	0.0%	0.4%	-1.0%
	Knowledge Spine North	-0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.3%	2.5%	0.3%	-0.5%
	Knowledge Spine South	-0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.5%	0.1%	3.7%	-0.5%
	External	-0.2%	-0.2%	-0.2%	-0.1%	0.1%	-0.1%	0.2%	-

**Table 5.8.8: Inter-Zonal commuting matrix, 2050 under the transformational: continued trends scenario**

		Location of residence							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge e Spine North	Knowledge e Spine South	External
Location of work	City Centre	14,900	35,100	3,100	3,100	7,300	5,200	5,200	5,300
	City Fringe	5,500	80,900	6,300	5,800	13,800	8,300	13,800	13,700
	County East	300	2,900	36,600	700	1,900	1,800	5,600	14,800
	County North	300	1,600	800	48,500	4,100	3,700	2,200	11,500
	County West	100	2,700	800	2,000	57,200	1,100	4,100	7,900
	Knowledge Spine North	100	1,500	800	2,200	1,700	28,800	1,800	4,900
	Knowledge Spine South	200	5,600	2,100	600	4,500	900	39,300	4,800
	External	1,200	8,500	13,800	7,300	7,000	5,300	6,300	-
		Weighted % change 2018-50							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge e Spine North	Knowledge e Spine South	External
Weighted % change 2018-50	City Centre	1.0%	2.4%	0.3%	0.2%	1.0%	0.8%	0.9%	-0.3%
	City Fringe	0.5%	5.9%	0.7%	0.6%	1.8%	1.2%	2.1%	-0.1%
	County East	0.1%	0.1%	2.9%	0.2%	0.4%	0.4%	1.0%	-0.1%
	County North	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	3.9%	0.7%	0.6%	0.6%	-0.3%
	County West	-0.1%	-0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%	4.6%	0.1%	0.6%	-1.0%
	Knowledge Spine North	-0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.3%	3.3%	0.4%	-0.5%
	Knowledge Spine South	-0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.6%	0.1%	4.9%	-0.5%
	External	-0.2%	-0.2%	-0.2%	-0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	0.3%	-

Source: Cambridge Econometrics

## 2050 – employment-led scenario

Table 5.8.9: Inter-Zonal commuting matrix, 2050 under the Standard Method (adjusted): employment-led scenario

		Location of residence							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Location of work	City Centre	13,400	32,600	2,600	2,600	5,500	3,600	3,400	5,300
	City Fringe	4,500	72,600	5,000	4,700	10,600	5,800	9,700	12,500
	County East	300	3,100	31,600	600	1,000	900	3,500	13,800
	County North	300	1,900	700	42,100	2,800	2,300	1,000	10,900
	County West	200	3,000	700	2,000	47,000	900	2,700	8,000
	Knowledge Spine North	300	1,900	900	2,200	1,300	23,100	1,100	5,000
	Knowledge Spine South	400	6,300	2,100	700	3,500	700	30,100	5,000
	External	1,500	9,000	14,000	7,500	6,700	5,100	5,100	-
		Weighted % change 2018-50							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Weighted % change 2018-50	City Centre	0.6%	1.7%	0.1%	0.1%	0.5%	0.3%	0.4%	-0.3%
	City Fringe	0.2%	3.6%	0.3%	0.3%	1.0%	0.6%	1.0%	-0.5%
	County East	0.1%	0.2%	1.5%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.5%	-0.4%
	County North	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	2.1%	0.4%	0.2%	0.2%	-0.4%
	County West	-0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	-0.1%	1.8%	0.0%	0.2%	-0.9%
	Knowledge Spine North	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	1.7%	0.2%	-0.5%
	Knowledge Spine South	0.0%	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.3%	0.1%	2.3%	-0.5%
	External	-0.2%	-0.1%	-0.1%	-0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%	0.0%	-

Table 5.8.10: Inter-Zonal commuting matrix, 2050 under the business as usual: employment-led scenario

		Location of residence							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Location of work	City Centre	14,100	35,100	2,700	2,700	5,600	3,600	3,400	5,300
	City Fringe	4,900	79,200	5,500	5,100	11,300	6,200	10,400	12,900
	County East	400	3,500	34,400	700	1,100	1,000	3,900	14,400
	County North	400	2,100	800	45,400	3,100	2,600	1,100	11,200
	County West	400	3,500	900	2,100	50,400	1,000	3,100	8,200
	Knowledge Spine North	300	2,200	1,000	2,500	1,300	24,800	1,200	5,100
	Knowledge Spine South	400	7,300	2,400	700	3,800	800	32,600	5,000
	External	1,500	9,200	14,100	7,600	6,700	5,100	5,000	-
		Weighted % change 2018-50							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Wei	City Centre	0.8%	2.4%	0.2%	0.1%	0.6%	0.3%	0.4%	-0.3%

	City Fringe	0.3%	5.5%	0.5%	0.4%	1.2%	0.7%	1.2%	-0.4%
	County East	0.1%	0.3%	2.3%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.6%	-0.2%
	County North	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	3.0%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	-0.4%
	County West	-0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%	2.8%	0.1%	0.3%	-0.9%
	Knowledge Spine North	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	2.1%	0.2%	-0.5%
	Knowledge Spine South	0.0%	0.6%	0.2%	0.0%	0.4%	0.1%	3.0%	-0.5%
	External	-0.2%	-0.1%	-0.1%	-0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%	0.0%	-

**Table 5.8.11: Inter-Zonal commuting matrix, 2050 under the transformational: employment-led scenario**

		Location of residence							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Location of work	City Centre	15,500	39,200	3,000	2,900	5,900	3,900	3,600	5,300
	City Fringe	5,300	88,000	6,000	5,500	12,100	6,700	11,300	13,300
	County East	500	4,400	37,600	800	1,200	1,100	4,300	14,900
	County North	500	2,800	900	49,400	3,300	3,000	1,300	11,600
	County West	400	4,400	1,000	2,500	54,500	1,100	3,500	8,200
	Knowledge Spine North	400	2,800	1,000	2,800	1,400	26,800	1,300	5,100
	Knowledge Spine South	400	8,500	2,800	800	4,100	900	35,400	5,100
	External	1,500	9,200	14,500	7,600	6,600	5,100	4,900	-
		Weighted % change 2018-50							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Weighted % change 2018-50	City Centre	1.2%	3.6%	0.2%	0.2%	0.6%	0.4%	0.5%	-0.3%
	City Fringe	0.4%	7.9%	0.6%	0.5%	1.4%	0.8%	1.4%	-0.2%
	County East	0.1%	0.6%	3.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.7%	-0.1%
	County North	0.1%	0.4%	0.2%	4.1%	0.5%	0.4%	0.3%	-0.2%
	County West	-0.1%	0.4%	0.1%	0.1%	3.9%	0.1%	0.4%	-0.9%
	Knowledge Spine North	0.0%	0.3%	0.1%	0.3%	0.2%	2.7%	0.2%	-0.5%
	Knowledge Spine South	0.0%	0.9%	0.3%	0.1%	0.5%	0.1%	3.8%	-0.4%
	External	-0.2%	-0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%	-0.1%	-

Source: Cambridge Econometrics

### 2050 – County-focussed scenario

**Table 5.8.12: Inter-Zonal commuting matrix, 2050 under the Standard Method (adjusted): County-focussed scenario**

		Location of residence							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Location of	City Centre	13,200	31,000	3,000	3,100	6,100	3,700	3,500	5,400
	City Fringe	4,500	69,900	5,500	5,200	11,400	6,000	10,000	12,700
	County East	200	2,700	32,300	600	1,100	900	3,400	13,800

		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
	County North	200	1,500	700	42,900	3,000	2,200	800	10,700
	County West	100	2,500	700	2,000	48,300	700	2,500	7,900
	Knowledge Spine North	200	1,500	900	2,400	1,600	23,000	1,100	5,000
	Knowledge Spine South	300	5,300	2,300	800	4,000	800	30,200	5,000
	External	1,400	8,700	14,200	7,600	6,900	5,100	5,000	-
		Weighted % change 2018-50							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Weighted % change 2018-50	City Centre	0.6%	1.3%	0.2%	0.2%	0.7%	0.4%	0.4%	-0.3%
	City Fringe	0.2%	2.9%	0.5%	0.4%	1.2%	0.6%	1.1%	-0.4%
	County East	0.0%	0.1%	1.7%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.4%	-0.4%
	County North	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	2.3%	0.4%	0.2%	0.2%	-0.5%
	County West	-0.1%	-0.2%	0.0%	-0.1%	2.2%	0.0%	0.1%	-1.0%
	Knowledge Spine North	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%	1.7%	0.2%	-0.5%
	Knowledge Spine South	-0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.5%	0.1%	2.4%	-0.5%
	External	-0.2%	-0.2%	-0.1%	-0.1%	0.1%	-0.1%	0.0%	-

Table 5.8.13: Inter-Zonal commuting matrix, 2050 under the business as usual: County-focussed scenario

		Location of residence							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Location of work	City Centre	13,800	32,400	3,300	3,400	6,600	3,900	3,700	5,300
	City Fringe	5,000	74,800	6,300	6,000	12,600	6,600	10,900	13,200
	County East	300	2,800	35,400	800	1,400	1,000	3,800	14,100
	County North	200	1,500	800	46,800	3,400	2,400	900	10,900
	County West	100	2,600	800	2,200	52,600	800	2,700	8,000
	Knowledge Spine North	200	1,500	1,100	2,900	1,800	24,700	1,200	5,000
	Knowledge Spine South	400	5,700	2,800	900	4,600	800	32,700	5,000
	External	1,300	8,600	14,700	7,600	7,000	5,000	4,900	-
		Weighted % change 2018-50							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Weighted % change 2018-50	City Centre	0.7%	1.7%	0.3%	0.3%	0.8%	0.4%	0.5%	-0.3%
	City Fringe	0.3%	4.2%	0.7%	0.7%	1.5%	0.8%	1.3%	-0.3%
	County East	0.1%	0.1%	2.6%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.6%	-0.3%
	County North	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	3.4%	0.5%	0.3%	0.2%	-0.4%
	County West	-0.1%	-0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	3.4%	0.0%	0.2%	-0.9%
	Knowledge Spine North	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.3%	0.4%	2.1%	0.2%	-0.5%
	Knowledge Spine South	0.0%	0.1%	0.3%	0.1%	0.6%	0.1%	3.1%	-0.5%
	External	-0.2%	-0.2%	0.1%	-0.1%	0.1%	-0.1%	-0.1%	-

**Table 5.8.14: Inter-Zonal commuting matrix, 2050 under the transformational: County-focussed scenario**

		Location of residence							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Location of work	City Centre	14,900	35,000	4,000	4,100	7,500	4,300	4,100	5,300
	City Fringe	5,500	81,000	7,300	7,000	14,200	7,300	12,000	13,800
	County East	300	2,800	39,300	900	1,800	1,000	4,100	14,600
	County North	200	1,500	900	51,700	3,900	2,600	900	11,100
	County West	100	2,600	900	2,600	58,100	900	2,900	8,000
	Knowledge Spine North	200	1,500	1,400	3,400	2,200	26,800	1,300	5,000
	Knowledge Spine South	400	6,100	3,400	1,100	5,300	900	35,600	5,100
	External	1,200	8,400	15,400	7,600	7,200	4,900	4,700	-
		Weighted % change 2018-50							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Weighted % change 2018-50	City Centre	1.0%	2.4%	0.5%	0.5%	1.1%	0.5%	0.6%	-0.3%
	City Fringe	0.5%	6.0%	1.0%	0.9%	2.0%	1.0%	1.6%	-0.1%
	County East	0.1%	0.1%	3.7%	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%	0.6%	-0.1%
	County North	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	4.8%	0.7%	0.3%	0.2%	-0.4%
	County West	-0.1%	-0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	4.9%	0.0%	0.2%	-0.9%
	Knowledge Spine North	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.4%	0.5%	2.7%	0.2%	-0.5%
	Knowledge Spine South	0.0%	0.2%	0.4%	0.1%	0.8%	0.1%	3.9%	-0.4%
	External	-0.2%	-0.3%	0.3%	-0.1%	0.1%	-0.1%	-0.1%	-

Source: Cambridge Econometrics

**2050 – centralised scenario****Table 5.8.15: Inter-Zonal commuting matrix, 2050 under the Standard Method (adjusted): centralised scenario**

		Location of residence							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Location of work	City Centre	13,400	32,700	2,400	2,400	5,300	3,900	3,800	5,300
	City Fringe	4,500	72,600	4,600	4,300	10,300	6,100	10,400	12,500
	County East	400	3,100	30,800	600	1,100	1,100	4,000	13,900
	County North	400	1,900	600	41,100	2,800	2,800	1,400	11,000
	County West	300	3,000	700	1,900	46,300	1,000	3,300	8,100
	Knowledge Spine North	200	1,800	700	1,900	1,000	23,800	1,300	5,000
	Knowledge Spine South	300	6,100	1,900	500	3,100	800	31,500	4,900
	External	1,500	9,000	13,800	7,400	6,600	5,100	5,700	-
		Weighted % change 2018-50							

		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Weighted % change 2018-50	City Centre	0.6%	1.8%	0.1%	0.1%	0.5%	0.4%	0.5%	-0.3%
	City Fringe	0.2%	3.6%	0.2%	0.2%	0.9%	0.6%	1.2%	-0.5%
	County East	0.1%	0.2%	1.3%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.6%	-0.3%
	County North	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	1.8%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	-0.4%
	County West	-0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	-0.1%	1.6%	0.1%	0.3%	-0.9%
	Knowledge Spine North	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	1.9%	0.2%	-0.5%
	Knowledge Spine South	-0.1%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%	2.7%	-0.5%
	External	-0.2%	-0.1%	-0.2%	-0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%	0.2%	-

**Table 5.8.16: Inter-Zonal commuting matrix, 2050 under the business as usual: centralised scenario**

		Location of residence							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Location of work	City Centre	14,100	35,100	2,300	2,300	5,200	4,100	4,100	5,200
	City Fringe	4,900	79,200	4,900	4,500	10,800	6,800	11,600	12,800
	County East	500	3,700	32,900	600	1,100	1,400	4,800	14,400
	County North	500	2,400	700	43,700	2,900	3,300	1,900	11,400
	County West	400	3,700	800	2,000	49,200	1,300	4,000	8,100
	Knowledge Spine North	300	2,000	700	1,900	1,000	26,000	1,500	5,000
	Knowledge Spine South	300	6,900	1,900	500	3,100	800	34,900	4,800
	External	1,500	9,100	13,700	7,300	6,500	5,200	6,000	-
		Weighted % change 2018-50							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Weighted % change 2018-50	City Centre	0.8%	2.4%	0.1%	0.0%	0.4%	0.5%	0.6%	-0.4%
	City Fringe	0.3%	5.5%	0.3%	0.2%	1.0%	0.8%	1.5%	-0.4%
	County East	0.1%	0.4%	1.9%	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%	0.8%	-0.2%
	County North	0.1%	0.3%	0.1%	2.6%	0.4%	0.5%	0.5%	-0.3%
	County West	-0.1%	0.2%	0.0%	-0.1%	2.4%	0.1%	0.5%	-0.9%
	Knowledge Spine North	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	2.5%	0.3%	-0.5%
	Knowledge Spine South	-0.1%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%	3.7%	-0.5%
	External	-0.2%	-0.1%	-0.2%	-0.2%	-0.1%	0.0%	0.2%	-

**Table 5.8.17: Inter-Zonal commuting matrix, 2050 under the transformational: centralised scenario**

		Location of residence							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Location of	City Centre	15,500	39,200	2,400	2,300	5,300	4,700	4,700	5,200
	City Fringe	5,300	88,000	5,100	4,600	11,200	7,600	13,100	13,100
	County East	500	4,600	35,300	600	1,100	1,900	5,700	15,000

Source: Cambridge Econometrics

	County North	500	3,200	800	46,700	3,100	4,000	2,500	11,800
	County West	500	4,700	800	2,100	52,500	1,800	4,900	8,300
	Knowledge Spine North	300	2,500	700	1,800	1,000	28,800	1,800	4,900
	Knowledge Spine South	300	7,900	1,900	400	3,000	800	39,200	4,800
	External	1,400	9,200	13,700	7,200	6,400	5,300	6,400	-
		Weighted % change 2018-50							
		City Centre	City Fringe	County East	County North	County West	Knowledge Spine North	Knowledge Spine South	External
Weighted % change 2018-50	City Centre	1.2%	3.6%	0.1%	0.0%	0.5%	0.6%	0.8%	-0.4%
	City Fringe	0.4%	7.9%	0.4%	0.3%	1.1%	1.0%	1.9%	-0.3%
	County East	0.1%	0.6%	2.6%	0.1%	0.2%	0.4%	1.1%	0.0%
	County North	0.1%	0.5%	0.2%	3.4%	0.4%	0.7%	0.7%	-0.2%
	County West	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	-0.1%	3.3%	0.3%	0.8%	-0.9%
	Knowledge Spine North	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	3.3%	0.4%	-0.5%
	Knowledge Spine South	-0.1%	0.7%	0.0%	-0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	4.9%	-0.5%
	External	-0.2%	-0.1%	-0.2%	-0.2%	-0.1%	0.0%	0.4%	-

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## Appendix B: Local Plan Forecast Completions

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Table 5.8.1 below shows forecast net completions by built up area (BUA's) in Oxfordshire over the 2020-31 period, derived from local authorities Local Plans. Note that these estimates were sourced directly from the respective Oxfordshire local authorities, who input to a proforma coordinated by Icen Projects during the development of this report. These forecasts have been used to inform Zonal distributions of housing need, as explored in *Chapter 4*.

Table 5.8.1: Forecast net completions from Oxfordshire local authority Local Plans, 2020-31

Local Plan	Built up Area (BUA)/locality	Forecast net completions - current pipeline										
		2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Oxford City	Oxford City	777	544	689	627	851	1191	1252	759	766	490	574
Cherwell	Banbury BUA	498	615	925	749	538	367	337	342	278	142	117
	Bicester BUA	681	529	550	485	577	613	540	481	479	479	379
	Former RAF Upper Heyford	150	130	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
	CDC Partial Review Sites (Kidlington, Begbroke, Gosford and Water Eaton and Yarnton)	0	105	255	475	505	540	590	575	515	485	355
	Other Cherwell (e.g. Rural)	261	292	452	606	535	570	620	605	545	515	385
West Oxfordshire	Carterton BUA	164	176	276	245	178	178	78	32	13	13	13
	Witney BUA	351	405	383	336	290	315	265	215	215	190	115
	Eynsham SDA/ Cotswold Garden Village	80	80	77	370	370	370	370	370	370	370	295
	Other West (e.g. Rural)	770	582	624	293	348	298	298	273	236	48	0
Vale of White Horse	Abingdon BUA	55	205	168	193	193	178	150	100	0	0	0
	Faringdon BUA	105	145	92	89	89	64	46	46	46	46	4
	Wantage & Grove BUA	521	497	410	325	398	398	311	242	220	220	320
	Botley (adjoins Oxford)	137	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Oxfordshire	Didcot BUA	505	582	579	635	882	982	971	632	577	562	279
	Henley-on-Thames BUA	55	32	0	0	134	78	0	0	0	0	0
	Thame BUA	73	70	10	0	60	60	15	0	0	0	0
	Wallingford BUA	180	387	310	127	199	186	172	55	0	0	0
Other South and Vale Rural		1251	1351	1159	988	919	765	853	1451	2031	2016	1966

Source: Oxford City Council, Cherwell District Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council.



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Energy & Environment

# Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Habitats Regulations Assessment:

Distance-based risk-zones for Plan development

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Report for Oxfordshire Plan Team

ED 12445100 | Issue Number 3 | Date 22/11/2019

**Customer:**

Oxfordshire Plan Team

**Customer reference:**

CN01607

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**Date:**

22 November 2019

**Ricardo Energy & Environment reference:**

Ref: ED12445100- Issue Number 3

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### Appendices

Appendix 1	Oxfordshire HRA Risk-zones
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# 1 Introduction

Ricardo Energy and Environment was commissioned by Oxford City Council, acting on behalf of a partnership of the five Oxfordshire district authorities<sup>1</sup>, to undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of how the emerging Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (“the Plan”) might affect designated European sites. The first stage of this HRA will involve screening the Plan for Likely Significant Effects (LSE) (HRA Stage 1) that would trigger the need for a full Appropriate Assessment (HRA Stage 2).

As the Plan has not yet been drafted, Ricardo was asked to undertake a pre-screening exercise to identify and map, at a high level, broad geographical areas that may pose potential risks to European sites from future development. This is to guide the Oxfordshire Plan Team in identifying broad areas of the county for future strategic development whilst avoiding, where possible, locations at higher risk of requiring detailed assessment and mitigation under the HRA process, due to the potential impacts on European habitat sites. The mapping of such higher risk zones or “buffers” is the aim of this pre-screening task, which is reported here.

These risk zones should not be interpreted as indicating that development within them will necessarily damage the integrity of European sites or undermine their conservation objectives. Rather, these zones serve only to highlight the possibility of strategic development within them needing a greater level of assessment under the Habitats Regulations, and potentially, a greater level of associated mitigation to overcome any adverse effects. The basic principle here is that the first consideration in the ‘mitigation hierarchy’ should be to avoid impacts wherever possible. The maps produced and described in this report are intended to facilitate such avoidance.

Whilst this work does not constitute a formal part of the HRA process, it is an initial step in helping to ensure that appropriate consideration and protection is afforded to European sites throughout the plan-making process.

## 2 Methodology

### 2.1 Study area

As a precautionary approach, all European-designated sites contained partially or wholly within a 20km radius of the five Oxfordshire district authorities are considered in this study. The use of a 20km buffer ensures that sites which are located relatively far from the Oxfordshire area, but which might be impacted by development within Oxfordshire due to exceptional pathways, are included in subsequent stages of the HRA process. Refer to Section 2.3 for additional information related to exceptional pathways.

### 2.2 Risk zones

In acknowledgement of the need for this to be a relatively simple and user-friendly output, the approach we have taken considers only two distance-based risk zones (‘buffers’) for each European site as follows.

#### 2.2.1 Outer, precautionary buffer (lower risk zone)

Each European site will be represented with a standard precautionary buffer extending 10km from the European site boundary. This is a standard distance that Ricardo uses as a screening threshold in the

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<sup>1</sup> Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council

majority of our strategic Habitats Regulations Assessments e.g. those carried out for Thames Water's Draft Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP)<sup>2</sup> and Havant Borough Council's Local Plan<sup>3</sup>. This is a commonly applied screening threshold that has been agreed through consultation stages of HRA and typically accepted and used by Natural England for all but truly exceptional impact 'pathways' (e.g. routes for highly mobile species or impacts and functionally-linked off-site supporting habitats). 10km is also the maximum distance Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) used by Natural England to help planners and developers to screen for impacts to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and European sites<sup>4</sup>. This precautionary outer buffer therefore has significant precedent.

This lower-risk zone has been mapped using yellow shading (in keeping with a 'traffic-light' approach to colour-coding of risk areas).

## 2.2.2 Inner buffer (higher risk zone)

For each European site selected, we have looked at the sensitivities of its qualifying feature habitats and species based on the information provided in the original request for quotation, the district level HRAs that we have reviewed<sup>5</sup>, site citations<sup>6</sup>, IRZs<sup>4</sup> and applicable Site Improvement Plans<sup>7</sup> (SIPs) for each site. These primarily relate to sensitivities to air quality, water level, water quality and recreation.

Inner buffer distance for each type of impact were selected based on the following considerations:

- For air quality impacts, a screening distance of 200m between the road and European site has commonly been used in HRA. We have used a more precautionary distance of 500m, based on recent modelling work undertaken by Ricardo for HRA studies.
- For impacts related to water quality and water levels/abstraction, a 2km buffer has been selected as an initial screening distance to identify where there might be water related issues impacting a designated site. This buffer is based on the SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZ) approach for use by Local Planning Authorities to assess planning applications for likely impacts on designated sites<sup>8</sup>. The IRZ approach uses a number of different distance-based buffers as an initial screening test to determine where impacts could occur. In this case, the

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<sup>2</sup> Thames Water, 2018. Revised draft Water Resources Management Plan 2019, Appendix C – Habitats Regulations Assessment.

<sup>3</sup> Ricardo Energy & Environment, 2019. Air Quality Regulations Assessment for Havant Borough Local Plan 2036, Report for Havant Borough Council. Issue 3.

<sup>4</sup> The Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) are a GIS tool developed by Natural England to make a rapid initial assessment of the potential risks posed by development proposals to: Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites. They define zones around each site which reflect the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and indicate the types of development proposal which could potentially have adverse impacts. See: <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>.

<sup>5</sup> a) Atkins, 2017. Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1): Oxford's Unmet Housing Needs, Proposed Submission Plan, Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report. b) Atkins, 2018. Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1): Oxford's Unmet Housing Needs Proposed Submission Plan incorporating Focused Changes and Minor Modifications Habitat Regulations Assessment Stage 1 Screening Report and Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment. c) Oxford City Council, 2018. Oxford Local Plan 2036 Habitats Regulations Assessment: Appropriate Assessment. d) LUC, 2018. South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2034: Final Publication Version 2, Habitats Regulations Assessment Update Report. e) AECOM, 2018. Vale of White Horse LPP2, Habitats Regulations Assessment incorporating Appropriate Assessment. f) AECOM, 2018. West Oxfordshire Local Plan, Habitats Regulations Assessment incorporating Appropriate Assessment. g) CH2MHILL, 2015. Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report, Local Transport Plan 4 (2030), prepared for Oxfordshire County Council. h) Oxfordshire County Council, 2015. Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 1 – Core Strategy, Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report.

<sup>6</sup> The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) website provides information about individual designated sites, including SACs (<https://sac.jncc.gov.uk/site/>) and SPAs (<http://archive.jncc.gov.uk/page-1400>).

<sup>7</sup> The Natural England website (<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/6149691318206464>) lists Site Improvement Plans (SIPs), by region, for individual designated sites.

<sup>8</sup> Natural England, 2019. Natural England's Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (For use by Local Planning Authorities to assess planning applications for likely impacts on SSSIs/SACs/SPAs & Ramsar sites and determine when to consult Natural England).

2km buffers has been used as a minimum buffer to identify where any potential surface or groundwater impacts may occur.

- For recreational impacts, a buffer distance of 2km was selected for most European sites based on Natural England's IRZs for residential development. A larger buffer distance of 7km was selected for European sites identified as having a higher potential for recreational pressure impacts, specifically Wittenham SAC and Thames Basin Heaths SPA. A report by Natural England<sup>9</sup> on engagement with the natural environment, which examined the distance travelled by people for visits to the outdoors, found that the distance travelled was less than 1 mile (1.6km) for 43% of visits, between 1 to 2 miles (1.6km to 3.2km) for 25% of the visits, between 3 to 5 miles (4.8km to 8.0km) for 15% of the visits and greater than 5 miles (8.0km) for 17% of the visits. While it is recognized that people may travel over 8km to reach a countryside location, we considered 2km and 7km to be suitable buffer distances for the purposes of this study.

For each European site, we have then selected what we consider to be a single appropriate inner buffer distance for that site based on the largest inner buffer related to its particular sensitivities. See Table 1 for a summary.

The inner buffer recognises that the outer 10km buffer is highly precautionary in many instances, and the likelihood of significant effects will still be very low in many places within that buffer. Therefore, this zone between each site's bespoke inner buffer and the standard 10km outer buffer allows greater spatial freedom for scenario development, whilst recognising some degree of risk. Within each site's chosen inner buffer, the risk of LSE, and therefore needing full Appropriate Assessment, is elevated further. The inner buffer represents a zone that may be best avoided, where possible, in the process of identifying broad locations for strategic scale development to avoid potential impacts on nature conservation, or used with caution if avoidance is not possible. It is important to note that these buffers are used as a high level guide only and the recommended buffer zone for HRA assessments is the wider 10km buffer. Once details of the plan are confirmed, a more detailed assessment of impacts and impact risk zones will be undertaken to determine what the likely type of impacts to water could occur and the area over which they may occur.

The selection of the appropriate inner buffer for each European site is based on professional judgement using existing sources of information rather than commissioning any site-specific detailed studies (e.g. on levels of recreation) or undertaking detailed stakeholder consultation (both of which would be undertaken as part of a future Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment). However, Natural England was consulted on this approach and feedback from Natural England has been taken into consideration (in particular see Section 2.3).

This higher-risk zone has been mapped using orange shading (in keeping with a 'traffic-light' approach to colour-coding of risk areas).

**Table 1: Site criteria used to determine inner buffer distance**

Site	Qualifying feature	Sensitivities	Maximum inner (higher-risk) buffer
Aston Rowant SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands</li> </ul>	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	2km for recreational pressure

<sup>9</sup> Natural England, 2015. Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment – The national survey on people and the natural environment, Annual report for the 2013-2014 survey.

Site	Qualifying feature	Sensitivities	Maximum inner (higher-risk) buffer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asperulo-Fagetum beech forests</li> </ul>		
Burnham Beeches SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Atlantic acidophilous beech forests with <i>Ilex</i> and sometimes also <i>Taxus</i> in the shrublayer (Quercion robori-petraeae or Ilici-Fagenion)</li> </ul>	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure Water levels/abstraction Water Quality	2km for recreational pressure (also covers water effects) (Note: site is beyond 10km from Oxfordshire)
Chilterns Beechwoods SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asperulo-Fagetum beech forests</li> <li>Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (*important orchid sites)</li> <li>Stag beetle <i>Lucanus cervus</i></li> </ul>	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure Water levels/abstraction Water Quality	2km for recreational pressure (also covers water effects)
Cothill Fen SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alkaline fens</li> <li>Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae)</li> </ul>	Air Pollution Recreational pressure Water levels/abstraction Water Quality	2km for water effects (also covers any recreational pressure)
Hackpen Hill SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (*important orchid sites)</li> <li>Early gentian <i>Gentianella anglica</i></li> </ul>	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	2km for recreational pressure
Hartslock Wood SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (*important orchid sites)</li> <li><i>Taxus baccata</i> woods of the British Isles</li> </ul>	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	2km for recreational pressure
Kennet & Lambourn Floodplain SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Desmoulin`s whorl snail <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i></li> </ul>	Air pollution Water levels/abstraction Water quality	2km for water effects (also covers any recreational pressure)
Kennet Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i></li> </ul>	Air pollution Water levels/abstraction	2km for water effects (also covers

Site	Qualifying feature	Sensitivities	Maximum inner (higher-risk) buffer
Alderwoods SAC	(Alno-Padion, <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i> )		any recreational pressure) (Note: site is beyond 10km from Oxfordshire)
Little Wittenham SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Great crested newt <i>Triturus cristatus</i></li> </ul>	Air pollution Recreational pressure Water levels/abstraction Water Quality	7 km for recreational pressure (greater distance due to greater draw of visitors according to existing study)
North Meadow & Clattinger Farm SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>)</li> </ul>	Air Pollution Recreational pressure Water levels/abstraction Water Quality	2km for water effects (also covers any recreational pressure) (Note: site is beyond 10km from Oxfordshire)
Oxford Meadows SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>)</li> <li>Creeping marshwort <i>Apium repens</i></li> </ul>	Air Pollution Water levels/abstraction Water Quality Recreational pressure	2km for water effects (also covers any recreational pressure)
River Lambourn SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculon fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation</li> <li>Bullhead <i>Cottus gobio</i></li> <li>Brook lamprey <i>Lampetra planeri</i></li> </ul>	Water levels/abstraction Water quality	2km for water effects (also covers any recreational pressure)
Thames Basin Heaths SPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nightjar <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i></li> <li>Woodlark <i>Lullula arborea</i></li> <li>Dartford warbler <i>Sylvia undata</i></li> </ul>	Air Pollution Recreational Pressure	7km for recreational pressure (Note: site is beyond 10km from Oxfordshire)
Windsor Forest & Great Park SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Old acidophilous oak woods with <i>Quercus robur</i> on sandy plains</li> <li>Atlantic acidophilous beech forests with <i>Ilex</i> and sometimes also <i>Taxus</i> in the shrublayer</li> </ul>	Air Pollution Water levels/abstraction Water Quality Recreational pressure	2km for recreational pressure (also covers water effects)

Site	Qualifying feature	Sensitivities	Maximum inner (higher-risk) buffer
	(Quercion robori-petraeae or Ilici-Fagenion) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Violet click beetle <i>Limoniscus violaceus</i></li> </ul>		(Note: site is beyond 10km from Oxfordshire)

### 2.2.3 Areas outside the buffers (very low risk zone)

Beyond the 10km buffer described above in Section 2.2.1, identification of areas for strategic development generally carries a very low risk of having LSE. In other words, unless there are identified exceptional impact pathways (see 2.3 below), strategic development in this zone should not require detailed analysis during the HRA process. This very low risk zone has been mapped using green shading (in keeping with a 'traffic-light' approach to colour-coding of risk areas).

## 2.3 Exceptional impact pathways

For this exercise, at this stage, we have not included a conclusive assessment of exceptional pathways (those beyond 10km from a European site). That is not to say that they could not operate for certain European sites; rather, that to determine whether they do would require significant effort and detail which is beyond the scope of this early pre-screening exercise. At this stage, we have included all European sites within 20km of the Oxfordshire area. Any strategic development and policies proposed within the 10-20km zone would be subject to careful consideration at HRA Stage 1 Screening and, if LSE were identified, at Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment. Examples of potential exceptional pathways would be air pollution arising along major transport routes and from large combustion plants, downstream water impacts of pollution and non-native species transfer and whole catchment impacts to migratory/highly mobile qualifying fish species.

In particular, for air quality impacts from vehicle traffic, the risk of LSE will relate to the distance of designated sites from roads where development is likely to significantly increase traffic volume. The normal screening distance for air quality impacts has generally been 200m between the road and European site (although recent Ricardo modelling has shown up to 500m may be appropriate). However, a development could potentially generate significant increases in traffic flows in close proximity to a European site which is many kilometres away. Therefore, major roads are likely to be exceptional impact pathways from developments to European Sites, which will need to be examined once traffic modelling is available at the HRA screening stage.

Recent consultation with Natural England indicated that examples of sites which fall within 200m of major roads include Oxford Meadows SAC, Aston Rowant SAC and Chiltern Beechwoods SAC. Natural England has also highlighted Burnham Beeches SAC as being susceptible to air quality impacts from distant sources.

## 2.4 Limitations and assumptions

This exercise was designed to help inform scenario development for the Oxfordshire Plan from an HRA perspective. If the buffer zones included are avoided when developing scenarios then the chance of LSE will be greatly reduced but not necessarily removed. Conversely, if scenarios are located within the buffer zones it is not necessarily the case that there will be a LSE or future adverse effect on site integrity; just that the likelihood of that happening is increased.

The buffer zones applied are typically precautionary in nature and should therefore not be the sole reason for not advocating development in certain areas. Local knowledge held by the team developing the Plan should also be brought to bear in such instances. For example, the buffer zones applied are simple concentric rings around the boundary of each European site – they do not take into account local conditions, land use, potential barriers such as roads or railways or other factors which could determine whether or not a development scenario would have LSE. Whilst we have made reasonable endeavours to identify suitable and robust distance thresholds for the inner buffer based on existing information, we have not undertaken a comprehensive literature review to determine these, nor conducted bespoke studies, as that level of detail is beyond the scope of this exercise (and will be undertaken as required in later stages of the HRA of the Oxfordshire Plan as it emerges).

## 3 Results

The results of this distance-based pre-screening exercise to inform the Oxfordshire Plan scenario development are shown in **Appendix 1** (precautionary 10km buffer and inner buffer). For visual impact and simplicity, we have used the following traffic light system:

- **ORANGE** Higher risk of LSE if development occurs within this zone.
- **YELLOW** Lower risk of LSE if development occurs within this zone.
- **GREEN** Very low risk of LSE if development occurs within this zone.

Given that the intended purpose of the maps is to inform the development of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (see Section 1), no interpretation of the results is given here.

## 4 Next steps

Now that this initial distance-based pre-screening exercise has been completed, it can be used by the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 team to further develop their spatial scenarios and prepare their draft Plan for formal HRA consideration in due course.

It may be useful to seek Natural England's views on this report before using it for spatial planning.

After a draft Oxfordshire Plan 2050 has been prepared, subsequent stages of the HRA process will be undertaken. The Stage 1 screening assessment will consider and assess impacts arising from the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, both alone and in combination with other plans and projects. In combination impacts are likely to include air quality impacts arising from increased vehicle traffic associated with the strategic plans developed by neighbouring local authorities. A search for relevant plans and projects to consider for the in-combination assessment will be carried out during the Stage 1 screening assessment. Any LSE that are identified during the Stage 1 screening assessment will be carried forward for further consideration in a Stage 2 appropriate assessment.

## Appendices

## Appendix 1 – Oxfordshire HRA Risk-zones



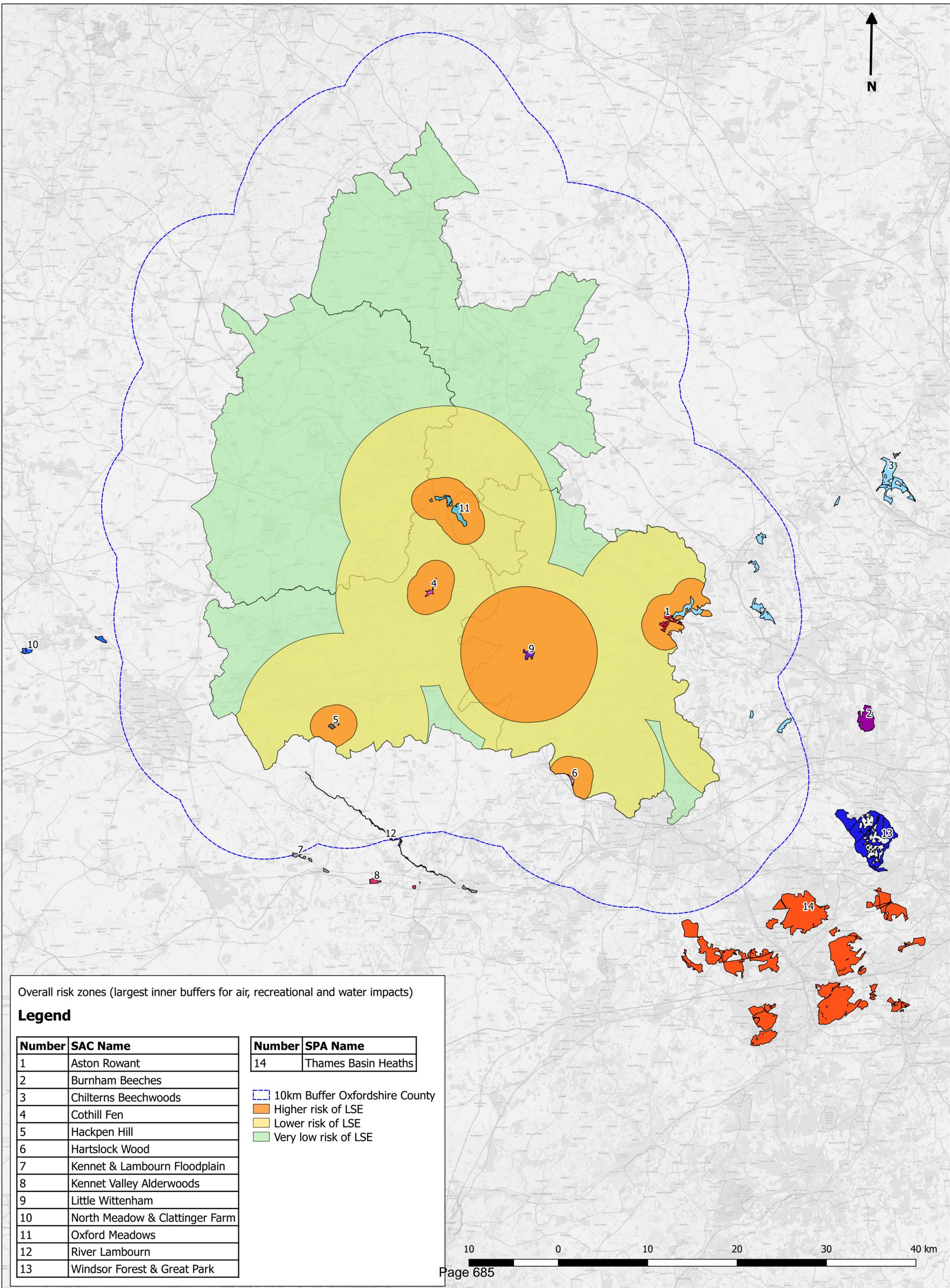
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Overall risk zones (largest inner buffers for air, recreational and water impacts)

**Legend**

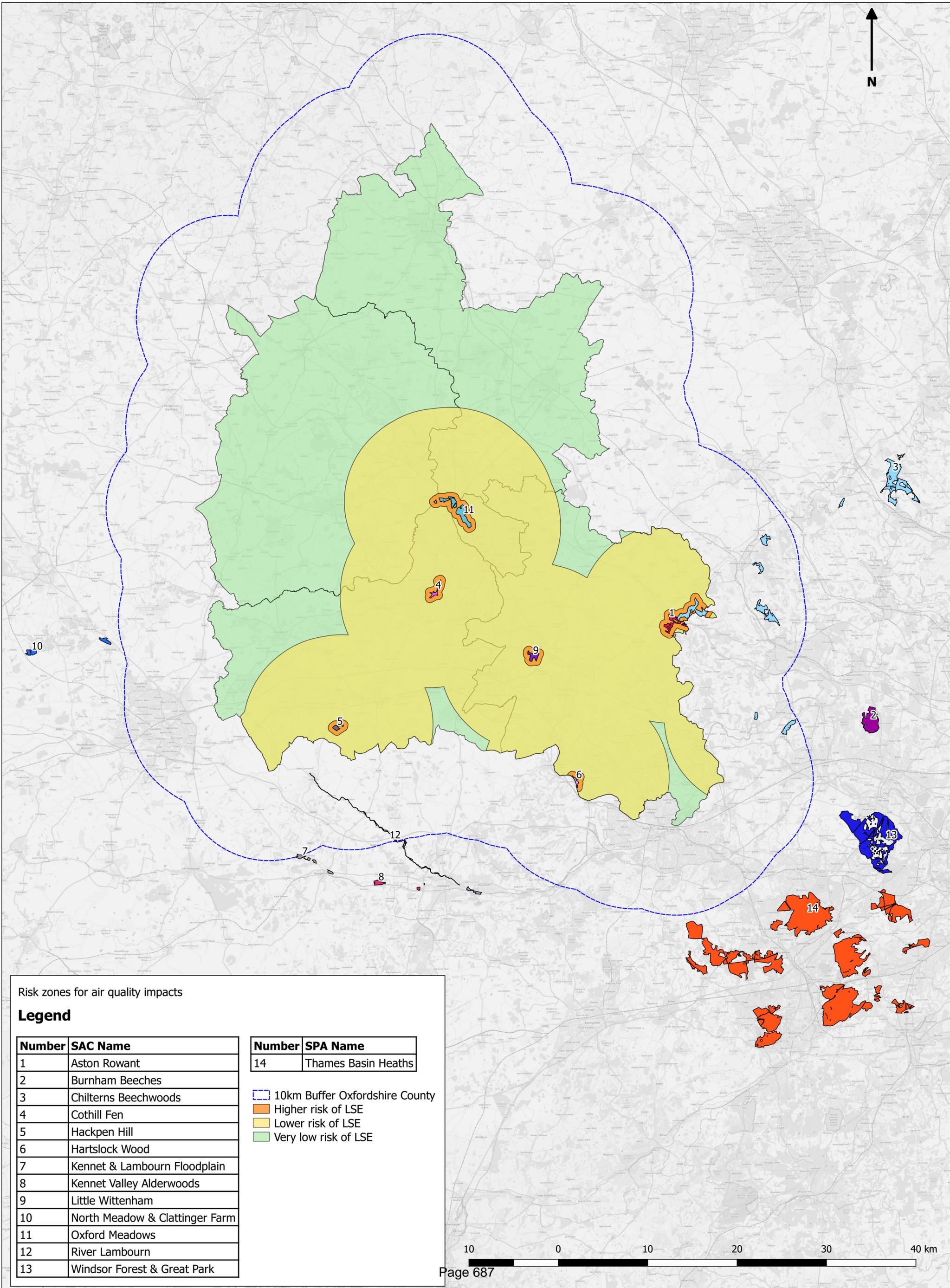
Number	SAC Name
1	Aston Rowant
2	Burnham Beeches
3	Chilterns Beechwoods
4	Cothill Fen
5	Hackpen Hill
6	Hartslock Wood
7	Kennet & Lambourn Floodplain
8	Kennet Valley Alderwoods
9	Little Wittenham
10	North Meadow & Clattinger Farm
11	Oxford Meadows
12	River Lambourn
13	Windsor Forest & Great Park

Number	SPA Name
14	Thames Basin Heaths

- 10km Buffer Oxfordshire County
- Higher risk of LSE
- Lower risk of LSE
- Very low risk of LSE

10 0 10 20 30 40 km

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Risk zones for air quality impacts

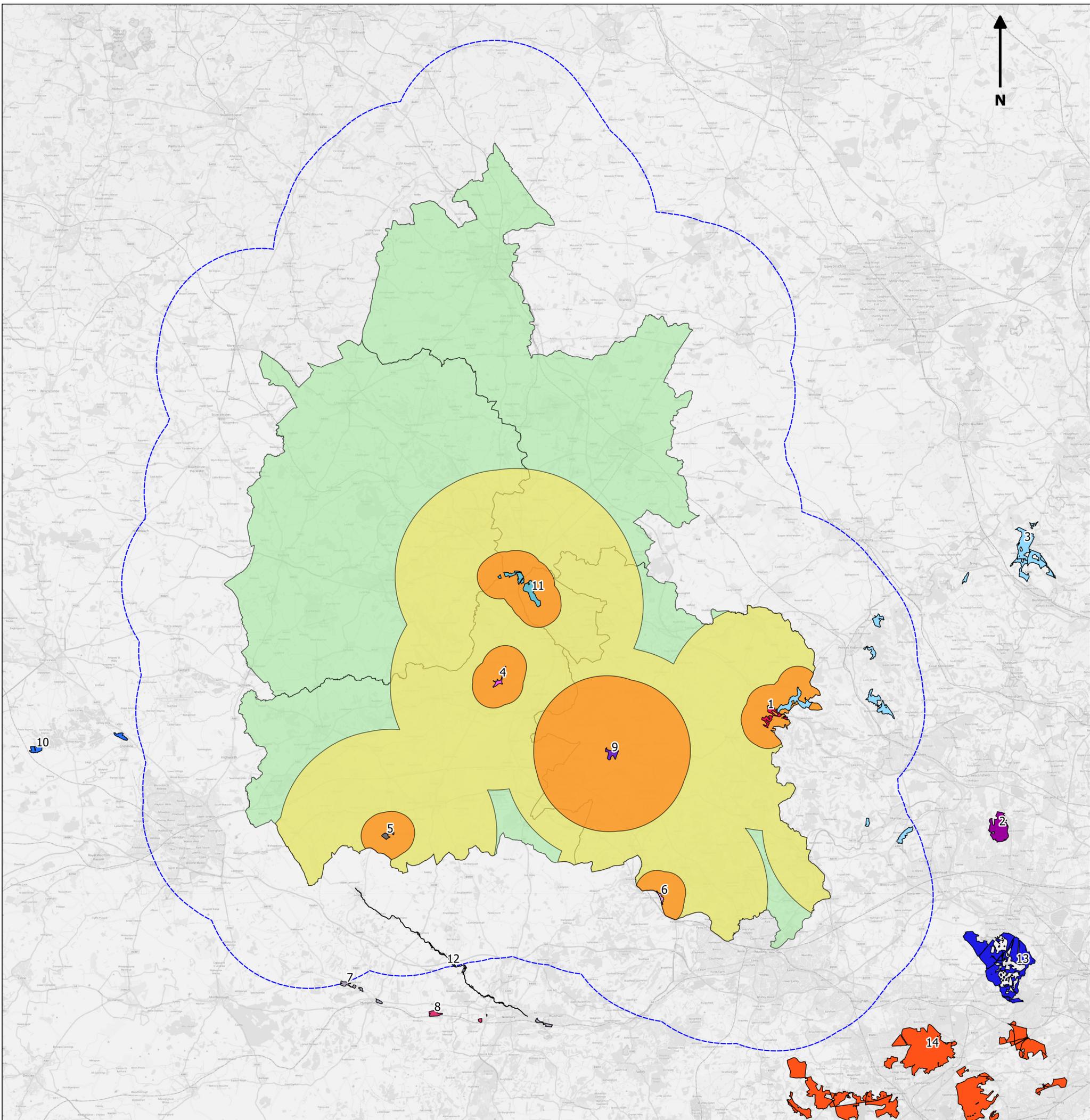
**Legend**

Number	SAC Name
1	Aston Rowant
2	Burnham Beeches
3	Chilterns Beechwoods
4	Cothill Fen
5	Hackpen Hill
6	Hartslock Wood
7	Kennet & Lambourn Floodplain
8	Kennet Valley Alderwoods
9	Little Wittenham
10	North Meadow & Clattinger Farm
11	Oxford Meadows
12	River Lambourn
13	Windsor Forest & Great Park

Number	SPA Name
14	Thames Basin Heaths

- 10km Buffer Oxfordshire County
- Higher risk of LSE
- Lower risk of LSE
- Very low risk of LSE

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Risk zones for recreational impacts

**Legend**

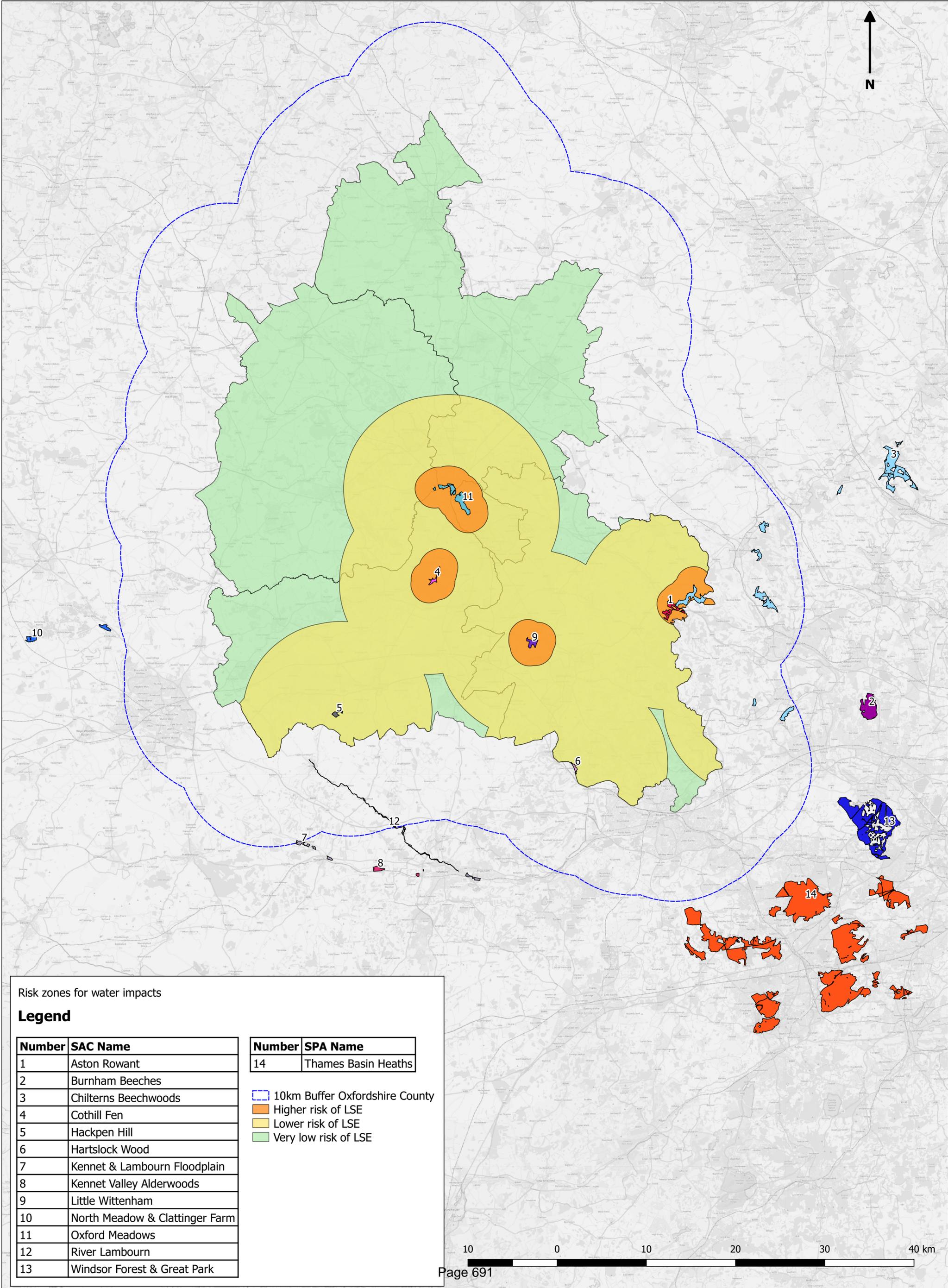
Number	SAC Name
1	Aston Rowant
2	Burnham Beeches
3	Chilterns Beechwoods
4	Cothill Fen
5	Hackpen Hill
6	Hartslock Wood
7	Kennet & Lambourn Floodplain
8	Kennet Valley Alderwoods
9	Little Wittenham
10	North Meadow & Clattinger Farm
11	Oxford Meadows
12	River Lambourn
13	Windsor Forest & Great Park

Number	SPA Name
14	Thames Basin Heaths

- 10km Buffer Oxfordshire County
- Higher risk of LSE
- Lower risk of LSE
- Very low risk of LSE



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Risk zones for water impacts

**Legend**

Number	SAC Name
1	Aston Rowant
2	Burnham Beeches
3	Chilterns Beechwoods
4	Cothill Fen
5	Hackpen Hill
6	Hartslock Wood
7	Kennet & Lambourn Floodplain
8	Kennet Valley Alderwoods
9	Little Wittenham
10	North Meadow & Clattinger Farm
11	Oxford Meadows
12	River Lambourn
13	Windsor Forest & Great Park

Number	SPA Name
14	Thames Basin Heaths

- 10km Buffer Oxfordshire County
- Higher risk of LSE
- Lower risk of LSE
- Very low risk of LSE

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Energy & Environment

# Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Habitats Regulations Assessment:

High-level risk assessment of spatial options

Report for Oxfordshire Plan Team

**Customer:**

Oxfordshire Plan Team

**Customer reference:**

CN01607

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**Date:**

24 June 2021

**Ricardo Energy & Environment reference:**

Ref: ED12445100-Task 2- Issue Number 1

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### Appendices

Appendix 1	Mapped comparison of spatial options with distance-based risk zones
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# 1 Introduction

1.a. Ricardo Energy and Environment has been commissioned by Oxford City Council, acting on behalf of a partnership of the five Oxfordshire city and district authorities<sup>1</sup>, to undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of how the emerging Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (“the Plan”) might affect designated European sites.

1.b. As part of the ongoing work to support the Oxfordshire city and district authorities in identifying and addressing potential risks from the Plan to European sites, Ricardo previously carried out a pre-screening exercise in 2019 to identify and map, at a high level, broad geographical areas that may pose potential risks to European sites from future development. The distance-based risk zones developed in this initial study<sup>2</sup> can be used to help identify broad locations for future strategic development whilst avoiding, where possible, locations at higher risk of requiring detailed assessment and mitigation under the HRA process, due to the potential impacts on European sites.

1.c. The current study builds on the previous work<sup>2</sup> by using the distance-based risk zones (refined where appropriate) to carry out a high-level HRA risk assessment of the spatial options. Five high-level spatial options for the Plan have been identified, as listed below. The final spatial strategy in the draft Plan may be a mix of some or all of the spatial options.

- Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations
- Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth
- Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs
- Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations
- Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities

1.d. In this report, each spatial option is considered against the distance-based risk zones in order to identify potential risks and potential opportunities for mitigation. The analysis has been undertaken by a comparison of the GIS layers for each spatial option overlaid with the GIS layers developed for the distance-based risk zones. At this stage, rather than trying to provide detailed formal HRA Screening, the priority is to identify which options, if any, are likely to have significant effects on a European site, and identify, where possible, potential mitigation strategies. Spatial options for which a Likely Significant Effect (LSE) has been identified at this early stage, can still progress to a short-list of feasible options if effective mitigation (that would potentially enable a conclusion of no adverse effect on site integrity) appears feasible, at least at this early stage.

1.e. Whilst this work does not constitute a formal part of the HRA process, it is an initial step in helping to ensure that appropriate consideration and protection is afforded to European sites throughout the plan-making process.

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<sup>1</sup> Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council

<sup>2</sup> Ricardo Energy & Environment, 2019. Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Habitats Regulations Assessment: Distance-based risk-zones for Plan development. Issue 3.

## 2 Methodology

### 2.1 Study area

**2.1.a.** As a precautionary approach, all European sites contained partially or wholly within a 20km radius of the Oxfordshire boundary are considered in this study. The designated sites included within a 20km buffer are shown in Figure 2.1, and their qualifying features are summarised in Table 2.1.

**2.1.b.** The use of a 20km buffer ensures that sites which are located relatively far from the Oxfordshire area, but which might be impacted by development within Oxfordshire due to exceptional impact pathways, are included in subsequent stages of the HRA process. Refer to Section 2.3 for additional information related to exceptional impact pathways.

### 2.2 Risk zones

**2.2.a.** The 2019 study<sup>2</sup> developed two distance-based risk zones (or 'buffers') for each European site: an outer, precautionary buffer (lower risk zone) and an inner buffer (higher risk zone). The buffer distances relate to the level of risk of LSEs being identified at HRA Stage 1 that would trigger the need for a full Appropriate Assessment (HRA Stage 2), and are colour-coded on the maps included with this study based on the following Red-Amber-Green (RAG) traffic light system:

- **RED** areas of the map indicate those areas within the inner buffer (high risk zone) for a European site. There is a higher risk of LSE if development occurs within this zone.
- **AMBER** areas of the map indicate those areas between the inner buffer (high risk zone) and outer, precautionary buffer (lower risk zone). There is a lower risk of LSE if development occurs within this zone.
- **GREEN** areas of the map indicate those areas outside both buffers. There is a very low risk of LSE if development occurs within this zone.

The buffer distances are briefly summarised below, including any updates from the previous study.

#### 2.2.1 Outer, precautionary buffer (lower risk zone)

**2.2.1.a.** The outer, precautionary buffer was set at 10km from the boundary of each European site in the previous study, and this distance is still considered appropriate for the current study. This is a standard distance that Ricardo uses as a screening threshold in the majority of our air quality Habitats Regulations Assessments e.g. those carried out for Thames Water's Draft Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP)<sup>3</sup> and Havant Borough Council's Local Plan<sup>4</sup>. This is a commonly applied screening threshold that has been agreed through consultation stages of HRA and typically accepted and used by Natural England for all but truly exceptional impact 'pathways' (e.g. routes for highly mobile species or impacts and functionally-linked off-site supporting habitats).

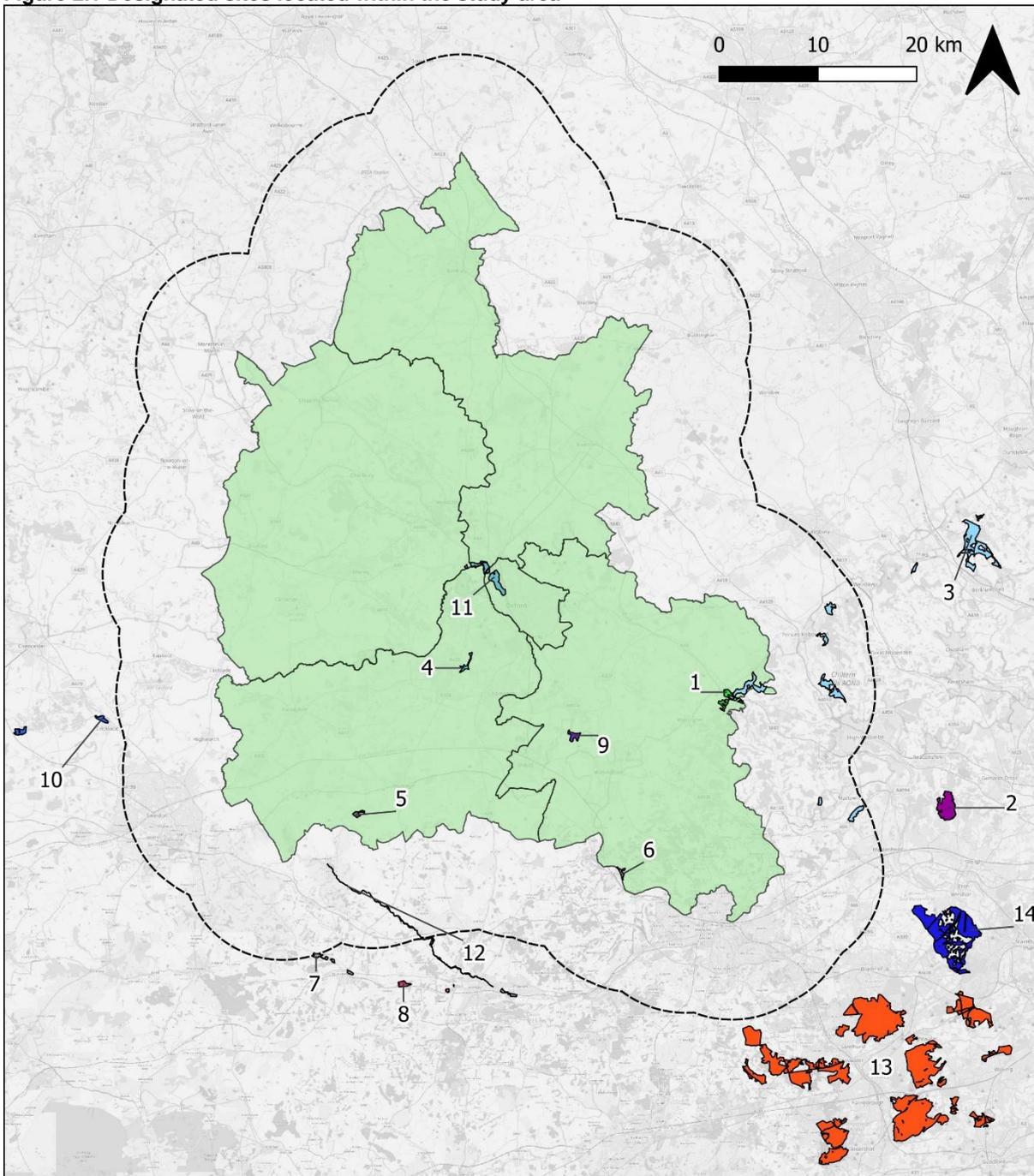
**2.2.1.b.** For water related impacts, the 10km outer, precautionary buffer was only applied to the sites which are designated for water dependent features and are therefore sensitive to water impacts, therefore omitting the designated sites that are not sensitive to water related impacts from the water impacts assessment.

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<sup>3</sup> Thames Water, 2018. Revised draft Water Resources Management Plan 2019, Appendix C – Habitats Regulations Assessment.

<sup>4</sup> Ricardo Energy & Environment, 2019. Air Quality Regulations Assessment for Havant Borough Local Plan 2036, Report for Havant Borough Council. Issue 3.

**Figure 2.1 Designated sites located within the study area**



**Legend**

Designated site locations

Number	Site name
1	Aston Rowant (SAC)
2	Burnham Beeches (SAC)
3	Chilterns Beechwoods (SAC)
4	Cothill Fen (SAC)
5	Hackpen Hill (SAC)
6	Hartslock Wood (SAC)
7	Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain (SAC)

Number	Site name
8	Kennet Valley Alderwoods (SAC)
9	Little Wittenham (SAC)
10	North Meadow & Clattinger Farm (SAC)
11	Oxford Meadows (SAC)
12	River Lambourn (SAC)
13	Thames Basin Heaths (SPA)
14	Windsor Forest & Great Park (SAC)

- Very low risk of LSE (>10km)
- 10km Buffer Oxfordshire County

**Table 2.1: Summary of designated sites included in the study area and their qualifying features**

Site	Qualifying feature
Aston Rowant SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands</li> <li>• <i>Asperulo-Fagetum</i> beech forests</li> </ul>
Burnham Beeches SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Atlantic acidophilous beech forests with <i>Ilex</i> and sometimes also <i>Taxus</i> in the shrub layer (<i>Quercion robori-petraeae</i> or <i>Illici-Fagenion</i>)</li> </ul>
Chilterns Beechwoods SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Asperulo-Fagetum</i> beech forests</li> <li>• Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (*important orchid sites)</li> <li>• Stag beetle <i>Lucanus cervus</i></li> </ul>
Cothill Fen SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alkaline fens</li> <li>• Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>)</li> </ul>
Hackpen Hill SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (*important orchid sites)</li> <li>• Early gentian <i>Gentianella anglica</i></li> </ul>
Hartslock Wood SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (*important orchid sites)</li> <li>• <i>Taxus baccata</i> woods of the British Isles</li> </ul>
Kennet & Lambourn Floodplain SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desmoulin's whorl snail <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i></li> </ul>
Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>)</li> </ul>
Little Wittenham SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great crested newt <i>Triturus cristatus</i></li> </ul>
North Meadow & Clattinger Farm SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>)</li> </ul>
Oxford Meadows SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>)</li> <li>• Creeping marshwort <i>Apium repens</i></li> </ul>
River Lambourn SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation</li> <li>• Bullhead <i>Cottus gobio</i></li> <li>• Brook lamprey <i>Lampetra planeri</i></li> </ul>
Thames Basin Heaths SPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nightjar <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i></li> <li>• Woodlark <i>Lullula arborea</i></li> <li>• Dartford warbler <i>Sylvia undata</i></li> </ul>
Windsor Forest & Great Park SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Old acidophilous oak woods with <i>Quercus robur</i> on sandy plains</li> <li>• Atlantic acidophilous beech forests with <i>Ilex</i> and sometimes also <i>Taxus</i> in the shrub layer (<i>Quercion robori-petraeae</i> or <i>Illici-Fagenion</i>)</li> <li>• Violet click beetle <i>Limoniscus violaceus</i></li> </ul>

---

## 2.2.2 Inner buffer (higher risk zone)

**2.2.2.a.** The inner buffer can vary depending on the type of impact being considered (e.g. air quality, water levels / abstraction and water quality, or recreational impacts) and the specific sensitivities of the qualifying feature habitats and species associated with each European site.

The inner buffer distance (radius) for each type of impact was selected based on the following considerations:

- For air quality impacts, an inner buffer distance of 500m was selected in the 2019 study and is also considered appropriate for this study. A screening distance of 200m between a road and European site has commonly been used in HRA studies, however a more precautionary distance of 500m was applied here, based on modelling work undertaken by Ricardo for various HRA studies.
- For water impacts, including water levels / abstraction and water quality, two higher risk zones were identified: 1) a 2km inner buffer distance; and 2) 4km along river reaches (following the path of the river) upstream of the European sites as well as 25m on either side of the river. The 2km inner buffer was identified in the previous study and is used here to screen any options that are very close to a European site and are therefore associated with a higher risk for LSE. The 4km river reaches distance is an update to the previous distance-based screening zones and is used to ensure that the risk of pollutants related to construction and development (required for the five spatial options) that could travel downstream into a European site is recognised. 4km of river is generally sufficient enough to dilute construction-based pollutants (e.g. petro-chemicals) and therefore any option within 4km along-river (upstream) is considered to be within the higher risk zone.
- For recreational impacts, an inner buffer of 2km was selected for most European sites based on Natural England's Impact Risk Zones (IRZs)<sup>5</sup> for residential development. A larger inner buffer distance of 7km was selected for European sites identified as having a higher potential for recreational pressure impacts, specifically Wittenham SAC and Thames Basin Heaths SPA. These inner buffer distances are consistent with the previous study.

## 2.3 Exceptional impact pathways

**2.3.a.** For this exercise, at this stage, we have not included a conclusive assessment of exceptional pathways (those beyond 10km from a European site). That is not to say that they could not operate for certain European sites; rather, that to determine whether they do would require significant assessment and detail which is beyond the scope of this high-level risk assessment. At this stage, we have included all European sites within 20km of the Oxfordshire boundary. Any strategic development and policies proposed within the 10-20km zone would be subject to careful consideration at HRA Stage 1 Screening and, if LSE were identified, at Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment. Examples of potential exceptional pathways would be air pollution arising along major transport routes serving the growing population and from large combustion plants, downstream water impacts of nutrient pollution and non-native species transfer and whole catchment impacts to migratory/highly mobile qualifying fish species.

**2.3.b.** In particular, for air quality impacts from vehicle traffic, the risk of LSE will relate to the distance of designated sites from roads where development is likely to significantly increase traffic volume. The

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<sup>5</sup> The Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) are a GIS tool developed by Natural England to make a rapid initial assessment of the potential risks posed by development proposals to: Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites. They define zones around each site which reflect the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and indicate the types of development proposal which could potentially have adverse impacts. See: <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>.

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normal screening distance for air quality impacts has generally been 200m between a road and European site (although recent Ricardo modelling has shown up to 500m may be appropriate).

**2.3.c.** However, a development could potentially generate significant increases in traffic flows in close proximity to a European site which is many kilometres away. Therefore, major roads are likely to be exceptional impact pathways from developments to European sites, which will need to be examined once traffic modelling is available at the HRA screening stage. Recent consultation with Natural England indicated that examples of sites which fall within 200m of major roads include Oxford Meadows SAC, Aston Rowant SAC and Chiltern Beechwoods SAC. Natural England has also highlighted Burnham Beeches SAC as being susceptible to air quality impacts from distant sources.

**2.3.d.** For exceptional downstream nutrient impacts from wastewater during the operational phase of development, a more detailed assessment of European sites' sensitivities to increased water-borne nutrients, wastewater treatment infrastructure (locations and effectiveness) and dilution factors will need to be examined when more detail is available at later stages.

## 3 Results

**3.a.** Each of the five spatial options, described in Section 1, has been considered in the context of the Red-Amber-Green risk zone mapping described in Section 2.2. This analysis has been undertaken by a comparison of the GIS layers for each spatial option overlaid with the GIS layers developed for the distance-based risk zones.

**3.b.** In the tables contained within this section, the risks of LSE for each type of impact (air quality impacts, water-related impacts and recreational impacts) have been colour-coded using a Red-Amber-Green (RAG) traffic light rating system as follows:

<b>RED</b>	Indicates that there is overlap between the possible development areas included in the spatial option, and the red distance-based risk zones. There is a higher risk of LSE if development occurs in these areas.
<b>AMBER</b>	Indicates that there is overlap between the possible development areas included in the spatial option, and the amber distance-based risk zones. There is a lower risk of LSE if development occurs within these areas.
<b>GREEN</b>	Indicates that the possible development areas included in the spatial option are all located beyond the outer buffer. There is a very low risk of LSE if development occurs within these areas.

### 3.1 Air quality impacts

**3.1.a.** The risk assessment results for air quality impacts are provided in Table 3.1. Table 3.1 includes information about the location and importance of roads located near each designated site, and how these considerations may impact the risk of LSE for each option.

**3.1.b.** New development areas, including housing and roads, should be located at least 500m from designated site boundaries in order to avoid introducing new pathways for air quality impacts. Where there are roads already located in close proximity to a designated site, early consideration should be given to how the development associated with the Plan may increase the traffic flows on the roads nearest each designated site, using the information about nearby roads included in Table 3.1. It may be possible to avoid or minimise the risk of air quality impacts on designated sites by using strategies such as locating new development farther away from the designated site, and/or by locating new development in areas where good access to public transportation already exists or could be developed so as to lessen the reliance on personal vehicles.

**3.1.c.** As the Plan spatial strategy develops, transport modelling and air dispersion modelling should be undertaken to provide additional detail on the location and magnitude of LSEs associated with air quality impacts. This will also facilitate the development of specific mitigation measures appropriate for LSEs identified through the modelling. In situations where air quality impacts on a designated site cannot be avoided, potential mitigation strategies may include:

- Reducing emissions from vehicles. This can include measures such as adjusting the speed limits on nearby roads (pollution emissions vary depending on the vehicle speed); introducing or encouraging changes to the vehicle fleet, e.g. by introducing more electric buses or encouraging the use of electric personal vehicles; etc.
- Introducing site management measures. This can include measures such as increasing the buffer area around the designated site and planting these areas with vegetation to intercept air pollution; regularly cutting and removing certain types of vegetation to deplete the soil of excess nitrogen in terrestrial environments; etc.

**Table 3.1: Risk assessment results for air quality impacts**

Risk assessment results for air quality impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
Aston Rowant SAC	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> The M40 passes very close to this SAC (within 20m). Transport modelling and air dispersion modelling should be undertaken to determine if development associated with the Plan would significantly increase traffic along the M40 and lead to a LSE.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1. However, since all of the development areas for Option 2 are located more than 10km from the SAC, there is a lower risk of LSE associated with this option.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 500 m of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1. Traffic along the M40 may be more of a concern with this option as compared to the other options, depending on the location of new development relative to the SAC and whether the M40 would be heavily used by the residents of the new development(s) for commuting.</p>
Burnham Beeches SAC	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p>

Risk assessment results for air quality impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
	<p><b>Additional considerations:</b> The A335 passes very close to this SAC (within 50m) and other roads are adjacent to the boundary of the site. Since all the development areas for this option are located more than 10km from the SAC, there is a low risk of LSE. Transport modelling and air dispersion modelling can be undertaken to check that there are no LSE.</p>	<p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>
Chilterns Beechwoods SAC	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> There are major roads located in close proximity to some portions of the</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1. However, since all of the</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 500 m of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1. Traffic emissions may be more of a concern with</p>

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Risk assessment results for air quality impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
	SAC, such as the A40 (passes through the SAC), the A4040 (adjacent to the SAC) and the A4010 (adjacent to the SAC). Transport modelling and air dispersion modelling should be undertaken to determine if development associated with the Plan would significantly increase traffic along these routes and lead to a LSE.	development areas for Option 2 are located more than 10km from the SAC, there is a lower risk of LSE associated with this option.			this option as compared to the other options, depending on the location of new development relative to the SAC and whether the roads located near the SAC would be heavily used by the residents of the new development(s) for commuting.
Cothill Fen SAC	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> There are several roads located adjacent to the SAC: Lashford Ln, Besselsleigh Rd, and</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 500 m of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Generally, the same as for Option 1. Due to the overlap between possible development areas for</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 500 m of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Generally, the same as for Option 1. Due to the close proximity between possible development</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 500 m of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Generally, the same as for Option 1. Due to the overlap between possible development</p>

Risk assessment results for air quality impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
	Cothill Rd. Early consideration should be given to the different areas for development associated with this option, in terms of whether they are likely to lead to a significant increase in traffic flows on the roads adjacent to the SAC. Transport modelling and air dispersion modelling should be undertaken to check for LSE.		this option and the SAC, particular consideration should be given early on in the process to minimise increases in traffic flow on the roads adjacent to the SAC.	areas for this option and the SAC, particular consideration should be given early on in the process to minimise increases in traffic flow on the roads adjacent to the SAC.	areas for this option and the SAC, particular consideration should be given early on in the process to minimise increases in traffic flow on the roads adjacent to the SAC.
Hackpen Hill SAC	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> The closest road is the B4001, located approximately 300m from the boundary of the SAC.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1. However, since all of the development areas for</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>

Risk assessment results for air quality impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
	Transport modelling and air dispersion modelling should be undertaken to determine if development associated with the Plan would significantly increase traffic along the B4001 and lead to a LSE.	Option 2 are located more than 10km from the SAC, there is a lower risk of LSE associated with this option.			
Hartslock Wood SAC	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> The A329 is located within 500m of this SAC. Transport modelling and air dispersion modelling should be undertaken to determine if development associated with the Plan would significantly increase traffic along the A329 and lead to a LSE.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1. However, since all of the development areas for Option 2 are located more than 10km from the SAC, there is a lower risk of LSE associated with this option.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 500 m of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Generally, the same as for Option 1. Due to the overlap between possible development areas for this option and the SAC, particular consideration should be given early on in the process to minimise increases in traffic flow on the roads nearest to the SAC.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>

Risk assessment results for air quality impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
Kennet & Lambourn Floodplain SAC	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> The A34 is a major road and is adjacent to a portion of the SAC. Other roads are also adjacent to the SAC, such as the B4192, Littlecote Ln, and Bath Rd. Since all the development areas for this option are located more than 10km from the SAC, there is generally a low risk of LSE. The A34 may represent an exceptional impact pathway for this SAC. Transport modelling and air dispersion modelling should be undertaken to check for LSE.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>

Risk assessment results for air quality impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> The A34 is a major road and is located within 500m of a portion of the SAC. The A34 may represent an exceptional impact pathway for this SAC. However, due to the large distances between the SAC and the option development areas (&gt;10km) and between the SAC and the A34 (approximately 400m), there is a very low risk of LSE.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>
Little Wittenham SAC	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site, which would typically</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 500 m of designated site, which</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 500 m of designated site, which</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 500 m of designated site, which</p>

Risk assessment results for air quality impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
	<p>correspond to an Amber rating. However, a Green rating has been assigned based on the additional considerations below.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> There is a very minor road located adjacent to the SAC, and there are no major roads located within 500m of the SAC. As long as no new roads are built within 500m of the SAC, there is a very low risk of LSE for this option.</p>	<p>designated site, which would typically correspond to an Amber rating. However, a Green rating has been assigned based on the additional considerations below.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p>would typically correspond to a Red rating. However, a Green rating has been assigned based on the additional considerations below.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Generally, the same as for Option 1. As long as no new development (roads, houses, etc.) is built within 500m of the SAC, there is a very low risk of LSE for this option.</p>	<p>would typically correspond to a Red rating. However, a Green rating has been assigned based on the additional considerations below.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Generally, the same as for Option 1. As long as no new development (roads, houses, etc.) is built within 500m of the SAC, there is a very low risk of LSE for this option.</p>	<p>would typically correspond to a Red rating. However, a Green rating has been assigned based on the additional considerations below.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Generally, the same as for Option 1. As long as no new development (roads, houses, etc.) is built within 500m of the SAC, there is a very low risk of LSE for this option.</p>
North Meadow & Clattinger Farm SAC	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b></p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b></p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>

Risk assessment results for air quality impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
	The A419 is located within 100m of the SAC and may represent an exceptional impact pathway for this SAC. Transport modelling and air dispersion modelling can be undertaken to check for LSE.	Same as for Option 1.			
Oxford Meadows SAC	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 500 m of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> The A34 and A40 are major roads that are located adjacent to the SAC. Particular consideration should be given early on in the process to minimise increases in traffic flow on the roads nearest to the SAC. Transport modelling</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 500 m of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 500 m of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 500 m of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 500 m of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>

Risk assessment results for air quality impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
	and air dispersion modelling should be undertaken to check for LSE.				
River Lambourn SAC	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Several major roads intersect the SAC, such as the M4, the A34 and the A339. These may represent exceptional impact pathways. Transport modelling and air dispersion modelling can be undertaken to check for LSE.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>
Thames Basin Heaths SPA	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p>

Risk assessment results for air quality impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
	<p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Several major roads are adjacent to the SPA, such as the M3, the A3 and the A332. These may represent exceptional impact pathways. Transport modelling and air dispersion modelling can be undertaken to check for LSE.</p>	<p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>			
Windsor Forest & Great Park SAC	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> There are several roads located adjacent to the SAC, such as the A332 and the B3022. Due to the large distances between the SAC and the option development areas</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p> <p><b>Additional considerations:</b> Same as for Option 1.</p>

Risk assessment results for air quality impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
	(>10km) there is a very low risk of LSE.				

### 3.2 Water impacts

3.2.a. The risk assessment results for water-related impacts are provided in Table 3.2. Where potential LSE have been identified, Table 3.2 indicates the specific type of potential water-related impact and includes potential mitigation strategies.

**Table 3.2: Risk assessment results for water impacts, including water levels / abstraction and water quality**

Risk assessment results for water impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
Aston Rowant SAC	<i>SAC not sensitive to water-related impacts.</i>	<i>SAC not sensitive to water-related impacts.</i>	<i>SAC not sensitive to water-related impacts.</i>	<i>SAC not sensitive to water-related impacts.</i>	<i>SAC not sensitive to water-related impacts.</i>
Burnham Beeches SAC	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.
Chilterns Beechwoods SAC	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas further than 2km from SAC but within 10km of SAC.  No LSE foreseen on the SAC as option areas are downstream of the SAC.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas further than 2km from SAC but within 10km of SAC.  No LSE foreseen on the SAC as option areas are downstream of the SAC.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas further than 2km from SAC but within 10km of SAC.  No LSE foreseen on the SAC as option areas are downstream of the SAC.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 2km of the SAC.  <b>Potential impact:</b> Option is downstream of the surface water bodies feeding the SAC and therefore could potentially have no LSE on the SAC related to surface water. Potential construction pollution and groundwater impacts

Risk assessment results for water impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
					<p>should still be considered due to the option including areas that are close (within 2km) of the SAC.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Ensure minimal runoff from potential developments and transport routes – create buffers around transport routes. Best practice construction measures to include pollution prevention techniques.</p>
Cothill Fen SAC	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 2km of the SAC.</p> <p><b>Potential impact:</b> Potential for water quality degradation of Sandford Brook (which flows through the SAC) caused by construction pollution</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 2km of the SAC.</p> <p><b>Potential impact:</b> Option is downstream of the surface water bodies feeding the SAC and therefore could</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas directly in contact with the SAC, including areas covering the whole SAC area and Sandford Brook.</p> <p><b>Potential impact:</b> Potential for water quality degradation of Sandford</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 2km of the SAC.</p> <p><b>Potential impact:</b> Option is 30m downstream of the surface water bodies feeding the SAC and therefore could potentially</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option directly covers the whole of the SAC and majority of the 2km surrounding buffer.</p> <p><b>Potential impact:</b> Potential for water quality degradation of Sandford Brook (which flows</p>

Risk assessment results for water impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
	<p>runoff from transport routes.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Ensure minimal runoff from potential developments and transport routes – create buffers around transport routes. Best practice construction measures to include pollution prevention techniques.</p> <p>To prevent environmentally damaging abstraction levels and possible follow-on LSE, appropriate abstraction licensing should be put in place.</p>	<p>potentially have no LSE on the SAC related to surface water. Potential construction pollution and groundwater impacts should still be considered due to the option including areas that are close (within 2km) of the SAC.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Ensure minimal runoff from potential developments and transport routes – create buffers around transport routes. Best practice construction measures to include pollution prevention techniques.</p>	<p>Brook (contributes to River Thames) caused by construction pollution runoff from transport routes.</p> <p>More information needed on options but potential increased abstraction from Sandford Brook to accommodate for new developments could reduce flows downstream and impact the amount of flow at the SAC. More information would be required on location, volume, duration, seasonality and frequency of abstraction and discharges.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Avoid developing near or upstream of SAC, ensure minimal runoff from potential developments</p>	<p>have no LSE on the SAC related to surface water. Potential construction pollution and groundwater impacts should still be considered due to the option including areas that are close (within 2km) of the SAC.</p> <p>Abstraction/discharge impacts as discussed to the left for Option 3.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Ensure minimal runoff from potential developments and transport routes – create buffers around transport routes. Best practice construction measures to include pollution prevention techniques.</p>	<p>through the SAC) caused by construction pollution runoff from transport routes.</p> <p>Abstraction/discharge impacts as for Option 3.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Ensure minimal runoff from potential developments and transport routes – create buffers around transport routes. Best practice construction measures to include pollution prevention techniques.</p> <p>Abstraction/discharge mitigation as discussed to the left for Option 3.</p>

Risk assessment results for water impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
			<p>and transport routes – create buffers around transport routes. Best practice construction measures to include pollution prevention techniques.</p> <p>To prevent environmentally damaging abstraction levels and possible follow-on LSE, appropriate abstraction licensing should be put in place.</p>	Abstraction/discharge mitigation as discussed to the left for Option 3.	
Hackpen Hill SAC	<i>SAC not sensitive to water-related impacts.</i>	<i>SAC not sensitive to water-related impacts.</i>	<i>SAC not sensitive to water-related impacts.</i>	<i>SAC not sensitive to water-related impacts.</i>	<i>SAC not sensitive to water-related impacts.</i>
Hartslock Wood SAC	<i>SAC not sensitive to water-related impacts.</i>	<i>SAC not sensitive to water-related impacts.</i>	<i>SAC not sensitive to water-related impacts.</i>	<i>SAC not sensitive to water-related impacts.</i>	<i>SAC not sensitive to water-related impacts.</i>
Kennet & Lambourn Floodplain SAC	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.</p> <p>No LSE foreseen on SAC as option is not within a</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.</p> <p>No LSE foreseen on SAC as option is not within a</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option is more than 10km SAC is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.</p> <p>No LSE foreseen on SAC as option is not</p>

Risk assessment results for water impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
	close enough range to make an impact.	No LSE foreseen on SAC as option is not within a close enough range to make an impact.	close enough range to make an impact.	No LSE foreseen on SAC as option is not within a close enough range to make an impact.	within a close enough range to make an impact.
Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.</p> <p>No LSE foreseen on SAC as option is not within a close enough range to make an impact.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.</p> <p>No LSE foreseen on SAC as option is not within a close enough range to make an impact.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.</p> <p>No LSE foreseen on SAC as option is not within a close enough range to make an impact.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.</p> <p>No LSE foreseen on SAC as option is not within a close enough range to make an impact.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.</p> <p>No LSE foreseen on SAC as option is not within a close enough range to make an impact.</p>
Little Wittenham SAC	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option is within the 2km buffer of the SAC and intersects the surface water body feeding the SAC within 4km (upstream) of the SAC.</p> <p><b>Potential impact:</b> Potential water quality degradation caused by construction pollution</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option is within the 10km buffer of the SAC – potential impacts on water levels/abstraction - more information on discharge/abstraction required.</p> <p><b>Potential impact:</b></p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option covers majority of the SAC area and intersects the surface water body feeding the SAC within 4km (upstream) of the SAC.</p> <p><b>Potential impact:</b> Both water quality degradation potential and increased abstraction</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option covers half of the SAC area and intersects the surface water body feeding the SAC within 4km (upstream) of the SAC.</p> <p><b>Potential impact:</b> Both water quality degradation potential and increased abstraction</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option covers approximately half of the 2km buffer surrounding the SAC and intersects the surface water body feeding the SAC within 4km (upstream) of the SAC.</p> <p><b>Potential impact:</b></p>

Risk assessment results for water impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
	<p>runoff from transport routes.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Ensure minimal runoff from potential developments and transport routes – create buffers around transport routes. Best practice construction measure to include pollution prevention techniques.</p>	<p>No LSE on water quality from option as it is more than 4km upstream and will not result in construction-based water quality degradation.</p> <p>More information needed on options but potential increased abstraction from River Thames to accommodate for new developments could reduce flows downstream and impact the amount of flow at the SAC. More information would be required on location, volume, duration, seasonality and frequency of abstraction and discharges.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b></p>	<p>potential from River Thames as discussed for options 1 and 2.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> As discussed to the left for Option 1 and 2.</p>	<p>potential from River Thames as discussed for options 1 and 2.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> As discussed to the left for Option 1 and 2.</p>	<p>Both water quality degradation potential and increased abstraction potential from River Thames as discussed for options 1 and 2.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> As discussed to the left for Option 1 and 2.</p>

Risk assessment results for water impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
		To prevent environmentally damaging abstraction levels and possible follow-on LSE, appropriate abstraction licensing should be put in place.			
North Meadow & Clattinger Farm SAC	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.  No LSE foreseen on SAC as option is not within a close enough range to make an impact.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.  No LSE foreseen on SAC as option is not within a close enough range to make an impact.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.  No LSE foreseen on SAC as option is not within a close enough range to make an impact.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.  No LSE foreseen on SAC as option is not within a close enough range to make an impact.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.  No LSE foreseen on SAC as option is not within a close enough range to make an impact.
Oxford Meadows SAC	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option covers large portion of the SAC area and intersects the surface water body feeding the SAC within 4km (upstream) of the SAC.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option covers majority of the SAC and intersects the surface water body feeding the SAC.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option covers all of the SAC area and intersects the surface water body feeding the SAC within 4km (upstream) of the SAC.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option covers large portion of the SAC area and intersects the surface water body feeding the SAC within 4km (upstream) of the SAC.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option covers approximately half of the SAC area and intersects the surface water body feeding the SAC within

Risk assessment results for water impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
	<p><b>Potential impact:</b> Water quality degradation potential from runoff from construction sites/new developments and transport links. More information needed on options but potential increased abstraction potential from River Thames, Seacourt Stream, Oxford Canal, River Evenlode to accommodate for new developments may lead to decreased river levels and flow rates. More information would be required on location, volume, duration, seasonality and frequency of abstraction and discharges.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b></p>	<p>SAC within 4km (upstream) of the SAC.</p> <p><b>Potential impact:</b> Same as for option 1.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Same as for option 1.</p>	<p><b>Potential impact:</b> Same as for option 1.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Same as for option 1.</p>	<p><b>Potential impact:</b> Same as for option 1.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Same as for option 1.</p>	<p>4km (upstream) of the SAC.</p> <p><b>Potential impact:</b> Same as for option 1.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Same as for option 1.</p>

Risk assessment results for water impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
	<p>Avoid development within and upstream of SAC. Create buffers around development areas to ensure run-off rates from development are maintained at green field rates and that development does not significantly alter groundwater flows, in line with the potential mitigation in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan (Policy ESD9)<sup>6</sup>. Best practice construction measures to include pollution prevention techniques.</p> <p>To prevent environmentally damaging abstraction levels and</p>				

<sup>6</sup> Cherwell District Council, 2015, The Cherwell Local Plan 2011 – 2031, <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/downloads/download/45/adopted-cherwell-local-plan-2011-2031-part-1-incorporating-policy-bicester-13-re-adopted-on-19-december-2016>

Risk assessment results for water impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
	possible follow-on LSE, appropriate abstraction licensing should be put in place.				
River Lambourn SAC	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is outside of Oxfordshire and is not downstream of any of the areas for this option.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is outside of Oxfordshire and is not downstream of any of the areas for this option.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is outside of Oxfordshire and is not downstream of any of the areas for this option.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is outside of Oxfordshire and is not downstream of any of the areas for this option.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is outside of Oxfordshire and is not downstream of any of the areas for this option.
Thames Basin Heaths SPA	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SPA is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.  No LSE foreseen on SPA as option is not within a close enough range to make an impact.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SPA is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.  No LSE foreseen on SPA as option is not within a close enough range to make an impact.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SPA is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.  No LSE foreseen on SPA as option is not within a close enough range to make an impact.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SPA is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.  No LSE foreseen on SPA as option is not within a close enough range to make an impact.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SPA is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.  No LSE foreseen on SPA as option is not within a close enough range to make an impact.
Windsor Forest & Great Park SAC	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.  No LSE foreseen on SAC as option is not within a	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.  No LSE foreseen on SAC as option is not within a	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.  No LSE foreseen on SAC as option is not within a	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> SAC is more than 10km outside of Oxfordshire.  No LSE foreseen on SAC as option is not

Risk assessment results for water impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
	close enough range to make an impact	No LSE foreseen on SAC as option is not within a close enough range to make an impact	close enough range to make an impact range to make an impact	close enough range to make an impact	within a close enough range to make an impact

### 3.3 Recreational impacts

3.3.a. The risk assessment results for recreational impacts are provided in Table 3.3. Where potential LSE have been identified, Table 3.3 also includes potential mitigation strategies.

**Table 3.3: Risk assessment results for recreational impacts**

Risk assessment results for recreational impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
Aston Rowant SAC	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 2km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.</p> <p>Development of a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring strategy for the affected site, funded through a per-dwelling tariff.</p>

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Risk assessment results for recreational impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
Burnham Beeches SAC	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.
Chilterns Beechwoods SAC	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.  <b>Potential mitigation:</b> Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.  <b>Potential mitigation:</b> Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.  <b>Potential mitigation:</b> Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 2km of designated site.  <b>Potential mitigation:</b> Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.  Development of a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring strategy for the affected site, funded through a per-dwelling tariff.
Cothill Fen SAC	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b>	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b>	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b>	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b>	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b>

Risk assessment results for recreational impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
	<p>Option includes areas within 2km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Development to be located where it avoids all areas of the SAC.</p> <p>Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.</p> <p>Development of a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring strategy for the affected site, funded through a per-dwelling tariff.</p>	<p>Option includes areas within 2km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.</p> <p>Development of a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring strategy for the affected site, funded through a per-dwelling tariff.</p>	<p>Option includes areas within 2km of designated site (contains the SAC).</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Development to be located where it avoids all areas of the SAC.</p> <p>Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.</p> <p>Development of a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring strategy for the affected site, funded through a per-dwelling tariff.</p>	<p>Option includes areas within 2km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.</p> <p>Development of a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring strategy for the affected site, funded through a per-dwelling tariff.</p>	<p>Option includes areas within 2km of designated site (overlaps with SAC).</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Development to be located where it avoids all areas of the SAC.</p> <p>Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.</p> <p>Development of a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring strategy for the affected site, funded through a per-dwelling tariff.</p>
Hackpen Hill SAC	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b></p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b></p>

Risk assessment results for recreational impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
	<p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.</p>	<p>Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p>	<p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.</p>	<p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.</p>	<p>Option includes areas within 2km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.</p> <p>Development of a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring strategy for the affected site, funded through a per-dwelling tariff.</p>
Hartslock Wood SAC	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 2km of designated site (contains the SAC).</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Development to be located where it avoids all areas of the SAC.</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to</p>	<p><b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.</p>

Risk assessment results for recreational impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
	provide recreation opportunities.		Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.  Development of a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring strategy for the affected site, funded through a per-dwelling tariff.	provide recreation opportunities.	
Kennet & Lambourn Floodplain SAC	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.
Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.
Little Wittenham SAC	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b>	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b>	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b>	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b>	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b>

Risk assessment results for recreational impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
	<p>Option includes areas within 7km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.</p> <p>Development of a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring strategy for the affected site, funded through a per-dwelling tariff.</p>	<p>Option includes areas within 7km of designated site.</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.</p> <p>Development of a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring strategy for the affected site, funded through a per-dwelling tariff.</p>	<p>Option includes areas within 7km of designated site (overlaps with SAC).</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Development to be located where it avoids all areas of the SAC.</p> <p>Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.</p> <p>Development of a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring strategy for the affected site, funded through a per-dwelling tariff.</p>	<p>Option includes areas within 7km of designated site (overlaps with SAC).</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Development to be located where it avoids all areas of the SAC.</p> <p>Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.</p> <p>Development of a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring strategy for the affected site, funded through a per-dwelling tariff.</p>	<p>Option includes areas within 7km of designated site (overlaps with SAC).</p> <p><b>Potential mitigation:</b> Development to be located where it avoids all areas of the SAC.</p> <p>Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.</p> <p>Development of a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring strategy for the affected site, funded through a per-dwelling tariff.</p>

Risk assessment results for recreational impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
North Meadow & Clattinger Farm SAC	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.
Oxford Meadows SAC	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 7km of designated site (overlaps with SAC).  <b>Potential mitigation:</b> Development to be located where it avoids all areas of the SAC.  Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.  Development of a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring strategy for the affected site, funded	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 2km of designated site.  Although all five spatial options have a Red rating, Option 2 (Oxford-led growth) presents the highest risk to this SAC as all of the growth would be concentrated in areas close to this SAC.  <b>Potential mitigation:</b> Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 7km of designated site (overlaps with SAC).  <b>Potential mitigation:</b> Development to be located where it avoids all areas of the SAC.  Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.  Development of a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring strategy for the affected site, funded	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 7km of designated site (overlaps with SAC).  <b>Potential mitigation:</b> Development to be located where it avoids all areas of the SAC.  Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.  Development of a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring strategy for the affected site, funded	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 7km of designated site (overlaps with SAC).  <b>Potential mitigation:</b> Development to be located where it avoids all areas of the SAC.  Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.  Development of a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring strategy for

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Risk assessment results for recreational impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
	through a per-dwelling tariff.	Development of a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring strategy for the affected site, funded through a per-dwelling tariff.	through a per-dwelling tariff.	through a per-dwelling tariff.	the affected site, funded through a per-dwelling tariff.
River Lambourn SAC	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.  <b>Potential mitigation:</b> Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.  <b>Potential mitigation:</b> Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option includes areas within 10km of designated site.  <b>Potential mitigation:</b> Identification of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide recreation opportunities.
Thames Basin Heaths SPA	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.

Risk assessment results for recreational impacts					
Designated Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth	Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs	Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations	Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities
Windsor Forest & Great Park SAC	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.	<b>Reason for RAG rating:</b> Option areas are all over 10km away from designated site.

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## 4 Summary

4.a. Table 4.1 summarises the findings of this high-level risk assessment for the five spatial options considered in this assessment, with a visual presentation of all of the RAG ratings associated with potential LSEs for air quality impacts, water impacts and recreational impacts. There are risks for LSEs (Red and Amber ratings) associated with each of the five spatial options, and potential mitigation strategies have been identified as part of this assessment. None of the spatial options have been ruled out at this stage.

4.b. The following designated sites have a very low risk of LSE (Green rating) arising from air quality impacts, water impacts and recreational impacts, across all of the spatial options considered in this assessment:

- Burnham Beeches SAC
- Kennet & Lambourn Floodplain SAC
- Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC
- North Meadow & Clattinger Farm SAC
- Thames Basin Heaths SPA
- Windsor Forest & Great Park SAC

4.c. The following designated sites have a higher risk of LSE (Red rating), for at least one type of impact, across all of the spatial options considered in this assessment:

- Cothill Fen SAC
- Little Wittenham SAC
- Oxford Meadows SAC

4.d. When considering the overall results presented in Table 4.1, it is important not to interpret the number of Red or Amber ratings associated with each option as an absolute indication of which is the best spatial option overall. For example, Option 2 (Focus on Oxford-led growth) has the lowest number of Red ratings. This option has a very low risk of LSEs for designated sites that are located away from the city of Oxford. However, since all of the growth and development would be concentrated in a fairly small area, in and around the city of Oxford, it is likely that this option would also concentrate the LSEs over a fairly small area as well. This may make it more difficult to develop effective mitigation to fully offset the LSEs.

4.e. On the other hand, Option 5 (Focus on supporting rural communities) has the highest number of Red ratings, and this is primarily a reflection of the large area encompassed by Option 5. Option 5 could be further developed with some additional constraints, such as locating development at a minimum distance away from designated sites, in order to lower the number of LSEs associated with this option.

4.f. In summary, rather than directly determining which is the overall best spatial option, the results of this high-level assessment serve to highlight where LSEs are associated with each spatial option, such that the LSEs can be considered and addressed early in the planning process.

**Table 4.1: Summary of RAG ratings for all options and all impacts**

Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations			Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth			Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs			Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations			Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities		
	Air	Water	Rec.	Air	Water	Rec.	Air	Water	Rec.	Air	Water	Rec.	Air	Water	Rec.
Aston Rowant SAC	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Green	Red
Burnham Beeches SAC	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Chilterns Beechwoods SAC	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red
Cothill Fen SAC	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
Hackpen Hill SAC	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Red
Hartslock Wood SAC	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green
Kennet & Lambourn Floodplain SAC	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green

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Site	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations			Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth			Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs			Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations			Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities		
	Air	Water	Rec.	Air	Water	Rec.	Air	Water	Rec.	Air	Water	Rec.	Air	Water	Rec.
Little Wittenham SAC	Green	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Green	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red
North Meadow & Clattinger Farm SAC	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Oxford Meadows SAC	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
River Lambourn SAC	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow
Thames Basin Heaths SPA	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Windsor Forest & Great Park SAC	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green

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## 5 Next steps

5.a. The results of this high-level risk assessment of spatial options can be used by the Oxfordshire city and district authorities to further develop the Plan spatial strategy and prepare their draft Plan for formal HRA consideration in due course.

5.b. It may be useful to seek Natural England's views on this report before using it for spatial planning.

5.c. Where potential risks have been identified, these should not be interpreted as indicating that the associated development will necessarily damage the integrity of European sites or undermine their conservation objectives. Rather, the identification of potential risks serves only to highlight the possibility of strategic development needing a greater level of assessment under the Habitats Regulations, and potentially, a greater level of associated mitigation to overcome any adverse effects. The basic principle here is that the first consideration in the 'mitigation hierarchy' should be to avoid impacts wherever possible. The high-level risk assessment described in this report is intended to facilitate such avoidance.

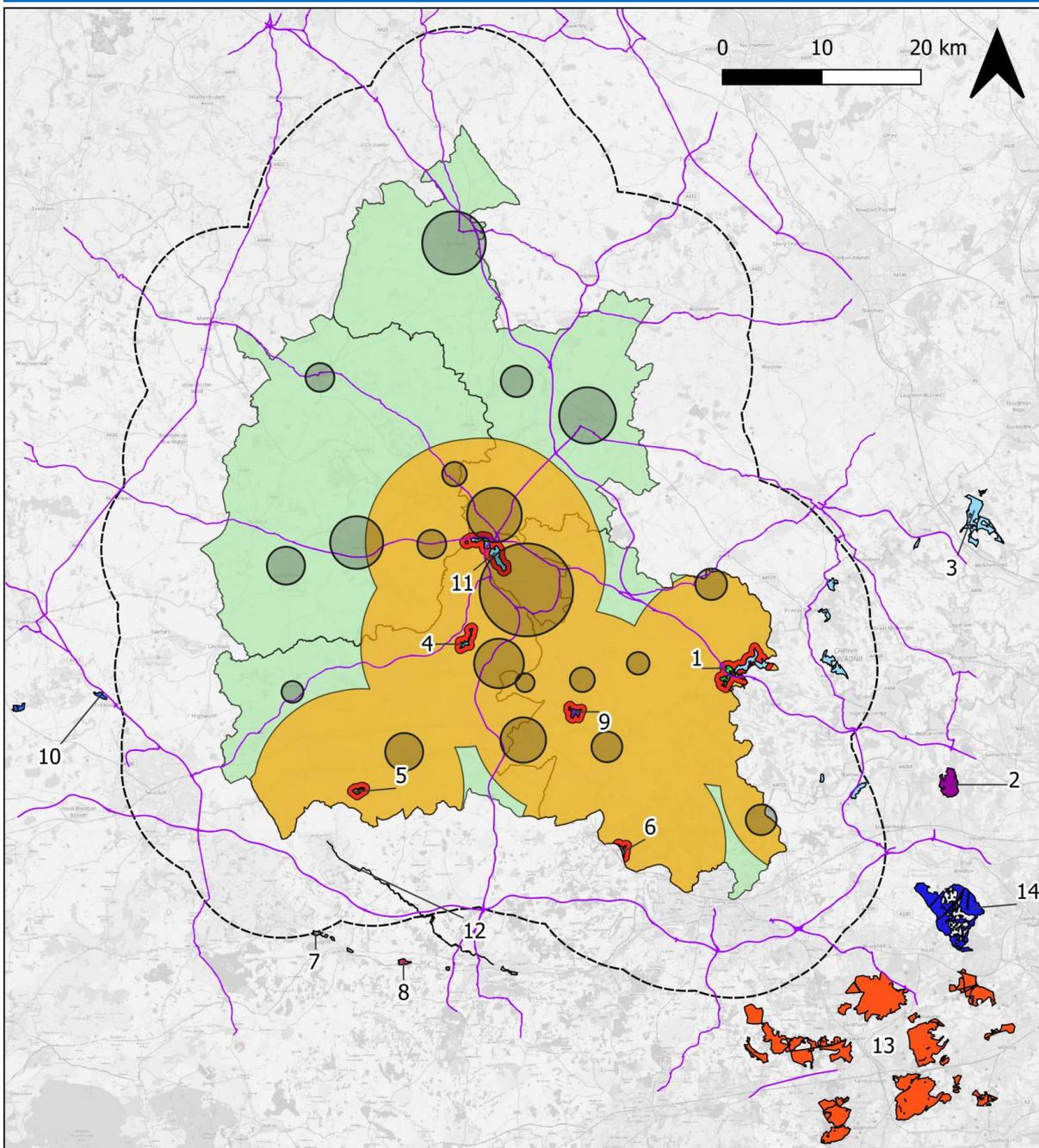
5.d. The mitigation hierarchy is:

- Avoidance of adverse impacts where possible;
- Mitigation for impacts that cannot be avoided, which would include:
  - Minimising (or reducing) what cannot be avoided;
  - Remedying (or restoring) what cannot be reduced; and (as a last resort)
- Compensating for what cannot be avoided or mitigated.

5.e. After a draft Oxfordshire Plan 2050 has been prepared, subsequent stages of the HRA process will be undertaken. The HRA Stage 1 screening assessment will consider and assess likely significant effects arising from the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, both alone and in combination with other plans and projects. In-combination impacts are likely to include air quality impacts arising from increased vehicle traffic associated with the strategic plans developed by neighbouring local authorities, as well as recreational impacts for those designated sites located near the Oxfordshire border. A search for relevant plans and projects to consider for the in-combination assessment will be carried out during the Stage 1 screening assessment. Any LSE that are identified during the Stage 1 screening assessment will be carried forward for further consideration in HRA Stage 2: appropriate assessment.

## Appendices

## Appendix 1 – Mapped comparison of spatial options with distance-based risk zones



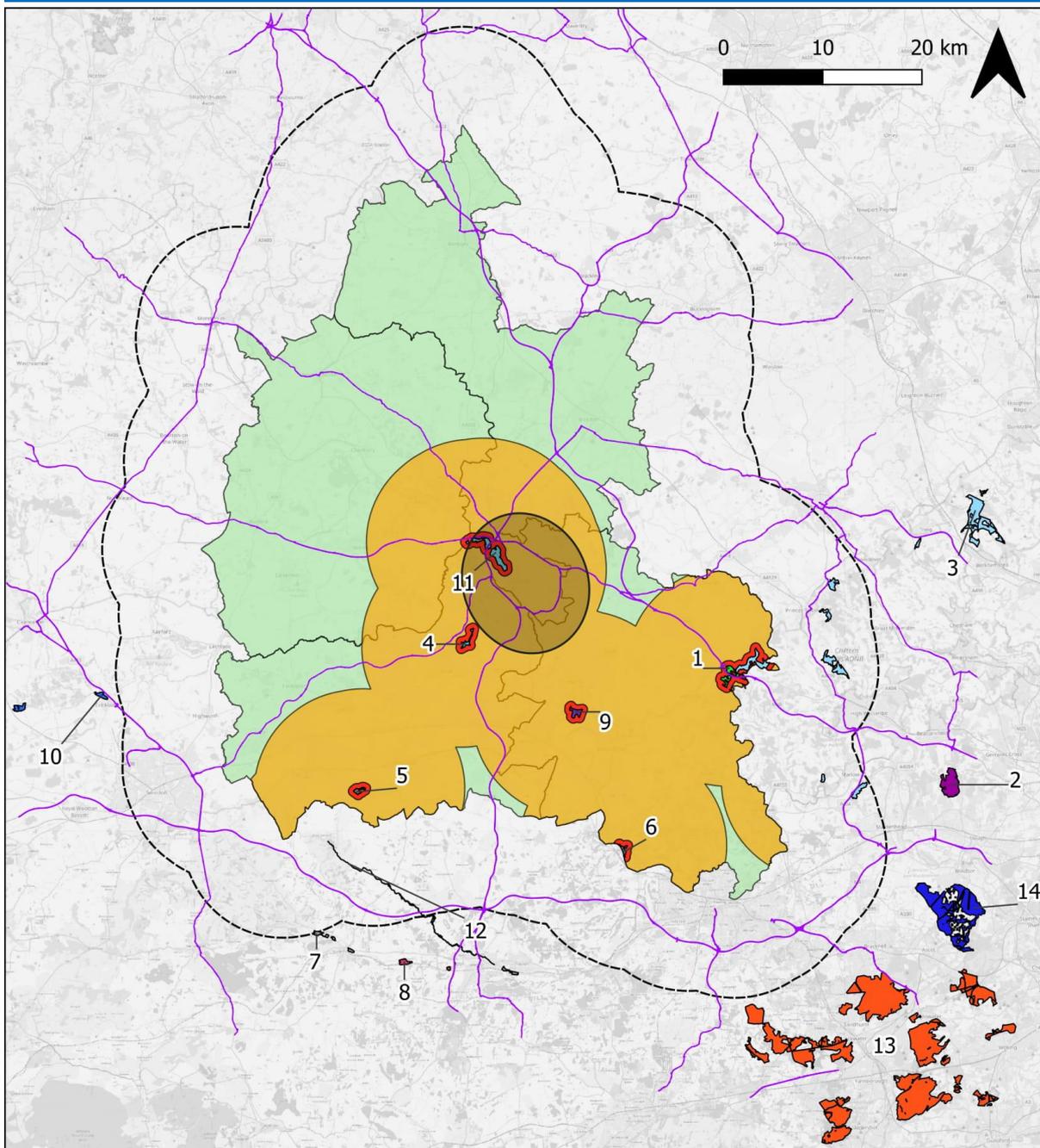
**Legend**

Risk zones for air quality impacts - Option 1 - Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations

Number	Site name
1	Aston Rowant (SAC)
2	Burnham Beeches (SAC)
3	Chilterns Beechwoods (SAC)
4	Cothill Fen (SAC)
5	Hackpen Hill (SAC)
6	Hartslock Wood (SAC)
7	Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain (SAC)

Number	Site name
8	Kennet Valley Alderwoods (SAC)
9	Little Wittenham (SAC)
10	North Meadow & Clattinger Farm (SAC)
11	Oxford Meadows (SAC)
12	River Lambourn (SAC)
13	Thames Basin Heaths (SPA)
14	Windsor Forest & Great Park (SAC)

- Option 1
- Primary roads links
- Risk Zone Buffers**
- Higher risk of LSE (2km or 7km)
- Lower risk of LSE (10km)
- Very low risk of LSE (>10km)
- 10km Buffer Oxfordshire County



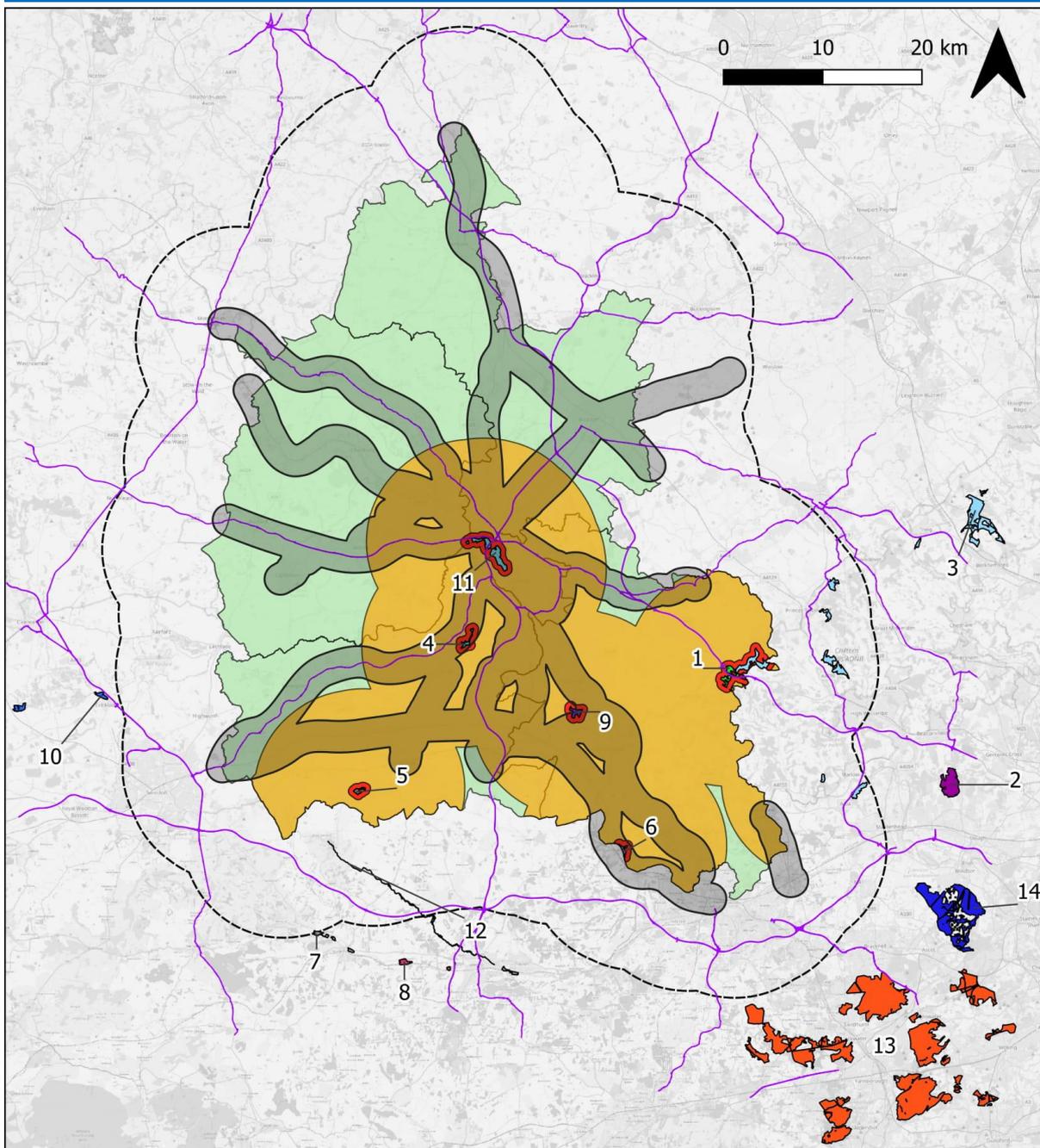
**Legend**

Risk zones for air quality impacts - Option 2 - Focus on Oxford-led growth

Number	Site name
1	Aston Rowant (SAC)
2	Burnham Beeches (SAC)
3	Chilterns Beechwoods (SAC)
4	Cothill Fen (SAC)
5	Hackpen Hill (SAC)
6	Hartslock Wood (SAC)
7	Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain (SAC)

Number	Site name
8	Kennet Valley Alderwoods (SAC)
9	Little Wittenham (SAC)
10	North Meadow & Clattinger Farm (SAC)
11	Oxford Meadows (SAC)
12	River Lambourn (SAC)
13	Thames Basin Heaths (SPA)
14	Windsor Forest & Great Park (SAC)

- Option 2
- Primary roads links
- Risk Zone Buffers
  - Higher risk of LSE (2km or 7km)
  - Lower risk of LSE (10km)
  - Very low risk of LSE (>10km)
- 10km Buffer Oxfordshire County



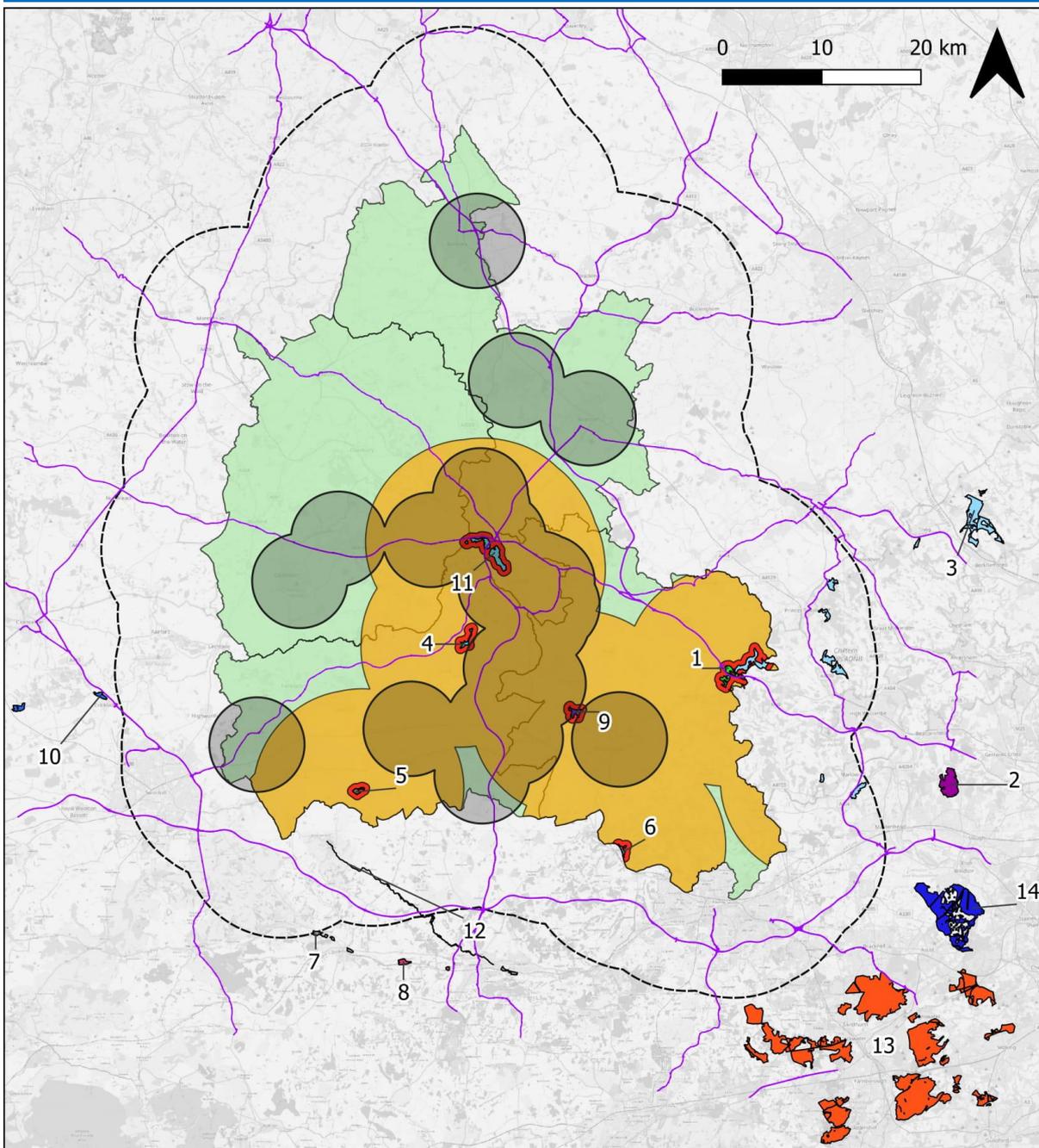
**Legend**

Risk zones for air quality impacts - Option 3 - Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs

Number	Site name
1	Aston Rowant (SAC)
2	Burnham Beeches (SAC)
3	Chilterns Beechwoods (SAC)
4	Cothill Fen (SAC)
5	Hackpen Hill (SAC)
6	Hartslock Wood (SAC)
7	Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain (SAC)

Number	Site name
8	Kennet Valley Alderwoods (SAC)
9	Little Wittenham (SAC)
10	North Meadow & Clattinger Farm (SAC)
11	Oxford Meadows (SAC)
12	River Lambourn (SAC)
13	Thames Basin Heaths (SPA)
14	Windsor Forest & Great Park (SAC)

- Option 3
- Primary roads links
- Risk Zone Buffers**
- Higher risk of LSE (2km or 7km)
- Lower risk of LSE (10km)
- Very low risk of LSE (>10km)
- 10km Buffer Oxfordshire County



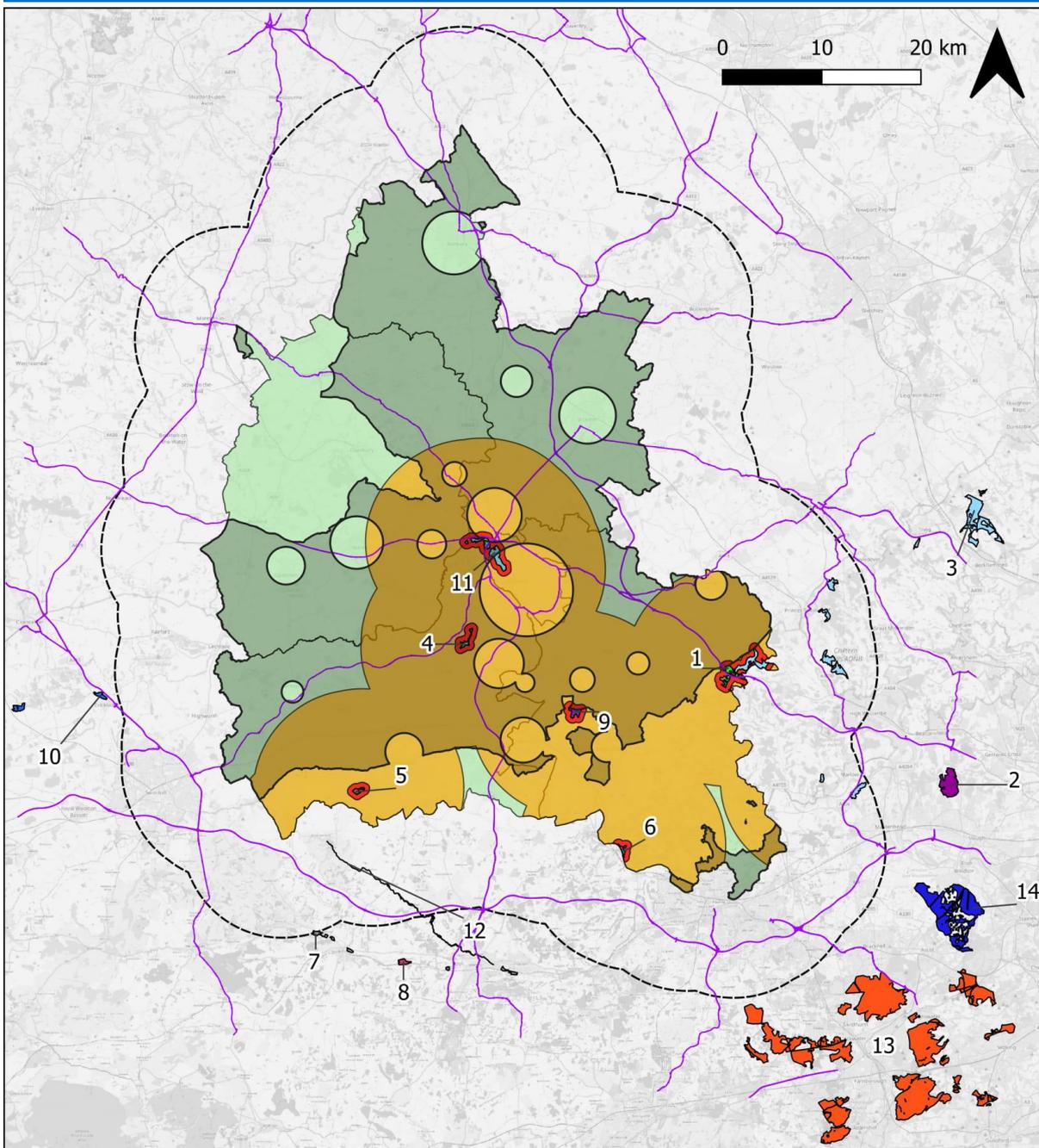
**Legend**

Risk zones for air quality impacts - Option 4 - Focus on strengthening business locations

Number	Site name
1	Aston Rowant (SAC)
2	Burnham Beeches (SAC)
3	Chilterns Beechwoods (SAC)
4	Cothill Fen (SAC)
5	Hackpen Hill (SAC)
6	Hartslock Wood (SAC)
7	Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain (SAC)

Number	Site name
8	Kennet Valley Alderwoods (SAC)
9	Little Wittenham (SAC)
10	North Meadow & Clattinger Farm (SAC)
11	Oxford Meadows (SAC)
12	River Lambourn (SAC)
13	Thames Basin Heaths (SPA)
14	Windsor Forest & Great Park (SAC)

- Option 4
- Primary roads links
- Risk Zone Buffers**
- Higher risk of LSE (2km or 7km)
- Lower risk of LSE (10km)
- Very low risk of LSE (>10km)
- 10km Buffer Oxfordshire County



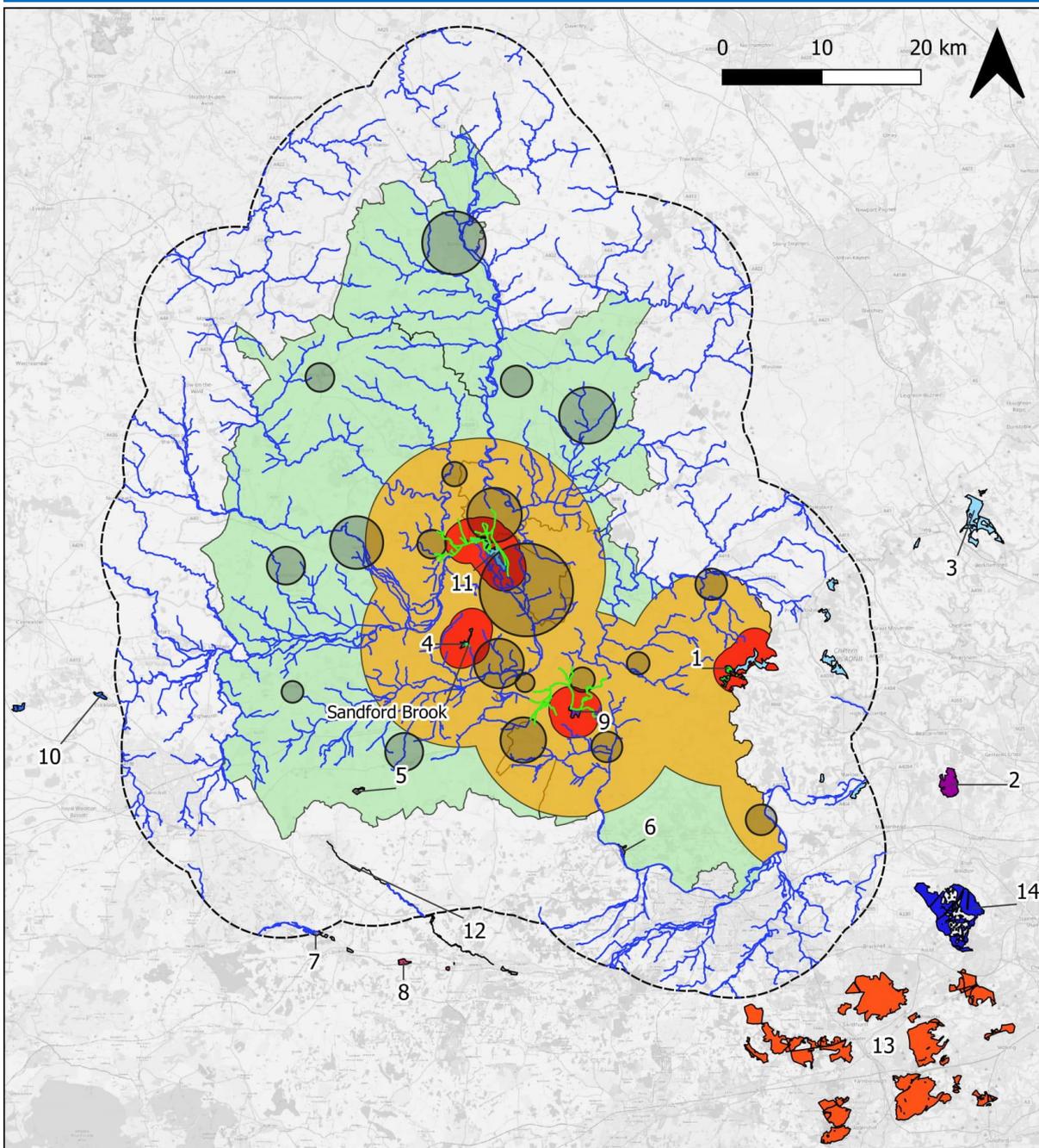
**Legend**

Risk zones for air quality impacts - Option 5 - Focus on supporting rural communities

Number	Site name
1	Aston Rowant (SAC)
2	Burnham Beeches (SAC)
3	Chilterns Beechwoods (SAC)
4	Cothill Fen (SAC)
5	Hackpen Hill (SAC)
6	Hartslock Wood (SAC)
7	Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain (SAC)

Number	Site name
8	Kennet Valley Alderwoods (SAC)
9	Little Wittenham (SAC)
10	North Meadow & Clattinger Farm (SAC)
11	Oxford Meadows (SAC)
12	River Lambourn (SAC)
13	Thames Basin Heaths (SPA)
14	Windsor Forest & Great Park (SAC)

- Option 5
- Primary roads links
- Risk Zone Buffers**
- Higher risk of LSE (2km or 7km)
- Lower risk of LSE (10km)
- Very low risk of LSE (>10km)
- 10km Buffer Oxfordshire County



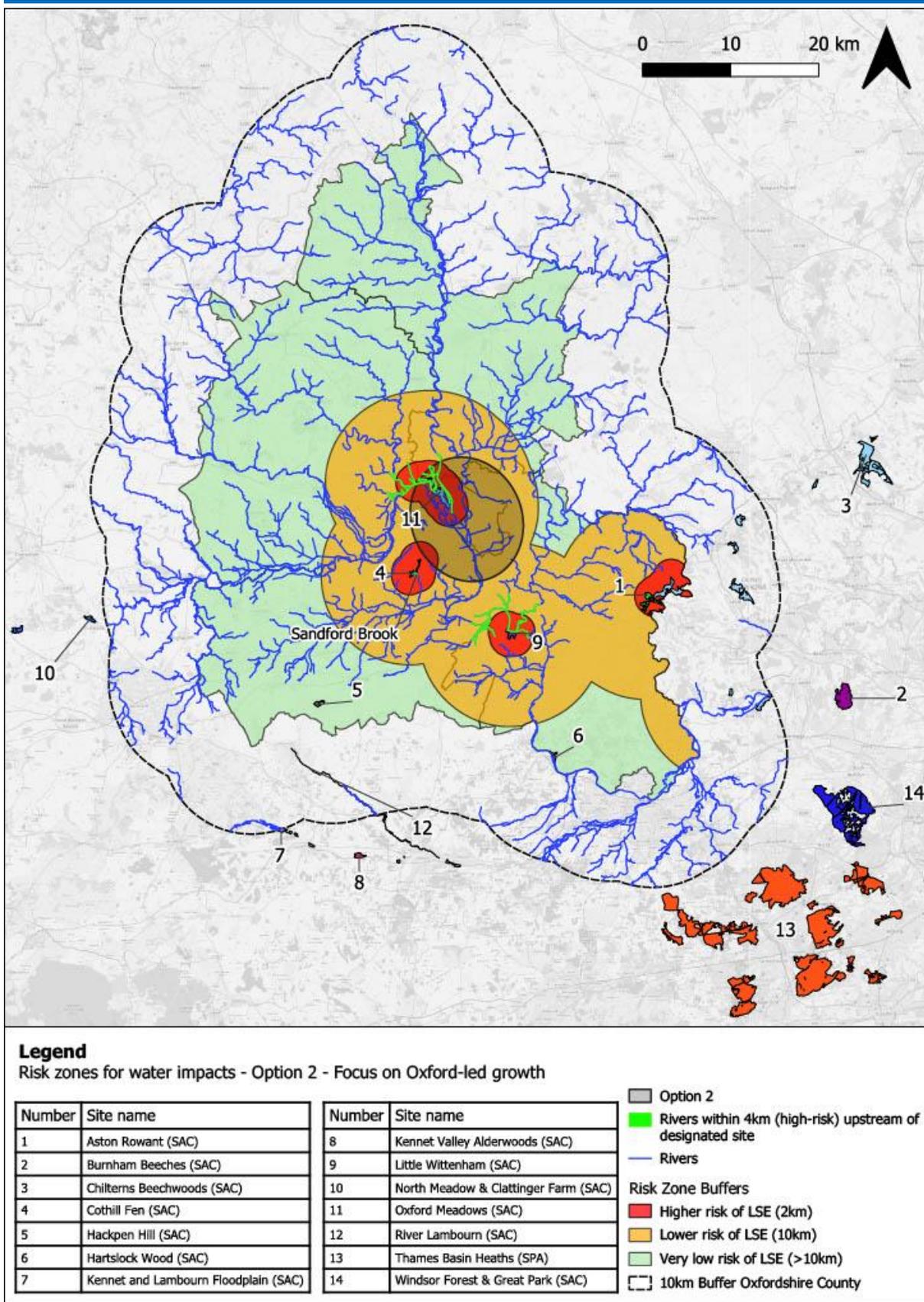
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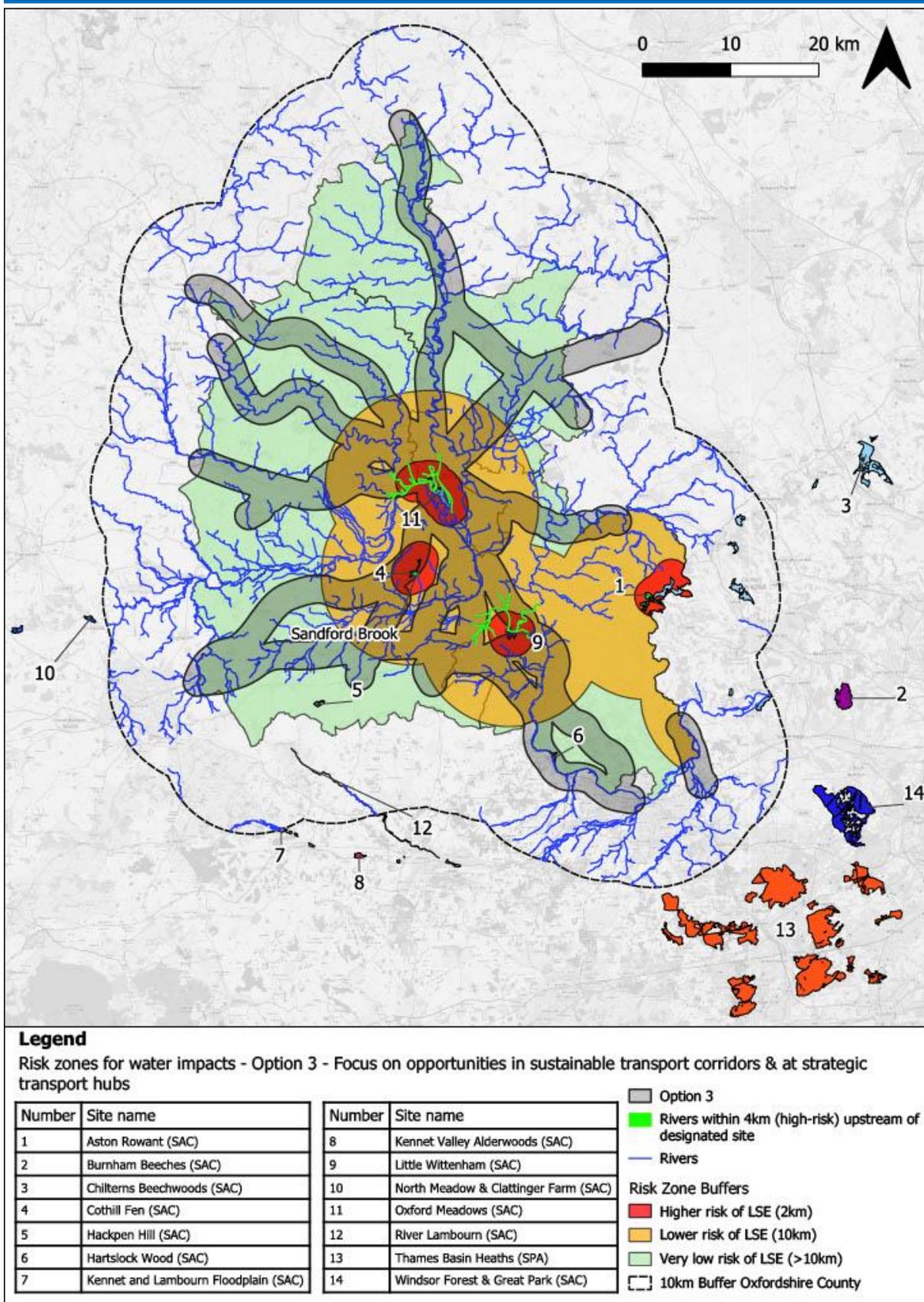
Risk zones for water impacts - Option 1 - Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations

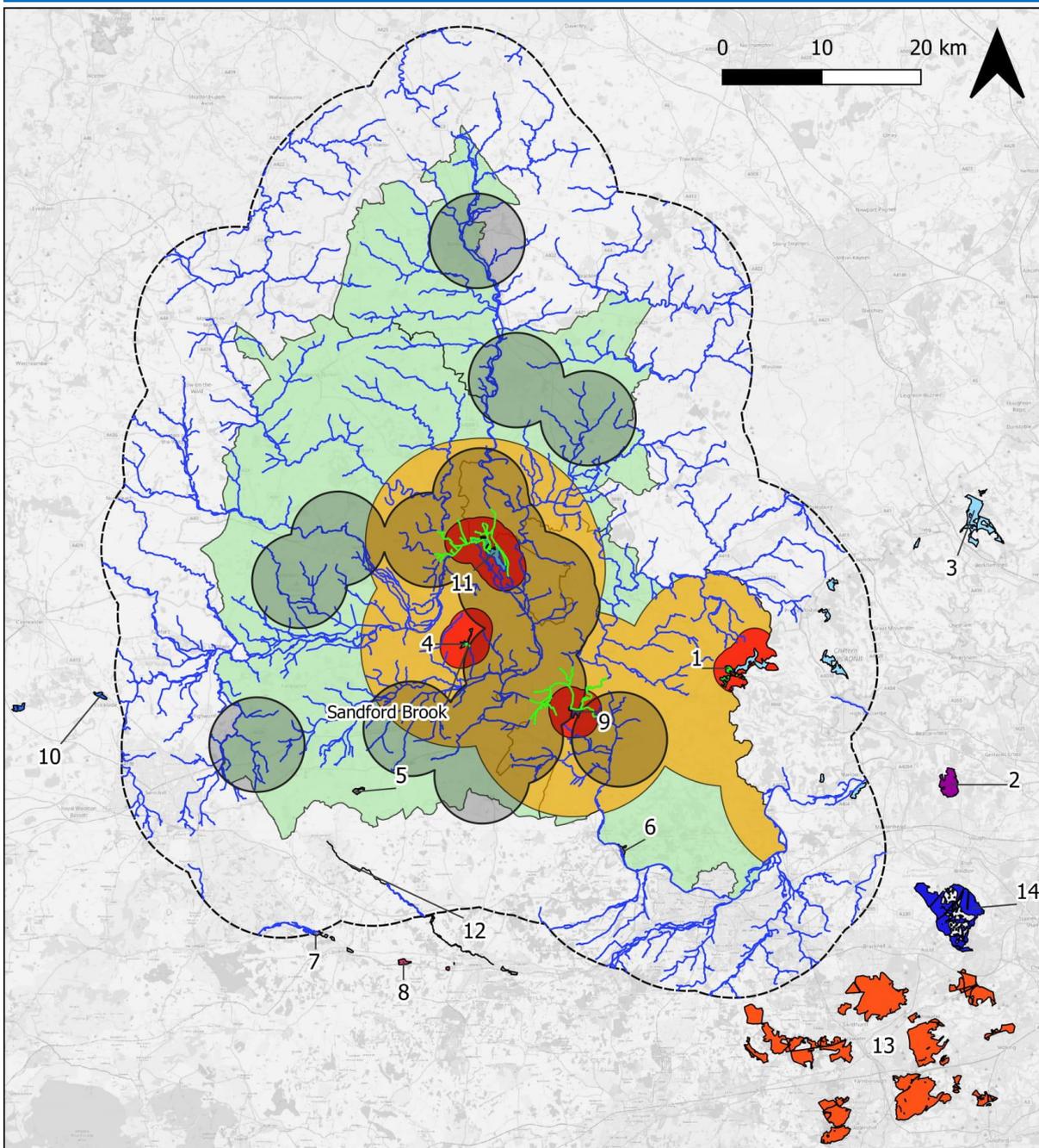
Number	Site name
1	Aston Rowant (SAC)
2	Burnham Beeches (SAC)
3	Chilterns Beechwoods (SAC)
4	Cothill Fen (SAC)
5	Hackpen Hill (SAC)
6	Hartslock Wood (SAC)
7	Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain (SAC)

Number	Site name
8	Kennet Valley Alderwoods (SAC)
9	Little Wittenham (SAC)
10	North Meadow & Clattinger Farm (SAC)
11	Oxford Meadows (SAC)
12	River Lambourn (SAC)
13	Thames Basin Heaths (SPA)
14	Windsor Forest & Great Park (SAC)

- Option 1
- Rivers within 4km (high-risk) upstream of designated site
- Rivers
- Risk Zone Buffers**
- Higher risk of LSE (2km)
- Lower risk of LSE (10km)
- Very low risk of LSE (>10km)
- 10km Buffer Oxfordshire County







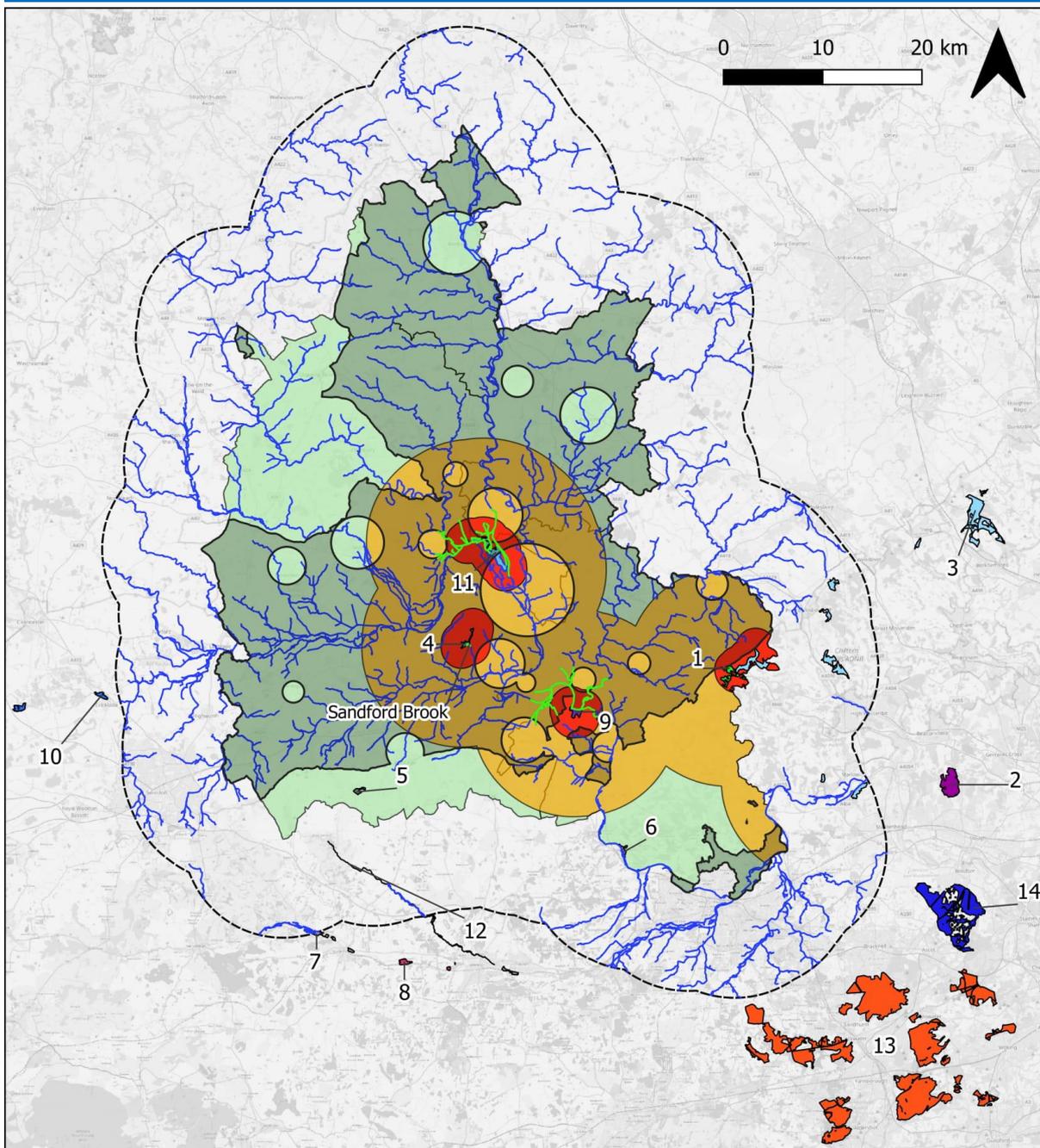
**Legend**

Risk zones for water impacts - Option 4 - Focus on strengthening business locations

Number	Site name
1	Aston Rowant (SAC)
2	Burnham Beeches (SAC)
3	Chilterns Beechwoods (SAC)
4	Cothill Fen (SAC)
5	Hackpen Hill (SAC)
6	Hartslock Wood (SAC)
7	Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain (SAC)

Number	Site name
8	Kennet Valley Alderwoods (SAC)
9	Little Wittenham (SAC)
10	North Meadow & Clattinger Farm (SAC)
11	Oxford Meadows (SAC)
12	River Lambourn (SAC)
13	Thames Basin Heaths (SPA)
14	Windsor Forest & Great Park (SAC)

- Option 4
- Rivers within 4km (high-risk) upstream of designated site
- Rivers
- Risk Zone Buffers**
- Higher risk of LSE (2km)
- Lower risk of LSE (10km)
- Very low risk of LSE (>10km)
- 10km Buffer Oxfordshire County



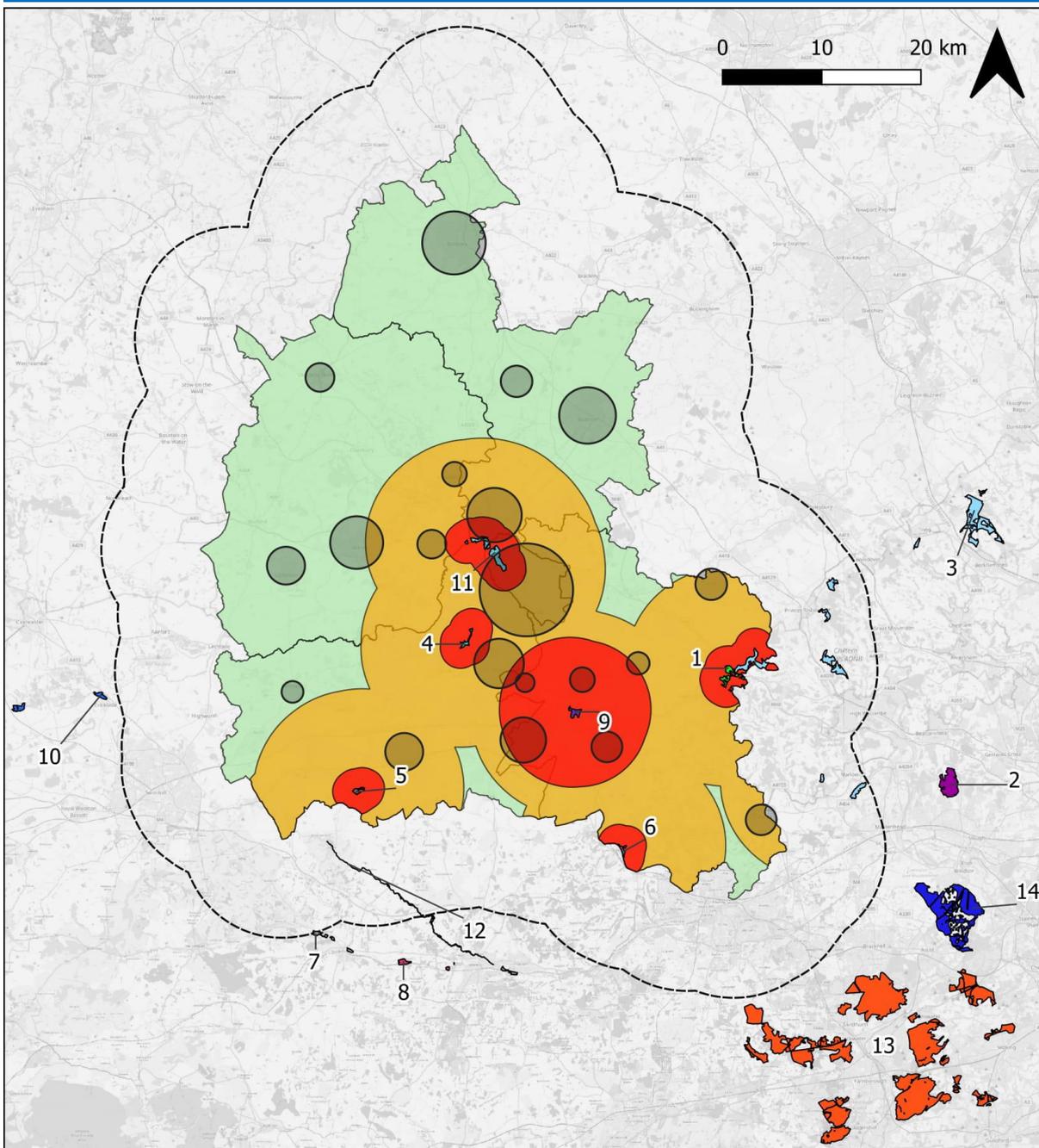
**Legend**

Risk zones for water impacts - Option 5 - Focus on supporting rural communities

Number	Site name
1	Aston Rowant (SAC)
2	Burnham Beeches (SAC)
3	Chilterns Beechwoods (SAC)
4	Cothill Fen (SAC)
5	Hackpen Hill (SAC)
6	Hartslock Wood (SAC)
7	Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain (SAC)

Number	Site name
8	Kennet Valley Alderwoods (SAC)
9	Little Wittenham (SAC)
10	North Meadow & Clattinger Farm (SAC)
11	Oxford Meadows (SAC)
12	River Lambourn (SAC)
13	Thames Basin Heaths (SPA)
14	Windsor Forest & Great Park (SAC)

- Option 5
- Rivers within 4km (high-risk) upstream of designated site
- Rivers
- Risk Zone Buffers**
- Higher risk of LSE (2km)
- Lower risk of LSE (10km)
- Very low risk of LSE (>10km)
- 10km Buffer Oxfordshire County



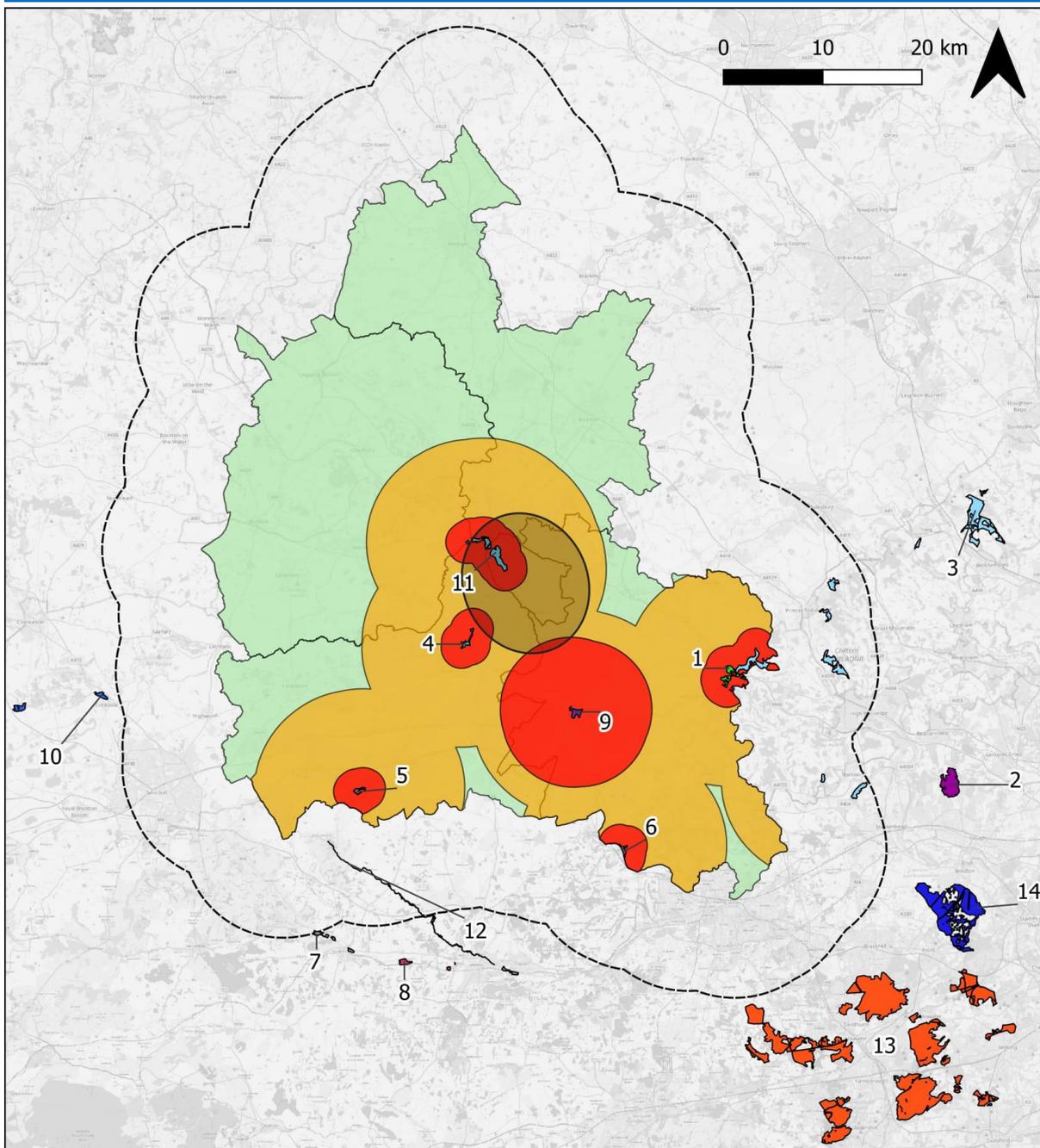
**Legend**

Risk zones for recreational impacts - Option 1 - Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations

Number	Site name
1	Aston Rowant (SAC)
2	Burnham Beeches (SAC)
3	Chilterns Beechwoods (SAC)
4	Cothill Fen (SAC)
5	Hackpen Hill (SAC)
6	Hartslock Wood (SAC)
7	Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain (SAC)

Number	Site name
8	Kennet Valley Alderwoods (SAC)
9	Little Wittenham (SAC)
10	North Meadow & Clattinger Farm (SAC)
11	Oxford Meadows (SAC)
12	River Lambourn (SAC)
13	Thames Basin Heaths (SPA)
14	Windsor Forest & Great Park (SAC)

- Option 1
- Risk Zone Buffers
  - Higher risk of LSE (2km or 7km)
  - Lower risk of LSE (10km)
  - Very low risk of LSE (>10km)
- 10km Buffer Oxfordshire County



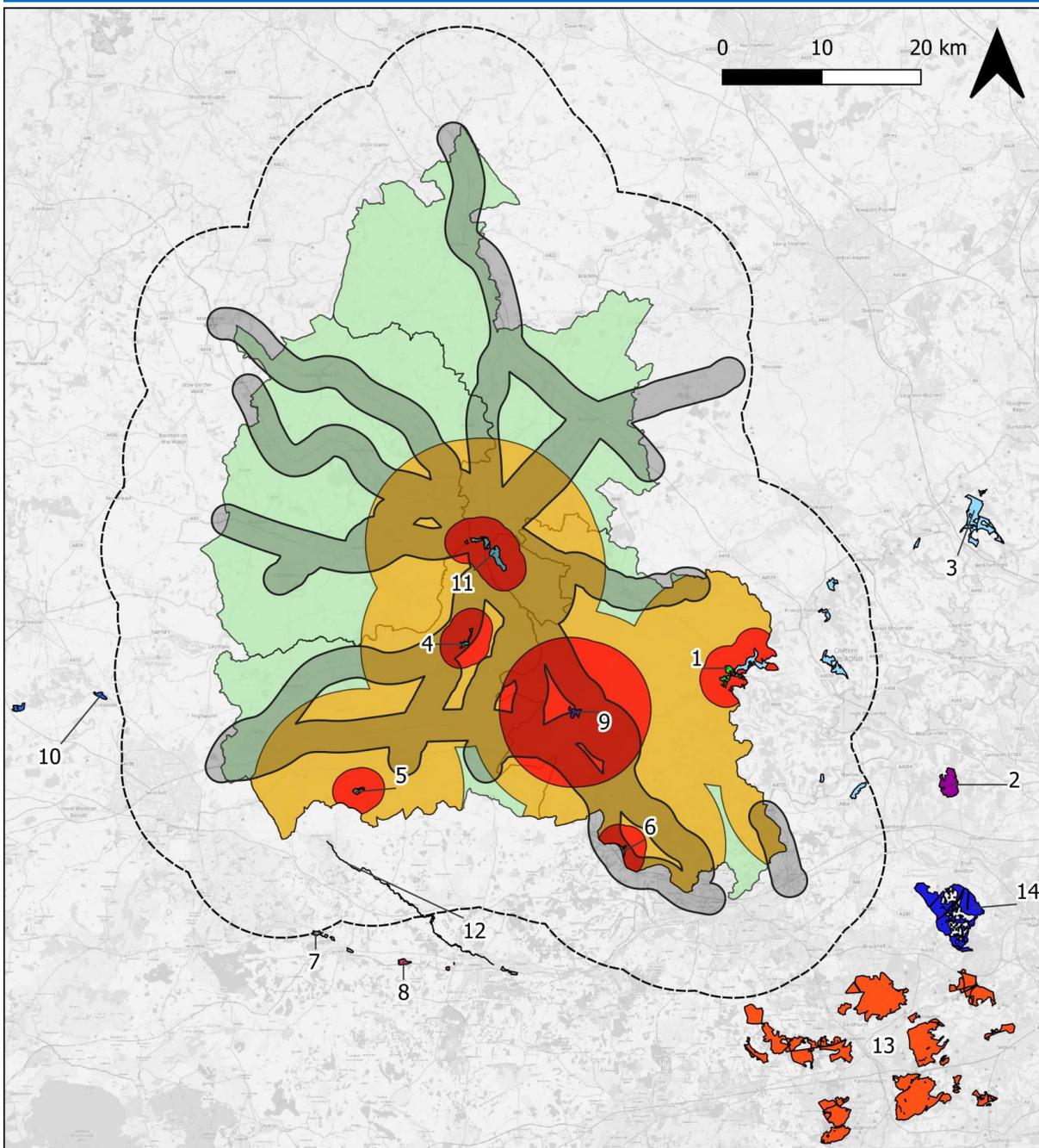
**Legend**

Risk zones for recreational impacts - Option 2 - Focus on Oxford-led growth

Number	Site name
1	Aston Rowant (SAC)
2	Burnham Beeches (SAC)
3	Chilterns Beechwoods (SAC)
4	Cothill Fen (SAC)
5	Hackpen Hill (SAC)
6	Hartslock Wood (SAC)
7	Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain (SAC)

Number	Site name
8	Kennet Valley Alderwoods (SAC)
9	Little Wittenham (SAC)
10	North Meadow & Clattinger Farm (SAC)
11	Oxford Meadows (SAC)
12	River Lambourn (SAC)
13	Thames Basin Heaths (SPA)
14	Windsor Forest & Great Park (SAC)

- Option 2
- Risk Zone Buffers
  - Higher risk of LSE (2km or 7km)
  - Lower risk of LSE (10km)
  - Very low risk of LSE (>10km)
- 10km Buffer Oxfordshire County



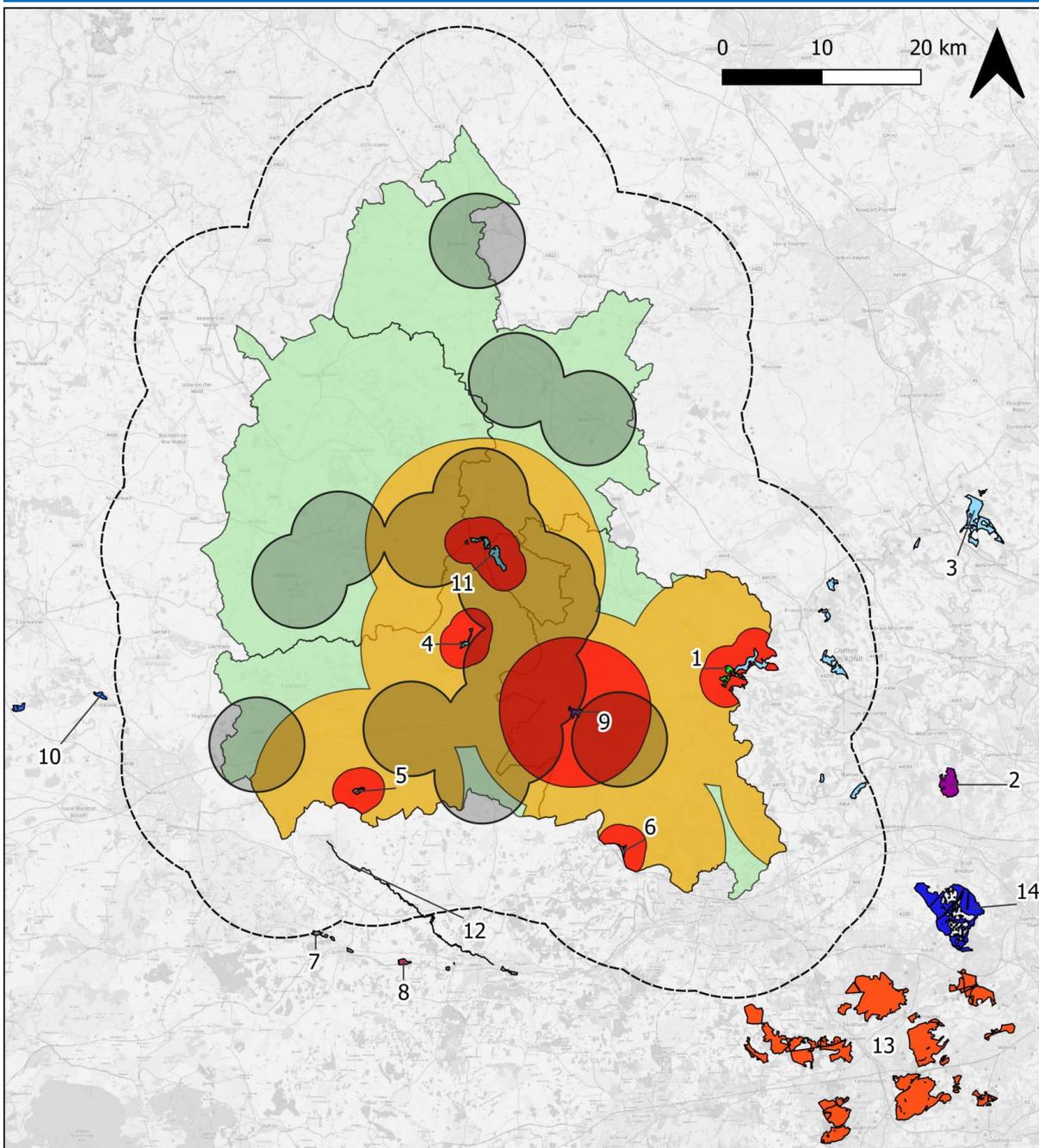
**Legend**

Risk zones for recreational impacts - Option 3 - Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs

Number	Site name
1	Aston Rowant (SAC)
2	Burnham Beeches (SAC)
3	Chilterns Beechwoods (SAC)
4	Cothill Fen (SAC)
5	Hackpen Hill (SAC)
6	Hartslock Wood (SAC)
7	Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain (SAC)

Number	Site name
8	Kennet Valley Alderwoods (SAC)
9	Little Wittenham (SAC)
10	North Meadow & Clattinger Farm (SAC)
11	Oxford Meadows (SAC)
12	River Lambourn (SAC)
13	Thames Basin Heaths (SPA)
14	Windsor Forest & Great Park (SAC)

- Option 3
- Risk Zone Buffers
  - Higher risk of LSE (2km or 7km)
  - Lower risk of LSE (10km)
  - Very low risk of LSE (>10km)
- 10km Buffer Oxfordshire County



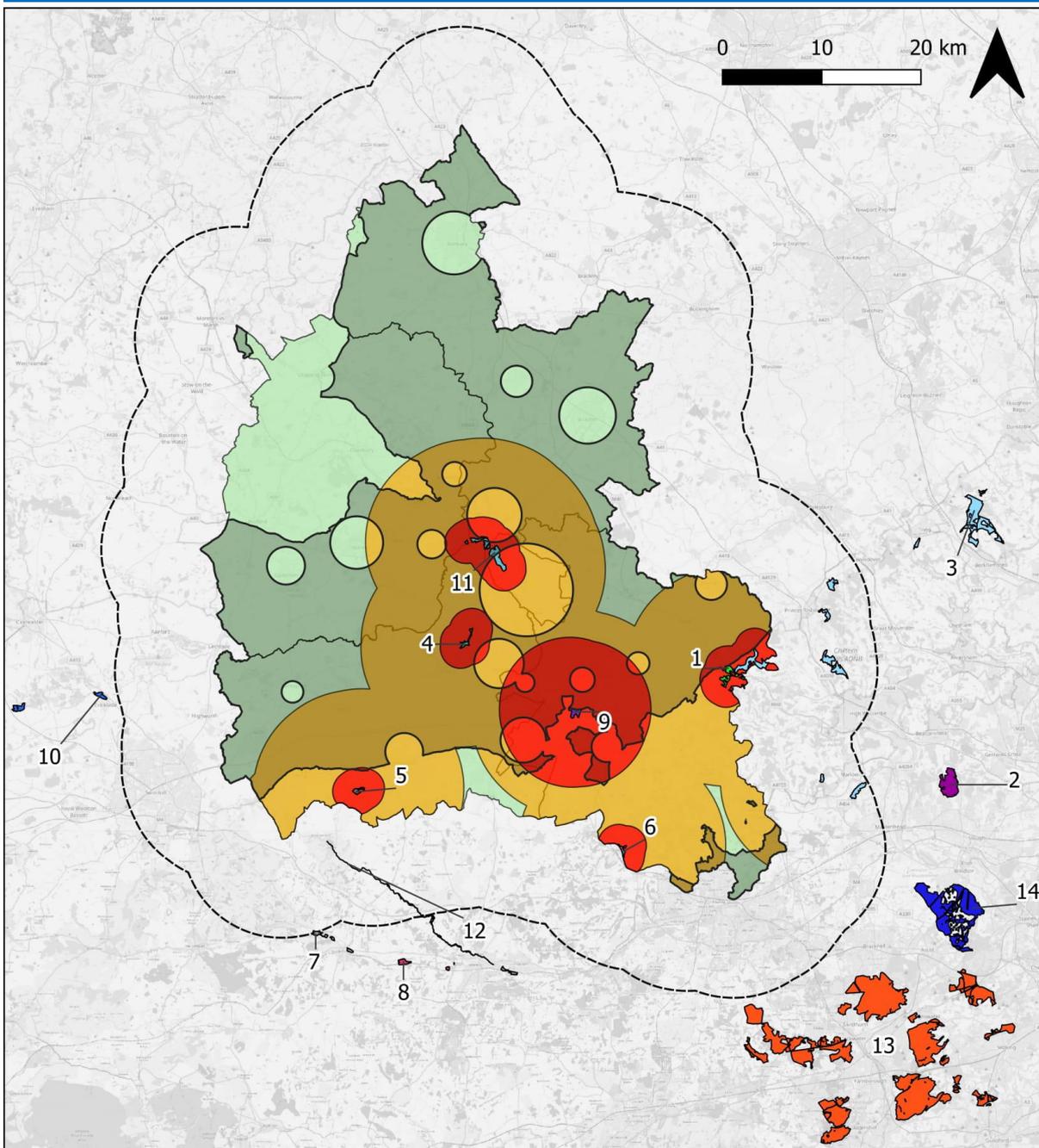
**Legend**

Risk zones for recreational impacts - Option 4 - Focus on strengthening business locations

Number	Site name
1	Aston Rowant (SAC)
2	Burnham Beeches (SAC)
3	Chilterns Beechwoods (SAC)
4	Cothill Fen (SAC)
5	Hackpen Hill (SAC)
6	Hartslock Wood (SAC)
7	Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain (SAC)

Number	Site name
8	Kennet Valley Alderwoods (SAC)
9	Little Wittenham (SAC)
10	North Meadow & Clattinger Farm (SAC)
11	Oxford Meadows (SAC)
12	River Lambourn (SAC)
13	Thames Basin Heaths (SPA)
14	Windsor Forest & Great Park (SAC)

- Option 4
- Risk Zone Buffers**
- Higher risk of LSE (2km or 7km)
- Lower risk of LSE (10km)
- Very low risk of LSE (>10km)
- 10km Buffer Oxfordshire County



**Legend**

Risk zones for recreational impacts - Option 5 - Focus on supporting rural communities

Number	Site name
1	Aston Rowant (SAC)
2	Burnham Beeches (SAC)
3	Chilterns Beechwoods (SAC)
4	Cothill Fen (SAC)
5	Hackpen Hill (SAC)
6	Hartslock Wood (SAC)
7	Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain (SAC)

Number	Site name
8	Kennet Valley Alderwoods (SAC)
9	Little Wittenham (SAC)
10	North Meadow & Clattinger Farm (SAC)
11	Oxford Meadows (SAC)
12	River Lambourn (SAC)
13	Thames Basin Heaths (SPA)
14	Windsor Forest & Great Park (SAC)

- Option 5
- Risk Zone Buffers**
- Higher risk of LSE (2km or 7km)
- Lower risk of LSE (10km)
- Very low risk of LSE (>10km)
- 10km Buffer Oxfordshire County



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# Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (Regulation 18 – Part 2) Sustainability Appraisal

Prepared by  
LUC July 2021

## Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (Regulation 18 – Part 2) Sustainability Appraisal

Version	Status	Prepared	Checked	Approved	Date
1.	Draft SA Report	O. Dunham S. Newman H. Briggs	J. Allen	T. Livingston	11.06.2021
2.	Publication SA Report	O. Dunham J. Allen	J. Allen	T. Livingston	25.06.2021

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

**1.1** This report has been prepared by LUC on behalf of the Oxfordshire Planning Authorities to document the current stage of the integrated Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

**1.2** As part of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal agreement with the Government, the six Oxfordshire authorities (i.e. including Oxfordshire County Council) have committed to producing a joint plan until 2050 for Oxfordshire, to be known as the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. The area to be covered by the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is shown in **Figure 1.1**.

**1.3** This report relates to the Regulation 18 (part 2) version of the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan and should be read in conjunction with that consultation document. A Regulation 18 (part 1) consultation document<sup>1</sup> entitled 'Introducing the Oxfordshire Plan' was published in early 2019 alongside an SA Scoping Report setting out the proposed Sustainability Appraisal process and associated SA Framework for testing the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan as it develops. The Regulation 18 (part 1) consultation document introduce the concept, context and scope for the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan and shared Councils' collective aspirations for the Plan for consideration and feedback from consultees. The Regulation 18 (part 2)<sup>2</sup> version of the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan sets out specific policy options for consultee review and feedback. This accompanying SA Report identifies the significant effects of all reasonable options within the Regulation 18 (part 2) document.

### Oxfordshire County

**1.4** Oxfordshire is located to the west of London, Milton Keynes and Cambridge (see **Figure 1.1**) and is part of the former south east region of England. The county is divided into five district council areas: Oxford City, Cherwell, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse and West Oxfordshire. Nearly a quarter of the county's residents live in Oxford City with the remainder split fairly evenly over the other four districts. The county is the most rural county in the south east of England, and over 30% of the population live in towns and villages of less than 10,000 people.

**1.5** Oxfordshire has a rich and varied natural and historic environment, which makes it an attractive place to live, visit and work. Oxfordshire is home to nearly 30,000 businesses, providing over 380,000 jobs, including a high proportion in research, science and technology, medicine, engineering, and high-tech manufacturing. Oxford's unique character as a leading university city and a historic centre sets it apart from the rest of the county. Tourism, business and academia are vital to the economy and 35% of the county's jobs are in the city. Due to the high number of jobs and the shortage and cost of housing in the city, more people commute to Oxford from outside the city than are working residents. However, Oxfordshire's rural areas are generally prosperous, so although many of its towns are largely commuter towns, they have managed to retain economic vitality as attractive and thriving local centres providing a good range of services.

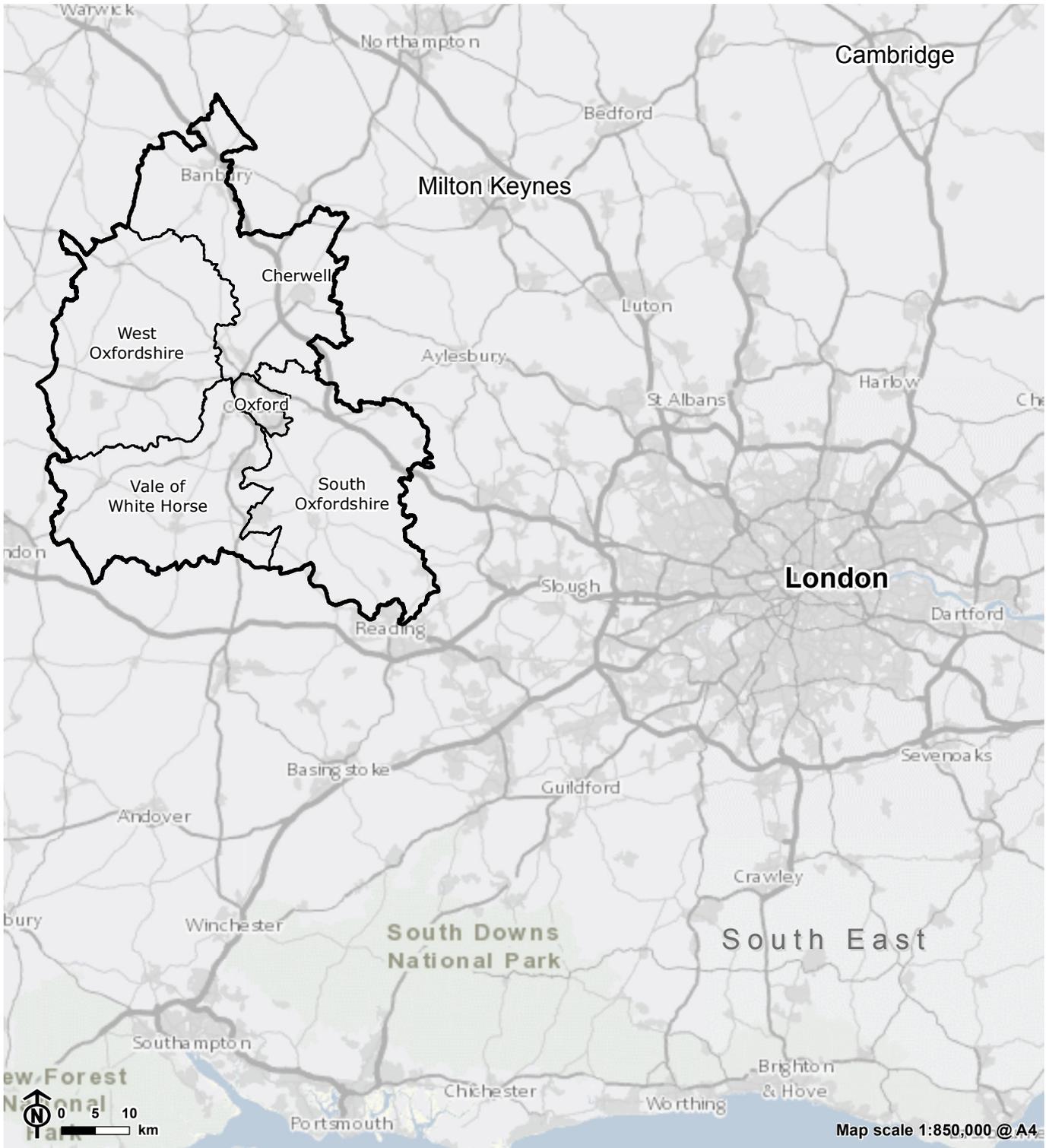
**1.6** Oxfordshire lies on the busy road and rail transport corridor between the south coast ports, the Midlands and the north and has good links to London and the West Midlands via the M40. However, it suffers a lack of connectivity to and from the east, in particular to the high-value growth areas around Milton Keynes and Cambridge. There are currently no direct rail connections to these centres, while travel by road involves cross-country single-carriageway routes or the use of the M25 around London. Therefore, improving the connectivity on this corridor, through the East-West Rail projects is a key ambition for Oxfordshire.

**1.7** Current trends in relation to the various social, economic and environmental issues affecting Oxfordshire are described in more detail in **Appendix B**. Without the implementation of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, such trends are likely to continue. In most cases, the emerging Oxfordshire Plan 2050 offers opportunities to affect existing trends directly and strongly in a positive way, through an up-to-date plan which reflects the requirements of the NPPF.

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<sup>1</sup> Introducing the Oxfordshire Plan, Oxfordshire Authorities (2019) Available at: <http://oxfordshireplan.org/about/#documents>

<sup>2</sup> Oxfordshire Plan – Regulation 18 (part 2) Consultation Document, Oxfordshire Authorities (2021) Available at: Oxfordshire Plan – Regulation 18(part 2) Consultation Document



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Source: OS

Figure 1.1: Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Area

-  Oxfordshire county
-  District boundary

## Oxfordshire Plan 2050

**1.8** The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 will provide an integrated strategic planning framework and evidence base to support sustainable growth across the county to 2050, including the planned delivery of new homes and economic development, and the anticipated supporting infrastructure needed.

**1.9** As part of the formation of the plan, the authorities are committed to ensuring there will be early, proportionate and meaningful engagement between plan makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and statutory bodies.

### Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal

**1.10** Oxfordshire's local planning authorities in association with Oxfordshire County Council signed the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal<sup>3</sup> with the government in 2018. In return for guaranteed funding for affordable housing, infrastructure and economic growth, the Oxfordshire authorities have committed to submit a Local Plan for each district, to plan for the delivery of 100,000 new homes to 2031 (through those Local Plans) and to produce the Oxfordshire Plan. The scope of the Oxfordshire Plan was developed in a Scoping Document<sup>4</sup> agreed by the partner authorities in October 2018 and endorsed by the Oxfordshire Growth Board.

**1.11** The Growth Deal commits to an Oxfordshire Plan that covers the period to 2050. This is a significantly longer period than is typical with a Local Plan and is important in this strategic context. A significant amount of joint work across the Oxfordshire authorities has already taken place which has fed into the current round of Local Plans. These Local Plans cover the period from 2011 to 2031, 2034 or 2036. There is therefore a good deal of detail and certainty around that period. The latter period of the Oxfordshire Plan to 2050 will be based on a new evidence base produced specifically for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. Future Local Plans will sit within the framework defined by the Oxfordshire Plan.

**1.12** The benefits of preparing a strategic plan covering the whole of Oxfordshire are recognised, enabling the long-term holistic planning for the county and alignment of economic and housing growth with infrastructure investment and environmental protection and enhancement. The Oxfordshire Plan will form part of a hierarchy of plans, including the Oxford-Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework, and will set the framework for the preparation of future local plans, which will still be required to guide development within the city and the Oxfordshire districts.

## Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

**1.13** The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires Local Plans to be subject to SA. SA is designed to ensure that the plan preparation process maximises the contribution that a plan makes to sustainable development and minimises any potential adverse impacts. The SA process involves appraising the likely social, environmental and economic effects of the policies and proposals within a plan from the outset of its development.

**1.14** SEA is also a statutory assessment process, originally required under the European SEA Directive<sup>5</sup>, transposed in the UK by the SEA Regulations<sup>6</sup> and amended by the Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 (SI 2018/1232). As set out in the explanatory Memorandum accompanying the Brexit amendments<sup>7</sup>, they are necessary to ensure that the law functions correctly following the UK's exit from the EU. No substantive changes were made by this instrument to the way the SEA regime currently operates. Therefore, the SEA Regulations remain in force and it is a legal requirement for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 to be subject to SA and SEA throughout its preparation. The SEA Regulations require the formal assessment of plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment and which set the framework for future consent of projects requiring Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)<sup>8</sup>. The purpose of SEA, as originally defined in Article 1 of the SEA Directive, is:

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<sup>3</sup> Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal (Nov 2017) MHCLG

<sup>4</sup> Oxfordshire Joint Statutory Spatial Plan Scoping Document (Oct 2018)

<sup>5</sup> Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment.

<sup>6</sup> The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/1633), as amended by The Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 (SI 2018/1232).

<sup>7</sup> Explanatory Memorandum to the Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 No. 1232.

<sup>8</sup> Under EU Directives 85/337/EEC and 97/11/EC concerning EIA.

“to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans...with a view to promoting sustainable development”.

**1.15** SEA and SA are separate processes but have similar aims and objectives. Simply put, SEA focuses on the likely environmental effects of a plan whilst SA includes a wider range of considerations, extending to social and economic impacts. The Government’s planning practice guidance<sup>9</sup> shows how it is possible to satisfy both requirements by undertaking a joint SA and SEA process, and to present an SA Report that incorporates the requirements of the SEA Regulations. The SA and SEA of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is being undertaken using this integrated approach and throughout this report the abbreviation ‘SA’ should therefore be taken to refer to ‘SA incorporating the requirements of SEA’.

### Meeting the requirements of the SEA Regulations

**1.16 Table 1.1** signposts the relevant sections of this SA Report that meet the SEA Regulations requirements (the remainder will be met during subsequent stages of the SA of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050). This table will be included in the full SA Report at each stage of the SA to show how the requirements of the SEA Regulations have been met through the SA process.

**Table 1.1: Requirements of the SEA Regulations and where these have been met**

SEA Regulations requirements	Where covered in this report
<b>Preparation of an environmental report in which the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme, and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan or programme, are identified, described and evaluated (Reg. 12). The information to be given is (Schedule 2):</b>	
a) An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme, and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes.	Chapters 1 and 3 and <b>Appendices B and C</b> of this SA Report.
b) The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme.	
c) The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.	
d) Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC.	
e) The environmental protection, objectives, established at international, Community or national level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental, considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.	
f) The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors. (Footnote: These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects).	Chapters 4 and 5 of this SA Report identify the likely significant effects of the options considered to date for the Oxfordshire Plan, including positive and negative effects over the short, medium and long term. Consideration of the secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects of the Oxfordshire Plan will be met at the next stage in the SA process, once preferred

<sup>9</sup> See <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

SEA Regulations requirements	Where covered in this report
	options have been identified for all constituent parts of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.
g) The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme.	This requirement will be met at the next stage in the SA process, once preferred options have been identified for all constituent parts of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.
h) An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.	Chapters 4 and 5 and <b>Appendix D</b> of this SA Report.
i) a description of measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Reg. 17.	Appropriate monitoring indicators will be considered once preferred options have been identified for all constituent parts of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.
j) a non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings.	A separate non-technical summary document will be prepared to accompany the SA Report for the Proposed Submission version of the Local Plan.
The report shall include the information that may reasonably be required taking into account current knowledge and methods of assessment, the contents and level of detail in the plan or programme, its stage in the decision-making process and the extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in that process to avoid duplication of the assessment (Reg. 12(3)).	Addressed throughout this SA Report.
Consultation requirements	
Authorities with environmental responsibility, when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information which must be included in the environmental report (Reg. 12(5)).	Consultation on the scope and level of detail of the SA was carried out with the public as well as Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England for 5 weeks in January and February 2019.
Authorities with environmental responsibility and the public, shall be given an early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinion on the draft plan or programme and the accompanying environmental report before the adoption of the plan or programme (Reg. 13).	Regulation 18 consultation on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is taking place between 31 <sup>st</sup> July and 8 <sup>th</sup> October 2021. The consultation documents are accompanied by this SA Report.
Other EU Member States, where the implementation of the plan or programme is likely to have significant effects on the environment of that country (Reg. 14).	The Local Plan is not expected to have significant effects on other EU Member States.
Taking the environmental report and the results of the consultations into account in decision-making (Reg. 16)	
<b>Provision of information on the decision:</b>  When the plan or programme is adopted, the public and any countries consulted under Reg. 14 must be informed and the following made available to those so informed:	To be addressed after the Local Plan is adopted.

SEA Regulations requirements	Where covered in this report
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the plan or programme as adopted;</li> <li>■ a statement summarising how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme and how the environmental report, the opinions expressed, and the results of consultations entered into have been taken into account, and the reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and</li> <li>■ the measures decided concerning monitoring.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Monitoring</b> of the significant environmental effects of the plan's or programme's implementation (Reg. 17).</p>	To be addressed after the Local Plan is adopted.
<p><b>Quality assurance:</b> environmental reports should be of a sufficient standard to meet the requirements of the SEA Regulations.</p>	This report has been produced in line with current guidance and good practice for SEA/SA and this table demonstrates where the requirements of the SEA Regulations have been met.

## Structure of this Report

1.17 This chapter has introduced Oxfordshire County, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and the SA process. The remainder of the report is structured into the following chapters:

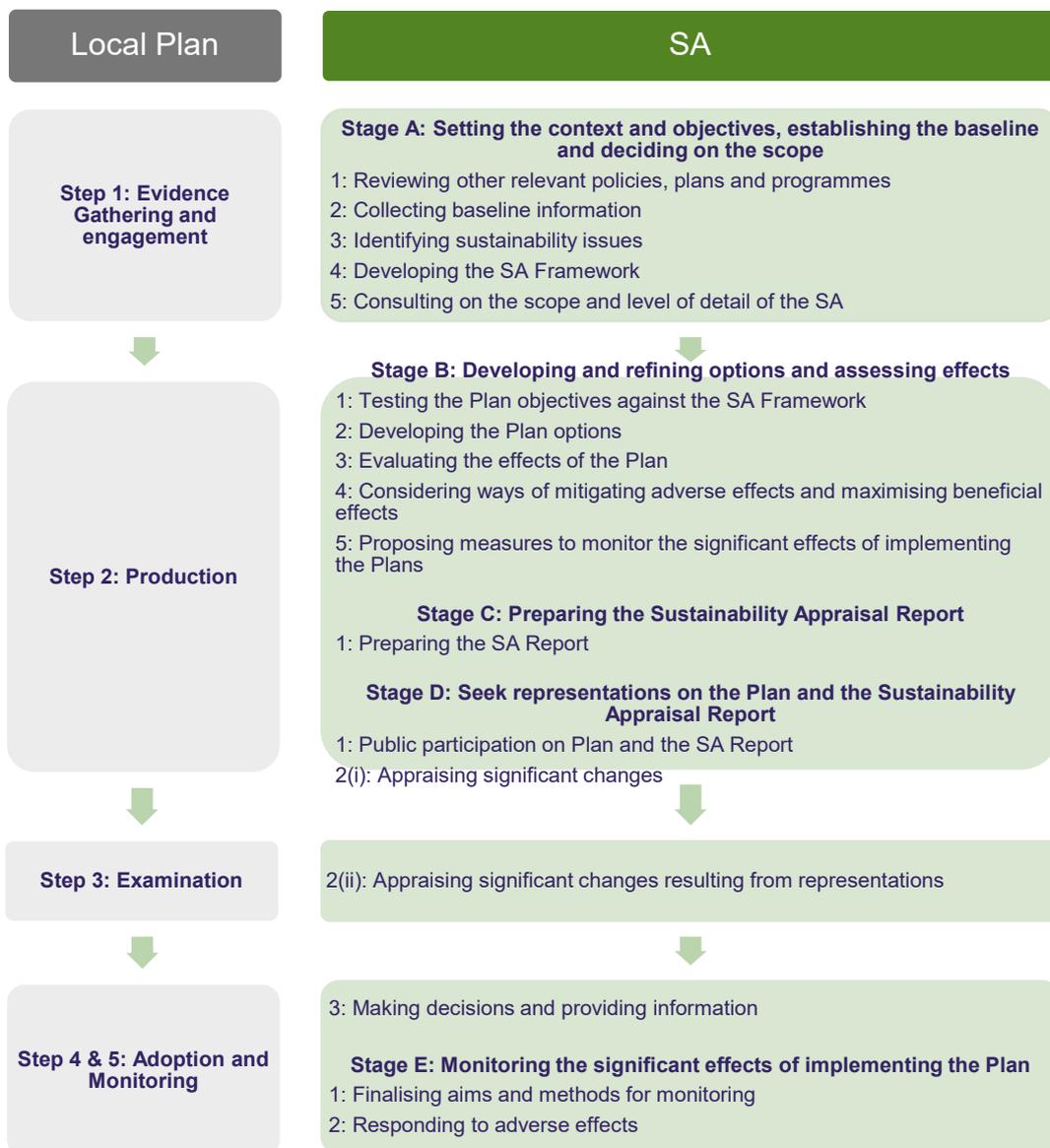
- **Chapter 2** describes the method used to carry out the SA and the difficulties encountered in applying that method.
- **Chapter 3** provides an outline of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and describes the relationship between the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and other relevant plans, policies and programmes; summarises the social, economic and environmental characteristics of the County and identifies the key sustainability issues.
- **Chapter 4** describes the results of the SA of the initial options considered in the drafting of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 through 2019 and 2020. This chapter also records the reasoning behind the definition of the initial options tested, i.e. what was and was not considered to be a reasonable option for consideration and SA at the time.
- **Chapter 5** describes the results of the SA of the options set out in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 document published alongside this SA Report for consultation. This chapter also records the evolution of options in the Draft Oxfordshire Plan 2050 consultation document from the initial options considered and appraised in Chapter 4.
- **Chapter 6** sets out conclusions relating to the SA findings presented in the preceding chapters of the SA Report and the next steps in the Plan and SA processes.
- **Appendix A** summarises the representations received during the consultation of the SA Scoping Report in 2019, responds to each comment, referring to associated changes to the SA scope where appropriate.
- **Appendix B** sets out the detailed sustainability context of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, used to inform the SA Framework.
- **Appendix C** reviews the relevant international and national plans, policies and programmes.
- **Appendix D** sets out the Council's reasons for the selection of preferred policies in the Oxfordshire Plan in light of the reasonable alternatives identified in the Oxfordshire Plan.

## Chapter 2 Methodology

**2.1** In addition, to complying with legal requirements, the approach being taken to the SA of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is based on current good practice and the guidance on SA/SEA set out in the Government's planning practice guidance.

**2.2** This calls for the SA to be carried out as an integral part of the plan-making process and **Figure 2.1** sets out the main stages of the plan-making process and shows how these correspond to the SA process.

**Figure 2.1: Corresponding stages in plan-making and SA**



**2.3** The sections below describe the approach that has been taken to the SA of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 to date and provide information on the subsequent stages of the process.

## Stage A: Scoping

**2.4** The Scoping stage of SA involves understanding the social, economic and environmental baseline for the plan area as well as the sustainability policy context and key sustainability issues and using these to inform the appraisal framework as follows.

### Review other relevant policies, plans and programmes to establish policy context

**2.5** The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is not prepared in isolation; rather it is prepared within the context of other policies, plans and programmes. The SEA Regulations require the Environmental Report to describe the relationship of the plan with other relevant plans and programmes. It should also be consistent with environmental protection legislation and support attainment of sustainability objectives that have been established at the international and national levels. A review was therefore undertaken of other policies, plans, and programmes at the international and national levels that were considered to be relevant to the scope of the Oxfordshire Plan. The review is presented in **Appendix C**.

### Collect baseline information to establish sustainability context

**2.6** Information on existing environmental, social and economic conditions in the plan area provides the baseline against which the plan's effects can be assessed in the SA and monitored during the plan's implementation.

**2.7** Baseline information can also be combined with an understanding of drivers of change that are likely to persist regardless of the local plan being assessed, to understand the likely future sustainability conditions in the absence of the plan.

**2.8** The SEA Regulations require the Environmental Report to describe relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and how they are likely to evolve without the plan. An understanding of this likely future, together with the assessed effects of the plan itself, additionally allows the SA to report on cumulative effects, another requirement of the SEA Regulations.

**2.9** The SEA Regulations require assessment of effects in relation to the following 'SEA topics': biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage), landscape, and the inter-relationship between these. Baseline information was therefore collected in relation to the SEA topics and additional sustainability topics were also addressed, covering broader socio-economic issues such as housing, health and wellbeing, access to services, crime and safety, education and employment. This reflects the integrated approach that is being taken to the SA and SEA processes. Baseline information for the County is presented in **Appendix B**.

### Identify sustainability issues

**2.10** The baseline information also allows the identification of existing sustainability issues, including problems as required by the SEA Regulations.

**2.11** Sustainability issues and their likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 are detailed in **Appendix B** and summarised in **Chapter 3**.

### Develop the SA framework

**2.12** The relevant sustainability objectives identified by the review of other policies, plans, and programmes together with the key sustainability issues facing the District, identified by the collection and review of baseline information, helped to inform the development of a set of sustainability objectives (the 'SA framework') against which the effects of the plan would be assessed. These objectives also take into account the types of issues that are capable of being affected by the land use planning system.

**2.13** Development of the SA framework is not a requirement of the SEA Regulations but is a recognised way in which the likely sustainability effects of a plan can be transparently and consistently described, analysed and compared. The SA framework comprises a series of sustainability objectives and supporting criteria that are used to guide the appraisal of the policies and proposals within a plan. The SA framework that has been used in this way throughout the plan-making process is presented in **Chapter 3**.

### Consult on the scope and level of detail of the SA

**2.14** Public and stakeholder participation is an important element of the SA and wider plan-making processes. It helps to ensure that the SA Report is robust and has due regard for all appropriate information that will support the plan in making a contribution to sustainable development.

**2.15** The SEA Regulations require the statutory consultation bodies (the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England) to be consulted “when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included” in the SA Report. The scope and level of detail of the SA is described in the Scoping Report and in particular addressed by the SA framework, and the statutory consultees (and the local authority areas which surround Oxfordshire, members of the public and local stakeholders) have therefore been consulted on this when it was developed as part of the scoping process for the SA Report<sup>10</sup>. This consultation on the SA Scoping Report was undertaken for a five-week period in January and February 2019.

**2.16 Appendix A** summarises the representations that were received during the consultation on the SA Scoping Report and responds, highlighting amendments to the review of policies, plans, and programmes, the baseline information, key sustainability issues, the SA framework and the SA assumptions where relevant.

### Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects

**2.17** Developing options for a plan is an iterative process, usually involving a number of consultations with the public and stakeholders. Consultation responses and the SA can help to identify where there may be other ‘reasonable alternatives’ to the options being considered for a plan.

**2.18** In relation to the SA Report, Regulation 12 (2) of the SEA Regulations requires that:

“The report must identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects on the environment of—  
(a) implementing the plan or programme; and  
(b) reasonable alternatives, taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme.”

**2.19** The SEA Regulations require that the alternative policies and site allocations considered for inclusion in a plan that must be subject to SA are ‘reasonable’, therefore alternatives that are not reasonable do not need to be subject to appraisal. Examples of unreasonable alternatives could include policy options that do not meet the objectives of the plan or national policy (e.g. the NPPF) or site allocation options that are unavailable or undeliverable.

**2.20** SA findings are not the only factors taken into account by plan-makers when determining a preferred option to take forward in a plan. Indeed, there will often be an equal number of positive or negative effects identified by the SA for each option, such that it is not possible to rank them based on sustainability performance in order to select a preferred option. Factors such as public opinion, deliverability and conformity with national policy will also be taken into account by plan-makers when selecting preferred options for their plan.

**2.21** The following sections describe the process that was followed in identifying and appraising options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. The alternative options were identified by the Council based on the most up-to-date evidence. The stages of option development and accompanying SA to date are outlined below.

### Identifying and appraising the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050

#### Initial options

**2.22** The initial options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 set out in **Chapter 4** of this SA Report were derived from several sources. Firstly, the Oxfordshire authorities prepared and consulted on a range of high-level documents in early 2019, including ‘Introducing the Oxfordshire Plan’<sup>11</sup> to ascertain the issues and alternatives for planning for growth up to 2050. A launch event of 18 December 2018 involved more than 100 stakeholders. Statutory consultees, stakeholders, and the general public were

<sup>10</sup> This original scoping process is described in the SA Scoping Report prepared by LUC in January 2019.

<sup>11</sup> Introducing the Oxfordshire Plan, Oxfordshire Authorities (2019) Available at: <http://oxfordshireplan.org/about/#documents>

invited to comment on the issues that the Oxfordshire Plan should deal with, a vision and series of objectives and aspirations to guide the plan, as well as suggest ideas for the most suitable places for economic growth and residential development up to 2050.

**2.23** Secondly, the Oxfordshire authorities met with the SA team for a series of short internal workshops in March and May 2019 to refine the alternatives prior to a sustainability appraisal being carried out of the initial alternatives for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. To inform this refining process, research was undertaken into policy alternatives and good practice used successfully elsewhere.

**2.24** Thirdly, additional public consultation was carried out through drop-in events, a bus roadshow, social media etc. This is documented in the June 2019 report 'Introducing the Oxfordshire Plan: Consultation Report'.

**2.25** In addition, a 'call for strategic ideas' from 21<sup>st</sup> February 2019 to 12<sup>th</sup> April 2019 invited suggestions on major infrastructure and other types of policy designations, such as new areas for environmental protection, as well as areas for employment and new homes. This resulted in 30 submissions that suggested strategic approaches to the Oxfordshire Plan, as well as many suggestions for specific sites for development. Suggested strategic approaches have helped to shape the reasonable alternatives to be tested through the SA.

**2.26** Further alternatives were identified on 24 May 2019 through a second major consultation event through which a broad range of stakeholders engaged in a panel workshop to discuss how good growth could be beneficial for Oxfordshire.

**2.27** Responses to all of these consultations were then reviewed alongside the relevant national legislation, policy and guidance to identify an initial set of strategic alternatives for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 to deliver, distribute and manage growth alongside other social and environmental priorities over the plan period. The plan-making team and SA consultants fine-tuned these alternatives later in 2019 and early 2020 through several rounds of internal review, combining some alternatives that were very similar, and deleting and giving reasons for why others were considered to be not reasonable. Further details on the initial reasonable options considered and appraised, as well as each option's potential significant effects can be found in **Chapter 4**.

#### Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Regulation 18 Part 2 Consultation Document options

**2.28** Following the consultations in 2019 and early 2020, a series of internal meetings were undertaken in October and November 2020 with the Oxfordshire Plan team and district partners, including planning and specialist officers, to refine options to be included in the next Oxfordshire Plan consultation and to be tested through SA. The meetings were thematically based to focus on options relating to climate change and energy, the natural environment, housing, jobs and infrastructure.

**2.29** The options discussed through the thematic workshops then informed the options in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Regulation 18 Part 2 Consultation Document organised around five themes: climate change, environmental quality, healthy communities, sustainable travel and jobs and homes.

**2.30** **Chapter 5** records the evolution of options in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 consultation document from the initial options considered and appraised in **Chapter 4** and **Appendix D** sets out the reasons for the selection of the preferred options in Oxfordshire Plan 2050 in light of the reasonable alternatives identified and appraised.

#### Appraisal methodology

**2.31** Reasonable alternative options considered in the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 have been appraised against the SA objectives in the SA framework set out in **Chapter 3**.

**2.32** The likely effects of options and policies need to be determined and their significance assessed, which inevitably requires a series of judgments to be made. The appraisal has attempted to differentiate between the most significant effects and other more minor effects through the use of the symbols. **Figure 2.2** illustrates the full range of potential effects identified through the SA process. The dividing line in making a decision about the significance of an effect is often quite small. Where either (++) or (-) has been used to distinguish significant effects from more minor effects (+ or -) this is because the effect of an option or policy on the SA objective in question is considered to be of such magnitude that it will have a noticeable and measurable effect taking into account other factors that may influence the achievement of that objective. Where a potential positive or negative effect is uncertain, a question mark is added to the relevant effect (e.g. +? or -?) and the effect is colour coded as per the potential positive, negligible or negative effect (e.g. green, yellow, orange, etc.).

Figure 2.2: Key to symbols and colour coding used in the SA of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050

++	Significant positive effect likely
++/-	Mixed significant positive and minor negative effects likely
+	Minor positive effect likely
+/- or ++/--	Mixed minor or significant effects likely
-	Minor negative effect likely
-/+	Mixed significant negative and minor positive effects likely
--	Significant negative effect likely
0	Negligible effect likely
?	Likely effect uncertain

### Stage C: Preparing the sustainability appraisal report

**2.33** This SA Report describes the process that has been undertaken to date in carrying out the SA of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. It sets out the findings of the appraisal of the spatial and policy options considered to date, highlighting any likely significant effects, both positive and negative, taking into account the likely short, medium and long-term and permanent and temporary effects.

**2.34** These findings are set out in **Chapters 4** and **5** of this SA Report.

### Stage D: Consultation on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and the SA report

**2.35** Information about consultation on the SA that has already taken place at earlier stages of plan-making has been provided above.

**2.36** The Oxfordshire Local Planning Authorities are inviting comments on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and this accompanying SA Report. These documents are being published on the Council’s website for consultation between 31<sup>st</sup> July and 8<sup>th</sup> October 2021. Consultation comments received on this SA Report document will be taken into account and reported on in the remaining stages of the SA.

### Stage E: Monitoring implementation of the Local Plan

**2.37** Recommendations for monitoring the likely significant social, environmental and economic effects of implementing the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 will be considered following the drafting and SA of the Submission Oxfordshire Plan 2050, once preferred options for all constituent parts of the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan have been identified.

### Difficulties encountered and Limitations

**2.38** The SEA Regulations, Schedule 2(8) require the Environmental Report to include:

“...a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.”

**2.39** The high-level nature of the policy options meant that at times it was difficult to assess in detail the likely effects of the options on each SA objective. Once policies have been worked up in more detail, it should be possible to draw more certain conclusions about their likely effects and make recommendations on how policy options might be worded to improve their sustainability performance.

**2.40** Because many effects of development are dependent on the exact location, layout and design of development, it may be possible to mitigate some of the effects highlighted in this SA. However, given the inherent uncertainties about these details at this strategic stage of planning and assessment, the SA focuses on identifying potential significant effects of the options considered, whilst making no assumptions about detailed design or mitigation measures that might be implemented.

**2.41** Notable limitations of the SA process to date include:

- The spatial options represent strategic principles for the scale and distribution of growth to be delivered over the Plan period. Consequently, the SA focusses on the likely strategic implications of their implementation. This approach ensured that all options could be appraised consistently.
- The sheer number of strategies, plans, programmes, policy documents, advice and guidance produced by a range of statutory and non-statutory bodies means that it has not been possible within the resources available to consider every potentially relevant document in detail (see **Chapter 3** and **Appendix C**). However, we have drawn out the key generic messages relevant to the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and the SA.
- Similarly, with regard to the evidence base set out in **Chapter 3** and **Appendix B** upon which effects have been identified, every effort has been made to ensure that the SA Report reflects the latest baseline information. The SA of future iterations of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and associated new reasonable alternatives will continue to benefit from the more recent, accurate and consistent evidence available.

## Chapter 3

# Sustainability context for development in Oxfordshire and the SA framework

**3.1** The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is not prepared in isolation and is influenced by other plans, policies and programmes and by broader sustainability objectives. It needs to be consistent with international and national guidance and strategic planning policies and should contribute to the goals of wide range of other programmes and strategies, such as those relating to social policy, culture and the historic environment.

**3.2** It must also conform to environmental protection legislation and the sustainability objectives established at international, national and regional level.

**3.3** Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations requires:

- (a) “an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and its relationship with other relevant plans or programmes”; and
- (e) “the environmental protection objectives established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation”

**3.4** An outline of the contents and main objectives of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation document can be found in **Chapter 5** and **Appendix D**. The relationship between the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and other relevant plans, policies and programmes is set out below and in **Appendix C**.

### Key International Plans, Policies and Programmes

**3.5** Former EU Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (the ‘SEA Directive’) and Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the ‘Habitats Directive’) were transposed into the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulations<sup>12</sup> and Habitats Regulations<sup>13</sup>. Following the UK’s departure from the EU, these Regulations still apply and require environmental assessment processes to be undertaken in relation to the emerging Oxfordshire Plan. These processes should be undertaken iteratively and integrated into the production of the plan in order to ensure that any potential negative environmental effects (including on European-level nature conservation designations) are identified and can be mitigated.

**3.6** There were also a wide range of other EU Directives relating to issues such as water quality, waste and air quality, most of which are transposed into UK law through Acts, Regulations and national-level policy. The UK has now fully left the EU and therefore EU Directives no longer apply to the UK. The relevant associated Regulations are discussed in **Appendix C**.

### Key National Plans, Policies and Programmes

**3.7** The most significant national policy context for the Oxfordshire Plan is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was originally published in 2012 and has periodically been updated (most recently in 2019)<sup>14</sup>. The Oxfordshire Plan must be consistent with the requirements of the NPPF, which states:

<sup>12</sup> The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/1633), as amended by The Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 (SI 2018/1232).

<sup>13</sup> The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (2017) SI No. 2017/1012, as amended by The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (SI 2019/579), TSO (The Stationery Office), London.

<sup>14</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2021) National Planning Policy Framework [online] Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/779764/NPPF\\_Feb\\_2019\\_web.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779764/NPPF_Feb_2019_web.pdf)

*“Succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings.”*

**3.8** The NPPF sets out information about the purposes of local plan-making, stating that plans should:

- *“Be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development;*
- *Be prepared positively, in a way that is aspirational but deliverable;*
- *Be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan-makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees;*
- *Contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous, so it is evident how a decision maker should react to development proposals;*
- *Be accessible through the use of digital tools to assist public involvement and policy presentation; and*
- *Serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area.”*

**3.9** The NPPF requires local planning authorities to set out the strategic priorities for the area in the Local Plan. This should include strategic policies to deliver:

- *“Housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;*
- *Infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);*
- *Community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and.*
- *Conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.”*

**3.10** The NPPF also promotes well-designed places and development, and plans should *“at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations.”*

**3.11** Non-strategic policies should be used by local planning authorities and communities to set out more detailed policies for specific areas, neighbourhoods or types of development, including qualitative aspects such as design of places, landscapes, and development.

**3.12** The NPPF also states that:

*“Local Plans and spatial development strategies should be informed throughout their preparation by a sustainability appraisal that meets the relevant legal requirements. This should demonstrate how the plan has addressed relevant economic, social and environmental objectives (including opportunities for net gains). Significant adverse impacts on these objectives should be avoided and, wherever possible, alternative options which reduce or eliminate such impacts should be pursued. Where significant adverse impacts are unavoidable, suitable mitigation measures should be proposed (or, where this is not possible, compensatory measures should be considered).”*

## Relationship with Other Relevant Plans and Programmes

**3.13** There is also a considerable amount of work being undertaken at the sub-regional level to help inform the future growth of Oxfordshire (and therefore the Oxfordshire Plan 2050) and other related parts of the country. Of particular note is the Government’s commitment to developing a Spatial Framework for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc with local partners in Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire. Relevant plans and initiatives are summarised below.

### Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal

**3.14** As mentioned above, in February 2018, all of the local authorities in Oxfordshire signed a Housing and Growth Deal, whereby the authorities would receive up to £215 million of central government funding in return for delivering 100,000 homes by 2031. The assumption built into this figure was that 1,400 dwellings per annum were required in Oxford to 2031. This requires achievement of a series of milestones to be achieved by the local authorities, with funding contingent on the achievement of each milestone.

### Oxfordshire's Strategic Vision for Long-Term Sustainable Development

**3.15** The Oxfordshire Strategic Vision (March 2021)<sup>15</sup> has been prepared by the collective leadership of the Oxfordshire Growth Board. It is designed to facilitate collaborative working on economic development, strategic planning and growth, and oversees the projects agreed in the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal, seeking agreement on local priorities. The Strategic Vision cuts across many sectors and is designed to inform a range of strategies, plans and programmes. It sets out common and shared ambition but is not intended to replace or set the vision for any of our communities or partner organisations.

**3.16** The Strategic Vision is part of the existing portfolio approach to plan and strategy development in Oxfordshire. Its role is to establish an overarching ambition that informs the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 amongst other relevant plans, strategies and programmes that reflect wider considerations such as health and wellbeing and infrastructure that impact on place-making in Oxfordshire. Consequently, the following components of the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision are published in the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan:

- Oxfordshire's strategic vision.
- Oxfordshire's definition of good growth.
- 11 guiding principles for sustainable development.

### Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) Strategic Economic Plan

**3.17** The OxLEP Strategic Economic Plan<sup>16</sup> helps identify potential opportunities and prospects of Oxfordshire and manages the county's economic growth to ensure sustainability and inclusivity. The Plan is structured around a number of priorities which define four programmes: People, Place, Enterprise and Connectivity. Under these four programmes, the Plan sets out a number of actions. These range from the Westgate Community Employment Plan which aims to provide local residents with sustainable jobs to providing rural broadband in more remote, cut-off areas and the development of science parks across the county (e.g. Science Vale in south Oxfordshire).

### Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP4)

**3.18** The Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan of 2015 (LTP4), 'Connecting Oxfordshire'<sup>17</sup>, sets out Oxfordshire County Council's policy and strategy for developing the transport system in Oxfordshire to 2031. The LTP4 aims to:

- Support jobs and housing growth and economic vitality;
- Reduce transport emissions and meet our obligations from Government;
- Protect, and where possible enhance Oxfordshire's environment and improve quality of life; and
- Improve public health, air quality, safety and individual wellbeing .

**3.19** The LTP4 includes an area strategy for Oxford as well as other strategies, including a bus strategy which sets out how improvements will be made to the county-wide bus network as well as developing rapid transit services along the busiest routes.

**3.20** Oxfordshire County is now in the process of updating this Local Transport Plan, entitled the 'Local Transport and Connectivity Plan' (LTCP). The updated document will better reflect the county's strategy both for digital infrastructure and for

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<sup>15</sup> Oxfordshire Strategic Vision, Oxfordshire Growth Board (2021). Available at: <https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/projects/oxfordshire-strategic-vision/>

<sup>16</sup> OxLEP (2016) *Creating the Environment for Growth: Strategic Economic Plan for Oxfordshire*

<sup>17</sup> Oxfordshire County Council and Connecting Oxfordshire (2015) *Connecting Oxfordshire: Local Transport Plan 2015-2031*

connecting the whole county. A vision document<sup>18</sup> has been prepared and consulted upon. The draft vision is for a net-zero transport system in Oxfordshire that facilitates clean growth while protecting the environment and society. There is also a focus on securing high quality gigabit connectivity and discouraging private vehicle use. Work is now underway on the preparation of a full version of the LTCP due for consultation later in 2021.

### Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy

**3.21** The Oxfordshire Growth Board published the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy in November 2017<sup>19</sup>. This sets out ambitions for new and improved infrastructure to 2031 and beyond. Regionally and county-wide, the strategy supports an East-West rail link between Oxford, Bicester, Milton Keynes and Bedford; rail improvements between Oxford and Didcot; redevelopment of Oxford Station, and upgrades to the A34.

### Spatial Framework for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc

**3.22** The Government is working with local partners in Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire to deliver a Spatial Framework for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc that will:

- support long-run sustainable economic growth across the area;
- help to make the area a brilliant place to live, work and travel in – for existing residents and future communities alike; and
- support lasting improvements to the environment, green infrastructure and biodiversity.<sup>20</sup>

## Sustainability Context

**3.23** Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations requires that the Environmental Report includes descriptions of:

‘(3) The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.’

**3.24 Appendix B** of this report sets out the detailed policy context, baseline, and key sustainability issues (including their likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050) for each SA subject area, including the topics required to be covered by the SEA Regulations. Separate sections of **Appendix B** cover the following subject areas:

- Population health and wellbeing (including inclusion and deprivation, culture, leisure and recreation and health).
- Housing.
- Economy and employment.
- Transport.
- Air quality.
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- Water resources and water quality.
- Flood risk.
- Soils.
- Minerals.
- Biodiversity and geodiversity.

<sup>18</sup> Oxfordshire County Council, Local Transport and Connectivity Plan – vision consultation (February-March 2021)

<sup>19</sup> AECOM (2017) *Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy*

<sup>20</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Planning for sustainable growth in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc: an introduction to the spatial framework (2021) Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-for-sustainable-growth-in-the-oxford-cambridge-arc-spatial-framework/planning-for-sustainable-growth-in-the-oxford-cambridge-arc-an-introduction-to-the-spatial-framework>

- Heritage.
- Landscape and townscape.
- Green Belt.

**3.25** The description of the likely future evolution of the baseline and key issues without the Oxfordshire Plan considers past trends and current pressures. It is recognised that development in Oxfordshire County will not be delivered in isolation from those areas around it. The effect of delivering new development and supporting infrastructure will often be transmitted across administrative boundaries. As such the SA will also consider the cumulative effect of delivering new development with consideration for growth being proposed in neighbouring authority areas, once the preferred options for the Oxfordshire Plan have been identified.

**3.26** SEA guidance recognises that data gaps will exist but suggests that where baseline information is unavailable or unsatisfactory, authorities should consider how it will affect their assessments and determine how to improve it for use in the assessment of future plans. Data gaps are referenced where necessary. The collection and analysis of baseline data is regarded as a continual and evolving process, given that information can change or be updated on a regular basis. Relevant baseline information will be updated during the SA process as and when data is published.

## Key Sustainability Issues

**3.27** Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations requires that the Environmental Report includes descriptions of:

‘(2) The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme.’

**3.28**

- The severe **under-provision of homes** to meet the needs of a growing number of households, and in particular the **delivery of homes that are genuinely affordable** in the county with highest house price to average income ratio in the country.
- The on-going and **persistent pockets of deprivation** in some communities in Oxfordshire, despite deprivation not being a major issue for the majority of the population.
- The under provision of **accessible natural green space** within Oxfordshire.
- The increasing importance of providing for the needs of an **ageing population**.
- The national importance of Oxford and Oxfordshire in providing **high quality jobs** linked to its research, science and knowledge sectors.
- The need to provide for a **flexible and diverse economy** and job opportunities.
- Significant **road congestion**, particularly on strategic roads and routes into the County’s main settlements at peak hours, coupled with inadequate public transport services outside the main settlements.
- Linked to congestion, an on-going concern about **air pollution**, particularly from vehicles.
- Increasing **pressure on water resources** to serve the needs of homes, commerce and industry as well as pressure on water quality relating to waste water treatment and the environmental capacity of the water systems.
- The importance of taking into account current and future **flood risk** in deciding where development should be located and managing surface water run-off through the use of sustainable drainage systems.
- The need to safeguard Oxfordshire’s **best and most versatile agricultural land and mineral resources** for future generations.
- Improving the contribution that the County makes to reducing its contributions to **climate change**, by being more efficient in energy use and increasing the proportion of energy from renewable and low carbon sources, and by building resilience.

- The need to protect the County's **biodiversity**, in particular its internationally and nationally designated habitats, but also to maintain and strengthen its ecological networks both within the County but also beyond, with a focus on biodiversity and environmental net gain.
- The need to protect and enhance the **historic character** of Oxfordshire, including not only its designated and non-designated assets but also its historic settlements and landscapes.
- The need to protect and enhance the character of Oxfordshire's **landscape**, including the special views into Oxford and the protected landscape of the three AONBs and their settings.

**3.29** The likely evolution of these issues without implementation of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is set out in detail in **Appendix B**.

## The SA Framework

**3.30** As described in **Chapter 2**, this SA Report sets out the likely significant effects of the spatial and policy options considered for inclusion in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, specifically in relation to whether they will help to meet a set of sustainability objectives – the 'SA framework'. The sustainability objectives and supporting appraisal questions were defined by reference to the key sustainability issues facing the County and the international, national, and sub-regional policy objectives that provide the context for the Plan (see **Appendix B**).

**3.31** The SA framework is set out in **Table 3.1**. The penultimate column indicates the relationship between the sustainability issues and the SA objectives, through a set of appraisal questions that seek to determine whether the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 will help to address/improve those issues. The final column indicates the relationship between the SA objective and the SEA Regulation environmental topics: biodiversity; population; human health; fauna; flora; soil; water; air; climatic factors; material assets; cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage; landscape.

**Table 3.1: SA Framework for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050**

SA objective	Appraisal questions: Will the Oxfordshire Plan 2050...	SEA topic
<b>1.</b> To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	Provide for objectively assessed housing need? Deliver the range of types, tenures and affordable homes the people of Oxfordshire need over the Plan Period? Provide well-located, well-designed and energy efficient homes? Address the housing needs of an ageing population?	Population Human Health Material Assets
<b>2.</b> To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	Maintain, connect and create multifunctional and accessible open spaces and green infrastructure commensurate with population growth? Provide for recreation and sports facilities? Provide additional space for local food production? Avoid and mitigate adverse health effects associated with air and noise pollution? Promote healthy lifestyles by encouraging and facilitating walking and cycling? Promote climate change resilience through sustainable siting, design, landscaping and infrastructure? Create and maintain vibrant, multifunctional countryside in and around existing and new communities? Assist in the reduction of health inequalities? Put healthy place making at the core of the plan? Address the needs of an ageing population?	Population Human Health Climatic Factors
<b>3.</b> To sustain and create safe and	Promote developments that benefit Oxfordshire's most deprived areas? Facilitate the integration of new communities with existing communities?	Population Human Health

SA objective	Appraisal questions: Will the Oxfordshire Plan 2050...	SEA topic
vibrant Oxfordshire communities	<p>Provide for a mix of uses including homes, jobs, community facilities, retail, open space?</p> <p>Encourage and support diverse town centre uses, flexible enough to adapt to future needs, including periodic pandemic measures such as social distancing measures and temporary closures?</p> <p>Ensure that new development is fully supported by appropriate green infrastructure, community, transport and utilities infrastructure and services?</p> <p>Address safety, crime and the fear of crime, and disorder?</p> <p>Safeguard existing social and cultural spaces of community cohesion and engagement?</p>	
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	<p>Facilitate the availability of land for research and development and commercial premises in the Oxfordshire Knowledge Spine?</p> <p>Allow for knowledge and science based activity linked to the universities and other research institutions to develop and grow?</p> <p>Support the delivery of Science Transit?</p> <p>Provide for the types of homes and cultural attractions that will attract and retain global talent?</p> <p>Allow for sufficient flexibility to respond to uncertainties and changing economic circumstances?</p> <p>Support opportunities for the expansion and diversification of business and inward investment?</p> <p>Provide for the types of homes, cultural attractions and natural environment that will attract and retain global talent?</p> <p>Support the rural, agricultural and tourism-based economies to ensure that a gap does not emerge between the areas of high investment and other parts of the County?</p> <p>Ensure residents across the County have access to high quality digital infrastructure to facilitate home working?</p> <p>Facilitate measures to embed the principles of a circular economy?</p>	Population Human Health Material Assets
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	<p>Provide for sufficient range, type and location of employment land to meet Oxfordshire's needs?</p> <p>Allow for sufficient flexibility to respond to uncertainties and changing economic circumstances?</p> <p>Support opportunities for the expansion and diversification of business and inward investment?</p> <p>Provide for new and improved education and training facilities leading to a work ready population of school and college leavers?</p> <p>Maintain and enhance the economic vitality and vibrancy of Oxfordshire's city and town centres?</p> <p>Encourage economic investment and regeneration to create jobs in Oxfordshire's more deprived communities?</p> <p>Diversify employment types?</p>	Population Human Health Material Assets
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	<p>Promote the delivery of integrated, compact communities made-up of a complementary mix of land uses?</p> <p>Support the maintenance and expansion of high quality public transport networks?</p>	Material Assets Human Health

SA objective	Appraisal questions: Will the Oxfordshire Plan 2050...	SEA topic
	<p>Help to address road congestion on the strategic road network and routes into Oxfordshire's city and town centres?</p> <p>Enhance connectivity of the sustainable transport network and provide new cycling and walking infrastructure, including transition the walking and cycling infrastructure that has been temporarily created during COVID-19 to permanent fixtures within communities?</p>	<p>Climatic Factors</p> <p>Air</p>
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	<p>Promote energy efficient design and sustainable construction?</p> <p>Encourage the provision of renewable energy infrastructure where possible?</p> <p>Encourage the provision of electric vehicle charging points?</p> <p>Minimise greenhouse gas emissions from transport?</p> <p>Build climate resilience?</p> <p>Promote the provision of a coherent and high-quality green infrastructure network?</p>	<p>Climatic Factors</p> <p>Air</p>
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	<p>Minimise increases in polluting traffic in Oxfordshire's Air Quality Management Areas?</p> <p>Contain measures which will help to reduce congestion, particularly involving Heavy Goods Vehicles?</p> <p>Facilitate the take up of low / zero emission vehicles?</p> <p>Minimise noise pollution during construction, and noise affecting new and existing Oxfordshire residents?</p> <p>Maintain Oxfordshire's tranquil areas and dark skies (particularly with regard to the three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty)?</p> <p>Promote natural air quality improvements and noise absorption through strategic planning of green infrastructure?</p> <p>Ensure potential impacts on European sites, such as the Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation, are mitigated?</p>	<p>Air</p> <p>Human Health</p>
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	<p>Minimise inappropriate development in Source Protection Zones?</p> <p>Ensure there is sufficient wastewater treatment capacity, both in physical and environmental terms, to accommodate the new development?</p> <p>Ensure there are sufficient water resources to support existing and new development?</p> <p>Support efficient use of water in new development, taking into account climate change?</p> <p>Safeguard the water quality and ecological integrity of waterbodies including the River Thames as it flows through Oxfordshire, and its tributaries?</p> <p>Promote the use of natural wetlands to improve water quality through water filtration?</p>	<p>Water</p> <p>Human Health</p> <p>Climatic Factors</p>
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	<p>Minimise inappropriate development in areas prone to flood risk and areas prone to increasing flood risk elsewhere, taking into account the impacts of climate change?</p> <p>Promote the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems and flood resilient design?</p> <p>Promote the use of Natural Flood Management techniques?</p>	<p>Water</p> <p>Material Assets</p> <p>Human Health</p> <p>Climatic Factors</p>
11. To protect Oxfordshire's	<p>Prioritise the development of brownfield land over greenfield land?</p>	<p>Soil</p>

SA objective	Appraisal questions: Will the Oxfordshire Plan 2050...	SEA topic
soils and ensure efficient use of land	Avoid development of Oxfordshire's best and most versatile agricultural land? Take an appropriate approach to remediating contaminated land?	Human Health
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	Avoid sterilising mineral resources?	Material Assets
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	Safeguard and enhance Oxfordshire's internationally and nationally designated biodiversity assets, taking into account the impacts of climate change? Safeguard and enhance Oxfordshire's locally designated biodiversity assets, taking into account the impacts of climate change? Safeguard and enhance Oxfordshire's ancient woodlands, meadows, chalk grasslands and other characteristic habitats, taking into account the impacts of climate change? Help to conserve, connect and enhance ecological networks, taking into account the impacts of climate change? Achieve overall net gains in biodiversity and the environment? Provide and manage opportunities for people to come into contact with resilient wildlife places whilst encouraging respect for and raising awareness of the sensitivity of such locations? Protect Oxfordshire's designated geodiversity sites?	Biodiversity Flora and Fauna
14. To protect and enhance the significant of Oxfordshire's historic environment	Conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's internationally (Blenheim Palace) and nationally designated heritage assets, including their setting? Conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's locally designated and non-designated heritage assets, including their setting? Encourage the conservation, management and enhancement of the County's heritage assets, particularly heritage at risk and historic landscapes, taking into account the impacts of climate change? Raise awareness, understanding and appreciation of, and access to, the historic environment? Facilitate regeneration opportunities through tourism and cultural assets to support the local area? Conserve and enhance designated and undesignated archaeology, including their setting (above or below ground)?	Cultural Heritage, Architectural and Archaeological Heritage
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	Protect and enhance the character of Oxfordshire's three AONBs (Cotswolds, Chilterns, North Wessex Downs) including their setting? Avoid development in locally sensitive landscapes? Protect the special views into and out of Oxford? Safeguard the character and distinctiveness of Oxfordshire's settlements? Safeguard the social and cultural importance of the landscape?	Landscape Cultural Heritage

## Chapter 4

### Initial options SA findings

**4.1** This chapter records all the options identified during the early phases of the development of the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan in 2019 and 2020. The assessment of these options has not previously been published through any earlier iterations of the Sustainability Appraisal but are recorded here to illustrate evolution of options for the Oxfordshire Plan. The consideration of options (or 'reasonable alternatives') is one of the most important parts of the SA process. The national Planning Practice Guidance states:

The sustainability appraisal needs to consider and compare all reasonable alternatives as the plan evolves, including the preferred approach, and assess these against the baseline environmental, economic and social characteristics of the area and the likely situation if the plan were not to be adopted. In doing so it is important to:

- outline the reasons the alternatives were selected, and identify, describe and evaluate their likely significant effects on environmental, economic and social factors using the evidence base (employing the same level of detail for each alternative option). Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment are set out in schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004;
- as part of this, identify any likely significant adverse effects and measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and, as fully as possible, offset them;
- provide conclusions on the reasons the rejected options are not being taken forward and the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of the alternatives.

Any assumptions used in assessing the significance of the effects of the plan will need to be documented. Reasonable alternatives are the different realistic options considered by the plan-maker in developing the policies in the plan. They need to be sufficiently distinct to highlight the different sustainability implications of each so that meaningful comparisons can be made.

The development and appraisal of proposals in plans needs to be an iterative process, with the proposals being revised to take account of the appraisal findings.

**4.2** By appraising the reasonable alternative options the SA provides information about how different options perform in environmental, social and economic terms, which in turn can help the Council decide which option to pursue. It should be noted, however, that the SA does not decide which policy options should be adopted. Other factors, such as the views of stakeholders and the public, and other evidence base studies, also help to inform the decision. The SA Report must, however, communicate how these various factors, including the SA, have been taken into account in selecting the preferred policy options, and to demonstrate that the preferred approach is an appropriate strategy when compared to the alternatives.

**4.3** To demonstrate that an appropriate range of policy options has been considered, this chapter describes which options have been considered and which options are considered to be reasonable and unreasonable. The chapter then goes on to appraise the initial reasonable options against the SA framework, identifying each option's likely significant effects.

**4.4** **Table 4.1** sets out all the initial reasonable policy options considered and appraised at this stage in the plan-making process. Both the options and the appraisal are organised under the following policy themes:

- Climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Sustainable construction and design principles.
- Historic environment.
- Natural environment.
- Green Belt.

- Addressing inequalities.
- Affordable housing targets.
- Scale of growth.
- Strategic growth locations.
- Spatial distribution of growth.
- Oxfordshire's infrastructure.
- Accessibility and transport.

**4.5 Table 4.2** sets out the initial policy options not considered to be reasonable at this stage in the plan-making process, and the reasons why.

Table 4.1: Initial Reasonable Policy Options Subjected to Sustainability Appraisal

Policy Theme	Potential alternatives (reasonable alternative approaches)
<b>Oxfordshire's Environment</b>	
<b>Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation</b>	<p><b>Energy efficiency targets:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Require all strategic development to be zero carbon, setting out 'allowable solutions'<sup>21</sup> to offset carbon that cannot be reduced on site.</li> <li>2. Require all strategic development to meet higher energy efficiency standards than Building Regulations<sup>22</sup>, setting out 'allowable solutions' to offset carbon that cannot be reduced on site.</li> <li>3. Set out criteria encouraging higher energy efficiency standards than Building Regulations.</li> <li>4. Do not set energy efficiency targets that are higher than Building Regulations.</li> </ol>
	<p><b>Renewable energy targets:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 100% of the County's new strategic development sites' energy needs generated from renewable sources by 2050<sup>23</sup>.</li> <li>2. 50% of the County's new strategic development sites' energy needs generated from renewable sources by 2050.</li> <li>3. Set out criteria encouraging the siting of renewable energy technologies.</li> <li>4. Do not set county-wide renewable energy targets.</li> </ol>
	<p><b>Promote local low carbon energy networks:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify strategic development locations with potential for local energy networks (e.g. heat from power, co-location of homes and heat/energy producing employment sites).</li> <li>2. Set out criteria encouraging the siting of local energy networks.</li> </ol>

<sup>21</sup> This refers to a local financial mechanism designed to allow developers to offset carbon footprints they couldn't achieve on site. By paying into an allowable solution set up by a local authority a developer could meet its mitigation obligations and receive consent. The money is pooled by local authorities and invested into large scale energy efficiency, low carbon and renewable initiatives that maximise carbon reduction. It could potentially be incorporated into a CIL charging schedule too.

<sup>22</sup> The Building (Amendment) Regulations 2017 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/856/made>

<sup>23</sup> As an example, this would involve very roughly 5-10km<sup>2</sup> solar arrays co-located with existing infrastructure (closed landfill sites, Abingdon reservoir), plus 15km<sup>2</sup> of 'greenfield' solar arrays, plus PVs on homes, plus ground-source heat pumps and biomass/district heating.

Policy Theme	Potential alternatives (reasonable alternative approaches)
Page 784	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Do not identify locations or set criteria for low carbon energy networks.</li> </ol>
	<p><b>Promote strategic renewable wind and solar developments:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify strategic development locations with potential for strategic wind and/or solar farms.</li> <li>2. Set out criteria encouraging the siting of strategic wind and solar farms.</li> <li>3. Do not identify locations or set criteria for strategic renewable wind/solar development.</li> </ol>
	<p><b>Promote low/zero carbon transport networks:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify strategic development locations and linkages for investment in strategic zero/low carbon transport networks, such as zero emission/electric vehicle zones, low emission zones, solar roads and electric car hubs.</li> <li>2. Encourage the development of strategic low/zero carbon transport networks.</li> <li>3. Do not encourage or identify strategic locations for low/zero carbon transport networks.</li> </ol>
	<p><b>Promote climate change resilience and adaptation*:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify strategic opportunities for upstream flood mitigation/storage areas (see also 'Promote/enhance biodiversity at the strategic scale).</li> <li>2. Identify strategic opportunities for urban greening.</li> <li>3. Identify strategic opportunities for large-scale tree planting.</li> <li>4. Do not identify strategic opportunities to promote climate change resilience and adaptation in Oxfordshire.</li> </ol>
	<p><b>Water efficiency standards:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Require all strategic development to be water neutral<sup>24</sup>.</li> <li>2. Require all strategic development to meet higher water efficiency standards than Building Regulations.</li> <li>3. Set out criteria encouraging higher water efficiency standards than Building Regulations.</li> </ol>

<sup>24</sup> Water neutrality is: For every new development, total water use in the region after the development must be equal to or less than total water use in the region before the development. Therivel, Riki, Christine Drury, and Ian Hepburn, comps. (Achieving Water Neutrality in the South East Region Discussion Paper. Oct. 2006).

Policy Theme	Potential alternatives (reasonable alternative approaches)
	<p>4. Do not set water efficiency targets that are higher than Building Regulations.</p>
<p><b>Sustainable construction and design principles</b></p>	<p><b>Promote sustainable construction and design:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prescribe county-wide principles/standards to encourage the sustainable design and construction of all buildings, including orientation, insulation etc., possibly in line with established Code for Sustainable Homes/Home Quality Mark and BREEAM standards.*</li> <li>2. Prescribe county-wide principles/standards for the masterplanning of strategic scale developments, including integration with public transport links, healthy place-making principles, community hubs, green infrastructure etc.*</li> <li>3. Do not identify county-wide principles/standards.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Historic Environment</b></p>	<p><b>Promote the conservation and enhancement of the historic built environment:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of Oxfordshire’s historic environment at the strategic scale.</li> <li>2. Do not establish a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of Oxfordshire’s historic environment at the strategic scale.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Natural Environment</b></p>	<p><b>Promote the conservation and enhancement of strategic views, landscape and townscape features:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish a positive strategy for the conservation and enhancement of important and/or sensitive strategic views, landscape and townscape features at a county-wide landscape scale.</li> <li>2. Do not establish a positive strategy for the conservation and enhancement of landscape and townscape features at a county-wide landscape scale.</li> </ol> <p><b>Protect/enhance biodiversity at the strategic scale:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish a positive strategy for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity at a county-wide landscape scale.</li> <li>2. Do not establish a positive strategy for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity at a county-wide landscape scale.</li> </ol> <p><b>Promote/create/enhance green infrastructure and access to nature at the strategic scale:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify location(s) for new strategic green spaces to serve the county.</li> <li>2. Do not identify strategic scale green spaces.</li> </ol> <p><b>Proportions of biodiversity net gain:</b></p>

Policy Theme	Potential alternatives (reasonable alternative approaches)
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 10% biodiversity net gain to be delivered through new development on the basis of achieving at least some net gain.</li> <li>2. 20% biodiversity net gain to be delivered through new development on the basis of proven viability<sup>25</sup>.</li> <li>3. 50%-100% biodiversity net gain to be delivered through new development on the basis of starting to account for past losses<sup>26</sup>.</li> <li>4. Set out criteria encouraging at least some biodiversity net gain.</li> <li>5. Do not set county-wide biodiversity net gain targets.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Green Belt</b></p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 786</p>	<p><b>Enhancement of Green Belt Beneficial Uses<sup>27</sup>:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify strategic opportunities to enhance the existing Oxford Green Belt (for delivery through Local Plans) (i.e. provide access, opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation, enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or improve damaged or derelict land).</li> <li>2. Do not identify strategic opportunities to enhance the existing Oxford Green Belt.</li> </ol>
<b>Equality in Oxfordshire</b>	
<p><b>Addressing inequalities</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify strategic development opportunities in areas of socio-economic deprivation to address inequality through regeneration. Identify strategic opportunities for investment in areas of strategic socio-economic deprivation to be delivered through S106 and CIL contributions, e.g. skills development and training, infrastructure investment including green infrastructure.</li> <li>2. Do not identify strategic opportunities to regenerate areas of socio-economic deprivation.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Affordable housing targets</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Set different affordable housing targets across the County to reflect different markets.</li> <li>2. Set consistent affordable housing target across Oxfordshire.</li> <li>3. Do not set affordable housing targets.</li> </ol>

<sup>25</sup> In 2016 Lichfield District Council introduced a policy requiring a 20% biodiversity net gain on developments: <https://www.endsreport.com/article/1578483/debrief-inside-councils-pioneering-biodiversity-net-gain-planning-policy>

<sup>26</sup> Several species have seen >90% losses over the last century, which would require much more than 100% net gain to reverse.

<sup>27</sup> Consideration will be given to the need to make strategic alterations to Green Belt boundaries once all other reasonable options for meeting the region's strategic growth needs outside the Green Belt have been considered, in line with the requirements of the NPPF.

Policy Theme	Potential alternatives (reasonable alternative approaches)
<b>Oxfordshire's Growth</b>	
<p><b>Scale of growth</b></p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 787</p>	<p><b>Housing growth alternatives<sup>28</sup>:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Government standard method using 2014 population projections (100,000 new homes to 2050).</li> <li>2. Continue rate of growth in Local Plans to 2030, and thereafter population projections<sup>29</sup> (150,000 new homes to 2050).</li> <li>3. Continue current rate of growth in Local Plans to 2050 (200,000 new homes to 2050).</li> <li>4. National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) Growth Deal level (300,000 homes to 2050).</li> </ol> <p><b>Economic growth alternatives:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Local Industrial Strategy Baseline – 35,000 additional jobs by 2040<sup>30</sup>.</li> <li>2. Meet the region's economic growth needs identified in the Local Industrial Strategy and deliver half of the growth identified in the growth strategy – 71,500 jobs by 2040.</li> <li>3. Local Industrial Strategy Growth Scenario – 108,000 additional jobs by 2040.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Strategic growth locations</b></p>	<p><b>Locations for strategic growth:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify strategic development locations for growth.</li> <li>2. Set out criteria to locate strategic development flexibly to respond to market demands.</li> <li>3. Do not identify locations or criteria for strategic development.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Spatial Distribution of Growth</b></p>	<p><b>Spatial alternatives:</b></p> <p>(Bold titles to show how the conceptual spatial scenarios from the 'Introducing Oxfordshire Plan 2050' consultation document have been refined by the potential spatial alternatives identified to date)</p>

<sup>28</sup> Economic growth is expected to be broadly consistent with housing growth, although improvements in productivity could mean that a given level of housing growth could lead to a greater level of economic growth.

<sup>29</sup> This is the approach used by Thames Water in its Draft Water Resource Management Plan.

<sup>30</sup> The Local Industrial Strategy has created growth scenarios to 2040. While the Oxfordshire Plan's remit is until 2050, additional evidence for the additional ten years is not currently available, as such there is uncertainty attached until 2050.

Policy Theme	Potential alternatives (reasonable alternative approaches)
Page 788	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Intensification in existing towns and cities</b> – Increase density of existing and planned settlements, prioritise brownfield sites.</li> <li>2. <b>Intensification of housing development around strategic economic assets</b> – Co-location of uses to meet business and research park needs.</li> <li>3. <b>Public transport ‘Wheel’ (transport led)</b> – Concentrate development around areas of good public transport connectivity.</li> <li>4. <b>Rail ‘String’ (transport led)</b> – Locate string of settlements along new/upgraded rail corridors (e.g. Cowley line).</li> <li>5. <b>OxCam ‘String’ (transport led)</b> – New development along route of OxCam expressway, once the route has been decided, consistent with NIC Growth Deal aspirations.</li> <li>6. <b>Strategic road junctions</b> – Concentrate development around strategic road junctions.</li> <li>7. <b>Proportionate dispersed growth between existing settlements (needs led)</b> – Oxford, towns and villages.</li> <li>8. <b>New settlements with new strategic transport connections.</b></li> <li>9. <b>Protect environmental assets (environment led)</b> – Identify environmental constraints first (e.g. strategic green and blue infrastructure, historic environment, flooding, AONB and other sensitive landscapes, best and most versatile agricultural land etc., possibly through natural capital mapping), then place housing and employment where they avoid significant impacts and enable enhancements.</li> </ol>
<b>Oxfordshire’s Infrastructure</b>	
<b>Accessibility and transport</b>	<p><b>Improve accessibility and transport*:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Plan for a comprehensive mass transit network linking larger existing and new built-up areas.</li> <li>2. Plan for a comprehensive cycling network linking larger existing and new built-up areas.</li> <li>3. Plan for county wide digital connectivity</li> </ol>

\* In contrast with the other sets of alternatives which are ‘mutually exclusive’ (i.e. only one alternative can be chosen), these sets of alternatives are ‘mix and match’ (i.e. any combination of alternatives can be chosen)

Table 4.2: Initial Policy Options considered not to be ‘reasonable alternatives’

Policy Theme	Alternatives not considered to be reasonable alternatives	Justification
<b>Strategic Historic/Natural Environment Harm avoidance, mitigation and compensation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Require strategic development to avoid, mitigate and/or compensate for significant impacts on all historic/natural assets, and enhance where possible.</li> <li>2. Require strategic development to avoid, mitigate and/or compensate for all impacts on historic settlements, particularly Oxford, or strategic natural assets, and enhance them.</li> </ol>	The NPPF requires all Local Plans to avoid harm to the historic and natural environment in the first instance, then to mitigate and finally compensate if harm cannot be avoided. Furthermore, the appropriateness of specific measures with regards to specific assets are more appropriately managed on a site-level rather than at a strategic scale.
<b>Biodiversity net gain</b>	Do not require biodiversity net gain.	Environment Bill to make biodiversity net gain mandatory.
<b>AONBs to National Park</b>	Support AONBs becoming National Parks.	Not within the remit of Oxfordshire Plan – up to government to determine.
<b>Scale of Growth</b>	Base on natural change in population (using 2016 population projections).	Not consistent with national policy.
<b>Economic Sectors</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Focus on the high tech / innovation / education economy, consistent with NIC Growth Deal / Local Industrial Strategy aspirations.</li> <li>2. Focus on self-sufficiency, resilience, green and ‘circular’ economy (e.g. food production, renewable energy).</li> <li>3. Focus on the construction and manufacturing economy (e.g. production of off-site homes, next generation vehicles, photovoltaics)</li> <li>4. Maximise the diversification of the Oxfordshire economy (e.g. including tourism, healthcare, leisure).</li> </ol>	Oxfordshire 2050 Plan to help deliver all economic needs across the region alongside the Local Industrial Strategy. Prioritising certain sectors at the expense of others is therefore considered to be unreasonable.
<b>Transport Infrastructure</b>	Oxford-Cambridge Expressway alternative route alignment options.	As this is being assessed via the Highways England technical process, it is not within the remit of the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan.
<b>Planning for infrastructure</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Minerals and waste management infrastructure.</li> <li>2. Water resource management.</li> <li>3. Flood risk management.</li> <li>4. Airport infrastructure.</li> </ol>	These types of infrastructure will be addressed through other regional plans and strategies, such as LTP5, Oxfordshire Minerals & Waste Plans, Thames Water’s Water Resource Management Plan, EA flood mitigation strategies, OxLEP Industrial Strategy, plan for these types of infrastructure. Specific alternatives for delivering certain types of infrastructure to support growth in the Oxfordshire Plan may emerge through associated technical studies, e.g. transport evidence, Oxford Infrastructure Strategy.

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Policy Theme	Alternatives not considered to be reasonable alternatives	Justification
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 790</p> <p><b>Delivering infrastructure</b></p>	<p><b>Funding infrastructure</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Optimise funding by central government (taking into account that this may have repercussions elsewhere in the plan).</li> <li>2. Developers to provide infrastructure (taking into account that this may limit the amount of affordable housing etc. that they can provide).</li> <li>3. New settlements to be at a scale large enough to provide full complement of new infrastructure.</li> <li>4. County to take out loans / other innovative funding for infrastructure.</li> </ol>	<p>Infrastructure will be funded through a variety of means including S106 and the County and partners have been successful in securing central government funding in recent years including HIF and the Growth Deal.</p>
	<p><b>Capture land value of new development for infrastructure etc.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Set county-wide land value capture targets or mechanisms through existing means (e.g. CIL, S106).</li> <li>2. Set county-wide land value capture targets or mechanisms through new means (e.g. compulsory purchase orders, changes to Land Compensation Act 1961).</li> <li>3. Do not set county-wide land value capture targets or mechanisms.</li> </ol>	<p>Different land value capture mechanisms are considered to be appropriate in different locations at different times; therefore, a regional approach is considered to be unreasonable.</p>

## Initial Policy Alternatives

4.6 The findings of the SA of the initial policy alternatives are organised by policy topic under each of the eight policy themes. **Tables 4.3 to 4.24** present the likely effects of each policy alternative under each policy topic. Each table is supported by a commentary of the alternatives under each topic. Likely significant effects are highlighted in **bold**.

### Climate change mitigation and adaptation

4.7 There are six policy topics under the climate change policy theme, and these are discussed in turn below:

- Energy efficiency/sustainable design targets.
- Renewable energy targets.
- Promote local low carbon energy networks.
- Promote strategic renewable wind and solar developments.
- Promote low/zero carbon transport networks.
- Promote climate change resilience and adaptation.

4.8 In line with the strategic nature of the plan, these focus on strategic policy alternatives.

### Energy efficiency targets

4.9 **Table 4.3** presents the findings of the SA of the four energy efficiency targets policy alternatives:

1. Require all strategic development to be zero carbon, setting out 'allowable solutions'<sup>31</sup> to offset carbon that cannot be reduced on site.
2. Require all strategic development to meet higher energy efficiency standards than Building Regulations<sup>32</sup>, setting out 'allowable solutions' to offset carbon that cannot be reduced on site.
3. Set out criteria encouraging higher energy efficiency standards than Building Regulations.
4. Do not set energy efficiency targets that are higher than Building Regulations.

Table 4.3: Energy efficiency targets alternatives SA findings

SA objectives	Alternatives			
	1	2	3	4
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	-?	0	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	+	+	0
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	0	0	0	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	+?/-?	+?/-?	+?/-?	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	-?/+?	+?/-?	+?/-?	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+	0	0	0

<sup>31</sup> This refers to a local financial mechanism designed to allow developers to offset carbon footprints they couldn't achieve on site. By paying into an allowable solution set up by a local authority a developer could meet its mitigation obligations and receive consent. The money is pooled by local authorities and invested into large scale energy efficiency, low carbon and renewable initiatives that maximise carbon reduction. It could potentially be incorporated into a CIL charging schedule too.

<sup>32</sup> The Building (Amendment) Regulations 2017 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/856/made>

SA objectives	Alternatives			
	1	2	3	4
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	++	+	+?	-
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	+	+?	-
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	+	+	+?	-
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	+?	+?	+?	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	-
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	-?	-?	-?	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	-?	-?	-?	-

**4.10** Alternative 1 represents the most ambitious of the three energy efficiency target alternatives; Alternative 4 would not set specific energy efficiency targets and effectively rely on the Building Regulations; and Alternatives 2 and 3 represent the middle ground. Both Alternatives 1 and 2 would include an 'allowable solutions' mechanism for offsetting carbon that could not be reduced on site, while Alternative 3 would include criteria encouraging higher energy standards.

**4.11** As the most ambitious alternative, Alternative 1 is likely to generate the most significant effects. The future cost of meeting ambitious energy efficiency targets is unknown, although it is becoming more viable to achieve energy efficiency/zero carbon targets as technology evolves and the market becomes more favourable. However, requiring all strategic development to be zero carbon is likely to add cost to the design and construction of new development. Consequently, minor negative effects are recorded against **SA objectives 1 (housing)** and **5 (employment)** for Alternative 1. The minor negative effect recorded against SA objective 5 (employment) is also coupled with the potential for a minor positive effect in acknowledgement of the fact that a significant increase in energy efficiency standards has the potential to create new local jobs in the county associated with more ambitious design, construction and delivery. However, Oxfordshire aims to expand its low carbon economy through its established vehicles of change: world renowned universities, high-tech economic clusters found at Harwell and Culham, the engineering experience of Motorsport Valley, Oxfordshire's skilled labour force, and a countrywide economic plan focused on innovation and enterprise<sup>33</sup>. The uncertain mixed minor positive and minor negative effects recorded against **SA objective 4 (economy)** are recorded for similar reasons as SA 5 (employment), although the effects are due to the other sectors and drivers influencing the growth of the county's economy. Minor positive effects are expected against **SA objective 6 (travel)** as carbon neutral development is likely to emphasise the use of sustainable modes of transport including active and healthy travel and public transport. This would reduce dependency on the private car. Uncertainty is attached as this would be dependent on location of new developments and integration between different modes of travel. A **significant positive effect** is recorded for Alternative 1 against **SA objective 7 (climate change)** in acknowledgement of the contribution of ambitious energy efficiency targets in reducing the County's contribution to the primary cause of climate change: greenhouse gases. This reduction in carbon emissions is also likely to result in positive effects on air quality and potential positive effects on climate related issues such as flooding; however, given the diverse range of other sources of air pollution and climate change effects these positive

<sup>33</sup> Low Carbon Oxford and the Environmental Change Institute at the University of Oxford *Joining the Crowd: Growing a New Economy for Oxfordshire*

effects are considered to be less significant and are therefore recorded as minor against **SA objectives 2 (health), 8 (pollution) and 10 (flooding)**.

**4.12** A minor positive effect is recorded against **SA objective 9 (water)** in acknowledgement that ambitious energy efficiency targets will have some effect on the design of equivalent water efficiency measures, i.e. energy efficiency measures include reducing water consumption in order to reduce the energy required to pump and heat it.

**4.13** The more ambitious the energy efficiency targets, the greater the likelihood that low carbon and renewable energy generation technologies will be required on site or off site elsewhere within the county. The greater the scale and density of such technologies across the county, the greater the potential for adverse effects on the county's sensitive historic and natural environments. Consequently, minor negative effects are recorded against **SA objectives 13 (biodiversity), 14 (historic environment) and 15 (landscape)** for Alternatives 1-3. Some uncertainty is attached to the likelihood and significance of these effects until such time as the location, design and scale of such technologies is known. Minor positive effects have also been identified against **SA objective 13 (biodiversity)** as reducing emissions combats climate change and consequently the impact climate change is likely to have on biodiversity in the long term. Alternative 1 is unlikely to affect the remaining SA objectives **3 (communities), 11 (soils) and 12 (minerals)** due to its focus on a specific planning policy issue (energy efficiency).

**4.14** The positive and negative effects on the same SA objectives recorded against Alternative 1 are also likely to be felt under Alternatives 2 and 3 for the reasons described above, although their impact is likely to be proportionately less, as they do not require zero carbon development and will depend on how much higher than the Building Regulations standards for energy efficiency they end up going. Alternative 3 is also expected to have uncertainty attached to each effect as the option sets out criteria encouraging higher energy standards but does not require development to achieve higher energy standards like Alternatives 1 and 2.

**4.15** Alternative 4 represents a 'no energy efficiency target' alternative. In the absence of an Oxfordshire-wide energy efficiency target for all strategic developments, developers will be required to meet the minimum requirements set out in the national Building Regulations. Consequently, under this scenario, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 would have a negligible effect on many SA objectives. However, by allowing continued climate change (albeit at a slower rate than at present), it would have a negative effect on **SA objectives 7 (climate change), 8 and 9 (air and water quality), 13 (biodiversity) and 15 (landscape)**.

#### Renewable energy targets

**4.16** Table 4.4 presents the findings of the SA of the four renewable energy targets policy alternatives:

1. 100% of the County's new strategic development sites' energy needs generated from renewable sources by 2050<sup>34</sup>.
2. 50% of the County's new strategic development sites' energy needs generated from renewable sources by 2050.
3. Set out criteria encouraging the siting of renewable energy technologies.
4. Do not set county-wide renewable energy targets.

Table 4.4: Renewable energy targets alternatives SA findings

SA objectives	Alternatives			
	1	2	3	4
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	-	-	-	-
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	+	+	-
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	0	0	0	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	++/-?	+?/-?	+?/-?	0

<sup>34</sup> As an example, this would involve very roughly 5-10km<sup>2</sup> solar arrays in association with existing infrastructure (closed landfill sites, Abingdon reservoir), plus 15km<sup>2</sup> of 'greenfield' solar arrays, plus PVs on homes, plus ground-source heat pumps and biomass/district heating.

SA objectives	Alternatives			
	1	2	3	4
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	-?/++?	+?/-?	+?/-?	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	0	0	0	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	++	+	+?	-
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	+	+?	-
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0	0	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	+?	+?	+?	-
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	+/-?	+/-?	+?/-?	-
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	-?	-?	-?	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	-?	-?	-?	0

**4.17** Alternative 1 represents the most ambitious of the three renewable energy target alternatives, requiring 100% renewables energy generation (i.e. 'zero carbon') for all new strategic development sites. Alternatives 2 and 3 represent the middle ground in between Alternatives 1 and 4. Alternative 2 aims for 50% renewables for new strategic development sites and Alternative 3 encourages renewable energy through setting out criteria. Alternative 4 would not set specific renewable energy targets in the Oxfordshire Plan; however, the minimum national requirements set out under the Renewable Energy Directive 2018/2001/EU would still need to be met.

**4.18** As the most ambitious alternative, requiring the most renewable energy infrastructure and development, Alternative 1 is likely to generate the most significant effects. As aiming to reach 100% renewables, 'zero carbon,' for all new strategic development sites could add costs to the design and construction of new development, but is becoming more viable to achieve as technology evolves and the market becomes more favourable, the potential to effectively deliver new homes and business premises across the County utilising renewable energy is possible. Consequently, the effect of the costs associated with such technologies on the deliverability of homes and employment land are recorded as only minor negative in the short term against **SA objectives 1 (housing) and 5 (employment)** for Alternative 1. The minor negative effect recorded against **SA objective 4 (economy)** is for similar reasons. Conversely, **significant positive effects** are recorded against SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment) in acknowledgement of the fact that a significant increase in the construction of renewable energy has the potential to generate significant growth in the local economy associated with more ambitious design, construction and delivery. In addition, there is potential for driving forward innovation in relevant sectors that exist in Oxfordshire, with opportunities to test and scale up technology within new developments. The cost of meeting ambitious renewable energy targets in the future is unknown. However, there is potential for higher renewable energy targets to be expensive in the short term, but successful and sustainable in the medium to long term as technology evolves.

**4.19** A **significant positive effect** is recorded against **SA objectives 7 (climate change)** in acknowledgement of the contribution of renewable energy targets in reducing the County's new strategic development sites' contribution to the primary cause of climate change: greenhouse gases. This reduction in carbon emissions is also likely to result in an improvement to air

quality and climate related issues such as flooding in the County; however, given the diverse range of other sources of air pollution and climate change effects these positive effects are considered to be less significant and are therefore recorded as minor against **SA objectives 2 (health), 8 (pollution) and 10 (flooding)**.

**4.20** The more ambitious the renewable energy targets for all new strategic development sites, the greater the likelihood that low carbon and renewable energy generation technologies will be required on site or off site elsewhere within the County. The greater the scale and density of such technologies across the county, the greater the potential for adverse effects on the County's sensitive historic and natural environments. Consequently, minor negative effects are recorded against **SA objectives 13 (biodiversity), 14 (historic environment) and 15 (landscape)**. Minor positive effects have also been identified against **SA objective 13 (biodiversity)** as reducing emissions from energy combats climate change and consequently provides positive effects for biodiversity as the two are interconnected. Some uncertainty is attached to the likelihood and significance of these effects until such time as the location, design and scale of renewable energy technologies is known.

**4.21** Alternative 1 is unlikely to affect the remaining SA objectives **3 (communities), 6 (travel), 9 (water), 11 (soils) and 12 (minerals)** due to its focus on renewable energy.

**4.22** The positive and negative effects on the same SA objectives recorded against Alternative 1 are also likely to be felt under Alternatives 2 and 3 for the reasons described above, although they are only likely to be minor, given Alternative 2 would result in a 50% renewable energy target rather than 100% for all new strategic development sites. Alternative 3 would also result in minor effects, but these would be uncertain as the option sets out criteria encouraging renewable energy instead of a specific target like Alternatives 1 and 2.

**4.23** Alternative 4 represents a 'no county-wide renewable energy target' alternative. In the absence of an Oxfordshire-wide renewable energy target, new development will be encouraged to contribute to national renewable energy targets. Consequently, under this scenario, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 has the potential to generate minor negative effects on **SA objectives 2 (health), 7 (climate change), 8 (pollution), 10 (flooding) and 13 (biodiversity)**. These negative effects are recorded in acknowledgement that a lack of county-wide action would result in the need for more energy to be generated from the burning of fossil fuels resulting in more pollution and a greater likelihood for health impacts associated with air pollution and adverse effects associated with climate change. These effects are recorded as minor in acknowledgement of the fact that other mitigation and adaptation measures are likely to be delivered.

#### Promote local low carbon energy networks

**4.24 Table 4.5** presents the findings of the SA of the three alternatives for promotion of local low carbon energy networks:

1. Identify strategic development locations with potential for local low carbon energy networks (e.g. heat from power, co-location of homes and heat/energy producing employment sites).
2. Set out criteria encouraging the siting of local low carbon energy networks.
3. Do not identify locations or set criteria for local low carbon energy networks.

**Table 4.5: Promote local low carbon energy networks alternatives SA findings**

SA objectives	Alternatives		
	1	2	3
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	-?	-?	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	+	0
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	0	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	++/-?	+?/-?	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	++?/-?	+?/-?	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	0	0	0

SA objectives	Alternatives		
	1	2	3
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	++	+?	-
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	+	0
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	+?	+?	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	+?	+?	-
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	+?	+?	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	+?	+?	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	+?	+?	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	+/-?	+/-?	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	+?	+?	0

**4.25** Alternative 1 represents the most ambitious of the three alternatives as it aims to identify strategic development locations with potential for local energy networks (e.g. heat from power, co-location of homes and heat/energy producing employment sites) and identify mechanisms for implementing them. Alternative 2 represents the middle ground between Alternatives 1 and 3, setting out criteria encouraging the siting of local energy networks and identifying mechanisms for implementing them. Under Alternative 3, the Oxfordshire Plan would not contribute to delivering local low carbon energy networks.

**4.26** Alternative 1 is likely to have **significant positive effects** in relation to **SA objective 7 (climate change)** as the identification of specific locations for investment and delivery of low carbon energy networks is most likely to result in delivery of significant reductions in carbon emissions.

**4.27** Transitioning to a low carbon energy network could add costs to the design and construction of new development, but is becoming more viable to achieve as technology evolves and the market becomes more favourable. Therefore, the potential to effectively deliver new homes and business premises across the County utilising renewable energy is possible. Consequently, the effect of the costs associated with such technologies on the deliverability of homes and employment land are recorded as only minor negative in the short term against **SA objectives 1 (housing), 4 (economy) and 5 (employment)** for Alternative 1. A **significant positive effect** is also recorded against SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment) for Alternative 1 in acknowledgement of the fact that a significant increase in the construction of low carbon energy networks has the potential to generate significant growth in the local economy associated with more ambitious design, construction and delivery. The future cost of meeting ambitious low carbon targets in the future is unknown, therefore there is some uncertainty associated with their effect on deliverability. However, a low carbon energy transition has the potential to be expensive in the short term, but successful and sustainable in the medium to long term as technology evolves.

**4.28** A reduction in carbon emissions associated with the creation of local low carbon energy networks under Alternative 1 is also likely to result in a marked improvement to air quality and climate related issues such as flooding in the County; however, given the diverse range of other sources of air pollution and climate change effects these positive effects are considered to be less significant and are therefore recorded as minor against **SA objectives 2 (health), 8 (pollution) and 10 (flooding)**. In addition, when identifying and implementing mechanisms there is opportunity for encouraging and facilitating community based low carbon energy projects which have the potential to promote climate change resilience and build community cohesion and engagement thereby having a minor positive effect on **SA objective 3 (communities)**.

**4.29** The more ambitious the local low carbon energy network target the greater the likelihood that low carbon energy generation technologies will be required on site or off site elsewhere within the County. The greater the scale and density of

such technologies across the county the greater the potential for adverse effects on the County's sensitive historic and natural environments. Consequently, minor negative effects are recorded against **SA objective 14 (historic environment)**. Some uncertainty is attached to the likelihood and significance of these effects until such time as the location, design and scale of such technologies is known, which is also true for **SA objectives 13 (biodiversity)** and **15 (landscape)**. Minor positive effects have also been identified against **SA objective 13 (biodiversity)** as reducing emissions from energy combats climate change and consequently provides positive effects for biodiversity as the two are interconnected. In addition, identification of location and criteria for new low carbon energy sites is likely to steer development away from sensitive locations including the nature recovery network. These effects are also expected against **SA objectives 9 (water), 11 (soils), 12 (minerals), 14 (historic environment)** and **15 (landscape)** as criteria have the potential to steer development away from sensitive receptors such as mineral safeguarding areas and sensitive areas such as chalk streams and other watercourses. It is also likely that mitigation and enhancements measures associated with these environmental issues will be required, but this is uncertain at this stage.

**4.30** Alternative 1 is unlikely to affect the **SA objective 6 (travel)** by virtue of its focus on promoting the delivery of sites for local energy networks.

**4.31** The positive and negative effects recorded against the same SA objectives for Alternative 1 are also likely to be felt under Alternative 2 for the reasons described above, although their significance is likely to be proportionately less, depending on the stringency of the criteria for delivering the local low carbon energy network. Effects are also uncertain due to Alternative 2 relying on criteria to help delivery rather than identifying specific locations for local low carbon energy networks.

**4.32** Alternative 3 represents a 'no low carbon energy network' alternative. In the absence of an Oxfordshire-wide approach to identifying locations or setting criteria for the development of local low carbon energy networks, it will be left for the Local Plans to determine individual approaches which may differ across the County. Under this alternative, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 would have a negligible effect on the majority of SA objectives, with the exception of **SA objectives 7 (climate change)** and **10 (flooding)** where a lack of local action is likely to result in more adverse effects in the longer term. The NPPF states that plans should 'identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems'<sup>35</sup>. Therefore, adherence to national policy would contribute to climate change adaptation, and under this alternative, the Oxfordshire Plan would have negligible or no effect.

#### Promote strategic renewable wind and solar developments

**4.33** Table 4.6 presents the findings of the SA of the three alternatives for promotion of strategic renewable wind and solar development:

1. Identify strategic development locations with potential for strategic wind and/or solar farms.
2. Set out criteria encouraging the siting of strategic wind and solar farms.
3. Do not identify locations or set criteria for strategic renewable wind/solar development.

Table 4.6: Promote strategic renewable wind and solar developments alternatives SA findings

SA objectives	Alternatives		
	1	2	3
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	0	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	+	-
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	+	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	++	+	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	++	+	0

<sup>35</sup> MHCLG (2019) National Planning Policy Framework  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/779764/NPPF\\_Feb\\_2019\\_web.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779764/NPPF_Feb_2019_web.pdf)

SA objectives	Alternatives		
	1	2	3
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	0	0	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	++?	+?	-
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	+?	-
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	+?	+?	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	+?	+?	-
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	+?	+?	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	+?	+?	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	-/+	-?/+?	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	+/-?	+/-?	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	+/--?	+/--?	0

**4.34** Alternative 1 represents the most ambitious of the three alternatives regarding promotion of strategic renewable wind and solar development, by identifying strategic development locations in the County with potential for strategic wind and solar farms and identifying mechanisms for implementing them. Alternative 2 represents the middle ground in between Alternatives 1 and 3, by setting out criteria encouraging the siting of strategic wind and solar farms and to identify mechanisms for implementing them. Under Alternative 3, the Oxfordshire Plan would not contribute to delivering strategic renewable wind and solar energy developments.

**4.35** As the most ambitious alternative, Alternative 1 is likely to generate the most significant effects. Identifying strategic development locations with potential for strategic wind and solar farms could have a **significant positive effect** in relation to **SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment)** in acknowledgement of the fact that a significant increase in the construction of and maintenance of wind and solar energy has the potential to create new jobs in the county associated with more construction, delivery and maintenance. In addition, as Oxfordshire aims to expand its low carbon economy,<sup>36</sup> there is potential for additional investment and development into the solar and wind energy industry to attract and retain global talent and develop skills locally.

**4.36** A **significant positive effect** is recorded against **SA objective 7 (climate change)** for Alternative 1 in acknowledgement of the contribution of solar and wind farm developments in reducing the County's contribution to the primary cause of climate change – greenhouse gases. This reduction in carbon emissions is also likely to result in a marked improvement to air quality and climate related issues such as flooding in the County; however, given the diverse range of other sources of air pollution and climate change effects these positive effects are considered to be less significant and are therefore recorded as minor against **SA objectives 2 (health), 8 (pollution) and 10 (flooding)**. Alternative 1 could also have a minor positive effect on **SA objective 3 (communities)** as it has the potential to lead to community energy schemes, however there is some uncertainty attached to the likelihood and significance of these effects until such time as the location, design and scale of such initiatives is known.

**4.37** By identifying locations for strategic solar and wind developments, Alternative 1 could result in a greater scale and density of such technologies across the County in particular the open countryside e.g. the Cotswolds and higher areas, and therefore more potential for adverse effects on the County's sensitive historic and natural environments. Consequently, potential

<sup>36</sup> Low Carbon Oxford and the Environmental Change Institute at the University of Oxford *Joining the Crowd: Growing a New Economy for Oxfordshire*

**significant negative effects** are recorded against **SA objective 15 (landscape)**, and minor negative impacts are recorded against **SA objective 14 (historic environment)**. Some uncertainty is attached to the likelihood and significance of these effects until such time as the location, design and scale of such technologies is known. Minor positive effects are also identified as identification of location and criteria also has the potential to steer development away from sensitive locations including heritage assets and locally important landscape features. Minor positive effects are also expected against SA objectives **9 (water)**, **11 (soils)** and **12 (mineral)** for similar reasons. Uncertainty is attached to these effects as criteria has yet to be established.

**4.38** Alternative 1's impacts on **SA objective 13 (biodiversity)** are likely to be mixed minor positive and negative. By helping to prevent climate change, the alternative would indirectly benefit biodiversity. In addition, as solar parks use a large amount of land the remainder of the land can be utilised for plant growth, wildlife enhancement and conservation grazing. However, wind farms could have potential negative effects in terms of bird and bat strike, and large solar arrays, although compatible with some biodiverse habitats take up land that could be used for more effective nature conservation measures. Alternative 1 is unlikely to affect the remaining SA objectives **SA objectives 1 (housing)** and **6 (travel)** by virtue of its focus on promoting strategic renewable wind and solar development.

**4.39** The positive and negative effects recorded against Alternative 1 are also likely to be felt under Alternative 2 for the same reasons, although their significance is likely to be proportionately less, due to Alternative 2 promoting a criteria-based approach. Effects are also uncertain due to Alternative 2 relying on criteria to help delivery rather than identifying specific locations for strategic renewable wind and solar development.

**4.40** Alternative 3 represents a 'no identification of strategic renewable development' alternative. In the absence of an Oxfordshire-wide approach to identifying locations or setting criteria for the development of strategic renewable energy development, it will be left for the Local Plans to determine individual approaches which may differ across the County. Under this alternative, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 has the potential to generate minor negative effects on **SA objectives 2 (health)**, **7 (climate change)** and **8 (pollution)**. These negative effects are recorded in acknowledgement that a lack of county-wide action would result in the need for more energy to be generated from the burning of fossil fuels resulting in more pollution and a greater likelihood for health impacts associated with air pollution and adverse effects associated with climate change. These effects are recorded as minor in acknowledgement of the fact that other mitigation and adaptation measures are likely to be delivered.

#### Promote low/zero carbon transport networks

**4.41** **Table 4.7** presents the findings of the SA of the three alternatives for the promotion of low/zero carbon transport networks:

1. Identify strategic development locations and linkages for investment in strategic zero/low carbon transport networks, such as zero emission/electric vehicle zones, low emission zones, solar roads and electric car hubs.
2. Encourage the development of strategic low/zero carbon transport networks.
3. Do not encourage or identify strategic locations for low/zero carbon transport networks.

**Table 4.7: Promote low/zero carbon transport networks alternatives SA findings**

SA objectives	Alternatives		
	1	2	3
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	0	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	++	+	-
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	+	-
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	++	+	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	++	+	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	++	+	-

SA objectives	Alternatives		
	1	2	3
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	++	+?	-
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	++	+?	-
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	+	+?	-
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	+?	+?	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	+?	+?	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	+?	+?	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	+	+?	-
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	+?	+?	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	+?	+?	0

**4.42** Alternative 1 represents the most ambitious of the alternatives for promotion of low/zero carbon transport networks. Alternative 2 represents the middle ground between Alternatives 1 and 3, by setting out criteria encouraging the siting of strategic low/zero carbon transport networks respectively. Under Alternative 3, the Oxfordshire Plan would not contribute to delivering zero or low carbon transport networks.

**4.43** Alternative 1 is likely to have a **significant positive effect** in relation to **SA objectives 2 (health), 6 (travel), 7 (climate change) and 8 (pollution)** as the promotion of zero carbon transport networks through identification of strategic locations and linkages is likely to deliver more sustainable transport by providing new cycling and walking infrastructure, which has positive implications for health and wellbeing. In addition, a zero carbon transport network has the potential to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transport which will help to minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and reduce the amount of air pollution within the County.

**4.44 Significant positive effects** are also likely under Alternative 1 in relation to **SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment)** in acknowledgement of the fact that an increase in the construction and maintenance of new zero carbon transport infrastructure has the potential to create new jobs in the county. In addition, as Oxfordshire aims to expand its low carbon economy,<sup>37</sup> there is potential for additional investment and development into the zero carbon transport industry to attract and retain global talent.

**4.45** Minor positive effects are likely in relation to **SA objective 3 (communities)** as Alternative 1 has the potential to provide a zero-carbon transport network in strategic development locations and linkages which could fully support new development within communities through providing additional opportunities for social interaction and supporting healthy place shaping principles.

**4.46** Minor positive effects are also likely in relation to **SA objectives 9 (water), 10 (flooding) and 13 (biodiversity)** as the reduction in greenhouse gas emitting vehicles has the potential to significantly reduce pollution in general and climate change effects, such as flooding. Alternative 1 is unlikely to affect the remaining SA objectives by virtue of its focus on promoting zero carbon transport networks.

**4.47** Minor positive effects are also identified against **SA objectives 11 (soils), 12 (minerals), 14 (heritage) and 15 (landscape)** as identification of location and criteria is likely to steer development away from sensitive locations including

<sup>37</sup> Low Carbon Oxford and the Environmental Change Institute at the University of Oxford *Joining the Crowd: Growing a New Economy for Oxfordshire*

mineral safeguarding areas, heritage assets and locally important landscape features. However, uncertainty is attached until the criteria are developed and more is understood about what they seek to achieve.

**4.48** The positive effects recorded against Alternative 1 are also likely to be felt for the same SA objectives under Alternative 2. However, these are likely to be at a smaller scale and with greater uncertainty, due to Alternative 2's reliance on criteria to help delivery rather than identifying specific locations and linkages for low carbon transport infrastructure.

**4.49** Alternative 3 represents a 'no identification of locations or criteria for either low or zero carbon transport networks' alternative. In the absence of an Oxfordshire-wide approach to identifying locations or setting criteria for low/zero carbon transport networks, it will be left for the local authorities and national government to determine approaches, which may differ across the County. Under this alternative, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 has the potential to generate minor negative effects on **SA objectives 2 (health), 3 (communities), 6 (travel), 7 (climate change), 8 (pollution), 9 (water) and 13 (biodiversity)**. These negative effects are recorded in acknowledgement that a lack of county-wide action would result in either 'business as usual' or an increase in petrol/diesel vehicles resulting in more pollution, and a greater likelihood of health impacts associated with air pollution and climate change. These effects are recorded as minor in acknowledgement of the fact that other mitigation and adaptation measures are likely to be delivered.

#### Promote climate change resilience and adaptation

**4.50 Table 4.8** presents the findings of the SA of the four alternatives for strategic scale promotion of climate change resilience and adaptation alternatives:

1. Identify strategic opportunities for upstream flood mitigation/storage areas (see also 'Promote/enhance biodiversity at the strategic scale').
2. Identify strategic opportunities for urban greening.
3. Identify strategic opportunities for large-scale tree planting.
4. Do not identify strategic opportunities to promote climate change resilience and adaptation in Oxfordshire.

**Table 4.8: Promote climate change resilience and adaptation alternatives SA findings**

SA objectives	Alternatives			
	1	2	3	4
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	0	0	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	++	++	-
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	++	++	-
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	0	+	0	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+	+	+	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	0	0	0	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	++	++	++	-
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	++?	++	++	-
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	+++?	+	+	-
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	++	0	++	-

SA objectives	Alternatives			
	1	2	3	4
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0	+	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	++?	++	++	-
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0	0	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	+?	+	+/-?	0

**4.51** Alternative 1 aims to identify strategic opportunities for upstream flood mitigation/storage areas and identify mechanisms for implementing them. Alternative 2 aims to do the same but for trees, green walls, green roofs etc. in urban settings ('urban greening'), to promote urban cooling. Alternative 3 aims to identify strategic opportunities for large scale tree planting to promote flood mitigation, biodiversity resilience and cooling and identify mechanisms for implementing them. Under Alternative 4, the Oxfordshire Plan would not contribute to delivering strategic opportunities to adapt Oxfordshire to the effects of climate change.

**4.52** Alternative 1 is likely to have **significant positive effects on SA objectives 7 (climate change), 9 (water), 10 (flooding) and 13 (biodiversity)**. This is due to the alternative's aim of identifying strategic opportunities for upstream flood mitigation/storage areas and to identify mechanisms for implementing them. The implementation of upstream flood mitigation promotes the use of natural flood management techniques. In addition, by implementing natural flood management techniques, it will ensure that the ecological integrity of waterbodies and local biodiversity is preserved. The use of upstream flood mitigation will also build climate resilience and promote more sustainable flood mitigation solutions. However, there is some uncertainty in relation to SA objectives 9 (water) and 13 (biodiversity), as some mitigation measures present the possibility of adverse effects.

**4.53** Minor positive effects are likely for Alternative 1 in relation to **SA objectives 2 (health), 3 (communities) and 5 (employment)** as building resilience to flooding has the potential to benefit the health and safety of local communities. In addition, the implementation of upstream flood mitigation could provide additional jobs and could protect business premises and operations from being negatively affected by flooding.

**4.54** Alternative 2 is likely to have **significant positive effects on SA objectives 2 (health), 3 (communities) and 7 (climate change)**. This is due to the alternative's aim of identifying strategic opportunities for urban greening and to identify mechanisms for implementing them. The implementation of urban greening promotes urban cooling which is necessary to combat the urban heat island effect. This occurs due to absorption and storage of heat within the land surfaces in towns and cities made of materials like tarmac and stone, that coupled with concentrated energy use and less ventilation than in rural areas, creates a heating effect<sup>38</sup>. With an estimated increase in population in Oxfordshire, the urban heat island effect becomes an increasing stressor on the towns and cities, especially the health of the local communities and its impacts on climate change by offsetting some of the County's carbon emissions. Urban greening helps to reduce this by providing shade. If the new greenspace was publicly accessible, it could then provide much needed green space; an assessment of available green spaces within Oxfordshire against Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt) concluded that most households in the County did not meet accessibility levels for strategic sites<sup>39</sup>. Additionally, reports have shown that apartment buildings with high levels of greenery had 52% fewer crimes than those without any trees. Residents living in greener surroundings report lower levels of fear, fewer incivilities, and less violent behaviour, because greenery promotes a greater sense of community and alleviates mental fatigue, a precursor to violent behaviour<sup>40</sup>.

<sup>38</sup> Met Office (2012) *Urban Heat Islands* [https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/binaries/content/assets/mohippo/pdf/8/m/mo\\_pup\\_insert\\_health.web.pdf](https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/binaries/content/assets/mohippo/pdf/8/m/mo_pup_insert_health.web.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> AECOM (2017) *Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy* [https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/oxis\\_stage2.pdf](https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/oxis_stage2.pdf)

<sup>40</sup> Friends of the Urban Forest (2019) *Benefits of Urban Greening*

**4.55 Significant positive effects** are also likely for Alternative 2 in relation to **SA objectives 8 (pollution)** and **13 (biodiversity)**. Urban greening has the potential to help absorb air pollution caused by vehicles and provide a buffer for noise pollution. Additionally, urban greening has the potential to provide additional habitats enhancing biodiversity.

**4.56** Minor positive effects are likely for Alternative 2 in relation to **SA objectives 4 (economy)** and **5 (employment)** as urban greening has the potential to increase the liveability and aesthetic of commercial areas, encouraging commerce, as well as improving productivity through the cooling of an area. Urban greening has the potential to provide additional jobs in the implementation and maintenance stages. Minor positive effects can also be expected for **SA objectives 9 (water)** and **15 (landscape)** as urban greening can help to retain water and reduce runoff, and help to make urban areas more attractive to those living, working and visiting the area.

**4.57** Alternative 3 is likely to have **significant positive effects** on **SA objectives 2 (health), 3 (communities)** and **7 (climate change)**. This is due to the alternative's aim to identify strategic opportunities for large scale tree planting to promote flood mitigation, biodiversity resilience and cooling and identify mechanism for implementing them. Large scale tree planting promotes cooling and significant reductions in carbon dioxide, which is essential to improve the health of the local communities and climate change impacts by offsetting some of the County's carbon emissions. Tree planting has the potential to provide much needed green space and help to reduce urban crime.

**4.58 Significant positive effects** are also likely in relation to **SA objectives 8 (pollution), 10 (flooding)** and **13 (biodiversity)** as tree planting has the potential to help absorb air pollution caused by vehicles and provide a buffer for noise pollution. Additionally, strategic tree planting has significant potential to promote flood mitigation and provide additional habitats for the local biodiversity, thereby building resilience.

**4.59** Alternative 3 is likely to have minor positive effects in relation to **SA objectives 5 (employment)** and **9 (water)** as tree planting consists of landscaping and forestry projects which have the potential to provide additional jobs in the implementation and maintenance stages and strategic tree planting has the ability to recycle significant amounts of water thereby improving water quality. In addition, the strategic planting of trees has the potential to maintain soil stability and could enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality and create additional special views into and out of Oxford which could have minor positive effects on **SA objectives 11 (soils)** and **15 (landscape)**. However, there is also some uncertainty and minor negative effects for SA objective 15 (landscape) as large tree planting schemes could harm the local landscape if not properly planned.

**4.60** Alternatives 1, 2 and 3 are likely to generate negligible effects against the remaining SA objectives **1 (housing), 6 (travel), 12 (minerals)** and **14 (historic environment)** by virtue of their focus on building resilience to climate change.

**4.61** Alternative 4 represents a 'no promotion of climate change resilience and adaptation' alternative. In the absence of Oxfordshire-wide promotion of flood mitigation/storage, urban greening, large-scale tree planting or water efficiency the County's communities and environment are likely to feel the adverse effects of climate change more often and intensely. Consequently, negative effects have been recorded against **SA objectives 2 (health), 3 (communities), 7 (climate change), 8 (pollution), 9 (water), 10 (flooding)** and **13 (biodiversity)**. These effects are recorded as minor in acknowledgement of the fact that other mitigation and adaptation measures are likely to be delivered.

### Water Efficiency Standards

**4.62 Table 4.9** presents the findings of the SA of the four alternatives for water efficiency standards:

1. Require all strategic development to be water neutral<sup>41</sup>.
2. Require all strategic development to meet higher water efficiency standards than Building Regulations.
3. Set out criteria encouraging higher water efficiency standards than Building Regulations.
4. Do not set water efficiency targets that are higher than Building Regulations

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<sup>41</sup> Water neutrality is: "For every new development, total water use in the region after the development must be equal to or less than total water use in the region before the development." Therivel, Riki, Christine Drury, and Ian Hepburn, comps. (Achieving Water Neutrality in the South East Region Discussion Paper. Oct. 2006).

Table 4.9: Water efficiency standards SA findings

SA objectives	Alternatives			
	1	2	3	4
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	-?	0	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	+	+	0
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	0	0	0	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	+?/-?	+?/-?	+?/-?	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+?/-?	+?/-?	+?/-?	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	0	0	0	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	++	+	+	-
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	+	+	-
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	++	+	+	-
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	+	+	+	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	++	+	+	-
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0	0	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	+	+	+	-

**4.63** Alternative 1 represents the most ambitious of the four water efficiency target alternatives as it requires all new strategic development to be 'water neutral'. Alternative 4 would not set specific water efficiency targets and effectively rely on the Building Regulations. Alternatives 2 and 3 represent the middle ground, as they both seek to achieve higher water standards than Building Regulations, but Alternative 2 would require this, while Alternative 3 would only include criteria encouraging higher water standards.

**4.64** As the most ambitious alternative, Alternative 1 is likely to generate the most significant effects. A **significant positive effect** is recorded for Alternative 1 against **SA objective 7 (climate change)** in acknowledgement of the contribution of ambitious water efficiency targets in reducing the County's risk of drought which is exacerbated by climate change. A **significant positive effect** is recorded against **SA objective 9 (water)** in acknowledgement of the fact that ambitious water efficiency targets will help to achieve sustainable water resource management, reduce the risk of drought and combat climate change. A significant positive effect is also recorded for **SA objective 13 (biodiversity)** in acknowledgement of how a significant reduction in water abstraction will minimise the County's impact on protected habitats and species dependent on good quality wetland and littoral areas which can be sensitive to local changes in water availability. The introduction of water efficiency targets is also likely to result in a marked reduction in carbon emissions, as it takes energy to pump and heat water, and improvement to climate related issues such as flooding; however, given the diverse range of other sources of air pollution

and climate change effects these positive effects are considered to be less significant and are therefore recorded as minor against **SA objectives 2 (health), 8 (pollution) and 10 (flooding)**.

**4.65** Minor positive effects are also expected against **SA objectives 13 (biodiversity) and 15 (landscape)** as ambitious water efficiency targets can help to conserve biodiversity especially aquatic wildlife and becoming water neutral combats climate change and consequently the impact climate change is likely to have on biodiversity and local landscape in the long term.

**4.66** The future cost of meeting ambitious water efficiency targets is unknown, although it is becoming more viable to achieve water efficiency/water neutral targets as technology evolves and the market becomes more favourable. However, requiring all strategic development to be water neutral is likely to add cost to the design and construction of new development. Consequently, minor negative effects are recorded against **SA objectives 1 (housing) and 5 (employment)** for Alternative 1. The minor negative effect recorded against **SA objective 5 (employment)** is also coupled with the potential for a minor positive effect in acknowledgement of the fact that a significant increase in water efficiency standards has the potential to create new local jobs in the county associated with more ambitious design, construction and delivery. The uncertain mixed minor positive and minor negative effects recorded against **SA objective 4 (economy)** are recorded for similar reasons as **SA 5 (employment)**, although these effects are due to the fact other sectors and drivers influencing the growth of the county's economy.

**4.67** Alternative 1 is unlikely to affect the remaining **SA objectives 3 (communities), 11 (soils), 12 (minerals) and 14 (historic environment)** due to its focus on a specific planning policy issue (water efficiency).

**4.68** The positive and negative effects on the same SA objectives recorded against Alternative 1 are also likely to be felt under Alternatives 2 and 3 for the reasons described above, although their significance is likely to be proportionately less, as they do not require water neutral development and will depend on how much higher than the Building Regulations standards for water efficiency they end up going. Alternative 3 is also expected to have uncertainty attached to each effect as the option sets out criteria encouraging higher water standards but does not require development to achieve higher water standards like Alternatives 1 and 2.

**4.69** Alternative 4 represents a 'no water efficiency target' alternative. In the absence of an Oxfordshire-wide water efficiency target for all strategic developments, developers will be required to meet the minimum requirements set out in the national Building Regulations. Consequently, under this scenario, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 would have a negligible effect on many SA objectives. However, by allowing continued climate change (albeit at a slower rate than at present), it would have a negative effect on **SA objectives 7 (climate change), 8 and 9 (air and water quality), 13 (biodiversity) and 15 (landscape)**.

### Sustainable construction and design

**4.70** Table 4.10 presents the findings of the SA of the three alternatives for promotion of sustainable construction and design:

1. Prescribe county-wide principles/standards to encourage the sustainable design and construction of all buildings, including orientation, insulation etc., possibly in line with established Code for Sustainable Homes/Home Quality Mark and BREEAM standards.
2. Prescribe county-wide principles/standards for masterplanning of strategic scale developments, including availability and timing of public transport links, healthy place-making principles, community services, green infrastructure etc.
3. Do not identify county-wide principles/standards.

Note that Alternatives 1 and 2 could both be chosen, since the former relates to individual buildings and the latter relates to strategic scale developments. Alternative 3 could relate to buildings and/or strategic scale developments

Table 4.10: Promote sustainable construction and design alternatives SA findings

SA objectives	Alternatives		
	1	2	3
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	-?	-?	-?
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	++	+

SA objectives	Alternatives		
	1	2	3
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	++	+
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	+/-?	+/-?	+
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+/-?	+/-?	+
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+	++	+
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	++	+	+
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	+	+
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	+	+	+
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	+	+	+
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0	+
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	+	0	0?
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	+	++	+
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	+	+	+

**4.71** Alternative 1 is likely to have **significant positive effects on SA objective 7 (climate change)** as it would set criteria on building orientation, insulation etc., which affect energy consumption. Alternative 1 could also help to build resilience for adaptation to climate change. It is likely to have minor positive effects on most of the other SA objectives: reduced energy consumption would contribute to improved air quality (**SA objective 8**); the criteria could include requirements for greywater recycling, SuDS, and other ways of improving water quality and reducing flooding (**SA objectives 9 and 10**); requirements for cycling parking, e-bike charging which could help to reduce the need to travel by car (**SA objective 6**) and minimise waste; and requirements for landscaping would help to protect and enhance the landscape (**SA objective 15**).

**4.72** Together, these measures would support people's health and wellbeing (**SA objective 2**) and sustain vibrant communities (**SA objective 3**) through reducing energy costs, designing buildings to be environmentally and potentially more community focused and reducing air pollution. The need for improved eco-friendly measures, including high-tech construction, could help to support Oxfordshire's knowledge economy and create/maintain jobs (**SA objectives 4 and 5**). Minor positive effects are also expected in relation to **SA objectives 12 and 13** as prescribing county-wide design and construction principles in line with BREEAM and Code for Sustainable Homes could safeguard minerals and ensure development does not harm biodiversity assets or includes appropriate mitigation if necessary. However, many SA objectives have some uncertainty attached to the likelihood and significance of these effects until such time as the location, design and scale of such developments is known.

**4.73** The sustainable construction requirements could add costs to new development, but it is becoming more viable to achieve as technology evolves and the market becomes more favourable. Consequently, the effect of the costs associated with sustainable construction requirements on the deliverability of homes and employment land are recorded as only minor negative in the short term, thereby having a minor negative effect with uncertainty on the delivery of homes (**SA objective 1**) and on the economy and jobs (**SA objectives 4 and 5**).

**4.74** Alternative 2, with its focus on strategic-scale sustainability, is likely to have **significant positive effects** on reducing the need to travel by car (**SA objective 6**), through support for walking, cycling and public transport. It is likely to have **significant**

**positive effects** on health and wellbeing (**SA objective 2**) and safe and vibrant communities (**SA objective 3**) through its focus on good layout, healthy place-making principles, and provision of community services. It would strongly support biodiversity (**SA objective 13**) through the promotion of green infrastructure and landscaping.

**4.75** Alternative 2 is also likely to have minor positive impacts on most of the other SA objectives. It would support health and wellbeing (**SA objective 2**) through good design for walking and cycling, provision of adequate community and health facilities, and provision of green infrastructure. It would support improvements to air, noise and light quality, water quality and flood risk, reduction in climate change and landscape (**SA objectives 7, 8, 9, 10, and 15**) through support for green infrastructure, sensitive planning, strategic scale sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), strategic scale landscaping, and by reducing the need to travel by car through good site layout and promotion of walking, cycling and public transport. Minor positive effects are also expected in relation to **SA objectives 4 and 5** as the masterplanning of strategic scale developments has the potential to create new jobs in the county associated with more ambitious design, construction and delivery. The cost of meeting healthy place-making, community services, public transport, green infrastructure etc. in the future is unknown, and therefore there is some uncertainty associated with their effect on deliverability.

**4.76** Again, these requirements are likely to add a small additional cost to home and employment premises construction, but it is becoming more viable to achieve as technology evolves and the market becomes more favourable. Consequently, the effect of the costs associated with sustainable construction requirements on the deliverability of homes and employment land are recorded as only minor negative in the short term, so having a negative impact with uncertainty on the delivery of homes (**SA objective 1**) and on the economy and jobs (**SA objectives 4 and 5**).

**4.77** Alternative 3 is less clear than Alternatives 1 and 2 since districts could set very strong but also very weak (or no) standards. As such, the impacts of Alternative 3 have been assessed as being like those of the previous alternatives, but with possibly fewer and more uncertain benefits.

### Historic environment

**4.78** **Table 4.11** presents the findings of the SA of the two alternatives for managing effects on the historic environment:

1. Establish a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of Oxfordshire's historic environment at the strategic scale.
2. Do not establish a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of Oxfordshire's historic environment at the strategic scale.

**Table 4.11: Managing effects on the Historic Environment alternatives SA findings**

SA objectives	Alternatives	
	1	2
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	-	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	-
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	-
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	+/-	-
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+	-
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	0	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	0	0
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	0	0

SA objectives	Alternatives	
	1	2
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	0	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	++	--
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	++	--

**4.79** Alternative 1 would have **significant positive effects** on **SA objectives 14 (historic environment)** and **15 (landscape)** as it is likely that a positive strategy will steer new development away from Oxfordshire's heritage assets and their settings or otherwise help to enhance them, and this in turn would have a positive impact on Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality. Alternative 2 does not establish a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of Oxfordshire's historic environment therefore, **significant negative effects** are expected against **SA objectives 14 (historic environment)** and **15 (landscape)** as the absence of a strategy could allow development to harm heritage assets.

**4.80** Minor positive effects are likely in relation to **SA objectives 2 (health)**, and **3 (communities)** for Alternative 1. Alternative 1 has the potential to safeguard and improve enjoyment of heritage assets which can have positive effects on health and wellbeing and community vitality through their cultural, educational, and recreational/leisure values. Minor positive effects are also likely in relation to **SA objective 4 (economy)** as maintaining heritage assets and avoiding adverse effects on them will help to protect local character and culture, which is part of what helps to attract and retain global talent thereby supporting the local knowledge economy<sup>42</sup>. It will also help to support tourism, which is a major economic sector in Oxfordshire, thereby having a minor positive effect on **SA objective 5 (employment)** as well.

**4.81** Alternative 1 could also have minor negative effects on **SA objective 4 (economy)**, as Alternative 1 could restrict where and/or how development can be delivered in the context of the historic environment, which may contribute to restricting growth within sensitive areas of the county, particularly the county's historic settlements and landscapes, reducing the opportunities for and viability and affordability of new development. Minor negative effects are also recorded against **SA objective 1 (housing)** for the same reason.

**4.82** Alternative 2 represents a 'no positive strategy for the historic environment.' In the absence of an Oxfordshire wide heritage strategy, developers could adversely affect the historic environment of the county. Therefore, it would have minor negative effects against the SA objectives that Alternative 1 has positive effects against.

**4.83** Neither of the alternatives are likely to generate more than negligible effects against the remaining SA objectives due to their specific focus on managing the historic environment.

### Natural environment

**4.84** There are four policy topics under the natural environment policy theme, and each of these are covered in turn below:

- Promote the conservation and enhancement of strategic views, landscape and townscape features
- Protect/enhance biodiversity at the strategic scale.

<sup>42</sup> OxLEP (undated) Creating the Environment for Growth: A Strategic Investment Plan for Oxfordshire  
[https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/sites/default/files/uploads/Creative%2C%20Cultural%2C%20Heritage%20and%20Tourism%20Sectors\\_0.pdf](https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/sites/default/files/uploads/Creative%2C%20Cultural%2C%20Heritage%20and%20Tourism%20Sectors_0.pdf)

- Promote access to nature at the strategic scale.
- Proportions of biodiversity net gain.
- Locations for natural capital/ecosystem services net gain, including biodiversity net gain.

**Promote the conservation and enhancement of strategic views, landscape and townscape features**

**4.85 Table 4.12** presents the findings of the SA of the two alternatives for promoting the conservation and enhancement of strategic views, landscape and townscape features:

1. Establish a positive strategy for the conservation and enhancement of important and/or sensitive strategic views, landscape and townscape features at a county-wide landscape scale.
2. Do not establish a positive strategy for the conservation and enhancement of landscape and townscape features at a county-wide landscape scale.

**Table 4.12: Promote the conservation and enhancement of strategic views, landscape and townscape features alternatives SA findings**

SA objectives	Alternatives	
	1	2
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	-	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	0
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	+/-	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+/-	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	0	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	0	0
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	0
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	+	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	++	-?
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	++	-?

**4.86** Alternative 1 is likely to generate **significant positive effects** in relation to **SA objectives 14 (historic environment)** and **15 (landscape)**. As this alternative establishes a positive strategy for the conservation and enhancement of the setting and special character of the area, it is likely that the landscape and townscape, both of which could encompass the setting of heritage assets, will be protected with sensitive and well-designed development. Since an attractive environment and good

heritage links can influence health and wellbeing, Alternative 1 is also likely to have minor positive effects for **SA objective 2 (health)**.

**4.87** Alternative 1 is likely to have indirect benefits for Oxfordshire’s ecological habitats and locally designated biodiversity assets thereby minor positive effects on **SA objective 13 (biodiversity)** are expected associated with landscape and townscape enhancements and mitigation. Similarly, conservation of landscape and views includes prevention of light pollution, hence a minor positive effect for **SA objective 8 (pollution)**.

**4.88** Other minor positive effects are likely in relation to **SA objective 3 (communities)** as the enhancement of important and/or sensitive strategic views, landscape or townscape features has the potential to have positive implications in creating vibrant communities by safeguarding the cultural importance of the landscape for communities to enjoy. In addition, Oxfordshire’s attractive landscape and townscape support the tourism industry, so Alternative 1 will have minor positive effects for **SA objective 5 (employment)**. There is also potential for employment opportunities in the maintenance and enhancement of landscape and townscape features. A minor positive effect is also recorded against **SA objective 4 (economy)** in acknowledgement that the conserving and enhancement of the county’s key landscape and townscape features will help to maintain and improve the character of the county, making it a better place to live and work and attracting talent to grow the local economy. This minor positive effect is coupled with a minor negative effect in acknowledgement of the fact that the greater the area of the county protected from development the more difficult it will be to accommodate growth in the county. A minor negative effect is also recorded against **SA objective 1 (housing)** for the same reason.

**4.89** Alternative 1 is likely to generate negligible effects against the remaining SA objectives due to its specific focus on conserving and enhancing landscape and townscape features.

**4.90** Alternative 2 represents a ‘no positive strategy’ alternative. By not establishing a positive strategy for the landscape and townscape features in the county there is greater potential for development to compromise these strategic assets with adverse effects against **SA objectives 14 (historic environment)** and **15 (landscape)**. These adverse effects are recorded as minor in acknowledgement of the safeguards on such features provided by other policies and legislation, including Local Plans. In addition, the effect is recorded as uncertain until such time as the location, design and scale of new development is known.

#### Protect/enhance biodiversity at the strategic scale

**4.91 Table 4.13** presents the findings of the SA of the two alternatives for promoting and enhancing biodiversity at the strategic scale:

1. Establish a positive strategy for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity at a county-wide landscape scale.
2. Do not establish a positive strategy for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity at a county-wide landscape scale.

**Table 4.13: Promote/enhance biodiversity alternatives SA findings**

SA objectives	Alternatives	
	1	2
1. To meet Oxfordshire’s housing needs	-	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire’s population	++	0
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire’s knowledge economy	+/-	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+/-	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+?	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire’s contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	++	0

SA objectives	Alternatives	
	1	2
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	0
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	++	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	++	-
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	++	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	++	-
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	+	0

**4.92** Alternative 1 would have **significant positive effects** for many of the SA objectives. Establishing a positive strategy for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity at a county-wide landscape scale would help to significantly improve biodiversity in the county (**SA objective 13**) through habitat connection and thereby making habitats and species more resilient to climate change. It is likely that the strategy will protect all types of habitats including floodplains and wetlands, notably those to the north of Oxford, and so could significantly help to reduce the risk of flooding downstream (**SA objective 10**). Protecting the floodplains and river corridors would indirectly help to improve the quality of the county's watercourses (**SA objective 9**). Protecting and enhancing biodiversity at a county-wide landscape scale could include an element of returning intensively farmed agricultural land to a more natural state, thus helping to protect Oxfordshire's soils (**SA objective 11**). All of these factors, and the greater opportunity that Alternative 1 would provide for improved access to nature, would have a **significant positive effect** on people's health and wellbeing (**SA objective 2**). The positive strategy is likely to incorporate planting more trees, helping to sequester greenhouse gases (**SA objective 7**), build climate resilience and to help to adapt to climate change through less flooding, more shade and cooler areas.

**4.93** Minor positive effects are also expected in relation to **SA objectives 3 (communities), 6 (travel), 8 (pollution) and 15 (landscape)**. A positive strategy would also protect the natural landscape and enhance it through more green/wooded areas. This would provide benefits in terms of a more attractive and natural looking landscape (**SA objective 15**) and associated benefits for local communities (**SA objective 3**). It could reduce the need to travel if walking and cycling trails were provided throughout the county. However, improving access to green spaces is not always compatible with improving biodiversity, so there is some uncertainty attached to **SA objective 6 (travel)**. This appraisal assumes that biodiversity is given priority over public access where there is a conflict between them. In addition, a greater quantity of trees and green areas would improve air quality (**SA objective 8**).

**4.94** However, a positive strategy for protecting and enhancing biodiversity at a county-wide scale could restrict the delivery of homes. The current Conservation Target Areas are extensive, and if these were protected in full, then housing delivery (**SA objective 1**) could be negatively affected; however, it is likely that some development could be accommodated within them without compromising the network, so a minor negative effect is recorded. **SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment)** could also be affected, as the positive strategy could restrict the location of employment sites. On the other hand, Oxfordshire's natural environment is one of the factors underlying the county's attractiveness for employers, so further improving the county's biodiverse areas could be positive for employers and jobs. Creation and maintenance of the local ecological network could also lead to new jobs being created. Therefore, **SA objectives 4 and 5** will have a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect on Alternative 1.

**4.95** Alternative 2 has mostly negligible effects because it is essentially a continuation of business as usual. However, in the absence of a positive strategy supporting biodiversity, there could continue to be a decline in biodiversity in the county (**SA objective 13**). Ongoing development on the floodplain, cumulatively with changes resulting from climate change, would also

lead to worse flood problems over time (**SA objective 10**). Therefore, minor negative effects are expected in relation to **SA objectives 10 and 13**.

**Promote/create/enhance green infrastructure and access to nature at the strategic scale**

**4.96 Table 4.14** presents the findings of the SA of the alternatives for promoting access to nature at the strategic scale, of which there are two:

1. Identify location(s) for new strategic green spaces to serve the county.
2. Do not identify strategic scale green spaces.

**Table 4.14: Promote/enhance access to nature alternatives SA findings**

SA objectives	Alternatives	
	1	2
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	-	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	++	-
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	++	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	+	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+	-
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	-
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	+?	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	+?	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	+?	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	++?	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	++?	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	++?	0

**4.97** Whereas the previous set of alternatives related to promoting biodiversity, this set of alternatives relates to promoting access to nature. Where there is a conflict between promotion of biodiversity and access to nature, this assessment assumes that access would be prioritised, i.e., people are the main beneficiaries. Alternative 1 involves identifying locations for strategic green spaces to serve the county. Under Alternative 2, the Oxfordshire Plan would not contribute to identification and delivery of strategic scale green spaces.

**4.98** The identification, creation and management of strategic scale green spaces would increase access to open and public space, improving the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population. Consequently, **significant positive effects** are recorded against **SA objectives 2 (health) and 3 (communities)** for Alternative 1.

**4.99 Significant positive effects** are also likely in relation to **SA objectives 13 (biodiversity), 14 (historic environment) and 15 (landscape)** for Alternative 1 due to the potential of strategic scale green spaces to safeguard and enhance the environment within them. Alternative 1 has the potential to protect and enhance a larger single habitat area in Oxfordshire or provide greater flexibility to connect multiple habitats across multiple Districts within the County. New strategic scale green spaces may also reduce pressure on existing open spaces with high biodiversity value, for instance Port Meadow. Recreational pressures are one of the main impacts on the Oxford Meadows SAC.

**4.100** Minor positive effects are likely against **SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment)** for Alternative 1 as providing strategic scale green spaces will provide some employment in their establishment and longer term management. They would help to maintain a healthy workforce by providing accessible opportunities for recreation, which is indirectly likely to be good for productivity and employment. Additionally, strategic scale green spaces help to make Oxfordshire attractive to employers and employees, so they are indirectly likely to attract and retain global talent to the area, which will benefit the local economy in the long term.

**4.101** Depending on how the strategic scale green spaces are established, for instance whether they simply make existing land more publicly accessible or whether they involve turning agricultural land into woodland and meadows, minor positive effects with uncertainty could be expected against **SA objectives 10 (flooding), 11 (soils) and 12 (minerals)** as strategic scale green spaces can naturally help to reduce the risk of flooding, and safeguard soils and minerals.

**4.102** Alternative 1 will likely generate minor positive effects in relation to **SA objectives 6 (travel), 7 (climate change) and 8 (pollution)** as it could locate strategic scale green space in accessible locations thereby serving multiple communities, especially those with the greatest need within each District, requiring people to travel less distance to enjoy them. Alternative 1 could also provide greater opportunity for the larger green spaces to be located in close proximity to the County's urban areas, providing greater opportunity for the green space to build in climate change resilience through urban greening and cooling. Oxfordshire has a high reliance on private vehicles, so this alternative will reduce Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change since transport is the largest emitter of carbon dioxide emissions in all of the Districts other than Oxford City and will further reduce air pollution<sup>43</sup>.

**4.103** Alternative 1 is likely to constrain housing delivery to an extent, by requiring land to be development-free therefore **SA objective 1 (housing)** is expected to have minor negative effects. Alternative 1 would generate negligible effects against the remaining SA objectives due to its specific focus on creating strategic scale green spaces.

**4.104** Alternative 2 would result in the creation of no strategic scale green spaces in the county. In the absence of policy designed to identify locations for new strategic scale green spaces the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 would have a negligible effect on the majority of SA objectives. However, the absence of such spaces could result in the effects of climate change and poor air quality to be more acutely felt in and around the county's urban centres resulting in adverse effects against the **SA objectives 2 (health), 7 (climate change) and 8 (pollution)**. These effects are considered to be minor in acknowledgement of the other policy and legislative mechanisms designed to mitigate and adapt to the adverse effects of climate change and air pollution.

#### Proportions of biodiversity net gain

**4.105** Table 4.15 presents the findings of the SA of the five alternatives for proportions of biodiversity net gain:

1. 10% biodiversity net gain to be delivered through new development on the basis of achieving at least some net gain.
2. 20% biodiversity net gain to be delivered through new development on the basis of proven viability<sup>44</sup>.
3. 50%-100% biodiversity net gain to be delivered through new development on the basis of starting to account for past losses<sup>45</sup>.
4. Set out criteria encouraging at least some biodiversity net gain.

<sup>43</sup> Department of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (June 2018) UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005-2016 Retrieved December 2018: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-2016>

<sup>44</sup> In 2016 Lichfield District Council introduced a policy requiring a 20% biodiversity net gain on developments: <https://www.endsreport.com/article/1578483/debrief-inside-councils-pioneering-biodiversity-net-gain-planning-policy>

<sup>45</sup> Several species have seen >90% losses over the last century, which would require much more than 100% net gain to reverse.

5. Do not set county-wide biodiversity net gain targets.

Table 4.15: Proportions of biodiversity net gain alternatives SA findings

SA objectives	Alternatives				
	1	2	3	4	5
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	-?	-?	--?	-?	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	+	+	+	-
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	+	+	?	-
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	0	0	+/-	0	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	0	0	+/-	0	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	0	0	0	0	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+	+	++	+	-
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	+	++	+	-
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	+	+	++	+	-
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	+	+	++	+	-
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	+	+	+	+	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0	0	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	+	++	++	+	-
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0	0	0	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	+	+	+	+	0

**4.106** Alternative 5 would result in no requirement or criteria for net gain within the county and therefore the most negative effects. Alternatives 1 and 4 are likely to have very similar effects, as they would deliver the least biodiversity net gain after Alternative 5: Alternative 1 because it includes the smallest target; and Alternative 4 because it does not identify a target, relying instead on criteria encouraging some biodiversity net gain, and developers are unlikely to voluntarily aim for high targets. Alternative 3 would deliver the largest amount of net gain. Alternative 2 represents the middle ground between Alternatives 1, 4 and 5, and Alternative 3.

**4.107 Significant positive effects** are likely in relation to **SA objectives 7 (climate change)** and **13 (biodiversity)** for Alternative 3, and more minor effects are likely for Alternatives 1 and 2. This is due to the potential for biodiversity net gain to build local resilience to the changing climate as well as increasing the amount of biodiversity within the area, providing opportunities for people to come into contact with resilient wild places whilst encouraging respect and raising awareness of the sensitivity of such locations. The higher the biodiversity net gain target the greater the potential and the more significant the positive effects are likely to be. Alternatives 1 and 4 are likely to have a minor positive effect on **SA objective 13** as Alternative 1 does not require a substantial target, only 10%, and Alternative 4 encourages net gain through setting out criteria but does not

identify a specific target or require net gain. With 20% net gain, Alternative 2 would significantly improve biodiversity, but it is not certain whether there would be a similarly significant benefit for climate change.

**4.108** Alternative 3 (requiring 50-100% biodiversity net gain) is also likely to have **significant positive effects** on **SA objectives 8 (pollution), 9 (water) and 10 (flood risk)**. Providing net gain, often in the form of tree planting, will help to slow down infiltration and absorb air pollutants. More modest benefits for pollution, water and flood risk can be expected from requiring a 20% increase in biodiversity net gain under Alternative 2, thereby providing minor positive effects. Alternatives 2 and 3 can be expected to have minor positive effects on **SA objective 11 (soils)** by protecting biodiverse land from development and converting existing less biodiverse (with lower soil quality) land into more biodiverse land.

**4.109** By requiring a percentage of biodiversity net gain, or encouraging it through criteria, Alternatives 1 to 4 could all have a negative effect on **SA objective 1 (housing)** due to the costs involved with achieving biodiversity net gain as part of new development (either on or off-site), although uncertainty is attached to all four alternatives. Alternative 3 would have **significant negative effects** due to its requirement to achieve 50-100% net gain, which may make developments less viable.

**4.110** Minor positive effects are also expected in relation to **SA objectives 2 (health) and 3 (communities)**. Achieving 20% or more net gains in biodiversity over the plan period, or significantly increasing wildlife habitat – Alternatives 2 and 3 – would lead to indirect benefits to resident and worker health and wellbeing, by mitigating the adverse effects of air pollution and reducing flood risk. Furthermore, net gains on this scale will provide numerous opportunities for residents and communities to come into contact with resilient wild places whilst encouraging respect and raising awareness of the sensitivity of such locations. This is also likely to support vibrant communities, which also translate into economic benefits with reduced NHS bill, healthier workforce etc. These benefits are less likely to occur under lower net biodiversity gain scenarios (Alternatives 1, 2 and 4).

**4.111** For Alternative 3, the minor positive effects recorded against **SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment)** are also coupled with equivalent negative effects. Requiring more net gains at employment sites could make it more difficult to bring these sites forward. On the other hand, a more attractive environment for Oxfordshire would help to retain and attract a high-quality workforce; biodiversity net gains are themselves an emerging economic sector (i.e., calculating them, implementing them); and delivering and managing the areas of net gain will provide some new jobs. Again, these benefits are likely to be more negligible for Alternatives 1, 2 and 4.

**4.112** Alternatives 1 and 4 are expected to have minor positive effects against the majority of the SA objectives as Alternative 1 aims to achieve 10% net gain and Alternative 4 sets out criteria encouraging significant net gain. However, uncertainty is also attached to effects associated to Alternative 4 as there is no requirement for net gain compared to Alternatives 1, 2 and 3.

**4.113** Alternative 5 would result in no requirement or criteria for net gain within the county. In the absence of policy designed to achieve biodiversity net gain, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 would have a minor negative effect on the majority of SA objectives. The absence of biodiversity net gain could result in the effects of climate change and poor conservation of local biodiversity resulting in adverse effects against the **SA objectives 2 (health), 3 (community), 7 (climate change), 8 (pollution), 9 (water), 10 (flood risk) and 13 (biodiversity)**. These effects are considered to be minor in acknowledgement of the other policy and legislative mechanisms designed to mitigate and adapt to the adverse effects of climate change and protect biodiversity.

#### Locations for natural capital/ecosystem services net gain, including biodiversity net gain

**4.114** **Table 4.16** presents the findings of the SA of the three alternatives for the locations for natural capital/ecosystem services net gain, including biodiversity net gain alternatives:

1. Identify strategic locations for net gain in Nature Recovery Networks.
2. Identify strategic locations for net gain in existing and new country parks/open space.
3. Encourage net gain, but do not identify locations or how it should be achieved/delivered.

**Table 4.16: Locations for natural capital/ecosystem services net gain, including biodiversity net gain alternatives SA findings**

SA objectives	Alternatives		
	1	2	3
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	-?	-?	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	++?	++	+?
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+?	+	+?
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	0	0	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	++/-?	++/-?	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	0	0	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	++	++	+?
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	+	+?
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	++	++?	+?
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	++	++?	+?
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	+	+	+?
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	++	++?	+?
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	+	+	+?

**4.115** The main differences between the alternatives are the likelihood of net benefits arising, and the location where they would accrue. Alternatives 1 and 2 require identification of strategic locations for natural capital/ecosystem services net gains. These are likely to be large scale locations which developers would help to set up and maintain through contributions. Alternative 3 represents a less focussed alternative for the more general encouragement of natural capital/ecosystem services net gain.

**4.116** This appraisal assumes that 'net gain' would definitely be for biodiversity and climate change, with other natural capital / ecosystem services benefits (e.g., nutrient cycling, food production, spiritual, educational) being less certain. With these assumptions, gain will be more likely to be achieved through strategic scale measures (Alternatives 1 and 2), as this will allow development sites for which it is difficult to provide net gain on-site to more easily come forward. Net gains within these areas have the potential to increase resilience to the changing climate, create new habitats and enhance and connect ecosystem networks. Developers with more flexible sites could still provide net benefits on-site, but most benefits would accrue in, respectively, the Nature Recovery Networks managed for biodiversity (Alternative 1) or strategic scale green areas managed for public access to nature (Alternative 2).

**4.117** Alternatives 1 and 2 are likely to have **significant positive effects** in relation to **SA objectives 7 (climate change)** and **13 (biodiversity)**, with associated improvements in health and wellbeing (**SA objective 2**). Alternative 1 would focus on Nature Recovery Networks (which may include floodplains and Conservation Target Areas), so the benefits for climate change and biodiversity would be strong and unambiguous; but the benefits to health have more uncertainties as the affected areas would

not necessarily be publicly accessible. Alternative 2 is the opposite, with benefits to health coming from provision of net gain in publicly accessible strategic green spaces, but benefits to biodiversity and climate change possibly uncertain by the need for these spaces to be publicly accessible.

**4.118** Alternatives 1 and 2 would also have **significant positive effects** for water quality (**SA objective 9**) and flood reduction (**SA objective 10**), with these effects being more certain for Alternative 1 since the Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network is likely to include a large proportion of the River Thames floodplain.

**4.119** All of the alternatives would have benefits in terms of more vibrant communities (**SA objective 3**), better air quality (**SA objective 8**), better soil quality (**SA objective 11**) and the landscape (**SA objective 15**). This is due to the broad range of possible net gains in natural capital/ ecosystem services, such as improving the quality of landscape and water quality, improving the productivity and growth of the local economy through the creation of more resilient and attractive places to work, reducing the risk of flooding, mitigating the effects of air pollution, maximising the beneficial use of the best and most versatile agricultural land and creating a healthy living and working environment. However, there is some uncertainty against these SA objectives depending on the alternative.

**4.120** The main negative effects of all of the alternatives are in the delivery of housing and employment sites, and encouragement of job creation (**SA objectives 1 and 5**). Providing net gain/ ecosystem services could restrict opportunities for development and increase the cost of development, possibly affecting its viability, however, uncertainty is attached. Alternatives 1 and 2 could reduce these costs by allowing developers to pay for off-site services rather than having to provide them themselves (on or off-site). Nature Recovery Networks and strategic scale green areas are unlikely to permit new developments, so reducing the opportunity costs of providing net gain. Provision of ecosystem services in larger areas also provides the opportunity for businesses to form based on these services, for instance biofuel, coppice, small scale renewable energy or bio-farming, thereby creating **significant positive effects** as well for Alternatives 1 and 2. Alternative 3 would have the fewest costs, as developers could decide whether to provide net gains at all but would also generate the fewest economic benefits.

**4.121** All of the alternatives are likely to generate negligible effects against the remaining SA objectives due to their specific focus on locations for natural capital/ecosystem services net gain. Generally, Alternative 3 would provide the fewest benefits (with many benefits being uncertain at best) but would also have the fewest costs to developers.

### Green Belt

**4.122** Table 4.17 presents the findings of the SA for the two alternatives to enhance the beneficial uses of Green Belt<sup>46</sup>:

1. Identify strategic opportunities to enhance the existing Oxford Green Belt (for delivery through Local Plans) (i.e. provide access, opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation, enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or improve damaged or derelict land).
2. Do not identify strategic opportunities to enhance the existing Oxford Green Belt.

Table 4.17: Enhancement of Green Belt beneficial uses alternatives SA findings

SA objectives	Alternatives	
	1	2
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	++	-
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	++	-
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	0	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	0	0

<sup>46</sup> Consideration will be given to the need to make strategic alterations to Green Belt boundaries once all other reasonable options for meeting the region's strategic growth needs outside the Green Belt have been considered, in line with the requirements of the NPPF.

SA objectives	Alternatives	
	1	2
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+?	-
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+	-
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+?	-
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	+	-
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	++	-
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	++	-
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	++?	-
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	++	-

**4.123** Alternative 1 would identify opportunities to enhance the existing Oxford Green Belt, for delivery through Local Plans (i.e., provide access, opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation, enhance landscapes, visual amenity, and biodiversity, or improve damaged or derelict land). Under Alternative 2, the Oxfordshire Plan would not promote strategic opportunities to enhance the existing Oxford Green Belt.

**4.124** Alternative 1 has the potential to have **significant positive effects** in relation to **SA objectives 2 (health), 3 (communities), 11 (soils), 13 (biodiversity), 14 (historic environment) and 15 (landscape)**. This is due to the broad range of opportunities available for enhancing the beneficial uses of the Green Belt, such as improving access and opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation, enhancing landscapes (which could include historic assets and their historic setting), visual amenity and biodiversity, or improving damaged or derelict land. Enhancing the Green Belt also has the potential to build local climate resilience through the enhancement of the natural environment.

**4.125** Minor positive effects are also likely in relation to **SA objectives 6 (travel), 7 (climate change), 8 (pollution) and 10 (water)** for Alternative 1. Enhancing the Green Belt through improvements in access and recreational opportunities within the Green Belt in close proximity to existing settlements and communities presents an opportunity to provide new opportunities for local sport and recreation, reducing the need for local people to travel and the related air pollution and traffic congestion. The Thames flood alleviation scheme will also likely improve the ecosystem services of flood mitigation within the Green Belt. The reduced need to travel, jointly with possible tree planting and other carbon fixing measures, is likely to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. However, some uncertainty is attached to these effects until such time as the locations of strategic Green Belt enhancements are known.

**4.126** Alternative 2 is broadly a 'business as usual' alternative. It is likely to have a negligible effect on a number of the SA objectives due to the fact that local planning authorities are required under the NPPF to enhance the beneficial uses of the Green Belt at the local scale. Consequently, the lack of a countywide policy in the Oxfordshire Plan would remove the opportunity to capitalise on the benefits of identifying strategic cross-boundary opportunities for enhancement. This is likely to result in a missed opportunity to capture the full socio-economic and environmental value potential of the County's open Green Belt land. Consequently, minor negative effects are acknowledged for those SA objectives for which positive effects are recorded under Alternative 1.

### Addressing Inequalities

4.127 Table 4.18 presents the findings of the SA of the three alternatives to reduce deprivation:

1. Identify strategic development opportunities in areas of socio-economic deprivation to address inequality through regeneration.
2. Identify strategic opportunities for investment in areas of socio-economic deprivation to be delivered through S106 and CIL contributions, e.g. skills development and training, infrastructure investment including green infrastructure.
3. Do not identify strategic opportunities to regenerate areas of socio-economic deprivation.

4.128 Oxfordshire is overall a prosperous county. Most of Oxfordshire's areas of multiple deprivation are in urban areas, and relate to employment, education and living environments. The cost of living in Oxfordshire – and especially Oxford – is high compared to wages. However, in rural areas the main cause of deprivation is with regard to access to services. This appraisal focuses on the more urban areas of deprivation.

Table 4.18: Addressing inequalities alternatives SA findings

SA objectives	Alternatives		
	1	2	3
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	++	+	--
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	++/-	++	-
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	++/-	++	-
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	++	++	-
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	++	++	-
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+/-	+	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	0	+	0
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+/-	+	0
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	-	+/-	0?
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	-	+/-	0?
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	+/-?	+/-?	0?
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	+/-?	+/-?	0?
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	+/-?	+/-?	0?

4.129 Alternative 1 identifies strategic development opportunities in areas of socio-economic deprivation, such as south Oxford, Banbury, Bicester and Didcot, addressing the areas' specific needs. Alternative 2 identifies strategic opportunities for investment in areas of socio-economic deprivation to be delivered through S106 and CIL contributions, e.g. skills and training and

infrastructure investment, including green infrastructure. Alternative 3 would not identify any strategic opportunities for development or investment in areas of socio-economic deprivation.

**4.130** It is likely that investment and development within these deprived communities under Alternatives 1 and 2 will result in improvements to the health and wellbeing and vibrancy of these local communities with **significant positive effects on SA objectives 2 (health) and 3 (communities)**. However significant construction and change in these areas could also pose a short-term disruption to these communities, so minor negative effects may also be felt for Alternative 1.

**4.131** Under Alternative 1, identifying housing and economic development in these locations is likely to facilitate access to jobs and services where there may currently be a barrier to access, with **significant positive effects against SA objectives 5 (employment) and 1 (housing)**. Such investment is also likely to have related positive effects on the growth of the local economy (**SA objective 4**). Alternative 2 is also likely to have **significant positive effects on SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment)** as it aims to provide additional investment in skills and training and infrastructure, which could include economic development. Housing could also be provided through additional investment in deprived areas; however, this is likely to be on a smaller scale than Alternative 1. In the longer term, beyond the plan period, the significance of the benefits of this investment to the county's economy is likely to be greater.

**4.132** Prioritising economic development in areas of deprivation is likely to significantly benefit the knowledge economy (**SA objective 4**), however depending on the location of additional development, it could lead to increases in the amount of travel by car (**SA objective 6**) or increased use of active modes of transport. Therefore, for Alternative 1, mixed minor positive and minor negative effects are expected. Similar effects are expected for **SA objective 8 (pollution)**. For Alternative 2, it is likely that public transport and active modes of travel infrastructure will be invested in thereby facilitating travel by more sustainable modes of transport. Therefore, minor positive effects are expected for this alternative in relation to **SA objectives 6 (travel) and 8 (pollution)**.

**4.133** For Alternatives 1 and 2 focusing development on the areas of the County that are particularly deprived could have minor negative effects on **SA objectives 9 (water), 10 (flooding), 13 (biodiversity), 14 (heritage) and 15 (landscape)** if improving deprivation was prioritised over these other environmental factors. Therefore, minor negative effects are expected against each of these. However, for both alternatives, ensuring that new development is located near existing settlements would help to protect environmental sensitivities elsewhere in the county. As such, minor positive effects are also recorded for **SA objectives 13 (biodiversity), 14 (heritage) and 15 (landscape)**. In addition, as Alternative 2 aims to invest in necessary infrastructure such as green infrastructure, minor positive effects are also expected against **SA objectives 7 (climate change), 9 (water) and 10 (flooding)**. This is due to the fact that green infrastructure builds resilience to climate change and its impacts through carbon sequestration, restoration of floodplains and wetlands.

**4.134** Alternatives 1 and 2 are likely to generate negligible effects against the remaining SA objectives due to their specific focus on tackling the issue of deprivation.

**4.135** Under Alternative 3, the Oxfordshire Plan would not identify strategic opportunities in areas of socio-economic deprivation. Not identifying strategic development and investment in the County's areas of deprivation could worsen access to services, training, employment opportunities, education and community facilities for areas that are already deprived. Therefore, minor negative effects are expected against **SA objectives 2 (health), 3 (communities) and 4 (economy)**. While this option could provide greater flexibility in the siting of growth and investment, it would not provide homes and jobs in areas that would benefit the greatest, and therefore minor negative effects are recorded in relation to **SA objective 5 (employment)**. While overall levels of deprivation are low in Oxfordshire, there are higher levels of deprivation associated with the barriers to housing domain, therefore, **significant negative effects** are expected against **SA objective 1 (housing)** as housing affordability in the county is low and homelessness is particularly acute. The likely adverse environmental effects on **SA objectives 9 (water), 10 (flooding), 13 (biodiversity), 14 (heritage) and 15 (landscape)** of concentrating development in the specific deprived locations of the County, for example, south Oxford, Bicester, and Banbury are less likely. However, economic and housing growth will still need to be located within the County and may still affect such environmental assets. Consequently, these negligible effects are recorded as uncertain.

#### Affordable housing targets

**4.136 Table 4.19** presents the findings of the SA of the three alternatives for affordable housing:

1. Set different affordable housing targets across the County to reflect different markets.

2. Set consistent affordable housing target across Oxfordshire.
3. Do not set affordable housing targets.

Table 4.19: Affordable growth targets alternatives SA findings

SA objectives	Alternatives		
	1	2	3
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	++?	+?	?
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	+	?
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	+	?
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	0	0	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	0	0	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	0	0	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	0	0	0
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	0	0	0
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0	0	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	0	0	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	0	0	0

**4.137** The three alternatives are difficult to appraise because they involve many assumptions, not least because of the methodological difficulties in forecasting affordable housing need over such a long timescale. In practice, Alternatives 1 and 3 could have very similar impacts because they both reflect the fact that Oxfordshire has different housing markets. Alternative 2 could lead to more affordable housing because developers would not be able to choose development sites based on lower affordable housing requirements; but it could lead to less affordable housing if viability needs to be shown for all areas of the county. This appraisal assumes that different targets based on market conditions (Alternative 1) would allow, on average, for higher affordable housing targets; consistent targets across the county (Alternative 2) would lead to fewer affordable homes being built; and it makes no assumptions about district-led affordable housing targets (Alternative 3). Therefore, **significant positive effects** are expected against **SA objective 1 (housing)** for Alternative 1 and minor positive effects for Alternative 2.

**4.138** None of the alternatives would have significant effects on most dimensions of the environment (**SA objectives 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14 and 15**). Although they would lead to different numbers of affordable homes, they would not change the overall number of homes built.

**4.139** Alternative 1, which is assumed to lead to more affordable homes than Alternative 2, would have more benefits in terms of housing needs (**SA objective 1**), and thus indirectly on health (**SA objective 2**) and vibrant communities (**SA objective 3**).

Alternative 3, the 'business as usual' alternative, is more likely to have impacts resembling Alternative 1 (different targets) than Alternative 2 (same target). However, the uncertainties associated with these three alternatives – the lack of clarity over how much affordable housing each alternative would deliver – makes any further appraisal difficult.

### Oxfordshire's Growth

**4.140** There are three policy topics under the growth policy theme, and each of these are covered in turn below:

- Scale of growth (which includes housing and economic growth alternatives)
- Locations for strategic growth
- Spatial distribution of growth

#### Scale of Growth – Housing Growth

**4.141 Table 4.20** presents the findings of the SA for the four alternatives for housing growth targets:

1. Government standard methodology using 2014 population projections (100,000 new homes to 2050)<sup>47</sup>.
2. Continue rate of growth in Local Plans to 2030, and thereafter population projections<sup>48</sup> (150,000 new homes to 2050).
3. Continue current rate of growth in Local Plans to 2050 (200,000 new homes to 2050).
4. National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) Growth Deal level (300,000 homes to 2050).

**Table 4.20: Housing growth alternatives SA findings**

SA objectives	Alternatives			
	1	2	3	4
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	-?	++	++/-?	++/-?
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	-	+/-	+/-	+/-
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	-	+	+++?	++/-?
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	-	+	+++?	++/-?
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	-	-/-	--	--
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	-	-/-	--	--
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	-	-	-/-	--
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	-	-/-	--	--
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	-	-/-	--	--
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	-	-/-	--	--
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0	-?	-?

<sup>47</sup> The housing numbers noted here are very broad-brush, and will be fine-tuned as further evidence is made available

<sup>48</sup> This is the approach used by Thames Water in its Draft Water Resource Management Plan

SA objectives	Alternatives			
	1	2	3	4
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	-	-/--	--	--
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	-	-/--	--	--
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	-	-/--	--	--

**4.142** All four of the above growth options cover the plan period 2020-2050, however it should be noted the first 10-15 years of housing growth and its associated infrastructure requirements have already been allocated within the County's District Local Plans. Consequently, the effects associated with each of these options would not be felt until the next set of Local Plan periods.

**4.143** In order for Oxfordshire to deliver on the vision to be a world-leading innovation ecosystem, the Local Industrial Strategy outlines that the county must continue to work to develop resilient infrastructure that can respond to future demands and is sustainable for the environment. This can be achieved through the delivery of new housing communities in the right areas, with advanced transport links to ensure residents can make the most of the economic opportunities the region offers and improve the quality of life for residents. In addition, the increase of affordable and good quality housing will attract foreign talent and business investment.

**4.144** Alternative 1 proposes growth at a lower annual average rate than is currently proposed in the Local Plans, just enough to provide for indigenous growth and limited in-migration. Some of this growth is already planned for through local plans, for instance in Bicester.

**4.145** This appraisal assumes that Alternative 1 would restrict growth to within and near larger settlements, but that this low level of growth would not be enough to provide for the infrastructure needed beyond that already planned for in local plans. To 2030, Alternatives 2 and 3 are equivalent in scale to the districts' existing and emerging Local Plans<sup>49</sup>, but after that Alternative 3 would continue growth at the same rapid pace, whereas Alternative 2 would slow it down significantly. This appraisal assumes that the existing and proposed Local Plan allocations would be implemented to 2030, and similar locations (with different scales of growth) would be developed after 2030.

**4.146** Alternative 4, reflects the National Infrastructure Commission aspirations for economic growth benefits and would more than double the population of Oxfordshire. For such large numbers of new homes, it is likely to involve very large amounts of new construction on greenfield land. For instance, Highways England's Oxford-Cambridge corridor assessment report of 2018<sup>50</sup> suggests that major development could occur not only at existing towns but at more rural locations too. This appraisal assumes that infrastructure and employment would match housing delivery under Alternative 4.

**4.147** Alternative 1 would be least likely to provide sufficient additional housing (**SA objective 1**): enough for indigenous demographic growth, but not for the increase in population needed to support economic growth. The lack of adequate housing would constrain economic growth and the knowledge economy (**SA objectives 4 and 5**). It would minimise impacts on existing communities and would cater for local needs for housing, jobs and services (**SA objective 3**), but overall could curb economic growth and it could negatively impact on socially vibrant communities. The delivery of about 100,000 new homes is unlikely to be possible solely on brownfield land within existing urban areas: some greenfield land allocations are still likely to be required. In addition, 100,000 new homes will put increased pressure on existing infrastructures (water, energy, transport etc.) as such negative effects are expected on all environmental factors: water, flooding, soils, biodiversity, landscape and heritage (**SA**

<sup>49</sup> At the time of writing, the South Oxfordshire Local Plan's allocations could still change significantly, with county-wide ramifications. The Oxford Local Plan has also not yet been adopted, in part because of concerns about housing numbers.

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=2ahUKEwiX7YjPoJpKAhUUXRUIHdNCAw8QFJAAegQIAxAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fassets.highwaysengland.co.uk%2Froads%2Froad-projects%2FOxford%2Bto%2BCambridge%2Bexpressway%2FCorridor%2BAssessment%2BReport.pdf&usg=AOvVaw2XTjKEFJV4RRDvfKjQX5XD>

**objectives 9, 10, 11, 13, 14 and 15).** Car traffic is also likely to increase (**SA objective 6**), with associated climate change and air pollution impacts (**SA objectives 6, 7 and 8**).

**4.148** On the other end of the scale, Alternative 4 would provide so much housing that it would support significant levels of immigration, as well as providing for all indigenous need. It may well be difficult to attract so many new workers, particularly under Brexit. This could lead to homes being started but not completed; or homes not being built because house prices would be so low that developers do not find it worthwhile to build them; or homes not being built because of a shortage of appropriate skills or building materials. This alternative would also pose the greatest uncertainty for the economy and job creation, again because of the lack of certainty over delivery, particularly under Brexit. For this reason, the **significant positive effects on SA objectives 1, 4 and 5** are tempered by a possible negative.

**4.149** Alternative 4 would have **significant negative effects** on environmental factors (**SA objectives 9, 10, 11, 13, 14 and 15**) because of the very large scale of housing and associated employment land that would be required for the envisaged scale of growth and due to the exponential increase in pressure on existing types of infrastructure (water, energy, transport etc.). **Significant negative effects** are also expected against **SA objectives 6, 7 and 8** because the greater amount of homes equates to a greater amount of cars and residents on the roads, consuming resources and enjoying the county's natural environment. The vibrancy of local communities (**SA objective 3**) would also have mixed positive and negative effects as they would contend with a more than doubling of the county's population, however an increase in housing and employment land increases social interaction, easier access to healthcare facilities and more community facilities. People's health and wellbeing (**SA objective 2**) is likely to be affected by a more urban environment and the short-term impacts of construction, although better housing provision, increased social interaction and easier access to healthcare and community facilities will help to counter-balance this.

**4.150** Most of the impacts of Alternatives 2 and 3 are likely to fall between those of Alternatives 1 and 4, particularly in terms of environmental effects (**SA objectives 6 – 15**). Effects on housing, the economy and jobs (**SA objectives 1, 4 and 5**) are likely to be **significant positive** for Alternatives 2 and 3, as housing and jobs growth is both more aspirational than Alternative 1 and more realistic than Alternative 4. However, the provision of infrastructure to meet the needs of housing growth beyond the lifetime of the current Growth Deal (2011 to 2031), which funds infrastructure delivery within the Districts' current Local Plan periods, is less certain. Although the greater the rate of housing delivery between 2030 and 2050 the greater uncertainty that infrastructure provision would be able to keep pace, it is assumed that all infrastructure requirements associated with the level of housing delivery would be met. People's health (**SA objective 2**) is likely to be negatively affected in the short term by construction and in the longer term by a more busy, urban environment – more negatively for Alternative 3 than Alternative 2. However, the additional housing would bring with it improved health and social infrastructure and increased social interaction resulting in minor positive effects as well. Similarly, the vibrancy of communities (**SA objective 3**) would be negatively affected by the scale of growth required, but positively impacted by increased social interaction and social infrastructure – again more for Alternative 3 than Alternative 2.

#### Scale of Growth – Economic Growth

**4.151 Table 4.21** presents the findings of the SA of the three alternatives for economic growth:

1. Local Industrial Strategy Baseline – 35,000 additional jobs by 2040<sup>51</sup>.
2. Meet the region's economic growth needs identified in the Local Industrial Strategy and deliver half of the growth identified in the growth strategy – 71,500 jobs by 2040.
3. Local Industrial Strategy Growth Scenario – 108,000 additional jobs by 2040.

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<sup>51</sup> The Local Industrial Strategy has created growth scenarios to 2040. While the Oxfordshire Plan's remit is until 2050, additional evidence for the additional ten years is not currently available, as such there is uncertainty attached until 2050.

Table 4.21: Economic growth target alternatives SA findings

SA objectives	Alternatives		
	1	2	3
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	-?	+	++/-
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+/-	+/-	+/-
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+/-	+/-	+/-
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	+	++	++/-
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+	++	++/-
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	-	-/--	--
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	-	-/--	--
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	-	-	-/--
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	-	-/--	--
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	-	-/--	--
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	-	-/--	--
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	-	-/--	--
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	-	-/--	--
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	-	-/--	--

**4.152** All three of the above growth options cover the plan period 2020-2050, however it should be noted the first 10-15 years of employment land growth and its associated infrastructure requirements have already been allocated within the County's District Local Plans. Consequently, the effects associated with each of these options would not be felt until the next set of Local Plan periods.

**4.153** In order for Oxfordshire to deliver on the vision to be 'a world-leading innovation ecosystem', the Local Industrial Strategy outlines that the county must continue to work to develop resilient infrastructure that can respond to future demands and is sustainable for the environment.

**4.154** Alternative 1 provides for significantly less growth than is currently proposed in the Local Plans, just enough to provide for indigenous growth and limited in-migration. This appraisal assumes that Alternative 1 would restrict growth to within and near larger settlements, but that this low level of growth would not be enough to provide for the infrastructure needed in the future.

**4.155** Alternative 3, which is outlined within the Local Industrial Strategy notes that it must also involve the improvement of infrastructure to relieve existing pressure and to accommodate future growth, while responding to increasing concerns around climate change. This appraisal assumes that infrastructure and housing would match economic development under Alternative 3. Alternative 2 represents a middle ground approach between Alternatives 1 and 3.

**4.156** Alternative 1 would be least likely to provide sufficient additional economic growth (**SA objectives 4 and 5**): enough for indigenous growth, but not for the increase in population expected in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc which will translate to increased

housing stock. By providing additional jobs a positive effect on housing (**SA objective 1**) is likely to be felt. Alternative 1 would minimise impacts on existing communities and would cater for local needs for jobs and services (**SA objective 3**), but overall could curb economic growth and not deliver socially vibrant communities. Additionally, an increased urban environment could have adverse impacts on health and wellbeing (**SA objective 2**), as it is likely that some greenfield land and open space, will be utilised to provide additional employment land to deliver the necessary 35,000 additional jobs. In addition, 35,000 new jobs will put increased pressure on existing infrastructures (water, energy, transport etc.) as such negative effects are expected on all environmental factors: **water, flooding, soils, biodiversity, landscape and heritage (SA objectives 9, 10, 11, 13, 14 and 15)**. Car traffic is also likely to increase (**SA objective 6**), with associated climate change and air pollution impacts (**SA objectives 6, 7 and 8**).

**4.157** On the other end of the scale, Alternative 3 would pose the greatest uncertainty for the economy and job creation, because of the lack of certainty over delivery, particularly under Brexit. This reasoning is also applied to housing as the additional number of residents will be uncertain. For this reason, the **significant positive effects** on **SA objectives 1, 4 and 5** are tempered by a possible negative.

**4.158** Alternative 3 would have **significant negative effects** on environmental factors (**SA objectives 9, 10, 11, 13, 14 and 15**) because of the large amount of employment land and associated housing that would be required for the envisaged scale of growth and due to the exponential increase in pressure on existing types of infrastructure (water, energy, transport etc.). The vibrancy of local communities (**SA objective 3**) and resident's health and wellbeing (**SA objective 2**) would also be both positively and negatively affected as there would be additional employment opportunities within close proximity to communities, however delivering 108,000 jobs would need a lot of employment land thereby reducing greenfield land and potential open space.

**4.159** Most of the impacts of Alternative 2 are likely to fall between those of Alternatives 1 and 3, particularly in terms of environmental effects (**SA objectives 6 to 15**). Effects on housing, the economy and jobs (**SA objectives 1, 4 and 5**) are likely to be the most positive for this alternative, as housing and jobs growth are both more aspirational than Alternative 1 and more realistic than Alternative 3. People's health (**SA objective 2**) is likely to be negatively affected in the longer term by a more busy, urban environment as it is likely that the majority of jobs will be provided within existing urban centres. However, the additional jobs would bring with it improved housing and social infrastructure. Similarly, the vibrancy of communities (**SA objective 3**) would be negatively affected by the scale of growth required.

### Locations for strategic growth

**4.160** Table 4.22 presents the findings of the SA of the three alternatives for the location growth:

1. Identify strategic development locations for growth.
2. Set out criteria to locate strategic development flexibly to respond to market demands.
3. Do not identify locations or criteria for strategic development

Table 4.22: Locations for strategic growth alternatives SA findings

SA objectives	Alternatives		
	1	2	3
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	++	++	-
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	++?	++?	0
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	++?	++?	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	+++	+++	-
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+++	+++	-
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	++?	+	0

SA objectives	Alternatives		
	1	2	3
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+?	+	0
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	0?	-?	-?
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0?	-?	-?
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0?	-?	-?
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	+	+	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	0?	-?	-?
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0?	-?	-?
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	0?	-?	-?

**4.161** This appraisal assumes that Alternative 1 would result in strategic housing and employment sites being located in sustainable locations that have few environmental constraints and are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport. For instance, they could be integrated in larger mixed-use developments. It assumes that Alternative 2 would result in employment and housing sites being located in locations with relatively few environmental constraints and relatively good public transport access, but not necessarily linked to other strategic development that would allow more efficient provision of infrastructure etc. Alternative 3 would rely on Local and Neighbourhood Plans to allocate housing and economic growth, which may be well located at a District level, but may not take advantage of strategic employment or infrastructure opportunities at the County level.

**4.162** Alternatives 1 and 2 would both have **significant positive effects** in relation to **housing (SA objective 1)**, **employment (SA objective 5)** and the **knowledge economy (SA objective 4)** because they would help to provide a coordinated approach of delivering housing, infrastructure and employment, which in turn would be more attractive to businesses and employees. There is uncertainty for Alternative 1 due to the fact that viable locations for economic growth and education and training may change over the plan period. The uncertainty attached to Alternative 2 acknowledges its less focussed criteria-based nature, putting greater requirements on developers to identify and deliver viable and sustainable locations.

**4.163** Alternative 1, would help to reduce the need to travel by car (**SA objective 6**), by helping to plan for integrated communities including housing, employment sites and sustainable transport. This would indirectly help to minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change (**SA objective 7**). There is some uncertainty about both of these, as they depend on the strategic growth sites put forward. Alternative 1 would also be more likely to direct housing and employment sites initially to previously developed land, helping to ensure efficient use of land (**SA objective 11**). Alternative 2 is likely to expect minor positive effects as well as this option would set out criteria that would help councils and developers to develop in sustainable locations. Alternative 1 is likely to have minimal impacts on the other SA objectives (**SA objectives 8, 9, 10, 13, 14 and 15**) since the sites would be chosen to avoid these impacts where possible. However, uncertainty is attached to the likelihood and significance of these effects until such time as the location, design and scale of such developments is known. Alternative 2 would have some negative impacts on these SA objectives because the sites put forward by developers may not meet all of the sustainability criteria.

**4.164** Alternative 1 would help to support health and vibrant communities (**SA objectives 2 and 3**) because the sites could be selected to help address those objectives, for example close to regeneration areas to address inequalities in accessing jobs in Oxfordshire's key sectors. Also, the planning, construction and ongoing running of housing and employment sites would be

integrated with planning for the wider community through phasing of infrastructure. Alternatives 1 and 2 support the provision of local employment, education and training opportunities, which could in turn improve the quality of life for Oxfordshire residents and workers, with associated health benefits and investment in existing and new communities.

**4.165** Alternative 3 would result in no identification of locations or criteria for strategic development, thereby relying on Local and Neighbourhood Plans. In the absence of policy designed to identify locations for strategic growth, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 would have a negligible effect on a number of the majority of SA objectives. However, the absence of the identification of strategic growth locations at a county wide level could result in piecemeal housing and economic development, not located in strategic areas resulting in adverse effects against the **SA objectives 1 (housing), 4 (economy) and 5 (employment)**. In addition, Alternative 3 may have some minor negative effects on the environmental **SA objectives (SA objectives 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14 and 15)** because the sites put forward by developers may not be in sustainable/strategically well-connected locations. However, uncertainty is attached to the likelihood and significance of these effects until such time as the location, design and scale of such developments is known. These effects are considered to be minor in acknowledgement of the other policy and legislative mechanisms designed to plan for sustainable development.

### Spatial Distribution of growth

**4.166 Table 4.23** presents the findings of the SA of the eight spatial alternatives for the Oxfordshire Plan. They are based on the conceptual spatial scenarios from the 'Introducing Oxfordshire Plan 2050' consultation document, but further refined for this appraisal:

1. Intensification in existing towns and cities – Increase density of existing and planned settlements, prioritise brownfield sites.
2. Intensification of housing development around strategic economic assets – co-location of uses to meet business and research park needs.
3. Public transport 'Wheel' – Concentrate development around areas of good public transport connectivity.
4. Rail 'String' – Locate string of settlements along new/upgraded rail corridors (e.g. Cowley line).
5. OxCam 'String' – New development along route of OxCam expressway, once the route has been decided, consistent with NIC Growth Deal aspirations.
6. Strategic road junctions – Concentrate development around strategic road junctions.
7. Proportionate dispersed growth between existing settlements – Oxford, towns and villages.
8. New settlements with new strategic transport connections – in relatively unconstrained areas of the County's countryside.
9. Protect environmental assets – Identify environmental constraints first (e.g. strategic green and blue infrastructure, historic environment, flooding, AONB and other sensitive landscapes, best and most versatile agricultural land etc., possibly through natural capital mapping), then place housing and employment where they avoid significant impacts and enable enhancements.

Table 4.23: Spatial Distribution alternatives SA findings

SA Objectives	Alternatives								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+/-	?	+/-	+/-?	--	--	+/-?	+?	+?
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+/-	?	+/-	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	+?	+?
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	++	+	++	+/-?	+/-	-	+/-?	+/-	+/-
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	++	+	++	+/-?	+/-	-	++/-	+/-	+/-
To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	++	?	++	++/-?	--	--	++/-	+/-	-
To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	++	?	++	+	--	--	+/-	+/-	++/-
To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	0	?	0	0	--	--	-	+/-	0
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	-	?	-	-?	-	-	-	--?	++
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	-	?	-	-?	-	-	-	--?	++
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	++	?	++	-?	--	--	+/-	--?	++
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	?	0	0	-?	-?	0	--?	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	-	?	-	-?	--	--	-	--?	++
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	-	?	-	-?	-/-	-/-	-	--?	++
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	-	?	-	-	--	--	-	--?	++

**4.167** This appraisal assumes that the same number of homes will be provided by each alternative and therefore no effect on SA objective 1, with the differences in effects arising from the location of the development (except for Alternative 2 which would provide bespoke accommodation for local workers, see below). It also assumes that, for each alternative, the amount of employment land made available would be roughly the same, and that the location of employment sites would roughly mirror the location of homes, e.g., employment sites in and around settlements for Alternative 1, or strung out along the Oxford-Cambridge expressway for Alternative 5.

**4.168** Alternatives 1 and 3 are considered likely to have the same effects across all the SA objectives, because concentrating development around areas of good public transport connectivity is assumed to mean that development would be located mostly within Oxfordshire's existing towns and cities. These two alternatives would have **significant positive effects** in terms of employment and the knowledge economy (**SA objectives 4 and 5**) because development would take place in areas where there are already employment and educational facilities, allowing economic clusters to form. The employment could be easily accessed by walking, cycling and transport, in part because development would be dense also resulting in **significant positive effects** on **SA objectives 6 and 11**. The denser development would make district heating easier, and flats – the form of housing that is most likely under these alternatives – use less energy than other forms of dwellings. This, combined with the reduced need to travel, would also have **significant positive effects** on minimising contributions to climate change (**SA objective 7**).

**4.169** Alternatives 1 and 3 would have both positive and negative effects on health and communities (**SA objectives 2 and 3**). Existing towns and cities have existing health facilities which could support new residents but could also be placed under a lot of pressure. Existing residents are likely to feel negative impacts from a large increase in population, although new residents are likely to benefit from the existing services (e.g., leisure and retail facilities).

**4.170** Alternatives 1 and 3 would limit negative effects on biodiversity due to their efficient land use, however denser development could result in fewer green spaces in urban settings (**SA objective 13**). Negative impacts on flooding, heritage and the landscape are also likely (**SA objectives 10, 14 and 15**) because existing urban areas are mostly in/near the floodplain, with significant heritage assets and attractive and distinctive townscapes and landscape character, which would be affected by significant quantities of new development.

**4.171** Most of the impacts of Alternative 2 are unknown and depend on where and how the employer-linked housing is built. Theoretically, this alternative would reduce the need to travel (**SA objective 6**) to work by car as housing would be near the employment site. However, the current large employment sites are not near services – they are on the edge of towns or outside towns – so other journeys than those to work might be made more easily by car.

**4.172** Similarly, the large employment sites are currently in areas with relatively limited environmental constraints, so adding homes in those locations could also limit impacts on water quality, flooding, biodiversity, soil quality, the heritage and landscape (**SA objectives 9, 10, 11, 13, 14 and 15**). However, other sites linked to business/research parks may be more environmentally sensitive. The new housing sites could support health and vibrant communities (**SA objectives 2 and 3**) if they are large enough and have good access to services but could be quite remote from services and become like commuter suburbs if they simply act as dormitories for local workers.

**4.173** Alternative 2 would help to meet Oxfordshire's housing needs (**SA objective 1**) by providing bespoke accommodation for local workers. This could include temporary accommodation for visiting scientists/scholars, accommodation for shift workers, and other employer-specific housing, which might be harder to provide through standard housing developments. By providing housing that is bespoke to the large employers, including being located near them, Alternative 2 also supports the knowledge economy and employment (**SA objectives 4 and 5**). Therefore, minor positive effects are expected.

**4.174** Alternative 4 would place new development along new and upgraded railway lines. With the exception of Oxford, Didcot, Banbury and Bicester, the Oxfordshire settlements that have existing rail stations are comparatively small and service is poor. This appraisal assumes that these settlements, along with Oxford and the market towns, would all grow significantly under this alternative, with other parts of Oxfordshire being relatively unaffected. Uncertainty is attached to each SA objective as this option would be subject to investment in improvements to rail facilities and frequency.

**4.175** Alternative 4's main positive effects would be in reducing the need to travel by car and associated climate change effects (**SA objectives 6 and 7**). Siting new development along rail corridors would encourage people to travel by rail rather than car, and the scale of development is likely to mean that adequate services and facilities would be provided in even the smaller towns. It is uncertain whether other public transport would be improved as a result of this alternative, and some commuting by

car might be needed to access the train stations. Uncertainty is attached as not all of the main employment hubs are accessible by rail, so there would be limitations on the positive effects.

**4.176** Like Alternatives 1 and 3, Alternative 4 would negatively affect existing residents but help to provide adequate/improved services and would be positive for new residents in terms of health and communities (**SA objectives 2 and 3**).

**4.177** Alternative 4 is likely to have minor negative effects on most environmental criteria, since the existing settlements along railway lines are sometimes located in the floodplain, with significant biodiversity, attractive landscape and heritage assets (**SA objectives 9, 10 11, 13, 14 and 15**). Most development is likely to be greenfield, with a negative impact on **SA objective 11**. The impact on jobs and the knowledge economy (**SA objectives 4 and 5**) would be both positive and negative: positive because employment sites in Oxford and the larger towns could benefit from clustering and from existing higher education institutions; negative because those in the smaller towns could be constrained by their relatively remote location and reliance on rail transport.

**4.178** Alternatives 5 and 6, which would focus development on roads (the Oxford-Cambridge expressway for Alternative 5, existing road junctions for Alternative 6) are the least sustainable alternatives of the nine considered. Alternative 5 aims to improve sub-regional/regional connections through the Expressway by locating growth along the junctions thereby encouraging long distance commuting. Development is likely to be greenfield (including the expressway being built on greenfield land) and is unlikely to be high density such as that in Alternative 1. This would have **significant negative effects** on efficient use of land (**SA objective 11**). Development would be by definition road-based, with consequent **significant negative effects** on reducing the need to travel by car (**SA objective 6**) and reducing the causes of climate change (**SA objective 7**).

**4.179** The additional traffic (and, for Alternative 5, new expressway) would have a **significant negative effect** on biodiversity through fragmentation of habitats, noise, and air pollution (**SA objective 13**). It would increase noise and light pollution (**SA objective 8**) on the roads and road junctions (and, for Alternative 5, in areas of the county that are currently tranquil). The additional development and associated traffic (and, for Alternative 5, the new expressway) would have a **significant negative effect** on the landscape, and at least some impact on the historic environment, notably on the settings of buildings (**SA objectives 14 and 15**).

**4.180** Alternatives 5 and 6 are also likely to have **significant negative effects** on health and communities (**SA objectives 2 and 3**). As the Expressway proposed in Alternative 5 aims to improve regional connections thereby locating growth along junctions, it is less likely to connect development to local places of work and residence. Existing and new residents will also be negatively affected by the additional noise and air pollution caused by large car-dependent developments; the indirect effects on the landscape and biodiversity; and the stress of increasing traffic on existing roads. It may be more difficult for new residents to form communities in large, car-dependent developments.

**4.181** The effects of Alternative 5 on jobs and the knowledge economy (**SA objectives 4 and 5**) are likely to be mixed. Investment in the expressway will result in some positive effects, for example, providing for access to a route to additional housing and employment opportunities. However, the expressway may not necessarily make commuting within Oxfordshire easier as it is likely to have fewer junctions. Therefore, it is likely that residents will be forced to use local roads thereby creating traffic congestion and increasing commuting times. For both Alternatives 5 and 6 it is likely that traffic movements<sup>52</sup> would increase and, in time, congestion. Suppliers will need to rely on increasingly congested roads for deliveries. Businesses will be vulnerable to problems on the roads and increases in petrol prices. Businesses located on road junctions will find it more difficult to form clusters with existing businesses and educational institutions, affecting the knowledge economy. Businesses on an Oxford-Cambridge Arc could profit from linking with other institutions along an expressway, but in practice they could simply be strung along a large road with relatively few links between them.

**4.182** Alternative 7 is for proportionate growth, i.e., each settlement would get an equal proportion of additional growth. The effects of this alternative are likely to be a combination of those of Alternative 1 (growth in existing towns) for development in Oxford, Didcot, Banbury and Bicester; and Alternatives 4 and 6 (growth outside of towns, near a railway station or road junction) for smaller settlements.

**4.183** For very small villages, a very small addition of development could be beneficial in keeping or enhancing local services (including health services) and supporting a vibrant local community (**SA objectives 2 and 3**); however, this is uncertain because in some settlements the scale of growth may be insufficient to deliver new and improved services and facilities in

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<sup>52</sup> <https://bettertransport.org.uk/roads-nowhere/induced-traffic>

certain locations. For larger settlements, impacts on communities are likely to be mixed, with new development bringing significant changes and new and improved services and facilities, as well as possibly overwhelming other local services.

**4.184** Alternative 7 would support Oxfordshire's knowledge economy (SA objective 4) in the larger settlements, which already have high-tech employment and educational facilities. It is less likely to do so in the smaller, more dispersed settlements. On the other hand, a wider variety of locations – rural as well as urban – could support a wider range of types of employment (SA objective 5), including light industrial and agricultural. This could also support a more balanced, resilient form of economic growth in the county.

**4.185** Alternative 7 would lead to more transport movements (**SA objective 6**) than Alternatives 1 or 3, but less than Alternatives 5 or 6. The new residents and employees of the urban areas are more likely to walk, cycle or take public transport, whilst those in the villages are more likely to drive their cars. However, the wider range of housing and employment opportunities offered by this 'mixed' option could allow people to live near where they work in the countryside and could allow more services to be provided in rural areas, thus allowing rural dwellers to more easily access them by non-car means. Impacts on greenhouse gas emissions (**SA objective 7**) are also likely to be mixed, with urban dwellers living in higher density developments and driving less, and rural dwellers more likely to live in larger detached houses that use more fuel and driving more.

**4.186** Like the other alternatives, Alternative 7 is likely to negatively affect air quality, water quality, flooding, biodiversity (**SA objectives 8, 9, 10 and 13**) by requiring more land take (**SA objective 11**), although this would be minimised by the fact that most new development would be in/near existing settlements, focused on brownfield land and of higher density. Impacts on heritage and landscape would also be negative (**SA objectives 14 and 15**).

**4.187** Alternative 8 will have positive effects on jobs, the knowledge economy, communities and health and wellbeing (**SA objectives 2, 3, 4 and 5**) as new settlements are likely to be self-sufficient and sustainable providing additional jobs and social and health infrastructure. Although, depending on the type of strategic transport connections, additional noise and air pollution caused by private vehicle travel could negatively affect communities. Negative effects are also expected on jobs and the knowledge economy as the new settlements could be placed in isolated or constrained areas.

**4.188** Depending on the location of these new settlements and what type of new strategic transport connections are created, mixed positive and negative effects are expected on reducing the need of the car, climate change and pollution (**SA objective 6, 7 and 8**). This is because new settlements could be located just outside of existing urban and town centres where transport links are concentrated thereby reducing the need for private vehicles, or new settlements could be situated in more rural areas with no transport links to connect with creating a settlement dependent on private vehicles thereby increasing greenhouse gas emissions and air and noise pollution.

**4.189 Significant negative effects** are expected against water, flooding, soil, minerals, biodiversity, historic environment and landscape (**SA objectives 9 to 15**) as new settlements and new transport connections could lead to water overuse, be developed on greenfield lands, flood zones or mineral safeguarding areas, be located within close proximity to European Sites or heritage assets and could create fragmentation within habitats. Therefore, negative effects are expected as locations for the new settlements and the type of transport connections are uncertain.

**4.190** Alternative 9 would focus development in areas that are environmentally robust: avoiding floodplains, sensitive biodiversity areas, landscape designations etc and as such would have **significant positive effects** for most dimensions of the environment. It would help to protect areas of floodplain, high biodiversity, high agricultural quality, high landscape quality, and heritage value (**SA objectives 10, 11, 13, 14 and 15**). In doing so, it would also help to protect water quality (**SA objective 9**).

**4.191** On the other hand, Alternative 9 would lead to development that is car-based or that would require excellent public transport services to prevent heavy car use (**SA objective 6**). The most environmentally unconstrained areas are not necessarily the most accessible via sustainable modes of transport and may require considerable travel if residents wanted to access jobs and services in the larger settlements. The emissions from the additional travel, is likely to add significantly to greenhouse gas emissions (**SA objective 7**).

**4.192** The effect of Alternative 9 on communities and health (**SA objectives 2 and 3**) is likely to be minor positive. The alternative would help to protect the environmental assets that underlie good health. This alternative is also likely to support a knowledge economy and high employment (**SA objectives 4 and 5**), through the retention of environment assets that attract people to live and work and businesses to invest in Oxfordshire. However, minor negative effects are also expected as

development would likely be located in areas that are not well served by public transport, with no clear links to existing employment clusters or educational institutions. They are also areas where broadband is likely to be absent or slow.

### Improving accessibility and transport

**4.193 Table 4.24** presents the findings of the SA of the three alternatives for improving accessibility and transport. Most policies regarding transport are set through the Local Transport Plan, but the three alternatives below are within the remit of the Oxfordshire Plan<sup>53</sup>:

1. Plan for, for a comprehensive mass transit network linking larger existing and new built-up areas.
2. Plan for, a comprehensive cycling network linking larger existing and new built-up areas.
3. Plan for county wide digital connectivity.

**Table 4.24: Improve accessibility and transport alternatives SA findings**

SA objectives	Alternatives		
	1	2	3
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	+	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+?	++	0
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+?	++	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	0	+	++
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+	+	+
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	++	++	+
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	++	+	+
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	0	0
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0?	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0?	0	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	++/-	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	++/-	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	++/-	+/-	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	++/-	+/-	-

**4.194** Alternative 1 would have **significant positive effects** on reducing the need to travel by car (**SA objective 6**) and, associated with that, on minimising greenhouse gases (**SA objective 7**). Mass transit is likely to be electric, helping to improve air quality. Residents would probably walk or cycle to public transport stops, helping to improve their health, and stops/stations

<sup>53</sup> Unlike most of the other alternatives discussed in this report which are mutually exclusive (only one can be chosen), any or all of these alternatives could be included in the plan.

would act as forms of community meeting spaces (**SA objectives 2 and 3**). Additionally, fast, effective, and reliable public transit could also help to reduce journey times thereby reducing time caught in traffic and would improve work life balance and quality of life. However, these positive effects are uncertain until the location of the network hubs are known. A robust public transport network could also make new housing and employment development more attractive, since they could be accessed by a range of transport modes (**SA objectives 1 and 5**).

**4.195** The development of a comprehensive mass transit network would have some negative implications in terms of land take for the new infrastructure (**SA objective 11**). However, it avoids much more land take in the form of new roads, parking areas and garages, so that the overall impact is positive. It would also affect the landscape (e.g., through tracks, bus lanes, overhead gantries), resource use (e.g., ballast for bus lanes or light rail tracks) and biodiversity (e.g., habitat fragmentation) but again would avoid worse impacts arising from roads and vehicles (**SA objectives 12, 13 and 15**). Therefore, these SA objectives are also expected to have **significant positive effects** as the mass transit system is likely to be electric and include public transport and active modes of travel. This approach would have a positive effect on the County's landscape, soils, biodiversity, and mineral resources compared to the creation of additional roads which would worsen air quality, use more land and it is less likely that private vehicle related infrastructure would include green infrastructure compared to more sustainable modes of travel.

**4.196** A comprehensive cycling network – Alternative 2 – would have **significant positive effects** on health from encouraging people to cycle (**SA objective 2**); on communities by providing spaces where people can meet (**SA objective 3**); and on reducing the need to travel by car by allowing more journeys to be made by bicycle (**SA objective 6**). The growth in the use of e-bikes could synergistically (more than just adding the impacts of the two separately) work with a better cycle network to significantly change people's future travel behaviour.

**4.197** A cycling network would support employment growth and the knowledge economy (**SA objectives 4 and 5**) by allowing employees to take a healthy form of transport to work. Reducing the need for car parking at the employment site would also be more cost-effective for the employer.

**4.198** Development of a cycle network – the assumption here is that this would be through currently undeveloped areas – is likely to have some minor negative effects on the landscape and biodiversity. However, the network is likely to be accompanied by planting and possibly (as with the Sustrans network) artwork, so it could instead have minor positive effects by becoming a biodiversity corridor, part of the multifunctional green infrastructure network and a visual asset (**SA objectives 13 and 15**).

**4.199** Comprehensive broadband access – Alternative 3 – is likely to have very few negative effects, apart from the visual impacts of any necessary masts (**SA objective 15**), and the short-term effects of digging in the cables. It would have **significant positive effects** for Oxfordshire's knowledge economy (**SA objective 4**) by allowing for faster communication. It would also allow people to work from home, increasing their efficiency and reducing the need for office space<sup>54</sup>. It would have a less clear effect in supporting employment generally (**SA objective 5**), although the ability to work more flexibly would still have benefits. Reducing the need to travel to work (**SA objective 6**) would also have benefits in terms of climate change (**SA objective 7**).

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<sup>54</sup> <https://www.inc.com/scott-mautz/a-2-year-stanford-study-shows-astonishing-productivity-boost-of-working-from-home.html>

# Chapter 5

## Oxfordshire Plan 2050

### Regulation 18 Part 2 options SA findings

**5.1** This chapter sets out and appraises the options being consulted upon in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation document, including preferred options and reasonable alternatives. **Appendix D** lists the contents of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation document policy by policy and provides justification for the selection of the preferred policies. The appraisal of the policy options in this chapter follows the same order as the Oxfordshire Plan consultation document.

**5.2** The Oxfordshire Plan makes reference to the contents of the 'Strategic Vision for Long-Term Sustainable Development 2050' document. The Oxfordshire Plan lists this strategic document's definition of 'good growth', strategic vision and associated guiding principles for context only; they do not represent components of the Oxfordshire Plan, so they have not been subject to appraisal in this SA Report. The following elements of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation document have been subject to appraisal:

- Oxfordshire Plan Vision for 2050 and Strategic Objectives:
  - One vision.
  - 11 strategic objectives.
- Theme One – Addressing climate change:
  - Four preferred policies.
  - Nine reasonable alternatives.
- Theme Two – Improving environmental quality:
  - Eight preferred policies.
  - Seven reasonable alternatives.
- Theme Three – Creating strong and healthy communities:
  - Four preferred policies.
  - Four reasonable alternatives.
- Theme Four – Planning for sustainable travel and connectivity:
  - Five preferred policies.
  - Five reasonable alternatives.
- Theme Five – Creating jobs and providing homes:
  - 11 preferred policies.
  - 12 reasonable alternatives.<sup>21</sup>
- Strategic spatial options:
  - Five reasonable alternatives.

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<sup>21</sup> Note: the preferred scale of growth (jobs and homes) to be planned for within the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan has yet to be determined. No new reasonable alternatives to the growth options appraised in Chapter 4 were identified at this stage, so no growth options are appraised in Chapter 5.

**5.3 Table 5.1** below reports the evolution of the reasonable options from those initially considered and appraised in **Chapter 4**, explaining their relationship with the options included in the latest iteration of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and providing the plan-makers' justification for the exclusion of previously appraised options where relevant.

Table 5.1: Evolution of initial options appraised Chapter 4 into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document

Initial Options Appraised in Chapter 4			Evolution of Options in Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document		Plan-makers' Justification for Change	
Theme	Topic	Option				
Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation	Energy efficiency targets	Require all strategic development to be zero carbon, setting out 'allowable solutions' to offset carbon that cannot be reduced on site.	Policy 01: Sustainable Design and Construction effectively covers this option.			
		Require all strategic development to meet higher energy efficiency standards than Building Regulations, setting out 'allowable solutions' to offset carbon that cannot be reduced on site.	Policy 01: Sustainable Design and Construction and Policy 02: Energy effectively cover this option.			
		Set out criteria encouraging higher energy efficiency standards than Building Regulations.	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	A decision has been made not to include criteria-based policies in the Oxfordshire Plan consultation document at this stage. Further consideration will be given to such options after this stage.		
		Do not set energy efficiency targets that are higher than Building Regulations.	Considered as an alternative to Policy 02: Energy.			
	Renewable energy targets	100% of the County's new strategic development sites' energy needs generated from renewable sources by 2050.	Policy 02: Energy effectively covers this option.			
		50% of the County's new strategic development sites' energy needs generated from renewable sources by 2050.	Considered as an alternative to Policy 02: Energy – but more generally through consideration of the principle of any policy-based energy target.			
		Set out criteria encouraging the siting of renewable energy technologies.	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	A decision has been made not to include criteria-based policies in the Oxfordshire Plan consultation document at this stage. Further consideration will be given to such options after this stage.		
		Do not set county-wide renewable energy targets.	Considered as an alternative to Policy 02: Energy.			

Initial Options Appraised in Chapter 4			Evolution of Options in Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document	Plan-makers' Justification for Change
Theme	Topic	Option		
Page 838	Promote local low carbon energy networks	Identify strategic development locations with potential for local energy networks (e.g. heat from power, co-location of homes and heat/energy producing employment sites).	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	A decision has been made not to include site-based policies in the Oxfordshire Plan consultation document at this stage. Further consideration will be given to such options after this stage.
		Set out criteria encouraging the siting of local energy networks.	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	A decision has been made not to include criteria-based policies in the Oxfordshire Plan consultation document at this stage. Further consideration will be given to such options after this stage.
		Do not identify locations or set criteria for low carbon energy networks.	Policy 02: Energy does not identify locations or set criteria for low carbon energy networks.	
	Promote strategic renewable wind and solar developments	Identify strategic development locations with potential for strategic wind and/or solar farms.	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	A decision has been made not to include site-based policies in the Oxfordshire Plan consultation document at this stage. Further consideration will be given to such options after this stage.
		Set out criteria encouraging the siting of strategic wind and solar farms.	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	A decision has been made not to include criteria-based policies in the Oxfordshire Plan consultation document at this stage. Further consideration will be given to such options after this stage.
		Do not identify locations or set criteria for strategic renewable wind/solar development.	Policy 02: Energy does not identify locations or set criteria for strategic renewable wind/solar development.	
	Promote low/zero carbon transport networks	Identify strategic development locations and linkages for investment in strategic zero/low carbon transport networks, such as zero emission/electric vehicle zones, low emission zones, solar roads and electric car hubs.	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	A decision has been made not to include site-based policies in the Oxfordshire Plan consultation document at this stage. Further consideration will be given to such options after this stage.
		Encourage the development of strategic low/zero carbon transport networks.	Policy 17: Towards a Net Zero Transport Network effectively covers this option.	

Initial Options Appraised in Chapter 4			Evolution of Options in Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document	Plan-makers' Justification for Change	
Theme	Topic	Option			
Page 839		Do not encourage or identify strategic locations for low/zero carbon transport networks.	Considered as an alternative to Policy 17: Towards a Net Zero Transport Network.		
	Promote climate change resilience and adaptation	Identify strategic opportunities for upstream flood mitigation/storage areas (see also 'Promote/enhance biodiversity at the strategic scale).	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	No strategic opportunities have been identified at this time. Such opportunities would however be linked to Policy 04: Flood Risk and Policy 07: Natural Capital as well as future spatial strategy-related policies.	
		Identify strategic opportunities for urban greening.	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	No strategic opportunities have been identified at this time. Such opportunities would however be linked to Policy 07: Natural Capital.	
		Identify strategic opportunities for large-scale tree planting.	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	No strategic opportunities have been identified at this time. Such opportunities would however be linked to Policy 05: Nature Recovery and Policy 07: Natural Capital.	
		Do not identify strategic opportunities to promote climate change resilience and adaptation in Oxfordshire.	Policy 04: Flood Risk does not identify strategic opportunities to promote climate change resilience and adaptation in Oxfordshire.		
	Water efficiency targets	Require all strategic development to be water neutral.	Policy 03: Water Efficiency effectively covers this option.		
		Require all strategic development to meet higher water efficiency standards than Building Regulations.	Policy 03: Water Efficiency effectively covers this option.		
		Set out criteria encouraging higher water efficiency standards than Building Regulations.	Policy 03: Water Efficiency effectively covers this option.		
		Do not set water efficiency targets that are higher than Building Regulations.	Considered as an alternative to Policy 03: Water Efficiency.		

Initial Options Appraised in Chapter 4			Evolution of Options in Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document		Plan-makers' Justification for Change	
Theme	Topic	Option				
Sustainable construction and design principles	Promote sustainable construction and design	Prescribe county-wide principles/standards to encourage the sustainable design and construction of all buildings, including orientation, insulation etc., possibly in line with established Code for Sustainable Homes/Home Quality Mark and BREEAM standards.	Policy 01: Sustainable Design and Construction effectively covers this option.			
		Prescribe county-wide principles/standards for the masterplanning of strategic scale developments, including integration with public transport links, healthy place-making principles, community hubs, green infrastructure etc.	Policy 15: High Quality Design for New Development and Garden Town Standards for New Settlements effectively covers this option.			
		Do not identify county-wide principles/standards.	Considered as an alternative to Policy 01: Sustainable Design and Construction.			
Historic Environment	Promote the conservation and enhancement of the historic built environment	Establish a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of Oxfordshire's historic environment at the strategic scale.	Policy 06: Protection and Enhancement of Historic Environment covers this option.			
		Do not establish a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of Oxfordshire's historic environment at the strategic scale.	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	It is no longer considered appropriate to be silent on this strategic issue in the Oxfordshire Plan.		
Natural Environment	Promote the conservation and enhancement of strategic views, landscape and townscape features	Establish a positive strategy for the conservation and enhancement of important and/or sensitive strategic views, landscape and townscape features at a county-wide landscape scale.	Policy 05: Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Characters covers this option.			
		Do not establish a positive strategy for the conservation and enhancement of landscape and townscape features at a county-wide landscape scale.	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	It is no longer considered appropriate to be silent on this strategic issue in the Oxfordshire Plan.		

Initial Options Appraised in Chapter 4			Evolution of Options in Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document		Plan-makers' Justification for Change	
Theme	Topic	Option				
Page 841	Protect/enhance biodiversity at the strategic scale	Establish a positive strategy for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity at a county-wide landscape scale.	Policy 07: Nature Recovery effectively covers this option.			
		Do not establish a positive strategy for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity at a county-wide landscape scale.	Considered through alternative to Policy 07: Nature Recovery.			
	Promote/create/enhance green infrastructure and access to nature at the strategic scale	Identify location(s) for new strategic green spaces to serve the county.	Policy 07: Nature Recovery effectively covers this option.			
		Do not identify strategic scale green spaces.	Considered through alternative to Policy 07: Nature Recovery.			
	Proportions of biodiversity net gain:	10% biodiversity net gain to be delivered through new development on the basis of achieving at least some net gain.	Considered through alternative to Policy 08: Biodiversity Gain given national legislation mandates 10% biodiversity net gain.			
		20% biodiversity net gain to be delivered through new development on the basis of proven viability.	Policy 08: Biodiversity Gain effectively covers this option.			
		50%-100% biodiversity net gain to be delivered through new development on the basis of starting to account for past losses.	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	It is considered that such high biodiversity net gain would present viability and deliverability challenges for the Plan.		
		Set out criteria encouraging at least some biodiversity net gain.	Considered through alternative to Policy 08: Biodiversity Gain given national legislation mandates 10% biodiversity net gain.			
		Do not set county-wide biodiversity net gain targets.	Considered through alternative to Policy 08: Biodiversity Gain.			
	Green Belt		Identify strategic opportunities to enhance the existing Oxford Green Belt (for delivery through	Policy 10: Green Belt effectively covers this option.		

Initial Options Appraised in Chapter 4			Evolution of Options in Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document	Plan-makers' Justification for Change
Theme	Topic	Option		
	Enhancement of Green Belt Beneficial Uses:	Local Plans) (i.e. provide access, opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation, enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or improve damaged or derelict land).		
		Do not identify strategic opportunities to enhance the existing Oxford Green Belt.	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	It is considered that the Oxfordshire Plan represents an important opportunity to provide strategic direction on this important cross-boundary issue.
Equality in Oxfordshire	Addressing inequalities	Identify strategic development opportunities in areas of socio-economic deprivation to address inequality through regeneration. Identify strategic opportunities for investment in areas of strategic socio-economic deprivation to be delivered through S106 and CIL contributions, e.g. skills development and training, infrastructure investment including green infrastructure.	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	Opportunities for addressing socio-economic deprivation will be explored through further spatial options assessment following this stage.
		Do not identify strategic opportunities to regenerate areas of socio-economic deprivation.	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	Opportunities for addressing socio-economic deprivation will be explored through further spatial options assessment following this stage.
	Affordable Housing Targets	Set different affordable housing targets across the County to reflect different markets.	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	Such a policy would require detailed viability assessment of housing sub-markets which has not been undertaken at this stage.
		Set consistent affordable housing target across Oxfordshire.	Considered through alternative to Policy 30: Affordable Housing.	
		Do not set affordable housing targets.	Policy 30: Affordable Housing does not set affordable housing targets.	
	Scale of growth	Housing growth	Government standard method using 2014 population projections (100,000 new homes to 2050).	Considered through alternative to Policy 28: How many Homes?

Initial Options Appraised in Chapter 4			Evolution of Options in Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document	Plan-makers' Justification for Change
Theme	Topic	Option		
Page 843		Continue rate of growth in Local Plans to 2030, and thereafter population projections <sup>56</sup> (150,000 new homes to 2050).		
		Continue current rate of growth in Local Plans to 2050 (200,000 new homes to 2050).		
		National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) Growth Deal level (300,000 homes to 2050).		
	Economic growth	Local Industrial Strategy Baseline – 35,000 additional jobs by 2040.	Considered through alternative to Policy 22: Supporting the Creation of Jobs.	
		Meet the region's economic growth needs identified in the Local Industrial Strategy and deliver half of the growth identified in the growth strategy – 71,500 jobs by 2040.	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	A decision has been made not to specific an economic growth target in the Oxfordshire Plan consultation document at this stage. Further consideration will be given to such options after this stage, guided by the Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment and subsequently covered by Policy 25: How many jobs.
		Local Industrial Strategy Growth Scenario – 108,000 additional jobs by 2040.	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	A decision has been made not to specific an economic growth target in the Oxfordshire Plan consultation document at this stage. Further consideration will be given to such options after this stage, guided by the Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment and subsequently covered by Policy 25: How many jobs.
	Locations for strategic growth	Identify strategic development locations for growth.	Policy 28: Homes: How many? Commitments and Locations effectively covers this option.	

<sup>56</sup> This is the approach used by Thames Water in its Draft Water Resource Management Plan.

Initial Options Appraised in Chapter 4			Evolution of Options in Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document	Plan-makers' Justification for Change
Theme	Topic	Option		
Strategic growth locations		Set out criteria to locate strategic development flexibly to respond to market demands.	Policy 28: Homes: How many? Commitments and Locations effectively covers this option.	
		Do not identify locations or criteria for strategic development.	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	The alternative of leaving this to local plans is not considered to be reasonable given the strategic importance of delivering a sustainable and deliverable pattern of growth across the county..
Spatial Distribution Growth	Spatial Alternatives	Intensification in existing towns and cities – Increase density of existing and planned settlements, prioritise brownfield sites.	Spatial Option 1 – Focus on opportunities at larger settlements and planned growth locations effectively covers this option.	
		Intensification of housing development around strategic economic assets – Co-location of uses to meet business and research park needs.	Spatial Option 4 – Focus on strengthening business locations effectively covers this option.	
		Public transport 'Wheel' (transport led) – Concentrate development around areas of good public transport connectivity.	Spatial Option 3 – Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs effectively covers this option.	
		Rail 'String' (transport led) – Locate string of settlements along new/upgraded rail corridors (e.g., Cowley line).	Spatial Option 3 – Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors & at strategic transport hubs effectively covers this option.	
		OxCam 'String' (transport led) – New development along route of OxCam expressway, once the route has been decided, consistent with NIC Growth Deal aspirations.	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	The expressway was formally cancelled by Government on 18 March 2021 after analysis showed that the proposed project would not be cost-effective, with any benefits outweighed by the costs.
		Strategic road junctions – Concentrate development around strategic road junctions.	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	The option was appraised in Chapter 4 to have significant negative effects across a range of SA objectives, including health, reliance on the car, climate change, pollution, soils and efficient use of land, biodiversity and geodiversity and landscape.

Initial Options Appraised in Chapter 4			Evolution of Options in Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document	Plan-makers' Justification for Change
Theme	Topic	Option		
Page 845		Proportionate dispersed growth between existing settlements (needs led) – Oxford, towns, and villages.	Spatial Option 5 – Focus on supporting rural communities effectively covers this option.	
		New settlements with new strategic transport connections.	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	New settlements have not been taken forward as a separate strategic spatial option in the Plan; rather a new settlement (or settlements) is considered as a spatial typology that could potentially help deliver several of the strategic options set out in this document.
		Protect environmental assets (environment led) – Identify environmental constraints first (e.g., strategic green and blue infrastructure, historic environment, flooding, AONB and other sensitive landscapes, best and most versatile agricultural land etc., possibly through natural capital mapping), then place housing and employment where they avoid significant impacts and enable enhancements.	Option not taken forward into Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation Document.	All options in the Plan prioritise the environment as a common thread that flows from the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision.
Accessibility and transport	Improve accessibility and transport	Plan for a comprehensive mass transit network linking larger existing and new built-up areas.	Policy 18: Sustainable transport in New Development effectively covers this option.	
		Plan for a comprehensive cycling network linking larger existing and new built-up areas.	Policy 18: Sustainable transport in New Development effectively covers this option.	
		Plan for county wide digital connectivity	Policy 20: Digital Infrastructure effectively covers this option.	

## Oxfordshire Plan Vision and Objectives

**5.4** The Oxfordshire Plan Vision for 2050 represents the overarching goal for the County. The Vision focuses on sustainable communities enjoying a high quality of life enriched by the county's historic and natural character. Connectivity and productivity will be higher and more resilient to change, contributing to the health and wellbeing of residents and workers. The Oxfordshire Plan Vision is supported by 11 objectives:

1. To demonstrate leadership in addressing the climate emergency by significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
2. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's historic, built and natural environments, recognising the benefits these assets contribute to quality of life, local identity and economic success.
3. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's distinctive landscape character, recreational and biodiversity value by identifying strategic green and blue infrastructure, improving connectivity between environmental assets and securing a net gain for biodiversity.
4. To improve health and wellbeing by enabling independence, encouraging active and healthy lifestyles, facilitating social interaction and creating inclusive and safe communities.
5. To sustain and strengthen Oxfordshire's economic role and reputation by building on our key strengths and relationships.
6. To ensure that the benefits and opportunities arising from Oxfordshire's economic success are felt by all of Oxfordshire's communities.
7. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs, including affordable housing, and to ensure that housing delivery is phased appropriately to support the needs of our communities.
8. To ensure that new housing is flexible to meet the varied needs of people through all stages of life.
9. To deliver high quality, innovatively designed development that ensures efficient use of land and resources.
10. To reduce the need to travel and to support people in making sustainable transport choices by providing inclusive, integrated, safe and convenient pedestrian, cycle and public transport infrastructure linking communities.
11. To ensure that communities are digitally connected and that innovative technologies are supported.

**5.5 Table 5.2** summarises the SA findings for the Oxfordshire Plan Vision and 11 Objectives, which are explained below the table.

**Table 5.2: Oxfordshire Plan Vision and Objectives SA findings**

SA objectives	Strategic Vision	Strategic objectives										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	++	+	+	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	+	0
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	0	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	0	+	+
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	0	0	0	+	+
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	+

SA objectives	Strategic Vision	Strategic objectives											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	+	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	+	0	+	++	0	0	0	--?	0	+	0	0	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	+	0	+	+	0	0	0	--?	0	+	0	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	+	0	+	+	0	0	0	--?	0	+	0	0	0

**5.6** The Oxfordshire Plan's Vision for 2050 aims for a wide range of secure and good quality housing options for all. Minor positive effects are therefore identified for the Vision in relation to **SA objective 1 (housing)**. **Significant positive** effects are recorded for Objective 7 due to it explicitly mentioning that it will meet Oxfordshire's housing needs, which will include affordable housing. To ensure that a range of people have access to appropriate housing, Objective 8 sets out to deliver flexibility in housing types, which should include meeting the needs of people through all stages of life. Similarly, Objective 6 aims to ensure that the benefits and opportunities arising from economic growth are felt by all Oxfordshire communities; which is likely to extend to home ownership. Finally, Objective 9 champions innovatively designed development that could include modular building or offsite construction techniques that deliver affordable homes quicker. Therefore, minor positive effects are recorded for Objectives 6, 8 and 9 in relation to SA objective 1.

**5.7** Minor positive effects are recorded for the Vision and Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 10 in relation to **SA objective 2 (health and wellbeing)**. By 2050, the Vision suggests that the people of Oxfordshire will have a high quality of life, enhanced through being part of a special place. Improved health and wellbeing is the main focus of Objective 4, which seeks to encourage healthy living and social interaction. There is potential for the physical aspect of the population's health to be supported through Objective 10 which sets out to provide pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. Objectives 1, 2 and 3 have the potential to improve quality of life in the County by combating the effects of climate change, enhancing the historic environment

and delivering green and blue infrastructure. Delivering housing that is tailored to people's specific needs through Objective 8 is likely to play an important role in maintaining general health and wellbeing. Objectives 6 and 7 aim to deliver the benefits of sustained economic growth and the provision of affordable homes in Oxfordshire, respectively. The delivery of economic success and affordable homes are both likely to help improve the health and well being of local residents and workers.

**5.8** Minor positive effects are recorded for the Vision and Objectives 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 11 in relation to **SA objective 3 (communities)** because they aspire to deliver a strong sense of community and vibrant communities in Oxfordshire.

**5.9** The Vision suggests that Oxfordshire will be productive and well-skilled with access to a range of high-value job opportunities generated by thriving public and private sectors. Therefore, minor positive effects are recorded for the Vision in relation to **SA objective 4 (economy)** and **SA objective 5 (employment)**. Minor positive effects are also recorded for Objectives 5, 6, 10 and 11 in relation to SA objective 4 (economy) and SA objective 5 (employment). In the case of Objectives 5 and 6, they are directly concerned with delivering economic growth in Oxfordshire that is equitable through provision of opportunities to all of the County's communities. For Objective 10, the positive effects are identified as a result of the provision of a sustainable and efficient transport system, which is likely to support the population's access to employment opportunities. In the case of Objective 11 improved digital connectivity within the County is likely to be valuable to businesses and remote working, which has become prevalent as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Minor positive effects are also recorded against Objective 2 and 4 in relation to SA objective 4 (economy). Objective 2 includes economic success as part of the contribution of protection and enhancement of the historic environment. Objective 4's focus on health and well being is likely to improve productivity of the county's population with associated economic benefits. Similarly, Objectives 7 and 8 focus on the delivery of suitable and affordable homes will help to support the retention of key workers in accessible locations, contributing to maintaining high and stable levels of employment across the county. This is likely to generate minor positive effects against SA objective 5 (employment).

**5.10** The Vision embraces technological, demographic and lifestyle changes for the future with a view to fostering climate change resilience. A minor positive effect is therefore recorded for the Vision in relation to **SA objective 7 (climate change)**. Objective 1 proposes that the plan will demonstrate climate leadership by significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Objective 3 sets out to deliver green infrastructure, which has the potential to contribute to carbon sequestration, Objective 9 focusses on the efficient use of resources and Objective 10 will provide sustainable transport options that reduce the need for people to travel by private car. Minor positive effects are therefore also recorded against Objectives 1, 3, 9 and 10 in relation to SA objective 7 (climate change).

**5.11** It is set out in the Vision that Oxfordshire will be well connected with sustainable travel options. Minor positive effects are therefore recorded against the Vision in relation to **SA objective 6 (transport)**. Objective 4 encourages active and healthy lifestyles, which is likely to help increase the uptake of active travel modes. Objectives 10 and 11 commit to significantly reducing carbon emissions and the provision of cycling and walking infrastructure, providing residents with sustainable transport options. Improved digital connectivity is also proposed in Objective 11, which has the potential to reduce the need for transport altogether for people who work in roles where working from home is viable, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Minor positive effects are therefore recorded against these Objectives in relation to SA objective 6 (transport).

**5.12** The Vision may also yield positive impacts on mitigating sources of poor air quality by increasing active travel and reducing the proportion of people who travel by private car. Consequently, minor positive effects are recorded for the vision in relation to **SA objective 8 (pollution)**. Objectives 1, 3 and 10 also have the potential to improve air quality in Oxfordshire as a result of the aspirations described in the two paragraphs above. Therefore, minor positive effects are identified for these Objectives in relation to SA objective 8 (pollution).

**5.13** In terms of the efficient use of resources, including mineral and water resources, Objective 3 suggests that consideration of blue infrastructure will form part of the plan, which may contribute to improved water quality within the County's water bodies and Objective 9 requires development that ensures efficient use of resources. As a result, minor positive effects are identified for Objective 2, 3 and Objective 9 in relation to **SA objectives 9 (water)** and **12 (minerals)**. The commitment on demonstrating leadership in addressing the climate change emergency through Objective 1 and the delivery of green infrastructure through Objective 3 may also be valuable in reducing flood risk in some areas, so minor positive effects are recorded for Objectives 1 and 3 against **SA objective 10 (flooding)**. Objectives 2 makes reference to the conservation of the natural environment, which includes natural resources and Objective 9 makes direct reference to the efficient use of land, which will directly protect the county's best and most versatile agricultural land. Therefore, a minor positive effect and a **significant** positive effect are recorded against **SA objective 11 (soils)** for Objectives 2 and 9, respectively.

**5.14** Objective 7 sets out to meet Oxfordshire’s housing need, which is likely to require significant land take in the period up to 2050. There is potential for the housing delivery to cause disturbance to wildlife and habitats and adverse impacts to heritage assets and their landscape setting. As a result, the potential for significant negative effects is identified for Objective 7 in relation to **SA objective 13 (biodiversity and geodiversity), 14 (historic environment) and 15 (landscape)**. The effects recorded are uncertain as they will depend on the specific locations, scale and design of development.

**5.15** The Vision states that the integrity and richness of the county’s historic character and natural environment will be valued and conserved. Minor positive effects are therefore identified for the Vision in relation to **SA objective 9 (water), 13 (biodiversity and geodiversity), 14 (historic environment) and 15 (landscape)**. Positive effects are identified for Objective 2 and 3 in relation to SA objectives 13, 14 and 15 as they promote the protection and enhancement of Oxfordshire’s natural environment, landscape character and historic environment because of the focus of these objectives on conserving the County’s historic and natural environments. The positive effects identified are **significant** for Objective 3 in relation to SA objective 13, as this objective makes explicit reference to securing net gains for biodiversity. Minor positive effects are also recorded for Objective 9 against SA objectives 13, 14 and 15 as the efficient use of land and the provision of high quality designed developments has the potential to result in the loss of less ecologically sensitive greenfield land and enhance the historic environment and the landscape setting.

## Theme One: Addressing Climate Change

### Sustainable Design and Construction

**5.16 Table 5.3** summarises the findings of the SA of the preferred option and two alternative policy options for the sustainable design and construction policy. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 1 – Sustainable Design and Construction
2. Alternative policy option 1: Defer standards for the design and construction of new buildings to district Local Plans. National policy does not prevent local authorities from setting higher ambitions, particularly in relation to energy efficiency standards that exceed Building Regulations.
3. Alternative policy option 2: Defer guidance on sustainable design and construction to building regulations and the Future Homes and Future Buildings Standards.

**Table 5.3: SA findings for Policy 1 and its alternative**

SA objectives	Policy Options		
	Policy 1	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
1. To meet Oxfordshire’s housing needs	-?	-	-
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire’s population	+	-	-
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+?	0	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire’s knowledge economy	+/-?	0	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+/-?	0	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+	0	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire’s contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	++	-	-

SA objectives	Policy Options		
	Policy 1	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	-	-
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	+	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	+	-	-
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	+	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	+/-?	-	-
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	-	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	-	0	0

**5.17** The preferred policy option is likely to have **significant positive effects on SA objective 7 (climate change)** as it would set construction requirements such as developments should be fossil fuel free, utilise the principles of circular economy and designed to be resilient to climate change. This option also aims to achieve a net-zero life span through on-site renewable energy generation which would reduce energy generation from fossil fuels. It is likely to have minor positive effects on a number of the other SA objectives: reduced energy consumption and renewable energy generation would contribute to improved air quality (**SA objective 8 (pollution)**); net-zero carbon will have some indirect effect on the design of equivalent water efficiency measures (**SA objective 9 (water)**), i.e. energy efficiency measures include reducing water consumption in order to reduce the energy required to pump and heat it, which will contribute to improving climate related issues such as reducing flood risk (**SA objective 10 (flooding)**); requirements for cycling parking, e-bike charging which could help to reduce the need to travel by car (**SA objective 6 (travel)**) and minimise waste through the use of natural or recycled materials in construction (**SA objective 12 (minerals)**).

**5.18** Together, these measures also would support people's health and wellbeing (**SA objective 2 (health)**) and sustain vibrant communities (**SA objective 3 (communities)**) through reducing energy costs, designing buildings to be environmentally and potentially more community focused and reducing air pollution. The need for improved eco-friendly measures, including high-tech construction and design, could help to support Oxfordshire's knowledge economy and create/maintain jobs (**SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment)**). Minor positive effects are also expected in relation to **SA objective 13 (biodiversity)** as the policy option will include a financial contribution to offsetting projects such as offsite carbon sequestration schemes that align with natural capital and nature recovery approaches which are likely to create additional habitats. However, as low carbon and renewable energy generation technologies will be required on site or off site elsewhere within the county, there is potential for adverse effects on the county's sensitive historic and natural environments. Consequently, minor negative effects are recorded against **SA objectives 13 (biodiversity), 14 (historic environment) and 15 (landscape)**. Many SA objectives have some uncertainty attached to the likelihood and significance of these effects until such time as the location, design and scale of such developments is known.

**5.19** The sustainable construction requirements could add costs to new development, but it is becoming more viable to achieve as technology evolves and the market becomes more favourable. Consequently, the effect of the costs associated with sustainable construction requirements on the deliverability of homes and employment land are recorded as only minor negative

in the short term, thereby having a minor negative effect with uncertainty on the delivery of homes (**SA objective 1 (housing)**) and on the economy and jobs (**SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment)**).

**5.20** The alternative policy options represent a no policy alternative. In the absence of an Oxfordshire-wide sustainable design and construction policy focussing on delivering zero carbon growth for all strategic developments, developers will be required to meet the minimum requirements set out in the national Building Regulations, Future Homes and Future Building Standards. Consequently, under this scenario, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 has the potential to generate minor negative effects on **SA objectives 2 (health), 7 (climate change), 8 (pollution), 10 (flooding) and 13 (biodiversity)**. These negative effects are recorded in acknowledgement that a lack of county-wide action would result in the need for more energy to be generated from the burning of fossil fuels resulting in more pollution and a greater likelihood for health impacts associated with air pollution and adverse effects associated with climate change, which is also likely to have an adverse effect on biodiversity and flood risk in the county. These effects are recorded as minor in acknowledgement of the fact that other mitigation and adaptation measures are likely to be delivered.

## Energy

**5.21 Table 5.4** presents the findings of the SA of the energy preferred policy option and two alternative policy options. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 2 – Energy.
2. Alternative policy option 1: Do not set county wide targets for renewable energy in new developments and to defer to Local Plans and individual developments.
3. Alternative policy option 2: Set a percentage target for renewable energy generation in new developments e.g. minimum 10%.

**Table 5.4: SA findings for Policy 2 and its alternatives**

SA objectives	Policy Options		
	Policy 2	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	-	-	-
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	-	+?
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	0	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	++/-?	0	+?/-?
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	++/-?	0	+?/-?
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	0	0	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	++	-	+
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	-	+
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	+	-	+
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0	0

SA objectives	Policy Options		
	Policy 2	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	+/-?	-	+?/-?
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	-?	0	-?
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	-?	0	-?

**5.22** As the preferred policy option aims to reach 100% of energy needs met from renewables for major developments, this could add costs to the design and construction of new development, but is becoming more viable to achieve as technology evolves and the market becomes more favourable, the potential to effectively deliver new homes and business premises across the County utilising renewable energy is possible. Consequently, the effect of the costs associated with such technologies on the deliverability of homes and employment land are recorded as only minor negative in the short term against **SA objectives 1 (housing) and 5 (employment)** for the preferred policy option. The minor negative effect recorded against **SA objective 4 (economy)** is for similar reasons. Conversely, **significant positive effects** are recorded against SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment) in acknowledgement of the fact that a significant increase in the construction of renewable energy has the potential to generate significant growth in the local economy associated with more ambitious design, construction and delivery. In addition, there is potential for driving forward innovation in relevant sectors that exist in Oxfordshire, with opportunities to test and scale up technology within new developments. The cost of meeting an ambitious renewable energy target in the future is unknown. However, there is potential for higher renewable energy targets to be expensive in the short term, but successful and sustainable in the medium to long term as technology evolves.

**5.23** A **significant positive effect** is recorded against **SA objectives 7 (climate change)** in acknowledgement of the contribution of a 100% renewable energy target in reducing the County's major developments contribution to the primary cause of climate change: greenhouse gases. This reduction in carbon emissions is also likely to result in an improvement to air quality and climate related issues such as flooding in the County; however, given the diverse range of other sources of air pollution and climate change effects these positive effects are considered to be less significant and are therefore recorded as minor against **SA objectives 2 (health), 8 (pollution) and 10 (flooding)**. Minor positive effects are also expected in relation to **SA objective 3 (communities)** as the preferred policy option supports the delivery of community scale renewable energy projects which could lead to community ownership of a scheme adding vitality to the area.

**5.24** As the target is 100% of energy needs to be met from renewable energy sources it is likely that low carbon and renewable energy generation technologies will be required on site or off site elsewhere within the County. The greater the scale and density of such technologies across the county, the greater the potential for adverse effects on the County's sensitive historic and natural environments. Consequently, minor negative effects are recorded against **SA objectives 13 (biodiversity), 14 (historic environment) and 15 (landscape)**. Minor positive effects have also been identified against **SA objective 13 (biodiversity)** as reducing emissions from energy combats climate change and consequently provides positive effects for biodiversity as the two are interconnected. Some uncertainty is attached to the likelihood and significance of these effects until such time as the location, design and scale of renewable energy technologies is known.

**5.25** The preferred policy option is unlikely to affect the remaining **SA objectives 6 (travel), 9 (water), 11 (soils) and 12 (minerals)** due to its focus on renewable energy.

**5.26** Alternative policy option 1 represents a 'no county-wide renewable energy target' alternative. In the absence of an Oxfordshire-wide renewable energy target, new development will be encouraged to contribute to national renewable energy targets. Consequently, under this scenario, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 has the potential to generate minor negative effects on **SA objectives 2 (health), 7 (climate change), 8 (pollution), 10 (flooding) and 13 (biodiversity)**. These negative effects are recorded in acknowledgement that a lack of county-wide action would result in the need for more energy to be generated from the burning of fossil fuels resulting in more pollution and a greater likelihood for health impacts associated with air pollution and adverse effects associated with climate change, which is also likely to have an adverse effect on biodiversity and flood risk in

the county. These effects are recorded as minor in acknowledgement of the fact that other mitigation and adaptation measures are likely to be delivered.

**5.27** The positive and negative effects recorded for the preferred policy are also likely to be felt under Alternative policy option 2 for the reasons described above, although they are only likely to be minor, given Alternative policy option 2 would result in a more modest renewable energy target (minimum 10%) rather than 100% for new development sites.

### Water Efficiency

**5.28 Table 5.5** presents the findings of the SA of the water efficiency preferred policy option and three alternatives. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 3 – Water Efficiency.
2. Alternative policy option 1: Require water neutrality in Oxfordshire.
3. Alternative policy option 2: Set less ambitious water efficiency standards in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. For example: i. align with the current optional requirement of 110 litres per person per day for new homes; ii. do not set water efficiency standards for non-residential development; and iii. encourage (rather than require) development at strategic growth locations identified in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 to maximise water efficiency through the delivery of community-scale rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling schemes.
4. Alternative policy option 3: Do not have a strategic policy on water efficiency in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. Leave it to Local Plans to set policies in relation to water efficiency.

**Table 5.5: SA findings for Policy 2 and its alternatives**

SA objectives	Policy Options			
	Policy 3	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	-?	-?	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	+	+	0
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	0	0	0	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	+?/-?	+?/-?	+?/-?	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+?/-?	+?/-?	+?/-?	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	0	0	0	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+	++	+	-
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	+	+	-
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	+	++	+	-
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	+?	+?	+?	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	+	++	+	-

SA objectives	Policy Options			
	Policy 3	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0	0	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	+	+	+	-

**5.29** A minor positive effect is recorded for the preferred policy option against **SA objective 7 (climate change)** in acknowledgement of the contribution of ambitious minimum water efficiency standards in reducing the County's risk of drought which is exacerbated by climate change. A minor positive effect is recorded against **SA objective 9 (water)** in acknowledgement of the fact that ambitious minimum water efficiency standards will help to achieve sustainable water resource management, reduce the risk of drought and combat climate change. The introduction of water efficiency standards is also likely to result in a marked reduction in carbon emissions, as it takes energy to pump and heat water, and improvement to climate related issues such as flooding; however, given the diverse range of other sources of air pollution and climate change effects these positive effects are considered to be less significant and are therefore recorded as minor against **SA objectives 2 (health), 8 (pollution) and 10 (flooding)**.

**5.30** Minor positive effects are also expected against **SA objectives 13 (biodiversity) and 15 (landscape)** as ambitious minimum water efficiency standards can help to conserve biodiversity especially aquatic wildlife and by requiring development to deliver community-scale rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling schemes will help adapt to the impact climate change and therefore reduce the impact on biodiversity and local landscape in the long term.

**5.31** The future cost of meeting ambitious minimum water efficiency standards is unknown, although it is becoming more viable to achieve water efficiency targets as technology evolves and the market becomes more favourable. However, requiring residential and non-residential development to be adhere to ambitious minimum water efficiency standards is likely to add cost to the design and construction of new development. Consequently, minor negative effects are recorded against **SA objectives 1 (housing) and 5 (employment)** for the preferred policy option. The minor negative effect recorded against **SA objective 5 (employment)** is also coupled with the potential for a minor positive effect in acknowledgement of the fact that a significant increase in water efficiency standards has the potential to create new local jobs in the county associated with more ambitious design, construction and delivery. The uncertain mixed minor positive and minor negative effects recorded against **SA objective 4 (economy)** are recorded for similar reasons as **SA 5 (employment)**, although these effects are due to the fact other sectors and drivers influencing the growth of the county's economy.

**5.32** The preferred policy option is unlikely to affect the remaining **SA objectives 3 (communities), 11 (soils), 12 (minerals) and 14 (historic environment)** due to its focus on a specific planning policy issue (water efficiency).

**5.33** The positive and negative effects recorded for the preferred policy are also likely to be felt under Alternative policy option 2 for the reasons described above, although their significance is likely to be proportionately less, as it would set less ambitious water efficiency standards for new homes and no standards for non-residential development.

**5.34** Alternative policy option 3 represents a 'no water efficiency standard' alternative. In the absence of an Oxfordshire-wide water efficiency standard for all strategic developments, developers will be required to meet the minimum requirements set out in the national Building Regulations. Consequently, under this scenario, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 would have a negligible effect on many SA objectives. However, by allowing continued climate change (albeit at a slower rate than at present), it would have a negative effect on **SA objectives 7 (climate change), 8 and 9 (air and water quality), 13 (biodiversity) and 15 (landscape)**.

**5.35** Alternative policy option 1 is likely to generate the most significant effects as requiring water neutrality is the most ambitious of the policy options identified. The effects set out against the preferred policy option would also be felt against alternative policy option 1 for the same reasons, but with intensified effects. **Significant positive effects** would be felt in relation to **SA objectives 7 (climate change), 9 (water) and 13 (biodiversity)** as achieving water neutrality would reduce water stress, achieve sustainable water resource management and conserve sensitive protected wetland and littoral habitats in the face of ongoing climate change.

## Flood Risk

**5.36 Table 5.6** presents the findings of the SA of the flood risk preferred policy option and two alternative policy options. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 4 – Flood Risk.
2. Alternative policy option 1: Include a strategic flood risk policy in the Oxfordshire Plan but reduce the scope of this policy.
3. Alternative policy option 2: Do not have a strategic policy on flood risk in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. Leave it to Local Plans to set policies in relation to flood risk.

**Table 5.6: SA findings for Policy 4 and its alternatives**

SA objectives	Policy Options		
	Policy 4	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	0	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	+	0
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	0	0	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	0	0	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	0	0	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	0	0	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	++	+	-
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	+	0
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	+	+	-
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	++	+	-
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	+	+	-
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	+	+	-

**5.37** The preferred policy option is likely to have **significant positive effects** in relation to **SA objective 10 (flooding)** in acknowledgment of the fact that development will have to take into account its impact on flood risk and utilise natural flood management methods. These methods could include green infrastructure, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and various design measures all of which can help adapt to the effects of climate change (**SA objective 7 (climate change)**), resulting in **significant positive effects**. Green infrastructure is multifunctional and can also act as a barrier to various pollutants (**SA objective 8 (pollution)**), can act as a natural filtration system for local watercourses (**SA objective 9 (water)**), provide additional habitats for wildlife (**SA objective 13 (biodiversity)**) and improve the local landscape (**SA objective 15 (landscape)**).

**5.38** The positive and negative effects recorded for the preferred policy are also likely to be felt under Alternative policy option 1 for the reasons described above, although their significance is likely to be proportionately less, as it would include a strategic flood risk policy but would reduce the scope.

**5.39** Alternative policy option 2 represents a ‘no strategic policy on flood risk’ alternative. In the absence of an Oxfordshire-wide flood risk policy for all strategic developments, developers will be required to meet the minimum requirements set out in national policy. Consequently, under this scenario, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 would have a negligible effect on many SA objectives. However, by not putting in place measures to adapt to ongoing climate change, it would have a negative effect on **SA objectives 7 (climate change), 9 (water quality), 10 (flooding), 13 (biodiversity) and 15 (landscape)**.

## Theme Two: Improving Environmental Quality

### Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Characters

**5.40 Table 5.7** presents the findings of the SA of the Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Characters preferred policy option. No reasonable alternatives have been appraised, as explained in **Table 5.1**. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 5 – Protection and enhancement of Landscape Characters.

**Table 5.7: SA findings for Policy 5**

SA objectives	Policy 5
1. To meet Oxfordshire’s housing needs	-
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire’s population	+
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire’s knowledge economy	+/-
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+/-
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire’s contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	0
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire’s watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire’s soils and ensure efficient use of land	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire’s mineral resources	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire’s biodiversity and geodiversity	+
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire’s historic environment	++
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire’s landscape character and quality	++

**5.41** The preferred policy option is likely to generate **significant positive effects** in relation to **SA objectives 14 (historic environment) and 15 (landscape)**. As this policy option establishes a positive strategy for the conservation and enhancement of the landscape and townscape at a county-wide scale, it is likely that the landscape and townscape, encompassing the setting

of heritage assets, will be protected by this policy. In addition, landscape character assessments are required to support major new developments and urban extensions this will help ensure that development is sensitive and well-designed. Since an attractive environment and good heritage links can influence health and wellbeing, minor positive effects are expected for **SA objective 2 (health)**.

**5.42** This policy option is likely to have indirect benefits for Oxfordshire’s ecological habitats and locally designated biodiversity assets thereby minor positive effects are expected on **SA objective 13 (biodiversity)** as associated landscape and townscape enhancements and mitigation are likely. Similarly, conservation of landscape will include taking account of tranquillity and dark skies thereby preventing light pollution, hence a minor positive effect for **SA objective 8 (pollution)**.

**5.43** Other minor positive effects are likely in relation to **SA objective 3 (communities)** as the enhancement landscape and townscape features has the potential to have positive implications in creating vibrant communities by safeguarding the cultural importance of the landscape for communities to enjoy. In addition, Oxfordshire’s attractive landscape and townscape support the tourism industry, so the policy option will have minor positive effects on **SA objective 5 (employment)**. There is also potential for employment opportunities in the maintenance and enhancement of landscape and townscape features. A minor positive effect is also recorded against **SA objective 4 (economy)** in acknowledgement of the fact that the conserving and enhancement of the county’s key landscape and townscape features will help to maintain and improve the character of the county, making it a better place to live and work and attracting talent to grow the local economy. This minor positive effect is coupled with a minor negative effect in acknowledgement of the fact that the greater the area of the county protected from development the more difficult it will be to accommodate growth in the county. The same mixed effect is also recorded against **SA objective 1 (housing)** for the same reasons.

**5.44** This policy option is likely to generate negligible effects against the remaining SA objectives due to its specific focus on conserving and enhancing landscape and townscape features.

### Protection and Enhancement of Historic Environment

**5.45** **Table 5.8** presents the findings of the SA of the protection and enhancement of historic environment preferred policy option. No reasonable alternatives have been appraised, as explained in **Table 5.1**. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 6 – Protection and Enhancement of Historic Environment.

**Table 5.8: SA findings for Policy 6**

SA objectives	Policy 6
1. To meet Oxfordshire’s housing needs	-
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire’s population	+
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire’s knowledge economy	+/-
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+/-
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire’s contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	0
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	0
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire’s watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0

SA objectives	Policy 6
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	++
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	++

**5.46** This preferred policy option would have **significant positive effects** on **SA objectives 14 (historic environment)** and **15 (landscape)** as it is likely that a positive strategy will steer new development away from Oxfordshire's heritage assets, including locally listed buildings, and their settings or otherwise help to enhance them, and this in turn would have a positive impact on Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality. Furthermore, development proposals that improve and enhance the natural and historic environment will be favoured.

**5.47** Minor positive effects are likely in relation to **SA objectives 2 (health)**, and **3 (communities)** for the preferred policy option. As it has the potential to safeguard and improve enjoyment of heritage assets which can have positive effects on health and wellbeing and community vitality through their cultural, educational and recreational/leisure values. Minor positive effects are also likely in relation to **SA objective 4 (economy)** as maintaining heritage assets and avoiding adverse effects on them will help to protect local character and culture, which is part of what helps to attract and retain global talent thereby supporting the local knowledge economy. It will also help to support tourism, which is a major economic sector in Oxfordshire, thereby having a minor positive effect on **SA objective 5 (employment)** as well.

**5.48** However, this preferred policy option could also have minor negative effects on **SA objective 4 (economy)**, as it could restrict where and/or how development can be delivered in the context of the historic environment as development proposals will be required to assess the impact of the potential development on the historic environment, which may contribute to restricting growth within sensitive areas of the county, particularly the county's historic settlements and landscapes, reducing the opportunities for and viability and affordability of new development. The same mixed effect is also recorded against **SA objective 1 (housing)** for the same reasons.

**5.49** The preferred policy option is not likely to generate more than negligible effects against the remaining SA objectives due to their specific focus on managing the historic environment.

### Nature Recovery

**5.50 Table 5.9** presents the findings of the SA of the nature recovery preferred policy option and one alternative policy option. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 7 – Nature Recovery.
2. Alternative policy option 1: Do not progress Nature Recovery Network map in Oxfordshire Plan and leave to subsequent Nature Recovery Strategy for Oxfordshire to define. Defer to established approach of site, species and habitat protection, Conservation Target Areas and application of mitigation hierarchy for biodiversity to be applied through Local Plans.

**Table 5.9: SA findings for Policy 7 and its alternative**

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 7	Alternative 1
1.To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	-	0
2.To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	++	-

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 7	Alternative 1
3.To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	-
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire’s knowledge economy	+/-	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+/-	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	0	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire’s contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	++	-
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	-
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire’s watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	++	-
10.To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	++	-
11.To protect Oxfordshire’s soils and ensure efficient use of land	++	0
12.To safeguard Oxfordshire’s mineral resources	+	0
13.To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire’s biodiversity and geodiversity	++	-
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire’s historic environment	0	0
15.To protect and enhance Oxfordshire’s landscape character and quality	+	0

**5.51** The preferred policy option would have **significant positive effects** for many of the SA objectives. Establishing a Nature Recovery Network for Oxfordshire would help to significantly improve biodiversity and strengthen the ecological networks in the county (**SA objective 13 (biodiversity)**) through habitat connection, biodiversity net gain and by making habitats and species more resilient to climate change. The Nature Recovery Network will protect all types of habitats including floodplains and wetlands, notably those to the north of Oxford, and so could significantly help to reduce the risk of flooding downstream (**SA objective 10 (flooding)**). Protecting the floodplains and river corridors would indirectly help to improve the quality of the county’s watercourses (**SA objective 9 (water)**). The Nature Recovery Network could protect and enhance biodiversity at a county-wide landscape scale which could include an element of returning intensively farmed agricultural land to a more natural state, thus helping to protect Oxfordshire’s soils (**SA objective 11 (soils)**) and could recognise the importance of the agricultural and urban landscapes. The Network also aims to protect the County’s natural resources which could safeguard mineral resources from sterilisation resulting in minor positive effects in relation to **SA objective 12 (minerals)**. All of these factors would have a **significant positive effect** on people’s health and wellbeing (**SA objective 2 (health)**). Methods to establish a Nature Recovery Network are likely to incorporate planting more trees and rewilding, helping to sequester greenhouse gases (**SA objective 7 (climate change)**), build climate resilience and help to adapt to climate change through less flooding, more shade and cooler areas.

**5.52** Minor positive effects are also expected in relation to **SA objectives 3 (communities), 8 (pollution) and 15 (landscape)**. A Nature Recovery Network would also protect the natural landscape and enhance it through more green/wooded areas. This would provide benefits in terms of a more attractive and natural looking landscape (SA objective 15 (landscape)) and associated benefits for local communities (SA objective 3 (communities)). In addition, a greater quantity of trees and green areas would improve air quality (SA objective 8 (pollution)).

**5.53** However, a Nature Recovery Network at a county-wide scale could restrict the delivery of homes. The proposed Nature Recovery Network (Core Zone, Recovery Zone and Wider Landscape Zone) is extensive, and if all of these areas were protected in full, then housing delivery (**SA objective 1 (housing)**) could be negatively affected; however, it is likely that some

development could be accommodated within them without compromising the network so a minor negative effect is recorded. **SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment)** could also be affected, as the Nature Recovery Network could restrict the location of employment sites. On the other hand, Oxfordshire’s natural environment is one of the factors underlying the county’s attractiveness for employers, so further improving the county’s biodiverse areas could be positive for employers and jobs. Creation and maintenance of the local ecological network could also lead to new jobs being created. Therefore, SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment) will have a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect resulting from the preferred policy option.

**5.54** The alternative policy option is essentially a continuation of business as usual and the effects are either negligible or minor negative. In the absence of a county-wide Nature Recovery Network supporting biodiversity, there could continue to be a decline in biodiversity in the county (**SA objective 13**). Ongoing development on the floodplain, cumulatively with changes resulting from climate change, would also lead to worse flood problems over time (**SA objective 10**). The absence of a Nature Recovery Network could result in the worsening effects of climate change resulting in adverse effects against the **SA objectives 2 (health), 3 (community), 7 (climate change), 8 (pollution) and 9 (water)**.

### Biodiversity Gain

**5.55 Table 5.10** presents the findings of the SA of the biodiversity gain preferred policy option and two alternative policy options. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 8 – Biodiversity Gain.
2. Alternative policy option 1: Establish differential biodiversity net gain targets for different parts of the county with a higher target (e.g. 25%) in high value parts of the county including in the Green Belt, AONBs, Conservation Target Areas, as well as Broad Areas for Growth identified in the Oxfordshire Plan, and a lower target (10% national minimum) for the rest of the county.
3. Alternative policy option 2: Leave to national standards and do not set minimum biodiversity net gain targets in Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

**Table 5.10: SA findings for Policy 8 and its alternative**

SA objectives	Policy Options		
	Policy 8	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
1. To meet Oxfordshire’s housing needs	-?	-?	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire’s population	+	+	-
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	+	-
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire’s knowledge economy	+/-	+/-	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+/-	+/-	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	0	0	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire’s contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+	+	-
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	+	-
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire’s watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	+	+	-
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	+	+	-

SA objectives	Policy Options		
	Policy 8	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	+	+	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	++	++	-
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	+	+	0

**5.56 Significant positive effects** are likely in relation to **SA objective 13 (biodiversity)** for the preferred policy option. This is due to the potential for a benchmark of 20% biodiversity net gain to increase the amount of biodiversity within the area, providing opportunities for people to come into contact with resilient wild places whilst encouraging respect and raising awareness of the sensitivity of such locations.

**5.57** Positive effects are also likely in relation to **SA objectives 7 (climate change), 8 (pollution), 9 (water) and 10 (flood risk)**. Providing net gain, often in the form of tree planting, will help to build local resilience to the changing climate, such as slowing down run-off and absorption of air pollutants and reducing flood risk. The preferred policy option can be expected to have minor positive effects on **SA objective 11 (soils)** by protecting biodiverse land from development, and converting existing less biodiverse (with lower soil quality) land into more biodiverse land.

**5.58** By requiring 20% biodiversity net gain, the preferred policy option could have a negative effect on **SA objective 1 (housing)** due to the costs involved with achieving biodiversity net gain as part of new development, especially as it should be delivered on site, although uncertainty is attached.

**5.59** Minor positive effects are also expected in relation to **SA objectives 2 (health) and 3 (communities)**. Achieving 20% or more net gains in biodiversity over the plan period, or significantly increasing wildlife habitat would lead to indirect benefits to resident and worker health and wellbeing, by mitigating the adverse effects of air pollution and reducing flood risk. Furthermore, net gains on this scale will provide numerous opportunities for residents and communities to come into contact with resilient wild places whilst encouraging respect and raising awareness of the sensitivity of such locations. This is also likely to support vibrant communities, which also translate into economic benefits with reduced NHS bill, healthier workforce etc.

**5.60** The minor positive effects recorded against **SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment)** are also coupled with equivalent negative effects. Requiring 20% biodiversity net gain at employment sites could make it more difficult to bring these sites forward. On the other hand, a more attractive environment for Oxfordshire would help to retain and attract a high-quality workforce; biodiversity net gains are themselves an emerging economic sector (i.e. calculating them, implementing them); and delivering and managing the areas of net gain will provide some new jobs.

**5.61** The positive and negative effects recorded for the preferred policy are also likely to be felt under Alternative policy option 1 as this alternative would achieve a higher biodiversity net gain target (25%)\_Nin targeted areas of the County and a lower target (10%) in the rest of the county.

**5.62** Alternative policy option 2 would result in no requirement for net gain within the county. In the absence of policy designed to achieve biodiversity net gain, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 would have a minor negative effect on the majority of SA objectives. The absence of biodiversity net gain could result in the effects of climate change and poor conservation of local biodiversity resulting in adverse effects against the **SA objectives 2 (health), 3 (community), 7 (climate change), 8 (pollution), 9 (water), 10 (flood risk) and 13 (biodiversity)**. These effects are considered to be minor in acknowledgement of the other policy and legislative mechanisms designed to mitigate and adapt to the adverse effects of climate change and protect biodiversity.

### Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services

5.63 Table 5.11 presents the findings of the SA of the natural capital and ecosystem services preferred policy option and one alternative policy option. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 9 – Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services.
2. Alternative policy option 1: Include natural capital considerations within place shaping principles rather than defining Oxfordshire wide approach to the assessment of supply and demand for ecosystem services.

Table 5.11: SA findings for Policy 9 and its alternative

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 9	Alternative 1
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	+/-	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	-
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	-
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	+/-	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+/-	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	0	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+	-
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	-
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	+	-
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	+	-
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	+	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	++	-
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	+	0

5.64 The preferred policy option would have positive effects for many of the SA objectives. Establishing Natural Capital baseline mapping for Oxfordshire will help guide strategic planning for development and green infrastructure investment at both landscape and site scales. A Natural Capital approach to planning would help to **significantly improve** biodiversity (**SA objective 13 (biodiversity)**), with associated at least minor positive effects for the health and wellbeing of communities (**SA objectives 2 (health)**) and building resilience to climate change (**SA objective 7 (climate change)**) through carbon sequestration and provide and strengthen the ecosystem services within the county. In addition, green infrastructure investment in areas that are in specific need will likely protect all types of habitats including floodplains and wetlands, notably those to the north of Oxford, thereby strengthening ecosystem services such as controlling flooding which could significantly help to reduce the risk of flooding downstream (**SA objective 10 (flooding)**). Protecting the floodplains and river corridors would indirectly help to improve the quality of the county's watercourses (**SA objective 9 (water)**). A Natural Capital approach to planning could

protect and enhance ecosystem services at a county-wide landscape scale, which could help to protect Oxfordshire's soils (**SA objective 11 (soils)**).

**5.65** Minor positive effects are also expected in relation to **SA objectives 3 (communities), 8 (pollution) and 15 (landscape)**. A Natural Capital Approach to planning would also protect the natural landscape through strategic placement of green infrastructure and it would likely enhance the various types of habitats through rewilding methods throughout the local landscape. This would provide benefits in terms of a more attractive and natural looking landscape (SA objective 15 (landscape)) and associated benefits for local communities (SA objective 3). In addition, an enhanced natural environment through natural capital planning provides various ecosystem services such as improving air quality and minimising air and noise pollution (SA objective (pollution)) through well-placed native trees and green areas.

**5.66** However, a Natural Capital approach to planning could restrict the delivery of homes as major developments will be required to provide an assessment of how natural capital and ecosystem services will be impacted as well as deliver environmental enhancement on site. The mapping of Natural Capital is likely to be extensive, and if all of these areas were highly protected, then housing delivery (**SA objective 1 (housing)**) could be negatively affected; however, it is likely that some development could be accommodated within the network and environmental enhancements are likely to increase desirability of an area, therefore a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is recorded. **SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment)** could also be affected, as a Natural Capital approach to planning could restrict the location of employment sites. On the other hand, Oxfordshire's natural environment is one of the factors underlying the county's attractiveness for employers, so further improving the county's biodiverse areas could be positive for employers and jobs. Creation and maintenance of the local ecological network could also lead to new jobs being created. Therefore, SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment) will have a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect resulting from the preferred policy option.

**5.67** The alternative policy option would include natural capital considerations within place making principles, therefore quite similar to a continuation of business as usual. Therefore, in the absence of a Natural Capital approach to planning for the county which would support biodiversity, there could continue to be a decline in biodiversity in the county **SA objective 13 (biodiversity)**. The absence of a Natural Capital approach to planning could result in the worsening effects of climate change resulting in adverse effects against the **SA objectives 2 (health), 3 (community), 7 (climate change), 8 (pollution), 9 (water) and 10 (flooding)**.

### Green Belt

**5.68** Table 5.12 presents the findings of the green belt preferred policy option. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 10 – Green Belt

Table 5.12: SA findings for Policy 10

SA objectives	Policy 10
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	++
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	++
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+?
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+?

SA objectives	Policy 10
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	+
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	++
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	++
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	++?
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	++

**5.69** Policy 10 has the potential to have **significant positive effects** in relation to **SA objectives 2 (health), 3 (communities), 11 (soils), 13 (biodiversity), 14 (historic environment) and 15 (landscape)**. This is due to the broad range of opportunities available for enhancing the beneficial uses of the Green Belt, such as improving access and opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation, enhancing landscapes (which could include historic assets and their historic setting), visual amenity and biodiversity, or improving damaged or derelict land.

**5.70** Enhancing the Green Belt also has the potential to build local climate resilience through the enhancement of the natural environment. Therefore, minor positive effects are also likely in relation to **SA objectives 6 (travel), 7 (climate change), 8 (pollution) and 10 (water)** for Policy 10. Enhancing the Green Belt through improvements in access and recreational opportunities within the Green Belt in close proximity to existing settlements and communities presents an opportunity to provide new opportunities for local sport and recreation, reducing the need for people to travel and the related air pollution and traffic congestion. The Thames flood alleviation scheme will also likely improve the ecosystem services of flood mitigation within the Green Belt. The reduced need to travel, jointly with possible tree planting and other carbon fixing measures, is likely to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. However, some uncertainty is attached to these effects until such time as the locations of strategic Green Belt enhancements are known.

### Water Quality

**5.71 Table 5.13** presents the findings of the water quality preferred policy option and one alternative policy option. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 11 – Water Quality.
2. Alternative policy option 1: Do not have a strategic policy on water quality in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. Leave it to Local Plans to set policies in relation to water quality.

**Table 5.13: SA findings for Policy 11 and its alternative**

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 11	Alternative 1
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	-
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	0	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	0	0

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 11	Alternative 1
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	0	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	0	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+	-
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	0	0
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	++	-
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	+	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	+	-
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	++	-
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	+	0

**5.72** The preferred policy option would protect and enhance water quality and ensure development improves water quality through the restoration of contaminated land and incorporation of green infrastructure, natural flood management and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) which is also likely to help reduce flood risk and enhance aquatic habitats along river corridors. Therefore, **significant positive effects** are expected in relation to **SA objective 9 (water) and 13 (biodiversity)**. Improving water quality through those methods is also likely to have minor positive effects on **SA objectives 2 (health), 7 (climate change), 10 (flooding), 11 (soils) and 13 (biodiversity) and 15 (landscape)** as green infrastructure and natural flood management provide health and wellbeing, climate change resilience, and nature and landscape benefits.

**5.73** The alternative policy option represents a 'no strategic policy on water quality' alternative. In the absence of an Oxfordshire-wide water quality policy for all strategic developments, developers will be required to meet the minimum requirements set out in local and national policy. Consequently, under this scenario, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 would have a negligible effect on many SA objectives. However, the absence of a regional policy increases the likelihood of ongoing water quality deterioration, which could have a negative effect on **SA objectives 2 (health), 7 (climate change), 9 (water quality), 11 (soils) and 13 (biodiversity)**.

### Air Quality

**5.74 Table 5.14** presents the findings of the air quality preferred policy option and two alternative policy options. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 12 – Air Quality.
2. Alternative policy option 1: Include a strategic air quality policy in the Oxfordshire Plan but reduce the scope of this policy. For example: do not require air quality assessments for major development proposals.
3. Alternative policy option 2: Do not have a strategic policy on air quality in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. Leave it to Local Plans to set policies in relation to air quality.

Table 5.14: SA findings for Policy 12 and its alternatives

SA objectives	Policy Options		
	Policy 12	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	0	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	+	-
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	0	0	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	0	0	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	0	0	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	++	+	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+	+	-
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	++	+	-
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0	0	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	+	+	-
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	+	+	0

**5.75** Oxfordshire has 13 areas of poor air quality designated as Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs), these areas are within the main towns of the County and Oxford City. This preferred policy option would ensure that development takes account of its impact on air quality and where development is proposed within an AQMA it will have to be consistent with the relevant local Air Quality Action Plan. Therefore, **significant positive effects** are expected in relation to **SA objective 8 (pollution)**. Development will also need to provide walking, cycling and public transport options and support zero and low emissions vehicles, therefore **significant positive effects** are also expected in relation to **SA objective 6 (travel)** as better access to sustainable modes of transport is likely to reduce the need to travel by private car. Development will also need to deliver green infrastructure and implement careful design principles to minimise human and sensitive species exposure to traffic pollution, leading to minor positive effects in relation to **SA objectives 2 (health), 7 (climate change), 13 (biodiversity) and 15 (landscape)** as these measures are likely to improve health and wellbeing of local residents and mitigate the effects of climate change, provide additional habitats and improve the appearance of townscapes.

**5.76** The positive and negative effects recorded for the preferred policy are also likely to be felt under the alternative policy option 1 for the reasons described above, although their significance is likely to be proportionately less, as it would include a strategic air quality policy but would reduce the scope.

**5.77** Alternative policy option 2 represents a 'no strategic policy on air quality' alternative. In the absence of an Oxfordshire-wide air quality policy for all strategic developments, developers will be required to meet the minimum requirements set out in local

and national policy. Consequently, under this scenario, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 would have a negligible effect on many SA objectives. However, the absence of a strategic direction on air quality could see deterioration of air quality in specific locations and fewer strategic green infrastructure and transport initiatives to mitigate their adverse effects, which could have a negative effect on **SA objectives 2 (health), 7 (climate change), 8 (pollution) and 13 (biodiversity)**.

## Theme Three: Creating Strong and Healthy Communities

### Healthy Place Shaping and Health Impact Assessments

**5.78 Table 5.15** presents the findings of the SA for the preferred policy option and alternative relating to healthy place shaping and health impact assessments. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 13 – Healthy Place Shaping and Health Impact Assessments.
2. Alternative policy option 1: Do not include a standalone policy, and instead weave healthy place shaping principles through the Oxfordshire Plan, allowing individual Local Plans to implement their own healthy place shaping principles as appropriate.

**Table 5.15: SA findings for Policy 13 and its alternative**

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 13	Alternative 1
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	+	+?
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	++	+?
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	++	+?
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	+	+?
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	0	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+	+?
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+	+?
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	+?
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	+	+?
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	0	0

**5.79** Minor positive effects are identified for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 1 (housing)** as it encourages a diverse mix of housing, with improvements to accessibility and affordability. Significant positive effects are identified for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 2 (health and wellbeing) and SA objective 3 (communities)** due to the

principles for development in Oxfordshire that are set out. They include targeted improvements to specific health and wellbeing needs in an area, provision of a range of sports facilities, provision of social community infrastructure and strategies to improve community cohesion and the creation of safe environments for residents. In addition, this policy sets out a requirement for all major development proposals in Oxfordshire to carry out a Health Impact Assessment (HIA). This is likely to maximise the potential health and wellbeing benefits arising from development, as well as identifying potential negative impacts on health and mitigation options.

**5.80** The provision of better health and wellbeing through the delivery of Policy 13 is likely to have indirect minor positive effects on the local **economy (SA objective 4)** as the local population is likely to be more productive and active in the local areas.

**5.81** Policy 13 encourages development layouts that prioritise walking and cycling and states that sustainable transport networks should be provided, including links to public transport, which is likely to be beneficial to life after the COVID-19 pandemic. Minor positive effects are therefore recorded for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 6 (travel)**, **SA objective 7 (climate change)** and **SA objective 8 (pollution)**. Additionally, it is set out that proposals should aim to improve air quality and reduce noise pollution, with consideration of locating development to avoid impacts on sensitive land uses. HIA is also likely to identify potential negative air quality, noise and light impacts arising from development and may potentially help develop mitigation strategies to protect vulnerable groups. This may contribute to minimising disturbance of habitats within and adjacent to new developments. The preferred policy also sets out that community gardens, orchards, roof gardens and edible landscaping could be delivered as part of developments, which are small contributions to local biodiversity. As such, minor positive effects are identified for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 13 (biodiversity)**.

**5.82** As such, the contents of Policy 13 would be expressed more generally throughout the Oxfordshire Plan, with the expectation that future Local Plans would draw healthy place shaping principles from this. Minor positive effects are identified for the same SA objectives as Preferred Policy 13. However, in this instance the effects identified are uncertain as it is not clear to what extent future Local Plans would adopt such principles.

### Health Infrastructure

**5.83 Table 5.16** presents the findings of the SA for the preferred policy option and alternative relating to health infrastructure. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 14 – Health Infrastructure.
2. Alternative policy option 1: Leave these considerations to future Local Plans.

**Table 5.16: SA findings for Policy 14**

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 14	Alternative 1
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	++	-?
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	-?
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	0	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+	0?
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+	0?
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+	0?
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	0?

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 14	Alternative 1
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	0	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	0	0

**5.84** Policy 14 is likely to play a crucial role in ensuring that health infrastructure is located in the right locations and can provide sufficient levels of capacity in the period up to 2050, which will contribute to maintaining and improving the health of residents in the County. It is required through the policy that comprehensive masterplans are produced for any changes to the health estate, which will set out the need for such action and the timetable for development. As such, significant positive effects are expected for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 2 (health and wellbeing)**. Health supporting infrastructure can provide valuable support to communities through targeted services for different groups of people and therefore minor positive effects are recorded for the preferred policy option against **SA objective 3 (communities)**. Furthermore, health infrastructure has become even more essential during the COVID-19 pandemic highlighting the need for health infrastructure in the right locations. Future Local Plans may put in place similar policies to manage their respective health estates, but measures may be less stringent and therefore uncertain negligible effects are identified for the alternative policy option in relation to SA objectives 2 and 3.

**5.85** The preferred policy option suggests that good connectivity should be considered in changes to health infrastructure, with ease of access using sustainable travel options for both the public and the workforce. As a result, minor positive effects are identified for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 5 (employment)**, **SA objective 6 (travel)** and **SA objective 8 (pollution)**. Additionally, the preferred policy option also suggests that new healthcare related buildings should introduce stringent energy efficiency measures and should prioritise the use of renewable energy. Minor positive effects are therefore recorded for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 7 (climate change)**. As above, uncertain negligible effects are identified for the alternative policy option in relation to these SA objectives as it is not clear whether future Local Plans will include such measures. Indeed, an absence of a strategic direction on health infrastructure may result in missed opportunities to tackle some of the County's known health inequalities with uncertain minor negative effects on at least **SA objective 2 (health)** and **3 (communities)**.

### High Quality Design for New Development and Garden Town Standards for New Settlements

**5.86 Table 5.17** presents the findings of the SA of the high quality design preferred policy option and one alternative option. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 15 – High Quality Design for New Development.
2. Alternative policy option 1: Leave design matters for local plans and neighbourhood plans based on national guidance.

Table 5.17: SA findings for Policy 15 and its alternative

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 15	Alternative 1
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	+/-?	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+?	0
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+?	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	+/-?	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+?	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+?	-?
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+++?	-?
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+?	-?
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	+?	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	+?	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	+?	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	+++?	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	+++?	0

5.87 The preferred policy option sets ambitions for how Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans should prioritise high quality design through the provision of detailed, locally specific design guides. Requiring developments to respect and enhance the County's distinctiveness and historic environment is likely to have **significant positive effects** on **SA objectives 14 (historic environment)** and **15 (landscape)** as it will steer new development away from Oxfordshire's heritage assets, including locally listed buildings and their settings or otherwise help to enhance them, and this in turn would have a positive impact on Oxfordshire's character, including Oxfordshire's distinctive landscapes and townscapes.

5.88 As well as creating nucleated patterns of travel (i.e., relating to neighbourhood centres), Policy 15 supports attainment of garden town standards through delivery of high levels of green space, sustainable water systems and sustainable drainage systems. The expectation for new settlements to account for these considerations is likely to benefit local biodiversity, improve water resource management and reduce flood risk. Therefore, minor positive effects are identified for Policy 15 in relation to **SA objective 9 (water)**, **SA objective 10 (flood risk)** and **SA objective 13 (biodiversity)**. The delivery of green infrastructure within new settlements will also provide residents with opportunities to access nature and recreation. Minor positive effects are therefore expected for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 2 (health and wellbeing)**.

5.89 Minor positive effects are likely in relation to **SA objectives 2 (health)**, and **3 (communities)** for the preferred policy option. Policy 15 also has the potential to create creative and innovative building designs, making homes and offices more adaptable, higher quality and will incorporate social and green spaces. This is likely to have minor positive effects on health and wellbeing (SA Objective 2) and **community vitality (SA objective 3)**, and will be particularly valuable in helping to address the lasting impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, the provision of community facilities supported through the preferred

policy may provide increased opportunities for residents to come into contact with each other, reducing the potential for social isolation.

**5.90** The preferred policy option sets out how proposals for new settlements should achieve 'Garden Town' standards. A reduced need to travel is supported through various aspects of the policy, with the creation of '20 minute neighbourhoods' being encouraged through provision of active travel links and neighbourhood centres, which will contain community facilities, schools and essential services. Furthermore, the policy suggests that housing in new settlements should contain sufficient digital infrastructure to facilitate home working, as well as electric vehicle charging points. Development proposals are also expected to be resilient to future change, which is likely to make the built environment more resilient to climate change. Therefore, positive effects are expected in relation to **SA objectives 6 (travel), 7 (climate change) and 8 (pollution)**. For **SA objective 7 (climate change)**, the positive effects identified are **significant** as the policy also includes requirements that new settlements will be designed with sustainable materials to achieve significant carbon reductions through energy efficiency and renewable energy generation measures. Minor positive effects are also likely in relation to **SA objective 4 (economy)** as respecting the County's heritage avoiding adverse effects on them will help to protect local character and culture, which is part of what helps to attract and retain global talent thereby supporting the local knowledge economy<sup>57</sup>. It will also help to support tourism, which is a major economic sector in Oxfordshire, thereby having a minor positive effect on **SA Objective 5 (employment)** as well. In addition, provision of housing alongside employment provision will provide future residents with job opportunities in close proximity. As a result, minor positive effects are also identified for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 1 (housing)**.

**5.91** The preferred policy option could also have minor negative effects on **SA objective 4 (economy)**, as it could restrict where and/or how development can be delivered in the context of the historic environment, which may contribute to restricting growth within sensitive areas of the county, particularly the county's historic settlements and landscapes, reducing the opportunities for and viability and affordability of new development. Furthermore, comprehensive masterplanning requirements and higher design standards for allocations over 300 units might compromise the viability of developments in certain parts of the county. The garden town standards are likely to add a small additional cost to homes construction, but it is becoming more viable to achieve higher design and construction standards as technology evolves and the market becomes more favourable. Therefore, minor negative effects are also recorded against **SA objective 1 (housing)**.

**5.92** As this preferred policy option is an ambition for Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans rather than a county-wide requirement, uncertainty is attached to all of these effects. The alternative policy option does not set out any requirements, instead opting to leave design guidance to future Local and Neighbourhood Plans, and therefore negligible effects are recorded for this option in relation to the majority of SA objectives. The notable potential exceptions relate to **SA objective 6 (travel), 7 (climate change) and 8 (pollution)** for which an absence of strategic direction of design principles may result in a lost opportunity to manage some of the most significant impacts of new strategic settlement development: traffic congestion, climate change and other disturbance issues. Any adverse effects remaining in the absence of such a strategic policy are likely to be managed by other policies in the Oxfordshire Plan and Local Plans, so these adverse effects are recorded minor and uncertain.

**5.93** The preferred policy option and alternative policy option are not likely to generate more than negligible effects against the remaining SA objectives due to their specific focus on high quality design and protecting the historic environment.

### Leisure, recreation, community and open space facilities

**5.94 Table 5.18** presents the findings of the SA for the preferred policy option and one alternative relating to leisure, recreation, community and open space facilities. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 16 – Leisure, recreation, community and open space facilities.
2. Alternative policy option 1: Include a policy that seeks to protect the existing indoor and outdoor sports facilities and open spaces within the County. Access to any new private facilities would also be encouraged.

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<sup>57</sup> OxLEP (undated) Creating the Environment for Growth: A Strategic Investment Plan for Oxfordshire  
[https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/sites/default/files/uploads/Creative%2C%20Cultural%2C%20Heritage%20and%20Tourism%20Sectors\\_0.pdf](https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/sites/default/files/uploads/Creative%2C%20Cultural%2C%20Heritage%20and%20Tourism%20Sectors_0.pdf)

Table 5.18: SA findings for Policy 16 and its alternative

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 16	Alternative 1
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	++	+
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	++	+
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	+	+
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+	+
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+	+
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+	+
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	+
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	+/-?	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	+/-?	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	+/-?	0

**5.95** The delivery of strategic scale leisure, recreation, community and open space facilities within Oxfordshire is likely to provide opportunities for community cohesion and improvement of health and wellbeing amongst communities, whilst also offering potential to attract visitors from the wider region and nationally. Community facilities would be a matter for Local Plans, except in instances where facilities are intended to meet the needs of a wider district or neighbouring districts. As a result, minor positive effects are identified for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 2 (health and wellbeing)** and **SA objective 3 (communities)**. The preferred policy option includes support for a wide range of facilities, including strategic indoor sports facilities such as leisure centres, aquatic centres and stadiums. These types of large-scale developments are likely to draw high levels of visitors as well as providing employment opportunities for Local People. Therefore, minor positive effects are identified for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 4 (economy)** and **SA objective 5 (employment)**.

**5.96** The preferred policy also includes support for strategic areas of open space, including country parks and associated facilities. The creation of a country park may provide opportunities to support biodiversity on a strategic scale within Oxfordshire, protecting other more sensitive ecological areas in the county and far afield as a consequence. As a result, minor positive effects are identified for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 13 (biodiversity)**. However, whilst the policy requires that such new leisure and recreation facilities, except in exceptional cases, should be located within the built-up area of settlements, there is potential for such developments to have adverse impacts on local biodiversity through disturbance of habitats. Additionally, the setting of heritage assets and landscape character may be adversely impacted by the delivery of such facilities. Therefore, minor negative effects are identified for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 13 (biodiversity)**, **SA objective 14 (historic environment)** and **SA objective 15 (landscape)**. The negative effects identified are

uncertain as they will be dependent on the location and scale of development. The policy does require that any development should be proportionally scaled and in keeping with the character of a settlement and that it should minimise visual and landscape impacts, which may mitigate and potentially even enhance some impacts on the historic environment and landscape character. As a result, minor positive effects are also identified for the preferred policy option in relation to SA objective 14 (historic environment) and SA objective 15 (landscape).

**5.97** It is required through the preferred policy option that any new recreation, leisure or open space facilities should be in locations with good sustainable transport links, with a sustainable transport plan setting out the details of bus and rail connectivity that would be secured. Additionally, it is also required that developments create minimal traffic and are designed with renewable energy provision. Therefore, minor positive effects are recorded for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 6 (travel), SA objective 7 (climate change) and SA objective 8 (pollution)**.

**5.98** The alternative policy option seeks to protect existing indoor and outdoor sports facilities and open spaces within the County. It is therefore likely to have positive effects against the same SA objectives as the preferred policy option; however, the effects are likely to have less significance in acknowledgement of their being less emphasis on the strategic coordination and enhancement of facilities. Less emphasis on the delivery of new strategic facilities also reduces the scope for

## Theme Four: Planning for Sustainable Travel and Connectivity

### Towards a Net Zero Transport Network

**5.99 Table 5.19** presents the findings of the SA for the preferred policy option and alternative relating to a net zero carbon transport network. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 17 – Towards a Net Zero Transport Network.
2. Alternative policy option 1: Leave these considerations to future Local Plans.

**Table 5.19: SA findings for Policy 17 and its alternative**

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 17	Alternative 1
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	0
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	+	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	++	-?
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	++	-?
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	++	-?
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 17	Alternative 1
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	+	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	0	0

**5.100** The preferred policy option sets out an ambitious approach in relation to the transport network in order to achieve net-zero carbon, which includes enhancements to the rail and bus network, enhanced walking any cycling routes with strategic links between settlements, improvements to transport interchange at key employment areas and transport hubs, improved efficiency in the freight network and road improvements that align with net-zero carbon targets. As a result of these requirements for development proposals that are likely to encourage modal shifts in transport choices in the long term, **significant positive effects** are identified for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 6 (travel)**, **SA objective 7 (climate change)** and **SA objective 8 (pollution)**. These kind of strategic interventions will be necessary to achieve net-zero carbon given the cross-boundary nature of the transport network. The absence of a regional policy on this important strategic issue (Alternative Policy 1) may result in minor negative effects in relation to SA objectives 6, 7 and 8. However, these negative effects identified are uncertain as it is not clear at this stage how and what other policy interventions will be made at the regional and local level.

**5.101** An efficient and effective transport network that is encouraged through the preferred policy approach is likely to ensure that communities have equitable access to services and facilities and job opportunities in key employment areas. Additionally, a modal shift away from private car travel may yield benefits for biodiversity and wellbeing and quality of life in some communities due to increased uptake of active travel and decreased air pollution and noise pollution. As such, minor positive effects are identified for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 2 (health and wellbeing)**, **SA objective 3 (communities)**, **SA objective 4 (economy)**, **SA objective 5 (employment)** and **SA objective 13 (biodiversity)**..

#### Supporting sustainable transport in new development

**5.102 Table 5.20** presents the findings of the SA for the preferred policy option and alternative relating to sustainable transport in development. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 18 – Sustainable transport in new development.
2. Alternative policy option 1: Leave these considerations to future Local Plans.

**Table 5.20: SA findings for Policy 18 and its alternative**

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 18	Alternative 1
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	-?	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	0
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	0	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	+/-?	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	++	-?
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	++	-?

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 18	Alternative 1
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	++	-?
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	+	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	0	0

**5.103** The preferred policy option builds on the strategic interventions set out in Policy 17, by setting out hierarchical principles relating to development proposals' approach to transport. In the first instance, the policy requires high digital connectivity within new developments so that there is potential to work from home and services and facilities should be located in close proximity where they are accessible by walking and cycling. The ability to work from home is particularly important as a result in changing work patterns arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. Where travel is needed, the policy suggests that development proposals should provide good access to active travel and public transport and, if private car travel is needed, zero-emission vehicle use should be provided for by ensuring there is access to charging infrastructure. Furthermore, the preferred policy option takes a proactive approach to this by requiring that new residential and non-residential developments should provide at least 25% of non-allocated spaces as electric vehicle charging points. As a result, **significant positive** effects are identified for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 6 (travel)**, **SA objective 7 (climate change)** and **SA objective 9 (pollution)**. Minor positive effects are also recorded for **SA objective 13 (biodiversity)** in acknowledgement of the indirect benefits of fewer polluting vehicles on Oxfordshire's road on the integrity of the county's sensitive habitats. Minor negative effects are identified for the alternative policy option in relation to these SA objectives, as there is potential for less sustainable travel patterns to remain prevalent without overarching principles in place for sustainable transport. The negative effects identified are uncertain as they will depend on how stringent future Local Plans are in relation to sustainable transport provision.

**5.104** The modal shift away from private car travel encouraged in the preferred policy option is likely to result in increased uptake of active travel amongst residents and potentially reduced negative health impacts arising from air and noise pollution. Therefore, minor positive effects are identified of the preferred option in relation to **SA objective 2 (health)**. Additionally, the preferred option provides residents in new developments with opportunities too access job opportunities using sustainable transport modes and promotes improvements to digital connectivity which will make it easier for employees and students to work from home, providing long-term resilience for large sectors of the local economy, and therefore minor positive effects are recorded against **SA objectives 4 (economy)** and **5 (employment)**. The preferred policy option sets out requirements for electric vehicle provision in new development, which may result in deliverability issues in new residential and employment developments. As a result, minor negative effects are identified for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 1 (housing)** and **SA objective 4 (economy)**. Again, these effects are recorded as uncertain in acknowledgement of the improving cost effectiveness of such technologies and the economies of scale that most strategic developments will be able to take advantage of.

### Supporting sustainable freight management

**5.105 Table 5.21** presents the findings of the SA for the preferred policy option and alternative relating to freight management. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 19 – Supporting Sustainable Freight Management.

2. Alternative policy option 1: Leave these considerations to the OxCam Arc Spatial Framework and/or Local Plans.

Table 5.21: SA findings for Policy 19 and its alternative

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 19	Alternative 1
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	0	0
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	0	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	0	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	0	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+	0?
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+	0?
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	0?
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	+?	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	+?	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	+?	0

**5.106** Decarbonisation of freight movements in Oxfordshire is a key concern given the strategic road network in the area and an increasing prevalence of freight movement on non-strategic roads. The preferred policy option seeks to address this by supporting development proposals that enable freight movements via zero-emissions freight vehicles. Additionally, the preferred policy option attempts to minimise the freight emissions by requiring that there is careful consideration of the alignment of proposals to road networks. As a result, this strategic support is judged likely to generate at least minor positive effects in relation to **SA objective 6 (travel)**, **SA objective 7 (climate change)** and **SA objective 8 (pollution)**. The alternative option would leave these considerations to the OxCam Arc Spatial Framework and Local Plans, which in combination are highly likely to include some measures relating to sustainable freight transport. Therefore, negligible effects are recorded for all SA objectives for the alternative, with uncertainty attached to SA objectives 6 (travel), 7 (climate change) and 8 (pollution), given these SA objectives are most likely to be influenced by alternative measures – for better or worse.

**5.107** The preferred policy option suggests that there should be careful review of any freight related proposals that may have environmental or heritage impacts. This may prevent inappropriate freight facilities coming forward that would have adverse impacts on sensitive environmental receptors. As a result, uncertain minor positive effects are identified for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 13 (biodiversity)**, **SA objective 14 (historic environment)** and **SA objective 15 (landscape character)**.

## Digital Infrastructure

**5.108 Table 5.22** presents the findings of the SA for the preferred policy option and alternative relating to digital infrastructure. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 20 – Digital Infrastructure.
2. Alternative policy option 1: Leave these considerations to future Local Plans.

**Table 5.22: SA findings for Policy 20 and its alternative**

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 20	Alternative 1
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	0	0
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	0	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	++	-?
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+	-?
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+	0
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	0
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	0	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	-	0

**5.109** As reliance on digital infrastructure increases, it has become important to ensure that any new development considers provision of fibre and mobile technology at an early stage in the planning process. The COVID-19 pandemic has reaffirmed the importance of this, with a significant amount of people working remotely. The preferred policy option reflects this need as it requires full fibre broadband and 5G mobile technology to be provided with new developments. Faster communication would make positive contributions to Oxfordshire's knowledge economy and increase the attractiveness of the area for business. Therefore, **significant positive** effects are identified for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 4 (economy)**. The ability to work from home with adequate internet speeds is likely to provide residents with employment opportunities and therefore minor positive effects are identified for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 5 (employment)**. By leaving these considerations to future Local Plans, the alternative policy option may result in disparities across Oxfordshire in the capacity of digital infrastructure delivered with new developments. Subsequently, this may result in negative impacts on the area's knowledge economy and the potential for people to work remotely in some areas. Therefore, minor negative effects are

recorded against SA objectives 4 and 5 for the alternative policy option. The negative effects identified are uncertain as it is not clear how future Local Plans will approach digital infrastructure at this stage.

**5.110** As well as improving employment prospects for residents, delivery of fast digital infrastructure may create a reduced need to travel, potentially resulting in positive impacts on carbon emissions and air quality arising from private car travel. Minor positive effects are therefore identified the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 6 (travel)**, **SA objective 7 (climate change)** and **SA objective 8 (pollution)**.

**5.111** The delivery of masts for 5G purposes are likely to have some visual impacts, which may cause disturbance to landscape and/or townscape character in some locations. As such, minor negative effects are recorded for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 15 (landscape)**.

### Strategic Infrastructure Priorities

**5.112 Table 5.23** presents the findings of the SA for the preferred policy option and alternative relating to electric vehicle charging. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 21 – Strategic Infrastructure Priorities.
2. Alternative policy option 1: Land should be safeguarded for strategic infrastructure priorities.

**Table 5.23: SA findings for Policy 21 and its alternative**

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 21	Alternative 1
1.To meet Oxfordshire’s housing needs	+/-?	+/-?
2.To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire’s population	+/-?	+/-?
3.To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	+/-?
4.To support the development of Oxfordshire’s knowledge economy	+/-?	+/-?
5.To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+	+/-?
6.To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+	+/-?
7.To minimise Oxfordshire’s contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+	+/-?
8.To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	+/-?
9.To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire’s watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	+	+/-?
10.To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	+	+/-?
11.To protect Oxfordshire’s soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0
12.To safeguard Oxfordshire’s mineral resources	0	0
13.To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire’s biodiversity and geodiversity	+/-?	+/-?
14.To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire’s historic environment	-?	
15.To protect and enhance Oxfordshire’s landscape character and quality	-?	0

**5.113** The preferred policy option promotes the planning of strategic infrastructure priorities set out in the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) and subsequent updates to it. This is likely to encourage sustainable patterns of growth, as new residential and employment development will be supported by the appropriate infrastructure, in terms of location and scale. Despite being a basic principle of good planning, reaffirming this principle in the Oxfordshire Plan could generate minor positive effects against the SA objectives tied to key types of strategic infrastructure, notably **SA objectives 1 (homes), 2 (health), 3 (community), 4 (economy), 5 (employment), 6 (travel), 7 (climate change), 8, (pollution), 9 (water), 10 (flood risk) and 13 (biodiversity)**. Conversely, promoting investment in and channeling development to particular strategic locations, could increase the cost of developments, which may compromise the viability of some developments and therefore the ability of the Oxfordshire Plan to deliver the county's growth needs. Furthermore, concentrations of development in particular strategic locations may put a strain on notable local sensitive receptors, such as new and existing local residents as well as sensitive ecology, landscapes and townscapes and the historic environment. Therefore, the minor positive effects recorded for SA objectives **1 (homes), 2 (health), 4 (economy) and 13 (biodiversity)** are also coupled with uncertain minor negative effects. Similarly, uncertain minor adverse standalone effects are recorded for SA objectives **14 (heritage) and 15 (landscape)** due to the potential for new infrastructure development to adversely affect landscape character and heritage assets.

**5.114** The alternative policy option promotes a more proactive approach to allocating land for strategic infrastructure priorities. This has the potential to generate more certainty in the delivery of the positive effects identified for the preferred policy option, but it could also have the potential for the misalignment of safeguarded land with evolving infrastructure needs, resulting in a mismatch between policy and more detailed growth proposals. As such, uncertain mixed minor positive and minor negative effects are identified for the alternative policy option for all the SA objectives for which positive effects are identified for the preferred option.

## Theme Five: Creating Jobs and Providing Homes

### Economic Growth

**5.115** **Table 2.24** presents the findings of the SA of the preferred policy option and one alternative option for supporting the creation of jobs. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 22 – Supporting the Creation of Jobs
2. Alternative policy option 1: OGNA trajectories range from an additional 20,000 to 45,000 jobs
3. Alternative policy option 2: Use a floor space calculation of new Class B employment.

**5.116** Alternative policy option 1 has already been appraised in **Chapter 4**. Three initial economic growth scenarios were tested as part of an earlier phase of sustainability appraisal work. See **Table 4.21** and the associated text for further details. Furthermore, the appraisal of spatial options in the final section of this chapter considers the implications of different scales of growth on the range of effects identified.

**Table 2.24: SA findings for Policy 22 and its alternative**

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 22	Alternative 2
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	0	0
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	0	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	+	+
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+	+
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	?	?

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 22	Alternative 2
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+?	?
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	?	?
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	?	?
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	?	?
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	?	?
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	?	?
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	?	?

**5.117**The preferred policy does not propose to identify specific requirements for job numbers as there is too much uncertainty later on in the plan period. However, this preferred policy encourages appropriate development that delivers jobs and the adoption of appropriate metrics to measure increased productivity and the impact of business innovation in Local Plans. As such, minor positive effects are expected in relation to **SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment)**.

**5.118**Minor positive effects are expected in relation **SA objective 7 (climate change)** as the preferred policy option encourages the adoption of metrics to measure business innovation as part of achieving 'clean growth'. This metric could encourage businesses to prioritise energy and water efficiency and green infrastructure when creating developments which could help mitigate and adapt to climate change. However, as the metric is not mandatory, uncertainty is attached.

**5.119**Additional development could result in the loss of more greenfield land in the county and/or have adverse effects on local wildlife, the historic environment, air and water quality or sensitive landscapes and townscapes; however, as this preferred policy option provides a framework rather than development locations, uncertain effects are expected against **SA objectives 6 (travel), 8 (pollution), 9 (water), 11 (soil), 13 (biodiversity), 14 (historic environment) and 15 (landscape)**.

**5.120**Alternative policy option 2 would use a floor space calculation of new B Class employment to support the creation of jobs. This option is likely to have similar effects to the preferred policy as they both support economic development. It is assumed that this metric would also not be mandatory. Therefore, this option would also have uncertain effects, including uncertain effects against **SA objective 7 (climate change)** as it does not emphasise 'clean growth'.

### Protection of Economic Assets

**5.121** **Table 5.25** presents the findings of the SA of the preferred policy option and alternative for economic assets. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 23 – Protection of Economic Assets.
2. Alternative policy option 1: This option would leave these considerations to future Local Plans.

Table 5.25: SA findings for Policy 23 and its alternative

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 23	Alternative 1
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+/-?	0
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	0	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	++	-?
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	++	-?
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+	0
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+/-?	0
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	-?	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	-?	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	-?	0

**5.122** Oxfordshire has a number of economic assets that are not only of regional importance, but of national and international importance. The intensification and diversification of economic activity within Oxford's business, science parks, innovation and technology centres through new investment and extensions, has the potential to contribute to the growth of the County's economy and employment opportunities. Policy 23 attempts to avoid the stagnation of these sites, by allowing flexibility in what uses are permitted within business parks so that they are future proofed for the emergence of new sectors. **Significant positive** effects are therefore recorded for Policy 23 in relation to **SA objective 4 (economy)** and **SA objective 5 (employment)**.

**5.123** Policy 23 encourages investment into renewable energy generation and sustainable construction as part of business park alterations, which is likely to be valuable in reducing the carbon footprint of these developments. The provisions of charging points for electric vehicle and improved public transport connections provides employees of the economic asset with sustainable transport options, potentially reducing the need for private, fossil fuel-reliant vehicles to access these locations. Therefore, minor positive effects are recorded for the preferred policy against **SA objective 6 (travel)**, **SA objective 7 (climate change)** and **SA objective 8 (pollution)**. Minor positive effects are also recorded against **SA objective 2 (health)** in acknowledgement of the benefits of economic growth on the quality of life of local residents directly through employment and indirectly through investment in the wider local economy, services and facilities.

**5.124** The preferred policy option provides support for the extension of economic assets, which may result in the greenfield land take. There is potential for this to result in negative impacts on the natural and historic environment, as well as existing landscape character. Minor negative effects are therefore recorded for this policy option in relation to **SA objective 13 (biodiversity and geodiversity)**, **SA objective 14 (historic environment)** and **SA objective 15 (landscape)**. Similarly, such

expansions or intensifications have the potential to generate additional adverse effects on the **SA objectives 2 (health) and 8 (pollution)**; however, these effects are uncertain until the exact nature and location of such intensifications and expansions are known.

**5.125** The alternative option, of leaving these considerations to future Local Plans, is expected to generally result in negligible effects against the majority of the SA objectives, with the exception of **SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment)** where a failure to provide strategic direction on the intensification and diversification of business parks may result in a failure to protect some industries in the county and capitalise on growing markets and industries. Therefore, uncertain minor negative effects are recorded against these two SA objectives.

### Town Centre Renewal

**5.126 Table 5.26** presents the findings of the SA of the preferred policy option and alternative relating to town centre renewal. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy: Policy 24 – Town Centre Renewal
2. Alternative policy option 1: This option would leave town centre renewal considerations to future Local Plans.

**Table 5.26: SA findings for Policy 24 and its alternative**

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 24	Alternative 1
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	+	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	0
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	-?
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	+	-?
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+	-?
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+/-?	0
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+/-?	0
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	0	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	0	0

**5.127** The preferred policy option would provide a policy framework that responds to the changing role of town centres by providing support for the delivery of new leisure and hospitality facilities and new economic and business uses. Minor positive

effects are therefore recorded for the policy in relation to **SA objective 4 (economy)** and **SA objective 5 (employment)**. The preferred policy also encourages cultural enrichment in town centres by providing support for markets and cultural activities. As a result, minor positive effects are identified for the policy against **SA objective 3 (vibrant communities)**. Conversely, the absence of a positive strategic direction through the alternative option could increase the likelihood of less coherent, complementary and resilient town centres across the county. As such, minor negative effects are recorded for the alternative in relation to SA objectives 3, 4 and 5. These effects are uncertain as they will be dependent upon the approaches taken in future Local Plans.

**5.128** The provision of new leisure uses in town centres may include facilities that provide residents with opportunities to engage in activities that improve their physical and mental wellbeing. Minor positive effects are therefore recorded for the preferred policy against **SA objective 2 (health)**. The ability of residents to access these town centre uses is likely to be enhanced through the policy's support for improved public transport facilities. Furthermore, the policy also supports the provision of charging points for electric and hybrid vehicles, which may reduce the potential for travel into town centre locations to result in reduced air quality. As such, minor positive effects are recorded for the preferred policy in relation to **SA objective 6 (travel)**, **SA objective 7 (climate change)** and **SA objective 8 (pollution)**. However, the increased movements within town centres that such a policy approach may encourage also has the potential to result in a net increase in carbon emissions and air pollution. Minor negative effects are therefore recorded for the preferred policy in relation to SA objective 7 and 8. These effects are uncertain as they will be dependent on the transport movements of residents, which are difficult to predict at this stage.

**5.129** Whilst housing in town centres is not generally supported by the preferred policy, it does offer support for accommodation above shop units and live work units, which will contribute to meeting some housing need in town centre locations. As such, minor positive effects are identified for the policy in relation to **SA objective 1 (housing)**.

### Visitor Economy

**5.130 Table 5.27** presents the findings of the SA for the preferred policy option and alternative relating to the visitor economy. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 25 – Visitor Economy.
2. Alternative policy option 1: This option would leave visitor economy considerations to future Local Plans.

**Table 5.27: SA findings for Policy 25 and its alternative**

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 25	Alternative 1
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	0
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	-?
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	++	-?
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+	-?
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+/-?	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+/-?	0
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+/-?	0
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	-?	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0	0

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 25	Alternative 1
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	-?	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	-?	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	-?	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	-?	0

**5.131** The support for the enhancement of Oxfordshire's visitor economy in the preferred policy through new large event spaces, hotels, leisure and sport facilities and theme parks is likely to have a significant impact on the region's economy given the scale of these developments. As such, significant positive effects are identified for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 4 (economy)**. Due to the employment opportunities and vibrancy to growth and community centres that such developments are likely to provide, minor positive effects are recorded against **SA objectives 3 (community) and 5 (employment)**. There is also a strong emphasis within the preferred policy on the provision of sports facilities and adventure-based tourism, which may provide opportunities to engage in activities that will be beneficial to resident's and visitor's physical wellbeing. Minor positive effects are therefore recorded for the preferred policy option against **SA objective 2 (health)**. Opting for the alternative policy option, of leaving these considerations to future Local Plans, could miss the opportunity to provide regional direction on these important economic assets and their effects. This could result in the stagnation of some existing facilities with minor negative effects in relation to SA objectives 3, 4 and 5.

**5.132** The preferred policy option suggests that the delivery of development should be at locations where there is easy access using sustainable transport modes, which includes a requirement to produce a sustainable travel plan that demonstrates how bus and rail connectivity has been secured. Furthermore, the policy requires that proposals minimise traffic impacts and include renewable energy provision. As a result, minor positive effects are identified for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 6 (travel), SA objective 7 (climate change) and SA objective 8 (pollution)**. However, the type of developments that are supported through the policy will attract high levels of visitors, which may contribute to an overall increase in transport movements if private car travel remains dominant. Therefore, minor negative effects are also expected for the preferred policy option in relation to these SA objectives. The effects identified are uncertain as it is difficult to predict the influence of specific proposals and future policies of people's travel habits at this stage.

**5.133** The policy supports proposals, such as stadium scale sports facilities and theme parks, which are likely to require significant land/surface water take and may have adverse impacts on sensitive environmental receptors, including heritage assets, landscape designations and the natural environment. As such, minor negative effects are recorded for the policy against **SA objectives 9 (water quality), SA objective 11 (soils), SA objective 13 (biodiversity), SA objective 14 (historic environment) and SA objective 15 (landscape)**. These effects are uncertain as they will depend on the location and scale of any proposals.

### Culture and Arts

**5.134** **Table 5.28** presents the findings of the SA for the preferred policy option and alternative relating to culture and arts. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 26 – Culture and Arts.
2. Alternative policy option 1: This option would leave culture and arts considerations to future Local Plans.

Table 5.28: SA findings for Policy 26 and its alternative

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 26	Alternative 1
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	0
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	++	-?
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	++	-?
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+	-?
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+/-?	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+/-?	0
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+/-?	0
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	-?	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	-?	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	-?	0

**5.135** The preferred policy option's broad ranging support for new cultural and arts facilities in the built-up areas of cities, towns and villages is likely to be beneficial to all communities within Oxfordshire and a wide range of demographics. The policy's attention to scale is important in this regard, with support for new venues ranging from museums and public broadcasting facilities to pop up culture and arts venues in vacant buildings. This will maximise benefits for different groups of people and Oxfordshire's creative economy. Furthermore, the policy is future proofed to an extent through a provision that support is not limited to the venue types listed in the policy text, which may be important as the creative industries adapt and change in the coming decades. **Significant positive** effects are therefore identified for the preferred policy option in relation to **SA objective 3 (communities)** and **SA objective 4 (economy)**. Uncertain minor negative effects are identified for the alternative policy option in relation to **SA objectives 3 (communities), 4 (economy) and 5 (employment)**, as a lack of a regional policy framework may result in the stagnation of some of these important facilities and the jobs and services they provide, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic where many creative industries have struggled.

**5.136** The employment opportunities arising from the delivery of new arts and cultural facilities is likely to provide job opportunities for residents in the area and therefore minor positive effects are recorded for the preferred policy against **SA objective 5 (employment)**. Additionally, delivery of cultural and arts facilities in communities may yield positive effects on resident's quality of life, by providing opportunities to socialise at a range of venues. Minor positive effects are therefore recorded for the policy against **SA objective 2 (health and wellbeing)**.

**5.137** The policy sets out specific criteria that any new cultural and arts facility proposals must be accompanied by sustainable travel plans, be located in good proximity to sustainable transport links, generating minimal traffic. Furthermore, the policy

requires that new cultural and arts facilities are designed to include renewable energy generation technologies. As a result, minor positive effects are identified for the policy in relation to **SA objective 6 (travel)**, **SA objective 7 (climate change)** and **SA objective 8 (pollution)**. However, given that the policy encourages new developments likely to attract significant numbers of people, there is potential for adverse impacts on sensitive environmental receptors and an overall increase in transport movements. As a result, minor negative effects are also expected for the policy in relation to **SA objectives 6 (travel)**, **7 (climate change)**, **8 (pollution)**, **13 (biodiversity)**, **14 (heritage)** and **15 (landscape)**. These negative effects identified are uncertain as they will depend on the scale and location of development and transport movements, which are difficult to predict at this stage.

### Meeting Skills and Education Needs

**5.138 Table 5.29** presents the findings of the SA for the preferred policy option and alternative relating to meeting skills and educational needs. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 27 – Meeting Skills and Education Needs.
2. Alternative policy option 1: This option would leave skills and education needs considerations to future Local Plans.

**Table 5.29: SA findings for Policy 27 and its alternative**

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 27	Alternative 1
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	0	0
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	-?
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	-?
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	+	-?
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	+	-?
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+	0
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	0
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	-?	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	-?	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	-?	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	-?	0

**5.139** The delivery of new schools and training facilities within Oxfordshire will be required to support growth in the County up to 2050 and will also be important in supporting the region's economic growth and employment levels. As such, the support the preferred policy provides for new education and training facilities record minor positive effects in relation to **SA objective 4**

**(economy) and SA objective 5 (employment)**. There is an emphasis in the preferred policy option on the delivery of facilities that can act as community hubs, serving the needs of local people. This will facilitate social isolation in communities and improve social wellbeing. As a result, minor positive effects are recorded for the preferred policy against **SA objective 2 (health and wellbeing)** and **SA objective 3 (communities)**. Failure to adequately prepare for planned growth in terms of educational capacity at the strategic scale may result in missed opportunities to address county-wide inequalities in education and training, with minor negative effects. Therefore, potential minor negative effects are recorded for the alternative policy option of leaving education considerations to future Local Plans in relation to **SA objective 2 (health)** and **SA objective 3 (communities)**. The knock-on effect of this lack of access to education needs may be felt within the local economy and may result in residents being less well equipped for job opportunities in the area. Therefore, minor negative effects are also identified for the alternative policy option in relation to **SA objective 4 (economy)** and **SA objective 5 (employment)**. The negative effects identified are uncertain as it is not clear at this stage how these considerations may be addressed through future Local Plans and other regional plans and strategies to capitalise on the strategic scales of growth needed.

**5.140** The policy sets out specific criteria that any new education and training facility proposals must achieve a high degree of environmental efficiency, be located in good proximity to sustainable transport links and generate minimal traffic. Furthermore, the policy requires that new education and training facilities are designed to include renewable energy generation technologies. As a result, minor positive effects are identified for the policy in relation to **SA objective 6 (travel)**, **SA objective 7 (climate change)** and **SA objective 8 (pollution)**.

**5.141** The delivery of large schemes for education and training facilities will potentially require land take on greenfield land, which may result in the loss of high-quality soils. Additionally, the physical and visual impacts of such schemes may result in adverse impacts on local biodiversity, heritage assets and townscape and landscape character. As such minor negative effects are identified for the preferred policy in relation to **SA objective 11 (soils)**, **SA objective 13 (biodiversity)**, **SA objective 14 (historic environment)** and **SA objective 15 (landscape)**. The effects identified are uncertain as they will be dependent on the location and scale of schemes proposed.

### How Many Homes?

**5.142 Table 5.30** presents the findings of the SA of the preferred policy option and alternative relating to where homes should go. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 28 – How many homes?
2. Alternative policy option 1: OGNA trajectories range from an additional 25,000 to 77,000 homes. See additional options appraised in **Chapter 4**. See **Table 4.20** and the associated text for further details.

**Table 5.30: SA findings for Policy 28 (Alternative policy option 1 appraised in Chapter 4)**

SA objectives	Policy 28
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	++
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+?
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+?
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	++?
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	++?
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+?
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+?
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	0?

SA objectives	Policy 28
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0?
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0?
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	+
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	0?
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0?
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	0?

**5.143** The preferred policy option would have **significant positive effects** in relation to **SA objective 1 (housing)**, **SA objective 5 (employment )** and **SA objective 4 (knowledge economy)** because it would help to provide a coordinated approach of delivering housing, infrastructure and employment, which in turn would be more attractive to businesses and employees. There is uncertainty for the preferred policy option due to the fact that viable locations for economic growth and education and training may change over the long plan period.

**5.144** The preferred policy option would likely help to reduce the need to travel by car (**SA objective 6 (travel)**), by helping to plan for integrated communities including housing, employment sites and sustainable transport. This would indirectly help to minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change (**SA objective 7 (climate change)**). The preferred policy option also aims to provide growth at locations that can achieve zero carbon growth and environmental enhancement. There is some uncertainty about both of these SA objectives as they depend on the strategic growth sites allocated. The preferred policy option would also be more likely to direct housing and employment sites initially to previously developed land, helping to ensure efficient use of land (**SA objective 11 (soils)**). The preferred policy option is likely to have minimal impacts on the other SA objectives (**SA objectives 8 (pollution)**, **9 (water)**, **10 (flooding)**, **13 (biodiversity)**, **14 (historic environment)** and **15 (landscape)**) since the sites would be selected to avoid these impacts where possible. However, uncertainty is attached to the likelihood and significance of these effects until such time as the location, design and scale of such developments is known.

The preferred policy option would help to support health and vibrant communities (**SA objectives 2 (health)** and **3 (communities)**) the emphasis on sustainable outcomes would see growth being located where it could contribute the regeneration of areas and address inequalities in accessing jobs in Oxfordshire's key sectors.

### Urban Renewal

**5.145** Table 5.31 presents the findings of the SA of the preferred policy option and one alternative relating to urban renewal. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 29 – Urban Renewal.
2. Alternative policy option 1: Leave to future Local Plans.

Table 5.31: SA findings for Policy 29 and its alternative

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 29	Alternative 1
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	0	0

SA objectives	Policy Options	
	Policy 29	Alternative 1
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	0
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	0
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	0	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	0	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+	-
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+	-
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	0	0
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	++	-
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	+/-	-
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	-	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	+/-	-

**5.146** The preferred policy option would support the reuse of brownfield land and intensification of land use in the market towns, Oxford City and at the former MoD sites where the majority of brownfield land is located within the County therefore, **significant positive effects** are expected in relation to **SA objective 11 (soils)**. As development is to be steered to existing towns it is likely that the developments will be within close proximity to existing transport links thereby reducing the need to travel by car (**SA objective 6 (travel)**) for residents, workers and visitors.

**5.147** Steering development away from greenfield land is likely to retain landscape character (**SA objective 15 (landscape)**) and allow natural green spaces to play a role in minimising the effects of climate change (**SA objective 7 (climate change)**) through for example carbon sequestration. Therefore, minor positive effects are expected against those SA objectives. However, densification of existing urban areas, particularly in historic settlements such as Oxford have the potential to adversely affect the setting and special character of historic buildings, with minor adverse effects against **SA objectives 14 (heritage)** and **15 (landscape)**. While focusing development to brownfield land is likely to reduce the likelihood of harm on local biodiversity, there is potential for brownfield land to provide habitats to local wildlife, therefore mixed effects are expected in relation to **SA objective 13 (biodiversity)**. Ensuring greenfield land is protected is also likely to have minor positive effects against **SA objectives 2 (health)** and **3 (communities)** as green space can promote mental and physical health and social cohesion.

**5.148** Alternative policy option 1 would result in no urban renewal policy, thereby relying on future Local and Neighbourhood Plans. In the absence of policy designed to promote the efficient use of land, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 would have a negligible effect on the majority of SA objectives. However, the absence of urban renewal schemes at a county wide level could result in more potential for adverse effects on **SA objectives 6 (travel), 7 (climate change), 11 (soils), 13 (biodiversity)** and **15 (landscape)**.

## Affordable Housing

**5.149 Table 5.32** presents the findings of the SA of the preferred policy option and two alternatives relating to affordable housing. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 30 – Affordable Housing.
2. Alternative policy option 1: Instead of leaving tenure mix to Local Plans, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 could set tenure mix targets across Oxfordshire reflecting existing Local Plan target.
3. Alternative policy option 2: Do not include an affordable homes policy in Oxfordshire Plan and instead leave to Local Plans.

**Table 5.32: SA findings for Policy 30 and its alternatives**

SA objectives	Policy Options		
	Policy 30	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	++/-?	+	?
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+	+	?
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+	+	?
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	0	0	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	0	0	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	0	0	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	0	0	0
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	0	0	0
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0	0	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	0	0	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	0	0	0

**5.150** The preferred policy requires Local Plans to ensure maximum levels of affordable housing are delivered on sites over 10 dwellings or 0.5 ha in area, based on each Local Plan's tailored tenure mix and affordable housing targets. This option is designed to prove flexibility to accommodate the needs of local markets rather than alternative option 1 which promotes a standardised tenure mix target for Oxfordshire based on the current contents of the county's Local Plans: 40% affordable rented; 35% social rented; 25% other routes to affordable housing. By providing the flexibility in the preferred policy to maximise what the market can accommodate in each are of the county, the preferred option is most likely to generate **significant positive** effects in relation to **SA objective 1 (housing)**. However, the policy is open ended leaving it to the Local Plans to define what is

and is not appropriate. Therefore, there is scope for some areas of the county not to maximise affordability. Therefore, the recorded significant positive effect is mixed with some uncertainty and the potential for some minor negative effects.

**5.151** A mixed minor positive and minor negative effect are recorded for alternative option 1 against SA objective 1 (housing) in acknowledgement that a county-wide target is likely to be more constrained by the areas of the county where affordable homes are the least viable, limiting the scope for significant positive effects and introducing inappropriate targets in other areas.

**5.152** The preferred policy option and alternative policy 1's provision of affordable homes would also generate indirect positive effects on the **health (SA objective 2)** and mix and vibrancy of local **communities (SA objective 3)**.

**5.153** Alternative policy option 2 is similar to the preferred option in that it relies more heavily on the county's Local Plans to dictate affordable housing policy; however this option would not include any county-wide policy. The absence of a county-wide policy setting out the principles and ambition of Oxfordshire to maximise affordable housing on specific types of development and through specific tenures could lead to the delivery of less coherent and joined-up Local Plan policies on this issue, leading to overall more uncertainty as to the likely effects to be generated for alternative option 2.

### Specialist Housing Needs

**5.154 Table 5.33** presents the finding of the SA of the preferred policy option and two alternatives relating to specialist housing needs. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 31 – Specialist housing needs.
2. Alternative policy option 1: Support the delivery of specialist housing where meeting an identified need (i.e. for older people, students and key workers), in appropriate locations and where proposals conform with Local Plan policies.
3. Alternative policy option 2: Leave to future Local Plans, allowing them to define different thresholds for specialist accommodation as appropriate.

**Table 5.33: SA findings for Policy 31 and its alternatives**

SA objectives	Policy Options		
	Policy 31	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	++?	++	-
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	++?	+	-
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	++?	+	-
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	0	0	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	0	0	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+	+	0
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+	+	0
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+	+	0
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0	0	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	0	0	0
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0	0	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0	0	0

SA objectives	Policy Options		
	Policy 31	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	0	0	0
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	0	0	0
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	0	0	0

**5.155** The preferred policy addresses the provision of housing to meet the needs of older people, students, key workers and people in need of additional care. Therefore, **significant positive effects** are expected in relation to **SA objective 1 (housing)**. This option is designed to prove flexibility to accommodate specialist needs. However, the policy is open ended leaving it to the Local Plans to define what each specialist type should include. This results in greater potential for uncertainty with regards to the appropriateness and tailored nature of each type of specialist housing. Delivering a mix of specialist homes would meet the needs of a wide section of the community and is expected to help support social inclusion through the creation of mixed and balanced communities resulting in minor positive effects on **SA objective 3 (communities)**. Minor positive effects are also expected in relation to **SA objective 2 (health)** as this preferred policy option is expected to help meet the specific housing needs of residents who have additional care requirements and might otherwise be vulnerable without these types of provisions. Again, given the lack of detail on what should be provided within each type of specialist housing, there is some uncertainty as to whether the preferred policy will deliver these minor positive effects.

**5.156** The preferred policy option also encourages potential development proposals to maximise walking, cycling and public transport links which could reduce reliance on the private car, minimise greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution through the use of more sustainable modes of transport. Therefore, minor positive effects are expected in relation to **SA objectives 6 (travel), 7 (climate change) and 8 (pollution)**.

**5.157** The alternative policy option 1 is likely to have similar effects to the preferred policy options, however it sets out much more specific needs for each specialist group such as the need for suitable parking for minibuses and ambulances to be provided at housing for elderly people. Such a policy is likely to generate greater certainty that the specialist needs of particular groups of people are planned for effectively.

**5.158** Alternative 2 would result in no specialist housing policy, thereby relying on future Local and Neighbourhood Plans. The absence of a county-wide strategy would make the provision of specialist needs more uncertain and miss an opportunity to provide a consistent county-wide approach to protect the vulnerable and resolve established inequalities in the county. Therefore, uncertain minor negative effects are recorded for alternative option 2 against **SA objectives 1 (housing), 2 (health) and 3 (communities)**.

### Gypsies, Travellers, Travelling Showpeople

**5.159** Table 5.34 presents the findings of the SA of the preferred policy option relating to gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople. The findings are described below the table.

1. Preferred policy option: Policy 32 – Gypsies, Travellers, Travelling Showpeople.

Table 5.34: SA findings for Policy 32

SA objectives	Policy 32
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	++?
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+?

SA objectives	Policy 32
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+?
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	0
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	0
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	+?
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	+?
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+?
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	0
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	+?
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	0
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	+?
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	+?
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	+?

**5.160** The preferred policy option would set out the assessed need for sites across the county in the Plan period and a breakdown by district. It also includes parameters for setting out locational criteria for the provision of pitches for gypsies and travellers and plots for travelling showpeople. As such, this policy option has the potential to generate **significant positive effects** against **SA objective 1 (housing)**. As this preferred policy option simply sets out locational criteria that ensures pitches and plots will avoid sensitive locations and be accessible to facilities and services, therefore it is likely to have minor positive effects against multiple **SA objectives 2 (health), 3 (communities), 6 (travel), 7 (climate change), 8 (pollution), 10 (flooding), 13 (biodiversity), 14 (historic environment) and 15 (landscape)**. Uncertainty is attached to each effect due to the fact that the locational criteria have not been finalised and the exact scale and location of future sites has yet to be determined.

## Spatial Strategy Options

**5.161 Table 5.35** presents the findings of the SA of the five options for distributing growth considered in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation document. These five spatial strategy options are based on the nine spatial alternatives that were appraised in **Chapter 4** and additional county-wide consultation:

1. Option 1: Focus on opportunities in and around larger settlements and planned growth locations.
2. Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth.
3. Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors and at strategic transport hubs.
4. Option 4: Focus on strengthening business locations.
5. Option 5: Focus on supporting rural communities.

**5.162** The findings are described below the table.

Table 5.35: SA findings for Spatial Strategy options

SA objectives	Spatial Strategy Options				
	1	2	3	4	5
1. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs	+?	+	+	+	+
2. To improve the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population	+/-	+/-?	+/-	+/-	+
3. To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities	+/-	+/-?	+/-	+/-	+
4. To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy	++	++	++	++	+
5. To maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire	++	++	++	++	+
6. To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire	++?	++	++?	+/-	-
7. To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to the changing climate	++?	++	++?	+/-	-
8. To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire	+/-?	++/-?	+	+/-	-
9. To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management	-	-	-	-	-
10. To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire	-	--?	-	--?	-
11. To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land	+	+	+	-	--
12. To safeguard Oxfordshire's mineral resources	0?	0?	0?	0?	0?
13. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity	-	+/-	-	-	--
14. To protect and enhance the significance of Oxfordshire's historic environment	-	-	-	-	-
15. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality	-	-	-	-	-

**5.163** This appraisal assumes that the same scale of growth could be planned for under each spatial strategy option. Given the preferred scale of growth to be planned for, in particular the number of homes to be delivered in the plan period, has yet to be determined, all options have been identified as having uncertain minor positive effects on **SA objective 1 (housing)** at this stage. Although all options would deliver a significant number of new homes, their affordability is unknown. The same general assumption has been made with regards to the provision of employment land; however the spatial pattern of existing employment opportunities has offered greater scope to draw out variations in likely effects of the spatial strategy options to SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment), which are described in more detail below. At the end of this section, the appraisal

of the spatial strategy options is supplemented by a short discussion of the likely implications of different scales of growth on the pattern of effects identified across the different spatial strategy options.

**5.164** There is not a lot of variation between the effects identified for Options 1, 2, 3 and 4 as they all would result in some or all new development being either within/close to existing towns and cities, along sustainable transport corridors and/or around strategic transport hubs, offering more alternatives to private vehicle use including more active travel modes. Option 5 has the most potential negative effects because it distributes new growth across rural areas, where the loss of greenfield land and its associated natural and historic assets are more likely to be adversely effected.

**5.165** Option 1 would provide strategic scale housing growth at existing market towns, Oxford, MoD sites and planned garden communities that have already been allocated through the five Local Plans within Oxfordshire. As such, it would not include the consideration of additional new settlements. While Option 3 considers growth along established transport corridors, largely centred around existing centres such as Oxford and the wider Oxfordshire market towns and out into more rural areas where there may be opportunities for accessible new settlements.

**5.166** Options 1 and 3 are considered likely to have the same effects across all but one of the SA objectives. These two options would have **significant positive effects** in terms of employment and the knowledge economy (**SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment)**) because development would take place in areas where there are already employment and educational facilities, allowing economic clusters to form. The employment opportunities could be easily accessed by walking, cycling and transport potentially resulting in '20 minute neighbourhoods', in part because development would be intensified in urban areas also resulting in **significant positive effects on SA objective 6 (travel)**. Both options aim to support urban renewal through the redevelopment of brownfield land, helping to minimise the loss of greenfield land with positive effects against **SA objective 11 (soil)**; however, this positive effect is not recorded as significant in acknowledgement of the fact that all options are still likely to result in the loss of significant areas of greenfield land. The denser development in urban areas and/or around sustainable transport nodes would make district heating easier and use less energy per dwelling than lower density communities. This, combined with the reduced need to travel, would also have **significant positive effects** on minimising contributions to **SA objective 7 (climate change)**. These new communities would be complemented by the delivery of new infrastructure, however it would take time to establish a fully compatible range of services, facilities and infrastructure alongside new mixed-use communities, therefore uncertainty is attached to **SA objectives 6 (travel), 7 (climate change) and 8 (pollution)** as the use of private vehicles may be needed more in the early stages of the garden communities. However, Option 3 highlights that the new garden communities will be well connected to the existing sustainable transport network and not located within isolated locations. A minor negative effect is also expected in relation to **SA objective 8 (pollution)** for Option 1 as there are currently 13 Air Quality Management Areas within Oxfordshire, each of which lies within a local centre of Oxfordshire, therefore, additional development in these areas would put more people in close proximity to these air quality issue, and potentially exacerbate them, at least in the short to medium term during construction.

**5.167** Options 1 and 3 would have both positive and negative effects on **SA objectives 2 (health) and 3 (communities)**. Existing towns and cities have existing health facilities which could support new residents but could also be placed under a lot of pressure. Existing residents are likely to feel negative impacts from a large increase in population, although new residents are likely to benefit from the existing services (e.g., leisure and retail facilities).

**5.168** Although Option 3 offers greater potential for the development of large areas of greenfield land, particularly through the delivery of new settlements along existing transport corridors, Options 1 and 3 are based on a principle of maximising development around existing centres. This has the potential to help minimise negative effects on biodiversity due to their more efficient use of land, however, both Options 1 and 3 are still likely to result in large urban extensions of existing settlements, resulting in the loss of large areas of greenfield land. Furthermore, the densification of existing centres could result in fewer green spaces in and around urban areas, with associated losses of biodiversity (**SA objective 13 (biodiversity)**). Negative impacts on **SA objectives 9 (water), 10 (flooding), 14 (historic environment) and 15 (landscape)** are also likely because existing urban areas and transport corridors, especially in the southern portions of the County, are mostly in/near designated floodplains and contains most of the County's most historic, attractive and distinctive characteristics, which would be affected by significant quantities of new development.

**5.169** Option 2 focusses on Oxford City and its immediate locale, prioritising the densification and expansion of the city rather than more dispersed growth and the development of isolated new settlements. Although there is an aim to retain the city's compact and modest size, Option 2's focus on intensification within the City and new or extended urban extensions will make this difficult. The current adopted Local Plans include allocations for some significant urban extensions to the city and at

adjacent settlements, which could be expanded or supplemented in the immediate vicinity resulting in the loss of more greenfield land and the release of Green Belt land. However, similar to Options 1 and 3, priority would be given to the densification and regeneration of existing sites in the city before the loss of additional greenfield land, resulting in positive effects on **SA objective 11 (soils)**; however, this positive effect is not recorded as significant in acknowledgement of the fact that all options are still likely to result in the loss of significant areas of greenfield land.

**5.170** Option 2 would have **significant positive effects** in terms of **SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment)** because development would take place in close proximity to Oxford's world class employment and educational facilities and the wider Ox-Cam Arc. The employment opportunities could be easily accessed by walking, cycling and transport utilising the city's existing sustainable transport links, resulting in **significant positive effects** on **SA objective 6 (travel)**. While additional residents would put pressure on the existing sustainable travel options, Option 2 would improve cycling and public transport links to ensure any new developments are fully integrated with the city.

**5.171** The densification of the city will make district heating easier and use less energy per dwelling than lower density communities. This, combined with the reduced need to travel, would also have **significant positive effects** on minimising contributions to climate change and air pollution (**SA objectives 7 and 8**). However, a minor negative effect is also expected in relation to SA objective 8 (pollution) for Option 2 as the entirety of Oxford city is designated as an Air Quality Management Area, therefore, like Options 1 and 3, additional development in the city would put more people in close proximity to these air quality issues, and potentially exacerbate them, at least in the short to medium term during construction.

**5.172** Option 2 would have both positive and negative effects on **SA objectives 2 (health) and 3 (communities)**. Oxford City has a plethora of existing health facilities which could support new residents but could also be placed under a lot of pressure. Existing residents are likely to feel negative impacts from a large increase in population, although new residents are likely to benefit from the existing services (e.g., leisure and retail facilities). In addition, this option would incorporate urban renewal within the city which could have positive effects but could also price out many people within an already very expensive city having adverse effects on health and wellbeing of the community. However, the amount of affordable housing that could be delivered as a consequence of densification is currently unknown.

**5.173** Although a focus of the County's existing largest urban area would help to minimise the loss of additional greenfield land and the natural habitats and species they contain, the densification of the city could result in the loss or under provision of green spaces in the existing urban area, including putting pressure on important ecological designations, such as Oxford Meadows SAC. Therefore, a minor negative effect is recorded against **SA objective 13 (biodiversity)**. This would be somewhat mitigated by the need to provide compensatory improvements to the remaining surrounding Green Belt land and enhance its beneficial uses. Furthermore, Option 2 aims to enhance the surrounding Green Belt to improve access to nature as well as provide environmental enhancements for local wildlife. Therefore, minor positive effects are also expected in relation to **SA objectives 2 (health) and 13 (biodiversity)**. Negative impacts are also likely in relation to **SA objectives 9 (water), 10 (flooding), 14 (historic environment) and 15 (landscape)** because a large portion of Oxford city is mostly in/near designated floodplains and contains most of the County's most historic, attractive and distinctive characteristics, which could be affected by significant quantities of new development. The negative impact against **SA objective 10 (flooding)** is considered to be potentially significant given the prevalence of flood risks zones in and around Oxford; however, this **significant negative** effect is recorded as uncertain in acknowledgement of the exact location of future growth under this option in and around Oxford is not known at this stage.

**5.174** Option 4 would support the key economic assets and business locations that have been identified through the Local Industrial Strategy as priorities for investment. These locations are scattered throughout the County, however the majority of growth under this option would be focused within Bicester, Oxford and the southern portion of the County. This option could include the creation of new settlements where new business sites are proposed. This option would also focus new growth where it would help support and strengthen Oxfordshire's existing key economic assets. This option would reduce the need to travel (**SA objective 6 (travel)**) to work by car as housing would be located near jobs. In addition, this option aims to extend walking and cycling routes to connect with regional routes thereby reducing the need to travel by private vehicle. However, the current large employment sites are not near services – they are on the edge of towns or outside towns – so other journeys than those to work might be made more easily by car. Therefore, mixed effects are expected. These effects are also expected in relation to **SA objective 7 (climate change) and 8 (pollution)**.

**5.175** The large employment sites are currently in areas with many environmental constraints, such as numerous Local Wildlife Sites, SSSIs and the Oxford Meadows SAC as well as many listed buildings and Conservation Areas and the Chilterns and

North Wessex AONBs. Therefore, concentrating growth in these locations could have adverse impacts on **SA objectives 9 (water), 11 (soils), 13 (biodiversity), 14 (historic environment) and 15 (landscape)**. **Significant negative effects** are expected in relation to **SA objective 10 (flooding)** as the majority of the development locations identified under this option are located in Flood Zones 2 and 3. Uncertainty is attached however, as the exact location and layout of development within sites is unknown at this stage and may be able to avoid the flood risk areas.

**5.176** The creation of new settlements would create new service centres able to support new healthy and vibrant communities with mixed effects on **SA objectives 2 (health) and 3 (communities)**, but some of these developments could be quite remote from existing service centres, introducing a risk that some new communities become commuter suburbs, acting as dormitories for local workers. Therefore, mixed minor positive and minor negative effects are recorded against these SA objectives.

**5.177** Currently, Oxfordshire struggles with the combination of retaining growth in key sectors and enabling business to grow with availability of affordable housing and capacity in the transport and infrastructure network. By providing growth across the network of business parks across the County, this option supports the knowledge economy and employment (**SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment)**), especially in the context of COVID-19 as workers in the knowledge economy are likely to need access to specialist equipment on a weekly basis. Therefore, **significant positive** effects are expected against these SA objectives for Option 4.

**5.178** Option 5 would propose growth within the rural areas of the County away from the main service centres. This option considers growth outside of the current adopted Local Plans and would include allocating new Garden Villages outside the AONBs. As this option is focused on rural areas it is likely to utilise more greenfield land for development compared to the other options, resulting in a more inefficient use of land and greater potential for the loss of habitats. In addition, there are many Local Wildlife Sites, patches of Ancient Woodland, Local Nature Reserves and SSSIs that could be adversely impacted by development in the rural areas of the county, resulting in the potential for **significant negative effects on SA objectives 11 (soils) and 13 (biodiversity)**. The most widespread deprivation factor across Oxfordshire relates to barriers for housing and services as the rural areas have become increasingly isolated with fewer sustainable transport links and existing health and community facilities. Although new service centres would be created in new and expanded village communities, they are unlikely to be of a scale to be able to support significant new and improved local service and facility centres of a scale needed for the level of growth likely to be required in the County, resulting in the need for more commuting to larger centres in existing market towns and Oxford city. Option 5 would therefore likely increase greenhouse gas emissions, traffic congestion and use of the private car resulting in at least minor negative effects on **SA objectives 6 (travel), 7 (climate change) and 8 (pollution)**. Positive effects are expected as a result of investment in additional infrastructure within the rural areas, which would improve the health and wellbeing of rural communities **SA objectives 2 (health) and 3 (communities)**.

**5.179** Additional rural infrastructure would open up new opportunities within the County's rural economy ( and encourage residents to stay within the rural areas for work, resulting in minor positive effects in relation to **SA objectives 4 (economy) and 5 (employment)**. For example, there is potential for an innovative rural economy with regard to farming practices in response to climate change and policy changes and more home working. However, the long-term viability and capacity of these growing practices is currently uncertain.

**5.180** With a greater loss of open countryside due to Option 5 promoting growth in the rural areas there are likely to be at least minor negative impacts on **SA objectives 9 (water) and 10 (flooding)**. Although the density of development would be lower it would have to be spread over a larger area of the county, which could potentially affect the setting and special character of the county's historic and landscape character and unique distinctiveness, with at least minor negative effects on **SA objectives 14 (historic environment) and 15 (landscape)**.

**5.181** All options are considered to have a negligible effect on SA objective 12 (minerals) on the assumption that safeguarded minerals within allocated areas would be recovered before development occurred; however, this is uncertain until the viability of mineral recovery on all sites is known.

#### Implications of different scales of growth

**5.182** The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Regulation 18 Part 2 Consultation document does not include alternative growth options for housing or employment land. However, a broad range of growth scenarios have previously been appraised in **Chapter 4**. Therefore, consideration has been given to what influence higher growth scenarios might have on the range of effects identified for the spatial options above, the implication being that lower growth scenarios would result in a similar pattern but a less significant range of effects.

**5.183** Meeting the County's housing and employment needs in the short, medium and long term will likely result in a diverse range and type of housing and employment opportunities thereby producing **significant positive effects** on **SA objectives 1 (housing), 4 (economy) and 5 (employment)**. It is also likely that high levels of growth would involve the most improvements to infrastructure to relieve existing pressure and to accommodate future growth in the long term. However, the higher the growth the greater potential for **significant negative effects** on environmental factors relating to **SA objectives 9 (water), 10 (flooding), 11 (soils), 13 (biodiversity), 14 (historic environment) and 15 (landscape)**, as more greenfield land would need to be developed, and there would likely greater densification in existing urban areas, which would also adversely affect the ability of the County to combat and adapt to **climate change (SA objective 7)** through an exacerbation of the city's urban heat island effect. The greater the scale of growth the greater the potential for **pollution (SA objective 8)** associated with greater traffic congestion and more buildings to heat and power. These implications of higher scales of growth could also have a knock-on adverse effect on the health and wellbeing of the county's new and existing communities (**SA objective 2 (health)**).

**5.184** The Options Paper emphasises that it is possible that no one option can sustainably accommodate all of the proposed additional Plan growth on top of the growth associated with the existing five adopted Local Plans.

## Chapter 6

### Conclusions and next steps

#### Conclusions

**6.1** This SA report has been prepared to accompany the Regulation 18 Part 2 Consultation for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. The SA has sought to identify significant effects emerging from the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 in line with the SEA Regulations.

**6.2** The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation document does not set out a preferred growth or spatial strategy, choosing to use the consultation process to gain further views before a decision is made in light of updated evidence at the Regulation 19 Stage of the plan-making process, when the version of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 proposed for submission to the Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government for examination is consulted upon. Therefore, the likely significant effects of the draft plan as a whole will be determined at the next stage in the plan-making process (Regulation 19).

**6.3** What is clear at this stage is that the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 will provide significant strategic direction on the full range of local planning issues across the county, i.e. addressing the county's response to climate change, improving the environmental quality of the county, creating healthier communities, planning for sustainable travel and connectivity, creating jobs and providing homes. The proposed policies in the Regulation 18 Part 2 document have the potential to generate new significant positive changes for the county across the range of sustainability issues tested in this sustainability appraisal process, as well as shape and coordinate the benefits of the districts' future Local Plans.

**6.4** Furthermore, in general, the preferred policies have more positive effects than the reasonable alternative policy options. Notable exceptions include Policy 3 – Water Efficiency, where one of the alternative policy options is more ambitious in its aim/targets than Policy 3 and Policy 31 – Specialist Housing Needs, where the alternative policy option provides more certainty than Policy 31.

**6.5** Besides the significant benefits of delivering the county's strategic needs and safeguarding and enhancing its unique assets, the prospect of significant scales of new growth – housing and employment land – have the potential to generate new significant adverse effects. It is clear that every effort is being made to avoid, minimise and compensate for such adverse effects through the definition of a robust and diverse range of reasonable policy approaches.

**6.6** Oxfordshire does not exist in isolation. Neighbouring Counties and Districts are also planning to deliver considerable amounts of development. This will result in in-combination effects, in particular increased urbanisation including the generation of additional traffic, and put pressure on resources, such as water, air quality, tranquillity and on ecological networks. It is therefore important that the Oxfordshire authorities continue to work closely together and with their neighbours to make sure that their plans are co-ordinated to provide an integrated approach to maintaining and enhancing quality of life for all their residents, workers and visitors, and to ensure that a rich, high quality and resilient environment is created.

#### Next Steps

**6.7** This SA Report will be available for consultation alongside the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 between 31<sup>st</sup> July and 8<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

**6.8** After the public consultation, another SA Report will be produced for consultation alongside the proposed submission version of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 before the Plan is submitted for examination.

**6.9** All consultation comments on the SA process and its findings will be reviewed and addressed before any further SA work is carried out. A schedule containing a summary of the consultation comments of relevance to the SA and appropriate responses will be produced and included in the next SA Report.

LUC

July 2021

# Appendix A

## SA Scoping consultation comments

**A.1 Table A1** below summarises all consultation comments received on the SA Scoping Report for the SA of the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan. Responses and associated actions are set out in the final column.

Table A.1: Oxfordshire 2050 SA Scoping Report Consultation Comments by Question

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Member of the Public	<b>Q1-Q6:</b> The scope of the SA is appropriate.	Noted.
Chinnor and Princes Risborough Railway	<b>Q6:</b> Chinnor and Princes Risborough Railway notes that there are a number of Heritage sites that are not covered in the Heritage <b>Section 3.92 to 3.97</b> . They also mention that the Chinnor and Princes Risborough Railway attracted over 20,000 visitors to the area in 2018, and there are other heritage railways within the plan area that should be considered as assets to the sustainability of community wellbeing . They feel that the volunteer-driven sector of the heritage community should be included in the section on Heritage in the SA of the Oxfordshire JSSP.	All readily available data on Oxfordshire’s historic environment has been recorded in the baseline section of the SA Scoping Report. It is acknowledged that no information is presented on the County’s locally listed and non-designated historic assets. Work is underway with Oxfordshire’s historic environment team to address this evidence gap and ensure that the Local Plan and the SA process take account of local and non-designated historic assets, including heritage at risk.
Member of the Public	<b>Q1:</b> This member of the public is concerned with Oxfordshire’s commitment to reduce its carbon emissions and felt that the SA fails to set an ambitious framework and hardly mentions climate change, which is a key sustainability issue.	The SA Scoping Report has a baseline section on climate change, which has now been added to. Effects of the plan on climate change will be assessed via SA objective 7.
	<b>Q2:</b> A strategy for carbon emissions reduction is needed that emphasises clear targets, particularly for housing and transport. (Please note Q3 and Q4 also relate back to Q2)	Noted.
	<b>Q6:</b> Reduction of carbon emissions should be the overarching theme of the JSSP. Concrete measures need to be applied to the various climate related objectives (e.g. ‘promoting energy efficiency’, ‘encouraging renewable energy provision where possible’, and minimising gas emissions from transport’). The idea of growth must be reinvented to be sustainable.	Noted.
Member of the Public	<b>Q1:</b> This member of the public felt the Scoping Report was too vague and that the housing development and expansion of the road network are not sustainable. In addition, it is mentioned that the term ‘sustainable’ completely loses meaning in this	Noted. SA is a strategic process to assess the likely sustainability effects of the plan. Once the Council has identified

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 902	context as the effects on water use, land, flooding risk, climate change, landscape and biodiversity will be widespread and detrimental. It is also noted that these plans for 2050 will decimate the environment of the county.	options for the plan, these will be subject to assessment through the SA.
	<p><b>Q2:</b> The government's 25 year plan for the environment must be central to any idea of 'sustainable development.' The aim of leaving the environment in a better position for the next generation should be central to the JSSP.</p>	The 25 Year Environment Plan is within the review of relevant international and national plans and programmes within Appendix 2.
	<p><b>Q3:</b> How have the predicted population increases of between 26-38% by 2031 for the four district council areas been arrived at? Where is the growth coming from?</p>	This figure is taken from the Oxfordshire County Council Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Summary Report as referenced on page 10 of the SA Scoping Report.
	<p><b>Q4:</b> The section in the Scoping Report regarding Climate Change should include a section regarding the impact of the farming sector has on climate change (e.g. impact of methane, carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxide) since it is one of the largest contributors. The impact should be drastically reduced, especially by 2050.</p>	Farming and agriculture is outside the scope of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.
	<p><b>Q6:</b> The sustainability objectives need to be followed by clear, legally binding policies that protect and restore the natural environment of the county. Without them, the environment will be ignored.</p>	Noted. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.
Member of the Public	<p><b>Q1 and Q3:</b> This member of the public notes that the scope of the SA is appropriate.</p>	Noted.
	<p><b>Q2:</b> Thames Water's Steventon Reservoir Plan leads to the export of significant volumes of water from Oxfordshire to London. This plan points out the area will be under water stress by 2020 and may need to import water from elsewhere. The JSSP should include examination of proposals to import water from the Severn basin that were detailed in the last reservoir public inquiry.</p>	Noted. Water issues have been acknowledged in the baseline of the SA Scoping Report.
	<p><b>Q4:</b> If the JSSP wants to steer people away from using private vehicles then it must address the provision of public transport in detail. There are currently no buses and the rail network is at capacity.</p>	Noted. This will be assessed via SA objective 6.
	<p><b>Q5:</b> The JSSP does not provide sufficient new road infrastructure beyond strategic routes and with the housing growth in the south of the county the roads will continue to be gridlocked.</p>	The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 has not yet been prepared. The role of the SA is to

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		assess the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 903</p> <p><b>Thames Valley Police</b></p>	<p><b>Q1:</b> Thames Valley Police felt that the SA fails to make reference to the safety and security of new and existing residents and the opportunities to reduce crime and the fear of crime within new communities.</p>	<p>Added a specific question on crime into SA objective 3.</p>
	<p><b>Q2:</b> TVP highlight that crime and disorder can have significant impacts on the health and wellbeing of victims, and there are further effects on the social and economic sustainability of places, especially in more deprived areas. Locations that suffer higher levels of crime are less sustainable. The carbon cost of crime within the UK is estimated to be in the region of 6,000,000 tonnes of CO2 per annum. This is roughly equivalent to the total CO2 output of 6 million UK homes (Secured By Design: Homes Guidance document 2016). Of course, there are also financial impacts on victims personally, but also for local authorities, businesses, insurance providers etc.</p> <p>In addition, TVP note that the effect on police resources over the period of the JSSP will also be significant if not addressed through the provision of adequate infrastructure to mitigate the impact of the significant growth planned in the area. All of these costs adversely affect the sustainability of development and existing places. Addressing crime and disorder within the objectives and policies of the SA and subsequent JSSP would also assist Oxfordshire's authorities in meeting the requirements of the updated NPPF. TVP explains that paragraphs 8, 26, 32 and 92 of the NPPF together confirm that sustainable development means securing a safe environment through the delivery of social infrastructure needed by communities. In addition, paragraph 20 specifically states policies should deliver development that makes sufficient provision for security infrastructure. Paragraphs 16, 26, 28, 32 and 38 collectively envisage this being delivered through joint working by all partners concerned with new developments. This is expanded on by paragraph 95, which states planning policies and decisions should promote public safety and security requirements by using the most up to date information available from the police; who are essential local workers providing an acknowledged "front line" service to the public, according to Annex 2 of the NPPF. Section 12 'Achieving well-designed places', point 127 (part f), which states that; 'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments... create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible... and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience'. Both planning policies and decisions are expected to deliver this.</p>	<p>See above. In addition, relevant crime statistics have been added to the baseline of the SA Scoping Report.</p>
	<p><b>Q3:</b> Consideration needs to be given to the impact of the significant growth planned in Oxfordshire and the impact this will have upon existing crime and disorder issues. TVP are happy to provide information regarding these issues on order that the SA can attempt assess the additional impact generated by the planned growth.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

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<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 94</p>	<p><b>Q4:</b> TVP is concerned that the draft document makes little or no reference to the need to ensure that new communities are safe and that new and existing residents are protected from crime and the fear of crime.</p> <p>It is therefore respectfully requested that Objective 2 is amended to read;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 'To improve the health, safety and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population'.</li> </ul> <p>Objective 3 is amended to read;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 'To sustain and create safe and vibrant Oxfordshire communities'.</li> </ul> <p>Furthermore, the following question should be added;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 'Will the JSSP... address safety, crime and disorder?'</li> </ul>	<p>Please note that the suggested amendments to SA objective 3 have been added into the SA report.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Member of the Public</p>	<p><b>Q1:</b> This member of the public is concerned that the scope of the SA is not ambitious enough.</p>	<p>Noted. SA is a strategic process and the scope covers all relevant topics set out in the SEA Regulations.</p>
	<p><b>Q2:</b> There is not enough about protecting and enhancing the AONB.</p>	<p>With regards to AONBs, reference is already made in SA objective 15, where protection of the AONBs is specifically highlighted.</p>
	<p><b>Q3:</b> The baseline for the SA is probably suitable.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Member of the Public</p>	<p><b>Q6:</b> This member of the public is concerned that construction around Grove and Wantage has not taken the environment into account. Open spaces in the area are insufficient to support habitats and provide benefits to wellbeing for those living in the area. Where trees have to be cut, two should be planted in a more appropriate place. It should be noted that cutting down ancient trees causes losses to flora and fauna which will not be replaced in our lifetime. Also, natural flood defences must be considered when flood planes are built on. There are many existing issues such as, congested roads, inaccessible services, homelessness that are not being dealt with, rather the Oxford Cambridge expressway is given priority and will benefit a few and further ruin the environment for all.</p>	<p>Noted. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 against the SA objectives.</p>

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<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 905</p> <p><b>Member of the Public</b></p>	<p><b>Q1:</b> This member of the public broadly supports the approach of the Scoping Report. Some greater consideration and recognition of the need to consider cross-boundary issues and cumulative impacts is suggested as outlined below particularly to support continued MOD operations in the County and optimisation of its sites.</p>	<p>Noted. The SA will take account any cross boundary impacts and include an assessment of cumulative effects.</p>
	<p><b>Q2:</b> The MOD operational developments across the County are not only key to the delivery of National Security, but are also some of the larger employers and trainers of specialist skills in the area. It is therefore important that the SA recognises this role and ensures that infrastructure developments continue to support these operations and developments do not either impact on safeguarding zones or access to sites (notably for Heavy Equipment Transporters). The MOD is a major land owner of sites across the County. The MOD is engaged in a process of optimisation of its estate and is engaging with local authorities as part of that process. It is important that the SA takes into account the opportunities arising from that process. Given the prominence the SA gives to the Ox-Camb 'knowledge arc' there is a need to give due consideration to neighbouring authority development plans / strategies and major growth poles (including London, Heathrow for example). But there is also a need to ensure that these do not pre-judge the outcome of the SA.</p>	<p>Specific effects on MOD sites is outside the scope of the SA. However, the Council will continue to consult relevant stakeholders throughout the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.</p>
	<p><b>Q3:</b> There are potential shortfalls in the baseline from the MOD perspective as outlined above.</p>	<p>Specific effects on MOD sites is outside the scope of the SA.</p>
	<p><b>Q4:</b> As mentioned above, there is a need to engage and consult with the MOD throughout the development of the JSSP.</p>	<p>The Council will continue to consult relevant stakeholders throughout the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.</p>
	<p><b>Q5:</b> There is a need to recognise that the development of the knowledge economy and supporting job growth (and quality jobs in particular) is wider than the research sector and Oxford- Cambridge arc in the county. This aspiration links well with developments being brought forward by the MOD and its core business in the County.</p>	<p>The economy and employment section of the Scoping Report considers the largest employment sectors according to census data. Employment outside of the research sector will be considered via SA objective 5.</p>
<p><b>Member of the Public</b></p>	<p><b>Q1:</b> This member of the public notes that the framework proposed is good. However, it is key to ensure that an appropriate spread of options and scenarios are assessed, so that the widest possible range of alternative approaches is explored, compared and understood.</p>	<p>Noted and this will be taken into consideration in the further stages of SA.</p>
	<p><b>Q3:</b> Concerned that there is currently great uncertainty regarding housing needed in Oxfordshire. Different analyses suggest different values for the current undersupply of housing. There also needs to be clarity on strategies to supply affordable</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its</p>

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Page 906	<p>housing for rent and purchase and how they will be delivered effectively. It is noted that provision of expensive new housing close to major rail and road links to London for example, will do nothing to meet local housing and employment needs, but will put additional strain on infrastructure. This respondent emphasised that Oxfordshire's Councils should be seeking powers to capture raised land values to fund infrastructure and other services, such as has been achieved in London. A clearly defined base position on housing and employment needs with all assumptions set out is needed at the outset. Any assessments should also explore how the outcomes might vary if key outturn indicators were to vary significantly e.g. by 20% or more. By assessing options against a range of differing potential outcomes we can have more confidence in the final Plan.</p> <p>The respondent is concerned about the new Expressway that Central Government is proposing that links Oxford and Cambridge. The nature and location of this is currently uncertain. There must also be a question mark as to whether a new road of this kind - particularly given the uncertainties about future car use and technology application - would actually be an appropriate part of the Oxfordshire Plan. It is therefore essential that the base option for the Plan should not include the Expressway. Different options can be assessed by applying different levels of investment in public transport and/or highway networks, one of which could include an Expressway type option or options. Government has committed to the funding and development of a new East-West rail link. This should be included in the baseline, but the pattern of service frequency and location of stations could vary with different development strategies for Oxfordshire.</p>	<p>relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>
	<p><b>Q5:</b> The framework as proposed has the potential to effectively assess the sustainability implications of the proposed Oxfordshire Plan. What is critical however is the establishment, at the outset, of a broad range of different scenarios of how Oxfordshire might change, with housing and other development located in different locations and how movement and other requirements might then best be managed. The benefits and weaknesses of each scenario can then be identified hopefully enabling an iterative move towards the optimum option(s) and ultimately the final Plan.</p> <p>An example of this would be to explore low growth, medium growth and high growth options, with variations for where major development is located. Each option could then be tested against the following transport options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. minimal change (quite likely given funding constraints)</li> <li>b. low investment in the public transport and cycling network</li> <li>c. high investment in the public transport and cycling network.</li> </ul> <p>A fairly basic initial assessment of these variants against selected criteria against key policy objectives - and crucially including affordability of capital and revenue costs - would help identify the best performing options for further more detailed assessment and development. If climate change, air quality, reducing car dependency and reducing the need to travel are given the weight they should be, new development should primarily be focussed on either expanding existing larger towns (or cities) or establishing compact new settlements - of say 25,000 minimum population - along existing or new high quality and</p>	<p>Noted. The SA will assess all reasonable alternative options identified by the Council.</p>

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	<p>frequency bus transit or rail networks, such as along the East-West rail line. This would also maximise the opportunity for people to walk and cycle to work, school, medical and other facilities. Such a scenario would also minimise the capital cost of new infrastructure and reduce the need for revenue support for public transport operations. It has been noted that the scattering of new development along existing or new road corridors, which would just increase car dependency, the length of trips and in the longer-term, congestion, should be ruled out on sustainability grounds.</p>	
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 907</p> <p><b>Historic England</b></p>	<p><b>Q1:</b> Historic England welcomes the identification of the historic environment as a topic. However, they are concerned as to why the second Sustainable Development Message/Objective for Historic Environment in <b>Table 2.2</b> starts with "Where possible". None of the other Messages/Objectives have this caveat, nor is it in paragraph 184 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which states heritage assets "are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations". The inclusion of this caveat could, potentially, lead to the masking of effects on heritage assets if, for example, a proposed site allocation would cause unavoidable harm to the significance of a heritage asset but because it would not be possible to "safeguard" the asset, the proposed allocation would be assessed against this objective as N/A.</p> <p>Historic England notes that it is essential that, to achieve genuinely sustainable development (given that, for the planning system, this includes the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment) and to make decisions based on the best information, that potential impacts on the significance of heritage assets (positive or negative) are recognised and taken into account in developing the JSSP. Accordingly, "where possible" should be deleted. The objective should also include reference to the significance of the historic environment/heritage assets – "significance" is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework but is essentially what is important about heritage assets and what should be conserved or enhanced (as well as the physical asset itself). Historic England would also suggest replacing "safeguard" with "conserve" to reflect the term used in the Framework.</p>	<p>With regard to Table 2.2, 'where possible' has been deleted and 'conserve' has replaced 'safeguard'. In addition, with regard to SA objective 14, the word 'significance' has been added to the wording of the objective.</p>
	<p><b>Q2:</b> Historic England notes that in <b>Appendix 2: List and Review</b> of relevant international and national plans and programmes, reference should be made to the Convention for the Protection for the Archaeological Heritage of Europe in the section on Heritage. The National Planning Policy Framework, in paragraph 185, requires plans to "set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats", which is not quite how it is expressed in the Scoping Report. Paragraph 184 of the Framework is also relevant to this section: "[Heritage] assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.</p>	<p>In regards to Appendix 2, the Convention for the Protection for the Archaeological Heritage of England has been added.</p>
	<p><b>Q3:</b> Historic England notes that in <b>paragraph 3.92</b>, not all scheduled monuments are "above ground". Reference should be made to non-scheduled but nationally important archaeological remains, which should be considered as subject to the same policies as for scheduled monuments. Historic England welcomes the reference to areas of archaeological potential – the</p>	<p>Reference to 'above ground' has been deleted in this paragraph.</p>

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Page 908	<p>JSSP evidence base should include a strategic assessment of archaeological potential in the County. Historic England <i>is</i> also aware of work on maps showing areas that have tended to produce higher or lower levels of archaeological discoveries, based on a GIS-based statistical analysis of archaeological and other information. The patterns are likely to reflect a combination of past patterns of archaeological work, archaeological visibility (e.g., archaeology is harder to detect in woodland than in open land) and real variations in the density of archaeological remains in different areas. The maps show areas where our archaeological knowledge is generally less good, which may be less archaeologically rich than other areas, but in which there is a higher risk of unexpected discoveries. This work could feed into the map of combined environmental sensitivity, particularly as although archaeology is identified in <b>paragraph 3.116</b> as an environmental asset, we are not clear how archaeological sensitivity has been identified for this map – is it based on the Historic Environment Record? It would be possible to refine these maps further, e.g., to produce more localised models of archaeological information and potential for particular development options as the underlying data is very fine-grained.</p> <p>Historic England would be pleased to explore this further with LUC and the local authorities. In <b>paragraph 3.93</b>, locally listed buildings should not be conflated with nationally listed buildings, with a separate figure given for those buildings of local interest. Given that the JSSP will be for Oxfordshire, the baseline data should be for Oxfordshire. Whilst they have no objection to the singling out of Oxford in <b>paragraph 3.93</b>, <b>paragraph 3.94</b> should give an equally comprehensive picture of the historic environment across the remainder of the County e.g., how many of the Conservation Areas in the other districts have Appraisals? Which other authorities have local lists, and how many assets are on those lists? What heritage is identified as being at risk across the County (noting that, outside London, the Register does not include Grade II listed secular buildings nor places of worship used less than six times a year)? Other Oxfordshire-wide baseline information includes the County Register of Historic Parks and Gardens and the Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Character Assessment. It is the view of Historic England that HLCs provide exactly the sort of landscape-scale information which should assist an SEA; giving perspective on the relative character of the wider area into which alterations to the character of any particular part might be weighed. HLC is an inherently comprehensive and generalising approach, all about providing context to the understanding of the particular and about the management of change everywhere. Historic England considers that the HLC approach is applicable and highly relevant to informing SEA. In fact, all of the commissioned County-level HLCs were designed to inform strategic level planning. More specifically, it was one of the Oxfordshire HLC project's stated Objectives "To support OCC's role in strategic planning in respect of historic environment issues". The Oxfordshire HLC should form part of the evidence base used to inform the SEA. It should also be noted that HLC can be undertaken at any scale, including coarser or finer grained work - HLC is also a principled approach which can be, and is being, undertaken at a range of scales. Paragraph 2.24 of "A practical guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive" states, in part: 'If, however, a plan or programme proposes a specific development or type of land use for a particular area or location, the Environmental Report should include information which can reasonably be provided on the likely significant effects of that proposal and alternatives to it.'</p>	<p>Figure 3.12 illustrating Oxfordshire's environmental sensitivity in 2016 has been removed in light of the more recent environmental evidence and data set out in other sections of the SA Scoping Report Baseline.</p> <p>Finer grain information will be used to inform assessments but will not necessarily be presented as mapped data in the SA Reports.</p> <p>All readily available data on Oxfordshire's historic environment has been recorded in the baseline section of the SA Scoping Report. It is acknowledged that no information is presented on the County's locally listed and non-designated historic assets. Work is underway with Oxfordshire's historic environment team to address this evidence gap and ensure that the Local Plan and the SA process take account of local and non-designated historic assets, including heritage at risk. With regards to Table 3.20, reference to heritage at risk has been added for each district.</p>

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	<p><b>Q5:</b> Historic England welcomes, in principle, "The need to protect and enhance the historic character of Oxfordshire, including not only its designated assets but also its historic settlements and landscapes" as a key sustainability issue the JSSP will need to address, but would like to see a specific reference to non-designated assets, (including historic settlements and landscapes). They welcome Sustainability Objective 14 and its associated Appraisal questions. However, would welcome an additional question "Raises awareness, understanding and appreciation of, and access to, the historic environment?".</p>	<p>With regards to the key sustainability issues, reference to non-designated assets has been added. In addition, with regards to SA objective 14, the appraisal question suggested has been added.</p>
	<p><b>Q6:</b> General advice on Sustainability Appraisal and the historic environment is set out in Historic England's Advice Note 8 "Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment": <a href="https://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/">https://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/</a>.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Member of the public Page 909</p>	<p><b>Q1:</b> This member of the public is concerned that the scope of the SA is not appropriate.</p>	<p>Noted. SA is a strategic process and the scope covers all relevant topics set out in the SEA Regulations.</p>
	<p><b>Q2:</b> This respondent states that 100,000 new homes will destroy the character of the towns and villages and they will not be able to cope with the expansion (33% in Cherwell).</p>	<p>Effects of the plan on the character of towns and villages will be assessed via SA objectives 14 and 15.</p>
	<p><b>Q3:</b> The baseline information is not suitable.</p>	<p>It is not clear why the respondent considers the baseline information unsuitable. SA is a strategic process and the scope covers all relevant topics set out in the SEA Regulations.</p>
	<p><b>Q4:</b> This respondent mentions again that 100,000 more homes will destroy the county.</p>	<p>See above.</p>
	<p><b>Q5:</b> The SA framework is not appropriate.</p>	<p>It is not clear why the respondent considers the SA framework unsuitable. SA is a strategic process and the scope covers all relevant topics set out in the SEA Regulations.</p>

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	<p><b>Q6:</b> This respondent believes this is pointless; the council has been bribed and have already decided to ruin the county.</p>	<p>The SA process has begun at an early stage of plan making so that it can influence the plan. It will be carried out in line with legal requirements and best practice.</p>
<p><b>Member of the Public</b></p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 910</p>	<p><b>Q1 and Q4:</b> This member of the public is concerned that this SA scoping report is not appropriate, because it does not take into account either Climate Policy Integration or Environmental Policy Integration as goals. Since (p.1), the SA is supposed to be 'an assessment process designed to identify and communicate the significant sustainability issues and effects of emerging plans and policies, including their reasonable alternatives,' then all policies likely to maintain a Climate Emergency within Oxfordshire needed to be identified and sound alternatives to them needed to be outlined.</p> <p>This respondent is concerned that the issue of resilience is missing from the SA. Apart from the possible impacts of the Climate Change crisis upon food supplies, there are also long term issues about the water, food and other physical resources the County is using and intends to use in future. Resilience can be considered to be about the capacity to withstand economic shocks, like 'hard Brexit' scenarios. In practical terms, the JSSP needs to consider – in each policy area – what capacity the County's statutory institutions and those they are in contact with, or in partnerships with, can contribute means and skills to assisting the County in carrying out both essential and desirable functions under conditions of environmental crisis.</p> <p>This respondent notes that we should deliver an Oxfordshire to future generations which is enhanced appreciably compared to its current ecological decline due to 'hyper-growth'. The SA must, and currently does not, take future generations into account.</p> <p>Other neglected issues: 'urban heat island effect'; issues of 2020 water shortages in Oxford-Swindon catchments; availability of skilled environmental officers in local government; availability of construction workers to make housing projections meaningful; no reference to PM2.5s. Consequently, SA is unfit for purpose.</p>	<p>The SA will assess all reasonable alternative options identified by the Council. Contribution to climate change will be assessed directly through SA objective 7, although SA objective 6 (reducing the need to travel) is also relevant. Climate change adaptation will mainly be assessed via SA objective 9 (water resource management) although SA objectives 2 (health and wellbeing), 10 (flooding) and 13 (biodiversity) also reference climate change in the appraisal questions. The SA will consider the likely effects of the plan against these and the other SA objectives.</p> <p>The SA will consider the issues of resilience and future generations within the scope of the plan. Consideration of what the county will look like in the future (in terms of sustainability) is a key purpose of the SA. The Scoping document presents the current background, whereas future SA reports will predict the likely effects of the plan.</p> <p>The baseline data has been updated to reflect these comments, where appropriate. Issues relating to water</p>

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Page 911		<p>stress/shortages are discussed in the 'water resources and water quality' section. PM2.5 is relevant to air quality. A note of the types of pollutants likely to arise from the local plan has been added.</p> <p>Many of the remaining suggestions are outside the scope of SA.</p>
	<p><b>Q2:</b> This member of the public has provided several links to additional climate related policies, such as, <a href="http://ipcc.ch/report/sr15/">http://ipcc.ch/report/sr15/</a>, to provide guidance on how to create effective climate action policies.</p>	<p>Please note that these policy sources have been reviewed and the relevant information has been added into the Climate Change section of Chapter 3, where appropriate</p>
	<p><b>Q3:</b> It is noted that the County Council group on congestion should be considering the respondent's report on Electronic Road Pricing for Oxford - already supplied to selected County councillors - to help reduce road traffic, parking demand, air pollution and congestion.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
	<p><b>Q5:</b> The SA framework is not appropriate until the issues under Q1 are covered, which would involve a full re-write and extensive Climate Policy Integration and Environmental Policy Integration.</p>	<p>See response to Q1. The role of SA is to consider the likely effects of the plan, and policy preparation (and therefore Climate Policy Integration and Environmental Policy Integration) is the role of the Council and matters beyond the Local Plan.</p>
	<p><b>Q6:</b> Comments on content:</p> <p><b>Section 1.5 2)</b> 'Whether there are any additional plans, policies or programmes that are relevant to the SA policy context that should be included.' See IPPC latest Climate Change report as mentioned above. See also Government advice on Sustainable Development which has not been taken into account adequately throughout this SA document.</p> <p><b>Section 1.7</b> The Government has attempted to define 'sustainable development' although it remains to be seen how clear and consistent its attempts may be. However, 'sustainable growth' as used in this section is not defined in Government policy</p>	<p>Relevant plans, policies and programmes have been added where appropriate. Reference to IPCC's latest Climate Change report has been added.</p> <p>Note that the role of the SA is to consider the likely sustainability effects of the local plan, including consideration of those</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 912	<p>since the sustainability of what is growing is not being assessed. So, there is an unresolved inherent conflict in Government between environmental policy, sustainability and the idea of growth. If growth involves the use of finite resources, it is not sustainable indefinitely. If growth involves undermining biodiversity, reducing land available for food and forestry and having harmful effects on public health through air pollution or noise, then none of this is sustainable. Sustainability and not conventional economic growth, or 'sustainable growth' should be a core priority and value in this SA, in order to meet references to sustainable development in the tests of soundness for Local Plans as a good way the SA itself might be tested, although this is not required. Quality of life will suffer if growth is pursued as if it were the only indicator worthy of significance. Suggestions included, as well as the UN Sustainable Development Goals, many other indicators are of value, such as air quality improvements year on year in all parts of the County, increased proportion of journeys made by bicycle, pedestrian priority, habitat restoration and more.</p> <p>Brexit will also be of concern and may mean a delay until 2021 in having a form of environmental agency to replace the roles created by EU legislation means that we are at risk of a hiatus in resources and enforcement for environmental policies.</p> <p><b>Section 2.2</b> of The Local Industrial Strategy referred to here has to sit within ecological and related human health and wellbeing considerations. It will not be sustainable or acceptable otherwise. The JSSP may not link to the so called 'Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Growth Corridor' since current economic conditions do not suggest conventional economic growth will be occurring in the foreseeable future.</p> <p><b>Section 2.3</b> The 100,000 homes target has been widely criticised and forensically destroyed by informed critics.</p>	<p>topics set out in the SEA regulations. The policies themselves and level of growth to be accommodated are determined by the Council.</p>
<b>Wild Oxfordshire</b>	<p><b>Q1:</b> Overall, Wild Oxfordshire believes the SA should reflect a strong ambition not just for environmental protection, but also environmental improvement. This will ensure compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states in paragraph 170 that 'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by...d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity...'. Paragraph 174 says that 'To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should: b)...identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity...'. As a minimum, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 should commit to a clear target (a minimum of 20% for net environmental gain).</p> <p><b>Q2:</b> In addition to what is included, they would expect to see the following included:</p>	<p>This is more relevant to the local plan itself, as the role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan against the SA objectives. The appraisal questions in Table 5.1 have been amended to further include consideration of enhancement.</p> <p>Oxfordshire State of Nature 2017 report, Conservation Target Areas, the Management plans for each AONB and</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 913	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Oxfordshire State of Nature 2017 report. Led by Wild Oxfordshire, this draws together a wealth of expertise from the county's professional and volunteer base in biodiversity and nature conservation, including our local authorities. It uses the best information available to establish a picture of the state of Oxfordshire's natural habitats and species, including long-term trends as well as more recent losses and gains. See: <a href="https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/stateofnature/reports/">https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/stateofnature/reports/</a></li> <li>■ Conservation Target Areas, which are the current spatial component of Oxfordshire's strategic approach to biodiversity. They are some of the most important areas for wildlife where targeted conservation action can secure the maximum biodiversity benefits. See: <a href="https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/biodiversity/conservation-target-areas/">https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/biodiversity/conservation-target-areas/</a></li> <li>■ All of Oxfordshire's Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty: Cotswolds, Chilterns, North Wessex Downs have up to date management plans. These should be included.</li> <li>■ Oxfordshire's historic landscape characterisation</li> </ul>	<p>Oxfordshire's Historic Landscape Characterisation are all now referenced in the SA Scoping Report.</p>
	<p><b>Q3:</b></p> <p>2. Wild Oxfordshire is disappointed not to see explicit reference to the Oxfordshire State of Nature 2017 report. This report draws together a wealth of expertise from the county's professional and volunteer base in biodiversity and nature conservation, including our local authorities. It uses the best information available to establish a picture of the state of Oxfordshire's natural habitats and species, including long-term trends as well as more recent losses and gains.</p> <p>We would be happy to liaise with those preparing the SA to discuss the report and its findings in more detail. Further info: <a href="https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/stateofnature/reports/">https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/stateofnature/reports/</a></p> <p>3. Likewise, they are also concerned that there is no explicit reference to Conservation Target Areas (CTAs) and would urge that these are included. <b>Figure 3.7:</b> Biodiversity and Geodiversity depicts Oxfordshire's NNRs, SACs, SSSIs and LNRs. These are effectively small, fragment islands that have been designated because they are special and vulnerable and there is nothing sustainable about that as they cannot survive indefinitely in isolation but need to be part of a wider network of habitats connected at a landscape scale. This allows populations to move, adapt to changing conditions locally and maintain genetic diversity. The Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS) (Blackwell &amp; Nikolakaki, 2004) which investigated the landscape character and biodiversity resource of the county was a precursor to the development of Oxfordshire's Conservation Target Areas (CTAs). The Government's own 25 year plan for the environment has pledged to develop a Nature Recovery Network to protect and restore wildlife, and provide</p>	<p>The Oxfordshire State of Nature 2017 report has been used as a reference to the Biodiversity and geodiversity section of Chapter 3. Specifically, within paragraph 3.137, which now references Conservation Target Areas.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 914	<p>opportunities to re-introduce species that we have lost from our countryside. In this case, Oxfordshire is ahead of the curve as Oxfordshire's CTAs are the spatial component of Oxfordshire's strategic approach to biodiversity (as referenced in the above report - Oxfordshire State of Nature 2017 report).</p> <p><b>Table 3.19:</b> Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire and likely evolution without the JSSP (Biodiv. &amp; Geodiv.) states that "on-going development, plus pollution and people pressure, produce on-going pressures that the JSSP can help to address at a strategic scale, seeking to safeguard and improve not only designated sites, but the ecological networks and supporting habitats that support them and their species". If properly funded the Conservation Target Area network would help deliver this. Wild Oxfordshire is the custodian of the CTA process and co-ordinates the CTA Leads group (incl. local authorities) which feeds into the Biodiversity Advisory Group. See: <a href="https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/biodiversity/conservation-target-areas/">https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/biodiversity/conservation-target-areas/</a></p> <p>Wild Oxfordshire believes consideration of CTAs should be an integral part of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and should be reflected in the SA. They would be happy to liaise with those preparing the SA to discuss this in more detail.</p>	
	<p><b>Q5:</b> They welcome the commitment to net gain in biodiversity, but it requires further clarification. It is essential that the mitigation hierarchy is applied so that, in the first instance, avoiding damage is a clear and transparent requirement. Wild Oxfordshire would ask that the appraisal clearly assesses if and how the Oxfordshire Plan will implement the government's commitment to "Embedding an 'environmental net gain' principle for development, including housing and infrastructure".</p>	<p>SA objective 13 contains appraisal question 'Achieve overall net gains in biodiversity and the environment?' which will be used when assessing each policy and site allocation for the Oxfordshire Plan.</p>
Member of the Public	<p><b>Q1:</b> This member of the public notes that the scope key points need to be here for general points to be understood.</p>	<p>We understand this to be a comment on the format of consultation, rather than the SA itself.</p>
	<p><b>Q2:</b> Again, it is noted that without the key points listed this is difficult to answer. There should be proposals to limit through traffic and car use by having electric power village, town and city network transport systems with centralised car parking to minimise traffic volumes and maximise walking and group transport network systems – this could include electric taxi system – chuc-chuc style for disabled and family commuting.</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 9 Member of the Public	<p><b>Q3:</b> Infrastructure planning must come before housing development.</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>
	<p><b>Q4:</b> Hedge and tree protection need bird and animal needs and population growth as principal objectives to direct what goes where across all aspects of development - from hedges for birds to under road path-tunnel systems that have existing study details to direct type and place for positioning.</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>
Member of the Public	<p><b>Q6:</b> My environmental colleagues in other Oxfordshire Districts may have made the following comment already – several of the numbers in <b>Table 3.9</b> on page 40 in the document are inaccurate. I would recommend that both this table and the accompanying text under 'Biodiversity and geodiversity' should be checked by the Thames Valley Records Centre.</p>	<p>On reviewing this comment, it seems the respondent is referring to Table 3.18, not 3.9. Updated accordingly.</p>
Sport England	<p><b>Q1:</b> In principle, Sports England believes it is.</p>	Noted.
	<p><b>Q2:</b> Please note that consideration must be given to emerging Local Authority Health Plans.</p>	Noted.
	<p><b>Q3:</b> It does as a starter for 10.</p>	Noted.
	<p><b>Q4:</b> Sport England feels that Table 2.2 Population, health and wellbeing consideration should be given to looking at county wide playing pitch strategies and built facility strategies.</p> <p>Economy - Work needs to be done on looking at new emerging economies/employment beyond traditional employment sectors. The acceptance of a greater home based work force and the implications on home design and the redefining of employment hubs.</p>	<p>With regards to Table 2.2, 'sports facilities' has been added to the Population, health and wellbeing table in addition to community facilities.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
	<b>Q5:</b> Sport England believes the SA framework is appropriate.	Noted.
<b>Wokingham Borough Council (Growth &amp; Delivery Team)</b>	<b>Q6:</b> They have no comments at this time, but welcome the opportunity to be kept informed as the plan progresses.	Noted.
<b>Member of the Public</b> Page 916	<b>Q1:</b> This member of the public suggests that the ‘scope’ of the SA is not the problem.  This respondent is concerned that the report refers at 1.5 to 1) Oxfordshire’s growth needs and development ambition. This is the first sign that the JSSP will not result in sustainable development and the implied need to reduce and eliminate carbon emissions, by presuming that there are ‘needs’ for Oxfordshire to ‘grow’. This ‘ambition’ cannot precede the work that will need to be put into the preparation of the JSSP to see what kind of growth could be made compatible with sustainable development (e.g. compliance with SDGs and achieving zero carbon).	This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.
	<b>Q2:</b> This respondent notes that the IPCC Report Oct 2018 on why and how global warming must be limited to 1.5 degrees. The SHMA Oct 2018 and ONS revised housing need figures should also be included. There are many reputable analyses of ‘sustainable growth’ that question whether this could be possible as being framed and proposed for the JSSP. The support for the Expressway is just one example of how evidence could be ignored.	The latest SHMA’s findings are within the Housing section of the SA Scoping Report. Please also note that the role of the SA is to assess the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.
	<b>Q3:</b> The baseline is suitable only if it is based on the need to limit global warming below 1.5 degrees and the understanding that places like Oxfordshire will have to make a disproportionate contribution to this effort and in the shortest possible time.	Climate change issues have been acknowledged throughout the baseline of the SA Scoping Report and will be assessed by SA objective 7.
	<b>Q4:</b> Apart from carbon neutral or negative housing (in construction and use) and the abandonment of any support for the Expressway, the international heritage importance and tourist potential of the former RAF Upper Heyford should be included.	Noted.
	<b>Q5:</b> The SA is not ‘appropriate’ in the evidence chosen/omitted and is not being treated in a meaningful way.	Noted.

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 917	<p><b>Q6:</b> Confirmation at 1.7 “The JSSP will provide an integrated strategic planning framework and evidence base to support sustainable growth across the county to 2050, including the planned delivery of new homes and economic development, and the anticipated supporting infrastructure needed.”, of the assumption that there is an existing model of ‘sustainable growth’. Given that new development (dwellings, workplaces and associated infrastructure are very carbon intensive; about 50% of emissions are embedded before occupation) the JSSP must start to investigate what is meant by genuine ‘sustainable growth’ before proposing 300,000 extra new houses and associated jobs and infrastructure.</p> <p>The commitment, “2.3 The JSSP ...to the Housing and Growth Deal to deliver up to 100,000 homes by 2031.”, should be re-examined in the light of the best evidence on the carbon emissions associated with urban development.</p> <p>The respondent also notes that ‘taking into account’ is not the same as ‘taking meaningful action’. The scale of urbanization being proposed implies a scale of carbon emissions that will be significantly above those implied by the IPCC Report Oct 2018. And supporting a new road to create a corridor with car dependent housing is inconsistent with reducing carbon from transport.</p> <p>This respondent would like to be kept up to date with the Oxfordshire Plan.</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>
Environment Agency	<p><b>Q1: Table 2.2:</b> Natural capital and environmental net gain should be highlighted here. They do not appear to be integrated within the proposed SA framework.</p> <p>Climate change is not an isolated topic and needs to be recognised as a key message integrated across topics, including resilience to climate change.</p> <p>Environment Agency is pleased that avoiding increase in flood risk is mentioned and that flood risk management is looking to the future, to take account of climate change, but the need to safeguard land for flood risk management should also be recognised and is key. Added to this natural flood management is highlighted as within the 25 year Environment Plan and should be acknowledged here as one of the key messages.</p> <p>There is a bullet point within the ‘land’ section relating to the use of previously development land but no mention of remediating contaminated land. A key message could be included to cover this point.</p>	<p>Table 2.2 has been updated in reference to climate change, natural capital, flood risk management and the remediation of contaminated land.</p> <p>In addition, the SA Scoping Report has drawn upon all up-to-date and readily available evidence in establishing the baseline. The SA Framework will be applied consistently to each policy and site allocation in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 918	<p><b>Q2:</b> The Defra 25 Year Environment Plan provides significant steer and emphasis for the environmental issues that will need to be considered in particular using natural flood management solutions, the natural capital approach and the need for environmental net gain. The plan is referenced within the Appendix which we welcome, but not in the body of the report. The Environment Agency believes that it is important for the SA of this plan to use the steer of the 25 year Environment Plan more evidently, as the JSSP has such a long time horizon.</p>	<p>Defra's 25 Year Environment Plan is now referenced within the main body of the report as well as the appendix.</p>
	<p><b>Q2: The Defra 25 Year Environment Plan provides significant steer and emphasis for the environmental issues that will need to be considered in particular using natural flood management solutions, the natural capital approach and the need for environmental net gain. The plan is referenced within the Appendix which we welcome, but not in the body of the report. The Environment Agency believes that it is important for the SA of this plan to use the steer of the 25 year Environment Plan more evidently, as the JSSP has such a long time horizon.</b></p> <p><b>Q3:</b></p> <p><u>Climate change</u></p> <p><b>Paragraph 3.59</b> does set the scene and acknowledges the need to address both mitigation and adaptation in terms of climate change. However, this section goes on to only cover carbon emissions which isolates this issue from all the other relevant issues relating to climate change. They accept that duplication of work and facts within the report is not wanted, but having acknowledged the issues in para 3.59 as a minimum there needs to be cross referencing to all the other issues which are linked to climate change, including resilience to climate change, even if they are considered in more detail under their own headings. This also then links into the issues that inform the framework.</p> <p><u>Water resources and water quality</u></p> <p><b>Paragraphs 3.62 to 3.65</b> provide a picture of the water resource and or water quality situation within Oxfordshire but it does not appear comprehensive. Some sources of information are referenced but others are not and there does not seem to be a complete picture for the County.</p> <p>Reference should be made to the Thames River Basin Management Plan (TRBMP) 2015 to 2021, which is under review at the moment in preparation for the TRBMP 2021 – 2027. This will help inform the water quality issues within the county and relates to the Water Framework Directive.</p>	<p>Clarification that climate change is a cross cutting issue that will affect all aspects of life has been added to Table 2.2. In addition, with regards to paragraphs 3.62 to 3.65, references to the Thames River Basin Management Plan and the Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies have been added. Please note that environmental capacity is highlighted within SA objective 9.</p> <p>The Flood Risk section of this comment relates largely to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 itself, rather than the SA Scoping Report.</p> <p>With regards to the section on 'soil', a paragraph has been inserted into the SA baseline for contaminated land.</p> <p>The importance of the River Thames as a blue infrastructure asset connecting wider species and habitats has been added.</p> <p>The heading of Figure 3.4 has been amended to make specific reference to flood risk zones 2 and 3.</p>

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Page 919	<p><b>Paragraph 3.62</b> acknowledges that the area is seriously water stressed. Reference should be made to the Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy (CAMS) for the area, please be aware that a new CAMS is in preparation for the Thames, anticipated publish date for April 2019.</p> <p>As part of the preparation for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 they expect a Water Cycle Study (or equivalent water evidence base) to be prepared to inform the decisions which are being made for the strategy for the County. This would usefully be informed by the Water Cycle Studies already carried out by the Districts, but they recommend that it is carried out as a new study with a consistent evidence base and methodology. Any WCS would need to cover the long time horizon for the JSSP. There is a need to plan ahead beyond the 25 years of the Thames Water, Water Resource Management Plan, using the projected levels of growth and the consequent implications for the environment.</p> <p>With regard to water quality there is no recognition of the need for environmental capacity to be assessed alongside the physical capacity of the waste water treatment facilities and networks. There is a misconception that if the waste water facilities have capacity or are upgraded then there is no impact on the environment. Again, a county wide Water Cycle Study will be needed to provide the evidence to demonstrate the impact of the growth strategy on water quality. This issue needs to be drawn out in the scoping report.</p> <p><u>Flood Risk</u></p> <p>In this section within <b>paragraphs 3.67 to 3.72</b> there is mention of flood risk and surface water flood risk/runoff. Flood risk from all sources needs to be used as the baseline and will need to be assessed as part of the evidence base for the plan. This includes fluvial flood risk, surface water flood risk, groundwater flood risk and flood risk from sewers. In terms of baseline information, a county wide Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) will be required. All the districts and the County Council have SFRA's which will provide a good starting point but will need to be updated where new hydraulic modelling is available, to account for climate change and bring it up to date with current planning policy.</p> <p>The NPPF makes it clear that current and future flood risk should be taken into account for plan making and that land for flood risk management should be safeguarded. In addition, the opportunities should be taken to reduce flood risk. This SA provides an opportunity to work on a County wide scale and to consider natural floodplain management and the options that may be available alongside or as part of any growth strategy. In this way the JSSP could contribute towards decreasing flood risk rather than increasing it.</p>	

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 920	<p>The Environment Agency does not agree with the statement made in Table 3.15 as the JSSP provides the vehicle to seek opportunities to steer development towards areas of lower risk of flooding, to emphasise the need to take a sequential approach to flood risk in terms of master-planning and site design and to take the opportunity to reduce flood risk overall.</p> <p><b>Figure 3.4</b> is entitled Water network and flood risk, with the source as the Environment Agency but it is unclear what flood risk this shows. It would be useful if the plan is accurately referenced to avoid confusion.</p> <p><u>Soils</u></p> <p>There is a section within the report on ‘soils’ but no section relating to ‘Land’. Therefore, there is no section relating to the remediation of contaminated land. With the current focus of development on previously developed land the opportunity should be promoted to remediated contaminated sites and bring them back into functional use, whilst ensuring pollution prevention. Baseline information on historic and active landfill sites as well as information from contaminated land registers would help inform this information.</p> <p><u>Biodiversity and Geodiversity</u></p> <p>They understand and support the need to acknowledge and protect designated sites but there should also be an acknowledgement of the wider biodiversity within Oxfordshire. It is recommended to include the River Thames and the river network for their role as river corridors and wildlife networks. This approach is supported by the NPPF which indicates that plans should safeguard components of wider ecological networks.</p> <p><u>Landscape and Townscape</u></p> <p><b>Paragraph 3.100</b> recognises the importance of the river and floodplain for the setting of Oxford however, the rivers within the county provide an important setting and for many of the towns within Oxfordshire. This attribute does not solely apply to Oxford but also to other riverside towns.</p>	
	<p><b>Q4:</b> They agree with the challenges of climate change as set out in <b>paragraph 4.8</b>.</p> <p>They are pleased that the tension between the provision of built infrastructure and green infrastructure has been acknowledged in <b>paragraph 4.20</b>, as this is important in sustainable place-making.</p> <p><b>Paragraph 4.23</b> summarises the key sustainability issues to be taken into account in progressing the JSSP and also the SA framework as it moves forward. They support the issues itemised relating to water resources, flood risk, biodiversity and</p>	<p>With regards to paragraph 4.23, the additional points that were raised have been added into the Scoping report.</p> <p>With regards to paragraph 4.25, highlighting the integration of the</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 921</p>	<p>reducing the contribution to climate change. However, they believe that other issues need to be itemised and relate to points already made above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ resilience to climate change, accepting that this applies across many of the issues already identified,</li> <li>■ when taking into account flood risk, future flood risk should be included as well as opportunities to reduce flood risk, natural floodplain management and safeguarding land for flood risk management.</li> <li>■ pressure on water resources is mentioned, which we support, but there is no acknowledgement of the pressure on water quality relating to waste water treatment and the environmental capacity of the systems.</li> <li>■ suggest that environmental net gain is also acknowledged as an issue as it should be addressed and used within the JSSP as an opportunity. The use of natural capital accounting can help with this.</li> </ul> <p>They support the point being made in <b>paragraph 4.25</b> but feel that there is also the opportunity to emphasise the benefits of working at this strategic scale to integrate the environment as an integral part of the growth strategy.</p>	<p>environment within the growth plan has been referenced.</p> <p>Relevant updates to the baseline information have been added to the SA Scoping Report.</p>
	<p><b>Q5:</b> There are a number of SA objectives and appraisal questions that are support but there are a few omissions or further clarity that we believe is required.</p> <p>Climate change resilience – they understand the need to avoid duplication and therefore support the consideration of this issue through the appraisal questions under many of the objectives indicating the need to take account of the impacts of climate change.</p> <p>Although biodiversity net gain is itemised and they support this, the need for environmental net gain is not specified. It may be that you consider it is covered through the aggregation of different objectives and appraisal questions but if this is the case there will need to be an outline of this and explain how the demonstration of environmental net gain will be achieved.</p> <p>Objective 9: They support this objective but suggest that appraisal question 2 is amended ‘Ensure there is sufficient waste water treatment capacity, both in physical and environmental terms, to accommodate the new development’. This links in with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and the need to demonstrate the environmental capacity of watercourse in relation to waste water treatment.</p>	<p>With regards to the SA objectives 9 and 13, they have been updated to reflect the suggestions mentioned here.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 922	<p><b>Q6:</b> The report identifies some of the key issues and opportunities relating to the natural environment, however they believe that there is an opportunity missed to fully integrate environmental issues with the social and economic factors at this strategic level for the whole of Oxfordshire. All new development needs to achieve environmental net gain; therefore this SA provides the framework to ensure this happens. The natural capital approach and the need to provide net environmental gain should be more evident throughout this framework and steer a more ambitious long-term plan for Oxfordshire. Resilience to climate change needs to be embedded in all new development, so that today's places and infrastructure are resilient to tomorrow's climate. This SA provides the opportunity to ensure that the plan is assessed within a framework that takes climate change resilience into account. The JSSP is an ideal opportunity to assess the options for the delivery of natural floodplain management as part of the infrastructure for the growth strategy; this needs to be considered within the SA framework. This also links with the natural capital approach. The remediation of contaminated land is not covered within the body of the report although it is mentioned within the SA framework in the appraisal questions. There are contamination/remediation issues which should be considered as part of the SA, where potential constraints and opportunities exist. For example, the opportunity to remediate previously contaminated sites and bring them back into functional use at a standard that is fit for purpose.</p>	<p>Remediation of contaminated land has been added to the section on Soil within Chapter 3.</p>
Natural England	<p><b>Q1:</b> It is noted that the Sustainability Appraisal will incorporate the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment, and will be informed by Habitats Regulations Assessment; this approach is welcomed. Natural England advises that this appraisal is aligned with any similar work available for the Oxfordshire-Cambridge Growth Arc.</p> <p>They also advise that consideration is given to Natural Capital and ecosystem services through the Sustainability Appraisal. The role of the planning system in recognising the wider benefits from natural capital is highlighted in paragraph 170 of the NPPF. Spatial planning at this scale is an ideal opportunity to assess the existing Natural Capital of the County (see para 171 of the NPPF), to plan to conserve those features providing key ecosystem services and address deficits. They suggest that Natural Capital accounting forms part of the evidence base for the JSSP, and also that the effects on Natural Capital are considered through the Sustainability Appraisal process.</p>	<p>With regards to natural capital, it has been added to Table 2.2.</p>
	<p><b>Q2:</b> It would appear that only international and national plans, policies and programmes have been considered in <b>Appendix 2</b>. They advise that there are a number of more local documents that provide relevant context to the Sustainability Appraisal. These include:</p>	<p>The relevant documents have been added to the appropriate sections of Chapter 3 of the SA Scoping Report.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 923	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Oxfordshire Conservation Target Areas</li> <li>■ Oxfordshire State of Nature 2017</li> <li>■ Oxfordshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan</li> <li>■ Management plans for the Cotswolds, North Wessex Downs and Chilterns AONBs.</li> <li>■ Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study</li> <li>■ South and Vale Green infrastructure strategy</li> <li>■ River basin management plans</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Q3:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Air Quality: Natural England advises that exceedance of limits for the natural environment are considered alongside those for human health. Information on this is available from <a href="http://www.apis.ac.uk/">http://www.apis.ac.uk/</a></li> <li>■ Water resources and water quality: they advise that consideration is given to impacts on water dependant habitats, as well as watercourses.</li> <li>■ Biodiversity and Geodiversity: they support the case that the JSSP presents an opportunity for a strategic approach to be taken to solutions to pressures on designated sites, and for planning ecological networks in line with the 25 year Environment Plan, and would welcome such an approach.</li> <li>■ Landscape – as suggested in <b>Table 3.22</b>, the JSSP does offer a further opportunity to ensure that the character and quality of the landscape character is taken into account, in particular we advise that it provides the opportunity to look more strategically at alternative sites in terms of landscape impacts and to plan strategically for landscape improvements</li> </ul> <p>As recognised in the document, Natural England advises that the environmental sensitivity mapping in <b>Figure 3.12</b> is applied with some caution. They also advise that opportunity mapping work for natural capital and habitat networks is undertaken to inform the plan and Sustainability Appraisal</p>	<p>With regards to Table 3.22, Natural England’s suggestion has been added and the additional comments have been noted.</p> <p>Please note that Figure 3.12 illustrating Oxfordshire’s environmental sensitivity in 2016 has been removed in light of the more recent environmental evidence and data set out in other sections of the SA Scoping Report Baseline.</p>
	<p><b>Q4:</b> As already mentioned, they advise that Natural Capital is considered by the Sustainability Appraisal, supported by baseline and opportunity mapping. As highlighted in the scoping report, the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy recognised</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 924	<p>the importance of addressing Green Infrastructure through the JSSP. They consider that Green Infrastructure and Natural Capital are closely linked and that the Sustainability Appraisal should consider the ability of the plans' policies to deliver both.</p> <p><b>Q5:</b> Natural England welcomes that the Framework includes objectives to conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity, and gives consideration as to whether biodiversity net gains and ecological connectivity is achieved. They also welcome the objectives to protect Oxfordshire's soils and to protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality.</p> <p>However, they suggest that an additional objective could address Natural Capital; such an objective might be "to conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's natural capital and ecosystem services". As a cross-cutting issue natural capital could also be considered under several of the other objectives, for example:</p> <p><b>To sustain and create vibrant Oxfordshire communities:</b> this section could include reference to green infrastructure in its final question: "Ensure that new development is fully supported by appropriate green infrastructure, community, transport and utilities infrastructure and services?"</p> <p><b>To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy:</b> the natural environment could also be incorporated under this section, for example: "Provide for the types of homes, cultural attractions and natural environment that will attract and retain global talent?"</p> <p><b>To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change:</b> they suggest that this objective also addresses adaptation to climate change and includes a question on whether the plan provides for eco-system services that are resilient to climate change. Also, consideration could be given to whether the plan recognises the role of eco-systems and soils in carbon sequestration.</p> <p><b>To minimise air, noise and light pollution in Oxfordshire:</b> a question could be included on whether the plan provides for natural air quality improvements and noise absorption through strategic planning of green infrastructure.</p> <p><b>To maintain and improve the quality of Oxfordshire's watercourses and achieve sustainable water resource management.</b> They advise that the final question includes water dependant habitats as well as watercourses. A question could be included here to look at whether the plan promotes the use of natural wetlands to improve water quality through water filtration.</p>	<p>With regards to the additional appraisal questions for several objectives, they have been added to the relevant objective. In addition, natural capital has been incorporated within the relevant SA objectives.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
	<p><b>To reduce the risk from all sources of flooding in Oxfordshire</b> a question could be included here to address whether the plan promotes the use Natural Flood Management techniques.</p>	
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 925</p> <p>Member of the Public</p>	<p><b>Q1:</b> In general, the scale and likely impact of existing growth plans needs more open discussion. What mechanisms will there be for a fundamental reconsideration of the scale of growth and the objectives for the strategy? This is not clear in this document, or in other information emerging from the Growth Board. For example, many district housing plans are based on unsustainable ONS 2014 figures, which have radically changed in the Oct 2018 report. Whose needs take priority and who will make that judgement?</p> <p>There is a risk that the SA scope will not match the Plan owing to time constraints and mismatches.</p> <p>There are key omissions and limitations in the scoping and statement of common ground documents for the JSSP, for example the 25 year Environment Plan; commitments to the rural and agri-economy; heritage and cultural capital; Energy; Natural Environment and 'Healthy Place-Shaping'.</p> <p><b>Climate Change/Carbon Emissions</b> - For the sake of all our futures this Scoping Report needs to be drastically restructured. Tackling the threat of climate change should be the central goal for this Plan and the Sustainability Appraisal must lead work towards that goal. The carbon emissions from hundreds of new Oxford commuters could not be worse for climate change. City worker's houses need to be built within the city environs as close to the workplaces as possible.</p> <p><b>Table 2.2</b> Transport - the purpose of the JSSP was to ensure an integrated strategic spatial plan. The update of the Local Transport Plan should not have been separated from this process and would urge that this decision is re-considered</p>	<p>The 25 Year Environment Plan is referenced within Appendix 2 and within the Climate Change section of the main body of the report.</p> <p>The issue of climate change has now been integrated more throughout the SA report.</p> <p>The Local Transport Plan is featured in paragraph 2.9. The SA will be working in tandem with the Local Transport Plan and the other Oxfordshire local plans.</p>
	<p><b>Q2:</b></p> <p>25 Year Environment Plan</p> <p>DEFRA Biodiversity Metrics</p> <p>Wild Oxfordshire's 'Oxfordshire State of Nature Report'</p>	<p>Noted. Defra's 25 Year Environment Plan and Wild Oxfordshire's 'Oxfordshire State of Nature Report' is now referenced within the main body of the report. Defra's 25 Year Environment Plan is also within Appendix 2.</p>
	<p><b>Q3:</b> The document focuses on mapping a static picture of the current situation rather than detailing current trends and rates of change. In this case, foreseeing the effects of the JSSP so far ahead is particularly challenging.</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 926	<p><b>Para 3.8</b> - "improving the connectivity on this corridor, through East-West Rail and the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway projects, is a key ambition for Oxfordshire". Completely opposed to the Expressway since it would add exponentially more carbon emissions; but in favour of a fast railway link which would be quicker and greener!</p> <p><b>Transport</b> - The Local Transport Plan (LTP) and JSSP are de-coupled and therefore not reliant on one another. The capacity for joined up thinking is therefore at risk.</p> <p><b>Climate Change</b> - The Stern Review 2006 'The Economics of Climate Change' "This Review assessed a wide range of evidence on the impacts of climate change and on the economic costs, and used a number of different techniques to assess costs and risks. From all of these perspectives, the evidence gathered by the Review leads to a simple conclusion: the benefits of strong and early action far outweigh the economic costs of not acting."</p> <p>Concern about the side effects of Renewable Energy generation has to be weighed against the prospect of human extinction if we do not end fossil fuel use now.</p> <p><b>Water resource/Flooding/Soils/Biodiversity/Geodiversity</b> All need to reference the 25 Year Environment Plan.</p> <p>The scale of growth must work alongside the finances available to protect resources it relies on for the future, to meet its national and international commitments, and to provide sufficient infrastructure investments in a timely manner to support communities and the local economy. If more development is planned than money available, then the implications for sustainability by that growth should be clearly and explicitly demonstrated in the SA report.</p>	<p>programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p> <p>DEFRA's 25 Year Environment Plan is now referenced within the section on climate change within the SA Scoping Report.</p>
	<p><b>Q5:</b> Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) regulations require a picture of actual change and what measures will be required to minimise or offset harmful effects or maximise benefits. To achieve this, the baseline information must record trends and rates of change, not just the static picture. In addition, there should be consideration of the cumulative and interactive impacts and it is not currently clear how this is being achieved. For example, there are clear links between biodiversity, water, soil quality and archaeology.</p> <p><b>Needed additions:</b></p> <p>There should be an explicit commitment to respect the rate and capacity of a community to grow without damaging social cohesion, and also for respect for the character, culture and ethos of a community.</p>	<p>Please note that consideration of cumulative impacts will be addressed later on in the SA process.</p> <p>With regards to the needed additions, it should be noted that it relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 927	<p>Ensure that new development is fully supported by appropriate and timely community, transport and utilities infrastructure and services.</p> <p>The issues of through traffic and the proposed Expressway are not referred to here and should be.</p> <p>The promotion of use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) must be coupled with assessment, policy and investment in long term maintenance and enforcement of such.</p> <p>Ensure biodiversity outside of designated sites is also considered a priority and its intrinsic and other value is understood and protected in decision making at all levels.</p> <p>The character and distinctiveness of Oxfordshire's settlements needs to encompass not only the visual, but also the social and cultural aspects.</p>	
	<p><b>Q6:</b> The need for debate about whether growth over and above that required to continue on the current organic growth path, high employment levels and net contribution to the treasury (as already enjoyed by Oxfordshire) is appropriate given any additional stress to resources.</p>	Noted.
Buckinghamshire County Council	No comment.	Noted.
BBOWT	<p><b>Q1:</b> BBOWT's focus is on the ecological aspects of the JSSP. They recognise that the role of the JSSP is to help meet and manage Oxfordshire's growth needs and development ambition. They believe that it should be similarly ambitious in seeking environmental improvements in Oxfordshire. The JSSP should provide an opportunity to safeguard and improve not only designated sites, but the ecological networks and habitats to support wildlife across Oxfordshire.</p> <p>They would like to see a minimum target of 20% increase in biodiversity units post-development compared with pre-development, measured using the Defra Biodiversity Metric, consistent with the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan for net environmental gain from development, though at present there is not an agreed way of measuring this, only net biodiversity gain using the Defra Biodiversity Metric. The NPPF 2018 paragraph 170 states that "Planning polices and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by... minimising impacts on and providing net</p>	Noted. With regards to the points relating to net gain for biodiversity, this relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, rather than the SA Scoping Report. In regard to the comments relating to the Review of Environmental Sensitivity, please note that Figure 3.12 illustrating Oxfordshire's environmental sensitivity in 2016 has been removed in light of the more recent environmental evidence and data set out in other sections of the SA Scoping Report Baseline.

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 928	<p>gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures".</p> <p>The Sustainability Appraisal refers to LUC's 2016 'Review of Environmental Sensitivity in Oxfordshire' which created a series of maps to illustrate by environmental theme (including biodiversity and geodiversity assets, and community and greenspace assets) how susceptible land was to change across Oxfordshire. They believe that this study should be developed further to identify opportunities for habitat connectivity, a Nature Recovery Network Map, so that these might be delivered through development over the life of the JSSP so that net gains in biodiversity really are delivered at scale and in the right place.</p> <p>The following key terms should be fleshed out. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Net gain for biodiversity: Delivering more or better habitats for biodiversity and demonstrating this measurable gain through use of the Defra biodiversity metric.</li> <li>■ Natural capital: The elements of nature that directly or indirectly produce value to people, including ecosystems, species, freshwater, land, minerals, the air and oceans, as well as natural processes and functions.</li> <li>■ Ecosystem services: The services provided by natural capital, such as pollination, biomass, flood management, clean air, carbon sequestration, that lead to benefits to society</li> <li>■ Mitigation hierarchy: The principle that environmental harm resulting from a development should be avoided (through locating development where there will be less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for.</li> <li>■ Offsetting: The creation or enhancement of wildlife habitat to compensate for loss or degradation elsewhere.</li> <li>■ Nature Recovery Network: An expanding and increasingly connected network of wildlife-rich habitat, designed to stimulate the recovery of wildlife and support the delivery of other economic and social benefits, such as water quality improvement or flood attenuation.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Q2:</b> BBOWT previously commented on the 2016 Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy. At that time they highlighted the need for a county-wide Green Infrastructure Strategy for Oxfordshire and the importance of highlighting the links between Green Infrastructure and climate change, health and the economy, not just nature conservation and recreation. BBOWT also noted that local wildlife sites were insufficiently recognised at a local level. They noted that Oxfordshire would benefit from a Natural</p>	<p>Noted. Conservation Target Areas are now referenced within the Biodiversity section of the Scoping Report.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 929	<p>Capital Investment Plan, which could sit alongside the Nature Recovery Network map and identify the areas within Oxfordshire where investment in enhancing Oxfordshire's Natural Capital could protect and enhance the ecosystem services on which we depend. Also, work done previously to identify Conservation Target Areas should be included. These are the spatial representation of Oxfordshire's strategic approach to Biodiversity.</p>	
	<p><b>Q3:</b> They would like to see Conservation Target Areas included in the baseline information for the SA.</p> <p>It is not clear whether LUC's 2016 'Review of Environmental Sensitivity in Oxfordshire' is formally part of the baseline information. The maps in it and datasets which they are based on should form part of the evidence base. They note that the maps are more extensive than the features listed in <b>paragraphs 3.87-3.91</b> of the SA Scoping Report.</p> <p>As mentioned above, they would like to see a Nature Recovery Network map developed to highlight where habitat should be created to improve ecological connectivity.</p> <p>Baseline information should be regularly reviewed and updated so that it can be relied upon. Up-to-date quality data is available from the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (<a href="http://www.tverc.org/cms/">http://www.tverc.org/cms/</a>).</p> <p>'The State of Nature in Oxfordshire 2017' (<a href="https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/stateofnature/">https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/stateofnature/</a>) provides additional information that should be included in the baseline information.</p>	<p>Conservation Target Areas are now referenced within the Biodiversity section of the Scoping Report. In addition, with regards to the State of Nature in Oxfordshire 2017, it has now been included.</p> <p>Figure 3.12 illustrating Oxfordshire's environmental sensitivity in 2016 has been removed in light of the more recent environmental evidence and data set out in other sections of the SA Scoping Report Baseline.</p> <p>It should be noted that the baseline information will be updated at every stage of the SA process.</p>
	<p><b>Q4:</b> They welcome the commitment to net gain in biodiversity but, as outlined above, it needs to be clearly defined and specified and a target set. They believe that the JSSP should be accompanied by a Natural Capital Investment Plan that would identify the impacts of JSSP proposals, opportunities for mitigation and investment so that Oxfordshire's natural capital and its role in providing ecosystem services is taken into account in decision-making. This Natural Capital Investment Plan would be supported by a Nature Recovery Network map (as outlined in our response to Q3).</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
	<p><b>Q5:</b> There is a clear objective (no. 13) to conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity with sub objectives. They make the following comments regarding SA objective 13.</p> <p>They welcome the recognition of designated and non-designated natural habitats and biodiversity, that the condition of designated sites must be maintained, and recognition of the indirect impacts of development on biodiversity assets: noise,</p>	<p>Please note that biodiversity net gain has been added to paragraph 4.23. In addition, information regarding priority and irreplaceable habitats have been</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 930	<p>vibration, light pollution, air pollution and increased visitor numbers. However, they would argue that sites in unfavourable recovering condition should continue to improve. The SA summarises designated sites in <b>Table 3.18</b> does not cover Priority Habitats or Irreplaceable Habitats (e.g. Ancient Woodland). The value of Local Wildlife Sites must be recognised in all areas of Oxfordshire if net gain is to be achieved, so that they are protected to the same level as SSSIs. If the value of Local Sites isn't adequately recognised, then there is a danger that these sites will continue to be damaged and lost. It is noted that Local Wildlife Sites are afforded policy protection in Local Plans but want to ensure they are actually protected in practice through the decisions taken.</p> <p>The impact of Brexit on regulatory regimes and environmental standards is uncertain.</p> <p>They support that the JSSP 'can seek to safeguard and improve not only designated sites, but the ecological networks and supporting habitats that support them and their species'. The work done in LUC's 2016 'Review of Environmental Sensitivity in Oxfordshire' to create a series of maps to illustrate by environmental theme (including biodiversity and geodiversity assets, and community and greenspace assets) how susceptible land was to change across Oxfordshire is welcomed. The map combining all the themes highlights the challenge in delivering large-scale growth in Oxfordshire in an environmentally sustainable way.</p> <p>The use of the Environmental Sensitivity Maps are supported and a good start but the maps of biodiversity and geodiversity assets and community and greenspace assets need to be further developed into a Nature Recovery Map for Oxfordshire. This will provide certainty and cost savings for developers and enable decisions to be based on high quality, robust spatial information, backed by clear and consistent policy processes to help to help developers before they submit their planning applications. This allows biodiversity impacts to be considered at the earliest possible stage and the mitigation hierarchy (covered below) to be applied properly, avoiding damage to important sites and species and reducing costly delays. These maps would help developers to understand the potential level of risk and impact resulting from their proposed development, before committing resources on up-to-date surveys to support a planning application. These maps could also identify the contribution, in terms of habitat-type, that development sites could make.</p> <p><b>Achieve net gains in biodiversity</b></p> <p>Support the commitment to net gain in biodiversity, but there should be clarification as to what this actually means as mentioned in Q1.</p>	<p>added to the Biodiversity section of Chapter 3 of the SA Scoping Report.</p> <p>With regards to Figure 3.12 illustrating Oxfordshire's environmental sensitivity in 2016, please note that it has been removed in light of the more recent environmental evidence and data set out in other sections of the SA Scoping Report Baseline.</p>

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Page 931	<p>A mandatory approach for net gain should be underpinned by a standard metric for measuring the impact of development on biodiversity. They recommend using the Defra metric, or a locally agreed metric derived from the DEFRA metric, as an agreed and standard metric to assist with delivery of real, measurable, transparent and objective net gain. The net gain commitment must apply to all development, including commercial and academic development as well as infrastructure; otherwise an overall net gain in biodiversity will never be achieved. The Oxford-Milton Keynes – Cambridge Growth Corridor is proposing 'net gain' but there are no further details yet.</p> <p>Concerned that the key sustainability issues list (4.23) does not refer to the need for biodiversity net gain to be mandated to halt biodiversity loss, a Biodiversity 2020 goal.</p>	
	<p><b>Q6:</b> SA Objective 11 (To protect Oxfordshire's soils and ensure efficient use of land') refers to supporting brownfield development ahead of greenfield development. A significant number of brownfield sites have high levels of biodiversity value and or features of interest, especially early-successional species on what are often under-surveyed sites. Some brownfield sites also have value as buffers to designated sites, connecting habitat and providing access to nature. This should not be overlooked in any assessment of their value. There is no reference to overheating or microclimate or urban heat island effect in the Climate change section (S3.59-3.61). This can affect habitats and wildlife. There is no reference in the Water resources and water quality section (S3.62-3.66) to Thames Water's proposed new reservoir near Abingdon. There is no reference to Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in the Flood risk section (S3.67-3.72) The SA refers to several areas where further information will be provided in later stages of the SA process, e.g. biodiversity, fauna, flora. They look forward to seeing this in due course. Habitat Regulations Assessment will be required. This should be done at a time where it can usefully inform the JSSP as it develops.</p>	<p>With regards to SuDS, paragraph 3.109 refers to the incorporation of SuDS into new development.</p> <p>With regards to climate change, urban heat island has now been referenced in paragraph 3.90.</p> <p>With regards to water resources, the South East Strategic Reservoir is now referenced in paragraph 3.100.</p> <p>Please note that a separate HRA is being completed alongside the local plan, and will be used to inform the SA as relevant.</p>
CPRE Oxfordshire	<p><b>Q1:</b> CPRE Oxfordshire believes that there is a failure to acknowledge or discuss in any detail the ambitious growth proposals underlying the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, and the fact that to a certain extent it is a self-justifying proposal – in other words the Plan needs to exist to mitigate its own effects.</p> <p>The Scoping Document should be revised to include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A vision that reflects a strong ambition not just for environmental protection, but also environmental improvement.</li> </ol>	<p>Please note that consideration of cumulative impacts will be addressed later on in the SA process.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 932</p>	<p>2. 2Meaningful information about current trends and rates of change, not just static information (an approach far more closely aligned with what the SEA regulations require).</p> <p>3. Appropriate analysis of the interactions between different SEA environmental topics and the indirect and cumulative issues arising.</p> <p>4. Clarity on the context in which objectives are being assessed – where does the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 sit in relation to other projects that may be 'imposed' (such as the Ox-Cam expressway) and whose needs take priority (existing v future Oxfordshire residents? Oxfordshire needs v needs of UK as a whole?)</p> <p>Pre-existing local and strategic plans severely restrict the ability of the SA/SEA to ensure that the different effects on the environment of different options can be positively considered in drawing up options. The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is being drawn up reflecting and implementing local, minerals, waste and transport plans that are already adopted or well advanced, together with a Strategic Economic Plan that has not been subject either to SEA or public examination. In terms of alternative approaches to development, this means the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is highly constrained and for the first 15-20 years is not proactively shaping development planning.</p> <p>Whilst the Sustainability Appraisal process is a largely paper exercise to make sure that procedures are in place to balance economic, social and environmental objectives, Strategic Environmental Assessment is far more concerned with predicting real-world environmental change likely to arise from the scale, character and broad location of proposed development. In this case, foreseeing the effects of the JSSP so far ahead is particularly challenging. The emphasis should therefore be on the iterative process, taking historical trends and the likely speed of their acceleration in the context of a step-change in the scale and extent of development, in order to start to define real objectives.</p> <p>As it stands, they are concerned that the proposed scope is inadequate for the scale and timeframe of the proposed Oxfordshire Plan 2050.</p>	
	<p><b>Q2:</b> The SA report will need to be much clearer about the legal status of the Plan, what weight it will carry and how it will influence decision-making under other plans (for example, in decisions relating to the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway and growth corridor). The coverage of environmental protection objectives is weak, focussing on local plans, but with no mention of relevant environmental guidelines, or the over-arching framework set by international treaties, UK statutes and regulations, national sectoral policy and sub-regional sectoral policies and plans.</p>	<p>Please note that national and international policies, programmes and plans are included within Appendix 2.</p> <p>With regards to Table 2.2, the phrase 'where possible' has been erased.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 933	<p>For example, omissions include:</p> <p><u>Environmental guidelines relevant to Oxfordshire &amp; its Districts</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Landscape character assessments of the County, each District and each AONB and associated strategies and guidelines</li> <li>- District design guidance</li> <li>- Oxfordshire's historic landscape characterisation</li> <li>- Oxford City Council's heritage plan</li> <li>- Archaeological research agendas (Solent, Thames and Oxford City)</li> <li>- Oxfordshire biodiversity action plans</li> </ul> <p><u>Planning Frameworks (some statutory)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regional and local health planning</li> <li>- Thames Water and river Catchment Management Plans</li> <li>- AONB Management Plans (Cotswolds, Chilterns, North Wessex Downs)</li> </ul> <p><u>Legislation that includes environmental objectives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CROW Act</li> <li>- Listed Buildings &amp; Conservation Areas Act and other heritage legislation</li> <li>- Environment Protection Act</li> <li>- Environment (Principles and Governance) Bill International conventions</li> <li>- UNESCO: World Heritage - Council of Europe: Florence, Valetta, Granada.</li> </ul>	

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 934	<p><b>Paras 2.1.3-2.1.5</b> - reference should be made to the statutory legal duties and obligations that underpin these environmental objectives. These are far more binding than 'the environmental, social and economic objectives contained within international and national policies, plans and strategies' referred to which are themselves shaped by such statutory requirements. The primary reference here should be to the relevant statutory duties (e.g., CROW Act, NERC Act, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act and other Heritage legislation).</p> <p><b>Table 2.2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Land – should include 'Preserve the openness and permanence of the Green Belt' (in line with national policy)</li> <li>- 'Where possible, safeguard historic assets including their setting' falls a very long way short of statutory duties and NPPF to have special regard to and give great weight to preserving designated heritage assets and their settings. The phrase 'where possible' and complete absence of any reference to designations is seriously misleading and clearly undermines the statutory importance of safeguarding historic environment. There is no mention of historic landscape character.</li> </ul> <p><b>Appendix 2</b> also omits key statutory provisions and duties, notably the complete absence of any reference to heritage legislation and designations and the statutory duties that apply to listed buildings and conservation areas; also with regard to landscape, the absence of any reference to the CROW Act and the duties to conserve and enhance natural beauty; and for biodiversity the absence of the existing duties to enhance as well as conserve biodiversity and the draft legislation designed to strengthen these duties.</p> <p>Overall, these omissions mean that the environmental objectives have not as yet been sufficiently well defined to be consistent with the overall framework within which the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 must operate.</p> <p><b>Q3:</b> To understand the likely effects of the Plan, it is essential to apply the experience of actual past change as a key part of the baseline within an ever-changing scenario. Concerned about the static approach taken: the 'current state of the environment' can only mean the current trends in environmental change, not static lists of environmental resources and designations.</p> <p><b>Para 3.3:</b> Scoping out topics 'because the location of development will not affect those issues' is both unsubstantiated and fraught with danger given that significant cumulative or indirect consequences may well arise. There is no evidence at all that the potential for such effects has been considered.</p>	<p>Please note that additional information has been added to Chapter 3 of the SA Scoping Report based on the comments relating to specific paragraphs where available, with special regard for current and future trends.</p> <p>In regard to scoping out topics from the SA, waste has been scoped out since it is</p>

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Page 935	<p><b>Para 3.5</b> - Covering the whole county as if equally affected manifestly distorts the assessment and is bound to result in a substantial under-representation of the significance of effects. It also badly distorts the baseline information, by implication treating the environment as changing uniformly whereas that is far from true. The SA will need to consider which areas are likely to change most and hence where environmental effects are likely to be most significant. This also reinforces the point made above about why the baseline information waste must be trend-based. Without addressing these issues, the baseline information will be inadequate to support any realistic assessment of the effects of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.</p> <p><b>Para 3.8</b> states that "improving the connectivity on this corridor, through East-West Rail and the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway projects, is a key ambition for Oxfordshire". However, the opinion of the people in Oxfordshire is not yet sought on this; the vision and benefits are not yet defined or proven.</p> <p><b>Paras 3.9-3.14</b> Population issues - The pressure of growth is not evenly spread across the county or districts as the tabulation and lack of detail might be taken to imply.</p> <p><b>Para 3.19</b> claims that 'New development near to deprived neighbourhoods can help to stimulate regeneration in those areas.' They note that the opposite statement could also be true, for example loss of accessible green space could exacerbate environmental issues and have a negative impact on health and wellbeing .</p> <p><b>Para 3.20</b> – the truly remarkable Oxford centric nature of this paragraph is concerning and sets the tone for relegation of more rural parts of the county, and the rural economy, to second place in both the OxPlan and any sustainability assessment.</p> <p><b>Table 3.3</b> – Key sustainability issues in relation to population:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– This should clearly make reference to the environmental implications arising from increased development/population growth. - Economic growth may reduce inequalities, but it may also increase them. 'The JSSP provides an opportunity to reduce car use' – only in terms of marginal limits on the overall dramatic increase implied by the growth strategy as a whole.</li> </ul> <p><b>Paras 3.25-3.54</b> – as with population above, concerns about the sections on housing, employment and transport, all of which fail to acknowledge that implications may not be equally felt across the county and that there are significant environmental implications arising from increased development.</p> <p><b>Table 3.6</b> – Key sustainability issues for housing:</p>	<p>dealt with under the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Plan and the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 will provide sustainable construction and design opportunities which is considered under SA objective 7.</p> <p>Please note that Figure 3.12 illustrating Oxfordshire's environmental sensitivity in 2016 has been removed in light of the more recent environmental evidence and data set out in other sections of the SA Scoping Report Baseline.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 936	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The additional scale of demand arises from growth targets, on top of Objectively Assessed Need, and is being imposed through the Growth Deal</li> <li>– This is the only factor that is likely to prevent local authorities keeping pace with demand.</li> <li>– The statement that house prices will continue to rise without the JSSP needs to have appropriate supporting commentary if it is to be considered seriously. Conversely, the statement implies that with the JSSP, house prices will fall. This is vanishingly unlikely given that developers are only incentivised to build at a rate that maintains their margins and that on any given day, the market is set by existing housing stock rather than new-builds.</li> </ul> <p><b>Table 3.7 – Key sustainability issues for Economy &amp; Employment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The sustainability of the current job market in Oxon seems to be quite robust. The impact on other areas of the UK from investment in Oxon/the JSSP is not explored. Attracting people to the area is not going to help sustainability in other parts of the country and could provide a localised "brain drain", further depressing some regions/making them less attractive for investment.</li> <li>– Specific opportunities for low and unskilled workers needs to be recognised. Should reference the rural and agri-economy, especially in the context of the 25 Year Environment Plan, new agri-environment schemes and post Brexit.</li> <li>– The statement that the "JSSP provides the opportunity to focus planning and investment on key economic sectors and strategic corridors and locations, supported by sufficient infrastructure to provide the conditions to make Oxfordshire's economy competitive" raises a number of questions. Who are we competing with and will sectors or areas that are less key or relevant to priority growth areas be omitted from investment, thereby increasing an economic and social gap between areas in Oxfordshire or between Oxfordshire and elsewhere in the UK?</li> </ul> <p><b>Paras 3.55-3.58 – Air quality –</b> Table 3.10 should make it clear what the current trend is (improving or worsening).</p> <p><b>Paras 3.59-3.61 – Climate change –</b> Table 3.12 should make it clear what the current trend is (improving or worsening).</p> <p><b>Paras 3.62-3.66 – Water –</b> This one issue alone is significant in any appraisal of the long-term sustainability of large scale growth ambitions for the county and brings into question the focus on growth on this one highly stressed area. There is no indication of whether water quality is getting better or worse, or why, nor the projected rate of growth in demand for water (not just in Oxfordshire but in other areas supplied by Oxfordshire resources). While increasing need to treat waste water is</p>	

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Page 937	<p>mentioned, there is no indication of either the projected capacity of existing infrastructure to cope with increasing demand up to 2050, or alternative means of addressing the problem though already proven water recycling methods which could greatly relieve environmental impacts.</p> <p><b>Paras 3.67-3.72</b> - Flood risk – this section should include evidence about how much development has been occurring in flood-risk areas; what additional run-off is already being experienced from new development; the nature of such development (housing roads, minerals etc) which have very different implications; and whether land is allocated for future development in flood risk areas. <b>Figure 3.4</b> makes no attempt to show flood risk relative to the pressures of development, and there is thus no indication of actual locations where problems are most likely to arise. This section on flood risk therefore currently falls short of the baseline needed to meet SEA requirements properly.</p> <p><b>Paras 3.73-3.77</b> – Soils – information is required on the current rate of loss of agricultural land to development, what proportion of this is best and most versatile and whether the rate is increasing or slowing down, and how that trend is due to change because of existing development allocations and projections. The cumulative effect of existing plans has never been calculated but is clearly ascertainable in reasonably accurate terms from the totality of all different land allocated/safeguarded or implied from projected demand. The baseline evidence for the environmental effects related to soils and best agricultural land is thus inadequate to meet SEA requirements.</p> <p><b>Paras 3.78-3.86</b> – Minerals - This section concerns only the need to ensure an adequate supply and not to sterilise important mineral resources through other forms of development. It says nothing about how far Oxfordshire minerals are underpinning development outside the County or the many environmental effects of mineral extraction, including cumulative and indirect effects on landscape, biodiversity, archaeology, historic landscape character, heritage settings, water and a further raft of effects indirectly arising from needs to provide adequate transport links. An absolutely crucial consideration for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is how far and at what stage new areas for mineral extraction need to be opened, with all the consequential implications for new infrastructure as well as major direct land take, introducing serious environmental effects for the first time to hitherto relatively unspoilt landscape and still coherent archaeological landscapes. A further major issue not considered is how far the demand for non-renewable natural mineral resources can be reduced in favour of better, more sophisticated recycling of aggregates, both within the county and beyond. This baseline evidence is currently inadequate to address the environmental impacts of mineral exploitation, falling a long way short of SEA requirements.</p> <p><b>Paras 3.87-3.89</b> – Biodiversity – this section requires evidence of past and current trends in habitat and species loss or gain. Although such trends are variable among different habitat types, and species of fauna and flora, a great deal of information is</p>	

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 938	<p>available that has not been cited. The Wild Oxfordshire's report on the state of Oxfordshire's wildlife should be included. The scope is not only at odds with DEFRA's 25 year plan but also fails to address the most sensitive aspects of Oxfordshire's wildlife which is the steady depletion of habitats and species. As it stands this baseline is entirely inadequate to understand properly the trends and where the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 could have a real influence and this does not meet SEA requirements.</p> <p><b>Paras 3.92- 3.97</b> - Heritage - the numbers of designated heritage assets is an almost meaningless piece of information: what matters much more is the pressure on the historic environment and most of that arises in connection with the overall historic character of the landscape, changes to the character and setting of conservation areas and loss of archaeological remains – the latter having knock-on effects in terms of services to conserve and curate archives generated by development-led archaeology. As with biodiversity, it is thus impossible to gauge from the so-called baseline presented how far future development will add to ongoing trends of loss and degradation of historic character and how far the richest and/or rarest surviving character will be under pressure. Although the importance of Oxford's heritage is recognised there is no reference to all the different aspects covered by the City Council's Heritage Plan and the trends that are emerging, especially for example with regard to high buildings. The bland statements in <b>Table 3.21</b> do not predict what effects further development under the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 will bring – and where there are degraded areas most ripe for enhancement. This is not an adequate basis to judge the effects of the Plan on the historic environment in any meaningful way, and once again this does not meet SEA requirements.</p> <p><b>Paras 3.98- 3.110</b> – Landscape – this requires trend information about landscape change or pressure relative to nationally and locally designated landscape areas and the Green Belt. The absence of any reference to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) management plans, guidance and position statements as defining key issues for the AONBs is a major omission. The absence of any attempt to map where the main areas of recent development, allocated development sites, and areas of potential (e.g., for minerals and major infrastructure) against these landscape appraisals is a very obvious gap. Once again <b>Table 3.22</b> consists of general statements that do not support meaningful assessment. There is therefore no adequate baseline for properly assessing which parts and characteristics of Oxfordshire's landscape will be most under pressure under existing plans or how the county's landscape can best be conserved and enhanced into the future.</p> <p><b>Paras 3.111 - 3.114</b> - Green Belt – this section does very briefly allude to (though does not quantify or map) historical trends that have seen a significant switch from tight control of development to de-designation to allow development. The assertion that there is currently debate about whether more land should be released for development than those areas removed from the Green Belt in the 1990s by the City Council is misleading and inaccurate: major areas have already been earmarked for</p>	

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<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 939</p>	<p>release in local plans that are adopted or well advanced, and there are other major pressures on the Green Belt land especially related to transport infrastructure and flood alleviation measures. This falls so far short of SEA requirements as to be positively misleading. Although already designated environmental sites are known and recorded, unrecorded ones are not.</p> <p><b>Paras 3.115 – 3.123</b> - Sensitivity mapping study – the methods adopted by this study to examine some aspects of environmental sensitivity are fundamentally flawed. The report itself stresses its limitations and states "The results of this study are not a replacement for standard planning protocol and the evidence studies undertaken by local planning authorities to inform Local Plans, and its limitations should be recognised" On this basis it clearly should not be used as part of the baseline study for the SA/SEA of the JSSP and instead proper evidence studies (as briefly outlined above for each topic) should be undertaken, starting from a basis of seeking to understand the reality of ever-moving trends of environmental change, not the artificially static, partial and often incomplete and in some cases misleading picture that this scoping report presents.</p> <p><b>Para 4.11-4.13</b> – this identifies the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan as "the key driver for local economic growth in the future". There has been no consultation on this. This objective is not one arising from within the JSSP process, but from an associated initiative and the adoption of that particular objective has yet to be tested. If adopted for the strategy, the SA needs to ensure that there is clarity on what benefits the objective is going to deliver against which the impact can be assessed.</p> <p><b>Para 4.17-4.18</b> – The SA should take the probability and practicality of any required funding for any mitigation measures into account in its modelling and assessment, and any risk should be a limiting factor to the scale of proposed growth.</p>	
	<p><b>Q4:</b></p> <p><b>Green Infrastructure Strategy</b></p> <p>As noted at <b>Para 4.2</b>, the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy in 2019 identified the lack of a green infrastructure strategy for the county. They are pleased that the Oxfordshire Plan (Para 2.3) intends to rectify this. Given the critical nature of this strategy, we believe that the Scoping Document should clearly identify this as a current gap in the baseline information and ideally explain how local authorities are intending to remedy this, in advance of considering spatial development proposals.</p>	<p>Noted. These comments have been reviewed and relevant changes have been made to the SA Scoping Report where considered appropriate.</p> <p>With regards to light pollution and dark skies, additional information has been added to the sections on landscape and biodiversity. In addition, it will be</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 940	<p><b>Light Pollution &amp; Dark Skies</b></p> <p>The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 could make a step change to a far more proactive co-ordinated effort to ensure that a consistent strategic and robust approach is taken to enhancing dark skies. In addition to being a key aspect of natural beauty (as recognised in AONB management plans) dark skies are important for wildlife, heritage settings and human health. Light pollution has become an increasingly serious problem. Although all Oxfordshire's districts have light pollution policies, hardly any have proactive dark skies policies that seek to reduce existing light pollution, and the county transport plan has no policy (although highways are a key contributor to rural light pollution). The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 could make a step change in the approach to this issue.</p> <p><b>Tourism</b></p> <p>As an area with both international and many nationally significant attractions, the ability to accommodate visitors in a sustainable way without harming the very assets they come to enjoy is a key issue for the next 50 years and one that currently is not properly addressed in local and transport planning. This is another cross-cutting issue related to landscape, cultural attractions events, heritage and museums. Tourism is generally seen as an undiluted benefit in terms of the local economy; it is already rapidly growing and there are ambitious plans to increase tourism in Oxfordshire further. But this cannot be achieved without environmental cost and there are already cases where there are problems of capacity.</p> <p><b>Para 4.24</b> – currently lacks any reference to environmental studies, guidance, management plans and position statements. As well as referring to the statutory consultation bodies such as Natural England, it would be appropriate to mention the non-statutory organisations/voluntary bodies (often supported by these agencies) that undertake vital professional work that could helpfully inform the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, including organisations such as RSPB, Wild Oxfordshire and CPRE. However, as it stands, it fails to identify what already exists or future requirements to enhance environmental information to provide a much better platform to understand and manage change.</p>	<p>addressed under the SA framework by SA objective 8.</p> <p>With regards to tourism, additional information regarding the natural and rural assets of the county has now been referenced within the economy and employment section of Chapter 3.</p> <p>With regard to paragraph 4.24, non-statutory organisations are now referenced.</p>
	<p><b>Q5:</b> Concerned that there is a complete absence (see for example <b>Paras 4.25-4.27</b>) of discussion of the step change in pressure on the environment likely to arise from the Growth Board's ambitions for economic expansion. This may be what is expected of sustainability appraisal, but it is not what the SEA regulations require, which is a picture of actual change and what measures will be required to avoid, reduce, minimise or offset harmful effects or maximise benefits. Assessment of environmental effects cannot be sound and adequate if the baseline is not robust. Unfortunately, the SA objectives and appraisal questions do not meet SEA requirements.</p>	<p>Noted. These comments have been reviewed and relevant changes have been made to the SA Scoping Report where considered appropriate. The use of SA objectives and the 'traffic light' approach to illustrating predicted sustainability effects is tried and tested,</p>

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Page 941	<p>In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The objectives do not cover all the topics required by SEA e.g. archaeological issues</li> <li>– The requirement to look at interactive effects amongst the topics is not considered (see comments above on water, soils, tourism etc).</li> </ul> <p>The appraisal questions as posed fall a long way short of the SEA requirement to consider '(f) the likely significant effects* on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors. (*These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.)' But some questions also serve to emphasise some of the clear shortcomings of the baseline identified above.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ For biodiversity, there is no read-across to the Government's 25 years plan, established biodiversity target areas and habitats, and the general aspiration to 'safeguard' locally and nationally designated assets and habitats makes no reference to the need to enhance them; no reference is made to threatened species, nor what an 'overall net gain in biodiversity' means. Once again the baseline as presented simply does not allow these questions to be addressed meaningfully or for a monitoring framework to be established.</li> <li>■ In relation to heritage there is no mention of undesignated archaeology– the heritage resource arguably under greatest pressure of development (and often of regional and not infrequently national importance). The laudable question of whether the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 will encourage conservation management and enhancement of the County's heritage assets particularly heritage at risk and historic landscapes [added emphasis] highlights the yawning gap in the baseline evidence that makes no mention of either heritage at risk or historic landscape character.</li> <li>■ It is noticeable that the landscape questions make no reference to enhancement despite this being part of the statutory duty for AONBs. Once again, including special views of and from Oxford here belittles the real point that the Oxford skyline composed of major listed buildings within Conservation Areas is an internationally significant cluster of designated heritage assets whose setting is a statutory consideration requiring 'special regard' and 'great weight,' not merely a locally designated set of 'special' views.</li> </ul> <p>The standard 'traffic light' approach to SA may be fine for the largely self-fulfilling process of sustainability appraisal of objectives and policy options, but it is most unlikely to fulfil the requirements of the UK SEA process in which actual changes</p>	<p>and has not been found unsound by Inspectors to date.</p> <p>With regards to the SA objectives, archaeology is now specifically referenced and will be addressed by SA objective 14.</p> <p>Please note that the SA will take account any cross boundary impacts and include an assessment of cumulative effects.</p> <p>With regards to biodiversity, conservation target areas are now referenced and the SA appraisal questions now include the safeguarding and enhancement of biodiversity assets.</p> <p>With regards to landscape, enhancement is now referenced within the SA appraisal questions.</p>

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<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 942</p>	<p>for good or ill need to be predicted as far as reasonably practical – taking account of the complex interactions between different aspects of the environment. Especially in the context of the severe shortcomings of the baseline data presented here, this approach is likely to be very poor at achieving the requirements of SEA to identify and where possible describe (and preferably quantify) the likely effects on the environment. In particular, it is very unlikely to identify as required the impacts on areas most likely to be affected significantly by the development facilitated and promoted by the Plan.</p> <p><b>Further comments on specific objectives:</b></p> <p>SA 3 Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Infrastructure should be appropriate and timely</li> <li>– Need the right type and tenure of homes to reflect local need - Respect for the rate and capacity of a community to grow without damaging social cohesion</li> <li>– Respect for the character, culture and ethos of a community.</li> </ul> <p>SA 5 – Employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Generate opportunities for lower-skilled</li> <li>– Invest in and enhance rural, agri and tourism-based economies</li> <li>– Ensure a gap does not emerge between areas of high investment (City and Arc) and other parts of the (rural) county</li> </ul> <p>SA6 – Car travel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Needs a reference to the issue of through travel.</li> </ul> <p>SA7 – Climate change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Fails to reference the Oxford-Cambridge growth corridor and expressway, which will have significant impact.</li> </ul> <p>SA15 – landscape character</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The character and distinctiveness of Oxfordshire's settlements needs to encompass not only the visual, but also the social and cultural aspects.</li> </ul>	

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	<p><b>Q6:</b> Our over-riding concern is that because of the fundamental problem of not looking at either historic trends or emphasising current trends (for better or worse), no evidence is presented as to which issues present the greatest challenges and which the greatest opportunities. Therefore, consider the process inadequate to assess or address the major long-term environmental pressures and opportunities that confront Oxfordshire in the next 30 years.</p>	<p>Noted. Many amendments have been made to Chapter 3 of the Scoping Report to address CPRE's (and other consultees') detailed comments above.</p>
<p><b>Member of Public</b></p>	<p>See CPRE Oxfordshire representation above.</p>	<p>See responses above.</p>
<p><b>Member of Public</b></p>	<p>Resident of Forest Hill who agrees with CPRE Oxfordshire's representation, see above.</p>	<p>See responses above.</p>
<p><b>Member of Public</b></p>	<p>See CPRE Oxfordshire representation above.</p>	<p>See responses above.</p>
<p><b>Need not Greed Oxfordshire</b></p>	<p><b>Q1:</b></p> <p><b>a)</b> The scale and likely impact of existing growth plans needs more open discussion. More clarity is required on whether the central tenet of the strategy – growth &amp; development – is appropriate in the first place. The scale of influence by Government and other strategies, outside the scope of the Growth Board and Oxfordshire elected bodies, is acknowledged (<b>para 2.5</b>) but not defined. Concerned that the Oxford-Cambridge growth corridor and expressway appears to be accepted without question, despite the fact there has been no public consultation, parliamentary scrutiny or environmental assessment.</p> <p><b>b)</b> There is little clarity on how emerging evidence will have influence on decision-making, especially about growth. Any mitigation, spatial planning and infrastructure investment must not lose sight of the wider impacts and cumulative effects both within the county and to the wider UK. This is not clear in this document, or in other information emerging from the Growth Board.</p> <p><b>c)</b> There needs to be greater clarity on whose needs take priority and what the wider social or environmental impacts of this are in the SA/SEA. Many of the questions asked in the document are good ones, and the setting of a vision and objectives is welcome, but it is not clear yet as to how the vision and objectives will be used, how the objectives are to be assessed, and whose needs will take priority. The document does note that the SA will consider impact across time and outside of the county (<b>para 1.15</b>) but this does not address the point being made here whereby asking for the context of the objectives being assessed to be made clear.</p>	<p>c) and d) Chapter 3 of the Scoping Report sets out the baseline for the SA, which has in turn informed the key challenges and sustainability issues identified in Chapter 4 and the SA Framework in Chapter 5. The SA Framework will be used to appraise the significant effect of the plan and its reasonable alternatives. No weighting will be applied to the issues and opportunities identified within the SA Framework.</p> <p>e) The baseline will be updated at each stage of the SA process.</p> <p>g) The baseline chapter includes a section on climate change, which has now been added to. Effects of the plan on climate change will be assessed via SA objective 7.</p>

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Page 944	<p><b>d)</b> There needs to be clarity on how evidence will be analysed and objectives balanced against each other.</p> <p><b>e)</b> There is a risk the SA scope will not match the Plan. The document notes that SEA Regulations require "an outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes". Given the tight timescales and the lack of opportunity for meaningful, iterative consultation discussion, there is a concern that either the outcome of any SA will not match the resultant strategy (and risk the Plan being considered unsound) and/or that the SA will be ineffective, leading to unsustainable practices.</p> <p><b>f)</b> Omissions in these documents, such as an explicit understanding of the interface with the 25 year Environment Plan, or commitments to the rural and agri-economy, heritage and cultural capital, are reflected in their absence or minor role in this document. Specific additional concerns include the fact that some more recent changes in rhetoric or discussions at Growth Board are not reflected in the consultation document. Note that Para 2.3 explains areas for which the JSSP will provide, but omits energy and natural environment, listed in the original Scoping Document. The apparent lack of technical skills on sustainability matters embedded in the OxPlan structure and processes (such as it is for Healthy Place-Shaping) is a further risk to the process.</p> <p><b>g)</b> The document as it stands fails to give sufficient priority to Oxfordshire's urgent need to reduce its carbon emissions in the coming decades. The scope needs to consider the 25 year Environment Plan and latest Climate commitments and agreements, fails to set any ambitious framework. Concerned that climate change is not mentioned enough throughout the document.</p> <p>The scoping report talks generally about the need to 'Promote energy efficiency', 'encourage' the provision of renewable energy 'where possible' and 'minimise' greenhouse gas emissions from transport. There are sections on strategies for growth, infrastructure, place-making and more. Nowhere is there a strategy for carbon emission reduction. This Scoping Report needs to be drastically restructured. Tackling the threat of climate change should be a central goal for this Plan and the Sustainability Appraisal must lead work towards that goal.</p> <p><b>h)</b> Some specific comments on <b>Table 2.2</b> Sustainable Development Messages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Economy – 'facilitate building competitive economy' – If the goal is for net gain to the UK, then this should be explicit and benefits (or detriment) to other areas – including indirect effects such as the re-focusing of investment away from them – needs to be in the scope of the appraisal.</li> <li>– Transport – NNGO believed that the whole purpose of the JSSP was to ensure an integrated strategic spatial plan. Disappointed that the update of the Local Transport Plan has been separated out from this process and would urge that this decision is re-considered.</li> </ul>	<p><b>h)</b> Please note that the Scoping Report contains a section on Green Belt below the section on Landscape.</p> <p>The rest of this comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 945	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Land – a clearly stated hierarchy of types of land appropriate for development is required. The whole ecosystem services value of the land needs to be considered, not just specific qualities.</li> <li>– Biodiversity – this section is overly focused on designated habitats and assets and should be broadened out to reflect wider natural systems.</li> <li>– Landscape – specific mention of the Green Belt is required.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Q2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Wild Oxfordshire's Oxfordshire State of Nature report</li> <li>■ Landscape character assessments of the County, each District and each AONB and associated strategies and guidelines – incl. AONB management plans</li> <li>■ District design guidance</li> <li>■ Oxfordshire's historic landscape characterisation</li> <li>■ Oxford City Council's heritage plan</li> <li>■ 25 Year Environment Plan</li> <li>■ Glover Report on designated landscapes</li> <li>■ Healthy place shaping</li> <li>■ DEFRA biodiversity metrics</li> <li>■ Oxfordshire Strategic Environmental Economic Investment Plan</li> </ul>	The relevant documents have been added.
	<p><b>Q3:</b> Concerned that the document focuses on mapping a static picture of the current situation rather than detailing current trends and rates of change. To adequately fulfil the demands of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (predicting real-world environmental change likely to arise from the scale, character and broad location of proposed development), the emphasis should be on the iterative process, taking historical trends and the likely speed of their acceleration in the context of a step-change in the scale and extent of development, in order to start to define real objectives.</p>	<p>Noted. Additional information regarding current and future trends is now included in Chapter 3.</p> <p>The rest of this comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 946	<p><b>a) Para 3.8</b> states that "improving the connectivity on this corridor, through East-West Rail and the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway projects, is a key ambition for Oxfordshire". However, the opinion of the people in Oxfordshire is not yet sought on this; the vision and benefits are not yet defined or proven.</p> <p><b>b) Population characteristics</b> the assumption that growth of the county as a whole would address areas of deprivation is not necessarily a consistent argument. <b>Para 3.19</b> notes that new development near to deprived neighbourhoods can stimulate regeneration. Careful spatial strategy, growth and investment may deliver improvements to these neighbourhoods and that would be most welcome, but the impact of focusing infrastructure and other investment away from other areas of the county, or a primary focus on "high quality" jobs or a knowledge-based economy, should be carefully considered such that new societal pressures are not created.</p> <p>The Oxford centric nature of <b>Para 3.20</b> is concerning and sets the tone for relegation of more rural parts of the county, and the rural economy, to second place in both the OxPlan and any sustainability assessment.</p> <p>Specific comments on <b>Table 3.3</b>: - It should be stated that the opportunities for economic growth and development will "help to reduce the inequalities" but they may also increase them if prices increase due to the attractiveness of an innovation hub with high wage jobs etc. - The statement regarding reduced car travel fails to mention the impact of the JSSP and associated strategies on through traffic.</p> <p><b>c) Housing Specific comments on Table 3.6:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The additional scale of demand arises from growth targets, on top of Objectively Assessed Need, and is being imposed through the Growth Deal – this is the only factor that is likely to prevent local authorities keeping pace with demand.</li> <li>- The statement that house prices will continue to rise without the JSSP needs to have appropriate supporting commentary if it is to be considered seriously. Conversely, the statement implies that with the JSSP, house prices will fall. This is vanishingly unlikely given that developers are only incentivised to build at a rate that maintains their margins and that on any given day, the market is set by existing housing stock rather than new-builds.</li> </ul> <p><b>d) Economy and Employment Specific Comments on Table 3.7:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The sustainability of the current job market in Oxon seems to be quite robust. The impact on other areas of the UK from investment in Oxon/the JSSP is not explored.</li> <li>- High value sectors are again specifically mentioned. Other community investment is acknowledged, but specific opportunities for low and unskilled workers needs to be recognised. The role of the rural and agri-economy should</li> </ul>	<p>programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 947	<p>also be highlighted, especially in the context of the 25 Year Environment Plan, new agri-environment schemes and post Brexit. Local food production and reduction of food-miles is essential if Oxfordshire is to play its role in developing a sustainable national model.</p> <p><b>e) Transport Specific comments on Table 3.9:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The Local Transport Plan (LTP) and JSSP are de-coupled and therefore not reliant on one another.</li> <li>– Investment in infrastructure such as bus networks is welcome but long term modelling of the impact of the (likely) investment into priority areas versus across the county must be considered.</li> <li>– Healthy Place Shaping should be included if it is now indeed embedded in the strategy.</li> </ul> <p>The 25 Year Environment Plan must be considered against many objectives.</p> <p><b>g) Climate Change</b> In addition to our previous comments, some specific observations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– a move to increased use and embedding of renewables and clean energy in development and energy supply in the county is welcome, but impact on other issues, including biodiversity, air quality, long-term waste disposal, tranquillity, land use and landscape need to be carefully considered in the SA</li> <li>– Assessment of the economic costs associated with investments in renewable versus conventional energy systems and low-carbon footprint expenditure, the SA for such should identify if full lifecycle analyses have been undertaken such that the manufacture, maintenance/replacement and long term indirect costs, including health, have been considered.</li> </ul> <p><b>h) Water Resources and Water Quality</b> - The limited nature of this vital resource, and its capacity to accommodate more stress, is clearly highlighted in the text (<b>para 3.62-3.65</b>). This one issue alone is significant in any appraisal of the long-term sustainability of large-scale growth ambitions for the county and brings into question why a focus on growth should be in this one highly stressed area. A notable issue that has been omitted from the text that should be included is specific reference to the regular discharges of untreated sewage into rivers.</p> <p>Specific comments on <b>Table 3.14:</b></p>	

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 948	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The JSSP may well help locate development in less water stressed areas, but the basic premise that it is delivering growth over and above that which is currently organically needed means that it in itself is introducing a significant leap in additional stress to the system.</li> <li>– Climate change and land use changes will add further stress to the system and must be factored into modelling/SA considerations.</li> <li>– Infrastructure investment in SuDS etc should not be considered in isolation from longer term maintenance investment, sustainable mechanisms for such and also enforcement costs</li> <li>– Modelling/assessment must look at cumulative effects over time and different system boundaries.</li> </ul> <p>i) Flood Risk, <b>Para 3.67</b> suggests SuDS may help. These are only as good as the long-term structures in place to manage them, and so long term costs and enforcement needs to be factored into appraisals.</p> <p>Specific comments on <b>Table 3.15</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Again, the same issue of scale of growth applies.</li> <li>– Changed land use can have local and wider effects on climate, creating a feedback loop further affecting flood risk in the shorter, and longer, term.</li> <li>– Modelling and assessment must take into account of cumulative effects, long term projections of different land use scenarios and offsite and wider region implications over time.</li> </ul> <p>Specific comments on <b>Table 3.16</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The Growth Deal and effects of other strategies pushing/concentrating a growth strategy on Oxon does add stress to the system and increased demand for land that otherwise would not be there.</li> <li>– The impact or requirements of the 25 Year environment plan and also any new agri-schemes are not yet known and will need to be integrated into the SA process and analysis.</li> </ul> <p>k) Biodiversity and geodiversity, the strategy and SA needs to recognise statutory commitments to halt biodiversity loss and apply this across all development, cumulatively as well as in staged assessments, in the county. It would also be suitable to dovetail into the work DEFRA is doing regarding net biodiversity gain.</p>	

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 949	<p>Specific comments on <b>Table 3.19:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– There is a concerning focus on designated biodiversity sites and providing corridors between them. The biodiversity in all natural habitats has an intrinsic value. Green space in built environments can also be important for biodiversity and the presence of animals and plants have direct proven wellbeing and healthy place shaping benefits.</li> <li>– The cumulative effect of different parts of the strategy need to be considered, as well as the impacts of specific developments or projects.</li> <li>– The proposal for a county wide green infrastructure strategy being proposed by OXIS would be a welcome additional consideration.</li> </ul> <p><b>l)</b> Heritage Specific comments on <b>Table 3.21:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The context and setting of heritage assets are also important factors.</li> <li>– Projections for the impact and effect of cumulative development, and the escalated scale of development and transport infrastructure that the JSSP and associated strategies are introducing to the county, should be modelled and part of the assessment.</li> </ul> <p><b>m)</b> Landscape and Townscape</p> <p>Specific comments on <b>Table 3.22:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Needs to consider the Glover Review.</li> <li>– The character of landscapes and settlements within it are important also.</li> <li>– Modelling and assessment of impacts of development cumulatively, and at the enhanced scale, and the effects not only directly but in the setting need to be considered.</li> <li>– Dark skies and tranquillity need to be explicit considerations.</li> <li>– The proposal for a county wide green infrastructure strategy being proposed by OXIS would be a welcome additional consideration.</li> </ul> <p><b>n)</b> Future Challenges &amp; Key Sustainability Issues <b>Para 4.11-4.13</b> refers to global talent, knowledge spine, high value science-related jobs and similar. This objective is not one arising from within the JSSP process, but from an associated</p>	

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 950	<p>initiative and the adoption of that particular objective has yet to be tested. If adopted for the strategy, the SA needs to ensure that there is clarity on what benefits the objective is going to deliver against which the impact can be assessed.</p> <p><b>o) Section 4.24</b> lists a number of plans and programmes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>4.25</b> notes the JSSP has a "major role" in setting the spatial strategy and policy framework. It is perhaps notably that it admits it is not a "defining" role. The SA scope will need to evolve and reflect these other influencing programmes more or less as the OxPlan progresses as the degree to which some of them impact, influence – or dictate – the scope and parameters of the OxPlan is still unknown.</li> <li>– <b>4.26</b> notes the £215million government funding for infrastructure (para 4.17 noting a gap of £7.14billion) and suggests "the JSSP should help to secure additional funding for the future", but it is unclear in this document if there is any legal commitment for such.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Q4:</b> See discussion for previous question above.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
	<p><b>Q5:</b> SEA regulations require a picture of actual change and what measures will be required to avoid, reduce, minimise or offset harmful effects or maximise benefits. To achieve this, the baseline information must record trends and rates of change, not just the static picture.</p> <p>Comments are listed below on a number of the proposed objectives:</p> <p>SA Objective 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Add healthy place shaping/making</li> <li>■ clarity is required on for what purpose the countryside is being optimised as this fundamentally affects the decisions being made, and sustainability assessments of such.</li> </ul> <p>SA Objective 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ensure that new development is fully supported by appropriate and timely community, transport and utilities infrastructure and services</li> </ul>	<p>Noted. These comments have been reviewed and relevant changes have been made to the SA Scoping Report where considered appropriate, notably healthy place making will be addressed by SA objective 2 and SA objective 15 now addressed the social and cultural importance of the landscape.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 951	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ There should be the addition of a commitment to encourage delivery of the right type and tenure of homes, reflecting the changing age profile of the county and the demography of specific economic sectors targeted for growth/additional jobs.</li> <li>■ There should be an explicit commitment to respect the rate and capacity of a community to grow without damaging social cohesion, and also for respect for the character, culture and ethos of a community</li> </ul> <p>SA Objective 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ there is a need to commit explicitly to growing job opportunities that are not knowledge/high value and will generate opportunities for the lower skilled in the community.</li> <li>■ there is a need for a commitment to respect and enhance the rural, agri and tourism based economies and ensure a gap does not emerge between areas of high investment (City and Arc) and other parts of the county (rural) or neighbouring counties.</li> </ul> <p>SA Objective 6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The whole issue of through traffic is not referred to here and should be.</li> </ul> <p>SA Objective 7:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The whole issue of some associated projects such as the Expressway are not referred to here and should be.</li> </ul> <p>SA Objective 9:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Given the specific sensitivity of this issue, the need to assess the cumulative impact of development and growth, and the long-term effects of any scale that is planned, must be explicitly committed to.</li> </ul> <p>SA Objective 10:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The promotion of use of SuDS must be coupled with assessment, policy and investment in long term maintenance and enforcement of such.</li> </ul> <p>SA Objective 13:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ As described in previous section, ensure biodiversity outside of designated sites is also considered a priority and its intrinsic and other value is understood and protected in decision making at all levels.</li> </ul>	

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 9 of 27</p>	<p>SA Objective 15</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The character and distinctiveness of Oxfordshire's settlements needs to encompass not only the visual, but also the social and cultural aspects.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Q6:</b> Whether the SA Framework is appropriate and includes a suitable set of objectives and appraisal criteria for assessing the effects of the proposed JSSP and reasonable alternatives is further affected by the phrasing used throughout the document looking at what would happen/the implications without the JSSP. This is concerning. Any growth will by its nature put additional stress on certain resources and objectives addressed in the SA document. Therefore, the question used through this document, of what would happen without the JSSP, rather ignores the need for debate about whether growth over and above that required to continue current organic growth, high employment levels and net contribution to the treasury (as already enjoyed by Oxfordshire) is appropriate given any additional stress to resources.</p>	<p>Support noted for the SA report. This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>
<p>Member of the Public</p>	<p>See Need not Greed Oxfordshire's representation above.</p>	<p>See above.</p>
<p>West Oxfordshire District Council</p>	<p><b>Q2:</b> The scoping document makes no reference to the following plans and programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Local Industrial Strategy</li> <li>■ Oxfordshire Energy Strategy</li> <li>■ Oxfordshire Strategic Environmental Economic Investment Plan (SEEIP)</li> <li>■ Adopted and emerging Local Plans</li> </ul> <p>These are important documents and should be included in the scoping document with any key implications drawn out as appropriate.</p> <p><b>Table 2.2:</b> Economy This makes no specific reference to increasing productivity despite this being a key aim of OxLEP.</p> <p>While the need to 'make provision for clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative or high technology industries' is understood, this invariably seems to bias main employment sites and larger urban areas. The SA should ensure that the needs of the rural economy are also properly taken into account through the JSSP.</p>	<p>Please note that updates to Table 2.2 have been made.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 953	<p><b>Table 2.2: Transport</b></p> <p>The table should also refer to other non-motorised forms of transport including riding.</p> <p><b>Table 2.2: Population, health and wellbeing</b></p> <p>The objective to 'take into account the needs of less able people' should be strengthened to 'meet the needs...' The objective to improve peoples' health and reduce health inequalities might also include something about improving access to healthcare, services and facilities. Reference should also be made to meeting education needs.</p> <p><b>Table 2.2: Land</b></p> <p>An additional point could be added to seek to bring contaminated land back into beneficial use through remediation.</p> <p><b>Table 2.2: Climate Change mitigation and adaptation</b></p> <p>Promoting energy efficiency could be further specified here to include sustainable design and construction. An additional objective to develop/ensure climate resilience is also needed which should then be reflected in the SA framework itself (see comments below).</p> <p><b>Table 2.2: Historic environment</b></p> <p>This section could also include 'Promote access to and enjoyment of the county's historic environment'.</p>	
	<p><b>Q3:</b></p> <p><b>Table 3.3</b> does not include reference to deprivation and the likely evolution without the JSSP in place.</p> <p>The section on housing should refer to the Oxfordshire housing and growth deal as it is directly relevant to the delivery of new homes in Oxfordshire in the period to 2031. It should also be expanded to include more information on housing affordability e.g., affordability ratios as well as further information on specific housing needs e.g. for the travelling community, older people, self-build etc.</p> <p>The section on economy and employment talks about job creation since 2011 and projected job forecasts to 2031 but does not set out how many existing jobs exist in Oxfordshire to put this in context. Furthermore, whilst it gives a breakdown of the</p>	<p>Please note that Table 3.3 does address inequality and deprivation.</p> <p>Information regarding the Oxfordshire housing and growth deal has been included, including information on affordable housing.</p> <p>Additional information has also been added to the section on Air quality within Chapter 3 of the SA Scoping Report.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 954	<p>County's economic growth by sector it gives no explanation as to how this is predicated to change and what sectors are seen as likely to grow significantly.</p> <p>The section on transport should reference the known congestion that occurs on the A40 for which existing baseline data is readily available. Further information could usefully be made available in respect of current levels of non-car transport across the County i.e., public transport, walking and cycling.</p> <p>The section on Air Quality should make reference to any known issues in relation to European sites of importance including Oxford Meadows and cross reference the need for HRA to determine impacts/mitigation in more detail.</p> <p>Other comments on Section 3 are as follows:</p> <p><b>Table 3.19</b> Biodiversity and ecology (row 1, column 2) Additional impacts of the JSSP in this regard could include benefits for networks that cross local authority boundaries (or should but do not because of those boundaries) and that are not otherwise protected by County or National policy.</p> <p>The JSSP could add further coherence and connectivity to these biodiversity networks which of course should not be otherwise bound by such administrative boundaries.</p>	
	<p><b>Q4:</b> Although infrastructure provision is identified as a particular future challenge, it should be listed as one of the key sustainability issues to be taken into account during the SA of the JSSP. More could also be said on the requirement to achieve net gain in biodiversity. Additional detail requiring the development of robust metrics to measure biodiversity gain/loss should also be included.</p>	<p>Noted. Relevant information has been added accordingly.</p>
	<p><b>Q5:</b> As a general observation some of the appraisal questions seem to be more applicable to a district level local plan rather than the JSSP.</p> <p>Thus it should perhaps be reworded to say 'Will the JSSP enable provision to be made for objectively assessed housing need and enable the delivery of a range of types and tenures etc? Similarly, is it the role of the JSSP to provide for sports and recreation facilities other than perhaps in very general locational terms for facilities of any significant scale?</p>	<p>Please note updates have been made to the SA framework.</p> <p>With regards to rural economy, the importance of supporting it is now addressed by SA objective 4.</p> <p>With regards to climate change, SA objective 7 now aims to build climate resilience and promote sustainable construction practices.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 95</p>	<p>In relation to SA objective 4 – the economy, the appraisal questions should highlight the need to increase productivity in Oxfordshire to reflect the aspirations of various county strategies. It should also reflect the importance of the rural economy in Oxfordshire.</p> <p>SA objective 7 should be expanded to include climate change resilience and mitigation, not just reducing the County's contribution to climate change. Furthermore, 'Promote energy efficient design' should also include reference to the use of sustainable construction methods.</p> <p>SA objective 8 should include reference to the potential impact on European sites of importance e.g., the Oxford Meadows SAC.</p> <p>Under SA objective 11 it may be more appropriate to refer to minimising the need for development of best and most versatile agricultural land rather than avoid.</p> <p>Under SA objective 12 - a further appraisal question could relate to the potential for prior extraction of any known mineral resource prior to development.</p>	
	<p><b>Q1:</b> Appropriate, but needs to be more ambitious or aspirational regarding support for new cycling infrastructure along inter urban routes within easy commuting distance of Oxford; Eynsham-Botley/Oxford (B4044) and Wootton-Cumnor-Botley and Wootton- Abingdon (B4017) corridors for example.</p> <p>A commitment to "to increase levels of cycling through targeted improvements to cycling infrastructure" (<b>page 20 3.47</b>) is inadequate given that it later acknowledges on the same page that "Cycle routes along inter-urban routes are largely non-existent".</p> <p><b>Q2:</b> Links to the wider transport plans are noted but they need to link to new local cycling and walking infrastructure plans as part of a more ambitious commitment to a range of measures regarding the climate change section.</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report.</p> <p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, rather than the SA Scoping Report.</p>
<p><b>Member of the Public</b></p>	<p><b>Q2:</b> Concerned there is not budget to prepare and execute the plan with.</p> <p>Concerned that the Oxfordshire Plan cannot be made until the route of the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway is published.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
	<p><b>Q4:</b> The mistakes of the past need to be corrected e.g. a fully planned road system, reducing air pollution in AQMAs and providing a reliable health service is necessary.</p>	Noted.
	<p><b>Q6:</b> Concerned that Bicester is in urgent need of modernisation.</p>	Noted.
<p><b>Oxford Swindon A420 Landowners Consortium</b></p>	<p><b>Q1:</b> The Sustainable Appraisal scope should steer Oxfordshire's growth needs and development ambition in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (JSSP) also towards:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Protecting where possible the current Oxford Green Belt and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)</li> <li>2) Railway connectivity to Heathrow and other UK airports.</li> <li>3) The Development and economic growth along strategic transport corridors including the A420 corridor between Oxford and Swindon.</li> <li>4) The A420 Oxford to Swindon strategic corridor could be an extension of the Cambridge to Oxford Expressway connecting onward along the M4 to Bristol / Avonmouth.</li> <li>5) Kingston Bagpuize, Faringdon and Shrivenham all have suitable and available land to enable residential and commercial development along this economical corridor.</li> <li>6) Shrivenham, Faringdon and Kingston Bagpuize would be ideal locations for New Towns.</li> <li>7) The added benefit is the connection of commerce between Oxford and Swindon, together with producing the shortest and fastest route between them both.</li> <li>8) Consideration should be given as to whether a railway line from Oxford to Didcot and then onto Swindon. A new railway should be considered between Oxford and the old station at Challow.</li> <li>9) Consideration should be given to opening stations along this more direct local calling Oxford to Swindon railway line at location such as Cumnor, Kingston Bagpuize, Challow (for Faringdon and Wantage), Shrivenham and Swindon Parkway Station at South Marston.</li> </ol>	<p>The SA will identify the significant effects of the Plan and its reasonable alternatives (to be set out in later SA Reports). These effects will be used alongside other material considerations and evidence to make an informed decision as to the most appropriate strategy and planning policies to include within the Oxfordshire Plan.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 957</p>	<p>10) Swindon is an important economic hub which a A420 growth zone could capitalise commercially and take pressure away from the Oxfordshire towns / villages along the A34 corridor and Oxford Green Belt.</p> <p>11) Please note although the East - West Rail and Expressway projects are focussed on enhancing the latitudinal connectivity between Oxford and Cambridge, no official commitments have been made within the sub areas west of the CAMKOX Growth Arc. There are driving forces from hauliers, major industrial companies and the general population in general to see an increased transport provision and stimulated economic growth along the A420 corridor between Swindon and Oxford.</p> <p>12) The A420 is the shortest A road route between the Oxford and Swindon. It is currently running very close to capacity and due to the economic success of Milton Keynes and Swindon will continue to be used as the first choice by traffic rather than going the extra 21 miles via the A34 to Newbury. The A420 road therefore needs upgrading, dualling and creating an economic area along its route and will reduce congestion on the A34 and around Oxford.</p> <p>13) The A420 corridor is now one of the most used Stagecoach coach routes in the UK with the S6 coach running at 20 minute intervals between Swindon and Oxford.</p> <p>14) The Eastern Development villages of Swindon will build 8,000 dwellings at the western end of the A420 route and in the current VWHDC Local Plan will see over 3,500 new dwellings built along the route. With new Park and Rides proposed at both Cumnor and Kingston Bagpuize, all of which will create without any improvements congestion.</p> <p>Based on the above there is a real economic and commerce requirement for a better road link with new settlements and employment between Oxford and Swindon along the A420 route.</p>	
	<p><b>Q2:</b></p> <p>The following plans should be also included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) A Plan of the existing Roads and those needing upgrading e.g. A420.</li> <li>2) A Plan of existing Railway lines / Stations and those needing upgrading or opening.</li> <li>3) A plan of corridors reserved in adopted Local plans for Highways and Water reservoirs.</li> </ol>	<p>Appendix 2 includes the relevant adopted international and national plans, programmes and projects and relevant regional and local plans, programmes and projects are referenced in the main body of the report.</p> <p>The information listed here relates to the evidence informing the baseline of the</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 958	<p>4) A plan of Oxfordshire constrained land (e.g., non coalescence areas around airports, sewer treatment works and gas / oil pipelines.</p> <p>5) plans of current allocated development sites in the Local Plan both proposed and allocated.</p> <p>6) Plans of employment locations in Oxfordshire.</p> <p>7) Topography Plan.</p> <p>8) Plan of Traffic Congestion at Peak Hours.</p> <p>The following programmes and policies should also be included:</p> <p>1) The Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan.</p> <p>2) All of the Cambridge to Oxford Growth Corridor studies and reports.</p> <p>3) East West Rail Consortium Plan and Department of Transport and Network Rail visions</p> <p>4) All of the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway Strategic studies and reports.</p> <p>5) The Government statistics on housing growth and future requirements.</p> <p>6) A plan of Oxfordshire airports.</p> <p>7) Volume of vehicles using the A420, A40 and A34 daily.</p>	SA. The baseline has been reviewed in this regard.
	<p><b>Q3:</b> Please see responses to Q1 and Q2.</p>	Noted.
	<p><b>Q4 and Q5:</b> Consideration should be considered to develop 3 locations along the A420 corridor between Oxford and Swindon at land South of Kingston Bagpuize, North West of Faringdon and North of Shrivenham.</p>	Noted.
	<p><b>Q6:</b> Looking at the hierarchy of existing towns and villages, along with the location of the transport links and the constraints plan the following towns in Oxfordshire appear to lend themselves for expansion as some towns are severely constrained by the green belt and the Flood Plain:</p>	Noted.

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
	<p>Bicester, Banbury, Thame, Faringdon, Didcot, Witney, Wantage / Grove.</p> <p>The following towns have high constraints on future large-scale development environmental / heritage (e.g. World Heritage Site) / land / flood plain / Green Belt classifications (e.g. AONB): Woodstock, Chipping Norton, Burford, Wallingford, Watlington, Henley-on-Thames, Abingdon, Goring, Abingdon, Sonning Common, Charlbury.</p> <p>This leaves the following larger villages which are located on major roads which could be expanded: Steventon, Kingston, Bagpuize, Shrivenham, Southmoor.</p>	
<p>University of Oxford</p> <p>Page 959</p>	<p><b>Q1:</b> The University of Oxford welcomes this opportunity to comment on the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (also known as the Joint Statutory Spatial Strategy). It understands that the purpose of this Scoping Report is to provide the context for and determine the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan and to set out the assessment framework for undertaking the later stages of the SA. The University is pleased that the Councils in Oxfordshire have agreed to produce a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan (JSSP), building upon the existing joint working and partnership arrangements through the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal. It is pleased to read that the scope of the Plan will be to identify the number of new market and affordable homes, the level of economic growth and related infrastructure that is needed across Oxfordshire. The University agrees that the scope of the SA is appropriate as set out considering the role of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (JSSP) to help meet and manage Oxfordshire's growth needs and development ambition.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
	<p><b>Q2:</b> The University would like the University of Oxford Strategic Plan 2018-2023 to be included as an additional plan or programme that is relevant to the SA policy context. This Strategic Plan sets out a framework of priorities for the University, its divisions and departments. The relevant part of its vision is to work to provide world-class research and education in ways which benefit society on a local, regional, national and global scale.</p>	<p>Please note that Appendix 2 contains solely national and international policies relevant to the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (as required by the SEA Regulations) . Relevant local plans, programmes and projects are referenced in the main body of the report.</p>
	<p><b>Q3:</b> The University agrees that the existing and emerging baseline information set out in the scoping report provides a suitable baseline for the SA of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, with one exception. In 2017 the University commissioned a report on the Economic Impact of the University of Oxford. The academic study, research and innovation at the University is the tip of a pyramid that drives the local Oxford, Oxfordshire County and Regional economy. This economic impact report estimated</p>	<p>Relevant information has been added to the Economy and employment section of Chapter 3.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 960	<p>that in 2014/15 the University of Oxford contributed £5.8 billion GVA to the UK economy, of which £2.3 billion GVA was to Oxfordshire. The report considers how the activities of the collegiate University and its related organisations have contributed to the economy through their activities in 2014/15. The University considers that this report will provide essential evidence to support the baseline economic context for the Oxfordshire Plan, which is set out in the SA scoping report at <b>chapter 3 paragraphs 3.32 -3.39</b>. It will also be important evidence to support the analysis of future challenges set out in Chapter 4 especially the section on technology and knowledge at <b>paragraph 4.9</b>.</p>	
	<p><b>Q4:</b> The University considers that there are no additional SA issues relevant to the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (JSSP) that should be included. It supports especially the inclusion of the following as a key sustainability issue to be taken into account during the SA of the Plan (set out in Chapter 4 paragraph 4.23):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The national importance of Oxford and Oxfordshire in providing high quality jobs linked to its research, science and knowledge sectors.</li> </ul>	Noted.
	<p><b>Q5:</b> The University considers that the SA Framework is appropriate and includes a suitable set of SA objectives and appraisal criteria for assessing the effects of the proposed Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (JSSP) and reasonable alternatives. It is particularly pleased to see the inclusion of the following Objectives in Chapter 5 at table 5.2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs</li> <li>■ To support the development of Oxfordshire's knowledge economy</li> <li>■ To reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire</li> <li>■ To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's historic environment</li> </ul>	Noted.
Wheatley Parish Council	<p><b>Q1 and Q3:</b> The scope of the plan is too Oxford City centric with little or no proposals relating to other large centres of population centres such as Bicester, Banbury, Henley or Wallingford. The scoping report is contradictory in several areas; on the one hand it seeks to reduce traffic and car journeys but proposes to support a major road development that can only bring additional traffic congestion, air pollution and environmental degradation, particularly in the south of the county which contains the highest number of biodiversity designated sites as well as those with cultural heritage designation.</p>	<p>An attempt has been made to include more information on the other districts within Oxfordshire.</p> <p>This rest of this comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess</p>

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Page 961	<p>A plan that extends over the next thirty years should not rely on outdated current infrastructure technology in the form of an expressway to facilitate one of its major objectives. The key objective of providing enhanced housing conditions is not dependent upon being "unlocked" by an expressway when the housing that is claimed will be the result is already planned through the various district council's local plans, without any decision or detailed information on this project being available.</p> <p>By 2050, in an area specialising in high tech research and development, major road infrastructure of this kind may well be largely irrelevant and is contradictory to key objectives stated in the scoping document.</p>	<p>the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>
	<p><b>Q2:</b> The scope of the plan does not provide adequate information to inform decisions on the required infrastructure at local level. Stated key objectives include; reducing the need to travel, promoting sustainable travel and improved air quality. Little or no account is taken of current local conditions regarding any of these objectives and without this detailed local information any plan will be ill informed, resulting in inaccurate conclusions that fail to provide successful solutions to both existing and long-term conditions. This is particularly relevant in terms of environmental pollution (especially air pollution where the information appears to be incomplete and lacking detail) as well as traffic congestion.</p>	<p>Please note that the baseline includes information on each of the key objectives mentioned in this comment.</p>
	<p><b>Q4:</b> Improving existing infrastructure at local level infrastructure is necessary.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
	<p><b>Q5:</b> No.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
Member of the Public	<p><b>Q1-Q3 and Q6:</b> Does not understand the terminology used in the questions. The questionnaire is designed for planners not for average people with no planning knowledge. Unsuitable consultation.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
	<p><b>Q4:</b> Provision of health and other services consistent with the houses must be built. This hasn't been done so far especially in Chinnor. Similar to North America there should be zone areas for certain uses, health, retail etc. Concerned that the plan is only focused on housing and not improving the existing services.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
	<p><b>Q5:</b> Concerned that the plan is concentrating on housing in large estates which are faceless and cold. Housing should be spread throughout the district in all parishes with a suitable maximum, with a good mix of sizes and tenures. Concerned that big developers are being favoured, which could be unsustainable economically.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 962</p> <p><b>Oxford Bioregion Forum</b></p>	<p><b>Q1:</b> The Assessment is fundamentally flawed as it fails to critique the role of the JSSP, and ask the question "are Oxfordshire's growth "needs" and development ambition sustainable"? The juxtaposition of the words "needs" and "growth" reflect the facile supposition that growth is good in itself. The scope proposed for the "Sustainability" Assessment is in reality "how can the investment opportunity the JSSP is written to support, be made compliant with regulations?".</p> <p>The core of the scoping document lies in <b>Appendix 2</b> in the lengthy list of legislation and treaty obligations. But even on that basis it is unsound as it omits any reference to the Sustainable Development Goals, which are the heart of international sustainability principles in the 21st Century. The limitation of the scope to 30 years, i.e., the period covered by the plan, disqualifies the SA as an assessment of "sustainability" as that period will hardly begin to show the long-term implications of the vast transformation of the county proposed by the JSSP.</p>	<p>Please note that SA Scoping Report sets out the scope and methodology for appraising the significant effects of the plan and its reasonable alternatives. No assessment has been undertaken at this stage.</p>
	<p><b>Q2:</b> This SA should include an "input output" analysis to test the JSSP against the zero-carbon circular economy which should be a focus of the plan due to climate change. The SA should put forward a statement of the legacy we wish to leave to the 22nd Century, and an attempt to envision the lives of those both human and other species that will live here then.</p>	<p>SA objective 7 of the SA Framework will test the Oxfordshire Plan and its reasonable alternatives on their ability to minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change.</p>
	<p><b>Q3:</b> The SA fails to assess the JSSP against a zero carbon circular economy; it needs to be revised to take account of Oxford City Council's declaration of Climate Emergency in Jan 2019, and the IPPC report of Oct 2018; likely to pass 1.5 degrees of warming by 2024.</p>	<p>SA objective 7 of the SA Framework will test the Oxfordshire Plan and its reasonable alternatives on their ability to minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change.</p>
	<p><b>Q5:</b> It is not appropriate as this framework is not about sustainability, but about compliance with legislation.</p>	<p>SA is a strategic process and the scope covers all relevant topics set out in the SEA Regulations.</p>
	<p><b>Q6:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A Sustainability Assessment worthy of the name should be commissioned and carried out by a Commissioner for Future Generations.</li> </ul>	<p>Noted.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The brief given to LUC for this SA should be published and openly debated.</li> </ul>	
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 963</p> <p>Member of the Public</p>	<p><b>Q1:</b> The SA mentions health in terms of its aims to ensure healthy and thriving communities but makes little mention of it in terms of infrastructure other than in <b>paragraph 4.16 and 4.18.</b></p>	<p>Noted. The health of the County's population is also summarised in Chapter 3.</p>
	<p><b>Q2:</b> Health services are a vital part of the county's infrastructure and in particular primary care services. If 100,000 homes are to be built by 2013 there will be a need for much greater provision of primary health care. This needs to be addresses by the SA policy and the Oxfordshire Plan.</p> <p>Primary Care cannot be expected to absorb this extra population without a corresponding growth in facilities and personnel. Primary Care needs good, modern premises and the plan must address where these are going to be located and how they are going to be paid for. Developer contributions should be sought at the outset.</p>	<p>Noted. This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p> <p>SA objective 2 of the SA Framework will test the Oxfordshire Plan and its reasonable alternatives on their ability to improve the health and wellbeing of the Oxfordshire population. Furthermore, SA objective 3 will test the ability of the Plan and its reasonable alternatives to sustain and create vibrant communities, including the provision new and improved services and facilities in line with local needs</p>
	<p><b>Q3 and Q4:</b> The baseline information makes repeated claims about the importance to human health and wellbeing but the information about the pattern, scale and quality of development and sufficient provision for community facilities such as health infrastructure is glossed over. The current pattern scale and quality of primary care infrastructure in the county is already poor and more needs to be done to improve it, even before we are 100,000 new homes. Primary Care infrastructure should be audited now to ensure an informed baseline is understood.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Member of the Public</p>	<p><b>Q1:</b> This sentence is so badly worded that the question is obscured. Should it read; 'Is the scope of the SA (is) appropriate as set out, considering the role of the etc.....'; There is no evidence of the 'need; on such a massive scale.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

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Page 964	<p><b>Q2:</b> There is no evidence of these plans being put in a national context. The south east is already over populated with enormous pressure on utilities, roads and public services. Surely infrastructure investment should go to where it is most needed, not where most money can be made out of it by developers.</p>	<p>Please note that Appendix 2 includes national and international plans, policies and programmes. Furthermore, Chapter 3 sets out the relevant local, regional and national environmental, social and economic evidence.</p>
	<p><b>Q4:</b> Probably</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
	<p><b>Q6:</b> It seems quite clear that this questionnaire is designed to ensure that as few people as possible plough their way through the complicated and specialised vocabulary, so is a million miles away from a genuine consultation. There is absolutely no appetite that he/she is aware of or growth on this scale which will put further pressure on access to London. While it is clearly desirable for plans to be made, they should be democratically generated out of genuine need, and proportionate to existing conditions (e.g. there is no way an increase in housing stock of 30% and a 6 lane highway can possibly not be environmentally devastating). These proposals are clearly being driven by people who will not be personally affected by their implementation, are not in touch with local opinion and stand to gain financially from their implementation.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p><b>Witney Town Council</b></p>	<p><b>Q1:</b> No. It should be required to include the impact on infrastructure i.e. housing, roads, health, schooling etc. to 2050 and beyond. Location of employment not co located with housing developments puts additional strain on existing infrastructure.</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p> <p>SA objective 3 will test the ability of the Plan and its reasonable alternatives to sustain and create vibrant communities, including the provision new and improved infrastructure, services and facilities in line with local needs.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
	<p><b>Q2 and Q5:</b> Health, air quality, cycle lanes, integrated infrastructure. The government's 'Cycling and Walking Strategy'; should be included. The following should also be added: electric charging points for vehicles, 3 phase electricity for houses (to enable car charging), energy supply securities, food and water securities and local/national travel policies.</p>	<p>The Cycling and Walking Strategy is included within Appendix 2.</p>
<p><b>Wheatley Parish Council (additional comments)</b></p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 965</p>	<p><b>Q1:</b> The scope of the plan is too Oxford city centric with little or no proposals relating to other large centres of population centres such as Bicester, Banbury, Henley or Wallingford. It looks as if the plan is only about growth and sustainability of Oxford city and its immediate surrounding area. It also begins by reference to the Housing and Growth Deal with the government requiring delivery of 100,000 homes by 2031. Since this deal was entered into by an unelected body without public consultation and without reference to the affordability of the homes provided, this constraint should be removed from the report to enable a full and honest public consultation to take place. The scoping report is contradictory in several areas; on the one hand it seeks to reduce traffic and car journeys but proposes to support a major road development that can only bring additional traffic congestion, air pollution and environmental degradation, particularly in the south of the county which contains the highest number of biodiversity designated sites as well as those with cultural heritage designation. A plan that extends over the next thirty years should not rely on outdated current infrastructure technology in the form of an expressway to facilitate one of its major objectives. The key objective of providing enhanced housing conditions is not dependent upon being 'unlocked' by an expressway when the housing that is claimed will be the result is already planned through the various district councils&amp;; local plans, without any decision or detailed information on this project being available.</p> <p>By 2050, in an area specialising in high tech research and development, major road infrastructure of this kind may well be largely irrelevant and is contradictory to key objectives stated in the scoping document. The report is also deficient in that it has been drawn up without reference to the results of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) as no SEA has been implemented in drawing up the local plans on which it relies, and without drawing a balance between the requirements for the environmental sustainability and any reasonable and sustainable growth ambitions. The importance of these considerations is such that it is insufficient to pay lip service to the SEA requirements by simply setting out in an Appendix steps to be undertaken at some unspecified future date at a local level. A detailed environmental plan should be set out at this stage. Furthermore, by stressing the need to meet entirely artificially set growth targets, the report slews its scope in a direction away from its declared aims.</p> <p><b>Q2:</b> The scope of the plan does not provide adequate information to inform decisions on the required infrastructure at local level. Stated key objectives include; reducing the need to travel, promoting sustainable travel and improved air quality. Little</p>	<p>SA incorporates the requirements of the SEA Regulations, including all relevant topics set out in the SEA Regulations.</p> <p>More information has been included within the baseline chapter on the other districts within Oxfordshire.</p> <p>Please note that the baseline includes information on each of the key objectives mentioned, including existing and</p>

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Page 966	<p>or no account is taken of current local conditions regarding any of these objectives and without this detailed local information any plan will be ill informed, resulting in inaccurate conclusions that fail to provide successful solutions to both existing and long-term conditions. This is particularly relevant in terms of environmental considerations, such as environmental pollution (especially air pollution where the information appears to be incomplete and lacking in detail) as well as traffic congestion and environmental protection of landscape and biodiversity.</p>	<p>potential future transport infrastructure and current demands and air quality issues.</p>
	<p><b>Q3:</b> No. In addition to the reasons given in section 2 above, there is little or no vision for the county outside the immediate Oxford city area. The whole county deserves and requires equal importance. The Sustainability Scoping Report contradicts its own objectives in many areas, particularly in terms of reducing car journeys and congestion when the inclusion of an expressway will only encourage and increase the number of vehicle journeys. The baselines adopted in relation to other environmental considerations are also inadequately stated, particularly in relation to water, flood risk, minerals and biodiversity. Reference should be made to the acknowledged key reference on the current state of biodiversity in Oxfordshire that is Wild Oxfordshire’s report on the State of Oxfordshire’s Wildlife.</p> <p>By its own admission, there is a funding shortfall for required infrastructure in excess of £7 billion, but there is no suggested or planned approach for how this shortfall is to be accommodated.</p>	<p>More information has been included within the baseline chapter on the other districts within Oxfordshire.</p> <p>The State of Oxfordshire’s Wildlife Report has been added to the Biodiversity section with Chapter 3.</p>
	<p><b>Q4:</b> There needs to be a clearer indication of the need to improve existing infrastructure at the local level.</p>	<p>Please note that the baseline includes information on existing and potential future transport infrastructure and current demands, including notable congestion issues.</p>
	<p><b>Q5:</b> No.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
	<p><b>Q6:</b> The report is prejudiced throughout by the stated aim to build numbers of homes far in excess of the needs of the county, 100,000 up to 2031 and apparently up to 250,000 thereafter doubling the housing stock of the county by 2050. This is neither proportionate nor realistic in terms of the existing infrastructure or funds available.</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Member of the Public	See Wheatley Parish Council's (additional comments) above. With the addition: There has also been no proper public consultation as to what criteria are to be applied in setting the levels of growth within the county.	Noted. See comments above.
Member of the Public	Q1: Health needs to be priority.	Noted. Additional information regarding health has been included. Health will be addressed by SA objective 2.
	<p><b>Q2, Q4 and Q6:</b> Oxfordshire Plan 2050 notes the requirements of future development which are needed to ensure that growth results in the creation of healthy communities. Whilst all the objectives identified in the plan are important, would like to emphasise that developing strong and healthy communities needs to be a priority. Therefore strongly recommend that the plan needs to include a clear healthy place shaping policy. Initial review of the population health and wellbeing section, (Section 3.21 and Table 3.3) has identified a number of gaps in its identification of key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire relating to the health and wellbeing challenges facing the Oxfordshire population. It does not recognise the increasing gap between years lived without disability and/or long-term conditions and overall life expectancy. The growth in long-term conditions will have profound implications and may create unsustainable demand for health and social care support unless action is taken to reduce future demand. Similarly, although it identifies that most comparative indicators show Oxfordshire is better than the England average, current lifestyles will impact on demand for health and care services amongst the whole population - not just older people or those from more deprived communities. This section should make clear that the whole population faces significant health challenges such as obesity and mental wellbeing. This section also makes no mention of the need to cater for new models of care which aim to support independence for as long as possible and which require different health and care facilities. This needs to be identified as an additional priority. These sustainability issues need to be reflected in section 4 and in the sustainability appraisal questions as set out in section 5. Additional questions might include: Promote active lifestyles to help address a range of key public health priorities including mental health and wellbeing, obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and dementia?, Make it easier for people to make healthier food choices., Reduce the gap between healthy life expectancy and overall life expectancy., Does the Plan take account of and support new models of care with a health and care infrastructure that seeks to reduce the need for treatment and delay the need for care?</p>	<p>Part of this comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p> <p>Please note that the SA framework contains appraisal questions regarding the promotion of healthy lifestyles (See SA objective 2).</p> <p>In addition, the health section of Chapter 3 of the SA Scoping Report has been updated to include additional information about the health challenges of Oxfordshire.</p>
Member of the Public	Q1: Inadequate planning for water delivery to new houses and sewage disposal. The burden on Thames Water has not been considered by the planners. Excessive water extraction causes damage to the environment. In dry summers water courses dry up and wildlife suffers. All animals including humans need water to survive. All food production needs water. Rubbish	Please note additional information has been added to the section on water resources within Chapter 3 of the SA Scoping Report.

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 968	disposal from increased number of houses. Incineration? Plastic disposal, recycling, more eco-facilities to deal with rubbish. Also inadequate provision of new GP surgeries to manage increased population.	SA objective 3 will test the ability of the Plan and its reasonable alternatives to sustain and create vibrant communities, including the provision new and improved infrastructure, services and facilities in line with local needs.
	<b>Q2:</b> Primary healthcare, Education, Playing Fields, Local buses to join up with shopping centres and GP Surgeries.	Noted. SA objective 3 will test the ability of the Plan and its reasonable alternatives to sustain and create vibrant communities, including the provision new and improved infrastructure, services and facilities in line with local needs.
	<p><b>Q3:</b> Will now have to account for the possibility of fewer people coming to live and work in Oxfordshire due to Brexit. Possible bad effect on number of young academic researchers being able to come and work/study at Oxford University and Oxford Brookes. Brexit effect on morale of visiting university academic staff. Prestige of Oxford City is dependent on the academic reputation of its schools and universities. Culture and ethos of city has to be maintained. These points are NOT well addressed in the Oxfordshire Plan. In fact they are largely ignored.</p> <p>Brexit effect is unknown as yet. It may or may not be an important factor in the future, but must be considered and contingency plans made.</p>	Please note the potential effect of Brexit and the uncertainty surrounding it and its effects are mentioned within the SA Scoping Report.
	<b>Q5:</b> Still not addressed the social effects on residents of too many people living in small spaces, too much traffic and pollution. Increased stress in their daily lives. Must provide Parks etc for people to relax in.	<p>Health and wellbeing is a topic that is crosscutting and that is noted throughout the baseline section.</p> <p>SA objective 3 will test the ability of the Plan and its reasonable alternatives to sustain and create vibrant communities, including the provision new and improved infrastructure, services and facilities in line with local needs.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 969</p> <p>Oxon Environment Board</p>	<p><b>Q1:</b> Overall, they believe the SA should reflect a strong ambition for the environment. The environment is important to people that live and work in Oxfordshire it provides quality of life, clean air, water. The benefits and needs are well articulated in previous responses but not recognised in Oxfordshire’s current strategies and plans. Oxfordshire’s ambition should extend beyond environmental protection and the traditional thinking, and into environmental improvement using understanding and quality of ecosystems to define impact. This will ensure compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states in paragraph 170 that; Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity. Paragraph 174 says that ‘To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should: b) identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity’. As a minimum, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 should commit to a clear target for net environmental gain that reflects Oxfordshire’s ambition and value of the natural world.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
	<p><b>Q2:</b> They would expect to see the following additional plans, policies or programmes included: Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan which sets out Government commitment and ambition for the natural world</p> <p>Natural Capital Committee reports and recommendations</p> <p>Oxfordshire State of Nature 2017 report. Led by Wild Oxfordshire, this draws together a wealth of expertise from the county’s professional and volunteer base in biodiversity and nature conservation, including our local authorities. It uses the best information available to establish a picture of the state of Oxfordshire’s natural habitats and species, including long-term trends as well as more recent losses and gains.</p> <p>Conservation Target Areas, which are the current spatial component of Oxfordshire’s strategic approach to biodiversity. They are some of the most important areas for wildlife where targeted conservation action can secure the maximum biodiversity benefits.</p> <p>See: <a href="https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/biodiversity/conservation-target-areas/">https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/biodiversity/conservation-target-areas/</a></p> <p>Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans (Cotswolds, Chilterns, North Wessex Downs) - these plans should be a material consideration in creating Oxon 2050 to ensure it meets the national policy requirement of giving great weight to the conservation of landscape and scenic beauty in these areas. Supporting achievement of these plans helps ensure the county and districts are fulfilling their statutory duty to care for the AONBs.</p>	<p>Relevant policies, plans and programmes have now been incorporated within the SA Scoping Report.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 970	<p>Oxfordshire’s historic landscape characterisation</p> <p>South Oxfordshire District Council Green Infrastructure Strategy which maps and describes green infrastructure requirements and opportunities (as an example of what is needed to inform a green infrastructure plan.</p>	
	<p><b>Q3:</b> They are concerned that much of the information presented reflects a static picture of the status quo, rather than a mapping and assessment of trends (both positive and negative) that would be more appropriate for fulfilling the requirements of a Strategic Environmental Assessment. By focussing only on designated sites (<b>Paras 3.87-3.89</b>) the scope is not only at odds with DEFRA’s 25 year plan but also fails to address the most sensitive aspects of Oxfordshire’s wildlife which is the steady depletion of habitats and species and the ecosystems on which we and nature depend. The approach being taken is one that may have been appropriate 20 years ago, but not today and not in the context of future development plans.</p> <p>Government guidance <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/natural-environment">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/natural-environment</a> lists the local ecological networks evidence that should be identified and mapped.</p> <p>Not all of these have been included in the Scoping Report and we strongly recommend they are included. These comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>areas of irreplaceable natural habitat, such as ancient woodland or ancient hay meadows, the significance of which may be derived from habitat age, uniqueness, species diversity and/or the impossibilities of re-creation</li> <li>habitats where specific land management practices are required for their conservation;</li> <li>main landscape features which, due to their linear or continuous nature, are important for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchanges of plants and animals, including any potential for new habitat corridors to link any isolated sites that hold nature conservation value, and therefore improve species dispersal;</li> <li>areas with potential for habitat enhancement or restoration, including those necessary to help biodiversity adapt to climate change or which could assist with the habitats shifts and species migrations arising from climate change;</li> <li>an audit of green space within built areas and where new development is proposed.</li> </ul> <p>They expect to see analysis of the potential for habitat enhancement and/or restoration in order to improve connectivity or increase area (the more, bigger, better, joined principles of the Lawton Review 1).We would also expect clearer recognition of the value of accessible natural green spaces and their contribution to health and wellbeing, as well as ecological benefits, and an assessment of how capacity in this area could be extended. The current baseline data is out-of-date and incomplete.</p>	<p>The Biodiversity section of Chapter 3 of the SA Scoping Report has been updated to now include available additional information on priority and irreplaceable habitats.</p>

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Page 971	<p>The most up-to-date and highest quality data currently available is accessible from the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC). This includes species data, priority habitats (and potential priority habitats) mapped to field level, all designated sites (Local Wildlife Sites, District Wildlife sites, Ancient Woodland etc) and connectivity analysis for grassland, woodland and wetland. This data is updated every 4 months for species and annually for other data. Analysis will be required to provide assessment of and mapping for natural capital. The above information could inform a plan for ecosystem services provision. Both will be needed for the OP2050: for instance, for considering services such as water, flooding and provision of water for new homes and achieving clean air standards in towns and the city.</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/news/making-space-for-nature-a-review-of-englands-wildlife-sites-published-today">https://www.gov.uk/government/news/making-space-for-nature-a-review-of-englands-wildlife-sites-published-today</a></p>	
	<p><b>Q4:</b> The continued loss of biodiversity across Oxfordshire is a major concern; ecosystems and ecosystems services and some key components of the ecological network, including irreplaceable habitats, will be impacted by the planned infrastructure and housing.</p> <p>Access to natural green space - The plan needs to address the issue of people not being able to benefit from access to natural greenspace. Access to green space is needed to ensure health and wellbeing particularly physical and mental health. There is a recognised lack of accessible natural greenspace in Oxfordshire, according to Natural England Access to Natural Greenspace Standards. According to analysis carried out by TVERC on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council in 2017<sup>58</sup>, 63% of households in Oxfordshire do not have access to a 2-hectare accessible green space within 300 metres. The analysis also shows that no residences have access to a 500-hectare accessible green space within 10 kilometres.</p> <p>Light Pollution &amp; Dark skies - The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 has the potential to make a step change to a far more proactive co-ordinated effort to ensure that a consistent strategic and robust approach is taken to enhancing dark skies which, as well as being a key aspect of natural beauty are important for wildlife, heritage settings and human health.</p> <p>Ecosystem services and natural capital NPPF paragraph 171 says that plans should... plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries. The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 needs to take a coherent strategic approach to enhancing natural capital across the county, and also take into account natural capital in neighbouring counties, ensuring landscape and habitat connectivity.</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>

<sup>58</sup> Carpenter et al. 2017 An Analysis of Accessible Green Space Provision in Oxfordshire. Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre.

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Page 972	<p>Natural capital has been defined as the elements of the natural environment which provide valuable goods and services to people. It is now well understood across all sectors that the effective management of natural capital is an environmental necessity that underpins a thriving economy and a healthy population. SEEIP and The State of Nature in Oxfordshire both identified that the extent and condition of many of the county’s natural capital assets have been declining over the course of decades, with major challenges including air and water pollution, land contamination, fragmentation of habitats and a decline in biodiversity. We know that planned development will impact on our natural environment and the benefits we derive from it.</p> <p>The key questions for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 are; What will the impact of the development be? Can the plans be modified to avoid or reduce impact and safeguard ecosystems? If not, what plans need to be actioned to ensure the entirety of these natural features and functioning ecosystems are recreated elsewhere? and by what mechanism will this be funded? If these questions cannot be answered, then either the development proposals should change or the Plan will fail in its environment, legal and moral obligations. An Environmental Investment Plan (EIP) will provide answers, in line with Natural Capital Committee recommendations, that changes in natural capital should be measured, valued, reflected in corporate and national accounts, and taken into account in decision making processes. The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 should include a strategic approach to investing in natural capital to offset the impacts of proposed development as well as improving the delivery of the vital goods and services on which the current and future residents of Oxfordshire rely for their health, wellbeing and prosperity. <b>Para 4.24</b> rightly recognises the role of the statutory environmental bodies such as Natural England and the Environment Agency. It would also be appropriate to highlight the role of non-statutory organisations, including members of the Oxfordshire Environment Board (see below), that undertake vital professional work that could helpfully inform the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.</p>	
	<p><b>Q5:</b> They welcome the commitment to net gain in biodiversity, however it requires further clarification and specification. It is essential that the mitigation hierarchy is applied so that, in the first instance, avoiding damage is a clear and transparent requirement. Oxfordshire 2050 should commit to implementing a system for secure measurable net gains for biodiversity through the planning system, as required by the NPPF. A minimum percentage increase should be specified to reflect the value Oxfordshire places on the natural world and the support services provided for our health and wellbeing. The basic prerequisites for this must always be to follow the mitigation hierarchy (i.e., avoid harm where possible first) and use the expertise and judgement of an in-house local authority ecologist. <b>Table 5.1 SA 15 (Landscape Character)</b> should reference not just protection but the enhancement of landscape (a statutory duty of AONBs). The character and distinctiveness of Oxfordshire’s settlements needs to encompass not only the visual, but also the social/cultural.</p>	<p>With regards to SA objective 15, updates have been made.</p>

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	<p><b>Q6:</b> As noted at <b>Para 4.2</b>, the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy in 2019 identified the lack of a green infrastructure strategy for the county. It appears that the Oxfordshire Plan (Para 2.3) intends to rectify this but there is no detail as to how this process will be taken forward. The Oxfordshire Environment Board recognises the need for a Green Infrastructure Strategy and Plan for the county and for this to be integrated into all other long-term development strategies as a priority if Oxfordshire is to achieve genuinely sustainable economic growth, visionary place-making, and remain a healthy and attractive destination for people and business. They would be happy to work with those involved in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and the SA to discuss how this could best be achieved.</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">OAHS Page 973</p>	<p><b>Q1:</b> The Oxfordshire Architectural and Historical Society believe that the SA fails to consider adequately the cumulative impacts of future development and change or to consider current rates of change. The indirect and direct impacts of interactions between the different environmental topics are not considered. These issues are directly relevant to heritage e.g., loss of below-ground archaeology and erosion of settlement distinctiveness.</p>	<p>Noted. Please note that updated baseline information regarding the historic environment and landscape are within Chapter 3 of the SA Scoping Report. In addition, SA objectives 14 and 15 will address safeguarding and enhancing the character and distinctiveness of the historic environment and landscape, respectively.</p>
	<p><b>Q2:</b> The list of International and National level plans and policies in Appendix 2 omits the Convention for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage of Europe (revised) (Valletta, 1992) or any references to heritage legislation such as the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act. At a regional and local level there are numerous valuable documents, including Landscape Character Assessments for the Districts, Oxford's Historic Landscape Characterisation study, Oxford City Council's Heritage Plan, archaeological research frameworks for Oxford City and the Solent Thames Region.</p>	<p>The Convention for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage of Europe has been added to Appendix 2. Only international and national plans and policies have been included as per the requirements of the SEA Regulations.</p>
	<p><b>Q3:</b> The environment is changing and it is inadequate just to consider a snapshot of the present to compare with predicted impacts. <b>Para 3.3</b> It is not possible to scope out topics because the location of development will not affect them. Waste will increase with housing and require transport and processing, which has the potential to affect landscape and heritage for example. There are several topics such as Minerals and Climate Change where the potential impacts on heritage are not mentioned. Similarly, the role of the Green Belt in maintaining separation and character of settlements is overlooked. The section on Heritage is focused on known and designated sites, with no consideration of Oxfordshire's important buried archaeology, which is constantly at risk from and actively being eroded by development. Designated assets are protected,</p>	<p>Current and future trends have been updated where relevant.</p> <p>In addition, the effects of climate change on historic assets has now been addressed by SA objective 14.</p>

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Page 974	<p>but the wider historic environment, including landscape character needs to be given adequate weight in planning in line with NPPF. The concentration of special views in and out of Oxford should be considered as being only one key component of the setting of designated heritage assets (top grade listed buildings, multiple Conservation Areas and Registered Parks and Gardens) to which special statutory duties and planning weight apply, as befits a cluster of heritage assets and skyline recognised to be of international importance.</p> <p>A review of the impact of mineral development on the archaeology of Oxfordshire was prepared by Oxford Archaeology in 2011, The Oxfordshire Aggregates and Archaeology Assessment.</p>	
	<p><b>Q4:</b> The tourist industry of Oxfordshire is not adequately addressed. While it may be beneficial in terms of employment the negative impacts, such as overcrowding, pressure on transport and damage to historic sites and buildings need to be considered.</p>	<p>Information regarding tourism's effect on transport has been included with Chapter 3 of the SA Scoping Report.</p>
	<p><b>Q5:</b> The SEA requirements consider likely significant impacts on all aspects of cultural heritage or its interrelationship with other factors. The lack of attention paid to below-ground archaeology or of the historic character of landscapes and settlements. Objective 14 is particularly disappointing.</p>	<p>Please note that below ground archaeology has now been included.</p>
	<p><b>Q6:</b> There is an opportunity being missed here to develop a clear assessment and overview of the historic environment of the county, its potential for heritage tourism, the trajectory of damage and identification of strategies to protect and enhance it. The social, community identity and wellbeing benefits of cultural heritage have not been considered. Culture and identity are also built through events and shared values.</p>	<p>Noted. The SA draws on the most up-to-date and accurate evidence available and uses it to establish the likely significant effects of the Plan its reasonable alternatives. The SA does not represent a historic environment study.</p>
Member of the public	<p><b>Q1:</b> Fittingly, this questionnaire opens with a misleadingly loaded question. Since the County's 'growth needs' and 'development ambition' are not factors that have been democratically accepted (or satisfactorily proven), the question is inapplicable. Essentially, this 'bold, forward-thinking' plan with its 'clear vision for growth' is instead a plan for developers and big business, designed with the hope that it will 'release opportunities for Government funding'.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
	<p><b>Q2:</b> Yes, see below.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
	<p><b>Q3:</b> No, see below.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

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Page 975	<p><b>Q4:</b> Yes, see below.</p>	Noted.
	<p><b>Q5:</b> No.</p>	Noted.
	<p><b>Q6:</b> The Plan lacks both proper democratic legitimacy and credible long-term planning principles.</p> <p>Its prime justification appears to be the perceived 'need' to inflate an already thriving economy where there is already full employment. Quantity has been confused with quality, physical growth with the expansion of ideas. The proposed vast increases in population and housing stock are not justified.</p> <p>While the UK does need more housing, it is the country's numerous forgotten towns and cities that urgently need serious investment in jobs and 'development' on this scale. To 'boost' Oxford unnecessarily merely compounds the problem.</p> <p>Cast-iron guarantees of good-quality, modest-scale, affordable housing would be essential. Yet the building industry appears to have grown too powerful to oblige without undue concessions.</p> <p>Oxford City has chosen to expand almost to bursting point; it cannot be encouraged simply to continue expanding beyond the City's bounds and into the County.</p> <p>Adding to the County's existing infrastructure problems makes no sense, and neither does the loss of yet more green fields.</p> <p>The irreversible damage to the essentially rural character of the County would be enormous. To suggest otherwise is disingenuous. Oxfordshire does not deserve to become any more urbanised or suburbanised.</p> <p>The fundamental principle of the Green Belt to prevent (further) sprawl is at serious risk of being opportunistically side-lined in favour of questionable Government house-building targets.</p> <p>The various long-term environmental implications of the proposed developments (housing, infrastructure, roads) are superficially treated pollution (air, water, light, noise), loss of both open spaces (agricultural, recreational, historical) and of corridors and habitats for wildlife and even run counter to certain government guidelines and objectives.</p> <p>The Plan should instead be focussing the real needs of the County's residents, over time and within its existing social and environmental limits.</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>

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	<p>The problematic proposal of a glamorous-sounding Oxford-Cambridge 'Expressway' in effect, another motorway but with many more exits and potential new rat-runs into Oxford is neither necessary nor desirable. Its environmental impact is significantly underestimated as (most probably) is its cost, too.</p> <p>The Plan's seductively aspirational 'vision' appears to lack a secure financial basis. How, for example, will the £8 billion hole in the current infrastructure budget be filled?</p>	
<p>Limited, Pye Homes Limited</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 976</p>	<p><b>Q1:</b> It is stated at <b>para 3.3</b> that the issue of waste is not to be included in the scope of the SA. Given the level of growth proposed, it is not clear why the issue of waste has not been included, which will have significant environmental implications in relation to matters such as: the amount of waste produced; waste management measures; sustainable construction methods; the materials used and their transportation. In addition, at <b>para 2.5</b>, it is states that the JSSP will inform the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan. If the issue of waste is not to be included in the scope, it is not clear how the JSSP can inform the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan. Reference should also be made to the Government's strategy for waste; Our Waste, Our Resources: A Strategy for England, December 2018.</p> <p><b>Table 2.2</b> sets out the sustainable development messages/environmental objectives which have been identified in the review of plans, policies and programmes. The table identifies the need to address sustainable construction, however, the issue of waste has been scoped out as explained above. Other issues which are not considered in sufficient detail are as follows:</p> <p>The Oxford-Cambridge Growth Arc</p> <p>Infrastructure provision and capacity</p> <p>Green Belt</p> <p>Built Environment.</p>	<p>While the Oxfordshire Plan will inform waste management in the County, the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Plan and its associated SA will consider and test the options for doing so. However, the Oxfordshire Plan will promote sustainable construction and design practices and this will be tested in the SA through SA objective 7.</p>
	<p><b>Q2:</b> Missing documents, which should be considered include:</p> <p>UK Industrial Strategy and the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy documents. Whilst there is some mention in passing and in footnotes the documents are not included in the relevant section on plans and programmes or the Appendix.</p> <p>National Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2016-21</p>	<p>Please note each of these strategies has been added to Appendix 2.</p>

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Page 977	<p>Our Waste, Our Resources: A Strategy for England, December 2018The references to plans and programmes are scattered throughout the document making it difficult to check for omissions.</p> <p>It would be helpful to provide a list of the documents in a table for ease of reference, sub-divided by International, National, Regional and Local level, as well as topic area.</p>	
	<p><b>Q3:</b> The following concerns with regards to the baseline information are set out below by issue:</p> <p>Economy: provides no information on the Oxford Cambridge Growth Arc and the potential implications for the economy. Whilst it is recognised that the Growth Arc is mainly going to have implications for the future, it is a matter which is known about now and should be included.</p> <p>Transport: there is no data given on the number of people working from home or current split of travel by modes. In order to measure the change in work and travel practices, the current data is needed.</p> <p>Air Quality: there is no mention of the Low Emission Zone introduced in Oxford City or its implications. The baseline data also does not identify whether the AQMAs are getting better or worse. There is no discussion of the impact of Air Quality on health and any data in relation to this matter.</p> <p>Climate Change: does not give a breakdown of the energy consumption by source e.g., % of renewable energy. There is also no discussion of the sustainability standards in buildings, such as the no. of BREEAM accredited buildings. The Government has also proposed a new Future Housing Standard to be introduced by 2025 to future proof new build homes with low carbon heating and world leading levels of energy efficiency, which will have significant implications for future development.</p> <p>Water: there is no mention of waste water and the sewerage capacity of the area.</p> <p>Land: there is no discussion of brownfield land or contaminated land data</p> <p>Landscape: there is no mention of Landscape capacity.</p> <p>Green Belt: the text states that without the JSSP, it is likely that the Green Belt would remain as it is. This statement is not correct, given the current pressures for development on the Green Belt land surrounding Oxford. For example, the recent Publication Version of the SODC Local Plan allocates 6 out of 7 strategic allocations within the Green Belt.</p>	<p>Updates have been made accordingly, where data has been found available and considered appropriate to use.</p> <p>With regards to economy and employment, additional information addressing the Oxford Cambridge Growth Arc has been added to the economy section of Chapter 3.</p> <p>With regards to air quality, the Low Emission Zone is now referenced.</p> <p>With regards to land, contaminated land is now referenced within the soil section of Chapter 3.</p> <p>With regards to the green belt, the SODC Local Plan is now referenced.</p>

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Page 978	<p><b>Q4:</b> The Future Challenges and Key Sustainability issues section identifies issues with ITC and changes in working patterns that are expected, however the baseline does not include the current data to assess impacts against. <b>Section 4.9-13</b> needs to be reflected in the baseline data to show clearly the step change in the provision of homes, jobs and infrastructure that is expected. The information on infrastructure (<b>para 4.14-4.22</b>) identifies the need for more specific information on infrastructure to be provided in the baseline data. The baseline data has not included a separate section on infrastructure, including the data on health and education. The key issues identified at <b>para 4.23</b> do not identify the pressure on the Green Belt as an issue, which will impact upon the JSSP.</p>	<p>Infrastructure is a cross cutting theme which is addressed within the transport, air quality, economy and employment, climate change and water resources sections.</p>
	<p><b>Q5:</b> The SA Framework does not include any indicators, targets or decision-making criteria for use in the assessment. It would be beneficial for the above to be identified at this stage to avoid difficulties when the assessment is undertaken.</p> <p>A few errors and omissions are noted including the following:</p> <p>Housing should read; assessed need rather than accessed.</p> <p>Health there is no mention of the health facilities needed.</p> <p>Communities include the provision of community, transport, utilities infrastructure and services. Suggest assessing infrastructure requirements as a separate category as the infrastructure requirements are significant and complex.</p> <p>Oxfordshire’s Knowledge Economy includes housing issues, suggest keeping all the housing issues under the first objective.</p> <p>Land use should include the issue of the Green Belt.</p> <p>Infrastructure the capacity of infrastructure does not appear to be addressed.</p> <p>Viability and deliverability - have not been included, which will have significant implications for the JSSP.</p> <p>Waste and materials - are not included or the need for sustainable construction</p>	<p>Suggestions have been noted and appropriate updates to the SA framework have been made.</p> <p>Viability and deliverability will inform the definition and identification of the reasonable alternatives considered for inclusion within the Plan.</p> <p>Green Belt issues will also be considered as part of the Plan preparation. As Green Belt is a policy designation and not an environmental designation and is also not in the list of SEA topics to be covered it is not specifically included in the SA objectives. However, SA objective 11 will test the ability of the Plan and its reasonable alternatives to ensure the efficient use of land in Oxfordshire, and maintaining countryside in and around existing and new communities is addressed by SA objective 2.</p> <p>Infrastructure needs are covered under SA objectives 3, 6 and 9.</p>

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<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 979</p> <p>Windrush Bike Project</p>	<p><b>Q6:</b> Methodology</p> <p>The methodology does not include the significance criteria set out in Schedule 12 of the regulations, in particular the duration, permanence, cumulative and synergistic effects. The need to identify suitable mitigation measures should also be included.</p> <p>Report Structure</p> <p>A summary of the how the consultation responses have been taken into account should be included within the SA main report, with the detailed responses provided in an Appendix, in order to aid transparency on the decision-making process. The JSSP Options should include an outline of the reasons for the selection and rejection of each option and a summary of the sustainability implications for the options so the reasons are clear to the reader. The cumulative impact of options and combinations of options should also be included.</p>	<p>The duration, permanence, cumulative and synergistic significant effects of the Plan will be assessed through the use of the SA framework in the next stage of the SA.</p> <p>A summary of the consultation responses received and responses will be included in the SA Report following each stage of consultation.</p>
	<p><b>Q3:</b> No. The fully referenced book 'The Uninhabitable Earth' provides the latest background to the climate crisis which is key to the SA during the period that the plan is current:<a href="https://www.amazon.co.uk/Uninhabitable-Earth-Story-Future/dp/0241355214">https://www.amazon.co.uk/Uninhabitable-Earth-Story-Future/dp/0241355214</a></p>	<p>Noted. Relevant international and national climate change evidence has been drawn on in Chapter 3 of the SA Report.</p>
	<p><b>Q5:</b> The transport objectives as presented fail to take the challenge we face seriously: 'Reduce the need to travel.' How? It doesn't say, presumably because it is not currently within the gift of local authorities. I suggest it is wishful thinking. 'Promote a sustainable way of travelling.' Promote? I'm surprised that that is the best the joint efforts of the county's spatial and transport planning authorities can come up with. How long has the county and its districts have been 'promoting' sustainable travel thus far and what that has achieved in modal shift? 'Encourage walking and cycling and public transport.' Encourage? They suggest that will work about as well as the county's efforts thus far to discourage use of private cars. Appropriate words/phrases might be plan for, design, charge, subsidise...</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>
<p><b>Q6:</b> The SA recognises that Witney does not have a rail link but it does not say why the level of housing development proposed does not warrant one. Suggestion: a transit link that can move significant numbers of people and that does not rely on the A40 is required for the level of dwellings being proposed to the West of Eynsham. Couple that to a well-designed local cycle network and it will create a sustainable transport network that people will use.</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its</p>	

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		reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 980</p> <p><b>Gresswell Environment Trust</b></p>	<p><b>Q1:</b> Inappropriate. Very few people actually know or understand what OxLEP is. The public have not been informed, nor were they consulted when the Growth Board £215M 'deal 'was first put on the table. This is completely undemocratic. OxLEP has decided that Oxford should become a business and commercial hub whether residents like it or not - a decision taken without democratic consultation.</p> <p>Growth Board diktat, under the nomenclature of NIC Strategy, shows a total disregard for sound planning principles as laid out in the NPPF.</p> <p>OxLEP is not a democratically elected body. OxLEP is thinking money and profit, over sound sustainable planning or governance. Oxfordshire Plan 2050 has been drawn up behind closed doors, and without consideration for the people of Oxford or for surrounding villages and countryside. It will do huge damage to the local area It is greed and masquerading as growth Vested interests at work, with institutional land owners and developers set to ruin Oxford and its environment. Government should spend its funds on sustainable travel links, with climate change to the fore. Re-kindle the Varsity railway link to join with HS2, and then re-consider transport before steamrolling-over, ruining, rural South Oxfordshire.</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>
	<p><b>Q2:</b> The whole plan is wrongly conceived. It is one giant step in the wrong direction. It makes no provision for the long-term effect that more houses, cars, and people will have on Oxford. It is greedy on green field land, therefore unsustainable. Far from offering environmental and transport improvement it will put further pressure on local infrastructure. Oxford cannot sustain this level of growth without doing huge harm to the environment, its heritage assets and surrounding countryside. Very few people actually know or understand what OxLEP is, never mind what it is up to. The public were not informed or consulted when the Growth Board £215M deal was first put on the table. This is completely undemocratic. Oxfordshire Plan 2050 has been drawn up behind closed doors, and without consideration for the people of Oxford or for surrounding villages and countryside. OxLEP accepted £215M deal on our behalf without proper consultation (section 18).</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>
	<p><b>Q3:</b> Greed not Need Oxford cannot sustain this level of growth or expansion. Not what Oxford needs or wants. Government funds should be redirected to less advantaged areas of England where growth and regeneration is needed. The only thing that unites this plan is economic greed: a wild conjecture on a ruinous scale that will damage Oxford and its environment forever.</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan</p>

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Page 981	<p>To quote Joni Mitchell: They took all the trees And put them in a tree museum And they charged all the people A dollar and a half to see 'em Don't it always seem to go That you don't know what you've got 'Till it's gone They paved paradise And they put up a parking lot.</p> <p>This is not a good vision for the future.</p>	<p>and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>
	<p><b>Q4:</b> This whole document assumes that building on the Green Belt is acceptable. It is not. Outlying villages rely on the Green Belt in order to remain rural, and separate. Oxford relies on the Green Belt for good air quality, flood alleviation, and reasonable access to the countryside.</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, rather than the SA Scoping Report.</p>
	<p><b>Q5:</b> Inappropriate. The Oxfordshire 2050 plan has effectively been steamrollered out over Oxfordshire, without listening to or consulting with the public. No one wants growth on this scale, it is inappropriate in this part of England. It will ruin what is effectively a rural county. The principles of good planning seem to have gone out the window.</p>	<p>This comment relates largely to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 itself, rather than the SA Scoping Report.</p>
	<p><b>Q6:</b></p> <p>1. Oxfordshire Plan 2050 has been drawn up behind closed doors, and without consideration for the people of Oxford or for surrounding villages and countryside. It shows little or no respect for Oxford, its residents, its outlying villages, the Green Belt, wildlife conservation or preservation of national heritage assets, our quality of life is effectively at stake. Development led housing as an economic policy is questionable. It will result in all the wrong houses being built on the edges of town, attracting the wrong people (incomers and commuters), which in turn will exacerbate traffic. The Plan is fundamentally flawed due to underlying unaccountability and lack of consultation in the early stages.</p> <p>2. SHMA 2014 housing figures + a further 100,000 houses in Oxfordshire. Adopting the outdated SHMA 2014, OxLEP has jumped onto this building bonanza without considering the effect Local Plans 2034 and the hideous reality of what a further 100,000 houses (300,000 people and their cars) will do to Oxford and Oxfordshire. Oxford will be ruined by a series of roundabouts and peripheral housing in the style of Swindon, Milton Keynes and Cambridge. Conjectural unmet housing need does not constitute exceptional circumstances. 2014 SHMA figures are a proven over estimation, calculated on the basis that to fulfil social housing quotas, developers need to build 9:1 in order to make a profit. Watch Oxfordshire disappear under a blanket of housing, a tangle of roundabouts and perimeter link roads, distribution centers and ancillary business parks, one elongated sprawl, Oxford doubled in size, the loss of our Green Belt, and open countryside amenity. Land is not a commodity: it is finite, and our future. Greenfield development is the lazy, complacent and unsustainable option. Local</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 982	<p>district councils have been bullied into taking on Oxford's unmet housing need under the duty to cooperate. If Oxford City is to develop sustainably, in proportion to its historical backdrop, with respect for the local community, it must start using urban brownfield sites for residential as well as commercial use. Contrary to NPPF recommendations OxLEP is refusing to regenerate commercial premises for housing. Contrary to the principles of the NPPF, Oxford is proposing to expand out onto the Green Belt, resulting in instant urban sprawl. Developer led profit driven executive style housing does nothing to relieve the social/ affordable housing crisis for key workers. Making Oxford into England's golden business hub, boom town, and commercial shopping centre (to rival Reading?) is completely inappropriate. Oxford needs a good balance of life: a cultural mix, students and local residents, visitors, in order to thrive. It is a vast conceit that Oxford should develop its brownfield sites for business and commercial sites over housing. Houses for key workers closer to employment, so that Oxford's commercial areas do not become deserted at night. Great harm will be done to the city, the Green Belt, and surrounding rural countryside, if land is used up for unnecessary developer led housing. Proven demographic need should always be a planning requirement around historic towns. The Growth Board promises infrastructure, which is dependent on developers, with no guaranteed delivery date. The right houses never get built: developers tend to cherry pick only the most profitable sites, thus guaranteeing the highest return and maintaining house prices at inflated levels.</p> <p>3. Green Belt Review: The NPPF states that all Green Belt land should remain permanently open. Unproven housing need does not constitute exceptional circumstances. The Growth Board Scrutiny Committee is committed to ensuring that the Growth Board does not reduce the Green Belt around Oxford without extra land being allocated local as GBelt. The 5 purposes of the Green Belt should be upheld. Planning creep must be enforced. The Green Belt is our lifeline and protection from suburban sprawl. Oxford has a limited allocation of green space amenity per capita. The Green Belt not only helps contain Oxford, keeping it in scale with itself, but it represents the breath and lungs of the city. If the Green Belt is to become the new greenfield parkland amenity for Oxford, then stop it becoming the parking lot for Oxford. Once laid to tarmac it ceases to be green, it becomes a parking lot (quote: Joni Mitchell) The Green Belt is fundamental to Oxford's success story. Far from being a stranglehold, the Green Belt has kept Oxford in proportion to its historical and landscape backdrop.</p> <p>4. Jobs and business growth over sustainability and demographic need. Oxford already has 45,000 jobs. Oxford cannot easily sustain more without huge sacrifices and loss of amenity: pressure on its local services, the footfall on its open spaces, loss of Green Belt, wear and tear on its historical and architectural infrastructure. Transport services are at an overload. Satellite park and rides are full. Where are these new people coming from? Why should Oxford, a national heritage asset and university town, take London overspill or become the commercial epicenter for more jobs and more people? Oxford cannot take it.</p>	

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<p>Member of the Public</p>	<p>5. The Expressway Let's just cut up the country into ever-smaller slices and nab a bit here then there, then everywhere: houses all along the route, a string of settlements with good connectivity. This is a relief road for the A34 national freight, (with quick access to the M40/A40), Portsmouth to Felixstow. Scarring the country with a freight-way will diminish our countryside and wildlife corridors. An Expressway will encourage longer daily commuting travel distances. A Sprawl-way, with houses and distribution centres all along its route. In a sustainable future, people should be travelling less, or by rail, by bus, or best by bicycle. On a daily basis we should have fewer long distance car journeys. Government wants us to think Climate Change, and yet it commissions a 'golden arc' of sprawl and an Expressway over southern England. The Plan is flawed by an irresponsible assumption of growth, OxLEP thinking is profit over sound planning for sustainable governance. The public wants a return to a fully accountable and democratic planning process. Sound principles at the heart of its thinking. Government aspiration needs to be more grounded and locally respectful if it is to be successful.</p>	
<p>Member of the Public</p>	<p><b>Q1-Q6:</b> Please refer to the submitted representation 'SA Scoping Report Consultation. FCC' issued to OCC via email at 15:39 25 March 2019.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Oxfordshire Conservation Board</p>	<p><b>Q1:</b> The way in which this question is framed automatically skews the scope and focus of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) towards issues associated with; growth needs and development ambition. This is highly inappropriate. As outlined in paragraph 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF expands on this by stating that; achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives [economic, social and environmental], which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives). By focussing primarily on; growth needs and development ambition, rather than addressing all three sustainable development objectives equally and in a mutually supportive way, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 / Joint Strategic Spatial Plan (JSSP) is failing to address the purpose of the planning system and the requirements of the NPPF. For the SA to be equally biased is even more inappropriate given that; its role is to promote sustainable development by assessing the extent to which the emerging plan will help to achieve relevant environmental, economic and social objectives.</p> <p>The SA should address all three sustainable development objectives equally, regardless of the scope of the Plan that is being assessed. As such, the second half of the question (i.e., considering the role) is irrelevant. With regards to the first part</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p> <p>Relevant changes have been implemented throughout the SA Scoping Report based on the topics highlighted, notably SA objective 7 addresses building climate resilience, the key sustainability issues for flood risk has been updated and the importance of irreplaceable and priority habitats is now referenced.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 984	<p>of the question (i.e., Is the scope of the SA appropriate) the Cotswolds Conservation Board (the Board) has the following comments to make.</p> <p>Overall, the Board agrees with the key sustainability issues identified in <b>paragraph 4.23</b> of the SA, albeit with the following caveats: Under-provision of homes (<b>paragraph 4.23 and Table 3.6</b>) A distinction should be made between meeting current housing needs in Oxfordshire and meeting the much larger housing numbers that are being proposed for Oxfordshire. A distinction should also be made between meeting county / local authority wide need and the provision of housing in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), which cover 25% of the county. The NPPF specifies that the scale and extent of development [in AONBs] should be limited (paragraph 172) and that, under most circumstances; planning permission should be refused for major development [in AONBs]. Paragraph 11 and Footnote 5 of the NPPF exempt AONBs from the requirement to accommodate local authority-wide objectively assessed needs for housing. The statutory Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2018-2023 states that; development in the Cotswolds AONB should be based on robust evidence of local need arising with the AONB. For these reasons, housing provision in AONBs should focus on meeting affordable housing needs arising within the individual settlements of the AONB. If this restriction means that Oxfordshire can't meet its housing needs wholly within the Plan area, consideration should be given to accommodating these needs elsewhere, in line with paragraph 26 of the NPPF. The Board's recommendations relating to these issues are outlined in response to Question 5, in relation to SA objective 15.</p> <p>Flood Risk (<b>paragraph 4.23 and Table 3.15</b>) The Board supports the recognition of the importance of taking into account flood risk. However, an important element of the JSSP's flood risk strategy should be to minimise the amount of and slow the rate of - surface water run-off from new and existing developments through the use of; sustainable drainage systems. This appears to be reflected in SA objective 10, but not in paragraph 4.23 or Table 3.15. The Board recommends that the following phrase should be added to this key sustainability issue: and managing surface water run-off through the use of sustainable drainage systems.</p> <p>Climate Change (<b>paragraph 4.23 and Table 3.13</b>) The bullet point relating to climate change focusses on reducing the County's contribution to climate change. Whilst this is an important issue, consideration should also be given to how the County will adapt to climate change. The Board recommends that the following sentence is added to this key sustainability issue: Building resilience for adaption to climate change.</p> <p>Biodiversity (<b>paragraph 4.23 and Table 3.19</b>) The Board supports the recognition of the need to protect the County's biodiversity and to particularly the aspiration to maintain and strengthen its ecological networks. However, the bullet point</p>	

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 985	<p>could be considerably strengthened. For example: Rather than just seeking to protect biodiversity, the aspiration should be to significantly increase biodiversity in order to redress the significant and ongoing losses to biodiversity. Rather than referring to internationally and nationally designated habitats, it would be more correct to refer to internationally and nationally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, as the designations relate to both habitats and species.</p> <p>The bullet point should emphasise the importance of irreplaceable habitat and other priority habitats and species. The bullet point should recognise the value of locally designated sites. Development should be required to deliver significant net-gains in biodiversity, in line with the aspirations of the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan. Taking account of, and supporting, Oxfordshire's network for Conservation Target Areas. For these reasons, the Board recommends that this key sustainability issue should be changed to: The need to significantly increase the County's biodiversity, including: protecting the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity and irreplaceable habitat; conserving and enhancing priority species and habitats; creating coherent and resilient ecological networks, particularly in Conservation Target Areas; and ensuring that development delivers a significant net-gain in biodiversity.</p> <p>Landscape: The Board supports the recognition of; the need to protect and enhance the character of Oxfordshire's landscape, including the protected landscapes of the AONBs and their settings. However, the purpose of AONB designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB. As such any assessment of the sustainability of the JSSP in relation to AONBs should Landscape character is obviously a key feature of AONBs. However, the statutory purpose of AONB designation is to conserve and enhance their natural beauty. Landscape character is an important component of natural beauty but natural beauty also covers a wider range of issues, including scenic beauty, relative tranquillity, natural heritage and cultural heritage. Natural beauty also relates to the special qualities of the AONBs. The bullet point refers to there being two AONBs but, as identified elsewhere in the SA, there are, in fact, three AONBs Cotswolds, Chilterns and North Wessex Downs. For these reasons, the Board recommends that this key sustainability issues should be changed to: The need to conserve and enhance: the character of Oxfordshire's landscape, including the special views into Oxford; and the natural beauty of the three AONBs and their setting.</p>	
	<p><b>Q2:</b> The Management Plans of the three AONBs Cotswolds, Chilterns and North Wessex Downs are statutory plans, which set out policies for the management of the AONBs. They are important material considerations and should be included as relevant plans in the SA. Ideally, the policies of the JSSP should be consistent with the policies of the AONB Management Plans.</p>	<p>Noted. The Management Plans of the three AONBs are now mentioned within the Landscape section of Chapter 3 of the SA Scoping Report.</p>

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Page 986	<p><b>Q3: Biodiversity and Geodiversity (paragraphs 3.87-3.91)</b> The Biodiversity and Geodiversity section should highlight the significant declines in biodiversity, both nationally and at a county level, as outlined reports such as the Wild Oxfordshire report; State of Nature in Oxfordshire 2017.</p> <p><b>Landscape and Townscape (paragraphs 3.98-3.110)</b> The Landscape and Townscape section should highlight the fact that the three AONBs cover 25% of Oxfordshire: Chilterns AONB = 9% of Oxfordshire; Cotswolds AONB = 9%; North Wessex Downs = 7% This section should also highlight the scale of development that has already taken place in these three AONBs - and in their setting - in recent years and the pressure that this puts on the purpose of AONB designation (i.e. conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONBs), as outlined below:</p> <p>Table of housing pressure in the Cotswolds, Chilterns and North Wessex Downs (number of housing schemes: 10 units approved and number of units within AONBs and within 500m of AONB 2012-2017) Chilterns: 23 schemes approved; 1,213 housing units approved within the AONB; 30 schemes approved within 500m of the AONB; 992 housing units approved within 500m of the AONB. Cotswolds: 62 schemes approved; 2,869 housing units approved within the AONB; 41 schemes approved within 500m of the AONB; 2,968 housing units approved within 500m of the AONB. North Wessex Downs: 35 schemes approved; 1,286 housing units approved within the AONB; 15 schemes approved within 500m of the AONB; 567 housing units approved within 500m of the AONB.</p>	<p>Noted. Additional information regarding housing pressures on the AONBs of Oxfordshire has been added to the Landscape section of Chapter 3 of the SA Scoping Report.</p>
	<p><b>Q4: Tranquillity and Dark Skies</b></p> <p>The Board acknowledges that the issues of tranquillity dark skies have been identified in SA Objective 8. However, these issues have not been adequately addressed in earlier sections of the SA (where the main focus is on air pollution). These are very important issues for three AONBs, which cover 25% of Oxfordshire, not least because they are two components of the 'special qualities' of the AONBs. The Cotswolds AONB Management Plan has policies to specifically address these issues - Policy CE4 (Tranquillity) and Policy CE5 (Dark Skies). These policies seek to avoid and minimise adverse impacts on tranquillity and dark skies resulting from new development and encourage measures to be taken to remove and reduce existing adverse impacts. Given their importance for the AONBs these topics merit being addressed in earlier sections of the SA, in particular, in Chapter 3. As a minimum the SA should explain what these terms mean and provide maps of: dark skies in Oxfordshire, based on the interactive maps on CPRE's Night Blight website and Tranquillity in Oxfordshire, based on CPRE's Tranquillity Map: England.</p>	<p>Additional information regarding tranquillity and dark skies has been included within the Landscape section of Chapter 3 of the SA Scoping Report.</p>

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Page 987	<p>Chapter 3 should make reference to these topics being special qualities of the AONBs and the high level of importance that these topics should be given in the AONBs. This should include the impact that development outside the AONBs has on these issues within the AONB (e.g., by creating additional traffic movements within and adjacent to the AONBs). Natural and Cultural Capital and Ecosystem Services are important issues which should be addressed in the SA and in the JSSP. As a starting point, Oxfordshire's natural and cultural capital and the services that they provide should be fully assessed and evaluated.</p>	
	<p><b>Q5:</b> SA objective 7 (To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change)</p> <p>As outlined in response to Question 1, in addition to considering Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change, the SA and JSSP should also consider how Oxfordshire can build resilience for adaptation to climate change. For this reason, the Board recommends that SA objective 7 is changed to: To minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change and build resilience for adaptation to climate change. To take account of this wider scope, the appraisal questions should include: Will the JSSP encourage building resilience for adaptation to climate change?</p> <p>SA objective 8 (To minimise air, noise and light pollution) Based on the points made in response to Question 4, the final appraisal question should be changed to: Will the JSP maintain Oxfordshire's tranquil areas and dark skies, particularly in the three AONBs? The following additional appraisal questions should be added: Will the JSSP: Help to avoid and minimise light pollution? Help to remove and reduce existing sources of light pollution? Help to avoid and minimise noise pollution and other aural and visual disturbance? Help to remove and reduce existing sources of noise pollution and other aural and visual disturbance?</p> <p>SA objective 15 (To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality) The Cotswolds, Chilterns and North Wessex Downs AONBs are the highest quality and most important landscapes in Oxfordshire. As such, they merit being explicitly referred to in SA objective 15. Landscape character and quality are obviously key features of the AONBs. The statutory purpose of AONB designation is to conserve and enhance their natural beauty. Therefore, it would be appropriate for the wording of the objective to be changed to: To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's landscape character and quality and the natural beauty of its three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, including their setting. As indicated in response to Question 1: natural beauty covers a wider range of issues than landscape character and quality. These issues include scenic quality, relative tranquillity, natural heritage features and cultural heritage. Natural beauty also relates to the special qualities of the AONBs. Some of these issues (e.g., biodiversity and historic environment) are addressed in some detail elsewhere in the SA. However, those natural beauty issues that are not addressed elsewhere (e.g. tranquillity and special</p>	<p>These comments have been reviewed and appropriate updates to the SA framework have been made, notably, building resilience is now referenced within SA objective 7 and the enhancement of the landscape will now be addressed by SA objective 15.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 988	<p>qualities, including dark skies) should be specifically addressed under this objective. Also, as indicated in response to Question 1, in relation to the under-provision of homes, the SA should address a number of issues relating to housing provision in the AONBS. Based on these points, the Board recommends that the first appraisal question for SA objective 15 should be replaced by the following two questions: Will the JSSP: Conserve and enhance the natural beauty of Oxfordshire’s three AONBs (Cotswolds, Chilterns, North Wessex Downs) and their setting, including their landscape beauty, character and quality scenic beauty and quality, including views into and out of the AONBs special qualities? Limit the scale and extent of development within the AONBs, including ensuring that major development is not permitted in the AONBs, development in the AONBs is based on robust evidence of local need arising from within the AONBs (particularly in the context of housing)?</p>	
	<p><b>Q6:</b> It is important note that relevant authorities, including public bodies such as local planning authorities (LPAs), have a statutory duty to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of AONBS when exercising or performing any functions in relation to the AONBs. This duty is known as the duty of regard. Natural England and Defra have produced useful guidance on the duty of regard, which clarifies the expectations of the duty and best practice relating to the duty. This guidance is also summarised in Appendix 4 of the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan. For example, the expectation of the duty of regard is that adverse impacts on the AONBs will be avoided or mitigated where possible. Best practice for relevant authorities, in relation to the duty of regard, includes: considering the duty of regard at several points any decision making process or activities, including during initial thinking, at more detailed planning stages and at implementation; providing written evidence that they have had regard and considered whether it is, or is not, relevant; undertaking and making publicly available and assessment of any plan which is likely to affect land within an AONB; ensuring that decisions affecting these areas are properly considered and recorded in high level policy documents and public statements; set out the actions that they have taken to comply with the duty of regard; make reference to the duty of regard in appropriate monitoring documents. This duty should be a key consideration in the development of the JSSP, especially given that AONBs cover 25% of Oxfordshire, and compliance with the duty should be appropriately assessed and recorded, as outlined above. LPAs also have the power to take all such action as appears expedient to them for the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of AONBs. This adds extra weight to the need to ensure that the JSSP genuinely contributes to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of Oxfordshire’s three AONBs.</p>	Noted.
	<p><b>Q1:</b> More or less</p>	Noted.

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 989</p> <p><b>Bus Users Oxford</b></p>	<p><b>Q2:</b> The Climate Change Act 2008 should be prominent in the JSSP's policy context. The SA is wrong to relegate the CCA to page 76 of Appendix 2. The SA notes that the NIC and LEP support the Government policy to build the CaMKOx Expressway road and increasing the capacity of the A34 road. But it fails not toe that Oxford City Council policy formally opposes the Expressway, and that Oxford City Council has declared a climate emergency. Bus Users Oxford agrees with Oxford City Council on both points. We are in a climate emergency now, and building the Expressway and increasing capacity on the A34 is incompatible with mitigating World climate change to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Building the Expressway and upgrading the A34 contravene other parts of the JSSP such as table 3.9 (page 21) and table 5.1 Section 6 (page 58) which emphasise the need to end high dependence on private cars and section 3.59 (page 27) which stresses reducing the need to travel in order to mitigate climate change. The Expressway would create large volumes of induced traffic. The Expressway makes the JSSP inherently self-contradictory.</p>	<p>The importance of building resilience to climate change has been highlighted throughout the SA Scoping Report.</p>
	<p><b>Q3:</b> The baseline notes that Oxfordshire has more jobs than resident workers, and that the imbalance is most acute in Oxford. This causes high housing costs and high levels of inward commuting. It also notes that West Oxfordshire, by contrast, has more resident workers than jobs, which causes high levels of outward commuting. However, section 3.50 (page 20) asserts that many of the workers commuting out of West Oxfordshire work in either Oxford (correct) or in the Abingdon and Didcot area. Do not 2011 Census data show more West Oxfordshire residents working in Cherwell district than in southern Oxfordshire? The SA mentions reducing the need to travel. But it does not note that average commuting distances in the UK are twice what they are in other European countries. Reducing commuting distances toward the European average should perhaps be a goal of the JSSP.</p>	<p>Noted. Please note that the commuting data has been updated since the 2011 Census, which is method of travel to work data specific to 2001. The updated information is shown in Table 3.8.</p> <p>Most of this comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>
	<p><b>Q4:</b> Section 4.7 mentions how our climate may change. This may require many aspects of transport to be revised, including higher melting points for road surfaces, higher-capacity road drainage, a need for more and better bus shelters, and what materials will be best for bus shelters in a warmer climate with wetter winters, drier summers and possibly more frequent high winds. Sections 4.7 and 4.9 discuss ICT and transport. The distinction between traditional scheduled bus services and new demand-responsive services such as PickMeUp may become blurred. It might be helpful for the SA to mention that Oxfordshire's Knowledge Spine is an ideal place to pilot such innovations. Section 4.18 names the rail network as the biggest cost and strategic rapid transport as the least. Buses are not mentioned, unless some forms of bus service are implied under strategic rapid transport. Buses are key to decongesting and decarbonising the first and last mile segments of many rail</p>	<p>Noted. This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, rather than the SA Scoping Report.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 990	<p>journeys. It should be emphasised that buses can yield relatively large benefits for relatively low capital investment, but have suffered chronic and acute under-investment by local and national governments. Section 4.23 emphasises severe under-provision of homes. Oxfordshire's housing shortage does cause both homelessness and high prices for private property to buy or rent. This is a key cause of workers living far from their jobs and commuting long distances. Enough social and affordable housing must therefore be provided. However, the targets numbers for new homes being prescribed for Oxfordshire for the next few decades seem excessive. If 100,000 or 300,000 new homes are built in Oxfordshire, transport will be strained and is unlikely that the transport sector will reach its climate change and air quality targets. Instead, we need more modest numbers of homes, strategically located to develop communities of sustainable density and size. These would help to make public transport viable for more communities, and for a larger proportion of residents in those communities.</p>	
	<p><b>Q5: Table 5.1 section 5</b> (page 57) sets as an objective to maintain high and stable levels of employment across Oxfordshire. This omits the shortage of jobs in West Oxfordshire, which leads many residents to commute out of their district (see above). <b>Table 5.1 sections 7 and 8</b> (page 58) sets as objectives minimising climate change and pollution. A policy to achieve transport that is carbon-neutral and has zero exhaust emissions by 2050 is not ambitious enough. Our climate emergency must be fixed by 2030 at the very latest. It makes sense to address air quality at the same time, which if successful could eliminate AQMAs by 2030.</p>	<p>Noted. This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, rather than the SA Scoping Report.</p>
	<p><b>Q6:</b> The SA mentions the Knowledge Spine in <b>sections 4.11 and 4.12</b> (page 53) and <b>Table 5.1 section 4</b> (page 57). And Section 3.50 (page 20) mentions that West Oxfordshire has more workers than jobs, leading to high levels of commuting out of the district. But the SA seems not to consider the need for a solution or what it should be. Much of West Oxfordshire's population lives in Witney and Carterton, which suffer from acute and chronic congestion on the A40. Oxfordshire County Council plans various works intended to relieve the A40. But the SA and JSSP seem to leave West Oxfordshire as a mere adjunct to the Knowledge Spine. The SA and JSSP should perhaps consider adding Witney and perhaps Carterton to the Knowledge Spine, and therefore deserving public transport links of equal quality. This would give the planned A40 bus lanes higher priority, and add the longer-term objective of restoring a rail link first to Witney and then to Carterton. Equal quality public transport would enable high-value, high-skill employers to locate in the Carterton Witney Eynsham corridor. This could enable West Oxfordshire to have as many jobs as resident workers, which would reduce both the need for residents to commute out of West Oxfordshire and the imbalance of commuter flows in and out of the district.</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>

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<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 991</p> <p><b>Active Oxfordshire</b></p>	<p><b>Q1:</b> The document does meet the need. However, we would like to see greater reference to Health; Inequalities and Healthy Place shaping (both for new growth areas and existing communities). These three areas underpin our vision of Everybody in Oxfordshire is Physically Active. Active Oxfordshire aspires to deliver healthy place making and community activation underpinned by the provision of good quality sports/leisure facilities; informal recreation spaces and good walking, cycling and running routes that is accessible to all.</p>	<p>Noted. Healthy place shaping has been added into the SA framework and will be addressed by SA objective 2.</p>
	<p><b>Q2:</b> Yes. There should be greater reference to the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy (and the sub strategies around Children and Young People; Adults and Older People) and the Oxfordshire Health Inequalities Commission report (plus associated documents related to both including the JSNA). There should also be greater reference to Getting Everybody Active Everyday a framework to changing people’s daily activity. At a national level the references should be made to Sporting Future (Government sport and physical activity strategy) <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/717782/2166-C_Sporting_Future.pdf">https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/717782/2166-C_Sporting_Future.pdf</a> and Towards an Active Nation (Sport England strategy) <a href="https://www.sportengland.org/media/10629/sport-england-towards-an-active-nation.pdf">https://www.sportengland.org/media/10629/sport-england-towards-an-active-nation.pdf</a>. These are the two key national strategies related to increasing physical activity. We would also recommend use of national and local insight (which Active Oxfordshire can provide <a href="https://www.activeoxfordshire.org/national-insight/">https://www.activeoxfordshire.org/national-insight/</a>); national guidance on Active Design (developed by Sport England <a href="https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/active-design/">https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/active-design/</a>) and national learning on place based approach being led by Sport England <a href="https://www.sportengland.org/our-work/local-delivery/">https://www.sportengland.org/our-work/local-delivery/</a></p>	<p>Noted. Relevant updates have been made to the Health section of Chapter 3 of the SA Scoping Report.</p>
	<p><b>Q3:</b> We would like to submit information related to physical activity data. Active Lives 16+ Levels of Activity Area / Region            Inactive (less than 30mins per week) Insufficiently active (31 149 mins per week) Active (over 150mins per week)            Population total Rate (%) RAG Rating Population total Rate (%) Population total Rate (%) RAG Rating Cherwell 72,400            22.3% 19,600 16.6% 26,300 61.2% Oxford 95,000 16.3% 11,800 9.3% 20,800 74.5% South Oxfordshire 80,100 18.2%            12,400 10.9% 20,600 70.9% Vale of White Horse 70,300 17.4% 17,400 16.4% 18,400 66.2% West Oxfordshire 59,500            22.3% 9,800 11.0% 19,800 66.7% Oxfordshire 105,700 19.1% 70,700 12.8% 377,800 68.2% South East 1,637,200 22.3%            920,200 12.5% 4,785,800 65.2% England 11,340,500 25.2% 5,615,400 12.5% 28,025,600 62.3% Active Lives 5-16 Active            every day (60 minutes or more every day)<sup>1</sup> Active across the week (an average of 60 minutes or more per day) Fairly active            (an average of 30-59 minutes a day) Less active (less than an average of 30 minutes a day) Population total Rate (%)            Population total Rate (%) Population total Rate (%) RAG Rating Cherwell 3,900 21.8% 5,300            29.7% 3,900 21.9% 4,700 26.6% Oxford 4,300 23.9% 4,100 22.6% 3,700 20.5% 6,000 33.0% South Oxfordshire * * 5,600</p>	<p>Noted. Additional information regarding active lifestyles has been added to the Health Section of Chapter 3 of the SA Scoping Report.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 992	<p>28.5% 6,200 31.2% 5,600 28.6% Vale of White Horse 4,400 25.1% 4,700 26.8% 4,000 22.9% 4,400 25.2% West Oxfordshire 2,300 15.4% 3,300 22.7% 3,700 25.0% 5,400 37.0% Oxfordshire 18,600 21.2% 22,900 26.1% 20,400 23.2% 25,900 29.5% South East 182,800 17.5% 272,900 26.2% 256,700 24.6% 331,000 31.7% National 1,232,600 17.5% 1,808,100 25.7% 1,678,600 23.9% 2,309,000 32.9% The rates of physical inactivity increase in Oxfordshire if: - You live in an area of deprivation- You have a disability and/or a long-term health condition (and multiple conditions makes this figure worse)- You have poor/low mental wellbeing- You are an older person The overview for data sets for Oxfordshire for different demographics and groups can be found here <a href="https://www.activeoxfordshire.org/uploads/oxfordshire-state-of-play.pdf">https://www.activeoxfordshire.org/uploads/oxfordshire-state-of-play.pdf</a></p>	
	<p><b>Q5:</b> Yes, it is appropriate. We would however like to see the inclusion of Oxfordshire (and districts and city level) physical activity/inactivity data across all ages and all themes. Active Oxfordshire can provide guidance and input on what is required.</p>	<p>Noted. Chapter 3 of the Scoping Report acknowledges the data on physical activity and obesity. SA objective 2 will test the ability of the plan and its reasonable alternatives for improving the health and wellbeing of Oxfordshire's population.</p>
Fairfax Properties	<p><b>Q1:</b> There is little or no reference in the JSSP to its duty to cooperate role with adjoining Counties. The document focuses its strategy entirely inwards and therefore needs to ensure that opportunities across the County boundary are explored where they can assist in achieving the wider objectives. Where reference is made to development further afield, this is in regard to the Oxford, Milton Keynes, Cambridge arc to the north east of the County. No reference is made to other major towns and cities that adjoin the County, in particular Reading located directly to the south. This is particularly relevant as the land that surrounds Reading is not located within the Green Belt or within an AONB and, further, has excellent transport links by road and rail, providing significant opportunity to take new development that can assist Oxfordshire in meeting its growth needs and development ambition. Taking this into account, the Plan should be more specific in allocating areas for development in particular for housing growth. <b>Table 3.6</b> states that the Plan will allow for a more strategic approach to housing delivery where District Local Plans may struggle to deliver. Focus on the location of these areas should cover the whole County and not just focus all development opportunities to the Oxford/Cambridge arc in the north of the County. Identifying land around existing settlements will allow for existing infrastructure and facilities to be utilised. Furthermore, by looking at the County as a whole and identifying a spread of development will, in essence, provide a steer to Districts, such as South Oxfordshire regarding where housing could be provided. This could be either as part of the emerging Local Plan, or as reserve sites, should concerns still linger regarding deliverability of the strategic housing allocations in that document.</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>

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Page 993	<p><b>Q2:</b> A program for assessing how Oxfordshire fits in with neighbouring Authorities should be undertaken and analysed in order to ensure that development is located in the most appropriate places. This is particularly pertinent considering the constraints of Green Belt and AONB within the County as well as the location of existing infrastructure and services beyond it, but accessible from it. Taking this approach will help consider the ability of proposed sites in Oxfordshire to provide the necessary services and infrastructure upgrades to bring forward development in the context that it is capable of being provided in connection with existing major service centres located just outside of the County. Development placement should be assessed on a holistic and wider scale to ensure that either major infrastructure improvements are implemented in locations that will bring maximum benefit or to take advantage of the opportunity provided by existing major service centres to locate development and growth in a manner that can be accommodated without the need for major upgrade.</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, rather than the SA Scoping Report.</p>
	<p><b>Q3:</b> More emphasis could be placed on Housing need rather than what is planned for and existing house prices. Information on what is driving the need in specific areas would be useful when assessing how to address issues such as housing locations and infrastructure requirements, for example: Why are people living where they do and why are they commuting to where they are? To better understand this question the SA needs to understand if people are commuting into Oxford to work, is it because that is where they want to work, or is it because it is the next best alternative to Reading or London, but that existing transport connections are so poor that they have no choice but to go to Oxford instead? Wider issues such as the benefit/disbenefit accrued by a Third Reading Bridge should form part of considerations.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
	<p><b>Q4:</b> One significant piece of infrastructure that would bring many benefits to Oxfordshire is a new Thames bridge proposed to be located to the east of Reading. A significant amount of work has already been undertaken that assesses the impact a new bridge would be. Wokingham Borough Council have had a Forecasting Report produced which assess how the bridge could function against predicted and modelled transport scenarios up to 2026. The report concludes that this new bridge would alleviate the current traffic pressures across the existing bridges in Reading and Sonning and open up access into Oxfordshire from the south. The new bridge would also divert traffic away from the centre of Reading providing significant congestion relief in many of the currently congested roads in South Oxfordshire, Reading and Sonning. With the Support of the Authorities either side of the Thames, it may be possible to secure Government funding towards the project. Furthermore, funding could also be sourced from development sites located near to the project.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
	<p><b>Q5:</b> Objective no. 1 is for the Joint Strategic Spatial Plan to meet Oxfordshire’s housing needs. However, it is very unclear how this document will achieve this if it is not proposing to spread its allocation for new areas of development across the</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the</p>



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Page 995	<p>Population forecasts from different sources are included within the scoping report. It's important to be consistent, and these various sources predict different population growth. Compare for example, NIC figures, Oxfordshire figures, ONS figures. They differ, yet all are 'evidence'. Which are we using, and why? Which has been historically more reliable? Can you show them all graphically? And justify your choice of which figures to base this plan on?</p>	
	<p><b>Q4:</b></p> <p><b>a.</b> Transport. Iterations of the county transport plan (LPTx) over the years have brought no improvement to our most intractable obstacles to growth; the A34 and A40 and A420 (at least) are too often over capacity and too often at a standstill. Building more houses in locations that require a commute to work will only exacerbate the problem. I'd like to see an assessment of the way LPTs are written, to find other ways of bringing forward effective plans for reducing road congestion. This JSSP is hanging its transport hat on the next iteration of LPT, and I question what's changed to allow us to continue to rely on the same old plan making.</p> <p><b>b.</b> Transport (more). The gap between what's needed to support the houses planned and what is funded is huge. It's irresponsible to move forward with providing more houses than the infrastructure funding can provide for.</p> <p><b>c.</b> Growth in general. It's arguable whether we can actually afford to grow any more at all, or whether we are full. School places, GP surgeries, hospital beds, social</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>
	<p><b>Q6:</b> Houses are unaffordable in the county. JSSP should have a plan to price houses affordable to people on average (this report says that's £27,793) and below average salaries. I read in the aspirations doc that most jobs here are in retail, a traditional low paying field. How do we provide housing for people in retail jobs, close enough to work that they can abandon car use? We need to address this. We need a new definition of 'affordable' that somehow relates to a family's income and joined up thinking about employment and housing.</p> <p>Poor maths and writing achievement in Oxfordshire students means school leavers aren't suitable to the well-paying jobs we have and therefore are priced out of the area. What will we do to address that?</p> <p>Recently we heard of a study by British Lung Foundation that measured particulate air pollution near health facilities. Botley Medical Centre was over WHO standards. They are right next to a primary school. What are we doing to improve air quality in our AQMAs? It looks like not enough, as we are still over the threshold in many areas. So the 100,000 houses we're</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>

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	building between now at 2030, and the (however many) after that will add to our troubles and the resulting health and mortality.	
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 996</p> <p><b>Elsfield Parish Meeting</b></p>	<p><b>Q1:</b> The SA has to have within its Scope the assessment of the sustainability of the Oxford Housing and growth Deal, the OXLEP strategic Economic Plan and the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy. The JSSP is going to provide the first ever statutory consultation on the programmes of work and the strategies in these documents. Therefore, the SA needs to review the sustainability of these plans.</p> <p>The SA lacks a section considering Alternatives to the development ambitions. The SA will need to consider alternatives to the JSSP development ambition, particularly for the later period where there is greater uncertainty about the technological, economic and environmental conditions. The SEA regulations require the SA to look at alternatives to the strategy set out in the JSSP.</p>	<p>Please note each of the documents mentions are considered within Chapter 2 of the SA Scoping Report. However, this SA will only assess the sustainability of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. Reasonable alternatives will be identified, appraised and reported later on in the SA process.</p>
	<p><b>Q3:</b> The OSOSAR is not a suitable baseline for the SA of the Oxfordshire JSSP because it has never been subject to Regulation 18 consultation (or any extensive consultation), its purpose is incompatible with the JSSP, and its assessment of accessibility, bus network, deliverability, and landscape issues is flawed. We believe that its information can only be used with great care and not as an unscrutinised starting point for the SA Scoping report.</p> <p>The OSOSAR has not been subject to statutory Regulation 18 consultation. As a result its baseline cannot be given weight in the SA process. The lack of extensive consultation also means there are errors and omissions, further diminishing its usefulness.</p> <p>The OSOSAR had as its focus on providing for Oxford's needs and not Oxfordshire. This impacted on what it looked at and how it assessed sustainability. This included an uncritical application of 'nearer to the centre of Oxford the more accessible and sustainable', without considering that transport problems start in getting into Oxford from the ring road, and that fast dedicated buses from anywhere in Oxfordshire can get to the City Centre quickly. The study also failed to take into account the need for households to have easy access to a range of employment opportunities, including those elsewhere in Oxford and in Oxfordshire.</p> <p>The OSOCSAR admitted to limitations in its approach and information base, however it made significant errors in its assessment of accessibility, bus network, deliverability, and landscape issues.</p>	<p>Part of this comment relates to the Oxford Spatial Options SA report, which was part of a separate study and will not be addressed here.</p> <p>The baseline of the SA has drawn on the most up-to-date and appropriate evidence available, and will be updated at each stage of the SA process. The comments relating to the baseline have been reviewed and appropriate updates have been made to the baseline section of the SA Scoping Report, specifically additional information regarding bus and cycle routes, the adverse impact of air pollution on biodiversity assets, integrating climate change throughout the SA Scoping Report and mapping Conservation Target Areas.</p> <p>Please note that Figure 3.12 illustrating Oxfordshire's environmental sensitivity in</p>

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<p>Page 997</p>	<p>Our interest is mostly in relation to the ‘Wick Farm’ site, where the OSOCSAR failed to capture the historical and cultural connections of Elsfield Lane, and College Pool and Sidlings Copse (Gerard and Ashmole collected wildlife samples there), missed the international importance of the Historic View of Oxford, and underplayed the now rare (in terms of Oxfordshire) feature of the landscape of 18th Century small fields with hedgerow trees.</p> <p>The OSOCSAR failed to take into account the environmental constraints of the ‘Wick Farm’ site (including significant damage to the nationally important wildlife site) in assessing how much housing would be possible, and admitted that it did not assess the infrastructure needed for sites and the cost. It thus erroneously concluded that the site was deliverable when the conclusions by South Oxfordshire District Council Planning staff (who carried out more reliable research) is that it is not deliverable. There is also significant doubt on the site’s viability.</p> <p>The OSOCSAR made major assumptions about the accessibility of the ‘Wick Farm’ site that do not bear scrutiny. The site is cut off from both Barton and Barton Park by the Bayswater Stream and the flood Zone 1 and 2, and of course Barton and Barton Park are cut off from the City by the A40. Much of the ‘Wick Farm’ site is a long walk from the bus at Barton and Barton Park. The bus service is not that frequent and takes over 25 minutes to get to the centre of Oxford, the same as the fast buses from Abingdon, Didcot and Witney! The actual walking distance to Headington from the western part of the ‘Wick Farm’ site is 2.4km. Cycling that route is dangerous, particularly going through Old Headington and crossing the A40 on a bridge without cycle tracks. Car access to Oxford’s facilities is increasingly limited by parking spaces: adding demand without increasing parking and road capacity in the city does not make sense; in effect the Wick Farm residents won’t have access by car.</p> <p>The Sustainability appraisal will need to take into account the access to a range of jobs because households have more than one employed person, and we are trying to increase flexibility of the workforce- being able to move to different jobs in the Region. A development site with jobs in more than one direction is a better choice that a site with jobs only in one direction. For example, the Wick Farm site is at the short-end periphery of the Eastern Arc of Oxford limiting easy access to Oxford based jobs, and has poor access to the Knowledge Economy Growth Areas to the North and South of Oxford.</p> <p><b>Housing baseline page 15</b></p> <p>A new assessment of housing needs and its location in relation to economic, social and planning aims and requirements needs to be developed. The baseline on Housing should not make assumptions on where housing needs arises and should</p>	<p>2016 has been removed in light of the more recent environmental evidence and data set out in other sections of the SA Scoping Report Baseline.</p>

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Page 998	<p>be met. It is second-guessing the spatial strategy being developed, and perpetuating the District Council bias to only look at their own obligations.</p> <p>This section of the Scope talks about Oxford's Housing need as though it is a fixed assumption that Oxford's housing need should be considered separately from the rest of Oxfordshire. The JSSP is for Oxfordshire, and is premised on the idea that the County acts as an economic unit. It is impossible to separate Oxford's housing need from that of the surrounding county when so many people commute to jobs in Oxford. The University and knowledge economy already extends beyond Oxford City, so therefore so does its housing needs. Furthermore, the relationship between housing and employment raises questions that go beyond Oxford. For example, how does the idea of balancing employment with housing equate with an assumption that we put more employment into Oxford and push the housing further out? The JSSP will tackle these questions and therefore needs to consider housing need in relation to its economic and social aims and not to the geographical areas of the District Authorities; a new geographical assessment of housing need is required.</p> <p><b>Transport baseline page 19</b></p> <p>The baseline on Transport in the SA Scoping report needs to be based on further and more rigorous research. The description of the baseline makes it seem that there is a significant transport advantage in locating housing near to Oxford, when the evidence tells a different story.</p> <p>The Scoping Study seems to make the assumption that cycle and bus use is uniformly high in Oxford. It isn't. Research on cycling to work has the percentage down to 13% 2 miles from the centre. It would be even lower outside the ring road. Bus use to get to work is no higher than the national average in the Eastern Arc of Oxford.</p> <p>The bus network in Oxford is not good away from the main axes, and bus travel to work that crosses the main axes of the Eastern Arc is difficult and time consuming. Buses into the centre of Oxford go via crossroads and suburban streets, stopping along the way and therefore are slow. As mentioned above the fast buses from Abingdon, Didcot and Witney can get to the centre of Oxford as fast as buses from Marston or Barton.</p> <p>For buses to be economic and viable need to go through higher density areas and connect with other services and major housing areas. This is just not the case for large parts of the Eastern arc in Oxford, and certainly not for buses North of Marston- there is no large settlements for the buses to go on to.</p>	

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Page 999	<p>With reference to ‘Sustainable Transport, the SODC Sustainable transport study to inform the 2033 Local Plan found that the percentage of journeys likely to use sustainable transport to be the same wherever housing was located in South Oxfordshire (Adjacent to Oxford or outside the Green Belt): 10%.</p> <p>As the scoping study says elsewhere, the traffic problems in commuting into Oxford occur at the Ring Road and inside the Ring Road. New housing on the edge of Oxford suffers from the same queues and have only marginally quicker journeys. Ironically, the Oxford Transport Plan is seeking to reduce the road space for cars and push them on to the ring road and link roads, making it more difficult to access jobs and facilities from outside Oxford.</p> <p><b>Air quality baseline page 24</b></p> <p>The NOX level experienced by vulnerable national Priority Habitats should be measured for the Air Quality baseline.</p> <p>As stated elsewhere in the Scoping Report, air quality is vital for certain biodiversity sites which could be near to the tipping point of NOX levels that will destroy them. This baseline section and Table 3.11 should reflect this. We recommend that the baseline NOX level for vulnerable habitats near to Air Quality action zones be measured- for example at Sidlings Copse and College Pool SSSI acid and calcareous grassland and heathland, and the alkaline fen- all habitats we have European obligations to protect.</p> <p><b>Climate change baseline page 27</b></p> <p>We are pleased to see that this section addresses the increased risk of flooding, and the potential impact on biodiversity.</p> <p>Flood risk baseline page 29</p> <p>Significant changes need to be made to the Flood risk baseline. Environment Agency (latest expected April 2019), Government and the Committee on Climate Change advice has greatly changed since the Thames Region Catchment Flood Management Plan published in 2009.</p> <p>It is now not enough to just use Fluvial Flood zones 1, 2, and 3 without taking climate change into account. Also here is a stress on including both Surface Water and Groundwater flooding, modelled for climate change, and to consider the interaction between the types of flooding. For example, Groundwater flooding saturates the soil and greatly increases the area vulnerable to fluvial flooding. Where an urban extension is being considered, a +80% scenario should be used. Where</p>	

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Page 1000	<p>the source of fluvial flooding drains an urban catchment area (with all its hard surfaces), the catchment needs to be modelled to enable accurate estimate of the impact of climate change.</p> <p>Applied to the 'Wick Farm' site, the South Oxfordshire Strategic Flood Assessment specifically recommended no housing on the western half of the site vulnerable to groundwater flooding, and that a modelling of the Bayswater Stream catchment be carried out to assess the impact of climate change on the boundary of the Flood Zones.</p> <p>We recommend Table 3.15 is modified to include the groundwater flood risk and the higher risk due to Climate Change in urban drainage catchment areas.</p> <p>Biodiversity and geodiversity baseline page 37</p> <p><b>Paragraph 3.87</b> needs not toe that the high biodiversity sites and wildlife are very vulnerable to negative impacts, and that the UK is failing to meet its national and international obligations for biodiversity (see the recent JNCC report 6th annual Report on the Convention for Biological Diversity).</p> <p><b>Paragraph 3.90</b> should not just concentrate on the favourable/ unfavourable status of SSSIs. Natural England has stated that we cannot take a purely site-based approach, we need to preserve habitats and species across the countryside. In particular, the baseline should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Note that Oxfordshire's nationally important SSSIs cover less than 2% of the land area, significantly less that the 8% lowland England average, and we cannot afford to lose any more.</li> <li>■ Describe the Conservation Target Areas developed by Wild Oxfordshire with the County Council, since these are protected in the NPPF and vital in responding to Climate Change.</li> <li>■ Give areas of Priority habitats, and their contribution to England's protection of these rare wildlife features.</li> <li>■ Give information of the Red Book species in Oxfordshire.</li> </ul> <p><b>Figure 3.7</b> should include the Conservation Target Areas</p> <p><b>Figure 3.7</b> should also use the Natural England 600m alert zone around the SSSIs (the level for major development of more than 100 houses) to show the constraint on selecting broad areas of development.</p> <p><b>Landscape and townscape baseline</b></p>	

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Page 1001	<p>The importance of access to high quality Countryside on the doorstep of the City, towns and villages needs to be included in Paragraph 3.99. This paragraph talks about the impact of development on the landscape but not the impact on easy access to that landscape. Conserving the high-quality landscape near where people live meets the Health and Wellbeing objectives in the scoping project, and cannot be replaced by more controlled urban 'Greenspace'. It is an important resource that needs to be recognised by the Scoping Report's baseline. One particular use of the Countryside is that of road cycling. It should be added to the Baseline, alongside footpaths and bridleways. An example is the access by Elsfield Lane and the Woodeaton Road to the Otmoor circular routes very popular with Oxford City's riders.</p> <p>We welcome that stress on the importance of the key views into Oxford which are arguably of International importance, but definitely of National Importance. Only two views give the whole rural context of the historic setting of Oxford (if you put aside the one that is viewed from a bridge over the A34). Only one- at Elsfield, has the 18th century enclosure arable fields in the foreground, and is without Pylons in the view (the electricity cables were put underground at considerable public expense in the 1960s).</p> <p>The view cone in Fig 3.10 will need to be modified to reflect the view cone into Oxford- a broader triangle to preserve the foreground. The view cones in the original Oxford Local Plan were only based on the view out from the City. As both your Scoping Study, the Historic England study and work by SODC show, that foreground needs protecting:</p> <p>Note the lack of pylons!</p> <p>We therefore recommend a view cone based on 55° viewing angle that is normally taken as the natural vision angle:</p> <p>We recommend an addition to the Table 3.22 Key Sustainability issues:</p> <p>Access to high quality landscape near town is important for inhabitants' access to landscape and should be protected.</p> <p>Without the JSSP piecemeal development could remove this strategic recreational resource.</p> <p>Summary of environmental sensitivity page 49</p> <p>We welcome the use of the environmental sensitivity approach. However we would want to see the following changes to Figure 3.12:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ addition of the Oxford View cones- modified to protect the vital foreground of the views into the City.</li> </ul>	

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Page 1002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Flood risk to reflect the increased risk due to Climate Change over the JPPS period, and include Surface and Groundwater flood risk also modified to reflect climate change. Where urban hard surface catchment areas exist, the modelling of those catchment areas should inform the flood risk.</li> <li>■ For biodiversity</li> <li>■ The Conservation Target Areas need to be added- to reflect what is needed to help biodiversity adapt and survive Climate Change and their inclusion in the NPPF.</li> <li>■ An alert zone of 600m to be around SSSIs and local wildlife sites, reflecting the approach of Natural England.</li> <li>■ The inclusion of the Priority habitats outside nature reserves and designated sites. These are of national importance.</li> <li>■ The areas of higher quality Countryside near population centres mapped as needing protected.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Q5:</b> We recommend changes to the Sustainability Framework in Table 5.1 to reflect the changes we have suggested earlier in this comment on the scoping report:</p> <p>SA objective 1: Objectively assessed housing need, but not one that is calculated on a District basis, but that is related to geographical criteria that reflect a coherent Spatial Strategy. That Spatial Strategy to be based on understanding housing need in relation to the spatial aspects of economic, social and environmental objective of the JSSP.</p> <p>SA Objective 2: Add “Maintain [not just create] high quality Countryside next to urban areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ SA Objective 3: Ensure that any urban extensions have many and good links into the adjacent urban areas, and are near effective rapid transport systems.</li> <li>■ SA Objective 4: Strengthen the appraisal in relation the Science Transit initiative. This is core to supporting the Knowledge spine, and the relatively low priority so far in infrastructure for rapid transit between employment sites and housing is a major concern. Dedicated bus lanes, reopening railway lines, and bus links to stations all need development to link Oxford, Harwell, Didcot, Wallingford, Abingdon, Witney, Eynsham, Kiddlington, Begbroke, Oxford science Park, Bicester.</li> <li>■ <b>SA Objective 5: We would question the inclusion of ‘economic vitality and vibrancy of Oxfordshire’s City and town centres.</b> Holding to the current model could result in distortions to our response to economic and technical</li> </ul>	<p>Notes on the SA framework have been reviewed and appropriate changes made.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
<p>Page 1003</p>	<p>changes with the major changes in economy and technology we could well need new types of centres, for example giving access in one place a range of services, for example to health care, day centres for old and young, formal and informal meeting areas, delivery collection and drop-off.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ SA Objective 6: We welcome that there is no simple statement of ‘nearness’ to facilities as a proxy for sustainability. For at least 25 years car use is going to be the predominant form of transport and access by car, including parking, needs to be considered in siting development. In later years for a connected Oxfordshire the emphasis needs to be on Rapid Transport and buses, which is effective in an area the size of Oxfordshire.</li> </ul> <p>We recommend a change to the wording not to focus on ‘road congestion’. Using ‘road congestion’ to describe the problem could result in a ‘road’ solution. This would starve investment from a comprehensive rapid transport/bus system, stop measures that convert road space to bus and cycling, and would make car use more attractive.</p> <p>The wording in relation to walking and cycling infrastructure is insufficient- we need housing with many links in all directions to employment and facilities, to make walking and cycling safer, more pleasant, and link them into a rapid transit or bus system. Bicycle lanes and bridges alone are not enough, and they often do not link together but abruptly stop leaving the user with busy dangerous roads and crossings. We also need to ensure housing has access via buses, rapid transport, walking and cycling to a variety of jobs. Peripheral sites are not ideal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ SA Objective 13: We would want to see added “To conserve and enhance the effectiveness of the ecological network identified in the NPPF and implemented in Oxfordshire as the Conservation action Areas”.</li> <li>■ SA Objective 15: We are very supportive of the inclusion of protecting special views into and out of Oxford. We would also want to add “protect high quality countryside landscapes next to urban areas”.</li> </ul> <p>We share the Scoping Report’s concerns about the scoring system and the closeness between ‘significant’ and ‘some’ impact.</p> <p>The scoring system creates dangerous anomalies for biodiversity which the SA needs to be aware of and compensate for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Uncertainty about the negative impacts on biodiversity should rule out an option because of the Government’s commitment to the Precautionary Principle under the 1992 Convention on Biodiversity Diversity.</li> </ul>	

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<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 1004</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ ‘Significant’ negative impact often puts on a level local and national or European biodiversity assets. This is counter to the NPPF, the hierarchy of sites, habitats and species needs to be applied, otherwise key irreplaceable assets could be significantly damaged.</li> <li>■ There has to be an absolute reporting of the significance of negative impact on biodiversity Because of the parlour state of biodiversity in Oxfordshire and its location, most options will significantly damage biodiversity, and if the scoring is applied only comparatively, significant damage to biodiversity becomes inevitable. The SA has to ensure the JSSP actively seeks to avoid significant damage to biodiversity.</li> <li>■ Sustainability Assessments often rely on mitigation and compensation without rigorously checking if they are possible and appropriate. They are only options for some impacts and some biodiversity resources. Most mitigation and compensation/creation schemes followed up in rigorous scientific study are not effective. The Precautionary Principle often precludes their use.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Chipton-on-Cherwell Quarry</b></p>	<p><b>Q1:</b> The scope of the SA as currently provided is considered appropriate to support the wider Oxfordshire Plan process but should be continually reviewed to ensure additional evidence base is robustly assessed at later stages in the plan making process.</p> <p><b>Q2:</b> Alder King Planning Consultants (AKPC) firmly support the Oxfordshire Plan as a sensible basis to comprehensively plan for growth in the county up to 2050. AKPC further support the collaborative working arrangements underpinning the plan in place between the six Oxfordshire authorities, the government together with national, regional and local bodies.</p> <p>The National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) describes Oxford as “amongst the UK’s most productive, successful and fast growing cities which plays host to a highly skilled labour force; world leading research facilities; knowledge intensive firms and technology clusters which compete on world stage.” It is therefore critical to the region, and indeed the UK as a whole, that the economic performance of this city region is not only maintained but enhanced and strengthened. In the longer term. The Oxfordshire Plan has a critical role to play in achieving this. The importance of the plan is underlined in a range of national strategies including the government commitments in the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal (2017). These commitments are now being taken forward in a series of local plans and strategies, advanced by Oxfordshire County Council, the Local Enterprise Partnership and local planning authorities.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 1005	<p>This being the case, AKPC lends significant support to the Oxfordshire Plan and the collaborative working arrangements that have informed it.</p> <p>The National Planning Practice Guidance scoping stage (Stage A) must identify the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the sustainability appraisal report. It should set out the context, objectives and approach of the assessment; and identify relevant environmental, economic and social issues and objectives. Although the scoping stage is a requirement of the process, a formal scoping report is not required by law but is a useful way of presenting information at the scoping stage. A key aim of the scoping procedure is to help ensure the sustainability appraisal process is proportionate and relevant to the Local Plan being assessed. Within this context, we have the following points to make on the scope of the baseline section of the SA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Policy context for the JSSP should be amended to include explain the relationship between the pre-existing and proposed plans for the area as a key component in the Oxford Housing and Growth Deal. This context is important in establishing the context for the JSSP up to 2031.</li> <li>■ Within this context, the SA Scoping Reports for each of the adopted and emerging plans is, indeed, relevant baseline context for the JSSP SA as noted on page 9. It would also be sensible to include relevant information arising from the Inspector's Reports into each of the plans in addition as they become available together with representations made at these stages in the plan period.</li> <li>■ It should be updated to reflect any matters arising in the topic papers that were published in support of the Regulation 18 version of the Oxfordshire Plan, published after the opening of consultation on the SA.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Q3:</b> We have the following comments to make on the SA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Figure 3.2</b> should be elaborated on to show committed highways infrastructure in adopted plans which should be a key determinant in assessing the location of future growth. A diagram showing planned housing infrastructure hasn't been provided but would be useful to do so (Section 3).</li> <li>■ <b>Figure 3.12</b> (Combined Environmental Sensitivity) is important as a means of discharging the authority's duty under Regulation 12(3) section 6(m) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and should be provided at a scale to enable respondent to comment on the accuracy as a key determinant of the acceptability of development proposals submitted for consideration.</li> </ul>	<p>Noted. The baseline of the SA has drawn on the most up-to-date and appropriate evidence available, and will be updated at each stage of the SA process. This includes all GIS data, available from the authorities, that consistently and comprehensively covers the Plan area.</p> <p>Please note that Figure 3.12 illustrating Oxfordshire's environmental sensitivity in 2016 has been removed in light of the</p>

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Page 1006		more recent environmental evidence and data set out in other sections of the SA Scoping Report Baseline.
	<p><b>Q4:</b> Our client land interest relates to Shipton on Cherwell Quarry and have the following comments on the environmental sensitivity of the site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The site is designated as a LWS on the basis of extensive open water, wetland, calcareous grassland and open-ground habitats. The bird interest is significant for over wintering, migrating and breeding birds. Much of this habitat is on land that has yet to be restored and is therefore temporary in nature. This land is under the flight path for Oxford Airfield. Compensatory habitats would be created in the land east of the railway and protected in perpetuity as part of the updates to the restoration scheme.</li> <li>■ Shipton-On-Cherwell &amp; Whitehill Farm Quarries SSSI is a geological SSSI which is located within the site area and is of importance in interpretation of sedimentology and environment during the Middle Jurassic period. It is of greatest importance during the extraction phases of the site and as exhibit outcrops on completion. The designation does not relate to ecology or biodiversity. A sympathetic design could benefit the SSSI by allowing greater exposure and maintenance of the geological features. Access to the SSSI would be greatly improved.</li> <li>■ Shipton on Cherwell Quarry site benefits from access off the A4095 road. The already approved restoration scheme includes the provision of an improved access into the site, with a new roundabout. Consequently a substantial part of the road improvements needed would be provided on the site.</li> <li>■ The site benefits from significant established infrastructure such as roads, potential rail connections and services (electricity, water, etc.). The electricity supply to the former cement works was the sufficient to power 1600 homes. Therefore there is no requirement for additional overhead powerlines. Other Infrastructure required would be secured under a Section 106 agreement.</li> </ul> <p>The development of the Shipton on Cherwell Quarry site presents a rare opportunity to integrate committed transport infrastructure with strategic land use and future growth strategy:</p>	Noted.

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Page 1007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Committed transport infrastructure:</b> Significant private sector investment has already been made at Shipton Quarry as part of the quarry restoration<sup>4</sup>. This includes a new railway depot and highway improvements along the A4260, effectively ‘pump priming’ infrastructure for the garden village.</li> <li>■ <b>The Oxford Cambridge Arc:</b> In order to maximise economic potential within the Arc, the government has identified the need to deliver one million new homes by 2050. This is supported by government backed initiatives, many of which also support the case for development at Shipton Quarry:</li> <li>■ <b>The Knowledge Spine:</b> Shipton Quarry is located within the ‘Science Vale to Bicester Knowledge Spine’ which has been embraced as a fundamental component of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc. Shipton Quarry could contribute 1,800 dwellings and 2,500 new jobs to the Knowledge Spine and realise a long-held ambition for a railway link between Oxford City Centre and Begbroke Science Park.</li> <li>■ <b>The Oxford to Cambridge Expressway:</b> The site is located within the preferred corridor for the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway which is designed to create a multi-modal transport spine to support the development of large-scale new communities such as Shipton Quarry.</li> <li>■ <b>East West Rail Link:</b> East West Rail has significantly enhanced connections between Oxford and London Marylebone Station. Shipton Quarry would complement this strategy by providing a new parkway station for journeys between Oxford and London Paddington, a sequentially preferable station for London Central, Crossrail and Heathrow.</li> <li>■ <b>Connecting Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan (2015 to 2031):</b> In the plan, the A4260 is set to deliver vastly improved rapid transit/bus services and an associated Super Cycleway into Oxford. Located just 2km to the south of Shipton Quarry, these services can readily be redirected into the site to establish sustainable commuting patterns between the site and Oxford Parkway.</li> </ul> <p>Within this context, Shipton Quarry has the capacity to deliver the following development between 2025 and 2036:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– At least 1,800 dwellings</li> <li>– 10.8 ha of employment land for technology and R&amp;D (Use Class B1, B2, B8)</li> <li>– A mixed use retail centre (A1, A2, A3, D1, D2)</li> <li>– Primary school and nursery (2.4ha)</li> </ul>	

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Page 1008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Railway station (0.8ha) and park and ride facility (8.7ha)</li> <li>– Highways infrastructure to support bus rapid transit (0.7ha)</li> <li>– Ecological mitigation (24.4ha)</li> <li>– Public open space and play facilities (18.1ha)</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Q5:</b> Neither the vision for the Oxfordshire Plan or the objectives that are derived from it, align with the objectives of the Sustainability Appraisal. The purpose of the sustainability appraisal is to promote sustainable development by assessing the extent to which the emerging plan, when judged against reasonable alternatives, will help to achieve relevant environmental, economic and social objectives. Without closer alignment between the two documents, there is a risk that the plan will fail in its statutory duty to be prepared with the objective of achieving sustainable development. Further, sites submitted for consideration as part of the separate Call for Strategic Locations exercise will not be fairly assessed against the plan framework, which is neither lawful nor appropriate. To address this, the vision for the plan, aspirations and objectives that follow should be aligned with the SA objectives to ensure that the plan is appropriately assessed.</p> <p>Within this context, the SA objectives should be updated to reflect the comments made on the aspirations for the Oxfordshire Plan:</p> <p>First, the use of the word ‘aspiration’ is not correct. While the vision for the plan is ‘aspirational’ in nature, in setting out what the county as a whole should achieve by 2050, the next stage of the plan should be to deliver this vision in practice. This stage is better described as the plan’s ‘aims’ rather its ‘aspirations’ which are deliverable, specific, measurable and achievable. The distinction goes beyond semantics alone, as it should enable the plan to set clearly written and unambiguous aims, so it is evident how the plan can achieve its vision in practice.</p> <p>Second, we have significant concerns that the plan aims lack the ambition necessary to deliver on the bold commitments to increase the competitiveness of Oxfordshire’s economy within the wider region made at local, regional and national levels.</p> <p>Third, the aims should be restructured to reflect the plan priorities identified below.</p> <p>We therefore suggest that the plan aspirations are revised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Aim 1 (Sustainable transport and development strategy):</b> This should replace ‘Aspiration 5: Improve connectivity and movement’ to become the very first aim of the plan. This is in the acknowledgement that the cornerstone of any plan</li> </ul>	<p>SA is a strategic process to assess the likely significant effects of the plan and its reasonable alternatives.</p> <p>The proposed SA Framework has been informed by the most recent SA Frameworks of the Oxfordshire Districts and a detailed review of the baseline and policy context of the Plan area to establish the key sustainability issues and opportunities.</p> <p>This comment mostly relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>

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<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 1009</p>	<p>should be to direct development to the most sustainable locations. Only by doing so, can the plan achieve a range of sustainability benefits including reducing the need to travel, easing congestion, improving air quality, enhancing the quality of life of residents and protecting the environment as a whole. This strategy also gives rise the ability for the plan to ‘plug in’ to existing and proposed infrastructure and make the investments necessary to increase capacity on the network and support sustainable development growth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Aim 2 (Significantly increase the supply of housing):</b> The National Infrastructure Commission indicates that the “sustained shortfall in housing supply” is placing a “fundamental constraint on the continued growth of the arc’s most successful economies”. Workers at all levels are being priced out of local housing markets, restricting firms’ access to labour and impacting upon competitiveness. The NIC recommends that if the region is to maximise its economic potential, current rates of house building will need to double, delivering up to one million new homes by 2050 to improve quality of life of local residents and the competitiveness of the economy as a whole. As a consequence, significantly increasing the supply of housing should be the second priority of the plan strategy replacing ‘Aspiration 4 (Improve housing availability and affordability).</li> <li>■ <b>Aim 3 (Strengthen economic competitiveness and growth):</b> Once the infrastructure investment is secured and housing supply existing constraints on economic competitiveness are relieved and growth will be better assured in the sub region. This strategy has been endorsed by the NIC. Oxfordshire is one of the strongest economies in the UK and is one of three net contributors to the exchequer, generating an economic output of around £23 billion of Gross Value Added each year, from about 400,000 jobs and 30,000 businesses. Consequentially, Oxfordshire is one of three authorities preparing a Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) to support the National Industrial Strategy nationally which aims to double GVA to £46 billion and create 108,000 private sector jobs in the County. In order for this bold ambition to be achieved, ‘Aim 3: Strengthen economic competitiveness and growth’ should replace ‘Aspiration 3 (Supporting economic growth)’ to ensure that the national and local commitments can be met.</li> <li>■ <b>Aim 4 (Facilitate sustainable communities):</b> Only once sustainable infrastructure, housing and economic growth strategies are secured, can a range of sustainability benefits be delivered for local communities. This should replace ‘Aspiration 4: Strong and Healthy Communities’.</li> <li>■ <b>Aim 5 (Protect and enhance the environment):</b> Similarly to Aim 4 above, the only tangible way in which the environment can be protected is to first direct development to the most sustainable locations that can confer the greatest sustainability gains. This being the case, this should replace ‘Aspiration 1 (Protect environmental quality)’ which is also</li> </ul>	

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Page 1010	<p>bolstered to also ‘enhance’ the environment as is required by the National Planning Framework (the Framework, 2019) at paragraph 170.</p> <p>The following hierarchy describes the manner in which these aims should be prioritised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Aim 1 (Sustainable transport and development strategy):</b> The cornerstone of plan strategy needs to be directing development to the most sustainable locations. These locations give rise to the greatest sustainability benefits by locating new housing which gives rise to a range of sustainability benefits including the ability for the plan to ‘plug in’ to existing infrastructure and make the investments necessary to support sustainable development growth.</li> <li>■ <b>Aim 2 (Housing delivery):</b> The NIC identifies that a lack of housing supply is one of the most serious constraints on the future growth of towns and cities in the region. The success of the city region in economic terms has fuelled a demand for homes but the long recorded shortfall in housing supply has led to high house prices and low levels of affordability, for both home ownership and private rental and an undersupply of affordable housing. Only by placing housing growth as the second priority of the plan, can the recommendations of the NIC be met: Maximising the economic potential of the region is the delivering of one million new homes by 2050.</li> <li>■ <b>Aim 3 (Economic growth):</b> Once the infrastructure investment and a significant increase in housing supply is secured, economic competitiveness and growth will be better assured. To maximise the economic potential of the region – and the contribution it makes to UK output, trading accounts and tax revenues – economic growth should take third priority in the strategy.</li> <li>■ <b>Aim 4 (Facilitate sustainable communities) and Aim 5 (Protect and enhance the environment):</b> Only once sustainable infrastructure, housing and economic growth strategies can the delivery of sustainable communities the protection of the environment be assured, which should be given equal weight in the priority of plan’s remaining aims.</li> </ul> <p>The SA Appraisal Framework should also be updated in line of the following comments on the Oxfordshire Plan draft objectives (with addition in underline and retraction in strikethrough):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Draft Objective 9 1:</b> “To promote development in the most sustainable locations which mitigate the effects of climate change, and co-locating homes and jobs; then connecting those less sustainable locations through improved public transport and digital networks.” Draft Objective 9 should become the first objective in the plan – only through promoting</li> </ul>	

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<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 1011</p>	<p>development in the most sustainable locations can the plan meet its objectives in contributing to mitigating the effects of climate change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Draft Objective 10 2:</b> “To reduce the need to travel and provide better travel choices, ensuring that walking and cycling are convenient and attractive, and that public transport is preferred by residents to private car ownership and use.” Once the most sustainable locations are chosen, the plan can then bolster existing infrastructure and make the necessary investments to ensure its sustainability in the longer term.</li> <li>■ <b>Draft Objective 7 3:</b> “To meet the county’s identified housing needs, particularly affordable housing and support our selected economic aspirations.” As recommended by the NIC, the delivery of housing needs to be significantly increased. We note that the Housing and Growth Deal does not meet all the affordable housing requirements of the county up to 2031. If meeting affordable housing need is an objective of the plan, then the plan should seek to deliver all of its affordable housing requirements over the plan period with the housing requirement identified requirement as 112,480 dwellings up to 2031.</li> <li>■ <b>Draft Objective 8 4:</b> “To ensure that a range of housing options are available to meet the needs of communities that will cater for a variety of needs and are built for adaptability, energy efficiency and to a high quality and support the plan’s economic growth strategy.” The plan should then deliver the type and mix of housing to meet the needs of communities and the overall economic growth strategy.</li> <li>■ <b>Draft Objective 5:</b> “To establish the right conditions to sustain and expand strengthen the role of Oxfordshire in the UK and global economy by supporting the objectives of the Local Industrial Strategy and building on our key strengths and assets.” This revision would better reflect a measurable and achievable strategy for economic growth over the plan period.</li> <li>■ <b>Draft Objective 6:</b> “To create a prosperous, successful and enterprising economy which invests in the most deprived areas to rebalance economic growth to ensure the benefits are felt by all.” Differences in life opportunities and quality of life are felt even within relatively small geographic areas in Oxfordshire. In those more deprived areas (which can be found in each of the districts of Oxfordshire) residents often have lower wages and skills, educational attainment is lower and health is poorer. Readdressing this balance needs to be a key objective of the plan.</li> <li>■ <b>Draft Objective 1 7:</b> “To maintain and enhance the historic built and natural environment of the county through strategic investment and high quality design and to capitalise on the benefits these assets contribute to quality of life and</li> </ul>	

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<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 10 of 24</p>	<p>economic success.” This revision simply reprioritises the objective in the overall hierarchy to indicate that these benefits can be better realised once the correct decisions are taken in directing development to the most sustainable locations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Draft Objective 2 8:</b> “To protect and enhance the County’s distinctive landscape character, recreational and biodiversity value by considering the benefits these assets bring when selecting areas for growth, by optimising densities, prioritising the efficient use of previously developed land, by improving connectivity between environmental assets and securing a net gain for biodiversity.” The Framework, at paragraph 123, confirms that the efficient use of previously developed land should be prioritised in areas that are highly constrained environmentally or there is an anticipated shortage of housing land for meeting identified needs – both of which apply to Oxfordshire. Having regard to both to the characteristics of the county and the significant level of housing growth required over the plan period, planning policies and decisions should prioritise and make the very best use of brownfield land. This objective should be amended as set out above to better reflect these points.</li> </ul>	
<p>East Hendred Parish Council</p>	<p>A review of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 would not be soundly based without monitoring &amp; a review of the 2014 Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), which formed the basis of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal for 100,000 dwellings, for these reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To comply with national planning policy that the NPPF Standard Method should be the starting point, and that exceptional circumstances reflect current &amp; future demographic trends, (i.e., the 2014-based ONS Household Projections), and market signals.</li> <li>■ To allow the Sustainability Appraisal to assess whether the exceptional circumstances for departing from the Standard Method are justified on the basis of the social, economic &amp; environmental impacts,</li> <li>■ Because of the implications on the 5 year housing requirement of a significant under-delivery of housing 2011-2018, (14,000 dwellings), and a 10%-20% buffer requirement, which would be double the 4,213 dwellings per year completed over the last 3 years. The 100,000 dwelling target should be phased over 30 years to 2041, not over 20 years to 2031.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>NATIONAL POLICY ON ASSESSING HOUSING NEED</u></b></p> <p>2.1 The Government’s Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) states that: <i>The standard method for assessing local housing need provides the minimum starting point in determining the number of homes needed in an area.</i> The NPPF paragraph 60 states that: <i>To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need</i></p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>

Consultee	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report									
Page 1013	<p><i>assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance - unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals.</i></p> <p>The 2014 SHMA does not reflect current demographic trends, using the out-dated birth, dead, migration and headship rates in 2011-based Government household projections to 2021, extended to 2031 with 2008-based projections, instead of 2014-based household projections set out in the PPG advice on Housing Need Assessments.</p> <p><b><u>The Justification of exceptional circumstances:</u></b></p> <p>The use of the Standard Method as a starting point would enable the Sustainability Appraisal to assess whether there are exceptional circumstances for departing from it, and the social, economic &amp; environmental impacts. These would cover population, economy, transport, air quality &amp; noise, land, water, climate change, historic environment, biodiversity &amp; landscape impacts, as set out on Table 2.2 of the Scoping Report.</p> <p><b><u>The Implications of housing under-delivery:</u></b></p> <p>The NPPF paragraph 73 sets out the need to demonstrate a deliverable 5 year land supply. However, the SHMA 5 year housing requirement of 5,003 dwellings per year is affected by under-delivery of housing 2011-18, and the need for a 10%-20% buffer to reflect under-delivery.</p> <p>Only 20,875 dwellings of the 2014 SHMA housing requirement for 35,021 new dwellings, (2011-18), has been delivered (60% of the total). This results in a shortfall of 14,146 dwellings, a significant underdelivery of the housing requirement. A review of the SHMA is justified to address such a significant failure to implement a Core Objective of the SHMA as included in District Local Plans, see Table 1.</p> <p>The implications for the SHMA's 5 year housing requirement (2018-23), compared to 3,370 dwellings per year proposed by the Parish Council, are:</p> <p><b><u>Table 1: THE 5-YEAR HOUSING REQUIREMENT</u></b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>SHMA</th> <th>Proposed by EHPC</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>5 year Housing requirement</td> <td>25,015</td> <td>16,850</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Plus Housing shortfall 2011-18</td> <td>+14,146</td> <td>+14,146</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		SHMA	Proposed by EHPC	5 year Housing requirement	25,015	16,850	Plus Housing shortfall 2011-18	+14,146	+14,146	
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Plus Housing shortfall 2011-18	+14,146	+14,146									

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Page 1014	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">Requirement incl. shortfall</td> <td style="width: 20%; text-align: right;">39,161</td> <td style="width: 20%; text-align: right;">30,996</td> <td style="width: 30%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Buffer for under-delivery</td> <td style="text-align: right;">46,993</td> <td style="text-align: right;">34,096</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>(84% over last 3 years)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">(+20%)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">(+10%)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Annual housing requirement</td> <td style="text-align: right;">9,398</td> <td style="text-align: right;">6,819</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>This increased SHMA target, 2018-23, is not therefore deliverable, being double the 4,213 per year housing completions over the last 3 years, see CLG Table 122.</p> <p>The Oxfordshire Growth Board have already accepted that they cannot meet a Government 5 year housing land supply requirement in negotiating the 20th of September 2018 MHCLG Written Statement, reducing it to a 3 year requirement until the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan is adopted.</p> <p>Half of the Oxfordshire shortfall occurs in Oxford City, with only 241 dwellings per year completed, (2011-2018), compared to a SHMA target of 1,400 dwellings per year. The shortfalls are largely due to delays in the adoption of District Local Plans, with Oxford City &amp; South Oxfordshire not yet achieving this requirement 7 years after the SHMA housing requirement plan period started (2011).</p> <p>A housing review is therefore required.</p> <p><b><u>Conclusions:</u></b></p> <p>The 2014-based ONS household projections should be used to assess housing need, to comply with the 2018 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). This would ensure the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan is based on current national policy &amp; is deliverable, to be soundly based.</p> <p>Table 3 shows that using the Standard Method, the Oxfordshire housing requirement falls from 5,000 dwellings per year in the out-dated Oxfordshire SHMA to 3,370 households per year.</p> <p><b><u>Proposed Amendment to Housing Requirement</u></b></p> <p>Using NPPF Standard Method = 3,370 dwellings per year</p>	Requirement incl. shortfall	39,161	30,996		Buffer for under-delivery	46,993	34,096		(84% over last 3 years)	(+20%)	(+10%)		Annual housing requirement	9,398	6,819		
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	<p>This would allow the re-phasing of the 100,000 dwelling target in Oxfordshire's Housing Growth Deal from 2011-31 to 2011 to 2041, (3,370 x 30 years), to reflect the significant under-delivery of housing 2011-18, due to delays in the adoption of some District Local Plans.</p> <p>In the absence of household projections beyond 2040, and uncertainties in demographic &amp; economic projections, power &amp; water supplies, infrastructure &amp; climate change requirements beyond 2040, clarification is sought on the justification for a plan period beyond 2040, almost 30 years from adoption of the plan, instead of the 15 year requirement in the NPPF.</p>	

Table A.2: Oxfordshire 2050 SA Scoping Report Consultation Comments by Document Part

Consultee	Document Part	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
PFT Planning	Introduction	<p>The Report refers at <b>1.5</b> to 1) Oxfordshire's growth needs and development ambition. This is the first sign that the JSSP will not result in sustainable development and the implied need to reduce and eliminate carbon emissions, by presuming that there are 'needs' for Oxfordshire to 'grow'. This 'ambition' cannot precede the work that will need to be put into the preparation of the JSSP to see what kind of growth could be made compatible with sustainable development (e.g. compliance with SDGs and achieving zero carbon).</p> <p>Confirmation at <b>1.7</b> "The JSSP will provide an integrated strategic planning framework and evidence base to support sustainable growth across the county to 2050, including the planned delivery of new homes and economic development, and the anticipated supporting infrastructure needed.", of the assumption that there is an existing model of 'sustainable growth'. Given that new development (dwellings, workplaces and associated infrastructure are very carbon intensive; about 50% of emissions are embedded before occupation) the JSSP must start to investigate what is meant by genuine 'sustainable growth' before proposing 300,000 extra net houses and associated jobs and infrastructure.</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, rather than the SA Scoping Report.</p> <p>SA objective 7 of the SA Framework will test the Oxfordshire Plan and its reasonable alternatives on their ability to minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change.</p>
	Policy context for the JSSP	<p>There are references like "<b>2.2</b>...It will also seek to address linkages to wider planning considerations, for example the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Growth Corridor." that continue to assume that the type of 'growth' underlying the concept of the 'corridor' could be made sustainable.</p> <p>The commitment, "<b>2.3</b> The JSSP ....to the Housing and Growth Deal to deliver up to 100,000 homes by 2031.", should be re-examined in the light of the best evidence on the carbon emissions associated with urban development.</p> <p>"<b>2.5</b> ...there are already a number of proposals for improvements to the local transport network, addressing both traffic congestion and seeking to provide high quality public transport services to both support growth and achieve a shift in use of transport modes away from private vehicles....<b>2.6</b> Of particular note is the work being carried out by the National Infrastructure Commission, which has been asked to provide Government with proposals and options to maximise the potential of the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford arc ...". The preparation of the JSSP is the perfect opportunity to expose the false assumptions that underlie the NIC report Partnering for Prosperity. The proposal to build a new road to Cambridge via Milton Keynes and Bedford flies in the face of the NIC report Congestion, Capacity and Carbon that explains the futility of new road building (citing the relevant research).</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, rather than the SA Scoping Report.</p> <p>The SA will draw on the most up-to-date evidence and policy available at the time of appraisal.</p> <p>SA objective 7 of the SA Framework will test the Oxfordshire Plan and its reasonable alternatives on their ability to minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change.</p> <p>SA objectives 6 and 8 of the SA Framework will test the Oxfordshire Plan and its reasonable alternatives on their ability to reduce the need to travel by car in Oxfordshire and to minimise air, noise</p>

Consultee	Document Part	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
Page 1017		<p>"It is possible, though expensive, to build more capacity on longer distance roads on the outskirts of cities, unlike in the city centre. But any such new capacity is still unlikely to solve the congestion challenge. Instead, it enables people to make different choices about where to live and work, and when and how to travel, which generate benefits for those individuals, but quickly fill up the new road space."</p> <p>"... In the long term, it also supports an Oxford-Cambridge expressway, which will provide a new high-quality road link between Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge. Once completed, the new road is expected to take up to 40 minutes off journeys between the M4 and the M1, bringing Oxford and Cambridge to within a 45-minute drive of Milton Keynes." This time saving is based on existing technology and an assumption that the route will continue to be used by ICEs driving at the environmentally damaging speeds of over 50mph which is the average achievable today. In fact, any new road would mainly be used by electric vehicles that will be traveling at about 50mph to maintain the range to avoid anxiety and/or carrying excessive battery weight. Neither the NIC nor Highways England have factored in the effects of electrification or automation in their continued support for the idea of a new road.</p> <p><b>"2.12</b> The high growth planned for Oxfordshire is part of the development of a 'knowledge arc' between Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge. The 'knowledge arc' is being promoted by all of the local authorities along this corridor, and by the National Infrastructure Commission. In particular, the National Infrastructure Commission supports the East-West rail line and an Oxford-Cambridge expressway in its 2017 report 'Partnering for Prosperity'." In fact, Oxford City Council has withdrawn its support for the Expressway. Meanwhile the NIC is aware of, but has not fully admitted, that the new road will attract more traffic and congestion onto the feeder roads (i.e., A34, A40, and A420) that would be very damaging to the functioning (and further growth) in the Oxford area. The NIC has not been able to show that the East-West rail line will proceed under the threat of a road being built-along the same route. It is very likely that any new development along the 'knowledge corridor' would need to be serviced by rail, built as soon as possible and unfettered by the threat of the new road. The road would be designed to serve car dependent housing, contrary to all the transport policies of all the constituent authorities (between Oxford and Cambridge).</p> <p><b>Table 2.2</b> Under 'Population health and wellbeing' Table 2.2 proposes meeting.</p> <p>-Meet objectively housing need (sic). The SHMA covers a housing market area and quantifies 'demand' and not 'need'. In October 2018 Oxford City Council reviewed the 2014 SHMA finding and found a significantly lower figures of 'need' that look close to the recent estimate made by the ONS.</p>	<p>and light pollution in Oxfordshire, respectively.</p>

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Page 1018		<p>Under – 'Promote sustainable construction' Table 2.2 does not refer to residential sub-divisions that would be the only way to meet any of the estimates of housing need within carbon budgets.</p> <p>* Under 'Transport is' – 'reduce the need to travel' that is contradicted by the support for the Expressway.</p> <p>* Under 'Land' is – 'promote local food production' but without any supporting evidence or suggestions as to how this might be achieved to allow any assessment of whether or how 'local food production' might fit with the notion of 'growth' being promoted by the Report.</p> <p>* Under Climate change mitigation and adaptation there is 'Support low carbon economies'.</p> <p>There is an understanding that '...information can change or be updated on a regular basis.' Given that there would be full knowledge of the lower estimates of 'need' and the imperative to start reducing carbon emissions it is concerning that the JSSP is prepared to ignore this updated evidence.</p>	
	<b>Baseline environmental, social and economic context for the JSSP</b>	<p><b>3.53</b> provide further detail about the Expressway, ...'which the Government sees as filling major gap in the national road network, will work together with the proposed East West Rail link to improve east-west connectivity. The Expressway is projected to take up to 40 minutes off the journey between the A34 south of Oxford and the M1 to improve connectivity to high quality jobs in centres of rapid growth such as Oxford Science Park.' In fact, the Expressway would prejudice the completion/and/or viability of the rail link and only reduce journey times for ICEs driven at speeds producing high carbon emissions.</p>	<p>The SA will draw on the most up-to-date evidence and policy available at the time of appraisal.</p>
	<b>Future challenges and key sustainability issues</b>	<p>'Future challenges' include 'Climate Change' but <b>paras 4.7 &amp; 4.8</b> only deal with adaptation and not challenge of mitigation (i.e. 1.5 degrees) that is of immediate importance and not for the future.</p> <p>Key sustainability issues to be taken into account during the SA of the JSSP.</p> <p>7. To minimize Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change</p> <p>Promote energy efficient design?</p> <p>Encourage the provision of renewable energy infrastructure where possible?</p> <p>Minimise greenhouse gas emissions from transport?</p> <p>Clearly 'taking into account' is not the same as 'taking meaningful action'. The scale of urbanization being proposed implies a scale of carbon emissions that will be significantly above those implied by the</p>	<p>Noted. Reference to the need for climate change mitigation has been added to Chapter 4.</p> <p>SA objective 7 of the SA Framework will test the Oxfordshire Plan and its reasonable alternatives on their ability to minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change.</p>

Consultee	Document Part	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
		<p>IPCC Report Oct 2018. And supporting a new road to create a corridor with car dependent housing is inconsistent with reducing carbon from transport.</p> <p>On a separate matter the JSSP should note at <b>para 14.</b> that the former RAF Upper Heyford is also recognised as being of 'international heritage importance' and should be developed into a major tourist attraction.</p>	
<p>Member of the Public and Many</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 1019</p>	<p><b>Introduction</b></p>	<p>SUBMISSION – CONSULTATION: OXFORDSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC SPATIAL PLAN: Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report</p> <p>This is a personal submission on the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report for the Oxfordshire JSSP. This SA is not adequate in terms of its scope, particularly with reference to the Climate Emergency and a failure to conform to the latest NPPF. All evidential references shown as footnotes in this submission offer additional material to the evidence base for the SA, if not previously used in the preparation of the consultation document.</p> <p>Omissions:</p> <p>The Climate Emergency: This consultation document was published recently and could have taken into account the latest evidence of accelerating Climate Change. On 8th October 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released its latest report. The effect of this report is not reflected in this consultation document. The consultation document is, in fact, significantly outdated in respect of the serious Climate Emergency which the IPCC has detailed in its 700pp report. [1] In consequence, systematic and extensive revisions to the draft Sustainability Appraisal and future JSSP are needed if they are to be relevant to the wide variety of intensifying Climate challenges in the period which the Plan is intended to cover. Essentially, this can be considered 'future proofing' throughout the JSSP with references to how the Climate Emergency is to have policy effects in virtually all sections of the final Plan. In addition, it is vital that Climate concerns are integrated into and are made explicit throughout the Plan so that the Climate Emergency is the over-arching policy priority for Oxfordshire. Without this, there will be serious damage to the ecology, economy and society within Oxfordshire. Specifically, the County needs to adopt a net Zero Carbon target for the entire County to achieve no later than 2030. Since (p.1), the SA is supposed to be 'an assessment process designed to identify and communicate the significant sustainability issues and effects of emerging plans and policies, including their reasonable alternatives,' then all policies likely to maintain a Climate Emergency within Oxfordshire needed to be identified and sound alternatives to them needed to be outlined. A range of sources can be used to justify a far more rigorous response to the SA than the current draft document offers. [2] This is not done in this consultation so far, meaning the document is not fit for its own stated purpose.</p>	<p>Climate change is highlighted throughout the SA Scoping Report as a cross cutting issue and building resilience to climate change is now addressed through SA objective 7.</p> <p>In addition, reference to the urban heat island effect has been added to the Climate Change section of Chapter 3 of the SA Scoping Report.</p> <p>Please note that the additional documents have been reviewed and references have been made to them where appropriate, for example the IPCC report referenced has been reviewed and added to the climate change section of Chapter 3.</p> <p>The comments relating to policy options for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and associated assets relates largely to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan itself, rather than the SA Scoping Report.</p>

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Page 1020		<p>Climate policy integration clearly needed to be accompanied by environmental policy integration in every part of this consultation document.</p> <p>Resilience: The issue of resilience is missing from the SA. Apart from the possible impacts of the Climate Change crisis upon food supplies, there are also long term issues about the water, food and other physical resources the County is using and intends to use in future. Resilience is primarily an ecological concept, important for assessing how humans and other species can and do deal with extremes of Climate and other types of environmental stresses. But resilience can also be considered to be about the capacity to withstand economic shocks, like 'hard Brexit' scenarios. In practical terms, the JSSP needs to consider – in each policy area – what capacity the County's statutory institutions and those they are in contact with, or in partnerships with, can contribute means and skills to assisting the County in carrying out both essential and desirable functions under conditions of environmental crisis. Responses to the Hurricane of 1986 and 7/7 indicate how councils and services supported by the public can respond to extreme pressures. In short, this is an upgrade to conventional Emergency Planning which ought to feature in the final JSSP.</p> <p>Intergenerational Equity: We should deliver an Oxfordshire to future generations which is enhanced appreciably compared to its current ecological decline due to 'hyper-growth'. I refer not just to the 2050 horizon of the JSSP, but in preparation for hundreds of years into the future. The SA must, and currently does not, take future generations into account.</p> <p>PM2.5s (see comments below)</p> <p>The 'urban heat island effect': Related to the concept of resilience is the 'urban heat island effect' which is not mentioned in the draft SA. In brief, this refers to urban settlements being warmer than rural ones due to reflected heat. This is appreciably worsened during hot dry periods, a reflection of rising global temperatures. The areas where this is most significant are in need of more trees, fountains and pedestrianisation to make them more liveable spaces throughout the County.</p> <p>Addressing the development problem of 'biodiversity compensation': I am very, very sceptical about 'biodiversity compensation' in terms of providing 'like for like'. Destroying 40 ancient woodland sites and promising replanting (for HS2) is not replacing one ecosystem with one identical to it. I also think that the basic principle of biodiversity restoration should be part of the SA given the appalling species and habitat losses in the UK since 1945.[3] Moving from 'ecological fragments' to corridors within which species can readily move is very important. The SA needed to address this problem and indicate how biodiversity can be protected from development. In more detail:</p>	

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Page 1021		<p>Biodiversity Policies should include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– set out an ambition for a net gain for biodiversity (to establish coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures)</li> <li>– require the creation of biodiversity spaces and features in and around new developments appropriate to the scale of the development (alongside the requirements for good design in the NPPF). For example, this could include new green spaces or green roofs or</li> <li>– roosting or nesting provision on built structures.</li> <li>– require the creation of biodiversity spaces and features in and around new developments protect existing sites of biodiversity importance (designated and undesignated)</li> <li>– appropriate to the scale of the development (alongside the requirements for good design in the NPPF). For example, this could include new green spaces or green roofs or roosting or nesting provision on built structures.</li> <li>– set out local standards for accessible green space provision at least equivalent to the Natural England Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards[4]</li> <li>– recognise the benefits of urban habitats and their role in supporting large, diverse communities of bees and other insects that plan an important role in pollinating urban crops, especially gardens and allotments and requiring new building and infrastructure developments, as well as conservation strategies, take this into account."[5] Section 1.5 2) 'Whether there are any additional plans, policies or programmes that are relevant to the SA policy context that should be included.' See IPPC latest Climate Change report as mentioned above. See also Government advice on Sustainable Development which has not been taken into account adequately throughout this SA document. See next point: Sustainability and not conventional economic growth, or 'sustainable growth' should be a core priority and value in this SA, in order to meet references to sustainable development in the tests of soundness for Local Plans as a good way the SA itself might be tested, although this is not required. Quality of life will suffer if growth is pursued as if it were the only indicator worthy of significance. I suggest that, as well as the UN Sustainable Development Goals, many other indicators are of value. Here are some suggestions:</li> <li>– Section 1.7 The Government has attempted to define 'sustainable development' although it remains to be seen how clear and consistent its attempts may be.[6] However, 'sustainable</li> </ul>	

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Page 1022		<p>growth' as used in this section is not defined in Government policy since the sustainability of what is growing is not being assessed. So, there is an unresolved inherent conflict in Government between environmental policy, sustainability and the idea of growth. If growth involves the use of finite resources, it is not sustainable indefinitely. If growth involves undermining biodiversity, reducing land available for food and forestry and having harmful effects on public health through air pollution or noise, then none of this is sustainable. Consequently, the basic idea of a Sustainability Appraisal needs to consider how forms of growth contemplated for Oxfordshire will be free of such obvious conflicts, since the idea of 'sustainable growth' in current official preferred usage is quite meaningless.</p> <p>In addition, comments on content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Longevity in all social classes improving year on year.</li> <li>- Air quality improvements year on year in all parts of the County</li> <li>- Increased proportion of journeys made by bicycle.</li> <li>- Area increases for pedestrianisation, pedestrian priority, allotments, the Oxford Green Belt and in areas within Oxfordshire providing food.</li> <li>- Increases in species now rare within the County year on year, in part through habitat restoration.</li> <li>- Educational attainments improving in all social classes by age 18.</li> <li>- Increased area of biodiverse land in Oxfordshire</li> <li>- Decrease in disused brownfield sites because of conversion to housing.</li> </ul> <p>Section 1.13 <b>Figure 1.3</b> Bearing in mind the comments in the previous paragraph, the baseline conditions of 'current and likely future environmental, social and economic conditions in Oxfordshire,' must take into account the potential depredations or depletions of water, soil, biodiversity and physical resources which would undermine the ecological resilience and human wellbeing which are inherent in current forms of growth. Using a SA without doing this effectively would not be intellectually honest. News that a 'hard' or no deal Brexit may mean a delay until 2021 in having a form of environmental agency to replace the roles created by EU legislation means that we are at risk of a hiatus in resources and enforcement for environmental policies. [7] It is difficult to see how meaningful the SA can be under this constraint and whilst a third of environmental laws &amp; regulations have yet to find a home in new</p>	

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Page 1023		<p>Government legislation to replace what we will lose if Brexit occurs. This raises the question of whether the SA &amp; JSSP can be realistically completed at present.</p> <p>[1] See the following. This link gives access to both the full report and a summary for policymakers: <a href="http://ipcc.ch/report/sr15/">http://ipcc.ch/report/sr15/</a></p> <p>[2] See all these examples as additions to the evidence base:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="https://www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk/blueprints-for-a-green-challenge?fbclid=IwAR0P3QSwsY1XYT6QRvktptB7ZF6pE79UwraItFDOtC65oyyrKYyqvVciCs">https://www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk/blueprints-for-a-green-challenge?fbclid=IwAR0P3QSwsY1XYT6QRvktptB7ZF6pE79UwraItFDOtC65oyyrKYyqvVciCs</a></li> <li>- <a href="https://www.sciencealert.com/giant-void-identified-under-antarctica-reveals-a-monumental-hidden-ice-retreat?fbclid=IwAR1QPH0hJkcR5eH86C18S-tHoSlcKOxQ8oLI0AR0UyUCIEYqLxrlwpV5wQ">https://www.sciencealert.com/giant-void-identified-under-antarctica-reveals-a-monumental-hidden-ice-retreat?fbclid=IwAR1QPH0hJkcR5eH86C18S-tHoSlcKOxQ8oLI0AR0UyUCIEYqLxrlwpV5wQ</a></li> <li>- <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/jan/30/polar-vortex-2019-usa-what-is-it-temperatures-cold-weather-climate-change-explained?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other&amp;fbclid=IwAR0oWNEslemGpcXr7SISxEmd7eumtWsfuPE39GqikC2Asn2ax_oPJs9G82Q">https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/jan/30/polar-vortex-2019-usa-what-is-it-temperatures-cold-weather-climate-change-explained?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other&amp;fbclid=IwAR0oWNEslemGpcXr7SISxEmd7eumtWsfuPE39GqikC2Asn2ax_oPJs9G82Q</a></li> <li>- <a href="https://www.independent.co.uk/environment/arctic-summer-global-warming-climate-change-high-temperature-canada-baffen-island-115000-years-a8750181.html?fbclid=IwAR3DEBsPAVvAb_cxo8nlbvM2ayL3qUp5Eb0kVmmGK7qXdTagotSdoUDGvvc">https://www.independent.co.uk/environment/arctic-summer-global-warming-climate-change-high-temperature-canada-baffen-island-115000-years-a8750181.html?fbclid=IwAR3DEBsPAVvAb_cxo8nlbvM2ayL3qUp5Eb0kVmmGK7qXdTagotSdoUDGvvc</a></li> <li>- <a href="https://phys.org/news/2019-01-landscape-unseen-years.html?fbclid=IwAR3LVU5fkASMi1WsobkN9iHEQSYXL_BxQmPJYqgG-nGA2k3j9up40a60YFY#jCp">https://phys.org/news/2019-01-landscape-unseen-years.html?fbclid=IwAR3LVU5fkASMi1WsobkN9iHEQSYXL_BxQmPJYqgG-nGA2k3j9up40a60YFY#jCp</a></li> <li>- <a href="https://www.eenews.net/stories/1060118349?fbclid=IwAR2ULHFnzknu55uSXq_PwYF7P4aRS9phtO5PnE8Q4lr2l-nHubyP429hYl">https://www.eenews.net/stories/1060118349?fbclid=IwAR2ULHFnzknu55uSXq_PwYF7P4aRS9phtO5PnE8Q4lr2l-nHubyP429hYl</a></li> <li>- <a href="https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/photos/rivers-run-dry/?fbclid=IwAR3oL6gpqvr4hRt_Sfi4DvOd6Zbp1jzWj_A62GOS2pdXgr5D0LcpVpq9uCc">https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/photos/rivers-run-dry/?fbclid=IwAR3oL6gpqvr4hRt_Sfi4DvOd6Zbp1jzWj_A62GOS2pdXgr5D0LcpVpq9uCc</a></li> <li>- <a href="https://www.independent.co.uk/environment/co2-levels-rise-climate-change-global-warming-fossil-fuels-met-office-a8744911.html?fbclid=IwAR1d03VoheZpH-y_kv3oPBuOc53XqINRUBItTufDucvOnvWQ9AflI8o_YtM">https://www.independent.co.uk/environment/co2-levels-rise-climate-change-global-warming-fossil-fuels-met-office-a8744911.html?fbclid=IwAR1d03VoheZpH-y_kv3oPBuOc53XqINRUBItTufDucvOnvWQ9AflI8o_YtM</a></li> </ul>	

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Page 1024		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="https://www.businessinsider.com/greenland-approaching-threshold-of-irreversible-melting-2019-1?utm_content=topbar&amp;utm_medium=referral&amp;utm_source=facebook.com&amp;utm_campaign=buffer&amp;utm_term=desktop&amp;referrer=facebook&amp;fbclid=IwAR1JPJwsKz2s6R3RtjxMOo_mjLe2vtK7lsWThHkYxzPmDOLn4UiRMKXdfiw&amp;r=US&amp;IR=T">https://www.businessinsider.com/greenland-approaching-threshold-of-irreversible-melting-2019-1?utm_content=topbar&amp;utm_medium=referral&amp;utm_source=facebook.com&amp;utm_campaign=buffer&amp;utm_term=desktop&amp;referrer=facebook&amp;fbclid=IwAR1JPJwsKz2s6R3RtjxMOo_mjLe2vtK7lsWThHkYxzPmDOLn4UiRMKXdfiw&amp;r=US&amp;IR=T</a></li> <li>- <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/environment/bike-blog/2019/jan/23/government-miss-cycling-targets-by-mile-time-invest?CMP=share_btn_fb&amp;fbclid=IwAR1dSqbzYMSzSnwcol9ogO19WK3N55DuwLeX3QgFcaVipbmsouDUpUc4E">https://www.theguardian.com/environment/bike-blog/2019/jan/23/government-miss-cycling-targets-by-mile-time-invest?CMP=share_btn_fb&amp;fbclid=IwAR1dSqbzYMSzSnwcol9ogO19WK3N55DuwLeX3QgFcaVipbmsouDUpUc4E</a></li> </ul> <p>[3] See for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="http://uknea.unep-wcmc.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=IfVaZJDoV8c%3d&amp;tabid=82pp.2-4">http://uknea.unep-wcmc.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=IfVaZJDoV8c%3d&amp;tabid=82pp.2-4</a></li> <li>- for forests, woods and trees specifically, see: <a href="https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/mediafile/100229275/stake-of-uk-forest-report.pdf?cb=58d97f320c">https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/mediafile/100229275/stake-of-uk-forest-report.pdf?cb=58d97f320c</a></li> </ul> <p>[4] <a href="http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140605090108/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/regions/east_of_england/ourwork/qi/accessiblenaturalgreenspacestandardangst.aspx">http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140605090108/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/regions/east_of_england/ourwork/qi/accessiblenaturalgreenspacestandardangst.aspx</a></p> <p>[5] Local Plan Guide, ibid, p.28.</p> <p>[6] See, for example: <a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/404521/RFI_7241_-_20150216_Government_Definitions_of_Sustainability_Redacted_2_amended.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/404521/RFI_7241_-_20150216_Government_Definitions_of_Sustainability_Redacted_2_amended.pdf</a></p> <p>[7] See for example: <a href="https://www.climatechangenews.com/2019/01/31/no-deal-brexit-leave-uk-without-green-watchdog-two-years-report/">https://www.climatechangenews.com/2019/01/31/no-deal-brexit-leave-uk-without-green-watchdog-two-years-report/</a></p>	
	<b>Policy context for the JSSP</b>	<p><b>Section 2.2</b> The Local Industrial Strategy referred to here has to sit within ecological and related human health and wellbeing considerations. It will not be sustainable or acceptable otherwise. The JSSP may not link to the so called 'Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Growth Corridor' since current economic conditions do not suggest conventional economic growth will be occurring in the foreseeable future. The Government's Brexit impact studies suggest a 2-8% reduction in GDP depending upon how 'hard' Brexit</p>	<p>Many of the comments relate to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess</p>

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Page 1025		<p>is in practice. Figures suggesting a loss to date of 2.1-2.5% of GDP are instructive. The current failure to agree a settlement of the future UK-EU relationship suggests a 'hard' form of Brexit with a longer and probably highly impacting form of recession. The SA needs to be candid and realistic about the conditions which may well apply throughout the Corridor in a collapsing form of Brexit if it is to be of any practical use whatsoever. How, for example, is growth to be expected if the end of freedom of movement and the choice by EU citizens – in increasing numbers already – to return to continental Europe exacerbates the extremely serious skills shortages noted on the Foreign Office shortage occupations web pages?</p> <p><b>Section 2.3</b> The 100,000 homes target has been widely criticised and forensically destroyed by informed critics. Sustainability cannot be achieved if each new home being built is adding substantially to carbon emissions in its construction and operation, including consequent transport emissions. On housing and its relationship to sustainability, there are many deficiencies in the basic thinking of bodies clustered around the planning process in Oxfordshire:</p> <p>Skills shortages in the construction industry are at a record high.[1] From 2013 onwards, the retirement estimate for UK construction workers aged over 55 is 400,000 people during the following 5-10 years; for those aged 45-54, the estimate was that a further 518,000 people would retire. For self-employed construction workers, it was also estimated that about 182,000 would retire during the same period.[2] The 16-21 age group is under 6% of our construction workforce and the industry needs about 400,000 new entrants each year, at a time when EU-origin construction workers are tending to return home.[3] This replenishment by young entrants into construction is not happening at the needed scale, perhaps because financial support for students for doing apprenticeships and further education courses is too low. The industry allegedly 'grows' - as the Government has noted how 100,000 construction jobs were added in England in 2015 alone [4] – but this does not accurately portray the actual current situation or compensate for losses to retirement and others leaving the industry, or the country. The Government is cutting back financial support for part-time students as well. The above figures also do not take into account shortages of civil engineers or planning officers in local government, both essential for implementing new housing and the provision of associated infrastructure. Austerity itself as the apparent key goal of Government policy undermines housing growth, which is faltering as home prices especially in the SE go down or flat line. Our councils, like our Government, need to consider how best use may be made of the existing built environment in areas of high pressure demand for homes. This is consistent with the idea of sustainability and better use of the existing built environment and brownfield sites. We simply do not have, and are not likely to obtain in the foreseeable future, the much larger number of skilled construction workers needed to build many new homes. Assuming otherwise in the</p>	<p>the significant effects of the Plan and their reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p> <p>The SA will draw on the most up-to-date evidence and policy available at the time of appraisal.</p>

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Page 1026		<p>prospective Industrial Strategy will not change failings in Government policy. It may take many years of effort and better financial support to students to eradicate very serious skills shortages.</p> <p>In short, we should all be exceptionally sceptical about construction delivery on the scale suggested throughout many official documents and as part of the evidence base for the SA. Government hostility to migrants is currently prejudicial to meeting skills needs in construction and elsewhere; the Malthouse plan for an extra 300,000 homes in Oxfordshire, to double the County's homes, is even more questionable and I note the bemused and less than compliant responses of Oxfordshire's local authorities to this idea – which are entirely constructive given the utterly implausible housing delivery figures Mr Malthouse appears to believe he can wish into existence. This is a difficulty for the SA: acute uncertainty about the realism of housing projections.</p> <p>With regard to the GL Hearn update of the SHMA evidence for Oxford, [5] I note the CPRE analysis from a recent newsletter:</p> <p>"Oxford City – new SHMA update from GL Hearn appears to reduce Oxford's need dramatically.</p> <p>".....This includes proposals to take a number of sites out of the Green Belt, totalling approx. 800 dwellings, and CPRE will of course be challenging these.</p> <p>However, the more existential threat to the Green Belt is the City's continuing expansionist tendency, with a failure to meet its housing need within its own boundaries, looking to its neighbours to pick up the slack (ideally through urban extensions). CPRE's case is that the City could meet this need if it prioritised land for housing, rather than employment, and built at a density appropriate for city living.</p> <p>One of the most interesting documents to emerge is an update to 2036 of the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment by its original authors GL Hearn. This appears to bring Oxford's objectively assessed need (OAN) down from 1,400 to 776 dwellings per annum. We must obviously bear in mind that the OAN is a floor, not a ceiling – and their argument that the higher figure is required to support the Oxfordshire Housing &amp; Growth Deal will no doubt be viewed as significant. However, this is certainly a strong point to challenge as it is Oxford's OAN that is driving the vast majority of the current Green Belt allocations."</p> <p>Since this is part of the evidence base for the SA and JSSP, its accuracy is critical in its implications for the entire County given Oxford's importance as an employment centre. However, the extent to which it heavily stresses uncertainties is a major question about how it then becomes useful as guidance for policy. The failure to improve housing policy can become a failure of the JSSP if the naiveties and misplaced growth assumptions of bodies such as the Oxfordshire Growth Board and LEP are not set</p>	

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Page 1027		<p>aside. There is also a general problem of consultants: evidence seen as 'good' from the client's point of view is stressed; evidence 'bad' from the client's point of view may not get the attention it deserves; deficiencies may occur if the consultant is not briefed – e.g., in this case on sustainability as a key factor and the need to take into account the implications of likely increases in targets for cutting carbon emissions.</p> <p>In terms of sustainability, we need land for biodiversity, food, recreation and tourism, forestry and to ensure that urban sprawl is not permitted in any location. Current fantastical plans for homes not likely to be built ignore how the average number of homes built each recent decade is going down because of a reliance on markets to meet housing demand – when home prices in Oxfordshire are beyond the reach of most households in terms of income.</p> <p>There is a farming case for feeding ruminants just on pasture, which would free land from being used for feed.[6] To do this, and to remove animals from factories, we need an assurance of a sustainable area of pastureland equal to the task as part of land use long-term. The SA as drafted does not offer this. We cannot attain long-term food security and food sovereignty [7] unless the SA takes these needs into account. This draft SA does not mention either. Similarly, local food strategies including more farmers' markets and infrastructure which supports agriculture are actually, as documents attempting to amend the Government's Agriculture Bill demonstrate.[8]</p> <p><b>Section 2.9</b> This is clearly contradictory. We cannot 'support jobs and housing growth and economic vitality' and simultaneously 'reduce transport emissions', enhance the environment, improve public health etc. Since about 533,000 people die in this country each year, and households turn over – by as much as 25% each year in the case of Oxford – and homes across the County remain empty – 430 in Oxford alone – we need to obtain maximum use of homes available instead of building on the countryside. If councils have the funds, they can purchase homes for social housing and keyworker housing that are on sale. They can look at reducing the empty spaces in industrial estates and science parks with very low cost housing. They should, always and everywhere, seek to build around the edges of and above the surface level of private and public car parks and stop wasting valuable space. Building on the countryside is lazy thinking and necessitates further appreciable spending on infrastructure that could be avoided by making better use of the existing built environment and under-used brownfield sites.</p> <p><b>Section 2.10</b> Bus journeys have fallen by 90 million in a year in England. [9] Bus strategies in Oxfordshire have been undermined by the removal of bus subsidies. The efficiency and reliability of buses in Oxfordshire is undermined by traffic growth on many although not all routes. Car commuting into Oxford shows little sign of succumbing to LTP4 policy to reduce it on most routes. The Electronic</p>	

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Page 1028		<p>Road Pricing Report I prepared and sent to key County Councillors needs to be considered as part of a strategy, including re-opening disused rail lines, to systematically reduce road traffic over time – including those areas with at capacity or over capacity conditions such as the A34.[10]</p> <p>2.11 This clause treats the Cambridge-Oxford Expressway as an accepted policy, although no consultation on the principle of this road has ever been undertaken. Reference to the Expressway should not, in consequence, influence the SA as it is still very much subject to legal challenge. I also note the steadily growing opposition to this idea, particularly but not exclusively within Oxfordshire: Oxford City Council now opposes the Expressway [11]; there are two coalitions of groups opposing the Expressway: the No Expressway Alliance (22 supporting groups at the time of writing) and the Expressway Action Group (33 Parish Councils in support). Data given for time supposedly to be reduced by the existence of an Expressway is completely unreliable. Since the Expressway has neither chosen route nor any decision about the number of junctions it may have, there can be no reasonable estimate of how many minutes might be taken – if any – off journeys. This sort of claim borders on fraudulence. The Expressway does not satisfy any known actual transport demand, nor can it be made 'sustainable' in any sense. The SA should, in fact, be ruling it out as unsustainable and in conflict with stated policies and plans in Oxfordshire including LTP4. It is one of the tests of veracity of the SA that it should do so. Further on this topic:</p> <p>Commuter traffic increases caused by the Expressway if ever built are in conflict with the County's Local Transport Plan, as are major developments likely to add significantly to both air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions in the City. The draft SA, to be consistent with other national, City and County policies, and indeed national ones, has to rule out the Expressway.</p> <p>To be specific, The Local Transport Plan for Oxfordshire emphasises goals such as:</p> <p>"2. To reduce emissions, enhance air quality and support the transition to a low carbon economy.</p> <p>* To protect and enhance the environment and improve quality of life (including public health, safety and individual wellbeing)" &amp; "Goal 2: Reduce emissions, enhance air quality and support the transition to a low carbon economy.</p> <p>Minimise the need to travel.</p> <p>Reduce the proportion of journeys made by private car by making the use of public transport, walking and cycling more attractive;"[12]</p>	

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Page 1029		<p>There is no way that these goals or the rest of the Oxfordshire County Transport Plan can be reinterpreted to permit the Cambridge-Oxford Expressway. The SA cannot be distorted to permit the Expressway. Support given by councils or any other body to the Expressway contravenes the Local Transport Plan and makes a nonsense of devolved decision making in the interests of the local communities which will suffer if this project goes ahead. There is no prospect whatsoever of the Expressway and associated corridor development being sustainable in all aspects, or carbon neutral in all aspects, despite the Climate Emergency.</p> <p><b>2.12</b> 'High growth planned for Oxfordshire'? Such a concept is incompatible with Brexit in any form, incompatible with any reasonable notion of sustainability or sustainable development since the idea of 'sustainable growth' touted in this consultation is intellectually insecure and fantastical in relation to current conditions.</p> <p><b>Table 2.2</b> I regret that claimed environmental rectitude and goals in this table are in conflict with unarticulated and highly questionable notions of growth. There are too many uses of the word 'Promote' where both local government and national Government policies need funding and improvement e.g., on carbon free construction, food production, pollution free travel, energy efficiency etc. The overall agenda here is in fact crippled by austerity and in particularly the utter inadequacy of the tax base in the UK: neither corporations nor the highest income/wealth groups are paying enough taxes and we desperately need Land Value Taxation, a financial transaction tax and other measures to fund a decent and sustainable Oxfordshire in a better UK.</p> <p>[1] <a href="https://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/news/uk-construction-worker-shortage-recruitment-brex-it-eu-nationals-citizens-europe-trade-association-a8172466.html">https://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/news/uk-construction-worker-shortage-recruitment-brex-it-eu-nationals-citizens-europe-trade-association-a8172466.html</a></p> <p>[2] <a href="https://www.citb.co.uk/news-events/uk-construction-skills-time-bomb/">https://www.citb.co.uk/news-events/uk-construction-skills-time-bomb/</a></p> <p>[3] <a href="https://www.constructionproducts.org.uk/news-media-events/blog/2017/september/the-underlying-challenges-of-the-construction-industry/">https://www.constructionproducts.org.uk/news-media-events/blog/2017/september/the-underlying-challenges-of-the-construction-industry/</a></p> <p>[4] See: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ministers-call-on-construction-industry-to-invest-and-build-home-grown-talent">https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ministers-call-on-construction-industry-to-invest-and-build-home-grown-talent</a></p> <p>[5] GL Hearn et al – Oxford City – Objectively assessed need update – October 2018.</p> <p>[6] <a href="https://www.pastureforlife.org/news/pasture-for-life-it-can-be-done/">https://www.pastureforlife.org/news/pasture-for-life-it-can-be-done/</a></p>	

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Page 1030		<p>[7] <a href="https://viacampesina.org/en/landworkers-alliance-recommendations-for-post-brex-it-agricultural-policy-in-uk/">https://viacampesina.org/en/landworkers-alliance-recommendations-for-post-brex-it-agricultural-policy-in-uk/</a></p> <p>[8] <a href="https://www.amendagbill.uk/">https://www.amendagbill.uk/</a></p> <p>[9] See: <a href="https://governmentbusiness.co.uk/news/30012019/bus-journeys-fall-90-million-year">https://governmentbusiness.co.uk/news/30012019/bus-journeys-fall-90-million-year</a></p> <p>[10] From Cowley Area Transport Group and available from me: <a href="mailto:stevedawe@gn.apc.org">stevedawe@gn.apc.org</a></p> <p>[11] Decision of its meeting of 28th January 2019.</p> <p>[12] See p.16: <a href="http://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s33704/Background%20CA_JUN2816R07%20Connecting%20Oxfordshire%20vol%201%20-%20Policy%20and%20Overall%20Strategy.pdf">http://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s33704/Background%20CA_JUN2816R07%20Connecting%20Oxfordshire%20vol%201%20-%20Policy%20and%20Overall%20Strategy.pdf</a></p>	
	<p><b>Baseline environmental, social and economic context for the JSSP</b></p>	<p><b>3.7</b> It is a colossal failure that more people are commuting to work in Oxford than live and work in the City. Housing needs are not being met for very low cost housing in the City, and alternatives suggested above are part of protecting the environment of Oxfordshire from a needless spatial expansion of Oxford. The SA needed to take this as a goal and work assuming this was the case in every area of suggested policy.</p> <p><b>3.8</b> Connectivity across the Cambridge-Oxford Arc when just 1% of those who commute in this area do so across the whole distance Cambridge to Oxford indicates that 'corridors' are fictions of developers and allied planners and are not based on evidence suggesting real demand. The Expressway can, and probably will, be rejected for seeking to answer a demand that does not exist. Freight should move more by rail and canal, and by cargo bikes whenever possible in urban areas, as examples of what should be done.</p> <p><b>3.9</b> Population projections are very highly questionable at present under Brexit conditions. Less EU citizens coming, more EU citizens going, an end to freedom of movement and the high risk of a Brexit recession raise questions. The beginning of actual and planned movements of investment and jobs to continental Europe is being noted repeatedly by the CBI and IoD in the media. There is a risk of really significant migration of people with skills in consequence. This could mean the risk of net outward migration in a Brexit-based recession of indeterminate length. As an example of the length of a potential Brexit recession, it is now estimated that trading freely under the highly disadvantageous World Trade Organisation rules may take 7 years to achieve – given the ability and actuality of objections by existing WTO members.[1] Over 20 WTO members have raised questions about UK trading post Brexit already. A 'hard' Brexit would mean renegotiating at least 357 treaties, which could take more than a decade.</p>	<p>Many of the comments relate to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the significant effects of the Plan and their reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p> <p>The SA will draw on the most up-to-date evidence and policy available at the time of appraisal.</p> <p>The information provided has been reviewed and updates have been made to the baseline where considered appropriate and effective.</p> <p>With regards to 3.44, the re-opening of the rail route is now addressed.</p> <p>With regards to air quality, PM10 and PM2.5 are now addressed.</p>

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Page 1031		<p>The SA needs to be far more realistic about population projections and household formation or actual household decreases in Oxfordshire, just as it needs to re-consider its repeating of housing targets that are not and may never be met even up to 2050 unless Brexit falls in a new referendum. We cannot assume Oxford is assume to such processes and the SA needed to reflect this issue stressing how likely this is if Brexit does occur.</p> <p><b>3.25</b> The Strategic Housing Market Assessment of 2014 is outdated and challenged as noted above. It is not a reasonable part of an evidence base for this SA.</p> <p><b>3.32-3.34</b> Indicates the problems of excessive and unsustainable growth in Oxfordshire when other areas have greater needs. The SA does not consider the content of growth and how sustainable it may or may not be. This is major failure.</p> <p><b>3.38</b> This needed to be many pages, not one small clause indicating concern about Brexit. Resilience, in all senses, depends on long-term sustainability in human activities including consumption and how this relates to greenhouse gas emissions. The folly of Brexit combined with mad austerity policies cannot be expected to provide security for people or their environment in any reasonable SA.</p> <p><b>3.44</b> The re-opening of the Carterton-Witney-Oxford-Cowley-Wheatley rail route is an essential element in reducing traffic emissions, giving commuters a more sustainable transport option and beginning a process of traffic reduction in the County. The SA should be explicit about the need for expanding rail, and the return of bus subsidies.</p> <p><b>3.45</b> The road corridors around Oxford suffer from congestion since Park and Ride locations contribute to the attraction of car drivers to those locations. As noted before, Electronic Road Pricing (ERP) could make some routes costlier to use and encourage a larger switch to more sustainable transport modes. It would also, as in Singapore where such a system has been operating since 1998, contribute funding towards road repair, electric bus deployment, pavement upgrades, cycle networks and marking, and enhanced walking routes.</p> <p><b>3.47</b> Matching and exceeding Oxford's cycling, walking and bus use figures in other districts requires taking into account the need for investment in cycling, public transport and ERP. This is an important impact to consider in the SA as it will help to reduce public health impacts of air pollution – and walking and cycling increases can improve public health.</p> <p><b>3.52</b> The £215 million Housing and Growth Deal is a derisory amount indicative of continuing austerity in UK public spending, and the current minimal tax base of the UK. Spread over the County, it will make</p>	<p>With regards to landscape, additional information is now included and the impact of tourism is now referenced in para 3.48.</p>

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Page 1032		<p>remarkably little difference to the declining physical infrastructure of roads, hospitals and schools which are critical to the unquestioned notions of housing and growth.</p> <p><b>3.53</b> The Expressway is not achieved or in any sense consensual. The Government cannot readily circumvent either the planning system or the legal system with its Expressway corridor plans. The Expressway is bad enough in terms of potential environmental damage and conflict with environmental policy and the idea of sustainable development, but far more countryside would be obliterated by accompanying corridor development of warehousing, dormitory settlements and associated infrastructure. Doing this when existing infrastructure in current settlements needs attention is irrational and very costly.</p> <p><b>Table 3.10</b> PM 2.5s are not mentioned in this table. This is a serious omission, given 40,000 deaths per year in the country from air pollution. Briefly, particles of dust and those originating from brake pads remain present even if other pollution sources are minimalised from tailpipes. These are referred to as 'Fine Particulate Matter' or PM2.5s and it is worth noting that the entire area of London has an unacceptable level of such particulates in its air. [2] Studies suggest that these particulates are actually highly toxic and worse for public health than PM10s.[3] Some further elaboration on this subject: total PM10 emissions from EVs have been found to be equal to those of modern Internal Combustion Engine Vehicles (ICEVs). PM2.5 emissions have been found to be only 1–3% lower for EVs compared to modern ICEVs. Therefore, a switch to electric vehicles may well not have a great effect on PM levels. It should be noted that non-exhaust emissions already account for over 90% of PM10 and 85% of PM2.5 emissions from traffic. Such emissions come from brake wear, tyre wear and road surface abrasion.[4] It therefore seems desirable to pedestrianise and give areas pedestrian priority in order to cut this source of air pollution in the centres of settlements. The SA, with a stronger health emphasis, should have dealt with this topic. We await technological solutions to this type of pollution.</p> <p><b>3.12</b> The figure of 4.5 tonnes per person of carbon dioxide per annum in Oxford is certainly to be welcomed compared to the higher figures of all other Oxfordshire districts. However, this is only part of the transportation aspects of emissions since aviation and shipping serving Oxford residents and visitors does not appear to be included here. Nor do we see other essential baseline information such as the complete ecological footprint of the County. These make the SA less than adequate in scope. This information should be collected from available sources or researched without delay.</p> <p><b>3.62</b> The water supply situation in Oxfordshire is grave. This section indicates that by next year (2020) demand will be greater than supply in the Swindon and Oxford water catchment areas. It is assumed that water will be drawn from neighbouring areas but no mention is made of how water stressed they might be at present or in future. Apart from the carbon implications of moving more water, which are</p>	

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Page 1033		<p>noted, there is the more serious constraint that each additional home in the County will require a water supply and it is a major obstacle to housing growth plans that such supply cannot currently be guaranteed. There is no doubt that the Climate Emergency means more weather extremes including longer dry periods. The SA needed to consider how water may be provided in far more detail, bearing in mind what may be very high estimates of population growth, up to 2050. However, there is another very serious related consideration:</p> <p>The UK is importing more than half of its food and feed. Much of this is from the EU. Current conditions indicate a need to radically increase UK food production and to cut the amount of land used to grow crops for feeding animals to allow it to be used for feeding people directly. Agriculture in all its forms is a water consuming activity which the UK needs to increase as part of reducing avoidable imports in its current precarious economic situation shadowed by the high risk of a bad Brexit. Having inflated housing targets for Oxfordshire is bad enough: meeting long-term food needs by greater use of existing land means more water use in Oxfordshire too.</p> <p><b>3.63-3.65</b> Biological conditions in rivers, and the volume of flows in an uncertain Climate, need an empowered and properly funded Environment Agency. Under pressure for more water use, this becomes imperative and the SA should indicate this.</p> <p><b>3.67-3.71</b> Under-states the problems of flood risk since available evidence clearly indicates a speeding up in the process of Climate Change. More extreme weather conditions means more flooding and more drought. Protection of homes and workplaces, and powers and resources for protecting vulnerable locations, needs to be given to an Environment Agency freed from the mindlessness of austerity. The SA should be unambiguous about this need. Given the colossal sums suggested - £150m for the Flood Alleviation Channel alone – natural barriers including tree planting, rough drainage in streams and brooks, and the full engagement of water companies are all needed to stem what are likely to be worse floods at times.</p> <p>In addition: Sustainable Urban and Rural Drainage Systems require maintenance and renewal. Permeable pavers and similar put down across driveways or as roads in new developments quickly fill up with dust and cease to be a permeable surface. I know of no overall scheme for businesses or privately rented properties or owner-occupied homes in areas which are either flood prone or susceptible to surface flooding in times of heavy rainfall. Water re-use in new buildings is essential and sustainable retrofitting of buildings needs to incorporate this type of water conservation measure. Higher quality drainage arrangements are needed for roadside drains that overflow frequently all over the County due to poor maintenance. The County should push a programme of Water conservation and management in cooperation with appropriate partners in a new County-wide partnership, including</p>	

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Page 1034		<p>addressing how SUDSs are to be maintained. Management of floor risk and water movements in urban settlements, exacerbated by poorly maintained drainage on roads, is not meeting tests of soundness, for example in the draft Oxford City Plan, regarding sustainable development now, nor seem likely to do so in future.</p> <p><b>3.73-3.74</b> Land uses are not fixed nor are agricultural classifications permanent. As noted in the last two Oxford Real Farming Conferences I have attended, diligent action to improve land leads to greater productivity and improved soil qualities. Land cannot be handed over to development because of agricultural land classifications giving a misleading picture of permanence of condition to some. Both agriculture and forestry can occur on low grade land. Agroforestry has huge potential for meeting both food and forestry needs.[5]</p> <p><b>3.87-3.90</b> Biodiversity and geodiversity – section: This section is small, inadequate and fails to bring together the sustainability aspects of the natural environment with local, regional, national and international tourist and recreational uses of the landscape – quite apart from agriculture. The overall offering to all of these areas of need should be SA work, setting out how the protected areas should be increased; how forestry can be extended for all uses; and how the Oxford Green Belt area should be increased in size and retained. This is very poor as SA work up to this point.</p> <p><b>3.98-3.110</b> See previous comment.</p> <p><b>3.111-3.114</b> The Oxford Green Belt should be retained as essential barrier against urban sprawl and fringe, dormitory settlement urban extensions of Oxford. It should also be increased in overall area and be given other protective designations in whole or in part which do things like maintaining agricultural uses, protecting biodiversity over larger areas and ensuring public access via footpaths. The SA is supposedly to serve Oxfordshire as part of the JSSP up to 2050, but we need longer-term protections for future generations.</p> <p>[1] See: <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/jan/27/uk-cannot-simply-trade-on-wto-terms-after-no-deal-brexit-say-experts">https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/jan/27/uk-cannot-simply-trade-on-wto-terms-after-no-deal-brexit-say-experts</a></p> <p>[2] Information supplied by Caroline Russell, AM, London Assembly.</p> <p>[3] SEE: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fine-particulate-matter-pm2-5-in-the-uk">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fine-particulate-matter-pm2-5-in-the-uk</a></p>	

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Page 1035		<p>[4] Information from Professor John Whitelegg. Re: Non-exhaust PM emissions from electric vehicles" Atmos. Environ. 134 (June 2016) 10–17] Authors: Victor R J H Timmers and Peter A J Achten</p> <p>[5] <a href="https://www.soilassociation.org/media/15756/agroforestry-in-england_soilassociation_june18.pdf">https://www.soilassociation.org/media/15756/agroforestry-in-england_soilassociation_june18.pdf</a></p>	
	<p><b>Future challenges and key sustainability issues</b></p>	<p><b>4.7</b> Onwards, Climate Change: Oxfordshire County Council, the JSSP, the Oxfordshire Growth Board and the LEP all need to declare a state of Climate Emergency and commit to a net zero carbon Oxfordshire by 2030. This Emergency has arisen because mitigation efforts globally up to the current date have been so poor that both greenhouse gas emissions and temperatures have carried on rising, and more rapidly in both cases in recent years. Only the absorption of heat and of carbon dioxide by the Oceans has, up to now, cushioned the Planet from the effects of the global irresponsibility that existing and future generations face. The SA needed to take into account, in its baseline evidence, all recent scientific evidence showing increases in physical effects – including upon ice throughout the world – from a warming world. The implication of doing so is that leisurely mitigation measures concerning Climate Change are now Climate complacency, and that measures must be expedited to achieve deeper cuts year on year in emissions. Oxfordshire must play its part.</p> <p><b>4.23</b> Is a section in which austerity as a factor in causing deprivation, and an under-supply of very low costs homes should have been mentioned. Austerity is a choice made by Government, as is the choice to allow many forms of Government debt to increase dramatically rather than provide an adequate tax base. The section is inherently contradictory: you cannot address road congestion by having a Cambridge-Oxford Expressway that increases the number of car journeys people take and the distances they will travel: the normal effects of increasing road capacity as known since the 1920s, but not to Highways England and its ilk. [1] You cannot be serious about air pollution and build new trunk roads like the Expressway. You cannot assume housing provision can just be added when the market is not providing very low cost homes and the water supply for such homes has yet to be demonstrated in this SA. You cannot protect agricultural land without recognising the need to prevent concrete and tarmac from being poured on it. Neither Climate Policy Integration nor Environmental Policy Integration have taken place in the resulting content of this deficient SA document.</p> <p><b>4.24</b> Raises expectations that may well not be fulfilled under austerity conditions. Housing is not objectively assessed when realistic projections and housing completions have gone down since the SHMA figures – and yet this is still quoted as gospel in this consultation as if it made sense. Infrastructure investment is under-resourced e.g., road conditions within Oxford are extraordinarily bad and will take years of investment to cure. Thames Water needs to demonstrate how the clearly fantastical housing projections for Oxfordshire are going to be accompanied by meeting consequent</p>	<p>The additional evidence has been reviewed and references have been made to them where appropriate, for example the IPPC report referenced has been reviewed and added to Appendix 2.</p> <p>Some comments relate to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>

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Page 1036		<p>water demand. If this evidence is not supplied and assessed by a non-commercial academic body rather than a 'consultant', then it must be assumed that the supply of water is not available to meet the demand resulting from an increased population in the County. The Local Transport Plan cannot move people easily to more sustainable modes of transport without funds. I have suggested ERP for this, and the need for a return to bus subsidies and a general programme of re-opening rail lines NOT new trunk road investment or increases in road capacity. The NIC has no authority to orchestrate a Cambridge-Oxford Expressway and it cannot be pursued if a Climate secure Oxfordshire by 2030 is to be achieved.</p> <p>[1] See accumulated evidence on this in: <a href="https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/economics/rdg/nataarchivedocs/trunkroadstraffic.pdf">https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/economics/rdg/nataarchivedocs/trunkroadstraffic.pdf</a></p>	
	<p><b>Sustainability Appraisal framework</b></p>	<p><b>5.5</b> Types, tenures and affordability of housing is not a matter of market activity, in terms of real demand. Developer, private landlord or foreign speculator demand is not actual housing demand. The primary housing need is for very low cost housing in a County with national average wages and some of the most expensive homes in the country, relative to wages. Given relatively low incomes in relation to housing costs, it is imperative that all opportunities to locate housing within existing settlements are taken. Brownfield site development and the use of the existing built environment are paramount, with zero carbon housing and sustainable retrofitting something which legal advice to Oxford City Council shows each planning authority can demand of developers. [1] All subsequent points in table 5.1 under 2 are best served by intensification of housing density and population within existing settlements and near to existing facilities. This is more sustainable than urban sprawl or dormitory settlements as planned/suggested. The SA needed to ensure land was retained for its many other uses rather than giving space to urban sprawl and dormitory settlements.</p> <p><b>p.57</b> Point 5 employment: The case that additional employment will result from additional land devoted to employment has not been made. Low density use of industrial estate and science park sites demonstrates very poor land use, with vacancies all over the County indicating that employment can grow and reach full employment levels as in Oxford without the allocation of additional land to employment. In terms of sustainability, people working at home or from home allows more of the employment land to be re-allocated to housing – instead of forcing urban sprawl of communities due to bad planning and a lack of a comprehensive approach to sustainable development in the long term.</p> <p><b>p.70</b> The SA as outlined in this document is not consistent with the idea of 'sustainable solutions' in the NPPF, nor more generally consistent with the idea of sustainable development. Tacit support for the</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Please note that SA is a strategic process to assess the likely significant effects of the plan and its reasonable alternatives. Once the Council has identified options for the plan, these will be subject to assessment through the SA.</p>

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Page 1037		<p>Cambridge-Oxford Expressway is symptomatic of a failure to consider what sustainability is, and what it means for Oxfordshire up to 2050. The SA and Oxfordshire 2050 documentation are not compatible with the notion of sustainability since they lack a policy base for a transformation of County transport to a carbon free future by 2030 – in line with immediate and serious evidence of accelerating Climate Change. And:</p> <p><b>p.74</b> The NPPF is stronger on reducing congestion and air pollution than this SA, since it is not clear what policies are to be used in Oxfordshire that will actually achieve this.</p> <p>[2] Local Authorities must strive to achieve sustainable development. Details of how this is to be done include reference in the NPPF to resolution 42/187 of the United Nations detailing the responsibilities of Governments in relation to their associated agencies and other bodies.[3] It specifically requires that growth is fundamentally changed towards actions consistent with the principle of sustainability. The SA is not doing this, since 'sustainable growth' is undefined (and questionable) and its relation to existing carbon reduction targets is unclear. Since these targets are very likely to be revised after the Committee on Climate Change reports in March 2019, it is desirable that the SA seeks to present evidence about HOW development is to be sustainable not making unsupported assertions suggesting there is something called 'sustainable growth' which is does not define.</p> <p>[1] Information supplied by Cllr Craig Simmons, meeting of Oxford Climate Lobby with a number of Oxford City councillors on 29.1.2019.</p> <p>[2] See page 5 and especially footnote 4: <a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/740441/National_Planning_Policy_Framework_web_accessible_version.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/740441/National_Planning_Policy_Framework_web_accessible_version.pdf</a></p> <p>[3] See: <a href="http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/42/ares42-187.htm">http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/42/ares42-187.htm</a></p>	
Member of the Public	Introduction	I am pleased the SODC Local Plan provides protection to smaller villages.	Noted.
Member of the Public	Introduction	Re <b>paragraph 1.7</b> : it is not defined what is meant by "sustainable growth", or "sustainable development", for that matter. Future versions of the SA process should include these definitions at the beginning of each document, so that the public have clear criteria against which to judge proposals and decisions.	Noted. Sustainable development as defined in the NPPF is recorded in Appendix 2.

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Page 1038		<p><b>Paragraphs 1.17-1.18:</b> the reliance on Habitats Regulations Assessment is far too restrictive, as it applies to European-designated sites only. As you rightly point out elsewhere, there are no Ramsar sites, for example, in Oxfordshire, but this does not mean the whole county is therefore OK to go under tarmac and concrete.</p>	
	<p><b>Policy context for the JSSP</b></p>	<p><b>Paragraph 2.3:</b> This paragraph has a list of nine areas that the JSSP will include. Notably absent from this important list is agriculture, and the balance between intensive and non-intensive farming. This is vitally important for biodiversity, food security, pollution and landscape. Agriculture (in the rural county of Oxfordshire) must be a priority, and included as a separate item in the list.</p> <p><b>Paragraph 2.7:</b> "The assumption built into this figure [100,000 new homes by 2031] was that 1,400 dwellings per annum were required in Oxford to 2031." G L Hearn provided this figure in the 2014 SHMA, based on maximalist and unrestricted growth targets. It should be added that G L Hearn have subsequently revised this figure down to 776 dwellings per annum in their Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) update of October 2018.</p> <p><b>Table 2.2:</b> "Where possible, safeguard historic assets including their setting." Please delete "Where possible".</p>	<p>Paragraph 2.3 relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, rather than the SA Scoping Report.</p> <p>In regard to Table 2.2, 'where possible' has been deleted.</p> <p>The SA will draw on the most up-to-date evidence and policy available at the time of appraisal.</p>
	<p><b>Baseline environmental, social and economic context for the JSSP</b></p>	<p><b>Paragraph 3.2,</b> footnote 16: For West Oxfordshire you refer, as your source, to Enfusion's 'Sustainability Appraisal Addendum Appendices' (CD10). This document has been shown to be riddled with factual errors and misleading assertions, while omitting important information; it should not be relied on in any way.</p> <p><b>Table 3.7:</b> One of the "key sustainability issues" for Oxfordshire is that there are "more jobs than there are people, with minimum growth in the working age population". There are plenty of places in England where there are more people than there are jobs and a substantial working age population. Furthermore, in these places, housing is far more likely to be affordable. So the solution is simple: put the jobs where the people are, not the people where the jobs already outnumber the people.</p> <p><b>Paragraph 3.53:</b> The Expressway is apparently going to cut journey times and improve connectivity between centres of rapid growth. So more traffic, more congestion, more pollution, more carbon dioxide emissions during and after construction. Utter madness.</p>	<p>Noted. The baseline information included in the SA Reports for the District Local Plans has been supplemented by more up to date sources as necessary.</p> <p>Updates have been made accordingly.</p> <p>Parts of this response relate to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, rather than the SA Scoping Report.</p> <p>The SA will draw on the most up-to-date evidence and policy available at the time of appraisal.</p>

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Page 1039		<p><b>Table 3.10:</b> Are there really only two AQMAs in West Oxfordshire (in Witney and Chipping Norton)? If so, that is not nearly enough. See comment below on Table 3.12.</p> <p><b>Paragraph 3.59:</b> Since the "UK Climate Projections scenarios confirm that the South East will be one of the region's most severely affected by climate change", it seems counter-intuitive, if not perverse, to plan for so much growth, development and construction in an already overheated region.</p> <p><b>Table 3.12:</b> It appears that carbon dioxide emissions in West Oxfordshire are the lowest among the five districts for domestic and industry, but by a huge amount the largest for transport. Is this all down to the A40? Whatever the reason, more AQMAs must be put in place and the data analysed as soon as possible to account for this extraordinary statistic.</p> <p><b>Paragraph 3.62:</b> Since, by 2020, "demand for water will outstrip supply from the Swindon and Oxfordshire catchment area, meaning that more water will have to be imported from adjoining water resource management areas", wouldn't it make more sense to build in those better-endowed areas instead?</p> <p><b>Figure 3.5:</b> This map does not distinguish between Grade 3a and Grade 3b land. You need a map that does because, as you rightly point out in paragraph 3.74, best and most versatile agricultural land "is considered a national resource and should not be lost".</p> <p><b>Figure 3.6:</b> Interesting not toe that the eastern half of the proposed 'garden village' site is in a Minerals Strategic Resource Area, given that mineral resources, "where possible, should not be lost or compromised by future growth" (Table 3.17).</p> <p><b>Paragraphs 3.87ff:</b> The text on biodiversity and geodiversity only talks about designated or other officially recognised sites, not the rest of the countryside, which in many cases is of equal value.</p> <p><b>Figure 3.11:</b> The Oxfordshire Plan and Expressway/Growth Arc are obviously going to decimate the Green Belt.</p>	
	<p><b>Future challenges and key sustainability issues</b></p>	<p><b>Paragraph 4.17:</b> I note the huge discrepancy between the OXIS-calculated infrastructure requirement costs (£8.35 billion) and the current amount of known funding (£1.21 billion). Surely that gap must be substantially narrowed before taking the risk to embark upon such ambitious plans?</p> <p><b>Paragraph 4.27:</b> Given the 5-year Oxfordshire Housing Growth Deal of £215 million, "to help deliver more affordable housing and infrastructure improvements" (paragraph 4.25), it is odd to read that the Growth Board's transport improvements already published for Year 1 of the 5-year deal "have a full total</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the significant effects of the plan and its</p>

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		cost estimated at around £274 million". If the £215 million pounds has already been allocated in Year 1, where is the rest of money coming from? Some clarification needed here.	reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.
Member of the Public Page 1040	Introduction	<p>The Introduction should make it clear that in identifying broad areas of growth, the JSSP will still need to gather enough evidence that a significant part of that broad area of growth can be developed sustainably and is viable. Because of the environmental constraints in Oxfordshire, some of those Broad Areas of growth are likely to be quite small, and therefore site specific issues, like the impact of Climate Change on flooding risk from fluvial, surface and ground water sources in an urban catchment system, could be crucial, as could the practicability of providing cycling and walking transport links- simple assumptions would not be enough.</p> <p>The Introduction should spell out that the SA and SEA process will apply the Precautionary Principle to Biological Diversity- the onus will be on the JSSP to prove that significant harm to biological diversity will not happen. If there is uncertainty, then significant harm will be presumed. I commend you for the comprehensive list of other policies to be considered including the International Convention on Biological Diversity. This convention binds the UK to apply the precautionary principle.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>SA is a strategic process and the scope covers all relevant topics set out in the SEA Regulations and is guided by national planning policy and practice guidance.</p>
Oxford University	Introduction	1.15 states that the JSSP covers three decades; 2020-2030, 2030-2040 and 2040-2050. Isn't the first decade here (and some of the second) covered by the existing Local Plans? Since the latter are already submitted how can, or might, the JSSP change them?	A significant amount of joint work across the Oxfordshire authorities has already taken place which has fed into the current and emerging round of Local Plans. These Local Plans cover the period from 2011 to 2031, 2034 or 2036. There is therefore a good deal of detail and certainty around that period as plans are well advanced. The latter period of the Oxfordshire Plan to 2050 will be based on a new evidence base produced specifically for the project. Future Local Plans will sit within the framework defined by the Oxfordshire Plan.
	Policy context for the JSSP	2.3 mentions that the JSSP will not identify specific development sites (possibly referring to the period 2030 - 2050) but how can it not do so in light of the fact that many of the additional 200,000 homes in the period will be associated in some way with the Ox-Cam expressway. The Oxford Growth Board	This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the

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Page 1041		<p>appears to be consulting with Highways England over such matters and the expressway proposals mention the possibility of several major new housing developments (large towns). Surely this must involve identifying sites capable of such large scale developments?</p> <p><b>Table 2.1</b> suggests clearly that the Housing and Growth Deal is contingent upon a JSSP being developed and submitted to a definite timetable. The Growth Deal involves increasing Oxfordshire's housing stock by more than a third by the mid-2030s, a rate which is more than double that predicted by the ONS for England as a whole to 2050. The JSSP involves another quantum of housing, possibly an additional 200,000. There has been no public consultation on the level of growth implied either by the Local Plans or the JSSP. Comments on the Local Plan are more about the distribution than number of houses, because the Growth Deal funds will be withheld if the housing target (100,000 across the county) is not met.</p> <p><b>2.8</b> the internal workings of OxLEP are opaque to the general public. They may or may not 'ensure sustainability', but they cannot claim 'inclusivity'.</p> <p><b>2.11</b> OXIS, in the long term, 'also supports an Oxford-Cambridge expressway' which, when completed, 'is expected to take up to 40 minutes off journey times between the M4 and the M1'. The expressway is another development that has not sought any form of public approval to date, and has not carried out any form of environmental assessment as required by international law. Even within supporting documents, the economic case for the expressway is dubious at best (benefit to cost ratio only barely exceeding 1). It is not at all clear how journey times can be estimated on a road not yet built, along a route not yet chosen, in traffic conditions 30 years hence. From the two OXIS Stage Reports it is clear that Oxfordshire has a &gt;£7 billion hole in its infrastructure budget to 2040 before any Local Plan or expressway houses are added to the mix. How can building more infrastructure-dependent projects solve this infrastructure deficit problem?</p> <p>Little or no mention is made of the increasing inequality between the English Regions, which more development in the South East can only exacerbate. In the Oxfordshire Plan document it is pointed out that the South East regions, including London, are the 'only' net contributors to the UK Treasury. Shouldn't some of the development planned for Oxfordshire's JSSP be distributed to other regions, thus reducing the strain on local housing and infrastructure?</p>	SA is to assess the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.
	<b>Baseline environmental, social and economic</b>	<b>3.9</b> Projected population changes 2016-2031 in Table 3.1 (7% for Oxford City, but 26 to 38% for the Districts) should be viewed in light of the ONS projections of only 16% population growth for the whole of England for the period 2016 to 2050. Does the county need to grow this much? The County's population changes are driven more by in- and out-migration than by reproduction of its residents. Both	Noted.

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Page 1042	<b>context for the JSSP</b>	<p>migration rates are notoriously variable and hence, also, the net migration rate. Migrant populations are more likely to want to rent than buy properties and will want properties of a particular type and location. Is this being factored into the housing calculations? Many of the migrant workers are associated with the Science hubs and Universities. Shouldn't these employers be involved more in providing housing for their workers, along the lines of Cambridge's North West (New Eddington) development?</p> <p><a href="http://www.nwcambridge.co.uk/">http://www.nwcambridge.co.uk/</a></p> <p><b>3.53</b> The dubious benefits of the expressway are mentioned in comments elsewhere. The improved connectivity to high quality job centres such as the Oxford Science Park is one of the expressway's stated benefits: see p. 11 in <a href="http://assets.highwaysengland.co.uk/roads/road-projects/Oxford+to+Cambridge+expressway/Oxford+to+Cambridge+Expressway+Corridor+overview+booklet.pdf">http://assets.highwaysengland.co.uk/roads/road-projects/Oxford+to+Cambridge+expressway/Oxford+to+Cambridge+Expressway+Corridor+overview+booklet.pdf</a></p> <p>This graphic states that with the expressway the Oxford Science Park (currently 70 companies employing 2,500 people in a 75 acre site) will be within a 45 minute drive time for 470,000 people. Even allowing for spectacular Science Park growth, why might almost half a million people want to visit a site with only 2,500 'residents' and rising? High-tech industries are not labour intensive.</p> <p>The expressway is advertised as connecting the presently un-connected, or poorly connected. But only about 2% of the journeys between Oxford and Cambridge are end-to-end. The expressway is a project meeting ill-defined or non-existent needs. Why we should need or want to squeeze between Oxford and Cambridge an additional economy equal to that of the whole of Scotland (another pointless statistic in the same graphic referred to above) is neither explained nor justified.</p> <p><b>3.62</b> The problem of water shortage by 2020 in the region is mentioned, to be solved by 'importing from adjoining water resource management areas'. But the London region will be short of water for 2 million people by 2040 on present trends (Thames Water figures). As Mark Twain said of land 'they ain't making any more of it'. There is only a limited supply of water. You can only redistribute it, not make more of it. The projected 300,000 increase in Oxfordshire's housing stock by 2050 will make water shortages much worse.</p>	Updates have been made as considered appropriate.
	<b>Future challenges and key</b>	<b>4.15</b> The AECOM study referred to in 4.14 assumed population growth in Oxfordshire of 267,700 people in the period 2016 to 2040 (a 39% increase) whereas the likely increase brought about by the current round of Local Plans (Oxford Growth Deal, 100,000 houses or approx. 230,000 more people by	

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Page 1043	<b>sustainability issues</b>	<p>the mid-2030s) plus the proposed expressway houses (an additional 200,000 houses or 460,000 people to 2050) will lead to an approximate 100% increase in the county's population by 2050.</p> <p><b>4.22</b> acknowledges the huge OXIS infrastructure investment required to 2040, and the current £7 billion shortfall (presumably under the modest AECOM scenario of growth). To conclude (4.22) that 'This will be a major issue for the JSSP to acknowledge and address as it is prepared' is something of an under-statement. Infrastructure is the key to all successful development and it needs to be put into place before that development begins; not during or after.</p> <p><b>4.26</b> In light of the above, the £215 million of the Oxford Growth Deal seems totally inadequate to meet the infrastructure needs of the Growth Deal's 100,000 houses. This section states that 'Without the JSSP, it is questionable whether such funding would have been made available, and the JSSP should help to secure additional funding in future.' Claiming as a 'success' getting totally inadequate funding with the JSSP shows an alarming refusal to face the facts of the real costs of development.</p>	
	<b>Sustainability Appraisal framework</b>	<b>Table 5.1</b> SA Framework. Objective 2 includes the aim to 'Create vibrant, multifunctional countryside in and around existing and new communities'. The countryside is already multifunctional without any help from the JSSP, and is less likely to be so with such help.	Noted.
	<b>Consultation and next steps</b>	It would be good if the SA looked at other communities worldwide that developed at the rate proposed for Oxfordshire in the next 30 years. There are few examples in history of development at such rates (e.g. some areas of the USA). What can we learn from them? What mistakes were made?	Noted.
<b>Member of the public</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<p>The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)) of Oxfordshire Joint Strategic Spatial Plan (JSSP) has been prepared by LUC. It is noted that paragraph 1.15 states that the JSSP will cover three decades, 2020- 2030, 2030 - 2040 and 2040 - 2050, yet the consultation document itself is not clear on the start date of the plan/plan period. The SA also provides more information in terms of what is anticipated to be included in the Plan, stating that it is expected to be quite detailed to 2030, be relatively specific for 2030 - 2040, and be visionary and less specific for 2040-2050.</p> <p>The consultation states that the JSSP will be prepared in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council, Oxfordshire LEP and that it will also seek to address the linkages to wider planning considerations such as the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Growth corridor, however, the latter is not necessarily reflected</p>	Noted. This comment relates more to the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 than the SA Scoping Report.

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Page 1044		<p>in the consultation document Oxfordshire 2050, yet this together with the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway and East-West Rail will have significant implications for the strategy to 2050.</p> <p>The role and the purpose of the JSSP to help meet and manage Oxfordshire's growth needs to 2050, is supported, however it will need to address the wider cross boundary issues and in particular the implications of the Oxford Cambridge Arc. The JSSP will need to be prepared in the context of the NPPF and the PPG as recently amended.</p> <p>The Sustainability Appraisal Framework is not surprisingly Oxfordshire focussed, However, as mentioned above the JSSP will need to address issues wider than the county boundary and it will as an emerging plan need to address the duty to co-operate and how such cross-boundary issues influence the shape and content of the Plan.</p> <p>DRM support the preparation of the JSSP as it has the potential to attract people to the area through a joined up, collaborative approach to future development across the County that delivers the homes that are needed alongside the jobs.</p>	
	Oxford Friends of The Earth	Introduction	<p>The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)) of Oxfordshire Joint Strategic Spatial Plan (JSSP) has been prepared by LUC.</p> <p>It is noted that paragraph 1.15 states that the JSSP will cover three decades, 2020 - 2030, 2030 - 2040 and 2040 - 2050, yet the consultation document itself is not clear on the start date of the plan/plan period. The SA also provides more information in terms of what is anticipated to be included in the Plan, stating that it is expected to be quite detailed to 2030, be relatively specific for 2030 - 2040, and to be visionary and less specific for 2040-2050.</p> <p>The consultation states that the JSSP will be prepared in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council, Oxfordshire LEP and that it will also seek to address the linkages to wider planning considerations such as the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Growth corridor, however, the latter is not necessarily reflected in the consultation document.</p> <p>Oxfordshire 2050, yet this together with the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway and East-West Rail will have significant implications for the strategy to 2050.</p> <p>It is noted that the key issues for sustainability in terms of transport are set out in Table 3.9 and that it concludes that without the JSSP, it is likely that car dependency will continue to be high. The Oxfordshire LTP (2015), which is to be reviewed, aims to minimise private travel through the promotion of public transport and by making walking and cycling more attractive alternatives to the car. It follows</p>

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Page 1045		<p>that locations that support and provide sustainable modes of transport are best placed to accommodate future growth. A joined up, strategic approach to transport planning to reduce car use through the JSSP is supported. The JSSP provides the opportunity to promote a joined up, strategic approach to transport planning across the County,</p> <p>integrated with the delivery of housing and economic development.</p> <p>The JSSP provides the opportunity to ensure that the area of land covered by the Green Belt is appropriate for the plan period and to allow for housing and economic needs to the county to be delivered whilst ensuring the purpose of the Green Belt are met in delivering new development. The role and the purpose of the JSSP to help meet and manage Oxfordshire's growth needs to 2050, is supported, however it will need to address the wider cross boundary.</p> <p>issues and in particular the implications of the Oxford Cambridge Arc. The JSSP will need to be prepared in the context of the NPPF and the PPG as recently amended. The Sustainability Appraisal Framework is not surprisingly Oxfordshire focussed; however, as mentioned above the JSSP will need to address issues wider than the county boundary and it will as an emerging plan need to address the duty to co-operate and how such cross-boundary issues influence the shape and content of the Plan. DRM and CC support the preparation of the JSSP as it has the potential to attract people to the area through a joined up, collaborative approach to future development across the County that delivers the homes that are needed alongside the jobs.</p>	
<b>Elsfield Parish Meeting</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<p>The Sustainability appraisal (SA) will need to be confident that the 'broad areas of growth' that the Joint Strategic Spatial Plan (JSSP) identifies are in fact developable and viable. To do so the SA may need to look in more detail at the Sustainability of that area.</p> <p>The Scoping report talks about identifying broad areas of Growth, at a level above that of the Local Authorities' Local Plan. Because of the restricted scope for development sites, some of those Broad areas of Growth will be quite small and will be vulnerable to being unviable or not deliverable because of site level environmental limitations and transport and infrastructure issues. The SA will need to be prepared to look at these site issues, and to expect the Oxfordshire Joint Strategic Plan to do so too.</p> <p>An example of this problem is the allocation of the 'Land North of Bayswater Brook' in the South Oxfordshire Local Plan for strategic development when the Chief Planning Officer has said there is significant doubt over delivery of the site, because of flooding, impact on biodiversity, financial viability,</p>	<p>This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.</p>

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		access to the transport network and connectivity with existing communities and facilities in Oxford. The SA for the SODC Plan (the updated 2019 version) flagged up the uncertainty and the significant impact on biodiversity, but not the other issues.	
<p><b>Stanton St. John Parish Council</b></p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 1046</p>	<b>Policy context for the JSSP</b>	<p>The Parish Council rejects the overall premise that the plan should be based on the acceptance of the Housing and Growth Deal delivering 100,000 houses and the building of the Oxford - Cambridge Expressway. There has been a huge democratic deficit in deciding these policies with no proper consultation and decisions made by undemocratic organisations such as The Oxfordshire Growth Board, the Local Enterprise Partnership and Highways England. These organisations do not have a mandate to make decisions which will overpopulate Oxfordshire and which ignores the critical environmental imperatives overtaking the world. The SHMA 2014 on which the housing needs are assessed were prejudiced and unrealistic.</p> <p>An increase in the population will overwhelm Oxfordshire's infrastructure which is already creaking at the seams. Growth should only be achieved if it can have a neutral or reductionary effect on climate changing gas outputs.</p> <p>The levels of funding provided by the Growth Deal is paltry combined with how much would be needed to fund the necessary infrastructure.</p> <p>The green belt around Oxford will become a victim of this expansion as is already happening against the guidelines of the NPPF.</p>	This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.
<p><b>Henley in Transition</b></p>	<b>Policy context for the JSSP</b>	Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation is relegated in this document to an entry towards the end of <b>Table 2.2</b> Climate Change and its effects will come to dominate every aspect of this plan unless it is given greater priority and action is taken over the next few years. There is a consensus now that we have 11 years to act to hold global temperature rise of 1.5 Degrees Celsius and even this change will affect Agriculture, food supply, the Economy and also demographic change.	Please note that climate change is highlighted as a cross cutting issue within the SA Scoping Report. Furthermore, SA objective 7 of the SA Framework will test the Oxfordshire Plan and its reasonable alternatives on their ability to minimise Oxfordshire's contribution to climate change.
	<b>Baseline environmental, social and economic</b>	3.44 Cholsey and Goring stations are in South Oxfordshire and on the GWR Mainline. They feed commuters into Reading and London. Henley and Shiplake stations also in South Oxfordshire and are connected via the Henley Branch to the GWR Mainline at Twyford. They feed over 1000 commuters a day to Reading and London.	Noted.

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<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 64/77</p>	<p><b>context for the JSSP</b></p>	<p><b>3.57</b> The increased urbanisation of the county not only brings pressure to bear on the major roads: M40, A34 and A40. As these roads are already close to capacity there is an overflow effect where rural A roads and even B roads have to take the excess. There is a flaw in the funding of infrastructure development from SIL money. The development has to take place before the funds become available and with large infrastructure projects there is a significant lead time between planning and completion. The greater the rate of development the more significant this effect becomes. The effect of this will be a worsening of the Local Environment with increased traffic and increased Air Pollution.</p> <p><b>3.59</b> and <b>3.61</b> A number of Local Authorities on Oxfordshire have either made or are going through the final stages of making their Local Plans. In particular, South Oxfordshire has decided to mandate the minimum standard for energy efficiency under Building Regulations Part L, rather than considering other Legislation such as the Climate Change Act. These plans are set in place until 2034. How can Oxfordshire through the JSSP influence Local Authorities to tighten the environmental requirements on New Build Dwellings to include measures to reduce Embodied Carbon as well as increasing efficiency and including local and renewable sources of energy?</p>	
	<p><b>Policy context for the JSSP</b></p>	<p>16. The 'Deal', and Democracy Vested interests have taken over our town and county. Whether we like it or not Oxford is about to be 'shafted' by the Growth Board and OxLEP. Very few people actually know or understand what OxLEP is, never mind what it is up to. The public were not informed nor consulted when the Growth Board £215M deal was first put on the table. This is completely undemocratic. Oxfordshire Plan 2050 has been drawn up behind closed doors, and without consideration for the people of Oxford or for surrounding villages and countryside. OxLEP has decided that Oxford should become a business and commercial hub whether we like it or not - a decision taken without democratic consultation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ OxLEP accepted £215M deal on our behalf without proper consultation (section 18).</li> <li>■ Growth Board diktat, under the nomenclature of NIC Strategy, shows a total disregard for sound planning principles as laid out in the NPPF.</li> <li>■ OxLEP is not a democratically elected body. OxLEP is thinking £££'s and profit, over sound sustainable planning or governance.</li> <li>■ Building developer led housing on the Green Belt will exacerbate rather than improve traffic in and around Oxford.</li> </ul>	<p>These comments relate to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, rather than the SA Scoping Report.</p>

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Page 1048		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Building on the Green Belt will rapidly attract commuters and people from elsewhere who want to cash in on the good lifestyle, heritage attractions and the natural and cultural assets that Oxford has to offer. In the process they will kill the town they have come to 'enjoy'.</li> <li>■ New roads will lead to extended distances and travel times along 'the 'golden arc' to Cambridge: people who want quick access to other parts of the country and commuter traffic making daily rush hours worse. More people trying to access the city for work, with or without their cars.</li> <li>■ The people of Oxford do not want this level of expansion. There is nothing in this plan that will benefit those who already live here, or that address Oxford's demographic housing need. The principles of good planning seem to have gone out the window. The Oxfordshire Growth Plan 2050 is now presented as a fait accompli colourful toy town brochure of developers' marketing spiel: a 'golden arc' stretching from Didcot and Cambridge. This is greed masquerading as growth: an economic conceit of such magnitude that will wreck the rural heartland of England. It shows little or no respect for Oxford, its residents, its outlying villages, the Green Belt, wildlife conservation or preservation of national heritage assets, our quality of life is effectively at stake. Not what Oxford needs or wants. Golden only for those who profit from the deal: land agents and developers. Diktat from central government to build houses as part of a NIC £215M deal. If you're offered a pot of gold, you do what you're told. This is a policy which does not address local people. It shows little or no respect for wildlife, the environment, or local green field amenity for future generations. Development led housing as an economic policy is questionable. It will result in all the wrong houses being built on the edges of town, attracting the wrong people (incomers and commuters), which in turn will exacerbate traffic. The Plan is fundamentally flawed due to underlying unaccountability and lack of consultation in the early stages. It makes no provision for the long-term effect that more houses, cars, and people will have on Oxford. It is greedy on green field land, therefore unsustainable. Far from offering environmental improvement and transport solutions it will put further pressure on local infrastructure. It is one giant step in the wrong direction.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Baseline environmental, social and</b>	17. SHMA 2014 housing figures + a further 100,000 houses in Oxfordshire Adopting the outdated SHMA 2014, OxLEP has jumped onto this building bonanza without considering the effect Local Plans 2034 , + the hideous reality of what a further 100,000 houses (300,000 people and their cars)	

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Page 1049	<p><b>economic context for the JSSP</b></p>	<p>will have on Oxford and Oxfordshire. This will come at huge cost: Conjectural unmet housing need does not constitute 'exceptional circumstances'. 2014 SHMA figures are a proven over estimation, calculated on the basis that to fulfil social housing quotas, developers need to build 9:1 in order to make a profit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Watch Oxfordshire disappear under a blanket of housing, a tangle of roundabouts and perimeter link roads, distribution centres and ancillary business parks, one elongated sprawl, Oxford doubled in size, the loss of our Green Belt, and open countryside amenity. Oxford will be ruined by a series of roundabouts and peripheral housing in the style of Swindon, Milton Keynes and Cambridge. Land is not a commodity: it is finite, and our future. Greenfield development is the lazy, complacent and unsustainable option. Not an option. Local district councils have been bullied into taking on Oxford's 'unmet housing need' under the duty to cooperate. If Oxford City is to develop sustainably, in proportion to its historical backdrop, with respect for the local community, it must start using urban brownfield sites for residential as well as commercial use.</li> <li>■ Contrary to NPPF recommendations OxLEP is refusing to regenerate commercial premises for housing.</li> <li>■ Contrary to the principles of the NPPF, Oxford is proposing to expand out onto the Green Belt, resulting in instant urban sprawl.</li> <li>■ Edge of town houses end up being car dependent.</li> <li>■ Developer led profit driven executive style housing does nothing to relieve the 'social/ affordable' housing crisis for key workers.</li> <li>■ Making Oxford into England's 'golden business hub boom town, and commercial shopping centre (to rival Reading?) is completely inappropriate. Oxford is an architectural jewel where a balance should be kept between Town + Gown: an homogenous mix of education excellence, commercial opportunity, and cultural interchange. Nine to five business and shopping areas become evening ghetto out of term. Oxford needs a good balance of 'life': a cultural mix, students and local residents, visitors, in order to thrive.</li> </ul>	

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Page 1050		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ It is a vast conceit that Oxford should develop its brownfield sites for business and commercial sites over housing. Houses for key workers closer to employment, so that Oxford's commercial areas do not become deserted at night.</li> <li>■ From the housing secretary (Brokenshire): "We will continue to consider the design of a permitted development right to allow commercial buildings to be demolished and replaced with homes". Brownfield every time.</li> <li>■ The demographic housing need is for key workers at the lower end of the market, not just for executive top end. Great harm will be done to the city, the Green Belt, and surrounding rural countryside, if land is used up for unnecessary developer led housing.</li> <li>■ Proven demographic need should always be a planning requirement around historic towns.</li> <li>■ The Growth Board promises infrastructure, which is dependent on developers, with no guaranteed delivery date.</li> <li>■ The 'right' houses never get built: developers tend to cherry pick only the most profitable sites, thus guaranteeing the highest return and maintaining house prices at inflated levels.</li> <li>■ Land banking should become illegal. The law needs to be changed so that developers are forced to build on existing planning permissions before applying for new ones.</li> </ul> <p>18. Green Belt Review. The Green Belt is fundamental to Oxford's success story. Far from being a stranglehold, the Green Belt has kept Oxford in proportion to its historical and landscape backdrop. It is our lungs, and sanity. The NPPF states that all Green Belt land should remain permanently open. Unproven housing need does not constitute exceptional circumstances. The 5 purposes (and guiding principles) of the Green Belt should be upheld in order to preserve Oxford. What is ENV2? HE maps show a newly washed-over land in the Green Belt. This needs to be defined.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ What does this mean? Some parts are protected, others aren't? Does this mean that the rest of the Green Belt is up for grabs? Does this mean non ENV2 villages are to become merged into Oxford?</li> </ul>	

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Page 1051		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Outlying villages such as Stanton St John/ Forest Hill/ Beckley are dependent on the Green Belt in order for land to remain permanently open, agricultural, and separate from Oxford, i.e. rural. The Green Belt is our lifeline and only protection from suburban sprawl.</li> <li>■ Oxford has a limited allocation of green space amenity per capita. The Green Belt represents the breath and lungs of the city. If the Green Belt is to become the new greenfield parkland amenity for Oxford, then stop it becoming the parking lot for Oxford. Once laid to tarmac it ceases to be green, it becomes a parking lot (quote: Joni Mitchell)</li> </ul> <p>19. Jobs and business growth over demographic need and sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Oxford already has 45,000 jobs. Oxford cannot easily sustain more without huge sacrifices and loss of amenity: pressure on its local services, the footfall on its open spaces, loss of Green Belt, and wear and tear on its historical and architectural infrastructure.</li> <li>■ Transport services are at an overload. Satellite park and rides are full. Houses = people and cars. Where are these new people coming from? Why should Oxford, a national heritage asset and university town, take London overspill or become the commercial epicentre for more jobs and more people? Oxford cannot take it.</li> </ul> <p>20. The Expressway, " A once in a lifetimes chance!" Let's just cut up the country into ever-smaller slices and nab a bit here then there, then everywhere: houses all along the route, a 'string of settlements with good connectivity'. This is a relief road for the A34 national freight, (with quick access to the M40/A40), Portsmouth to Felixstow. Scarring the country with a freight-way will diminish our countryside and wildlife corridors. An Expressway will encourage longer daily commuting travel distances.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A Sprawl-way, with houses and distribution centres all along its route.</li> <li>■ Cars, and lorries fill the spaces allocated them. In the interests of equality Government should spend its funds addressing the North/ South divide and on regenerating less advantaged parts of England. Re-ignite the Varsity railway link to join with HS2, then re-consider transport before</li> </ul>	

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Page 1052		<p>steamrolling-over rural South Oxfordshire. In a sustainable future, people should be travelling less, or at least by rail, bus, or bicycle. On a daily basis, we be thinking fewer long distance car journeys. Government wants us to consider Climate Change, and yet it is proposing a National Strategy Expressway across rural England: a policy which is flawed by irresponsible growth and greed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Oxford's geographical layout cannot sustain a projected economic growth level of this level. Flood plains and landscape features at risk. To sum up: The public wants a return to fully accountable democratic planning principles. OxLEP is an unelected body made up of land agents and developers in bed with our local district councillors. Vested interests at work. Localism seems to have gone out of the window? No one local wants this level of expansion or growth. To quote Joni Mitchell: They took all the trees And put them in a tree museum And they charged all the people A dollar and a half to see 'em Don't it always seem to go That you don't know what you've got 'Till it's gone They paved paradise And they put up a parking lot The only thing that unites this plan is economic greed: a wild conjecture on a ruinous scale, one that will damage Oxford and its environs by 2034, never mind 2050. This is not a good vision for the future.</li> </ul>	
<b>Member of the Public</b>	<b>Baseline environmental, social and economic context for the JSSP</b>	Please don't change the Green Belt around Oxford. Already we are beginning to see it eroded & affecting the area. The proposed Bayswater development is an example of destruction of countryside, overloading of transport links & would affect the skyline.	This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.
<b>Member of the Public</b>	<b>Baseline environmental, social and economic context for the JSSP</b>	There has not been adequate analysis for the initial demographic scenarios used to create the housing needs assumptions underlying this report including the uncritical support for the government's Oxford Cambridge expressway and development plans. The document raises some of the key challenges in terms of transport and air quality, but does not address the difficulty of addressing climate change and pollution caused by extra car travel due to the new expressway plan.	This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess

Consultee	Document Part	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
	<b>Future challenges and key sustainability issues</b>		the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.
<b>Member of the Public</b>	<b>Consultation and next steps</b>	<p>The 2050 plan holds the Expressway as a given. This is not the case. It has not been consulted on and it would be disastrous for Oxfordshire. Adding more pollution to the environment, when we already have illegal pollution on Oxfordshire roads, e.g. A34. The expressway is incompatible with the Council Transport Plan 4. I have not encountered a single person in favour of the Expressway.</p> <p>Also, I would urge those involved to ensure that the Oxford Cambridge rail link to ensure it is adequately funded so it can be a real success and offer the maximum benefits. For a start it should be able to take freight, getting freight off the roads will bring countless benefits in reducing pollution, noise and traffic and risks on the roads. And should be electrified.</p>	This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.
<b>Farringdon Town Council</b>	<b>Consultation and next steps</b>	<p>Farringdon Town Council resolved at their meeting held on 13/3/2019 to make the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Adequate provision of employment land should be included, as stated in the Farringdon Neighbourhood Plan</li> <li>■ Infrastructure for the community should keep pace with development.</li> <li>■ The community should be involved in any plans.</li> <li>■ Provision for young people and children should be carefully considered and included</li> </ul>	This comment relates to the options for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and its relationship with other plans and programmes, rather than the SA Scoping Report. The role of the SA is to assess the policies of the plan and its reasonable alternatives against the SA objectives.
<b>Bloombridge Development Partners</b>	<b>Baseline environmental, social and economic context for the JSSP</b>	I have been going through the SA LUC completed for the Oxon Plan and have a question on the Green Belt annotations you have used around Kidlington in <b>Figure 3.12</b> . It looks like you have cut out parts of the Green Belt with green edging. Could you please explain the rationale for this?	The SA Scoping Report is the first stage of the SA of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and no appraisal has yet been undertaken, that will come at a later stage. Please note that Figure 3.12 illustrating Oxfordshire's environmental sensitivity in 2016 has been removed in light of the more recent environmental evidence and data set out in other

Consultee	Document Part	Consultation comments – summarised where appropriate	Response/action taken to address consultation comment in this updated SA Scoping Report
			<p>sections of the SA Scoping Report Baseline. However, the consultee is likely referring to Figure 3.11 which shows the 2018 boundaries of the Oxford Green Belt as defined in the national dataset held by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG).</p> <p>The 'green edging' represents the existing Green Belt boundary at the urban edges of the settlements inset within Oxfordshire's Green Belt including Oxford.</p>

## Appendix B

### Detailed sustainability and policy context

## Population Health and Wellbeing

### Population

**B.1** According to the most recent Joint Needs Assessment Report (JSNA)<sup>59</sup>, there are thought to be around 687,500 people living in Oxfordshire. The latest Oxfordshire County population forecasts, predict an increase in the number of residents of +57,130 (+8.3%) between 2018 and 2040 as shown in **Table B.1**, with the largest percentage increase in Vale of White Horse and Cherwell both with an expected increase of 21% and 12%, respectively. Oxford was the most populated district in the County in 2018 with an estimated 154,300 people, while West Oxfordshire was the least populated with 109,800 people.

**Table B.1: Projected growth in total resident population 2018 to 2040<sup>60</sup>**

District	2018	2040	% change
Oxford City	154,300	146,233	-5
Cherwell	149,161	167,885	12
South Oxfordshire	140,504	148,872	6
Vale of White Horse	133,732	162,287	21
West Oxfordshire	109,800	119,350	9

**B.2** There are various reasons why the population across the County varies. For example in Oxford, the two universities mean that the City has a large student population which is relatively young, a 2019 estimate states that 32,930 students were enrolled for full-time studies<sup>61</sup>. The City's population is also culturally diverse, with the third highest minority ethnic population in the South East. However, the population turnover is also very high. The County's rural character is also another factor. In Cherwell District, the population density is just 2.5 persons per hectares, which is much lower than the South East region (4.8 persons per hectare). Similarly, West Oxfordshire's population of 109,800 is spread across an area of 71,500 hectares (276 square miles), in approximately 130 separate towns, villages and hamlets. Nearly 60% of the 81 parishes contain fewer than 500 residents<sup>62</sup>.

**B.3** The population in Oxfordshire is expected to grow by 6,000 per year to 928,000 in 2052<sup>63</sup>. At the same time, Britain has an ageing population which has significant implications for the economy and public service provision. In Oxford, however, trends predict that the older population will actually decrease over the next 30 years, presumably driven by migration of older people out of the City<sup>64</sup>. However, in other districts and for the county as a whole, the pattern is predicted to be different. The oldest age

<sup>59</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (2020) *Joint Strategic Needs Assessment*, [https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/system/files/documents/2020\\_JSNA.pdf](https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/system/files/documents/2020_JSNA.pdf)

<sup>60</sup> Office for National Statistics (2020) *Population projections for local authorities: Table 2*

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/datasets/localauthoritiesinenglandtable2>

<sup>61</sup> Oxford City Council (2019) *Key facts about Oxford* [https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20131/population/459/oxfords\\_population](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20131/population/459/oxfords_population)

<sup>62</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (2020) *Joint Strategic Needs Assessment*, [https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/system/files/documents/2020\\_JSNA.pdf](https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/system/files/documents/2020_JSNA.pdf)

<sup>63</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (2016) *Oxfordshire's Population*

<sup>64</sup> Oxford City Council (2009) *Oxford Economic Profile, 2009*

group, those aged 85 and over, is predicted to increase from 18,000 in mid-2019 to 21,300 by mid-2027, an increase of 3,300 people (18%)<sup>65</sup>.

**B.4** At present, Cherwell, South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse Districts have the highest number of residents aged over 65. In South Oxfordshire between 2001 and 2011 there was a shift in the age structure of the District with growth in all age groups over 60. The proportion of older people aged 65 and over in Cherwell was 15.3% in 2014 and is predicted through ONS projections to increase to 24% by 2033.

**B.5** Similarly, the population of Vale of White Horse District is predicted to be 158,118 in 2035<sup>66</sup>. However much of this increase will be in the over 50s and early 60s age groups, while the estimated number of working age population (16-64 males/59 females) is estimated to remain fairly static.

**B.6** These demographic changes across Oxfordshire are likely to have planning and resources implications. An ageing population is also a key factor affecting a reduction in household size, with more homes being occupied by fewer people in the future.

## Social inclusion and deprivation

**B.7** The English Indices of Deprivation 2019<sup>67</sup> is a measure of multiple deprivation in small areas or neighbourhoods, called Lower-layer Super Output Areas (LSOA). Seven domains of deprivation are measured: Income Deprivation; Employment Deprivation; Health Deprivation and Disability; Education, Skills and Training Deprivation; Crime; Barriers to Housing and Services; and Living Environment Deprivation. Each domain contains a number of indicators. The seven domains are combined to give a multiple deprivation score.

**B.8** According to the Indices of Deprivation 2019<sup>68</sup> ranking (i.e., rank of average score) out of the 326 local authority areas in England (where 1 is most deprived and 326 is least deprived) Oxford City was ranked 189<sup>th</sup>, Cherwell 220<sup>th</sup>, South Oxfordshire 302<sup>nd</sup>, Vale of White Horse 305<sup>th</sup>, and West Oxfordshire 301<sup>st</sup>.

**B.9** There are 32,844 LSOAs nationally. Oxfordshire is the 10<sup>th</sup> least deprived of 152 upper tier local authorities in England but some small areas experience high levels of deprivation. Ten of Oxford City's 83 neighbourhood areas are among the 20% most deprived areas in England. These areas include the Leys, Rose Hill and Barton areas of the city. Twelve neighbourhood areas are amongst the 20% most deprived in the UK. There are great disparities between different areas of Oxford, with peripheral areas such as parts of Barton, Blackbird Leys, Littlemore and Rose Hill, as well as part of the city centre, being the most deprived.

**B.10** Although Cherwell District is in the 25% least deprived areas nationally, there is evidence of disparity between the different parts of the District when looking at the assessment at the small area level. For example, the highest ranking (therefore most deprived) LSOA in Cherwell District ranks 4,701 (approximately 14%) – this is Banbury Grimsbury and Castle ward (Cherwell 004A). In South Oxfordshire District, there are no LSOAs in the most deprived 20% nationally. However, around 26% of LSOAs ranked poorly in the barriers to housing and services domain. Vale of White Horse District has one LSOA, located in Abingdon, which is in the bottom 20% nationally.

**B.11** For the year 2020, Oxfordshire as a whole had a crime rate of 24.8 per 1,000 people<sup>69</sup>. For the year 2019, West Oxfordshire had a crime rate per 1,000 of 44, which is relatively low<sup>70</sup>. In Cherwell, during 2019/20 there were a total of 10,827 recorded crimes in the District, which is an increase of 184 from the previous year (10,643). The majority of crimes recorded were in violent (32.7%) and anti-social behaviour (13.9%)<sup>71</sup>. The rest of the Districts within the county have not provided crime

<sup>65</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (2020) *Joint Strategic Needs Assessment*, [https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/system/files/documents/2020\\_JSNA.pdf](https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/system/files/documents/2020_JSNA.pdf)

<sup>66</sup> ONS 2018-based subnational population projections for local authorities and higher administrative areas in England (2018) <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/datasets/localauthoritiesinenglandtable2>

<sup>67</sup> DCLG (2019) *The English Indices of Deprivation*

<sup>68</sup> DCLG (2019) *The English Indices of Deprivation, File 10: Local authority district summaries*

<sup>69</sup> Plumplot (2020) *Oxfordshire violent crime statistics* <https://www.plumplot.co.uk/Oxfordshire-violent-crime-statistics.html#:~:text=Oxfordshire%20violent%20crime%20rate%20compared%20to%20other%20counties,by%20crime%20rate%20and%20crime%20rate%20percentage%20change>

<sup>70</sup> West Oxfordshire District Council (2019) *Local Plan Monitoring Report 2018-19* <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/njtameyh/2018-to-2019-local-plan-monitoring-report.pdf>

<sup>71</sup> Cherwell District Council (2020) *Annual Monitoring Report 2020* <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/33/planning-policy/370/monitoring-reports>

statistics. Nationally, average crime rates are lower in rural areas than urban areas. For example, in 2019/20, the rate of violence against the person was 23.1 per 1,000 population in predominantly rural areas compared with 30.4 per 1,000 population in predominantly urban areas. This would suggest that the rural areas of Oxfordshire would similarly have a lower rate of violence than the more built up areas<sup>72</sup>.

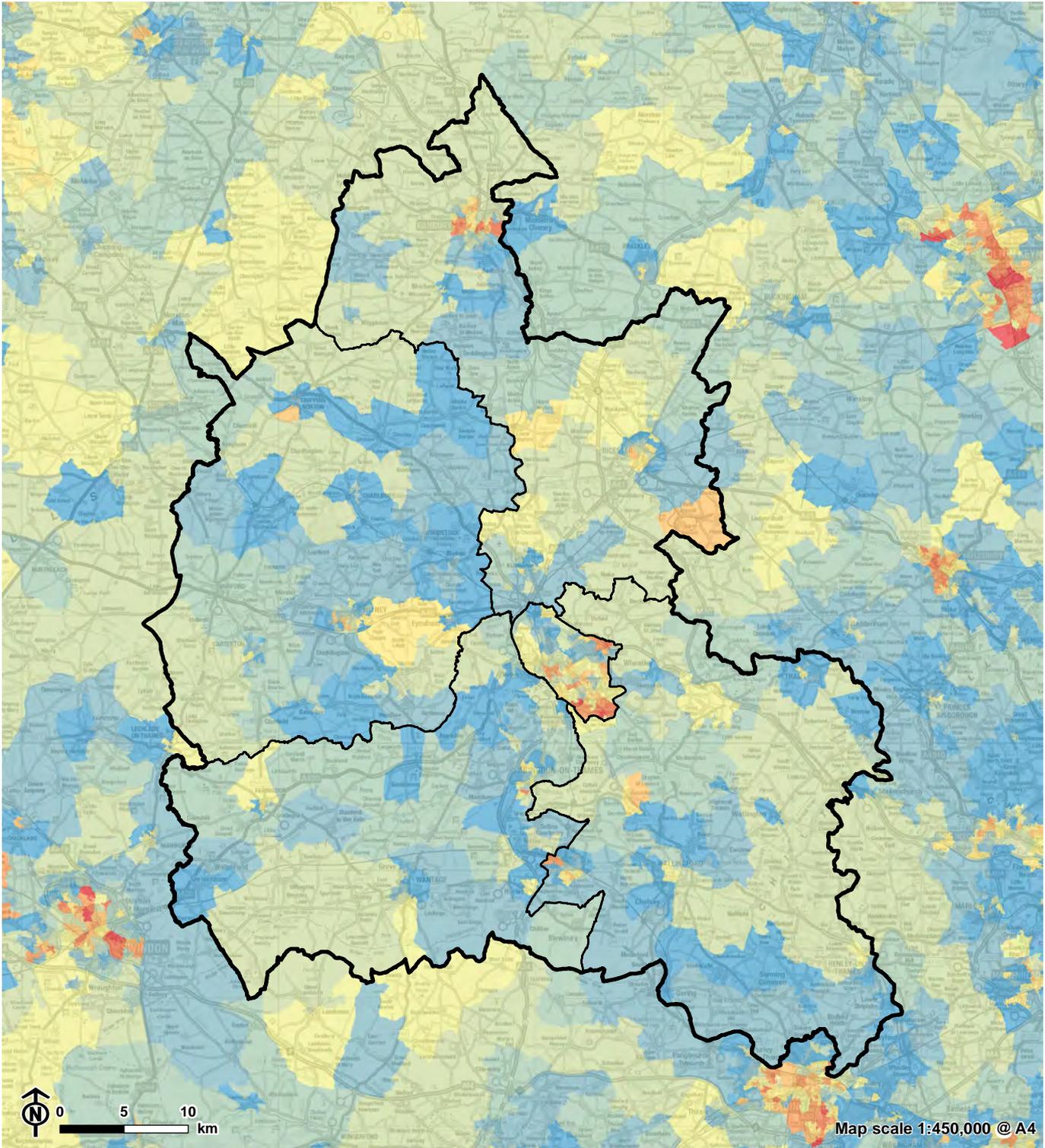
**B.12** In addition, it should be noted that locations that suffer higher levels of crime are less sustainable. The carbon cost of crime within the UK is estimated to be in the region of 6,000,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per annum. This is roughly equivalent to the total CO<sub>2</sub> output of 6 million UK homes<sup>73</sup>.

**B.13** New development near to deprived neighbourhoods can help to stimulate regeneration in those areas. Therefore, the location of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 spatial options in relation to the most deprived neighbourhoods could influence the extent to which they can have positive effects on those areas. **Figure B.1** shows the Index of Multiple Deprivation for Oxfordshire.

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<sup>72</sup> Crime, August 2020 [online] Available at:  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/912406/Crime\\_August\\_2020.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/912406/Crime_August_2020.pdf)

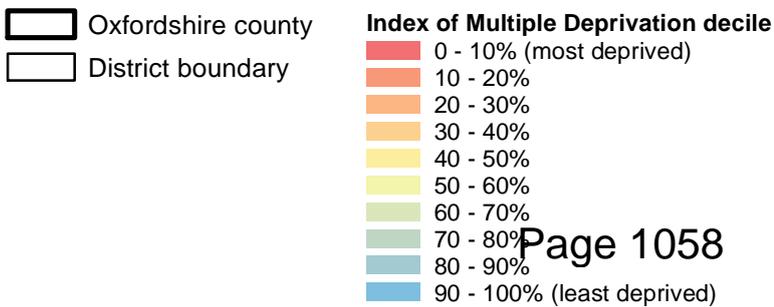
<sup>73</sup> Secured by Design (2016) *Secured by Design Homes* <http://designforsecurity.org/downloads/SBD-New-Homes-2016.pdf>



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2021

CB:KS EB:Chamberlain\_K LUC FIG03\_01\_10573\_IMD\_A4P 03/06/2021  
Source: DCLG, OS

**Figure B.1: Index of Multiple Deprivation**



## Culture, leisure and recreation

**B.14** There is a wide range of leisure, cultural and recreation facilities throughout Oxfordshire. The most significant concentration is in Oxford City Centre with its high concentration of museums and galleries, many (but not all) of which are associated with the universities and colleges.

## Health

### Life expectancy

**B.15** Oxfordshire tends to be relatively healthy compared with other parts of the country, however in those communities suffering socio-economic deprivation, ill health and preventable health issues are more pronounced. The County has above average life expectancy compared to the rest of England, as shown in **Table B.2** below.

**Table B.2: Life expectancy in Oxfordshire**

Life expectancy	England	Oxford City	Cherwell District	South Oxfordshire District	Vale of White Horse	West Oxfordshire District
Males	79.5	80.6	80.2	81.6	82.3	82.1
Females	83.1	84.3	84.5	85.5	85.4	84.1

**B.16** Oxfordshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2018 – 2023) states that: demographic pressures (a growing and ageing population), high levels of child poverty, isolation and loneliness have been found to be a significant health risk for the elderly population, increase in ‘unhealthy’ lifestyles, the provision of adequate facilities for the mentally ill and preparing a coordinated approach are all challenges specific to health services in Oxfordshire<sup>74</sup>. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy outlines 4 priorities which centre on children and young people, older people and mental health and health improvement.

**B.17** Pockets of deprivation and ill health have a major impact on the County’s residents’ health and life expectancy. Overall, common conditions include high blood pressure, diabetes, asthma, and common mental health disorders like depression and anxiety. Across the County, Districts are dealing with various health issues. For instance, in Oxford City and West Oxfordshire District there are certain pockets that have a higher proportion of people with limiting long-term illnesses and in deprived areas e.g. Carfax in Oxford City was ranked as the worst of all of the Lower-layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Oxford for the health and disability deprivation domain. Similarly, there are parts of West Oxfordshire that fall within the most deprived 40% LSOAs in England in terms of health inequalities. Life expectancy is 6.2 years lower for men and 4.0 for women in the most deprived areas of Oxfordshire than in the least deprived areas<sup>75</sup>. The leading causes of death in Oxfordshire are dementia (for women) and heart disease (for men). Furthermore, those with a heart condition are at an increased risk of more severe complications of COVID-19<sup>76</sup>.

**B.18** The Health and Social Care Information Centre found that the total number of emergency hospital admissions (continuous inpatient spells) was 42,841 inpatients in 2014/15, which was less than the 2010/11 predicted value of 62,443 inpatients<sup>77</sup>. It should be noted that these statistics were collected before the COVID-19 pandemic, during which emergency hospital admissions were considerably higher. Despite this, the effects of a growing population are likely to result in an increase in the

<sup>74</sup> Health and Wellbeing Board, Oxfordshire County Council (2019), *Oxfordshire’s Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy*, <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/constitution/oxfordshirejointwbstrategy.pdf>

<sup>75</sup> Public Health England (2020) *Oxfordshire Local Authority Health Profile 2019* <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/static-reports/health-profiles/2019/E10000025.html?area-name=Oxfordshire>

<sup>76</sup> British Heart Foundation (2021) *Coronavirus: what it means for you if you have heart or circulatory disease*, [https://www.bhf.org.uk/informationsupport/heart-matters-magazine/news/coronavirus-and-your-health#:~:text=Anyone%20with%20a%20heart%20condition,high%20risk%20\(clinically%20vulnerable\)](https://www.bhf.org.uk/informationsupport/heart-matters-magazine/news/coronavirus-and-your-health#:~:text=Anyone%20with%20a%20heart%20condition,high%20risk%20(clinically%20vulnerable))

<sup>77</sup> Health and Social Care Information Centre (2016) *Compendium of Population Health Indicators*, <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/clinical-indicators/compendium-of-population-health-indicators/compendium-hospital-care/current/emergency-admissions>

number of emergency hospital admissions. There has been an increase in the number of emergency hospital readmissions in Oxfordshire, according to the NHS. There were 9,615 emergency readmissions in 2017/2018, compared to 7,025 in 2013/14<sup>78</sup>.

**B.19** There are more road deaths in South Oxfordshire District than the regional average. This may be due to the rural nature of the District where residents are heavily reliant on the private car to move around, represented by the high levels of car ownership.

### Physical activity/access to green space

**B.20** Oxfordshire contains a higher than average proportion of physically active adults (72.5% compared to 66.3% national average) and lower than average excess weight in adults over 18 (58.9% compared to a national average of 62.0%)<sup>79</sup>.

**B.21** An assessment of available green spaces within Oxfordshire against Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt) concluded that most households in the County did not meet accessibility levels for strategic sites, with particularly inadequate provision in Vale of White Horse and West Oxfordshire<sup>80</sup>. In addition, according to an analysis done by TVERC in 2017, 63% of households in Oxfordshire do not have access to a 2-hectare accessible green space within 300 metres and no residences have access to a 500-hectare accessible green space within 10 kilometres<sup>81</sup>. The importance of good access to high quality blue and green infrastructure to the health and wellbeing of communities is increasingly well recognised. A range of evidence has shown that access to parks and green spaces can help address national, regional, and local policy priorities relating to tackling obesity, diabetes, and heart disease as well as supporting mental wellbeing. The COVID-19 pandemic has also highlighted the importance of residents being able to visit an open space within a short walking distance. Evidence generally indicates that the quality of open spaces has a stronger bearing on health outcomes than quantity<sup>82</sup>.

**B.22** Access to the countryside via rights of way can also provide an important recreation resource, with paths often stretching across the County linking communities with the countryside. However, although accessible land such as down land and common land also provide the opportunity for those living in cities to access natural greenspaces, it only makes up a small portion of the County. Woodland across Oxfordshire also attracts a large number of visitors, and can provide significant value from ecosystem services including climate regulation and for the timber industry<sup>83</sup>.

**B.23** South Oxfordshire and Oxford City are the only Districts within Oxfordshire to have commissioned Green Infrastructure studies. New and existing development has the potential to create additional green infrastructure or destroy the existing network, therefore affecting the County's resilience to climate change, biological and ecological networks and the health and wellbeing of residents.

**B.24** The proposed Didcot Garden Town aims to connect and interlink green spaces, both within Didcot and into the surrounding countryside. Proposals include: reducing traffic traveling through the centre of Didcot by re-directing as much traffic as possible around the town's northern periphery, upgrading and completing the 'Garden Line' cycleway and walkway that links the town centre with Culham and Harwell campuses, connecting Didcot to the surrounding countryside through cycle routes and pathways, enhancing the streets that link Didcot station with the town centre, upgrading routes so they are safer for cyclists, and providing a wider mix of homes and encouraging multi-generational living<sup>84</sup>.

**B.25** A key element of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 is the establishment of a new garden village to the north of the A40 near Eynsham. The initial garden village proposals set out in the Local Plan include 2,200 new homes and a new science business park which will give local people an alternative to driving to work in Oxford. In addition, the nearby Hanborough railway station together with a new Park and Ride facility to the north of Eynsham (expected to be open by 2020) will give people an alternative to using their cars. In addition, the key principles that lay the foundation for this garden village include, but are not limited to: development that enhances the natural environment, providing a comprehensive green infrastructure network and

<sup>78</sup> NHS (2020) *Compendium – Emergency readmissions to hospital within 30 days of discharge* <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/compendium-emergency-readmissions/current>

<sup>79</sup> Public Health England (2019) *Local Authority Health Profiles – Oxfordshire* <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/static-reports/health-profiles/2019/e10000025.html?area-name=oxfordshire>

<sup>80</sup> AECOM (2017) *Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy* [https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/oxis\\_stage2.pdf](https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/oxis_stage2.pdf)

<sup>81</sup> Carpenter et al. 2017 *An Analysis of Accessible Green Space Provision in Oxfordshire*. Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre.

<sup>82</sup> Julian Dobson, Cathy Harris, Will Eadson and Tony Gore (2019) *Space to Thrive – A rapid evidence review* <https://www4.shu.ac.uk/research/cresr/sites/shu.ac.uk/files/space-to-thrive-2019-evidence-review.pdf>

<sup>83</sup> AECOM (2017) *Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy* [https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/oxis\\_stage2.pdf](https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/oxis_stage2.pdf)

<sup>84</sup> South Oxfordshire District Council (2017) *Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan* <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/business/support-business/supporting-our-town-centres/didcot/didcot-garden-town-0>

biodiversity net gains, ensuring climate resilience, community engagement with an emphasis on cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable, vibrant and sociable neighbourhoods and providing integrated and accessible transport systems that encourages walking, cycling and public transport<sup>85</sup>.

**B.26** A summary of the key sustainability issues in relation to the population characteristics described above is provided in **Table B.3**, along with the likely evolution of each issue if the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 were not implemented.

**Table B.3: Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire and likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (Population Characteristics)**

Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire	Likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050
An ageing population which is likely to have planning and resource implications (especially in the short to medium term with regard to the COVID-19 pandemic).	Without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, it is likely that services and facilities would still be delivered. However, it is less likely that these would be planned for in a coherent, sustainable manner across the County alongside development. Demographic change is accounted for throughout many policies within each District's Local Plan.
Oxford has a high population turnover due to problems associated with the retention of highly qualified students in the area.	Without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, it is likely that Oxford City would continue to have a high population turnover. The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 encourages more collaborative working between the six Oxfordshire Councils which could, to an extent, result in delivering the types of employment opportunity that will attract highly qualified people, for example in the knowledge sector. This could make the County more attractive to recent graduates.  Without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 it is likely that affordable housing would still be delivered but not in sufficient quantity to meet the needs of recent graduates.
There is a need to reduce the inequalities gap between those living in the most and least deprived parts of Oxfordshire.	Without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, it is possible that the gap between the most and least deprived areas in Oxfordshire would remain. However, each District Council's Local Plan addresses issues of deprivation, whilst documents such as the OxLEP Strategic Economic Plan (2016) seek to provide opportunities for economic growth and development. This may help reduce the inequalities.
High reliance on the private car which may be resulting in more road deaths in South Oxfordshire than the regional average.	Without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, it is likely that car dependency will continue to be high. However, the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (2017) aims to deliver long-term investment in major public transport schemes, and the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan (2015) aims to minimise private travel through the promotion of public transport and by making walking and cycling more attractive alternatives to the car. The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 provides an opportunity to reduce car use through the promotion of a joint-up, strategic approach to transport planning across Oxfordshire, in an integrated way with the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy and Local Transport Plan.
The majority of households in Oxfordshire do not have easy access to natural greenspace, an issue exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.	The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 represents an opportunity to provide strategic direction on this important issue. While each District Council's Local Plan addresses lack of green space, it is less likely that green spaces would be planned for

<sup>85</sup> West Oxfordshire District Council (2018) *Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village* <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/residents/planning-building/planning-policy/local-development-framework/garden-village/>

Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire	Likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050
	in a coherent network across the County alongside development.

## Housing

**B.27** The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (April 2014)<sup>86</sup> reports that Oxfordshire is a relatively high value market. In relative terms, the SHMA analysis suggests that the strongest demand pressures are in Oxford, followed by the south of the County (Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire). In relative terms, the market signals suggest that there is less market pressure in Cherwell District. However, there are marked differences in Cherwell, with house prices in the south of the District being markedly higher than in the north.

**B.28** Table B.4 shows the relative levels of median house prices across the Districts which make up the SHMA.

Table B.4: Median house prices 2020<sup>87</sup>

	Median House Price	Differential to Oxfordshire average
Cherwell District	£286,952	−£63,518
Oxford City	£433,918	£83,448
South Oxfordshire District	£405,669	£55,199
Vale of White Horse District	£352,294	£1,824
West Oxfordshire District	£309,952	−£40,518
Oxfordshire	£350,470	£0
England	£247,355	−£103,115

**B.29** The Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment notes that, like many parts of the South East, Oxfordshire is characterised by high housing costs with the median house prices over the last 20 years rising from £100,000 to £350,000. Across the County, the median cost of a home is now 10.4 times incomes and up to 17 times median earnings in the city of Oxford. Oxford is one of the UK's least affordable cities. There is significant need for affordable housing with the estimated need being almost 3,200 affordable homes per year to 2030<sup>88</sup>.

**B.30** Benchmarks of land values in 2010 using data published by the Valuation Office Agency and HCA cited in the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (April 2014) indicates that Oxford has some of the highest recorded land values in the region (e.g., bulk land at £5 million per ha).

**B.31** Housing demand is particularly strong in Oxford and those areas with good transport links to it. More generally, demand is stronger in the towns with rail links, with prices falling in the west and north of the Housing Market Area. Particularly west of Oxford near Brize Norton, and near Didcot, the presence of MOD personnel has an important influence on local markets<sup>89</sup>.

**B.32** Oxford is not a large city, but population density is high and the city's institutions (universities colleges, schools hospitals, administration) occupy a great deal of the available space alongside retail and housing. Oxford's local housing market therefore extends well beyond the City's boundary. Beyond the City, Oxfordshire towns fall into two main groups, those that have easy

<sup>86</sup> GL Hearn Limited (2014) *Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment*

<sup>87</sup> HM Land Registry/UK House Price Index 2020

<sup>88</sup> Cambridge Econometrics and Icen Projects (2021) *Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment – Executive Summary*

<sup>89</sup> GL Hearn (2014) *Oxfordshire Housing Market Assessment*

access to direct rail links to the City of Oxford and London and those that do not. Those that do not are generally to the west of the County<sup>90</sup>.

**B.33** Oxfordshire's Housing and Growth Deal provides the County with £215 million of new funding to support the County's ambition to plan for and support the delivery of 100,000 homes by 2031. The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 reinforces the commitment of the Housing and Growth Deal to deliver up to 100,000 homes by 2031. The plan is expected to be quite detailed to 2030, be relatively specific for 2030-2040, and be visionary and less specific for 2040-2050. In addition, of the £215 million, £150m of this funding focuses on infrastructure delivery, £60m on additional affordable housing, and £5m capacity funding for the costs of delivering on the agreement. The £60m affordable housing funding is intended to support a bespoke Oxfordshire-wide affordable housing delivery programme that will support delivery of at least 1,320 affordable homes across a range of tenures to start on site by 2021. The fund will work in tandem with Homes England Affordable Homes Programme<sup>91</sup>. The most recent versions of the five Districts' Local Plans aim to deliver at least 96,000 net additional dwellings, including contributions to Oxford City's unmet housing need, albeit over different time periods. The 96,000 net additional dwellings will help to complete Oxfordshire's Housing and Growth Deal goal of 100,000 homes by 2031. The four Districts outside Oxford City are expected to contribute the most towards this figure, as shown in **Table B.5**.

**Table B.5: Planned housing delivery.**

District	Planned Net Additional Dwellings	Local Plan Period	Status of Local Plan
Cherwell	22,840	2011-31	Adopted 19 <sup>th</sup> December 2016
Cherwell's delivery of Oxford City's unmet needs	4,400	2019-31	Adopted 7 <sup>th</sup> September 2020
Oxford City	10,884	2016-36	Adopted 8 <sup>th</sup> June 2020
South Oxfordshire District	18,600	2011-35	Adopted 10 December 2020
South Oxfordshire's Delivery of Oxford City's unmet needs	4,950	2021-35	
Vale of White Horse District	20,560	2011-31	Adopted Dec 2016
Vale of White Horse's Delivery of Oxford City's unmet needs	2,200	2019-31	Publication Version Part 2 Adopted October 2019
West Oxfordshire District	13,200	2011-31	Adopted 27 <sup>th</sup> September 2018
West Oxfordshire's Delivery of Oxford City's unmet needs	2,750	2021-31	

**B.34** Currently across the county there are 6 permanent council-owned traveller sites, providing 89 pitches and 21 privately run authorised sites<sup>92</sup>.

**B.35** A summary of the key sustainability issues in relation to the housing baseline described above is provided in **Table B.6**, along with the likely evolution of each issue if the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 were not implemented.

<sup>90</sup> As above.

<sup>91</sup> Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal Delivery Plan  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/692366/Oxfordshire\\_Housing\\_Deal\\_-\\_Delivery\\_Plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/692366/Oxfordshire_Housing_Deal_-_Delivery_Plan.pdf)

<sup>92</sup> Draft Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

**Table B.6: Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire and likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (Housing)**

Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire	Likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050
Under-provision of homes to meet the needs of a growing number of households and demographic change.	The purpose of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is to facilitate strategic planning across all Districts in Oxfordshire, as part of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal Agreement. Without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, it is likely that housing would still be delivered through each of the District Council's individual Local Plans but without a strategic approach it may be more difficult to keep pace with demand. Specifically, there may be a shortfall in appropriate housing in Oxford City.
High house prices and lack of affordable homes, despite demand.	Without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 it is likely that house prices will continue to rise across the County. However, each District Council aims to provide a percentage of affordable housing in all new residential developments. The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 offers the opportunity to facilitate and expedite the delivery of affordable housing across the County, especially affordable housing that would have otherwise been located in Oxford City but cannot due to constraints within the area.

## Economy and employment

**B.36** Oxfordshire has been one of the country's fastest growing economies in recent years, and sustained jobs growth of around 6,000 per year over the 2010-18 period. Oxfordshire is one of the three net contributors to the national exchequer, generating approximately £22 billion GVA to the UK economy in 2015. The evidence suggests that whilst rates of housing delivery have been rising, jobs growth over the 2010-2018 period outpaced growth in housing and labour supply within the County. Between 2011-18 the working-age population age 16-64 increased by just 1%. A supply-demand imbalance for housing has resulted, contributing to both house price growth and growth in net in-commuting into Oxfordshire<sup>93</sup>.

**B.37** Oxfordshire also attracts over 30 million people each year, including a significant number of international visitors. The tourism and hospitality industries contribute £2.17 billion to the economy<sup>94</sup>. 50,000 new jobs were created since 2011/12 and Oxford has the second fastest growing economy of all UK cities<sup>95</sup>.

**B.38** The Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan of 2016 sets out a goal of 85,600 new jobs to 2031, reflecting the pace of change and effects of new and emerging technologies on the labour market. However, a key challenge that Oxfordshire is experiencing is the extremely tight labour market (many more jobs than there are people) with low levels of unemployment (0.7% out of work benefits claimants) and high job density at 0.96 (i.e., there are 96 jobs available for every 100 residents of 'working age'). With minimal growth in the working age population in the coming years and a child population (0-18 years) that is expected to decrease, this will present further challenges. The largest contributions to the County's growth came from the following sectors: public administration, education and health (24%), distribution, transport, accommodation and food (17%), business activities and property (both with 13%)<sup>96</sup>. Between July 2017 and June 2018, in terms of occupation, managers, directors and senior officials are the largest employment group for the County (59.8%) followed by professional occupations with 28.3% and associate professional and technical with 17.4%<sup>97</sup>. South Oxfordshire is home to just over a quarter (26%) of the County's business enterprises. The majority of these are small companies and many are based on the business and science parks in the area.

**B.39** The median annual pay for employees resident in Oxfordshire in 2017 was £27,793. Oxfordshire has seen nearly 14% growth in the median annual pay since 2012 and much more growth than the South East at 7% and England with 9%. Most of

<sup>93</sup> Cambridge Econometrics and Icen Projects (2021) Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment – Executive Summary

<sup>94</sup> Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (July 2019) *Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy*

<sup>95</sup> Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Annual Report (2017/18)

<sup>96</sup> Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (2018) *Overview of the Economy*

<sup>97</sup> Local Area Report: Oxfordshire (2018) <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1941962886/report.aspx?town=oxfordshire>

(83.1%) the working age population in Oxfordshire is economically active and in work. 68% of those in employment work full-time rather than part-time. Three quarters of part-time workers are women. However, there is a significant proportion of the population not in work. In 2017, 12,500 people were registered as unemployed and an additional 16,600 are economically inactive, not claiming anything from the state, but wanting a job. This is up from 2016 by 1,200. 0.7% of the working age population in the County were claiming out of work benefits in 2017, this equates to 2,950 people<sup>98</sup>. In March 2020, there were 6,670 people claiming out of work benefits, an increase from 2017. However, by December 2020, the number of claimants rose to 16,460, an increase of 146%<sup>99</sup>. The increase is likely due to the economic shock and rise in unemployment caused by the COVID-19 health pandemic.

**B.40** Oxfordshire has a significant network of business parks located in the city, towns and rural locations. They range from the internationally significant sites at Harwell and Culham to the smaller business parks on the edges of towns.

**B.41** In 2019 the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government published a report on the government ambitions and joint declaration between Government and local partners for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc. The report illustrates that productivity in the Arc as a whole, is around 2.55% higher than the UK average. In addition, the Arc's economy appears to be more resilient than the national average, with 2.5 percentage point growth in GVA per head between 2009 and 2010, compared to 1.7 percentage points in England and Wales as whole<sup>100</sup>. The Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessments (2021) sets out that there is the potential for a more spatially balanced growth picture to emerge compared to 2011-18 trends. Central Oxfordshire, encompassing the Knowledge Spine (including Oxford City and Fringe), is expected to remain a significant driver of economic activity, accounting for two-thirds of net additional employment growth to 2050.

**B.42** The Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal includes the commitment from Government and local partners to work together to boost productivity through a number of measures including the development of an Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy, supporting local business growth and addressing skills gaps<sup>101</sup>. The Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy is a direct response to the UK Industrial Strategy, launched by Government in November 2017. The Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy aims to provide a long-term vision for economic growth until 2040<sup>102</sup>. The Oxfordshire Investment Plan translates the ideas in the Oxford Local Industrial Plan into a coherent programme of delivery over an initial 10-year period, up until 2030. This plan responds to the economic challenges which COVID-19 has created for businesses, supply chains and the workforce in Oxfordshire<sup>103</sup>.

**B.43** In 2011, businesses in the UK arts and culture industry generated an aggregate turnover of £12.4 billion. The 2020 Economic Impact Report for Tourism in Oxfordshire noted that the county saw a significant increase (9%) in visitor spend in 2019. The report also highlights that the visitor economy is extremely important across the whole of Oxfordshire, with the largest proportion of visitor spending taking place in Oxford (40%) and the largest number of visits to North Oxfordshire (26%) with Oxford City closely followed with 25% of the total visits. However, the findings of the report are now a stark contrast to the current situation across Oxfordshire where business across the visitor economic are facing challenging times due to the COVID-19 pandemic<sup>104</sup>.

**B.44** The Strategic Investment Plan: Oxfordshire Creative, Cultural, Heritage and Tourism Sectors notes that the rural economy is strong, including a diverse agricultural sector and growing renewable energy sector as well as an increasing number of small businesses. The Creative Industries is increasingly a small and micro business sector. 85% of creative businesses are micro businesses (up to 10 employees), a further 12% are small businesses (up to 50 employees), and 43% of workers within the creative and cultural industries are self-employed and self-employment in the sector is growing – especially in rural areas.

**B.45** In addition, the natural and rural assets of the County play an important role in the heritage and cultural offer and are a major tourist attraction that includes three AONBs, the Chilterns, Cotswolds and North Wessex Downs. An act of Parliament in 1949 first gave provision for National Parks and Long Distance Routes to be created, with The Thames National Trail finally

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<sup>98</sup> Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (2018) *Overview of the Economy*

<sup>99</sup> Unemployment Claims in Oxfordshire (2020)

[https://public.tableau.com/views/OxfordshireUnemploymentDashboard/MainStory?embed=y;:display\\_count=no&:showVizHome=no%20](https://public.tableau.com/views/OxfordshireUnemploymentDashboard/MainStory?embed=y;:display_count=no&:showVizHome=no%20)

<sup>100</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019) *The Oxford-Cambridge Arc*

<sup>101</sup> Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal Delivery Plan

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/692366/Oxfordshire\\_Housing\\_Deal\\_-\\_Delivery\\_Plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/692366/Oxfordshire_Housing_Deal_-_Delivery_Plan.pdf)

<sup>102</sup> OxLEP *Local Industrial Strategy* <https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/lis>

<sup>103</sup> OxLEP (2020) *The Investment Plan* <https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/lis#:~:text=The%20Oxfordshire%20Investment%20Plan%20-%20issued%20in%20August,which%2C%20in%20turn%2C%20will%20leverage%20almost%20%C2%A32%20>

<sup>104</sup> Experience Oxfordshire (2020) *Pre Covid-19 Tourism Figures show Challenge Ahead for Oxfordshire's Visitor Economy* [https://www.experienceoxfordshire.org/tourism\\_figures\\_pre\\_covid/](https://www.experienceoxfordshire.org/tourism_figures_pre_covid/)

coming into being in 1997. Stretching over 184 miles, part of the route passes through the southern reaches of Oxfordshire alongside the River Thames which plays an important role attracting visitors to the countryside. Passing close by numerous villages, historic market towns, skirting the city of Oxford and including many places of interest opens up opportunities for business in rural areas. The natural and rural landscape is a major cultural asset and its sensitive management will be essential to effective and sustainable growth<sup>105</sup>.

**B.46** In 2017, the University of Oxford commissioned a report on the Economic Impact of the University of Oxford. The academic study, research and innovation at the University drive the local Oxford, Oxfordshire County and Regional economy. This economic impact report estimated that in 2014/15 the University of Oxford contributed £5.8 billion GVA to the UK economy, of which £2.3 billion GVA was to Oxfordshire, and supports 50,000 full time jobs<sup>106</sup>. The University of Oxford's Strategic Plan 2018-2023 is committed to benefit society on a local, regional, national and global scale through the collaboration of staff, students and alumni, their colleges, faculties and departments and will foster a culture of innovation and collaboration<sup>107</sup>.

**B.47** Due to Oxfordshire's proximity to London and Berkshire, and its links to Higher Education, it has created an economy that is competitive and proved resilient during and following on from the last recession. A report by the Enterprise Research Centre published in May 2017 positioned the County top in three of the ten innovative metrics: for marketing innovation; new to market products and services; and sales of innovative products.

**B.48** The UK left the European Union in January 2020. It is uncertain what effect this will have on the Oxfordshire economy, particularly given its excellent transport links to the continent and the rest of the UK. However, there is general consensus that the immediate impact will be negative.

**B.49** Finally, the impact of COVID-19 on changes in consumer behaviour and spending patterns tied to changes in average economic circumstances and travel patterns is unknown. The Social Market Foundation briefing paper published in July 2020 highlights that "lockdown will change consumer and business behaviour on a long-lasting basis, with a permanent shift to homeworking and digital retail. This change will impact urban spaces, risking widening income and wealth inequality. Reduced commuting costs will benefit white collar professionals, while those working in retail have faced widespread job losses."

**B.50** It is likely that the COVID-19 pandemic will accelerate the shift towards online retail and service access, resulting in higher shop vacancy rates on the high street and in retail parks as stores become financially unviable. Office space could increasingly become vacant and difficult to re-let as firms embrace a policy of (at least) partial homeworking, resulting in a need to allocate less office space in Local Plans. This will have knock-on impacts for other businesses. Without office workers, tourists and shoppers returning to cities and towns, food and drink and cultural attractions are at risk, as well as office management and cleaning services.

**B.51** The Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment also notes that there is potential for the pandemic to trigger and accelerate longer-term economic, social and behavioural change in Oxfordshire and throughout the UK. While in the short term, negative impacts within Oxfordshire have been severe and will continue to be felt for years to come, some of the new trends, such as homeworking and localism, could present a significant opportunity to reshape Oxfordshire's economic geography and transport systems<sup>108</sup>.

**B.52** A summary of the key sustainability issues in relation to the economy and employment baseline described above is provided in **Table B.7**, along with the likely evolution of each issue if the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 were not implemented.

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<sup>105</sup> OxLEP (undated) *Creating the Environment for Growth: A Strategic Investment Plan for Oxfordshire*  
[https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/sites/default/files/uploads/Creative%2C%20Cultural%2C%20Heritage%20and%20Tourism%20Sectors\\_0.pdf](https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/sites/default/files/uploads/Creative%2C%20Cultural%2C%20Heritage%20and%20Tourism%20Sectors_0.pdf)

<sup>106</sup> BiGGAR Economics (2017) *Economic Impact of the University of Oxford*  
<https://www.ox.ac.uk/sites/files/oxford/Economic%20Impact%20of%20the%20University%20of%20Oxford.pdf>

<sup>107</sup> University of Oxford (2018) *Strategic Plan 2018-2023* <http://www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation/strategic-plan-2018-23>

<sup>108</sup> Cambridge Econometrics and Icen Projects (2021) Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment – Executive Summary

**Table B.7: Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire and likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (Economy and employment)**

Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire	Likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050
<p>More jobs than there are people, with minimal growth in the working age population.</p> <p>Although the number of people claiming out of work benefits has skyrocketed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a large number of economically inactive people in Oxfordshire who are not claiming anything from the State but do want a job.</p>	<p>Without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, it is likely that there will continue to be more jobs than there are people. However, the OxLEP Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) (2016) seeks to increase accessibility to the employment market.</p> <p>The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 offers the opportunity to revitalise the local economy in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and promote employment prospects within urban areas and the rural economy which may make the job market more accessible to the wider Oxfordshire community, focusing not only on high value sectors but also on those communities in need of economic investment due to poor job prospects.</p> <p>The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 also has the potential to attract people to the area through a joined-up, collaborative approach to future development across the County that delivers the homes that are needed alongside the jobs.</p>
<p>Uncertainty associated with the effects of Brexit and COVID-19 will have on the Oxfordshire economy.</p>	<p>It is uncertain how the job market will change without the implementation of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, particularly given the uncertainties posed by Brexit and COVID-19.</p> <p>The Strategic Economic Plan (2016) highlights Oxfordshire's commitment to sustainable economic growth across the County. The LEP is seeking to help businesses prepare for Brexit, and also to support the world-class economy of Oxfordshire in order to compete in a post-Brexit world.</p> <p>Whilst the District Council's Local Plans will continue to allocate land for employment uses, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 provides the opportunity to focus planning and investment on key economic sectors and strategic corridors and locations, supported by sufficient infrastructure to provide the conditions to make the Oxfordshire economy competitive, as well as promoting access and opportunity for all.</p>

## Transport

**B.53** Oxfordshire sits on the busy road and rail transport corridor between the south coast ports, the Midlands and the north and has good links to London and the West Midlands via the M40 (see **Figure B.2**). However, it suffers from a lack of connectivity to and from the east, in particular to growth areas around Milton Keynes and Cambridge. The existing good links between Oxfordshire and London, Birmingham, Heathrow Airport and Southampton are currently accessed by road<sup>109</sup>. Emissions from transport currently account for around a third of greenhouse gas emissions in Oxfordshire, with the majority of this from road traffic<sup>110</sup>.

**B.54** Vehicle traffic has been growing steadily in Oxfordshire and at a greater rate than in the region as a whole. The M40 carries the most traffic, particularly on the stretch between junctions 9 and 10, which links the A34 via the A43 to the M1 and carries over 100,000 vehicles per day.

<sup>109</sup> As above.

<sup>110</sup> Draft Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

**B.55** The A34 carries up to 70,000 vehicles per day, including a large proportion of lorries. It forms part of the Oxford ring road, which results in severe congestion, damaging the local and national economy. It is particularly vulnerable to disruption due to incidents, because of the lack of alternative north-south routes for journeys both within and through the County<sup>111</sup>. Congestion in Oxfordshire has a significant impact on bus journeys causing delay along important corridors. Technology improvements are due to start in 2019/20 along the A34 between the M4 and M40 which will improve safety and reduce congestion. However, capacity along the A34 is currently insufficient to sustain the level of traffic accessing Oxfordshire and the M40 leading to congestion and delays, which is a key constraint for any future housing development. In addition to the technology improvements along the A34, there are numerous local road improvements that are proposed to alleviate both existing congestion hot spots and to plan for proposed growth in Oxfordshire up to and beyond 2031<sup>112</sup>.

**B.56** Movement of freight and goods is an inherent part of Oxfordshire's market-based economy, with the majority of which moved by road. Due to Oxfordshire's central location in the country and proximity to major ports and airports there are major freight movements through the county, particularly on the main routes such as the A34 and M40. However, there has been increasing concern regarding the impacts of freight movements on particular areas and less strategic roads. Volumes of freight moved by rail has increased since 2017, however it is restricted<sup>113</sup>.

**B.57** There are five railway stations in Cherwell District. Banbury station has connections to London Marylebone, Oxford and Birmingham, as well as Manchester, Bournemouth, Newcastle and Reading. Bicester has two train stations; Bicester North (the larger) and Bicester Village. Bicester North station is on the Chiltern Main Line running south to London Marylebone and north to Birmingham. Oxford Parkway Station is also served by Chiltern Railways.

**B.58** In West Oxfordshire, there are rail services connecting to Birmingham and London, which pass through a small part of the eastern fringe of the District. The Cotswold line passes through the largely rural central part of the District, connecting several small towns and villages with Hereford in the west and Oxford and London in the east. However, the main town of Witney does not have a rail connection. South Oxfordshire is served by the train station at Didcot Parkway, which is on the Great Western Rail line running between London, Reading and the West. However, it also connects to Oxford and Birmingham. While the same two railway main lines (Bristol to London and Oxford to London) run through the Vale of White Horse District, there are only two stations on the Oxford line and none on the Bristol line within the Vale of White Horse.

**B.59** In addition, Oxfordshire contains a number of older disused railway lines, for example the Carterton-Witney-Oxford-Cowley-Wheatley rail route, some of which may or may not be appropriate for re-opening in the future.

**B.60** In West Oxfordshire, there were approximately 3,880,000 tourism days trips made to the District in 2014<sup>114</sup>, up 1.8% compared to the previous year. Despite this, the effects of tourism on the transport network are not well understood.

**B.61** There is a good network of frequent bus or rail services linking the County's main towns with Oxford, yet the proportion of car journeys between these towns and Oxford remains high. In part this is due to the success of Park & Ride on the edge of Oxford. However, it means that the road corridors leading to Oxford used by buses all suffer from congestion<sup>115</sup>.

**B.62** Within Oxford, there is a mature and well-used network of largely commercial bus services, including regular services to the city centre from the five Park and Ride sites on the edge of the city. However across the rest of the County, bus networks are relatively under-developed, offering slow, infrequent routes that are more suited to shoppers than commuters. In West Oxfordshire, Witney, Carterton and Eynsham are connected to Oxford by high frequency bus services. Other bus services operate throughout the rural area with varying frequencies but many have required ongoing public subsidy.

**B.63** The quality of cycling and walking networks is variable, with some towns having had very little investment in pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. Compared to most cities, Oxford has particularly high proportions of people travelling by bus and by bicycle. However elsewhere across the County, there is scope to increase levels of cycling through targeted improvements to cycling infrastructure. Cycle routes along inter-urban routes are largely non-existent, the notable exception being the cycle track

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<sup>111</sup> As above.

<sup>112</sup> AECOM (2017) *Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy* [https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/oxis\\_stage2.pdf](https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/oxis_stage2.pdf)

<sup>113</sup> Draft Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

<sup>114</sup> Tourism South East (2014) *The Economic Impact of Tourism West Oxfordshire 2014*, [https://www.oxfordshirecotswolds.org/dbimsgs/Advice\\_EIS2014.pdf](https://www.oxfordshirecotswolds.org/dbimsgs/Advice_EIS2014.pdf)

<sup>115</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (2016) *Local Transport Plan 2015-2031 Volume 1: Policy & Overall Strategy*

alongside the A40 linking Witney and Wheatley to Oxford. Over 25% of Oxford residents who work in Oxford cycle to work, with a further 25% walking and 20% using the bus<sup>116</sup>.

**B.64** In terms of travel to work, **Table B.8** below shows that the highest level of inward commuting is experienced in Oxford and Cherwell Districts.

**Table B.8: Commuting flows from the Annual Population Survey, Great Britain, 2011**

District	Inward Commuting	Outward Commuting
Oxford City	57,451	16,557
Cherwell	19,195	23,629
South Oxfordshire	24,447	32,581
Vale of White Horse	17,926	31,690
West Oxfordshire	10,949	19,910

**B.65** Of the 57,451 commuters into Oxford, 16,563 are from Vale of White Horse District and most of the outward commute to work is to Reading<sup>117</sup>. The level of outward commuting to work is highest amongst South Oxfordshire residents<sup>118</sup>. Most commuters are travelling into Aylesbury Vale and Cherwell to work and travel to work by car either as a driver or as passenger. This figure has remained roughly equivalent to the 2001 data; however, it is significantly higher than the proportion for England. Cherwell residents travel further to work than people in the rest of the South East and nationally. It is estimated that 23,629 people commute from Cherwell with the majority (7,543) commuting into Oxford<sup>119</sup>.

**B.66** A large number of people commute out of West Oxfordshire to work, particularly to Oxford and the employment locations in the Abingdon and Didcot area. Many journeys continue to be made by private car and the number of people and distance people travel to work by car increased between the 2001 and 2011 Censuses. Commuting creates congestion on major routes, particularly the A40, A44 and A415 as well as within towns. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 saw a significant drop in commuting across the country as those who could work from home have. In April 2020, 46.6% of people in employment did some work at home and of those 86% did so as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic<sup>120</sup>.

**B.67** Oxfordshire County Council has produced its 4th Local Transport Plan (LTP4) which will run until 2031<sup>121</sup>. It guides the Council's policy making across all services, and is the long-term plan on which the Council's annually updated Corporate Plan is based. Its aims are to:

- Create a world class economy for Oxfordshire.
- Have healthy and thriving communities.
- Look after our environment and respond to the threat of climate change.
- Reduce inequalities and break the cycle of deprivation.

**B.68** The Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy lists a wide variety of transport projects that are being proposed to 2031 to address Oxfordshire's transport issues. Some include: East-West Rail, upgrades to the A34, three bus rapid transit lines, super cycle routes and an A40-A44 link road. However, the Strategy suggests that about 25% of the proposed rail projects, 10% of the

<sup>116</sup> As above.

<sup>117</sup> Commuting flows from the Annual Population Survey, Great Britain, 2011  
[http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/HTMLDocs/Commute\\_APS\\_Map/Index.html](http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/HTMLDocs/Commute_APS_Map/Index.html)

<sup>118</sup> As above.

<sup>119</sup> As above.

<sup>120</sup> Office for National Statistics (2020) *Coronavirus and homeworking in the UK: April 2020*,  
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/coronavirusandhomeworkingintheuk/april2020>

<sup>121</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (2016) *Local Transport Plan 2015-2031 Volume 1: Policy & Overall Strategy*  
[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/connectingoxfordshire](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/connectingoxfordshire)

proposed road and bus projects, and none of the cycle projects had secured funding in 2017<sup>122</sup>. Additionally, the Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (2021) sets out key actions for how to roll out EV infrastructure over the next 5 years.

**B.69** In addition, the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal will help to fund a series of transport improvements focusing on reducing the impact of congestion, improving public transport infrastructure, pedestrian and cycling improvements<sup>123</sup>.

**B.70** In September 2018, the Government announced the preferred corridor for the new Oxford-Cambridge Expressway, accepting the recommendations of Highways England. The Expressway, which the Government sees as filling major gap in the national road network, will work together with the proposed East West Rail link to improve east-west connectivity. The Expressway is projected to take up to 40 minutes off the journey between the A34 south of Oxford and the M1 to improve connectivity to high quality jobs in centres of rapid growth such as Oxford Science Park<sup>124</sup>.

**B.71** A summary of the key sustainability issues in relation to the transport baseline described above is provided in **Table B.9**, along with the likely evolution of each issue if the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 were not implemented.

**Table B.9: Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire and likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (Transport)**

Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire	Likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050
High reliance on the private car.	Without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, it is likely that car dependency will continue to be high. However, the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan (2015) aims to minimise private travel through the promotion of public transport and by making walking and cycling more attractive alternatives to the car. The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 provides an opportunity to reduce car use through the promotion of a joined-up, strategic approach to transport planning across Oxfordshire.
Oxford experiences severe traffic congestion, with the ring road being particularly vulnerable to disruption as a result of incidents. This is due to the lack of alternative routes for journeys both within and through the County.	Without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, it is anticipated that congestion will continue to rise with the rising population. However, the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan (2015) aims to minimise use of the private car, and the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (2017) sets out ambitions for new and improved infrastructure to 2031 and beyond. Regionally and County-wide, the Strategy supports an East-West rail link between Oxford, Bicester, Milton Keynes and Bedford; rail improvements between Oxford and Didcot; redevelopment of Oxford Station, and upgrades to the A34. In the long term, it also supports an Oxford-Cambridge expressway.  The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 presents the opportunity to address issues associated with congestion through providing clarity for infrastructure providers at the same time as promoting a joined-up, strategic approach to transport planning across the County, integrated with the delivery of housing and economic development.
Rail services across Oxfordshire could be improved.	Without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, there will be a continued need for improvements to be made to rail services across Oxfordshire. However, as set out in the document 'Partnering for Prosperity: A new deal for the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc', the National Infrastructure Commission supports the proposed East-West rail line and Oxford-Cambridge expressway. The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 can help integrate development with these new public transport initiatives and can help support improvements to rail services across the

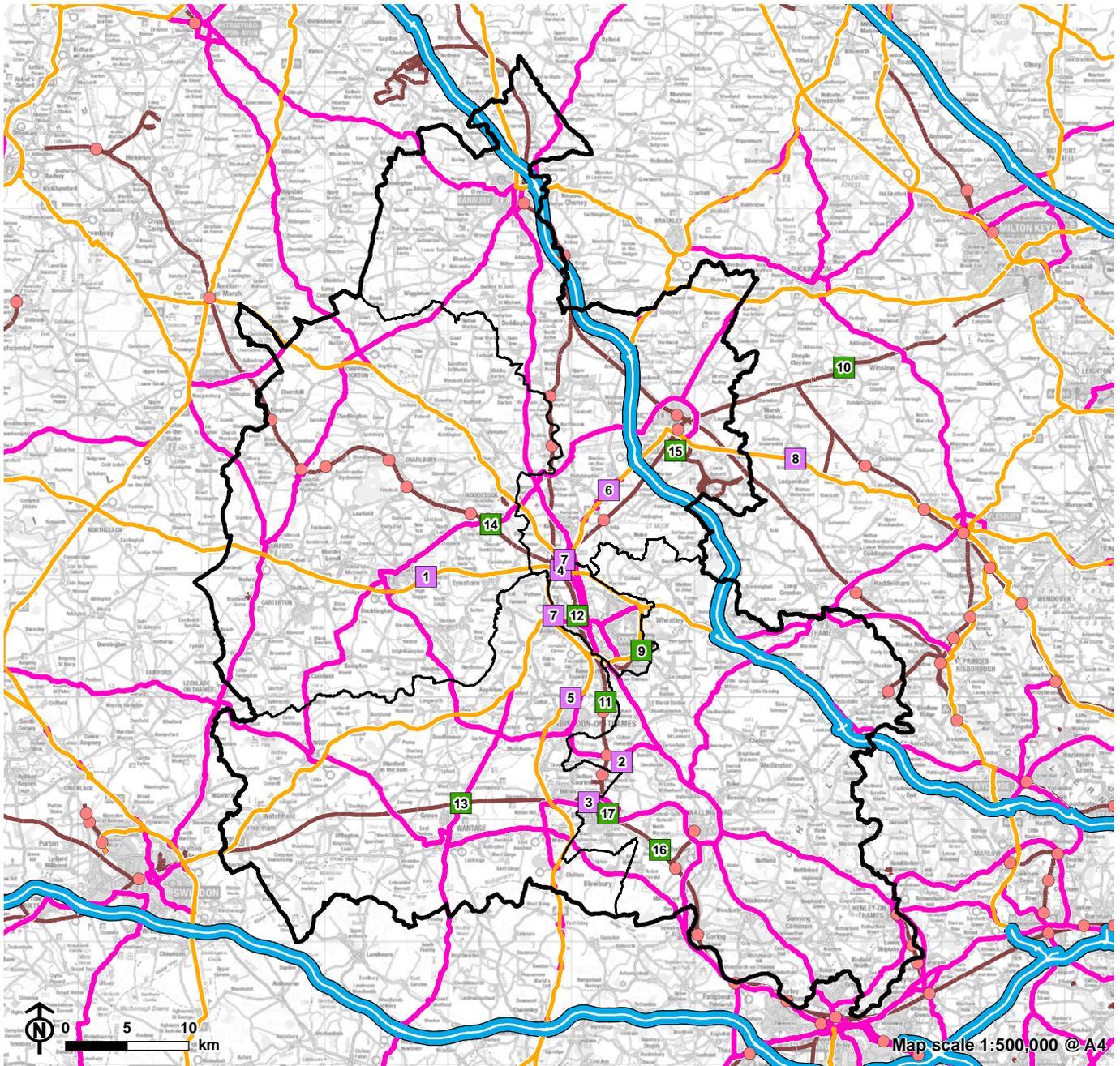
<sup>122</sup> AECOM (2017) *Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy* [https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/oxis\\_stage2.pdf](https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/oxis_stage2.pdf)

<sup>123</sup> Oxfordshire Growth Board *Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal – Outline Agreement*

[https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/4138/outline\\_agreement](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/4138/outline_agreement)

<sup>124</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/oxford-to-cambridge-expressway-road-scheme-update>

Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire	Likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050
	County by encouraging collaborative working between each of the six Oxfordshire Councils.
<p>Outside of Oxford City, bus networks are relatively under-developed offering slow, infrequent routes that are more suited to shoppers than commuters.</p>	<p>Without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, bus networks across Oxfordshire are likely to remain under-developed. However, the Oxfordshire Bus &amp; Rapid Transit Strategy (part of the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 2015) aims to improve bus services across Oxfordshire so as to reduce dependence on the private car.</p> <p>The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 could help support improvements to the bus network through the promotion of collaborative working between the six Oxfordshire Councils, and by ensuring that new strategic scale development links into and supports the bus network.</p>
<p>The quality of cycling and walking networks across Oxfordshire is variable, with some towns having had very little investment in pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. Cycle routes along inter-urban routes are largely non-existent. However, new walking and cycling infrastructure temporarily created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic offers an opportunity to make permanent improvements to these important networks.</p>	<p>Without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, it is anticipated that the standard of cycling and walking networks across Oxfordshire would remain as they are. The Active &amp; Healthy Travel Strategy (part of the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 2015) does, however, seek to reduce pressure on the road network through the promotion of sustainable door to door journeys that combine cycling or walking with public transport. The Strategy specifically aims to provide a safer, more attractive environment for cyclists and walkers.</p> <p>The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 could help support improvements to the pedestrian and cycling infrastructure through the promotion of collaborative working between the six Oxfordshire Councils, and by ensuring that new strategic scale development links into and supports cycling and walking networks.</p>



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Source: OCC, OS

Figure B.2: Transport network

- Oxfordshire county
- District boundary
- Rail station
- Rail track
- Motorway
- Trunk road
- A road

**Strategic road and rail projects**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="background-color: purple; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold;">1</span> Road</li> <li>1. A40 strategy: dual carriageway from Witney to Eynsham</li> <li>2. Culham to Didcot river crossing</li> <li>3. Didcot Science Bridge and A4130 capacity</li> <li>4. A40 - A44 link road</li> <li>5. A34 upgrades: (short term) traffic management</li> <li>6. A34 upgrades: (longer term) Oxford to Cambridge</li> <li>7. A34 upgrades: (short term) on-slip improvements to Botley and Pear Tree interchanges</li> <li>8. A41 Bicester to Aylesbury</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="background-color: green; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold;">9</span> Rail</li> <li>9. Cowley branch line</li> <li>10. East West Rail phase 2</li> <li>11. Didcot to Oxford capacity improvement</li> <li>12. Oxford Station redevelopment phases 1-3</li> <li>13. Wantage and Grove Station and new inter-regional service</li> <li>14. Cotswolds line upgrade (including Hanborough Station)</li> <li>15. Freight interchange at Graven Hill</li> <li>16. Wester Rail link to Heathrow: facilitates new direct services from Didcot to Oxford</li> <li>17. Didcot east grade separation</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

## Air quality

**B.72** Nationally, from the 1990s leading up to 2000 there were reductions in NOx emissions, however since 2000 the amount of NOx emissions has surprisingly plateaued<sup>125</sup>. The major threat to clean air is currently created by traffic emissions. Petrol and diesel-engine motor vehicles emit a wide variety of pollutants, principally carbon monoxide (CO), oxides of nitrogen (NOx), volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and particulate matter (PM10 and PM 2.5), which have an increasing impact on urban air quality. These pollutants may not only prove a problem in the immediate vicinity of pollutant sources, but can be transported long distances. Health concerns are associated with each air pollutant. For example, both short-term and long-term exposure to ambient levels of PM is consistently associated with respiratory and cardiovascular illness and mortality as well as other ill-health effects<sup>126</sup>.

**B.73** The World Health Organisation has recently released data looking at air pollution world-wide and which pollutants posed the greatest risk to human health. This found that 10 towns and cities in the UK, including Oxford, breached safe levels of PM10, and another 39 urban areas, including Oxford, breached safe levels of PM2.5<sup>127</sup>.

**B.74** Despite these findings for Oxford city, air quality across Oxfordshire is considered to be generally good since the County is largely rural in nature. In more densely populated areas of the County, and those which experience high traffic flows such as Oxford, Banbury and Bicester, increased levels of air pollution are of concern. In these areas, road traffic is the most significant source of pollutant emissions. In 2015, there were generally lower levels of NOx emissions across the County; however it is unclear whether this is indicative of a downward trend or whether other factors have influenced the results<sup>128</sup>.

**B.75** In March 2009, the Cabinet Member for Transport gave support to Oxford City Council's declaration of a low emission zone (LEZ) for buses operating in Oxford city centre. The LEZ declared in 2009 requires buses to meet the Euro V standard by January 2014. Oxford City Council Environment Officers estimate investments into new low emission buses will have reduced emissions of oxides of nitrogen (NOx) from buses by almost 60%<sup>129</sup>.

**B.76** From 2020, Oxford's Zero Emission Zone will put restrictions on some vehicles and journey types, which will increase gradually to all vehicles in the following years. The vision towards zero emissions accelerates from 2022 to 2035, when Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council are considering further possible measures for non-zero and high emission vehicles to encourage a faster conversion towards low emission and zero emission vehicles. The aim is to have zero transport emissions in Oxford by 2035. It is also expected that the ZEZ will improve air pollution levels across Oxfordshire because the buses and taxis that serve Oxford also serve towns and villages across the County<sup>130</sup>.

**B.77** To support the change to electric vehicles, Oxford City's Submission version Local Plan, which was submitted on 22 March 2019, includes proposals for electric vehicle charging points across the city. Oxford City Council also plans to introduce a zero emission zone (ZEV) in the city centre from 2020, with zero emissions progressively applying to more vehicles and a larger area, until the city centre has zero transport emissions by 2035. Oxford City Council is also a leader in the provision of car-free homes<sup>131</sup>. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the current plan to launch the ZEV has been postponed, with the end goal of implementing the scheme in the Summer of 2021<sup>132</sup>.

**B.78** The Environment Act 1995 introduced the National Air Quality Strategy and the requirement for local authorities to determine if statutory air quality objectives (AQOs) are likely to be exceeded. All local authorities now report to DEFRA on an

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<sup>125</sup> IEMA (2017) Air Quality in the UK – Trends, Science and Politics <https://www.iema.net/event-reports/2017/03/08/air-quality-in-the-uk-trends-science-and-politics/>

<sup>126</sup> Oxfordshire Air Quality (2019) *What are the causes of air pollution* <https://oxfordshire.air-quality.info/what-are-the-causes-of-air-pollution>

<sup>127</sup> Oxford City Council (undated) *Air Quality* [https://www.oxford.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/2635/55\\_air\\_quality.pdf](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/2635/55_air_quality.pdf)

<sup>128</sup> Oxfordshire Air Quality Group Annual Report – Health Improvement Board

<https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s35048/Item%2011%20-%20Air%20Quality%20Annual%20Report%20to%20Health%20Improvement%20Board.pdf>

<sup>129</sup> Deputy Director for Environment and Economy (2012) *Oxford City Centre Low Emission Zone*, [http://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s14877/CMDT\\_FEB1612R05.pdf](http://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s14877/CMDT_FEB1612R05.pdf)

<sup>130</sup> Oxford City Council (2019) *Plans for Zero Emission Zone in Oxford move ahead in the journey to zero emissions*

[https://www.oxford.gov.uk/news/article/965/plans\\_for\\_zero\\_emission\\_zone\\_in\\_oxford\\_move\\_ahead\\_in\\_the\\_journey\\_to\\_zero\\_emissions](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/news/article/965/plans_for_zero_emission_zone_in_oxford_move_ahead_in_the_journey_to_zero_emissions)

<sup>131</sup> Oxford City Council, Oxford Zero Emission Zone (ZEV) <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/zez>

<sup>132</sup> Oxford City Council (2020) Oxford Zero Emission Zone (ZEV) March 2020 proposals [https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20299/air\\_quality\\_projects/1305/oxford\\_zero\\_emission\\_zone\\_zez/2](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20299/air_quality_projects/1305/oxford_zero_emission_zone_zez/2)

annual basis, and have the obligation to declare Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) and develop action plans for improvement of air quality if objectives are likely to be exceeded.

**B.79** There are currently 13 AQMAs within Oxfordshire. **Table B.10** below provides information about the AQMAs in each of the Oxfordshire Districts and **Figure B.3** shows their locations.

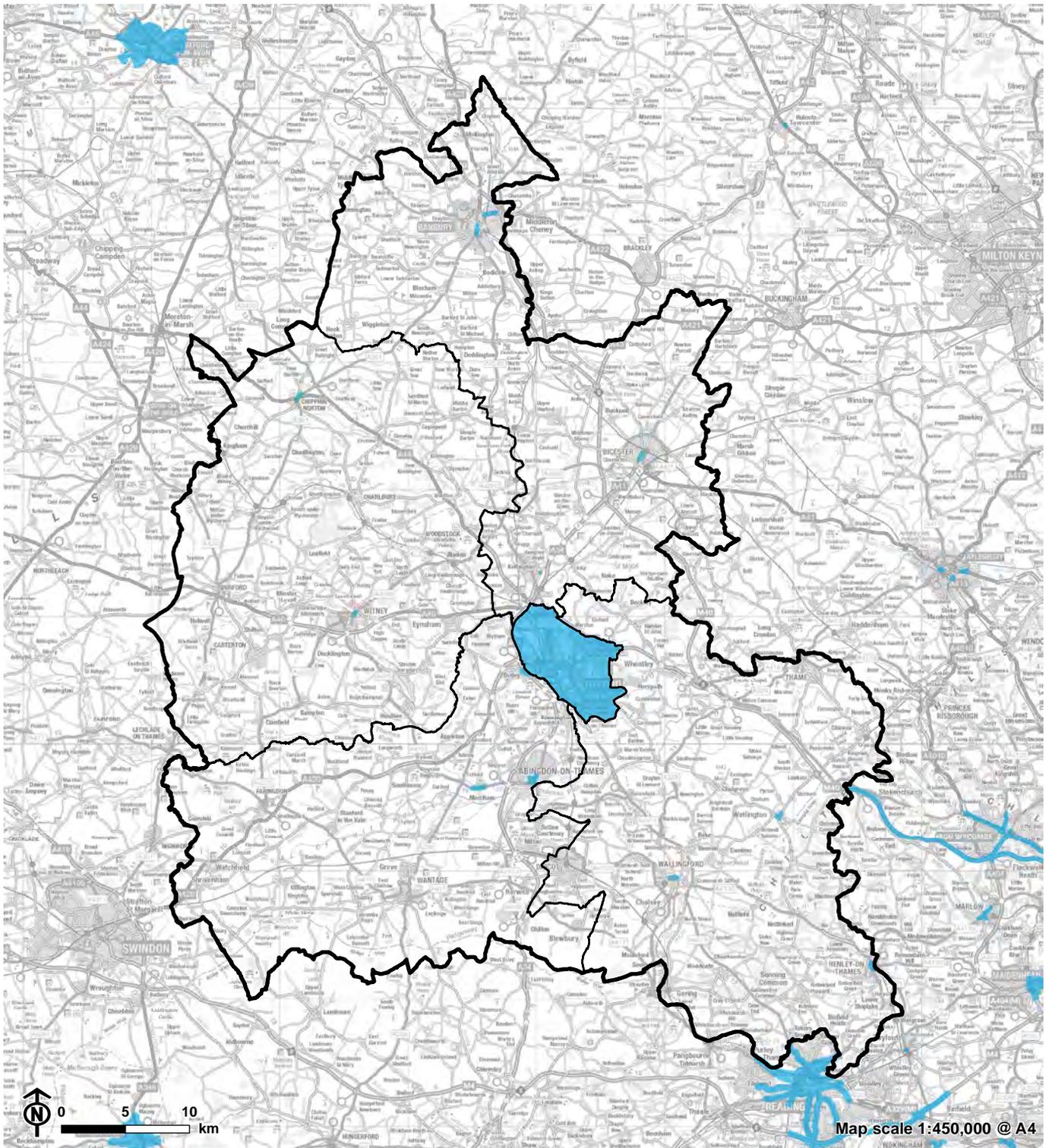
**Table B.10: AQMAs**

District	AQMAs	Declared for
Oxford City	City of Oxford	NO <sub>2</sub> concentrations in excess of the annual mean objective
Cherwell	Hennef Way, Banbury	NO <sub>2</sub> annual mean objective being exceeded
	Bloxham/ Oxford Road Junction and Horsefair, Banbury	Exceedances of the NO <sub>2</sub> annual mean objective
	Bicester Road, Kidlington	NO <sub>2</sub> concentrations in excess of the annual mean objective
	Kings End-Queens Avenue, Bicester	NO <sub>2</sub> concentrations in excess of the annual mean objective
South Oxfordshire	Duke Street, Hart Street, Market Place, Bell Street to the New Street junction, Greys Road to the Albert Road junction, Friday Street to the Queens Road junction, Reading Road to the Station Road junction, Henley	NO <sub>2</sub> annual mean objective being exceeded
	Wallingford High Street, Wallingford	Exceedances of the NO <sub>2</sub> annual mean objective
	Brook Street, Watlington	Exceedances of the NO <sub>2</sub> annual mean objective
Vale of White Horse	Stratton Way, Stert Street and parts of High Street, Ock Street, the Vineyard and Bridge Street, Abingdon	Exceedances of the NO <sub>2</sub> annual mean objective
	A34, Botley	Exceedances of the NO <sub>2</sub> annual mean objective
	A415, Marcham	Exceedances of the NO <sub>2</sub> annual mean objective
West Oxfordshire	Bridge Street, Witney	Exceedances of the NO <sub>2</sub> annual mean objective
	Horsefair and High Street, Chipping Norton	Exceedances of the NO <sub>2</sub> annual mean objective

**B.80** A summary of the key sustainability issues in relation to the air quality baseline described above is provided in **Table B.11**, along with the likely evolution of each issue if the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 were not implemented.

**Table B.11: Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire and likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (Air quality)**

Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire	Likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050
<p>On-going concern over air pollution, particularly from vehicles and as a result of congestion.</p>	<p>How air quality will change in the absence of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is unknown, given that the County accommodates a high volume of traffic. However, recent national policies and the emergence of new technologies are likely to improve air pollution, for example, through cleaner fuels/energy sources, and the shift towards electric and low emissions vehicles is likely to gather pace over the plan period.</p> <p>However, the development of new housing across the County will inevitably result in a higher number of cars on the roads. The Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan (2015) seeks to reduce pressure on the road network which will have a beneficial effect on air quality.</p> <p>The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 provides an opportunity to contribute to improved air quality in the County through the sustainable siting of development and the promotion of alternative travel modes to the motorised vehicle, in line with national policy aspirations.</p>



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Source: Defra

**Figure B.3: Air Quality Management Areas**

-  Oxfordshire county
-  District boundary
-  Air Quality Management Area

## Climate Change

**B.81** The UK is a signatory to the international 2015 Paris Agreement, committing the country to a long-term goal of keeping the increase in global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, through domestic mitigation measures. The UK's Climate Change Act, 2008 commits to reduce national emissions by at least 80% of 1990 levels by 2050.

**B.82** All of the Oxfordshire authorities have declared a climate emergency with Oxfordshire County Council declaring in April 2019 and aims to be carbon neutral by 2030<sup>133</sup>.

**B.83** Planning has a significant role to play in mitigating the effects of and adapting to the inevitable impacts of climate change. In the past this has focussed on reducing the need to travel but in the future buildings will need to be more energy efficient, use decentralised, low carbon or renewable energy sources and be designed and located to be resilient to more extreme weather events and increased risk of flooding. It should also be highlighted that climate change is a cross cutting issue that can contribute to increasing the significance of effects related to other sustainability issues. Defra's 25 Year Environment Plan aims to improve the global environment by providing international leadership in tackling climate change.

## Climate Change Adaptation

**B.84** The UK Climate Projections (UKCP18) scenarios confirm that the South East will be one of the region's most severely affected by climate change. Greater extremes in temperature, more storms and extreme weather events (e.g., torrential rainfall, heat waves) are predicted. The 2018 IPCC Special Report on Global Warming presents the key findings, based on the assessment of the available scientific, technical and socio-economic literature relevant to global warming of 1.5°C and for the comparison between global warming of 1.5 °C and 2 °C above pre-industrial levels<sup>134</sup>. Unless rapid action is taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, global temperatures may rise to 4°C above pre-industrial levels by the end of the century. Summer maximum temperatures could rise by up to 10°C in parts of England by the 2080s. Sea levels will rise for decades and centuries ahead. Sea level rise is predicted to be between 0.4 and 1 metre by 2100, and possibly by as much as 4 metres by 2300<sup>135</sup>.

**B.85** Urban growth can contribute to the urban heat island effect. This is due to the land surfaces in towns and cities, which are made of materials like tarmac and stone, which absorb and store heat, that coupled with concentrated energy use and less ventilation than in rural areas, creates a heating effect<sup>136</sup>. With an estimated increase in population in Oxfordshire, urban heat island effect becomes an increasing stressor on the towns and cities.

**B.86** Successfully adapting to climate change involves understanding the risks and quantifying the likely impacts, so that informed decisions can be taken about the costs and benefits of reducing those risks. Taking the impacts of a changing climate into account in all short, medium and long term planning is an investment to save money. Actions to increase resilience help to maximise the capacity of all to adapt. Adaptation plans need to be kept under regular review as adaptation will become increasingly important if appropriate mitigation is not put in place in time<sup>137</sup>.

## Climate Change Mitigation

**B.87** The most recent carbon dioxide emission data records a 23% reduction in emissions between 2008 and 2015 in Oxfordshire<sup>138</sup>. Although there has been a decrease in overall emissions since 2008, they remain high with road transport, residential development, public services and commercial services contributing the majority of emissions.

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<sup>133</sup> Declare a Climate Emergency (2019) Oxfordshire <https://www.climateemergency.uk/blog/oxfordshire/>

<sup>134</sup> IPCC (2018) *Global Warming of 1.5 °C Special Report* <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

<sup>135</sup> Environment Agency (2018) *Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/758983/Climate\\_change\\_impacts\\_and\\_adaptation.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/758983/Climate_change_impacts_and_adaptation.pdf)

<sup>136</sup> Met Office (2012) *Urban Heat Islands* [https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/binaries/content/assets/mohippo/pdf/8/m/mo\\_pup\\_insert\\_health.web.pdf](https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/binaries/content/assets/mohippo/pdf/8/m/mo_pup_insert_health.web.pdf)

<sup>137</sup> Environment Agency (2018) *Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/758983/Climate\\_change\\_impacts\\_and\\_adaptation.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/758983/Climate_change_impacts_and_adaptation.pdf)

<sup>138</sup> Oxfordshire County Council: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/environment-and-planning/energy-and-climate-change/across-oxfordshire>

**B.88** Coal-fired Didcot A power station stopped operations in 2013. Gas-burning Didcot B started operations in 1997. South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse are exploring options for using surplus heat from Didcot B to heat buildings and generate electricity for the new business park planned for the Didcot A site.

**B.89 Table B.12** sets out the per-capita carbon dioxide emissions from each of the Oxfordshire authorities for 2016, and shows that the highest total emissions were from Cherwell District. The significantly lower emissions from Oxford City can be largely attributed to the much lower emissions from transport than from the other Districts.

**Table B.12: Carbon dioxide emissions 2017**<sup>139</sup>

District	Industry and Commercial (kt CO <sub>2</sub> )	Domestic (kt CO <sub>2</sub> )	Transport (kt CO <sub>2</sub> )	Total (t CO <sub>2</sub> per person)
Oxford City	339.9	188.7	146.3	4.4
Cherwell	362.2	227.0	675.7	8.5
South Oxfordshire	225.7	240.4	446.1	6.2
Vale of White Horse	222.3	205.7	436.6	6.5
West Oxfordshire	192.6	183.2	215.1	5.2

**B.90** The Oxfordshire Local Economic Partnership (OxLEP) has made predictions of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions under a scenario of 100,000 new homes by 2031. The analysis begins by noting that GHG emissions already dropped by about one-quarter between 2008 and 2015 as a result of reduced emissions from the commercial, public services and residential sectors (see **Chart B.1** below)<sup>140</sup>. However, **Chart B.1** highlights that under a 'business as usual' scenario of no new government policies, emissions in Oxfordshire will begin to rise again to 2040, reflecting Oxfordshire's increasing population. The projection including implementation of national measures estimates a reduction of 40% by 2030 which is insufficient to reach Oxfordshire's target of 50% by 2030 compared to the 2008 baseline<sup>141</sup>.

**B.91** Oxfordshire has a thriving economy, with almost 81,000 business contributing £21.9 billion to the national economy. Homes, business and transport used 6,800 GWh of energy in 2015. Between 2008 and 2015 energy use fell within the county; however, energy used for transport has increased proportionately and remains the highest energy consumer across the county<sup>142</sup>. Furthermore, Oxfordshire's reliance on petroleum products and gas must reduce at a fast rate in order to meet national 2030 targets and clean energy goals.

**B.92** The OxFutures Programme led by OxLEP is a 3.2m project to grow Oxfordshire's low carbon economy. The three year project runs until March 2020 focusses on energy efficiency and low carbon innovation by delivering free energy audits to small and medium enterprises (SMEs)<sup>143</sup>. Oxford's Low Carbon Hub<sup>144</sup> has invested in 38 renewable and low carbon energy installations to date, saving 1,562 tonnes of carbon dioxide every year and generating 4.2GWh of clean energy a year and has a target is on track to reduce emissions in Oxford by 40% by 2020.

**B.93** Oxfordshire's low carbon economy accounts for 7% of the local economy, with 8,800 jobs, 570 businesses and £1.15 billion per year in sales. Oxfordshire is hoping to expand its low carbon economy through its established vehicles of change:

<sup>139</sup> Department of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (June 2019) *UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005-2017* Retrieved April 2020: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2017>

<sup>140</sup> Aether (2018) *Oxfordshire LEP Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Projections 2018 Update* <https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/environmentandplanning/climatechange/OxLEPEmissionsReport.pdf>

<sup>141</sup> Aether (2018) *Oxfordshire LEP Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Projections 2018 Update* <https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/environmentandplanning/climatechange/OxLEPEmissionsReport.pdf>

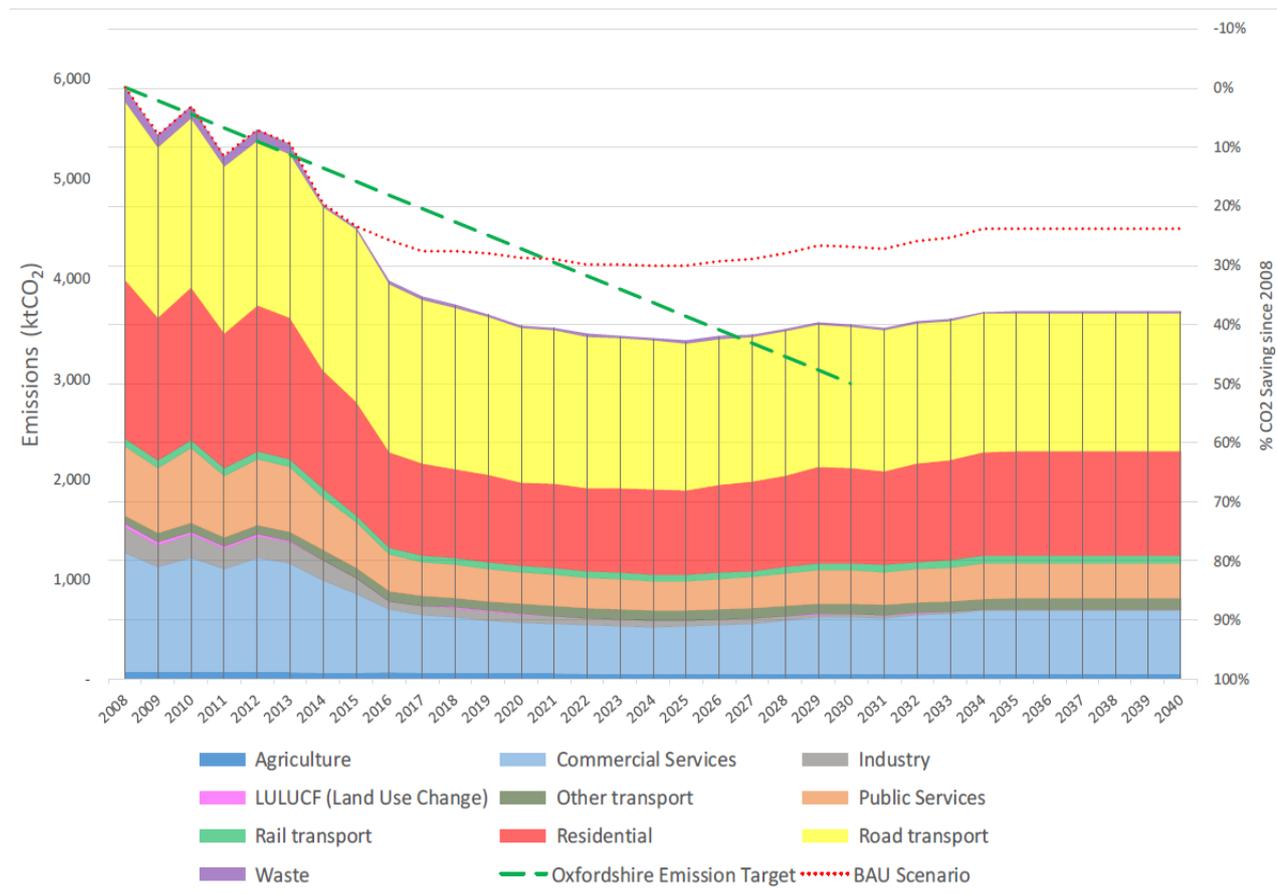
<sup>142</sup> Oxfordshire Energy Strategy: <https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/sites/default/files/uploads/Oxfordshire%20Energy%20Strategy.pdf>

<sup>143</sup> OxFutures Programme: <http://oxfutures.org/>

<sup>144</sup> Oxford's Low Carbon Hub: <https://www.lowcarbonhub.org/>

world renowned universities, high-tech economic clusters found at Harwell and Culham, the engineering experience of Motorsport Valley, Oxfordshire’s skilled labour force, and a countrywide economic plan focused on innovation and enterprise<sup>145</sup>.

Chart B.1 GHG emission projections for Oxfordshire until 2040<sup>146</sup>



**B.94** Communities and governments around the world must adapt and plan in the face of climate uncertainty, as it is not possible to know the exact extent to which our climate will change. Adaptation and mitigation plans must incorporate the full range of climate risks, take account of uncertainty over timing and severity and build climate resilience<sup>147</sup>.

**B.95** A summary of the key sustainability issues in relation to the climate change baseline described above is provided in **Table B.13**, along with the likely evolution of each issue if the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 were not implemented.

<sup>145</sup> Low Carbon Oxford and the Environmental Change Institute at the University of Oxford *Joining the Crowd: Growing a New Economy for Oxfordshire*

<sup>146</sup> Aether (2018) *Oxfordshire LEP Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Projections 2018 Update*

<https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/environmentandplanning/climatechange/OxLEPEmissionsReport.pdf>

<sup>147</sup> Environment Agency (2018) *Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/758983/Climate\\_change\\_impacts\\_and\\_adaptation.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/758983/Climate_change_impacts_and_adaptation.pdf)

**Table B.13: Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire and likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (Climate change)**

Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire	Likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050
<p>In common with all parts of the country, Oxfordshire needs to dramatically reduce its carbon emissions and contribution to climate change.</p>	<p>National policy will continue to seek to reduce carbon emissions by encouraging more efficient use of energy (e.g. through insulation of buildings) and by a switch to renewable sources of energy. This is likely to continue without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and will be encouraged through the District's Local Plans.</p> <p>The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 provides the opportunity to encourage energy efficient development in the County, and to reduce the need to use the car through planning and support for walking, cycling and public transport. It can also encourage provision for renewable energy schemes.</p>

## Water resources and water quality

**B.96** Demand for water and the quality of water resources have become important local, national and international issues. Oxfordshire lies largely within the Thames Water region, which is one of the driest in the country. The Environment Agency has assessed the Thames Water supply region as an area of 'serious' water stress which is expected to get worse, as shown in **Chart B.2** below<sup>148</sup>. Water is abstracted from the River Thames, from groundwater aquifers and there are reservoirs at Farmoor and Grimsbury, Banbury in Oxfordshire<sup>149</sup>. Thames Water's Water Resource Management Plan (2020) shows that Oxfordshire lies within the Swindon and Oxfordshire Water Resource Zone (SWOX)<sup>150</sup>. The Thames Valley Region is seriously water stressed, and by 2020 baseline demand for water will outstrip supply from the Swindon and Oxfordshire catchment area meaning that more water will have to be imported from adjoining water resource management areas<sup>151</sup>. This has knock on implications for the carbon footprint of supplying water to residents as it is pumped or transported from further afield. To mitigate the impact of this, Thames Water is developing a new reservoir in Oxfordshire in partnership with Affinity Water<sup>152</sup>. From the base year of 2016/17 to 2045, Thames Water predicts that there will be a 27.4% increase in SWOX's population, putting enormous stress on the Thames Water supply region. In its Draft Water Resources Management Plan, Thames Water envisages a future scenario of sourcing water from reservoirs and inter-regional water transfers<sup>153</sup>. For example, the Water Resources Management Plan proposes the South East Strategic Reservoir Option to improve the resilience of both the Thames Water and Affinity Water (serves parts of Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Essex, Greater London, Hertfordshire, Surrey and Kent) regions through the creation of a regional storage and transfer hub. This will capture and store water falling on the wetter west side of the region to meet the growing needs of Swindon and Oxford, and using the River Thames as a natural, efficient water transfer system to supply customers in the Slough, Wycombe and Aylesbury area, customers served by Affinity Water, and Thames Water customers in London, up to 100 miles away. Development of this new reservoir is earmarked from 2037<sup>154</sup>.

<sup>148</sup> JBA Consulting (2016) *South Oxfordshire District Council – Water Cycle Study* <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Water%20Cycle%20Study%20Phase%20I%20-%20S%20Oxfordshire%20District%20Council.pdf>

<sup>149</sup> Transport Research Laboratory (2017) *Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 1 - Core Strategy incorporating Proposed Main Modifications Sustainability Appraisal Report Update: Appendix A: Scoping Report Update*

<sup>150</sup> Thames Water (2020) *Shape Your Future Water. Our Water Resources Management Plan 2020-2100* <https://www.thameswater.co.uk/media-library/home/about-us/regulation/water-resources/water-resources-management-plan-overview.pdf>

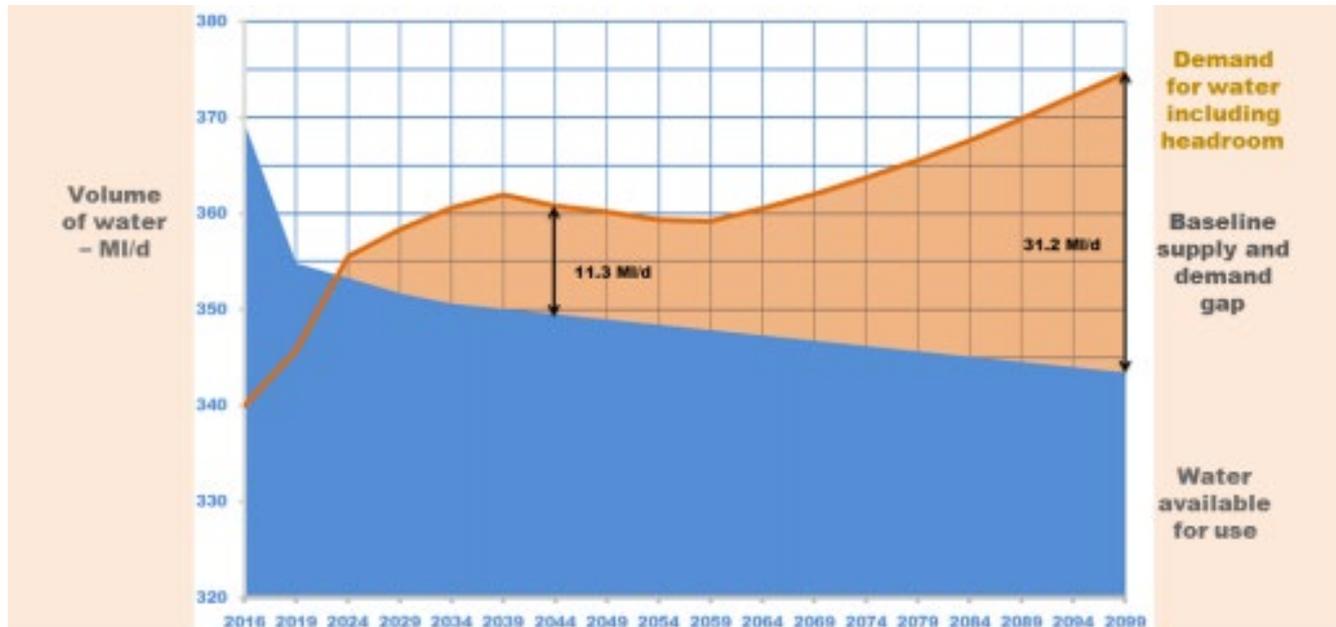
<sup>151</sup> Environment Agency (2014), *Thames Catchment Abstraction Licensing Strategy*

<sup>152</sup> Thames Water (2020) *Shape Your Future Water. Our Water Resources Management Plan 2020-2100* <https://www.thameswater.co.uk/media-library/home/about-us/regulation/water-resources/water-resources-management-plan-overview.pdf>

<sup>153</sup> Thames Water (2019) *Draft Water Resources Management Plan 2019* [https://corporate.thameswater.co.uk/-/media/Site-Content/Your-water-future-2018/WRMP-Sections/dWRMP19-Section-03---Current-and-Future-Demand-For-Water\\_151217.pdf](https://corporate.thameswater.co.uk/-/media/Site-Content/Your-water-future-2018/WRMP-Sections/dWRMP19-Section-03---Current-and-Future-Demand-For-Water_151217.pdf)

<sup>154</sup> Thames Water (2019) *Draft Water Resources Management Plan 2019* <https://corporate.thameswater.co.uk/-/media/Site-Content/Your-water-future-2018/WRMP-Sections/dWRMP19-Section-00---Executive-summary-221217.pdf>

Chart B.2 Baseline supply demand balance for SWOX Water Resource Zone<sup>155</sup>



**B.97** All five local authorities' Local Plans include policies that require new development to be designed to a water efficiency standard of 110l per person per day. This is required by the National Planning Policy Guidance in water-stressed areas.

**B.98** Thames Water has undertaken an assessment which shows that a large number of Wastewater Treatment Plants in Oxfordshire will have capacity issues up to 2031<sup>156</sup>. Increased demand for water consumption and treatment from new development could result in changes to the water environment<sup>157</sup>.

**B.99** The ecological status of waterbodies within Oxford varies from high to poor, but each has good chemical status. The Thames river basin management plan includes measures for the Cherwell and Cotswold catchments, which include Oxford, to increase the environmental capacity for the water environment of Oxford. These measures include creating more back waters between Banbury and Oxford helping to re-naturalise the river corridor and targeting the connectivity or riparian and aquatic habitats with the aim to improve flood management, water quality and soil quality.<sup>158</sup>

**B.100** The Upper Cherwell catchment supports abstractions for public water supply at Banbury and from the Sor Brook at Adderbury, as well as licensed abstractions for agricultural purposes and supporting the Oxford Canal. As a result, low flows occur upstream of the Sor Brook confluence so measures such as increasing water efficiency are proposed. There are abstractions in the catchment from both surface water and groundwater sources. The majority of existing abstraction licences are for farming and industrial purposes. However, the largest amounts of water are abstracted for public water supply<sup>159</sup>. Of the 37 water bodies within the Cherwell catchment, four are artificial or heavily modified. Over a quarter (28%) of rivers currently achieves good or better ecological status/potential. Nearly half (48%) of rivers are at good or high biological status, with 30% at poor biological status, and 7% at bad biological status. The main reasons for less than good status are high levels of phosphate, degraded physical habitat, localised low flows and pollution from large areas of land<sup>160</sup>. The priority river basin management

<sup>155</sup> Thames Water (2019) *Draft Water Resources Management Plan 2019* <https://corporate.thameswater.co.uk/-/media/Site-Content/Your-water-future-2018/WRMP-Sections/dWRMP19-Section-00---Executive-summary-221217.pdf>

<sup>156</sup> AECOM (2017) *Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy* [https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/oxis\\_stage2.pdf](https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/oxis_stage2.pdf)

<sup>157</sup> Transport Research Laboratory (2017) *Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 1 - Core Strategy incorporating Proposed Main Modifications Sustainability Appraisal Report Update: Appendix A: Scoping Report Update*

<sup>158</sup> Oxford City Council (2018) *Phase 1 of Oxford City Water Cycle Scoping Study*

[https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/5091/water\\_cycle\\_study](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/5091/water_cycle_study)

<sup>159</sup> Environment Agency (2012) *Cherwell, Thame and Wye Catchment Abstraction Licensing Strategy*

<sup>160</sup> Environment Agency, Catchment Data Explorer, Cherwell-Summary Operational Catchment 2016

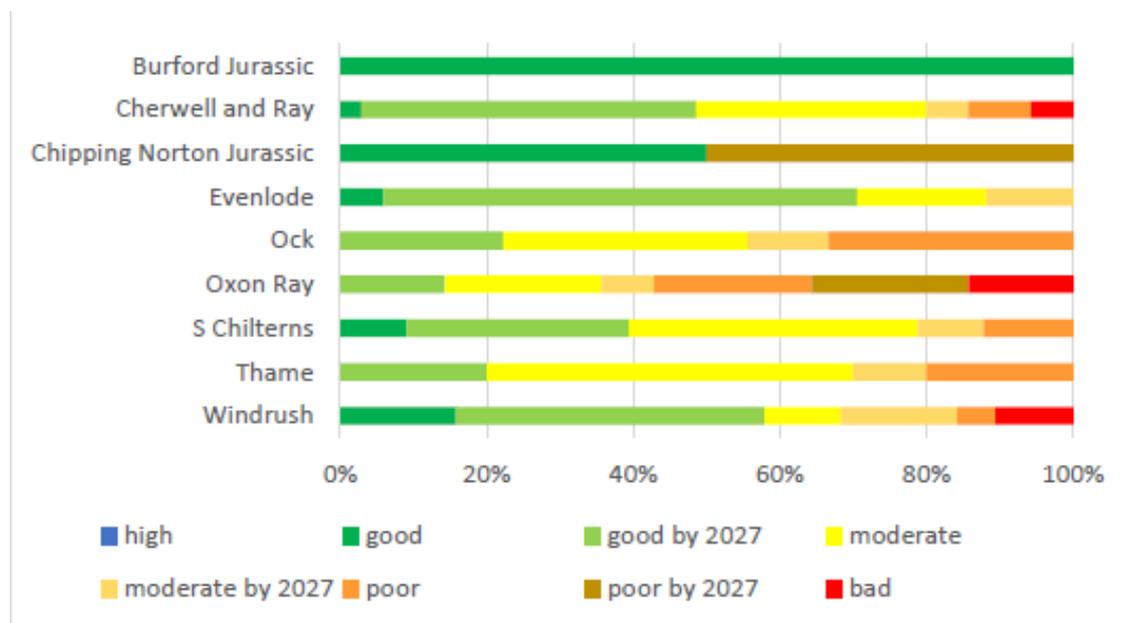
issues to tackle in the Cherwell catchment, affecting both surface water and groundwater, are diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off, pollution from waste-water (including from sewage treatment works) and heavily modified channels<sup>161</sup>.

**B.101** Vale of White Horse District is included within the Thames River Basin District and is covered by the Vale of White Horse catchment although this also includes Didcot and Swindon. This catchment contains 34 river water bodies, three of which are artificial or heavily modified. Twenty-four percent of rivers currently achieve good or better ecological status/potential. Forty-six percent of rivers are at good or high biological status, with 29% at poor biological status. Surface water quality in the catchment is generally good, with the Rivers Ock, Key and Ginge Brook having the poorest water quality in the catchment.

**B.102** The majority of water bodies monitored in South Oxfordshire are of moderate standard while a few water bodies have achieved good status and some are poor. One river received a failed status. Several rivers flow through West Oxfordshire including the Thames on the southern boundary and its tributaries the Windrush and Evenlode rivers which flow through the western and central parts of the District. These rivers and their floodplains are also important corridors for biodiversity, provide opportunities for recreation, and form part of the setting of many towns and villages. Surface water quality is generally good and most rivers have shown improvements over the last few years although phosphate concentrations are a concern on the River Evenlode and River Glyme.<sup>162</sup>

**B.103** Chart B.3 shows the ecological status of Oxfordshire rivers in 2015 and how it is expected to change by 2027. The figure shows that many of Oxfordshire’s water bodies do not and will not achieve ‘good’ status within that period. The Oxon Ray, Ock and Thame river catchments are particularly challenged, with less than 40% expected to achieve ‘good’ status by 2027. Pollution from agricultural and rural land management and wastewater pollution from the water industry are the two main polluters. In addition, another cause is physical modification from urban and transport development, encroachment by non-native species and industry<sup>163</sup>.

Chart B.3 Ecological Status or potential by 2015 or, where extended, by 2027



**B.104** A summary of the key sustainability issues in relation to the water resources and water quality baseline described above is provided in **Table B.14**, along with the likely evolution of each issue if the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 were not implemented.

<sup>161</sup> Environment Agency and DEFRA (2015) *Part 1: Thames River Basin District, River Basin Management Plan*

<sup>162</sup> Environment Agency, Catchment Data Explorer, Cherwell-Summary Operational Catchment 2016

<sup>163</sup> Environment Agency, *River Basin Districts*, <https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/>

**Table B.14: Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire and likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (Water resources and water quality)**

Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire	Likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050
<p>The Thames Valley Region is seriously water stressed, and by 2020 baseline demand for water will outstrip supply from the Swindon and Oxfordshire catchment area meaning that more water will have to be imported from adjoining water resource management areas. This has knock on implications for the carbon footprint of supplying water to residents as it is pumped or transported from further afield.</p>	<p>Without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, it is possible that development could be located in areas that would intensify the strain on water resources or have insufficient water supply infrastructure. The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 would provide the opportunity to ensure that strategic development is located and designed to take into account the sensitivities of the water resources and provide an opportunity to encourage better and more sustainable use of water resources. The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 may also provide the mechanism by which strategic planning for water resources is achieved on a catchment basis, helping to justify the necessary infrastructure investment.</p>
<p>Whilst water quality in some watercourses is good, others are not meeting quality standards. A large number of Wastewater Treatment Plants in Oxfordshire will have capacity issues up to 2031, and diffuse agricultural pollution plus discharges from waste water treatment facilities are the two main causes of poor water quality.</p>	<p>Pollution to watercourses from agriculture are outside the remit of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and therefore need to be addressed in other ways.</p> <p>The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 offers the opportunity to ensure that development does not lead to polluted run-off, for example through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), but it also can provide the context for necessary investment in wastewater treatment in a co-ordinated way across the catchment.</p>

## Flood risk

**B.105** Development within high flood risk areas, or the loss of greenfield land to development, could contribute to increased flood risk. Properties outside the floodplain are also susceptible to flooding due to an increase in surface water runoff and large development sites outside the floodplain may exacerbate surface water flooding issues further without appropriate mitigation. However, mitigation may be achieved through the incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) into the new development.

**B.106** The Environment Agency has prepared the Thames Region Catchment Flood Management Plan, which has information on the recommended approaches and actions needed to deliver the selected flood risk management option in each of the 43 sub-areas that have been identified, including in Oxfordshire. Oxfordshire has a range of between 500 to 5,000 properties at risk of flooding. The last major flood event in the Thames Region was in July 2007, causing immediate surface water flooding in many locations followed by river flooding in the upper parts of the Thames catchment. Over 5,000 flooded properties were reported to the Environment Agency; 2,000 of these were a result of surface water. Numerous communities across Oxfordshire were badly affected by the flooding<sup>164</sup>.

**B.107** Of the total land area of Oxfordshire, 12% is within the floodplain. Approximately 24,000 hectares of land is within flood zone 3 (1 in 100 year risk) and a further 6,000 hectares is in flood zone 2 (1 in 100 year risk). The largest areas of floodplain are predominantly in the centre of Oxfordshire around Witney in West Oxfordshire (from the River Windrush), in Oxford (from the River Thames and River Cherwell) and in Abingdon in the Vale of White Horse District (from the River Ock and River Thames). Other high flood risk areas include the Langford Brook and River Ray south of Bicester in Cherwell<sup>165</sup>. However, it is important

<sup>164</sup> Environment Agency (2009) *Thames Catchment Flood Management Plan*

<sup>165</sup> Transport Research Laboratory (2017) *Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 1 - Core Strategy incorporating Proposed Main Modifications Sustainability Appraisal Report Update: Appendix A: Scoping Report Update*

note that flooding of internationally and nationally designated wildlife sites can be beneficial; indeed many of the sites such as the Oxford Meadows depend on regular flooding to sustain its habitat<sup>166</sup>.

**B.108** Climate change is forecast to result in milder and wetter winters and more storms in summer months. Changes in farming practices can exacerbate overland flow due to the removal of hedgerows and trees and the issue is likely to become increasingly important due to climate change. Further development pressure will increase the pressure on existing sewer systems effectively reducing their capacity, leading to more frequent flooding.

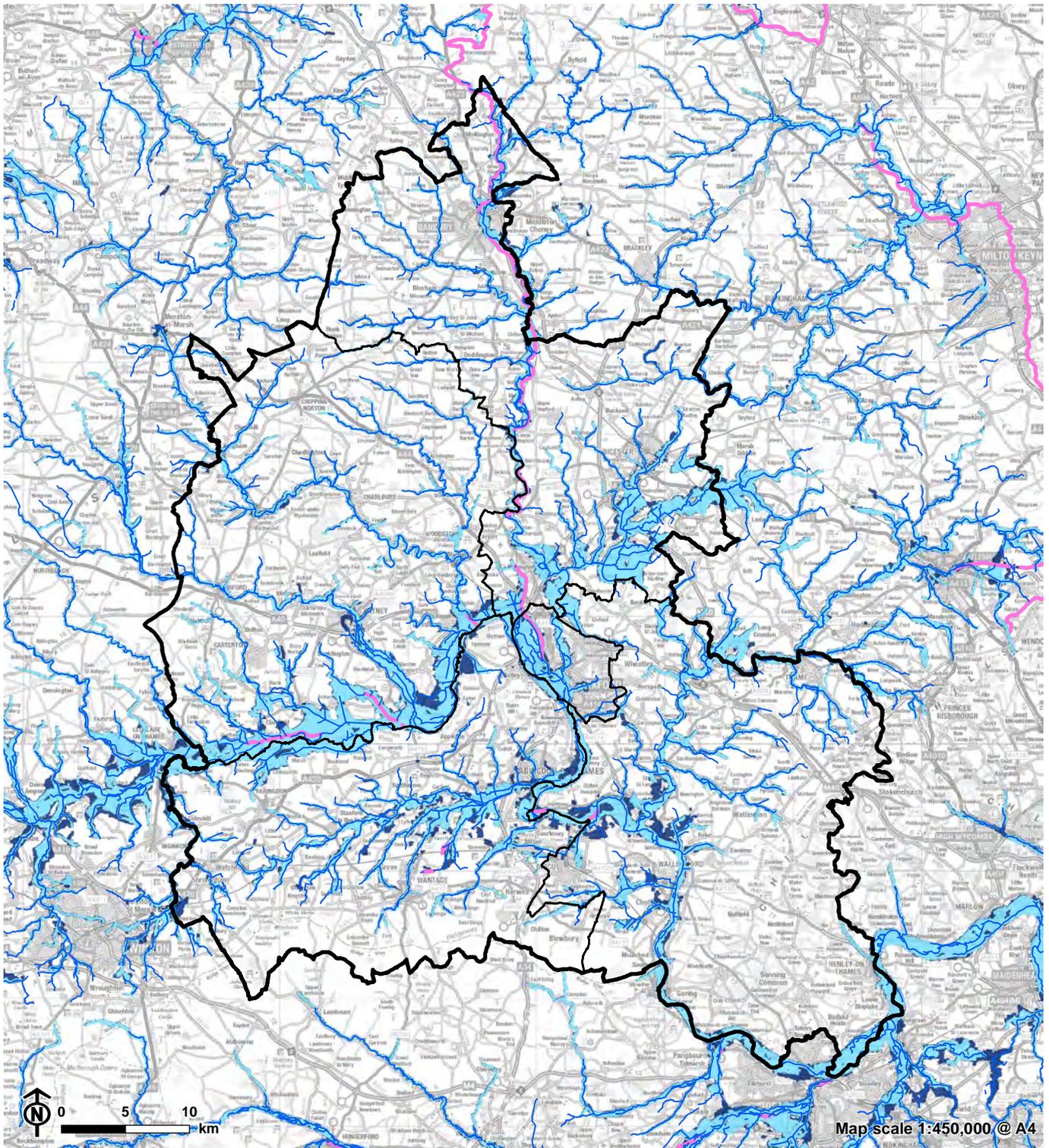
**B.109** Figure B.4 shows the extent of flood risk across Oxfordshire.

**B.110** A summary of the key sustainability issues in relation to the flood risk baseline described above is provided in Table B.15, along with the likely evolution of each issue if the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 were not implemented.

**Table B.15: Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire and likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (Flood risk)**

Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire	Likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050
<p>Development within high flood risk areas or the loss of greenfield land to development, could contribute to increased flood risk. Development outside the floodplain is also susceptible to flooding due to an increase in surface water runoff.</p>	<p>The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is not likely to reduce the risk of flooding to existing development and infrastructure. However, it does present an opportunity for each of the District Councils to work together alongside the Environment Agency to locate development in sustainable locations that would not be significantly impacted by flooding and to mitigate the effects of potential future flooding.</p>

<sup>166</sup> Environment Agency (2009) *Thames Catchment Flood Management Plan*



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Source: EA

**Figure B.4: Water network and flood risk**

-  Oxfordshire county
-  District boundary
-  River
-  Canal
-  Flood zone 2
-  Flood zone 3

## Soils

**B.111** The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC)<sup>167</sup> system provides a framework for classifying land according to the extent to which its physical or chemical characteristics impose long-term limitations on agricultural use. The principal factors influencing agricultural production are climate, site and soil. These factors, together with the interactions between them, form the basis for classifying land into one of five grades, where Grade 1 describes land as excellent (land of high agricultural quality and potential) and Grade 5 describes land as very poor (land of low agricultural quality and potential). Land falling outside of these scores is deemed to be 'primarily in non-agricultural use', or 'land predominantly in urban use'.

**B.112** The best and most versatile agricultural land (defined as Grades 1, 2, and 3a) is considered to be a national resource and should not be lost. Development options that would involve large-scale development on greenfield land where the land is higher agricultural quality would have negative effects on the efficient use of land and soils as a result of that land being permanently lost to agricultural uses. Government guidance contained in the NPPF states that planning authorities should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed or brownfield land. From 1961 to 2016 the UK has lost 24,500 sq m. of agricultural land<sup>168</sup>.

**B.113** Most of the agricultural land in Oxford City is not high quality, but there are some parcels of Grade 2 agricultural land north of Binsey and in the Cherwell Valley. The majority of land within Cherwell District is Grade 3 and in the north of the District Grade 2, while the two urban centres of Banbury and Bicester are classified as non-agricultural land. The majority of agricultural land quality in South Oxfordshire is Grade 3. Vale of White Horse District has a significant part of its land under cultivation for farming with the quality of the farmland ranging from Grade 4 up to Grade 2 in a number of locations. In West Oxfordshire, most of the land is Grade 3 although there are areas of Grade 2 land, particularly in the south of the District.

**B.114** Figure B.5 shows the distribution of high quality agricultural land across Oxfordshire.

## Contaminated Land

**B.115** Each District council has created a contaminated land strategy. Currently, there are two entries on the South Oxfordshire District Council contaminated land public register, however, there are no entries logged for Oxford City, Cherwell or Vale of White Horse Districts.

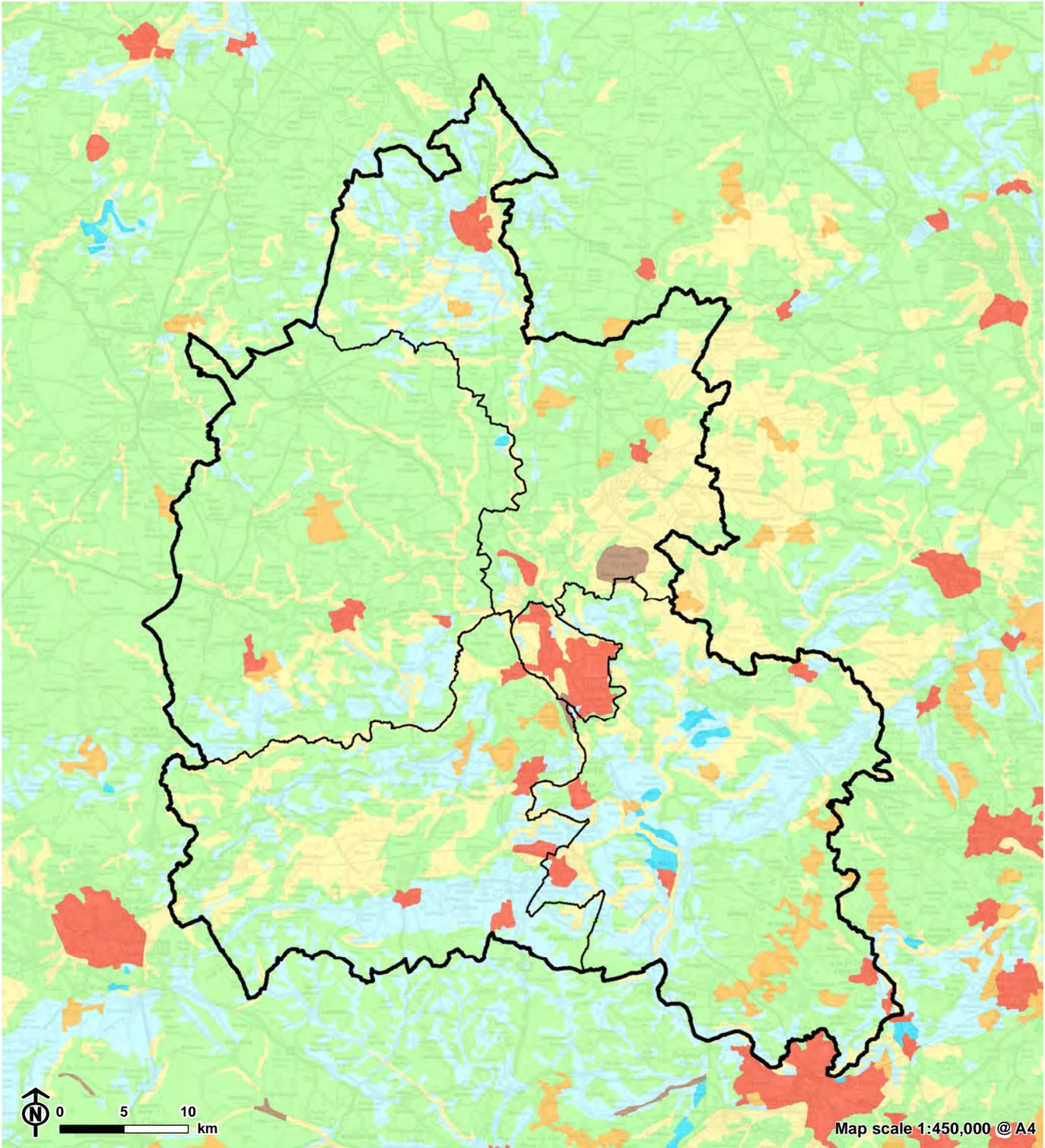
**B.116** A summary of the key sustainability issues in relation to the soils baseline described above is provided in Table B.16, along with the likely evolution of each issue if the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 were not implemented.

**Table B.16: Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire and likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (Soils)**

Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire	Likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050
<p>Oxfordshire contains a mix of classified agricultural land, the majority of which is Grade 3, with some areas of Grade 1 and Grade 2 which, where possible, should not be lost or compromised by future growth.</p>	<p>Without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 it is likely that Grades 1, 2 and 3a land would not be lost or compromised because of national policy and policies in the individual District Council's Local Plans.</p> <p>However, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 does provide an opportunity for the local authorities to work together to ensure these natural assets are not lost or compromised and to take the quality of agricultural land into account using a County-wide approach.</p>

<sup>167</sup> Natural England, Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) system, 2013

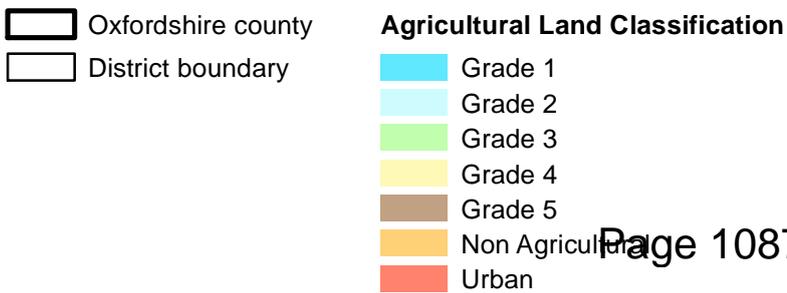
<sup>168</sup> The World Bank, *Agricultural Land* <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/AG.LND.AGRI.K2?end=2016&start=2013>



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Source: NE

**Figure B.5: Agricultural Land Classification**



## Minerals

**B.117** Where development takes place within areas of minerals resource, this may result in the sterilisation of minerals, meaning that potentially useful mineral resources will no longer be available for extraction and use in the future.

**B.118** Sand and gravel is the most common mineral resource across Oxfordshire and typically found in river valley deposits, particularly along the River Thames which runs north-south through the District and its tributaries. Limestone and ironstone are found mainly in the north and west of the County; they are used primarily as crushed rock aggregate but also for building and walling stone.

**B.119** Annual production of aggregates (sand and gravel and crushed rock) in Oxfordshire fell over the 10 year period 2004 to 2013 from two million tonnes to just over one million tonnes. It increased again, to just under two million tonnes in 2015, comprising 52% sand and gravel and 48% crushed rock<sup>169</sup>.

### Sand and gravel

**B.120** Production of sharp sand and gravel in Oxfordshire has become increasingly concentrated in the northern part of the County (Cherwell and West Oxfordshire Districts), particularly in West Oxfordshire District, with a decline in the proportion coming from quarries in the southern part (South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Districts). Over the last 10 year period 2006-2015, an average of 70% of production has been from northern Oxfordshire and there are concerns about the rate and intensity of mineral working in the area and the cumulative impact on local communities, generation of traffic on the A40 and water quantity and quality<sup>170</sup>.

### Crushed rock

**B.121** Existing working areas of limestone are south east of Faringdon (Vale of White Horse District), south of Burford (West Oxfordshire District) and north west of Bicester (Cherwell District). There is one existing area of ironstone working in the north of the County at Alkerton / Wroxton Alkerton (Cherwell District)<sup>171</sup>.

### Safeguarded mineral locations

**B.122** Oxfordshire County Council is currently replacing this plan with a new Minerals and Waste Local Plan that is being prepared in two parts: Core Strategy, which was adopted in September 2017, and Site Allocations document, which is currently being consulted. Policy M3 has identified the following principal locations for safeguarding working aggregate minerals:

- Sharp sand and gravel:
  - The Thames, Lower Windrush and Lower Evenlode Valleys area from Standlake (West Oxfordshire) to Yarnton (Cherwell District).
  - The Thames and Lower Thame Valleys area from Oxford to Cholsey (South Oxfordshire District).
  - The Thames Valley area from Caversham (previously part of Oxfordshire, but now in Berkshire) to Shiplake (South Oxfordshire District).
- Soft sand
  - The Corallian Ridge area from Oxford to Faringdon (Vale of White Horse District).
  - The Duns Tew area (Cherwell District).
- Crushed rock
  - The area north west of Bicester (Cherwell District).
  - The Burford area south of the A40 (West Oxfordshire District).

<sup>169</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (2017) *Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 1 – Core Strategy Adopted Plan, September 2017*

<sup>170</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (2017) *Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 1 – Core Strategy Adopted Plan, September 2017*

<sup>171</sup> As above

- The area east and south east of Faringdon (Vale of White Horse District).

**B.123** Specific sites for working aggregate minerals will be identified within these strategic resource areas in the Minerals & Waste Local Plan: Part 2 – Site Allocations Document<sup>172</sup>.

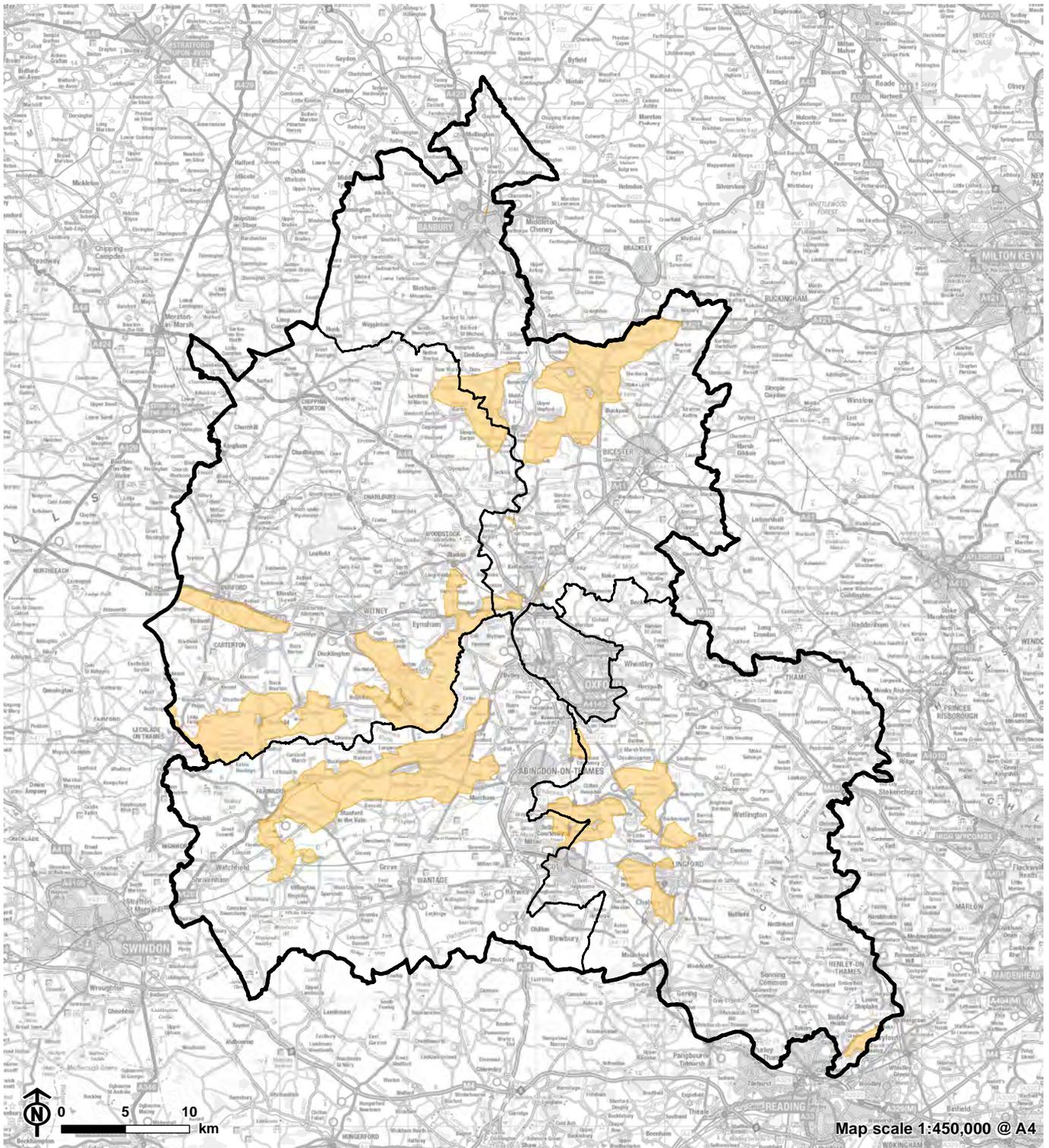
**B.124** **Figure B.6** shows the locations of Strategic Minerals Resource Areas in Oxfordshire.

**B.125** A summary of the key sustainability issues in relation to the minerals baseline described above is provided in **Table B.17**, along with the likely evolution of each issue if the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 were not implemented.

**Table B.17: Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire and likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (Minerals)**

Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire	Likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050
<p>Oxfordshire contains safeguarded mineral resources which, where possible, should not be lost or compromised by future growth.</p>	<p>Without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, un-planned minerals development could take place in areas being overused and result in unnecessary sterilisation, although each of the District’s Local Plans should guard against this happening.</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council is currently in the process of preparing a new Minerals and Waste Local Plan which will set out areas in which minerals extraction can take place.</p> <p>The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 could provide an opportunity for each of the District Councils to work together to ensure that minerals development is located and designed to take into account the importance of ensuring that sufficient economic minerals are available for future generations to use.</p>

<sup>172</sup> As above



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Source: OCC

Figure B.6: Mineral resources

-  Oxfordshire county
-  District boundary
-  Mineral safeguarding area

## Biodiversity and geodiversity

**B.126** There is a wide variety of important biodiversity and geodiversity features across Oxfordshire which could be affected by development. The extent of land known to be of significant value for nature in Oxfordshire is 30,289 hectares<sup>173</sup>, which includes both designated and undesignated sites and features. The impacts of development on biodiversity and geodiversity could include direct physical damage or disturbance and the impacts of non-physical disturbance such as noise, vibration or light pollution. There could also be indirect impacts, for example an increase in air pollution from additional vehicle traffic could affect some habitats and species. An increase in population near to sensitive sites which are popular for recreation could also result in increased visitor numbers, leading to damage and disturbance.

**B.127** Table B.18 below shows the number of designated biodiversity and geodiversity sites in each of the five Districts and these are mapped in Figure B.7.

**B.128** Oxfordshire is in the process of creating a Nature Recovery Network, which will be formed by a core zone, recovery zone and a wider landscape zone. The core zone constitutes 11% of the county, which includes Special Areas for Conservation, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Nature Reserves, Local Wildlife Sites (including proposed), Cherwell District Wildlife Sites, Oxford City Wildlife Sites, BBOWT reserves, Woodland Trust Woodlands, Other sites of local importance for nature conservation and all priority habitats<sup>174</sup>. At the European level, Oxford Meadows is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for its lowland hay meadows and creeping marshwort. The SAC lies partly within Oxford City and partly within Cherwell District, with a very small area extending into West Oxfordshire District. Previous HRAs have noted that air pollution could potentially adversely affect the integrity of the site, especially since the site is in close proximity to multiple A roads. The Oxford Meadows SAC also lies within the Oxford Meadows and Farmoor Conservation Target Area. Other SACs in Oxfordshire include Hackpen Hill and Cothill Fen in Vale of White Horse District, and Little Wittenham, Hartslock Wood and Aston Rowant in South Oxfordshire District. Development proposals that could have an adverse effect on the integrity of these SACs would therefore be subject to the requirements of the Habitats Regulations. There are no Special Protection Areas (SPAs) or Ramsar sites within any of the Oxfordshire Districts.

**B.129** There are a total of 111 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in the County which are designated for either their biological or geological interest. These designations cover a total of 4,494ha. Of the total area of SSSIs in Oxfordshire assessed and recorded by Natural England, 97.88% are in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition, as shown in Figure B.8. The remaining SSSIs in Oxfordshire are either in unfavourable condition with no change (0.09%), unfavourable declining condition (1.84%) or are destroyed (0.19%)<sup>175</sup>.

**B.130** The recovery zone of the Nature Recovery Network will consist of the Conservation Target Areas and Important Freshwater Areas making up about 50% of Oxfordshire. Oxfordshire contains 37 Conservation Target Areas (CTAs) that cover over 20% of the County<sup>176</sup>. Conservation Target Areas are concentrations of Priority Habitats and Priority Species that include surrounding land which could buffer and link these areas, as well as provide opportunities to create new areas of high quality and Priority Habitat should funding become available. The CTAs contain 95% of the SSSI land area in Oxfordshire and 74% of the Local Wildlife Sites. Any development within a CTA should increase connectivity of wildlife habitats and aim to achieve targets for priority habitats<sup>177</sup>. Similar to Conservation Target Areas, there are Important freshwater areas within Oxfordshire. These areas contain sites and habitats that support a significant proportion of freshwater biodiversity. The Freshwater Habitats Trust have mapped these areas creating a network which will help create a hydrological approach to freshwater connectivity and be vital inputs to the Nature Recovery Network in Oxfordshire. This network includes a significant amount of terrestrial habitat, including ancient woodlands<sup>178</sup>.

**B.131** Oxfordshire contains 18 priority habitats which can be categorised into the following themes: grasslands, woodlands, wetlands and other. In particular, Oxfordshire has an abundance of lowland beech and yew woodland in the south of the County and wet woodlands distributed sporadically within the County. Oxfordshire also contains five types of irreplaceable habitats:

<sup>173</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (2021) Topic Paper: A Nature Recovery Network for Oxfordshire

<sup>174</sup> Thames Valley Environmental Record Centre (2020) A Draft Nature Recovery Network for Oxfordshire

<sup>175</sup> Natural England, SSSI Condition Summary, data recovered January 2016

<sup>176</sup> Wild Oxfordshire, *State of Nature in Oxfordshire 2017* [https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/State-of-Nature-in-Oxfordshire-2017\\_Full-Report\\_FINAL\\_MIN2\\_COVERS.pdf](https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/State-of-Nature-in-Oxfordshire-2017_Full-Report_FINAL_MIN2_COVERS.pdf)

<sup>177</sup> Oxfordshire Nature Conservation Forum, *Oxfordshire's Biodiversity Action Plan and Conservation Target Areas*

<sup>178</sup> Thames Valley Environmental Record Centre (2020) A Draft Nature Recovery Network for Oxfordshire

ancient woodland, ancient/veteran trees, ancient hedgerows, traditional unimproved meadows/ancient grasslands and fens. For example, ancient woodland is found throughout Oxfordshire, but there are particular concentrations in the Chilterns in South Oxfordshire, Wychwood in West Oxfordshire and the edge of the Bernwood area in the east of Oxfordshire<sup>179</sup>.

**B.132** Less than 10,000ha of Oxfordshire retains any special value for wildlife which equates to 4% of the total landmass of the County. The Oxfordshire State of Nature report (2017) found that there continues to be long-term decline in farmland and woodland biodiversity and that there is continued habitat fragmentation and loss of connectivity across the county's landscape. Around 80 protected species and 200 species are therefore recognised as being a priority for conservation that are native to Oxfordshire<sup>180</sup>. Adders, nightingales and the marsh fritillary butterflies are examples of species lost from Oxfordshire in recent years. Many more are threatened with extinction, including once widespread birds such as turtle doves, cuckoos and willow tits<sup>181</sup>. The wider landscape zone of the Nature Recovery Network includes the wider countryside which will aim to strengthen the character of the area.

**B.133** The loss of meadows and species-rich grassland in Oxfordshire is primarily due to agricultural intensification, sand and gravel extraction, and urban and industrial development. Climate change related changes in temperature and rainfall also affect species composition. The relatively poor water quality in Oxfordshire's water bodies affects river and wetland biodiversity, as does dredging, canalisation and impoundment. Oxfordshire's woodlands are small and fragmented, and suffer from neglect and pests/diseases. In urban areas, a decrease in the average size of gardens and modern trends of impermeable surfaces has reduced the overall green cover of garden holdings; and pollution (including light pollution) affects breeding birds, night-flying insects and bats<sup>182</sup>.

**B.134** The Thames River Basin is an essential component to Oxfordshire's blue infrastructure network connecting local species and habitats to those of neighbouring plan areas. There are ecological assets located downstream, including European sites that contain a diverse array of aquatic wildlife.

**Table B.18: Summary of biodiversity designations**

District	SACs	SPAs	Ramsar sites	SSSIs	National Nature Reserves	Local Wildlife Sites	Local Nature Reserves	Local Geological Sites
Oxford City	2	0	0	19	0	18	3	2
Cherwell	3	0	0	26	0	85	3	13
South Oxfordshire	8	0	0	53	6	111	6	5
Vale of White Horse	3	0	0	37	2	73	2	9
West Oxfordshire	1	0	0	37	2	96	2	17

*Note: where a feature falls within more than one District it is included in the row for both Districts, so the columns in these tables should not be totalled to reach a County-wide figure*

**B.135** A summary of the key sustainability issues in relation to the biodiversity and geodiversity baseline described above is provided in **Table B.19**, along with the likely evolution of each issue if the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 were not implemented.

<sup>179</sup> Wild Oxfordshire, *Biodiversity and Planning in Oxfordshire 2014*, <https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Biodiversityandplanning.pdf>

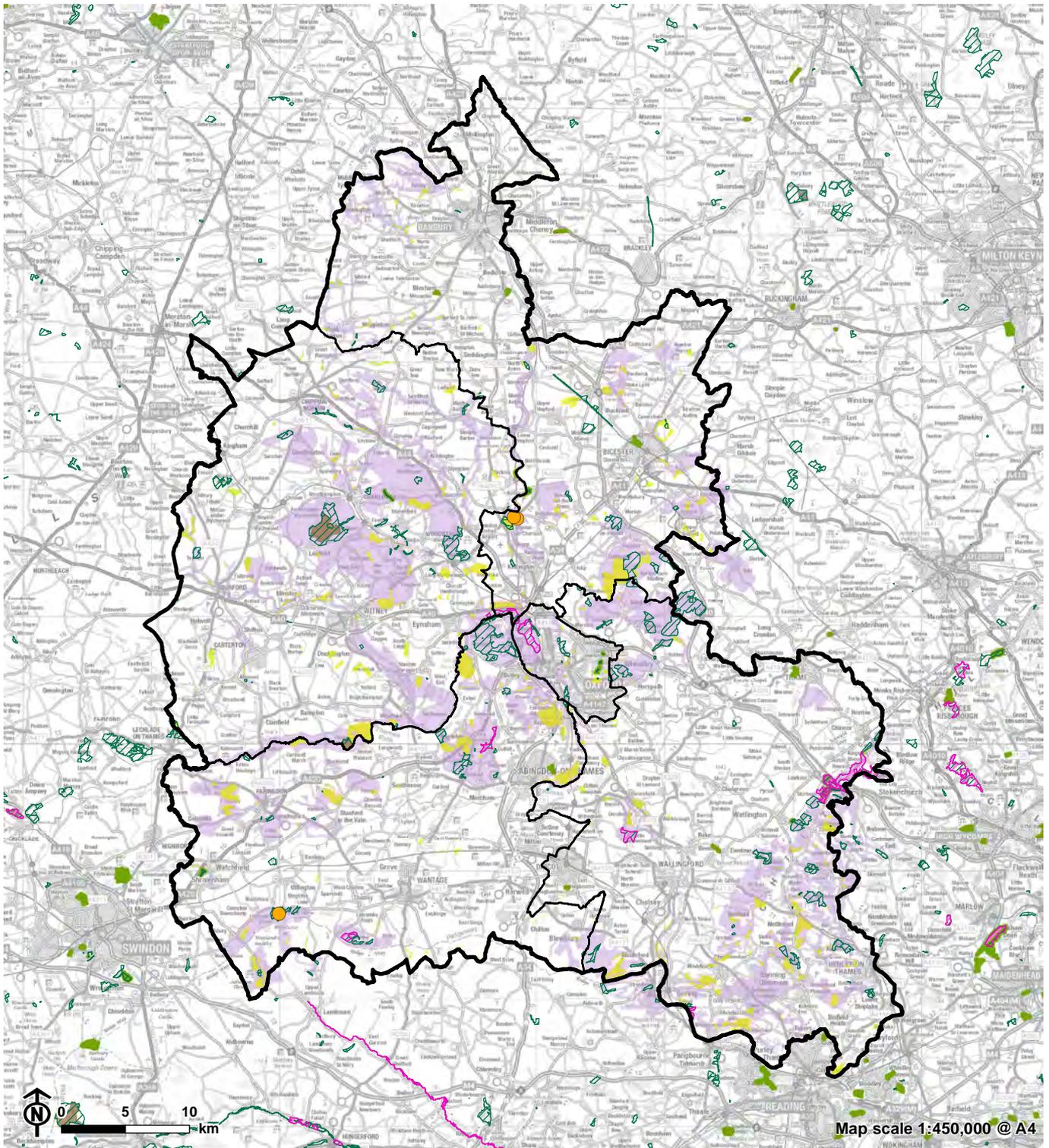
<sup>180</sup> Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust, Oxfordshire County Council and Thames Valley Environmental Record Centre (March 2014) *Biodiversity and Planning in Oxfordshire*

<sup>181</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (2021) Topic Paper: A Nature Recovery Network for Oxfordshire

<sup>182</sup> Wild Oxfordshire, *State of Nature in Oxfordshire 2017* [https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/State-of-Nature-in-Oxfordshire-2017\\_Full-Report\\_FINAL\\_MIN2\\_COVERS.pdf](https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/State-of-Nature-in-Oxfordshire-2017_Full-Report_FINAL_MIN2_COVERS.pdf)

**Table B.19: Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire and likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (Biodiversity and geodiversity)**

Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire	Likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050
<p>Oxfordshire contains and is in close proximity to a wide variety of both designated and non-designated natural habitats and biodiversity.</p> <p>Although the vast majority of the designated sites are in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition, this needs to be maintained.</p> <p>Overall biodiversity in Oxfordshire can be affected by the loss and erosion of habitats and fragmentation of ecological networks.</p>	<p>Internationally designated biodiversity sites receive protection through the Habitats Regulations, which apply to Local Plans and development projects irrespective of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. However, such sites still experience pressure, for example from recreation and traffic-related air pollution that often benefits from a strategic response that the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 could provide.</p> <p>Nationally designated sites also receive national policy protection, and designated sites are usually taken into account in Local Plans. Similarly, locally designated biodiversity assets receive policy protection in Local Plans.</p> <p>However, on-going development, plus pollution and people pressure, produce on-going pressures that the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 can help to address at a strategic scale, seeking to safeguard and improve not only designated sites, but the ecological networks and supporting habitats that support them and their species.</p>

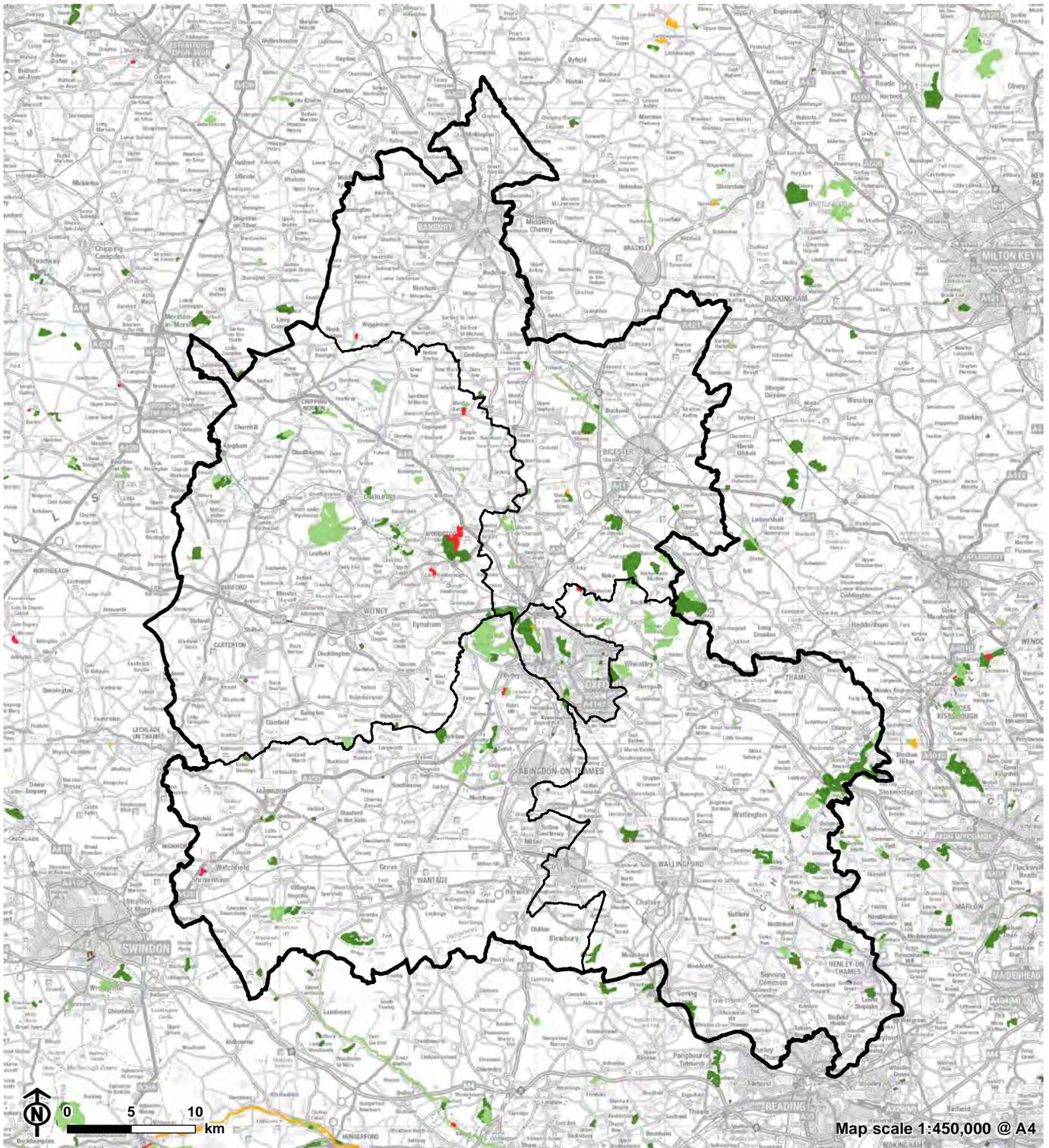


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CB:KS EB:Chamberlain\_K LUC FIG03\_07\_10573\_Biodiversity\_A4P 03/06/2021  
Source: NE, OCC

**Figure B.7: Biodiversity and Geodiversity**

- |                                     |                          |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Oxfordshire county                  | National Nature Reserve  |
| District boundary                   | Local Nature Reserve     |
| Local Geological Site               | Local Wildlife Site      |
| Special Area of Conservation        | Conservation target area |
| Site of Special Scientific Interest |                          |



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CB:KS EB:Chamberlain\_K LUC FIG03\_08\_10573\_SSSI\_condition\_A4P 04/06/2021  
Source: NE

Figure B.8: SSSI condition

- Oxfordshire county
- District boundary

**SSSI condition**

- Favourable
- Unfavourable recovering
- Unfavourable no change
- Unfavourable declining
- Not Assessed

## Heritage

**B.136** Oxfordshire has significant historic environment assets, from the prehistoric, Roman occupation and the Saxon, Norman, Medieval, post-medieval and Victorian periods. Development can affect both designated and undesignated heritage assets either directly or as a result of impacts on the setting of assets. As well as listed buildings and scheduled monuments, consideration will also need to be given to areas of archaeological potential which could be affected by new development. New development could itself lead to the discovery of further sites and artefacts.

**B.137** Oxford City is steeped in history, with evidence of a settlement dating as far back as the Bronze Age. Oxford City has a total of 1,172 Listed Buildings (this figure is over 1,600 when considering Locally Listed Properties)<sup>183</sup>, 10 Scheduled Monuments, and 15 Registered Parks and Gardens. 18 Conservation Areas have been designated in Oxford, of which 13 have published Conservation Area Appraisals. Fourteen of the 72 Conservation Areas within South Oxfordshire have published a Conservation Area Appraisal. Twenty-four of the 51 Conservation Areas within West Oxfordshire have published a Conservation Area Appraisal. Fifty-six of Cherwell's 60 Conservation Areas have a Conservation Area Appraisal. Six of the 51 Conservation Areas within Vale of White Horse have completed Conservation Area Appraisals.

**B.138** Two sites in Oxford City were listed on the Heritage at Risk Register as of December 2018. These are the Church of St Thomas the Martyr (Grade II Listed) and the Swing Bridge near Rewley Road which is a Scheduled Monument. Heritage at risk for the rest of the Districts is outlined in **Table B.20**.

**B.139** Outside of Oxford City, many of Oxfordshire's settlements, both market towns and villages, have distinctive histories reflected in their character, buildings and artefacts, many of which are recognised in their designation as Conservation Areas. Many of these settlements are set within historic landscapes, such as the Cotswolds.

**B.140** Of particular note is Blenheim Palace and its park, which is internationally designated by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. In addition, Oxfordshire has many historic landscapes, parks and gardens. These range from medieval to modern and in scale from private gardens to the landscaped grounds of great estates through to manorial, college and domestic gardens. There are currently 56 sites within Oxfordshire on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. There are also many sites of local importance that are not included. A review of historic parks and gardens in the County was carried out by Colvin and Moggeridge in 1997. Their report identified 185 sites of special interest, either nationally or at County level<sup>184</sup>.

**B.141** With the support of Historic England, the Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation project examined Oxfordshire and includes the three AONBs within the County as well as the District of Oxford. The landscape of Oxfordshire has been characterised into 15 Broad Types and subdivide into 109 HLC Types. One of the key findings was how agricultural Oxfordshire is, with 73.8% of the County characterised by Enclosure Types. These Enclosures are spread throughout the County and are only less common in the heavily wooded area of the Chiltern Hills and within the County's major settlements. The band of Woodland Types identified in the south-east of Oxfordshire is also very prominent. A less obvious, but equally important area of woodland lies to the northwest of Oxford and represents the remains of the Ancient Wychwood Forest<sup>185</sup>.

**B.142** **Table B.20** below summarises the number of heritage designations across the five Oxfordshire Districts as well as heritage assets at risk. These are mapped in **Figure B.9**.

<sup>183</sup> Oxford City Council (March 2020) *Annual Monitoring Report* [https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/download/420/annual\\_monitoring\\_report](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/download/420/annual_monitoring_report)

<sup>184</sup> Oxfordshire Gardens Trust (undated) *Parks and Gardens* <https://www.ogt.org.uk/parks-and-gardens>

<sup>185</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (2017) *Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation Project* <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/environment-and-planning/archaeology/landscape-characterisation>

**Table B.20: Summary of cultural heritage designations**

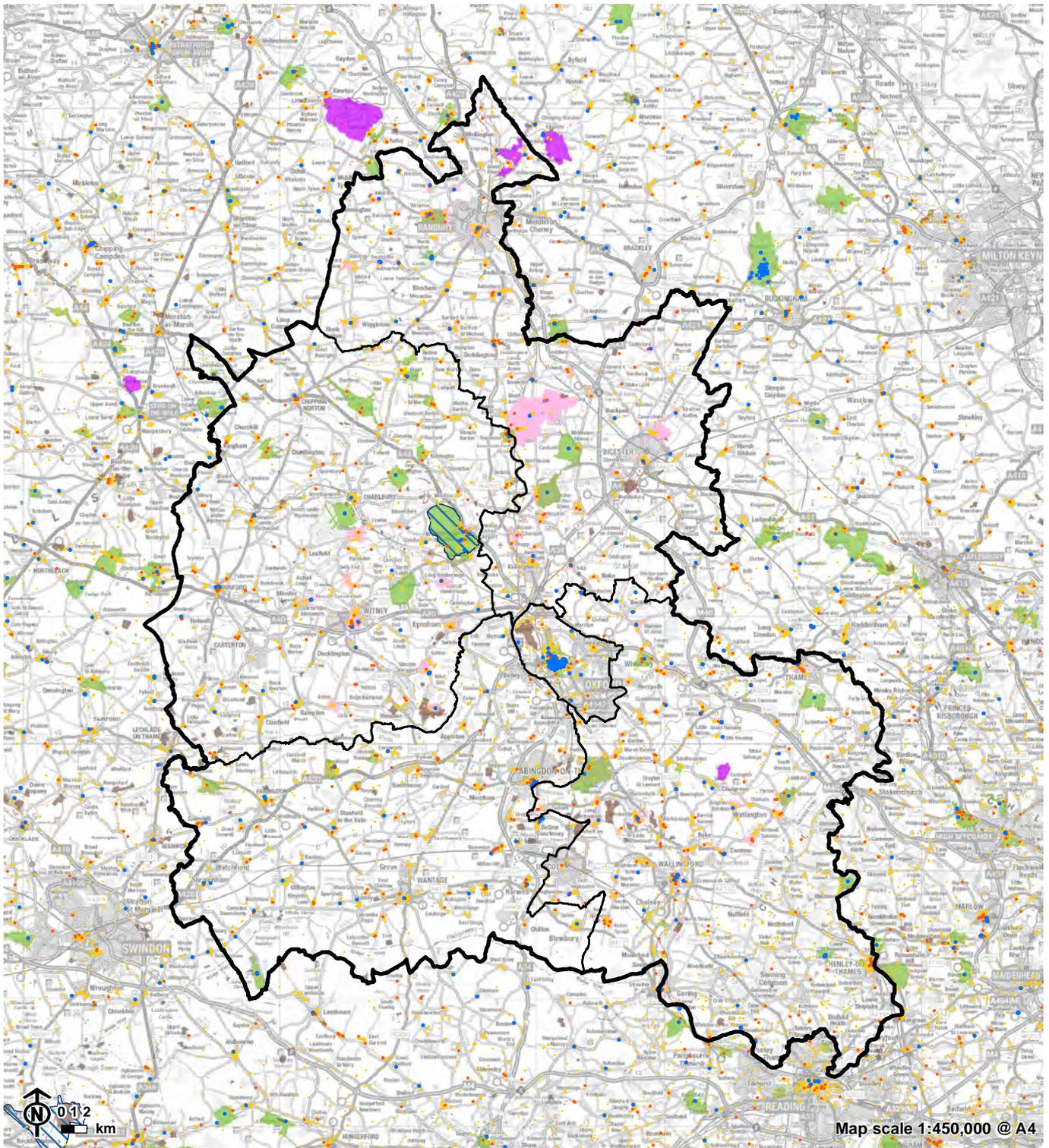
District	World Heritage Sites	Grade I listed buildings	Grade II listed buildings	Grade II* listed buildings	Conservation Areas	Scheduled Monuments	Registered Parks and Gardens	Registered Battlefields	Heritage at Risk
Oxford City	0	199	894	79	18	10	15	0	2
Cherwell	0	39	2,191	102	60	36	5	1	10
South Oxfordshire	0	61	3,042	179	72	52	11	1	14
Vale of White Horse	0	43	2,008	125	51	75	8	0	8
West Oxfordshire	1	40	2,942	213	51	138	17	0	10

*Note: where a feature falls within more than one District it is included in the row for both Districts, so the columns in these tables should not be totalled to reach a County-wide figure*

**B.143** A summary of the key sustainability issues in relation to the heritage baseline described above is provided in **Table B.21**, along with the likely evolution of each issue if the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 were not implemented.

**Table B.21: Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire and likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (Heritage)**

Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire	Likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050
<p>There are many sites, features and areas of historical and cultural interest in Oxfordshire, some of which could be affected by poorly located or designed development.</p> <p>The Blenheim Palace UNESCO World Heritage Site requires special consideration in terms of its status.</p>	<p>Without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, the heritage assets across Oxfordshire would still be protected by statutory designations. Furthermore, the NPPF requires local planning authorities to refuse consent for development that would lead to substantial harm to (or total loss or significance of) a designated heritage asset. However, it is possible that undesignated assets would be adversely affected by inappropriate development. Each District Council's Local Plan does, however, make provision for this.</p> <p>The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is likely to encourage collaborative working between each of the District Councils, ensuring the protection and conservation of designated and undesignated heritage assets.</p>



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Source: CDC, HE, SODC, WODC

**Figure B.9: Historic Environment**

- |                        |                    |  |                              |
|------------------------|--------------------|--|------------------------------|
|                        | Oxfordshire county |  | World Heritage Site          |
|                        | District boundary  |  | Registered Parks and Gardens |
| <b>Listed building</b> |                    |  |                              |
|                        | Grade I            |  | Scheduled monument           |
|                        | Grade II*          |  | Registered battlefield       |
|                        | Grade II           |  | Conservation area            |

## Landscape and Townscape

**B.144** Oxfordshire's landscapes are particularly important in defining the character of the county. Much of Oxfordshire's landscape is high quality and while there are no National Parks in the County there are three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs):

- North Wessex Downs AONB which lies in the south of Vale of White Horse District and the west of South Oxfordshire District.
- The Chilterns AONB which covers much of the southern half of South Oxfordshire District.
- The Cotswolds AONB which covers much of central West Oxfordshire District, also extending slightly within the north west of Cherwell District.

**B.145** The protected landscapes of the Chilterns, Cotswolds and North Wessex Downs cover over a third of the land area of the county<sup>186</sup>. A recent CPRE report highlights that there has been an 82% increase in new housing units given planning permission in the 34 AONBs of England from 2012-2017. The three AONBs within Oxfordshire are within the eight AONBs under the most pressure nationally from development. In particular, the Cotswolds AONB saw the largest rise in units per year average; 217 units to 635 units<sup>187</sup>.

**B.146** The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act classifies light pollution as a statutory offence under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. In Oxfordshire, just 1% of its total land area is within CPRE Oxfordshire's 'truly dark' category<sup>188</sup>.

**B.147** Further development could affect the character and quality of the landscape, depending on its location in relation to the most sensitive areas. Other factors such as the design and layout of the development and the incorporation of screening will also influence impacts on the landscape and townscape, although this cannot be determined in detail until the planning application stage. It should also be noted that each of the AONBs within Oxfordshire has a management plan which sets out the vision, outcomes, ambitions and policies to guide the management of each AONB over the plan period.

**B.148** An important consideration is the setting of the city of Oxford, which is defined by agricultural vales to the north and south, wooded hills to the east and the west and rivers valleys extending through the urban core of the city. Key to Oxford's character is the fact that it is located in a floodplain overlooked by surrounding ridges which provide an important backdrop to Oxford's cityscape. The city itself is divided up by the river corridors of the Rivers Thames and Cherwell. Oxford's character is also defined by its unique built environment. The iconic skyline and architecture produced by the limestone colleges and towering spires create a world famous urban environment.

**B.149** **Figure B.10** shows the location of the AONBs in Oxfordshire and key views into Oxford.

**B.150** England has been divided into 159 separate National Character Areas (NCAs), each of which are regarded as distinct natural areas. A unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, history, and cultural and economic activity defines each area in question. The boundaries of each NCA relate to how these elements have combined to form the landscape and do not relate to administrative boundaries.

**B.151** Oxfordshire is split between eight individual NCAs, as also shown in **Figure B.10**. In the north of the County, Northamptonshire Uplands NCA is within the District of Cherwell and is characterised by gently rolling, limestone hills and valleys capped by ironstone-bearing sandstone and clay Lias, with many long, low ridgelines.

**B.152** The Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands NCA is also within Cherwell District. This NCA is a broad, gently undulating, lowland plateau dissected by shallow river valleys which gradually widen towards the east where the Fens NCA forms.

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<sup>186</sup> Draft Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

<sup>187</sup> CPRE Oxfordshire (2017) *Oxfordshire's most outstanding landscapes under pressure from housing development* <http://www.cpreoxon.org.uk/news/current-news/item/2647-beauty-betrayed-aonbs-under-pressure-report>

<sup>188</sup> CPRE Oxfordshire (undated) *Dark Skies Matter*, <http://www.cpreoxon.org.uk/campaigns/countryside/dark-skies/dark-skies-matter/item/2097-dark-skies-matter>

**B.153** The Cotswolds NCA is to the west of the Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands NCA and covers much of the northern part of Oxfordshire, falling across the boundary of Cherwell and West Oxfordshire Districts. This area is displayed as a steep scarp crowned by a high, open wold. It forms the beginning of a long and rolling dip slope which is cut by a series of increasingly wooded valleys.

**B.154** Upper Thames Clay Vales NCA covers parts of all five Oxfordshire Districts, in effect forming a ring of flat lands around the more elevated ground which stretch from the Vale of Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire to Swindon. The area is a broad belt of open, gently undulating lowland farmland on predominantly Jurassic and Cretaceous clays.

**B.155** Midvale Ridge NCA covers most of the city of Oxford which lies in its middle section. This NCA also takes in parts of Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire and is a band of low-lying limestone hills stretching east–west which is surrounded by the flat lands of the Oxfordshire clay vales, allowing for extensive views across the surrounding countryside.

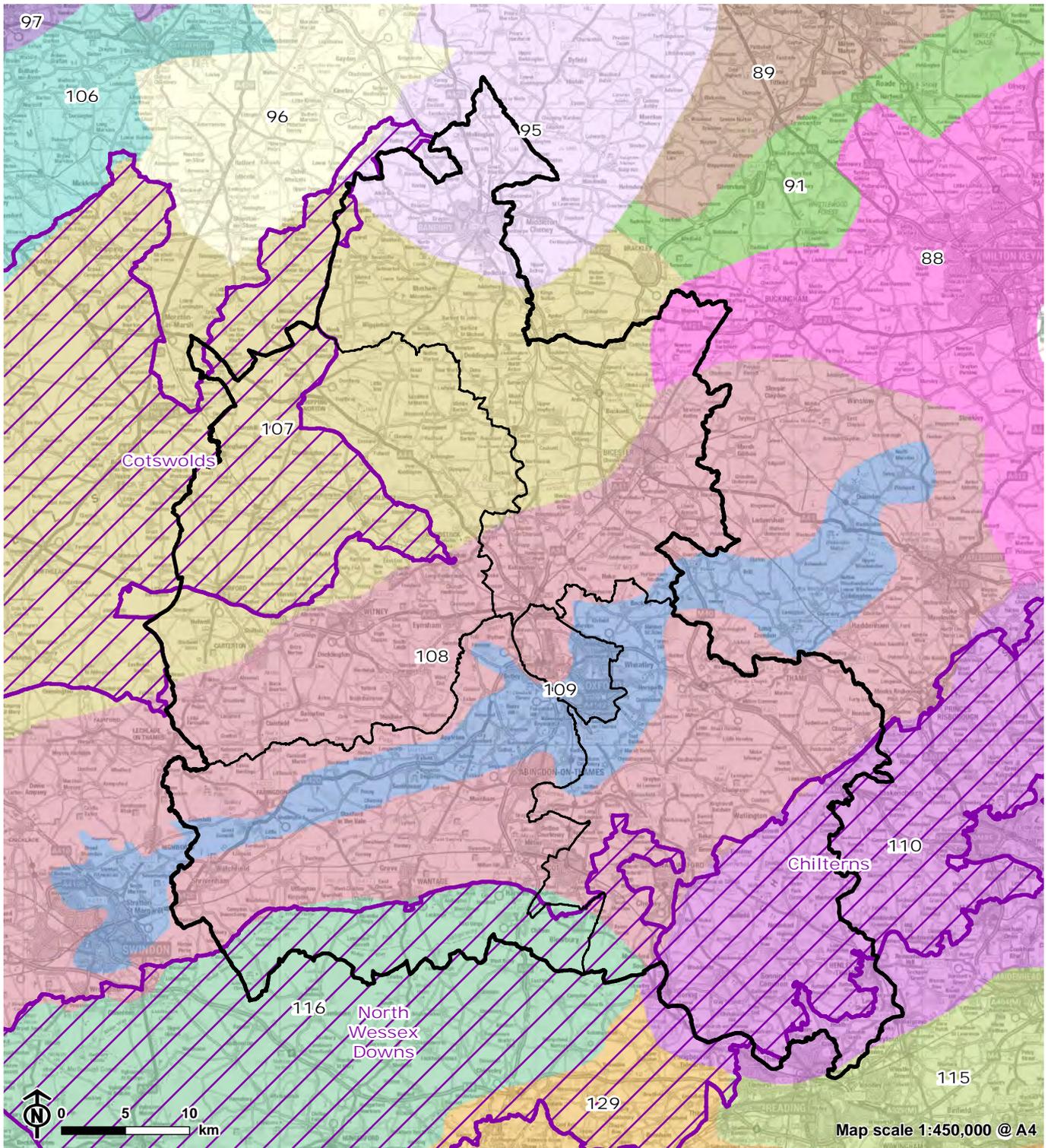
**B.156** Berkshire and Marlborough Downs NCA is within Vale of White Horse District and covers much of the south and south western parts of Oxfordshire. The NCA consists of vast arable fields which are stretched across the sparsely settled, rolling chalk hills. Directly to the east of the Berkshire and Marlborough Downs NCA, the Chilterns NCA is within South Oxfordshire District. This NCA is extensively wooded with areas of farmland interspersed allowing for an overall patchwork within hedged boundaries. The entire area is underlain by chalk bedrock which rises up from the London Basin to form a north-west facing escarpment.

**B.157** A very small area in the most south easterly part of Oxfordshire is within the Thames Valley NCA. The NCA is a very diverse landscape of urban and suburban settlements, infrastructure networks, fragmented agricultural land, historic parks, commons, woodland, reservoirs and extensive minerals workings with the River Thames being a unifying feature throughout the area. Hydrological features such as its tributaries dominate the valley.

**B.158** A summary of the key sustainability issues in relation to the landscape and townscape baseline described above is provided in **Table B.22**, along with the likely evolution of each issue if the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 were not implemented.

**Table B.22: Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire and likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (Landscape and townscape)**

Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire	Likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050
<p>Development could affect the character and quality of the landscape and townscape in Oxfordshire, specifically the three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and views of Oxford’s famous ‘Dreaming Spires’.</p>	<p>In the absence of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, Oxfordshire’s landscape and townscape would still be protected by each of the District’s Local Plans.</p> <p>However, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 does offer a further opportunity to ensure that the character and quality of the landscape character is taken into account in the design and siting of strategic development, whilst maximising any opportunity for the protection and enhancement of the landscape. In addition, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 provides the opportunity to look more strategically at alternative sites in terms of landscape impacts and to plan strategically for landscape improvements.</p>



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Source: NE

Figure B.10: Landscape

- |   |                              |                                      |
|---|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Oxfordshire county                            | 95: Northamptonshire Uplands | 116: Berkshire and Marlborough Downs |
| District boundary                             | 96: Dunsmore and Feldon      | 117: Avon Vale                       |
| Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty            | 97: Arden                    | 129: Thames Basin Heaths             |
| <b>National Character Areas</b>               | 106: Severn and Avon Vales   | 130: Hampshire Downs                 |
| 88: Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands | 107: Cotswolds               |                                      |
| 89: Northamptonshire Vales                    | 108: Upper Thames Clay Vales |                                      |
| 91: Yardley-Whittlewood Ridge                 | 109: Midvale Ridge           |                                      |
|   | 110: Chilterns               |                                      |
|   | 115: Thames Valley           |                                      |

## Green Belt

**B.159** Although not an environmental designation, it is worth noting that around Oxford City there is approximately 66,000ha of designated Green Belt land which extends within all four of the neighbouring Districts, as shown in **Figure B.11**. Nearly 250ha of the Green Belt is open access land, including 100ha of Country Parks, while around 75% of the Green Belt is in agricultural use.

**B.160** The Green Belt has historically been subject to development restraint due to the protection provided to Green Belts by national policy, although in the mid-1990s Oxford City Council released areas in the Green Belt for housing and employment uses such as the Northern Gateway. Since then, there have only been very minor alterations to the Green Belt in Oxfordshire although there is currently debate about whether more land should be removed from the Green Belt in order to deliver development requirements.

**B.161** The 2015 Oxford Green Belt Study<sup>189</sup> recommended that local authorities should undertake careful masterplanning of development so that harm is minimised. It also assessed whether individual land parcels within the designated Green Belt are performing well against the Green Belt purposes identified in the NPPF.

**B.162** A recent CPRE report notes that the Oxfordshire Districts are opening up the Green Belt to accommodate the expected increase in population, with new Local Plans allocating land for release from the Green Belt around Oxford, including at Elsfield, Sandford, Horspath and Kidlington<sup>190</sup>.

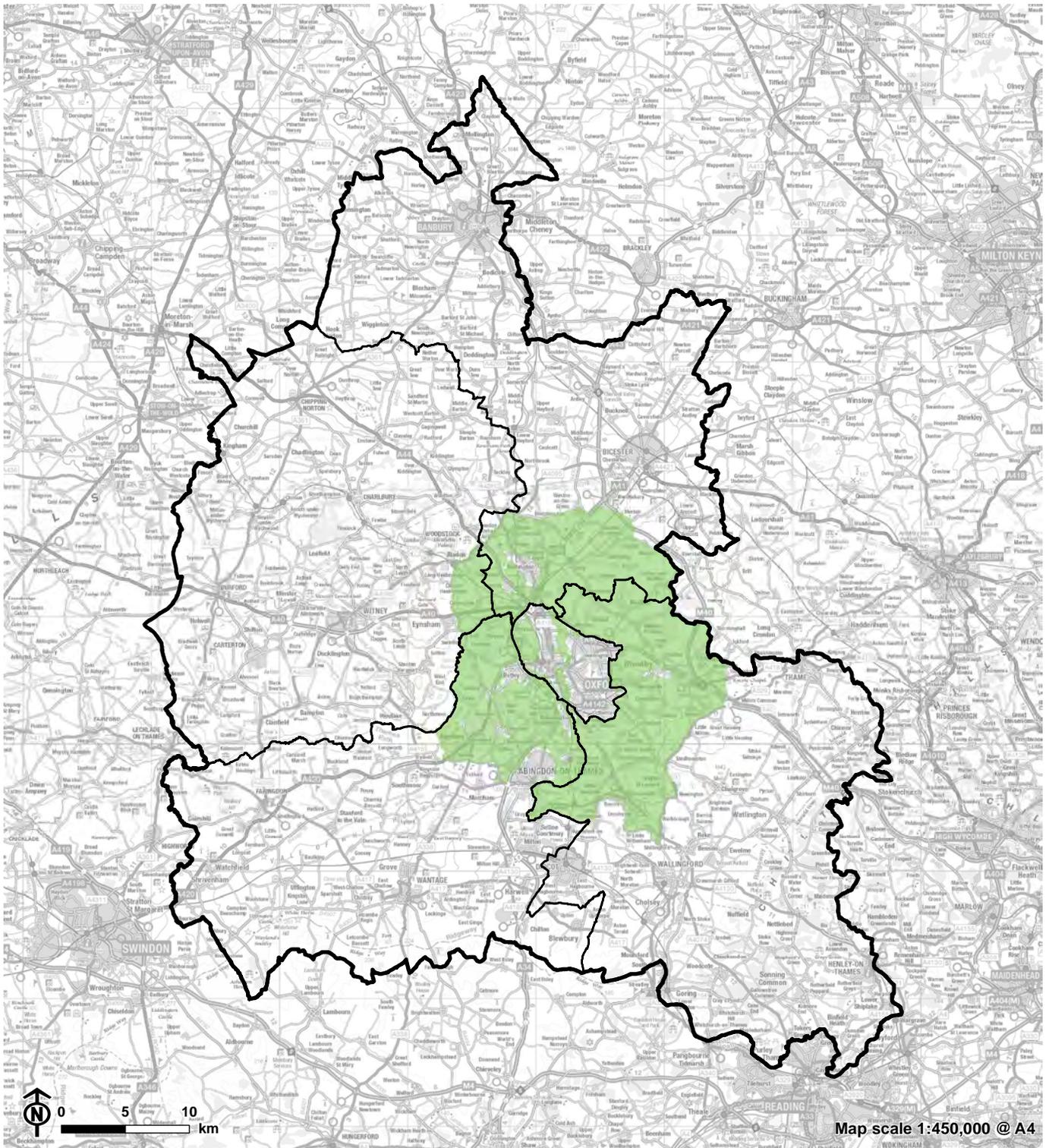
**B.163** A summary of the key sustainability issues in relation to the Green belt baseline described above is provided in **Table B.23**, along with the likely evolution of each issue if the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 were not implemented.

**Table B.23: Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire and likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (Green Belt)**

Key sustainability issues for Oxfordshire	Likely evolution without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050
<p>The Green Belt restricts development within Oxfordshire, particularly around Oxford. However, maintaining the Green Belt also helps to safeguard the Oxfordshire countryside from encroachment by development.</p>	<p>Without the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, it is likely that the Green Belt would reduce due to increasing development pressure. However, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 provides an opportunity for the local authorities to work together to minimise the amount of harm to the Green Belt as well as discussing the performance of individual land parcels within the Green Belt.</p>

<sup>189</sup> LUC (October 2015) Oxford Green Belt Study: Final Report

<sup>190</sup> CPRE Oxfordshire (2019) *Battle for the Green Belt* <http://www.cpreoxon.org.uk/news/item/2751-battle-for-the-green-belt>



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Source: DCLG

**Figure B.11: Green Belt**

-  Oxfordshire county
-  District boundary
-  Green Belt

## Appendix C

# Review of relevant national and international plans, policies and programmes

## Overarching policy objectives

### International

**C.1 United Nations Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (the 'Aarhus Convention')** (1998) establishes a number of rights of the public (individuals and their associations) with regard to the environment. The Parties to the Convention are required to make the necessary provisions so that public authorities (at national, regional or local level) will contribute to these rights to become effective.

### National

**C.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**<sup>191</sup> is the most significant national policy context for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. The latest version of the NPPF, adopted in July 2018, with further updates in 2019, sets out the Government's planning policy for England and how these policies should be applied. The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 must be consistent with the NPPF requirements. The NPPF sets out information about the purposes of local plan-making, stating that:

*"Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area ... So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development".*

**C.3** The presumption in favour of sustainable development is to be given priority in plan-making and in the decision making process. Specific to the plan-making process this will mean that:

*"a) plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area, and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change;*

*b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:*

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or*
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole."*

**C.4** In addition to contributing to the achievement of sustainable development the NPPF also requires Local Plans to be prepared positively in a way that is 'aspirational but deliverable'. This means that opportunities for appropriate development should be identified in order to achieve net gains across the three overarching objectives of sustainable development: that is to say achieving the economic, social and environmental objectives of the planning system. Significant adverse impacts on these objectives should be avoided however and, where possible, alternative options which reduce or eliminate these types of impacts should be taken forward. Where this is not possible mitigation followed by compensatory measures should be pursued.

**C.5** The Government is also setting out goals for managing and improving the environment within its **25 Year Environment Plan**<sup>192</sup>. The document seeks to influence planning at a local level and therefore will be relevant to the scope of the SA and the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. Reference has been included within each topic below to the relevant text from the 25 Year Environment Plan.

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<sup>191</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (July 2018) *National Planning Policy Framework*

<sup>192</sup> HM Government (January 2018) *A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment*

## Population, health and wellbeing

### International

**C.6 The United Nations Declaration on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Declaration) (2002)** sets the broad framework for international sustainable development, including building a humane, equitable and caring global society aware of the need for human dignity for all, renewable energy and energy efficiency, sustainable consumption and production and resource efficiency.

**C.7 United Nations Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (the 'Aarhus Convention') (1998):** Establishes a number of rights of the public (individuals and their associations) with regard to the environment. The Parties to the Convention are required to make the necessary provisions so that public authorities (at national, regional or local level) will contribute to these rights to become effective.

**C.8** Other topic based international policies relating to human health and wellbeing are described under the relevant topics below.

### National

**C.9** The NPPF includes as part of its social objective the promotion of “*strong, vibrant and healthy communities*” by:

- *“ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and*
- *by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural wellbeing .”*

**C.10** Ultimately planning policies and planning decision making should “*aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places*”.

**C.11** The document states that strategic policies should set out the pattern, scale and quality of development and make sufficient provision for “*housing (including affordable housing) ... [as well as] community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure)*.” Policies should reflect “*the size, type and tenure of housing needed*”. This policy approach is to include but should not be limited to housing requirements relating to affordable homes, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, those who rent their homes and people wishing to commission the construction of their own homes. Major developments that involve the provision of new housing planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the total number of homes to be delivered for affordable home ownership subject to conditions and exemptions.

**C.12** To help to diversify opportunities for builders, promote a better mix of site sizes and increase the number of schemes that can be built-out quickly to meet housing need, the NPPF states that at least 10% of the sites allocated for housing through a local authority’s plan should be half a hectare or smaller.

**C.13** Where there is an identified need, development of sites not already allocated for housing to provide entry-level homes suitable for first-time buyers is to be supported by local planning authorities unless such need is already to be met at other locations within the authority area. These sites should comprise of entry-level homes that offer one or more types of affordable housing.

**C.14** The document also promotes a theme of enhancing healthy and safe communities which is to be achieved by creating places which “*promote social interaction (and) enable and support healthy lifestyles*.”

**C.15** As part of this approach social, recreational and cultural facilities and services that the community needs should be provided guided by planning policies which:

- *“plan positively provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services;*
- *support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all sections of the community;*
- *help prevent unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services.”*

**C.16** Plan making through the guidance of the NPPF recognises the important role of access to open spaces and other facilities which provide opportunities for sport and physical activity has in terms of health and wellbeing of communities. The importance of delivering a sufficient choice of school places to meet the needs of existing and new communities is also recognised in the document and local planning authorities should take a “*proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement*”.

**C.17** The NPPF also sets out that the standard method provided in national planning guidance should be used to undertake a local housing need assessment identifying the minimum number of homes needed. The **Housing Delivery Test Measurement Rule Book**<sup>193</sup> provides this standard method allowing for calculation of objectively assessed housing need using government household forecasts adjusted for local house prices and local earnings. Unmet need from neighbouring areas will also need to be taken into account as part of the calculation.

**C.18 National Design Guide**<sup>194</sup>: sets out the Government’s priorities for well-designed places in the form of ten characteristics: context, identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, uses, homes and buildings, resources and lifespan.

**C.19 Fair Society, Healthy Lives**<sup>195</sup> investigated health inequalities in England and the actions needed in order to tackle them. Subsequently, a supplementary report was prepared providing additional evidence relating to spatial planning and health on the basis that there is “*overwhelming evidence that health and environmental inequalities are inexorably linked and that poor environments contribute significantly to poor health and health inequalities*”.

**C.20 Select Committee on Public Service and Demographic Change report Ready for Ageing?**<sup>196</sup>: warns that society is underprepared for the ageing population. The report states “longer lives can be a great benefit, but there has been a collective failure to address the implications and without urgent action this great boon could turn into a series of miserable crises”. The report highlights the under provision of specialist housing for older people and the need to plan for the housing needs of the older population as well as younger people.

**C.21 Laying the foundations: a housing strategy for England**<sup>197</sup>: Aims to provide support to deliver new homes and improve social mobility.

**C.22 Homes England Strategic Plan 2018 to 2023**<sup>198</sup>: Sets out a vision to ensure more homes are built in areas of greatest need, to improve affordability, and make a more resilient and diverse housing market.

**C.23 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites**<sup>199</sup> sets out the Government’s planning policy for traveller sites. The Government’s overarching aim is to ensure fair and equal treatment for travellers, in a way that facilitates the traditional and nomadic way of life of travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community.

**C.24 Planning for the Future White Paper**<sup>200</sup>: Sets out a series of potential reforms to the English planning system, to deliver growth faster. The White Paper focuses on the following:

- Simplifying the role of Local Plans and the process of producing them.
- Digitising plan-making and development management processes.
- Focus on design, sustainability and infrastructure delivery.
- Nationally determined, binding housing requirements for local planning authorities to deliver through Local Plans.

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<sup>193</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (July 2018) *Housing Delivery Test Measurement Rule Book*

<sup>194</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (January 2021) *National Design Guide* [online] Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide>

<sup>195</sup> The Marmot Review (2011) *Fair Society, Healthy Lives*

<sup>196</sup> Select Committee on Public Service and Demographic Change (2013) *Ready for Ageing?* [online] Available at: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201213/ldselect/ldpublic/140/140.pdf>

<sup>197</sup> HM Government (2011) *Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England* [online] Available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/7532/2033676.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7532/2033676.pdf)

<sup>198</sup> Homes England (2018) *Strategic Plan 2018 to 2023* [online] available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/752686/Homes\\_England\\_Strategic\\_Plan\\_AW\\_REV\\_150dpi\\_REV.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/752686/Homes_England_Strategic_Plan_AW_REV_150dpi_REV.pdf)

<sup>199</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government (2015) *Planning policy for traveller sites*

<sup>200</sup> Department for Housing, Communities and Local Government (2020) *Planning for the Future White Paper* [online] Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/907647/MHCLG-Planning-Consultation.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/907647/MHCLG-Planning-Consultation.pdf)

**C.25 Planning for the Sustainable Growth in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc (An introduction to the Oxford-Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework (2021))<sup>201</sup>:** This paper sets out the government's approach, growth, spatial planning and infrastructure provision within the area and how the community and local partners will help develop the framework.

**C.26 The Housing White Paper 2017 (Fixing our broken housing market)<sup>202</sup>** sets out ways to address the shortfall in affordable homes and boost housing supply. The White Paper focuses on the following:

- Planning for the right homes in the right places – Higher densities in appropriate areas, protecting the Green Belt while making more land available for housing by maximising the contribution from brownfield and surplus public land, regenerating estates, releasing more small and medium-sized sites, allowing rural communities to grow and making it easier to build new settlements.
- Building homes faster – Improved speed of planning cases, ensuring infrastructure is provided and supporting developers to build out more quickly.
- Diversifying the Market – Backing small and medium-sized house builders, custom-build, institutional investors, new contractors, housing associations.
- Helping people now – supporting home ownership and providing affordable housing for all types of people, including the most vulnerable.

**C.27 Public Health England, PHE Strategy 2020-25<sup>203</sup>:** identifies PHE's priorities upon which to focus over this five-year period to protect people and help people to live longer in good health.

**C.28 Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our strategy for public health in England<sup>204</sup>:** Sets out how our approach to public health challenges will:

- Protect the population from health threats – led by central government, with a strong system to the frontline.
- Empower local leadership and encourage wide responsibility across society to improve everyone's health and wellbeing, and tackle the wider factors that influence it.
- Focus on key outcomes, doing what works to deliver them, with transparency of outcomes to enable accountability through a proposed new public health outcomes framework.
- Reflect the Government's core values of freedom, fairness and responsibility by strengthening self-esteem, confidence and personal responsibility; positively promoting healthy behaviours and lifestyles; and adapting the environment to make healthy choices easier.
- Balance the freedoms of individuals and organisations with the need to avoid harm to others, use a 'ladder' of interventions to determine the least intrusive approach necessary to achieve the desired effect and aim to make voluntary approaches work before resorting to regulation.

**C.29 The 25 Year Environment Plan** sets out goals for improving the environment over the next 25 years. It details how the Government will work with communities and businesses to leave the environment in a better state than it is presently. The document identifies six key areas upon which action will be focused. Those of relevance to the topics of population growth, health and wellbeing are using and managing land sustainably; and connecting people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing. These two key areas are of relevance to the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 as follows:

- Using and managing land sustainably:
  - Embed an 'environmental net gain' principle for development, including housing and infrastructure.
- Connecting people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing:

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<sup>201</sup> HM Government (2021) Planning for sustainable growth in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc [online] Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/962455/Spatial\\_framework\\_policy\\_paper.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/962455/Spatial_framework_policy_paper.pdf)

<sup>202</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government (2017) *Fixing our broken housing market*

<sup>203</sup> Public Health England (2019) PHE Strategy 2020-25 [online] Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/831562/PHE\\_Strategy\\_2020-25.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/831562/PHE_Strategy_2020-25.pdf)

<sup>204</sup> HM Government (2010) Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our strategy for public health in England [online] Available at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/216096/dh\\_127424.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/216096/dh_127424.pdf)

- Help people improve their health and wellbeing by using green spaces including through mental health services.
- Encourage children to be close to nature, in and out of school, with particular focus on disadvantaged areas.
- ‘Green’ our towns and cities by creating green infrastructure and planting one million urban trees.
- Make 2019 a year of action for the environment, working with Step Up To Serve and other partners to help children and young people from all backgrounds to engage with nature and improve the environment.

## Economy

### International and National

**C.30** There are no specific international economic policy agreements relevant to the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and the SA, although there are a large number of trading agreements, regulations and standards that set down the basis of trade within the European Union (subject to changes post-Brexit) and with other nations.

**C.31** The NPPF contains an economic objective to “*help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity.*”

**C.32** It also requires that planning seeks to “*create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt*” with policies required to “*set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth*”. Policies addressing the economy should also seek “*to address potential barriers to investment, such as inadequate infrastructure, services or housing, or a poor environment.*”

**C.33** Of particular relevance to Oxfordshire is the requirement for planning policies to “*recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. This includes making provision for clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative or high technology industries; and for storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations.*”

**C.34** Planning policies are also required specifically to address support for the rural economy. Sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas should be supported, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings, while the diversification of the rural economy and promotion of sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments is also supported.

**C.35** The NPPF also supports the role of town centres as functioning at the heart of local communities. This support is required to provide for a “*positive approach to [town centres] growth, management and adaptation.*” Included within this support is a requirement to “*allocate a range of suitable sites in town centres to meet the scale and type of development needed, looking at least ten years ahead.*”

**C.36** **The Local Growth White Paper (2010)**<sup>205</sup> highlights the importance of economic policy that focusses on the delivery of strong, sustainable and balanced growth of income and employment over the long-term, growth which is broad-based industrially and geographically to provide equality of access and opportunity and build businesses that are competitive internationally.

**C.37** **Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth**<sup>206</sup>: Sets out a plan to ‘build back better’ tackling long-term problems to deliver growth that delivers high-quality jobs across the UK while supporting the transition to net zero. This will build on three core pillars of growth: infrastructure, skills and innovation.

**C.38** **The Rural White Paper 2000 (Our Countryside: the future – A fair deal for rural England)**<sup>207</sup> sets out the Government’s Rural Policy Objectives:

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<sup>205</sup> Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (2010) *Local Growth: Realising Every Place’s Potential*

<sup>206</sup> HM Treasury (2021) *Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth* [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/build-back-better-our-plan-for-growth/build-back-better-our-plan-for-growth-html>

<sup>207</sup> HM Government (2000) *Rural White Paper (Our Countryside: the future – A fair deal for rural England)*

- To facilitate the development of dynamic, competitive and sustainable economies in the countryside, tackling poverty in rural areas.
- To maintain and stimulate communities, and secure access to services which is equitable in all the circumstances, for those who live or work in the countryside.
- To conserve and enhance rural landscapes and the diversity and abundance of wildlife (including the habitats on which it depends).
- To promote government responsiveness to rural communities through better working together between central departments, local government, and government agencies and better co-operation with non-government bodies.

**C.39 National Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2016-2021)** sets out the government's plans for economic infrastructure over a five year period with those to support delivery of housing and social infrastructure.

**C.40 UK Industrial Strategy: building a Britain fit for the future** (2018) lays down a vision and foundations for a transformed economy. Areas including: artificial intelligence and big data; clean growth; the future of mobility; and meeting the needs of an ageing society are identified as the four 'Grand Challenges' of the future.

## Transport

### International

**C.41 The Trans-European Networks (TEN)** was created by the European Union by Articles 154-156 of the Treaty of Rome (1957), with the stated goals of the creation of an internal market and the reinforcement of economic and social cohesion. These include the Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T), which includes High Speed 1, and the Trans-European Telecommunications Networks (eTEN).

### National

**C.42 The NPPF** requires that "*transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making*". The scale, location and density of development should reflect "*opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure*". To help reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health the planning system should focus significant development "*on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes.*" The draft revised framework also requires that planning policies support an appropriate mix of uses across an area to further help reduce the need to travel as well as the provision of high quality walking and cycling network.

While the framework promotes the use and development of sustainable transport networks it also requires that "*where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice and realise opportunities for large scale development*" should be identified and protected.

**C.43 The Road to Zero**<sup>208</sup> sets out new measures towards cleaner road transport, aiming to put the UK at the forefront of the design and manufacturing of zero emission vehicles. It explains how cleaner air, a better environment, zero emission vehicles and a strong, clean economy will be achieved. One of the main aims of the document is for all new cars and vans to be effectively zero emission by 2040.

**C.44 Transport Investment Strategy**<sup>209</sup>: Sets out four objectives that the strategy aims to achieve:

- Create a more reliable, less congested, and better connected transport network that works for the users who rely on it;
- Build a stronger, more balanced economy by enhancing productivity and responding to local growth priorities;
- Enhance our global competitiveness by making Britain a more attractive place to trade and invest; and
- Support the creation of new housing.

<sup>208</sup> HM Government (2018) *The Road to Zero*

<sup>209</sup> Department for Transport (2017) *Transport Investment Strategy* [online] Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/918490/Transport\\_investment\\_strategy.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/918490/Transport_investment_strategy.pdf)

**C.45 Door to Door: A strategy for improving sustainable transport integration**<sup>210</sup>: Focuses on four core areas which need to be addressed so that people can be confident in choosing greener modes of transport. There are as follows:

- Accurate, accessible and reliable information about different transport options.
- Convenient and affordable tickets.
- Regular and straightforward connections at all stages of the journey and between different modes of transport.
- Safe and comfortable transport facilities.

**C.46** The strategy also includes details on how the Government is using behavioural change methods to reduce or remove barriers to the use of sustainable transport and working closely with stakeholders to deliver a better-connected transport system.

**C.47 Department for Transport, Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge (2020)**<sup>211</sup> sets out the strategic priorities for a new Transport Decarbonisation Plan (TDP), to be published later in 2020, will set out in detail what government, business and society will need to do to deliver the significant emissions reduction needed across all modes of transport, putting us on a pathway to achieving carbon budgets and net zero emissions across every single mode of transport by 2050. This document acknowledges that while there have been recently published strategies<sup>212</sup> to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in individual transport modes, transport as a whole sector needs to go further and more quickly, therefore the TDP will take a coordinated, cross-modal approach to deliver the transport sector's contribution to both carbon budgets and net zero.

## Air, land and water quality

### National

**C.48** The **NPPF** states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued soil and the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Policies should also prevent new and existing development from “*contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution.*”

**C.49** The document also requires that strategic policies should seek to make the most effective use of land in meeting local requirements making as much use as possible of previously-developed or ‘brownfield’ land. Furthermore policies should “*support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land*”.

**C.50 Environmental Protection Act 1990**<sup>213</sup>: makes provision for the improved control of pollution to the air, water and land by regulating the management of waste and the control of emissions. Seeks to ensure that decisions pertaining to the environment are made in an integrated manner, in collaboration with appropriate authorities, non-governmental organisations and other persons.

**C.51 Building Regulations**<sup>214</sup>: requires that reasonable precautions are taken to avoid risks to health and safety cause by contaminants in ground to be covered by building and associated ground.

**C.52 National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW)**<sup>215</sup>: Key planning objectives are identified within the NPPW, requiring planning authorities to:

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<sup>210</sup> Department for Transport (2013) *Door to Door: A strategy for improving sustainable transport integration* [online] Available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/142539/door-to-door-strategy.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/142539/door-to-door-strategy.pdf)

<sup>211</sup> Department for Transport (2020) *Decarbonising Transport Setting the Challenge* [online] Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/932122/decarbonising-transport-setting-the-challenge.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/932122/decarbonising-transport-setting-the-challenge.pdf)

<sup>212</sup> These have not been summarised, since the upcoming TDP will supersede them to some extent: the Road to Zero strategy, Maritime 2050 and the Clean Maritime Plan, the Aviation 2050 Green Paper and forthcoming net zero aviation consultation and Aviation Strategy, the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy, the 2018 amendments to the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation, Freight Carbon Review, the Rail Industry Decarbonisation Taskforce and the Carbon Offsetting for Transport Call for Evidence.

<sup>213</sup> HM Government (1990) *Environmental Protection Act 1990* [online] Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/43/contents>

<sup>214</sup> HM Government (2010) *Building Regulations* [online] Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/431943/BR\\_PDF\\_AD\\_C\\_2013.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/431943/BR_PDF_AD_C_2013.pdf)

<sup>215</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government (2014) *National Planning Policy for Waste* [online] Available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/364759/141015\\_National\\_Planning\\_Policy\\_for\\_Waste.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/364759/141015_National_Planning_Policy_for_Waste.pdf)

- Help deliver sustainable development through driving waste management up the waste hierarchy.
- Ensure waste management is considered alongside other spatial planning concerns.
- Provide a framework in which communities take more responsibility for their own waste.
- Help secure the recovery or disposal of waste without endangering human health and without harming the environment.
- Ensure the design and layout of new development supports sustainable waste management.

**C.53 The Nitrate Pollution Prevention Regulations<sup>216</sup>** provides for the designation of land as nitrate vulnerable zones and imposes annual limits on the amount of nitrogen from organic manure that may be applied or spread in a holding in a nitrate vulnerable zone. The Regulations also specify the amount of nitrogen to be spread on a crop and how, where and when to spread nitrogen fertiliser, and how it should be stored. It also establishes closed periods during which the spreading of nitrogen fertiliser is prohibited.

**C.54 The Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations<sup>217</sup>** protect the environment from the adverse effects of urban waste water discharges and certain industrial sectors, notably domestic and industrial waste water. The regulations require the collection of waste water and specifies how different types of waste water should be treated, disposed and reused.

**C.55 The Water Environment Regulations<sup>218</sup>** protect inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater, and outlines the associated river basin management process.

**C.56 The Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations<sup>219</sup>** focus on the quality of water for drinking, washing, cooking and food preparation, and for food production. Their purpose is to protect human health from the adverse effects of any contamination of water intended for human consumption by ensuring it is wholesome and clean.

**C.57 The Environmental Permitting Regulations<sup>220</sup>** streamline the legislative system for industrial and waste installations into a single permitting structure for those activities which have the potential to cause harm to human health or the environment. They set out how to prevent or, where that is not practicable, to reduce emissions into air, water and land and to prevent the generation of waste, in order to achieve a high level of protection of the environment and human health.

**C.58 The Air Quality Standards Regulations<sup>221</sup>** set out limits on concentrations of outdoor air pollutants that impact public health, most notably particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) and nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>). It also sets out the procedure and requirements for the designation of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs).

**C.59 The Environmental Noise Regulations<sup>222</sup>** apply to environmental noise, mainly from transport. The regulations require regular noise mapping and action planning for road, rail and aviation noise and noise in large urban areas. They also require Noise Action Plans based on the maps for road and rail noise and noise in large urban areas. The Action Plans identify Important Areas (areas exposed to the highest levels of noise) and suggest ways the relevant authorities can reduce these. Major airports and those which affect large urban areas are also required to produce and publish their own Noise Action Plans separately. The Regulations do not apply to noise from domestic activities such as noise created by neighbours; at work places; inside means of transport; or military activities in military areas.

**C.60 The Waste (Circular Economy) Regulations<sup>223</sup>** seek to prevent waste generation and to monitor and assess the implementation of measures included in waste prevention programmes. They set out requirements to justify not separating waste streams close to source for re-use, recycling or other recovery operations, prohibit incineration and landfilling of waste unless such treatment process represent the best environmental outcome in accordance with the waste hierarchy. The Regulations set out when waste management plans and in waste prevention programmes are required. The Regulations focus on the circular economy as a means for businesses to maximise the value of waste and waste treatment.

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<sup>216</sup> HM Government (2016) *The Nitrate Pollution Prevention Regulations*

<sup>217</sup> HM Government (2003) *The Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations*

<sup>218</sup> HM Government (2016) *The Water Environment (England and Wales) Regulations*

<sup>219</sup> HM Government (2016) *The Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations*

<sup>220</sup> HM Government (2016) *The Environmental Permitting Regulations*

<sup>221</sup> HM Government (2016) *The Air Quality Standards Regulations*

<sup>222</sup> HM Government (2018) *The Environmental Noise (England) Regulations*

<sup>223</sup> HM Government (2020) *The Waste (Circular Economy) Regulations*

**C.61 Safeguarding our Soils – A Strategy for England**<sup>224</sup> sets out how England's soils will be managed sustainably. It highlights those areas which Defra will prioritise and focus attention in tackling degradation threats, including: better protection for agricultural soils; protecting and enhancing stores of soil carbon; building the resilience of soils to a changing climate; preventing soil pollution; effective soil protection during construction and; dealing with contaminated land.

**C.62 The Water White Paper**<sup>225</sup> provides out the Government's vision for the water sector including proposals on protecting water resources and reforming the water supply industry. It outlines the measures that will be taken to tackle issues such as poorly performing ecosystems, and the combined impacts of climate change and population growth on stressed water resources.

**C.63 National Policy Statement for Waste Water**<sup>226</sup>: sets out Government policy for the provision of major waste water infrastructure. The policy set out in this NPS is, for the most part, intended to make existing policy and practice in consenting nationally significant waste water infrastructure clearer and more transparent.

**C.64 Future Water: The Government's Water Strategy for England**<sup>227</sup>: Sets out how the Government wants the water sector to look by 2030, providing an outline of steps which need to be taken to get there. These steps include: improving the supply of water; agreeing on important new infrastructure such as reservoirs; proposals to time limit abstraction licences; and reducing leakage. The document also states that pollution to rivers will be tackled, whilst discharge from sewers will be reduced.

**C.65 The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland**<sup>228</sup> sets out a way forward for work and planning on air quality issues by setting out the air quality standards and objectives to be achieved. It introduces a new policy framework for tackling fine particles, and identifies potential new national policy measures which modelling indicates could give further health benefits and move closer towards meeting the Strategy's objectives. The objectives of the Strategy are to:

- Further improve air quality in the UK from today and long term.
- Provide benefits to health quality of life and the environment.

**C.66 The Road to Zero**<sup>229</sup> sets out new measures towards cleaner road transport, aiming to put the UK at the forefront of the design and manufacturing of zero emission vehicles. It explains how cleaner air, a better environment, zero emission vehicles and a strong, clean economy will be achieved. One of the main aims of the document is for all new cars and vans to be effectively zero emission by 2040.

**C.67 The UK Plan for Tackling Roadside Nitrogen Dioxide Concentrations**<sup>230</sup> provides the Government's ambition and actions for delivering a better environment and cleaner air, including £1 billion investment in ultra-low emission vehicles (ULESVs), a £290 million National Productivity Investment Fund, a £11 million Air Quality Grant Fund and £255 million Implementation Fund to help local authorities to prepare Air Quality Action Plans and improve air quality, an £89 million Green Bus Fund, £1.2 billion Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy and £100 million to help improve air quality on the National road network.

**C.68** Of the key areas in the **25 Year Environment Plan** around which action will be focused, those of relevance to the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 in terms of the protection of air, land and water quality are: using and managing land sustainably; recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes; and increasing resource efficiency, and reducing pollution and waste:

- Using and managing land sustainably:
  - Embed a 'net environmental gain' principle for development, including natural capital benefits to improved and water quality.

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<sup>224</sup> Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2009) *Safeguarding our Soils: A Strategy for England*

<sup>225</sup> Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2012) *The Water White Paper*

<sup>226</sup> HM Government (2012) *National Policy Statement for Waste Water* [online] Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/69505/pb13709-waste-water-nps.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69505/pb13709-waste-water-nps.pdf)

<sup>227</sup> HM Government (2008) *Future Water: The Government's water strategy for England* [online] Available at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/69346/pb13562-future-water-080204.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69346/pb13562-future-water-080204.pdf)

<sup>228</sup> Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (2007) *The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland*

<sup>229</sup> HM Government (2018) *The Road to Zero*

<sup>230</sup> Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs and Department for Transport (2017) *UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations*

- Protect best agricultural land.
- Improve soil health, and restore and protect peatlands.
- Recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes:
  - Respect nature by using our water more sustainably.
- Increasing resource efficiency and reducing pollution and waste:
  - Reduce pollution by tackling air pollution in our Clean Air Strategy and reduce the impact of chemicals.

**C.69 Our Waste, Our Resources: A strategy for England** (2018) aims to increase resource productivity and eliminate avoidable waste by 2050. The Strategy sets out key targets which include: a 50% recycling rate for household waste by 2020, a 75% recycling rate for packaging by 2030, 65% recycling rate for municipal solid waste by 2035 and municipal waste to landfill 10% or less by 2035.

**C.70 Clean Air Strategy 2019**<sup>231</sup>: This strategy sets out the comprehensive action that is required from across all parts of government and society to meet these goals. New legislation will create a stronger and more coherent framework for action to tackle air pollution. This will be underpinned by new England-wide powers to control major sources of air pollution, in line with the risk they pose to public health and the environment, plus new local powers to take action in areas with an air pollution problem. These will support the creation of Clean Air Zones to lower emissions from all sources of air pollution, backed up with clear enforcement mechanisms. The UK has set stringent targets to cut emissions by 2020 and 2030. The goal is to reduce the harm to human health from air pollution by half.

## Climate change mitigation and adaptation

### International

**C.71 United Nations Paris Climate Change Agreement** (2015) is an international agreement to keep global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

### National

**C.72 The Climate Change Act 2008**<sup>232</sup> sets targets for UK greenhouse gas emission reductions of at least 80% by 2050 and CO<sub>2</sub> emission reductions of at least 26% by 2015, against a 1990 baseline.

**C.73 Planning and Energy Act** (2008)<sup>233</sup>: enables local planning authorities to set requirements for carbon reduction and renewable energy provision. It should be noted that while the Housing Standards Review proposed to repeal some of these provisions, at the time of writing there have been no amendments to the Planning and Energy Act.

**C.74 The NPPF** contains as part of its environmental objective a requirement to mitigate and adapt to climate change, “including moving to a low carbon economy”. The document also states that the “*planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change.*” To achieve these aims new development should be planned to ensure appropriate adaptation measures are included (including green infrastructure) and should be designed, located and orientated as to help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

**C.75** The revised framework also requires that development is directed away from areas which are at highest existing or future risk of flooding. Where development is required in such areas, the “*development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.*”

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<sup>231</sup> DEFRA, *Clean Air Strategy 2019* [online] Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/770715/clean-air-strategy-2019.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/770715/clean-air-strategy-2019.pdf)

<sup>232</sup> HM Government (2008) *Climate Change Act 2008*

<sup>233</sup> HM Government (2008) *Climate Change Act 2008*: [https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/pdfs/ukpga\\_20080027\\_en.pdf](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/pdfs/ukpga_20080027_en.pdf).

**C.76** In relation to coastal change in England planning policies and decisions should take account of the UK Marine Policy Statement and marine plans. Furthermore, plans should “*reduce risk from coastal change by avoiding inappropriate development in vulnerable areas and not exacerbating the impacts of physical changes to the coast*”.

**C.77 The Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations<sup>234</sup>** seek to improve the energy efficiency of buildings, reducing their carbon emissions and lessening the impact of climate change. The Regulations require the adoption of a standard methodology for calculating energy performance and minimum requirements for energy performance, reported through Energy Performance Certificates and Display Energy Certificates.

**C.78 The UK Renewable Energy Strategy<sup>235</sup>** describes out the ways in which we will tackle climate change by reducing our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions through the generation of a renewable electricity, heat and transport technologies.

**C.79 The Energy Efficiency Strategy<sup>236</sup>** aims to realise the wider energy efficiency potential that is available in the UK economy by maximising the potential of existing dwellings by implementing 21<sup>st</sup> century energy management initiatives on 19<sup>th</sup> century homes.

**C.80 The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan: National Strategy for Climate and Energy<sup>237</sup>**: sets out a five point plan to tackle climate change. The points are as follows: protecting the public from immediate risk, preparing for the future, limiting the severity of future climate change through a new international climate agreement, building a low carbon UK and supporting individuals, communities and businesses to play their part.

**C.81 UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017<sup>238</sup>**: sets out six priority areas needing urgent further action over the next five years. These include:

- flooding and coastal change risks to communities, businesses and infrastructure,
- health, well-being and productivity from high temperatures,
- shortages in public water supply, and for agriculture, energy generation and industry with impacts on freshwater ecology,
- natural capital, including terrestrial, coastal, marine and freshwater ecosystems, soils and biodiversity,
- domestic and international food production and trade and
- new and emerging pests and diseases and invasive non-native species affecting people, plants and animals.

**C.82 The National Adaptation Programme and the Third Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting<sup>239</sup>** sets out visions for the following sectors:

- People and the Built Environment – “*to promote the development of a healthy, equitable and resilient population, well placed to reduce the harmful health impacts of climate change...buildings and places (including built heritage) and the people who live and work in them are resilient and organisations in the built environment sector have an increased capacity to address the risks and make the most of the opportunities of a changing climate.*”
- Infrastructure – “*an infrastructure network that is resilient to today’s natural hazards and prepared for the future changing climate*”.
- Natural Environment – “*the natural environment, with diverse and healthy ecosystems, is resilient to climate change, able to accommodate change and valued for the adaptation services it provides.*”
- Business and Industry – “*UK businesses are resilient to extreme weather and prepared for future risks and opportunities from climate change.*”

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<sup>234</sup> HM Government (2021) *The Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations*

<sup>235</sup> HM Government (2009) *The UK Renewable Energy Strategy*

<sup>236</sup> Department of Energy & Climate Change (2012) *The Energy Efficiency Strategy: The Energy Efficiency Opportunity in the UK*

<sup>237</sup> HM Government (2009) *The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan* [online] Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/228752/9780108508394.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/228752/9780108508394.pdf)

<sup>238</sup> HM Government (2017) *UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017* [online] Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/584281/uk-climate-change-risk-assess-2017.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/584281/uk-climate-change-risk-assess-2017.pdf)

<sup>239</sup> HM Government (2018) *The National Adaptation Programme and the Third Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting: Making the country resilient to a changing climate*

- Local Government – “Local government plays a central in leading and supporting local places to become more resilient to a range of future risks and to be prepared for the opportunities from a changing climate.”

**C.83 The Flood and Water Management Act 2010<sup>240</sup> and The Flood and Water Regulations<sup>241</sup>** sets out measures to ensure that risk from all sources of flooding is managed more effectively. This includes: incorporating greater resilience measures into the design of new buildings; utilising the environment in order to reduce flooding; identifying areas suitable for inundation and water storage to reduce the risk of flooding elsewhere; rolling back development in coastal areas to avoid damage from flooding or coastal erosion; and creating sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). **Understanding the risks, empowering communities, building resilience: The national flood and coastal erosion risk management strategy for England<sup>242</sup>**: This Strategy sets out the national framework for managing the risk of flooding and coastal erosion. It sets out the roles for risk management authorities and communities to help them understand their responsibilities. The strategic aims and objectives of the Strategy are to:

- Manage the risk to people and their property.
- Facilitate decision-making and action at the appropriate level – individual, community or local authority, river catchment, coastal cell or national.
- Achieve environmental, social and economic benefits, consistent with the principles of sustainable development.

**C.84 The 25 Year Environment Plan** sets out policy priorities with respect to: responding to climate change are using and managing land sustainably; and protecting and improving our global environment. Actions that will be taken as part of these two key areas are as follows:

- Using and managing land sustainably:
  - Take action to reduce the risk of harm from flooding and coastal erosion including greater use of natural flood management solutions.
- Protecting and improving our global environment:
  - Provide international leadership and lead by example in tackling climate change and protecting and improving international biodiversity.

## Biodiversity

### International

**C.85 International Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention)** (1976) is an international agreement with the aim of conserving and managing the use of wetlands and their resources.

**C.86 European Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention)** (1979) aims to ensure conservation and protection of wild plant and animal species and their natural habitats, to increase cooperation between contracting parties, and to regulate the exploitation of those species (including migratory species).

**C.87 International Convention on Biological Diversity** (1992) is an international commitment to biodiversity conservation through national strategies and action plans.

**C.88 United Nations Declaration on Forests (New York Declaration)** (2014) sets out international commitment to cut natural forest loss by 2020 and end loss by 2030.

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<sup>240</sup> HM Government (2010) *Flood and Water Management Act*

<sup>241</sup> HM Government (2019) *The Flood and Water Regulations*

<sup>242</sup> HM Government (2011) *Understanding the risks, empowering communities, building resilience: The national flood and coastal erosion risk management strategy for England* [online] Available at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/228898/9780108510366.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/228898/9780108510366.pdf)

## National

**C.89** A requirement of the **NPPF's** environmental objective is that the planning system should contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural environment including helping to improve biodiversity, and using natural resources prudently. In support of this aim the framework states that Local Plans should “*identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks*” and should also “*promote the conservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.*”

**C.90** The framework requires that plans should take a strategic approach in terms of “*maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries*”.

**C.91 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations**<sup>243</sup> protect biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora, including birds. The Regulations lay down rules for the protection, management and exploitation of such habitats and species, including how adverse effects on such habitats and species should be avoided, minimised and reported.

**C.92 The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006**<sup>244</sup> places a duty on public bodies to conserve biodiversity.

**C.93 England Biodiversity Strategy Climate Change Adaptation Principles**<sup>245</sup>: sets out principles to guide adaptation to climate change. The principles are: take practical action now, maintain and increase ecological resilience, accommodate change, integrate action across all sectors and develop knowledge and plan strategically. The precautionary principle underpin all of these.

**C.94 Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services**<sup>246</sup> guides conservation efforts in England up to 2020 by requiring a national halt to biodiversity loss, supporting healthy ecosystems and establishing ecological networks. The Strategy includes 22 priorities which include actions for the following sectors: Agriculture, Forestry, Planning & Development, Water Management, Marine Management, Fisheries, Air Pollution and Invasive Non-Native Species.

**C.95 Biodiversity Offsetting in England Green Paper**<sup>247</sup> sets out a framework for offsetting. Biodiversity offsets are conservation activities designed to compensate for residual losses.

**C.96** The key areas of the **25 Year Environment Plan** of relevance in terms of the protection and promotion of biodiversity are recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes; securing clean, productive and biologically diverse seas and oceans; and protecting and improving our global environment. Actions that will be taken as part of these three key areas are as follows:

- Recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes:
  - Develop a Nature Recovery Network to protect and restore wildlife, and provide opportunities to re-introduce species that have been lost from the countryside.
- Securing clean, healthy, productive and biologically diverse seas and oceans:
  - Achieve a good environmental status of the UK's seas while allowing marine industries to thrive, and complete our economically coherent network of well-managed marine protected areas.
- Protecting and improving our global environment:
  - Provide international leadership and lead by example in tackling climate change and protecting and improving international biodiversity.

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<sup>243</sup> HM Government (2019) *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations*

<sup>244</sup> HM Government (2006) *Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006*

<sup>245</sup> Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2008) *The England Biodiversity Strategy Climate Change Adaptation Principles* [online] Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/69270/pb13168-eps-ccap-081203.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69270/pb13168-eps-ccap-081203.pdf)

<sup>246</sup> Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2011) *Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services*

<sup>247</sup> Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2013) *Biodiversity offsetting in England Green Paper*

- Support and protect international forests and sustainable agriculture.

## Heritage

### International

**C.97 United Nations (UNESCO) World Heritage Convention (1972)** promotes co-operation among nations to protect heritage around the world that is of such outstanding universal value that its conservation is important for current and future generations.

**C.98 European Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (1985):** defines ‘architectural heritage’ and requires that the signatories maintain an inventory of it and take statutory measures to ensure its protection. Conservation policies are also required to be integrated into planning systems and other spheres of government influence as per the text of the convention.

**C.99 Valletta Treaty, formerly the European Convention on the Protection of Archaeological Heritage (1992):** agreed that the conservation and enhancement of an archaeological heritage is one of the goals of urban and regional planning policy. It is concerned in particular with the need for co-operation between archaeologists and planners to ensure optimum conservation of archaeological heritage.

### National

**C.100** Of relevance to the approach of the planning system to the historic environment the **NPPF** contains an environmental objective to contribute to the protection and enhancement of the built and historic environment. The document also sets out a strategy to seek “*the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay and other threats.*” Such a strategy is required to take into consideration the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and bringing them into viable use.

**C.101** It should also be considerate of the wider benefits of conserving the historic environment, the contribution new development can make in terms of character and distinctiveness and the opportunity for the historic environment to contribute to this character and distinctiveness. Local authorities should also maintain or have access to a historic environment record which is to be supported by up to date evidence.

**C.102 Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Areas Act 1979<sup>248</sup>:** a law passed by the UK government to protect the archaeological heritage of England & Wales and Scotland. Under this Act, the Secretary of State has a duty to compile and maintain a schedule of ancient monuments of national importance, in order to help preserve them. It also creates criminal offences for unauthorised works to, or damage of, these monuments.

**C.103 Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990<sup>249</sup>:** An Act of Parliament that changed the laws for granting of planning permission for building works, with a particular focus on listed buildings and conservation areas.

**C.104 Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953<sup>250</sup>:** An Act of Parliament that makes provision for the compilation of a register of gardens and other land (parks and gardens, and battlefields).

**C.105 The Government’s Statement on the Historic Environment for England<sup>251</sup>** sets out the Government’s vision for the historic environment. It calls for those who have the power to shape the historic environment to recognise its value and to manage it in an intelligent manner in light of the contribution that it can make to social, economic and cultural life. It includes reference to promoting the role of the historic environment within the Government’s response to climate change and the wider sustainable development agenda.

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<sup>248</sup> HM Government (1979) *Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Areas Act*: <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/engagement/bostonbarriertwo/results/b.21---ancient-monuments-and-archaeological-areas-act-1979.pdf>.

<sup>249</sup> HM Government (2002) *Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act (1990)*: [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/pdfs/ukpga\\_19900009\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/pdfs/ukpga_19900009_en.pdf).

<sup>250</sup> HM Government (1953) *Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953* [online] Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Eliz2/1-2/49/contents>

<sup>251</sup> HM Government (2010) *The Government’s Statement on the Historic Environment for England 2010*

**C.106 The Heritage Statement**<sup>252</sup> describes out how the Government will support the heritage sector and help it to protect and care for our heritage and historic environment, in order to maximise the economic and social impact of heritage and to ensure that everyone can enjoy and benefit from it.

**C.107 Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment, Historic England Advice Note 8**<sup>253</sup>: Sets out Historic England's guidance and expectations for the consideration and appraisal of effects on the historic environment as part of the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment process.

## Landscape

### International

**C.108 The European Landscape Convention** (2002) promotes landscape protection, management and planning. The Convention is aimed at the protection, management and planning of all landscapes and raising awareness of the value of a living landscape.

### National

**C.109** The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 will be required to have consideration for the conservation and enhancement of landscape character in the District. The **NPPF** includes as part of its approach to protecting the natural environment, recognition for the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits to be secured from natural capital. Importantly, great weight is to be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

**C.110** As part of the approach to achieving well-designed places the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments “*are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.*”

**C.111 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949**<sup>254</sup>: An Act of Parliament to make provision for National Parks and the establishment of a National Parks Commission; to confer on the Nature Conservancy and local authorities powers for the establishment and maintenance of nature reserves; to make further provision for the recording, creation, maintenance and improvement of public paths and for securing access to open country.

**C.112 Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2010**<sup>255</sup>: An Act of Parliament to make new provision for public access to the countryside.

**C.113 England National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular 2010**<sup>256</sup>: provides updated policy guidance on the English National Parks and Broads. It also sets out a vision for 2030 and the key outcomes the Government is seeking over the next five years to ensure early progress towards the vision.

**C.114** The key area in the **25 Year Environment Plan** of relevance in terms of the conservation and enhancement of landscape character is recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes. Actions that will be taken as part of this key area are as follows:

- Working with AONB authorities to deliver environmental enhancements.

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<sup>252</sup> Department for Digital, Culture Media and Sport (2017) *Heritage Statement 2017*

<sup>253</sup> Historic England (2016) *Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment: Historic England Advice Note 8* [online] Available at: <https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/heag036-sustainability-appraisal-strategic-environmental-assessment.pdf>

<sup>254</sup> HM Government (1949) *National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949* [online] Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo6/12-13-14/97>

<sup>255</sup> HM Government (2010) *Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2010* [online] Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/section/85>

<sup>256</sup> Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2010) *English National Parks and the Broads UK Government Vision and Circular 2010* [online] Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/221086/pb13387-vision-circular2010.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/221086/pb13387-vision-circular2010.pdf)

**C.115** Identifying opportunities for environmental enhancement of all England's Natural Character Areas, and monitoring indicators of landscape character and quality.

## **Appendix D**

### **Reasons for the selection of policies in light of the reasonable alternatives**

Table D.1: Reasons for the selection of policies in light of the reasonable alternatives

Theme	Options		Justification for Selection of Preferred Approach over Reasonable Alternatives
	Preferred Approach	Alternatives Considered	
Oxfordshire Plan Vision	'In 2050 the people of Oxfordshire are living in sustainable communities with a high quality of life and strong sense of community. The integrity and richness of the county's historic character and natural environment are valued and conserved. A wide range of secure and good quality housing options are within reach for all. Existing and new communities are well connected, integrated, distinct, attractive and desirable places to live; their design and layouts facilitate healthy lifestyles and sustainable travel options. Productivity has increased and residents are well-skilled and able to access a wide range of high-value job opportunities and share in wealth creation. The private and public sector continue to have the confidence to invest in the county. Oxfordshire has embraced the technological, demographic and lifestyle changes of recent decades and new developments are fit for the future and resilient to climate change. The wellbeing of residents and workers is enhanced through being part of this special place'.	No reasonable alternatives identified.	A draft vision for the Oxfordshire was consulted upon at the Regulation 18 (part 1) stage and was amended following the responses received.
Oxfordshire Plan 11x Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To demonstrate leadership in addressing the climate emergency by significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions.</li> <li>2. To conserve and enhance Oxfordshire's historic, built and natural environments, recognising the benefits these assets contribute to quality of life, local identity and economic success.</li> <li>3. To protect and enhance Oxfordshire's distinctive landscape character, recreational and</li> </ol>	No reasonable alternatives identified.	A series of draft objectives were consulted on at Reg 18 part 1 stage. The current objectives were revised and updated in light of consultation responses received.

Theme	Options		Justification for Selection of Preferred Approach over Reasonable Alternatives
	Preferred Approach	Alternatives Considered	
Page 1122	biodiversity value by identifying strategic green and blue infrastructure, improving connectivity between environmental assets and securing a net gain for biodiversity.		
	4. To improve health and wellbeing by enabling independence, encouraging active and healthy lifestyles, facilitating social interaction and creating inclusive and safe communities.		
	5. To sustain and strengthen Oxfordshire's economic role and reputation by building on our key strengths and relationships.		
	6. To ensure that the benefits and opportunities arising from Oxfordshire's economic success are felt by all of Oxfordshire's communities.		
	7. To meet Oxfordshire's housing needs, including affordable housing, and to ensure that housing delivery is phased appropriately to support the needs of our communities.		
	8. To ensure that new housing is flexible to meet the varied needs of people through all stages of life.		
	9. To deliver high quality, innovatively designed development that ensures efficient use of land and resources.		
	10. To reduce the need to travel and to support people in making sustainable transport choices by providing inclusive, integrated, safe and		

Theme	Options		Justification for Selection of Preferred Approach over Reasonable Alternatives
	Preferred Approach	Alternatives Considered	
	convenient pedestrian, cycle and public transport infrastructure linking communities.		
	11. To ensure that communities are digitally connected and that innovative technologies are supported.		
Addressing climate change	Policy 01: Sustainable Design and Construction: The preferred policy approach is to define an Oxfordshire-wide definition for net-zero carbon design and construction for development in Oxfordshire.	<p>1) Defer standards for the design and construction of new buildings to district Local Plans. National policy does not prevent local authorities from setting higher ambitions, particularly in relation to energy efficiency standards that exceed Building Regulations.</p> <p>2) Defer guidance on sustainable design and construction to building regulations and the Future Homes and Future Buildings Standards.</p>	<p>Setting a consistent approach to net zero carbon across the county would be beneficial in working towards ambitious targets for net zero emissions. The preferred approach will assist in achieving the County's objectives in achieving net zero carbon emissions over the lifetime of the Oxfordshire Plan with multiple benefits including supporting the health and wellbeing of communities and encouraging clean growth and innovation, consistent with Strategic Vision and Oxfordshire Plan objectives. The preferred approach takes account of whole life carbon while existing Local Plan and proposed national approaches do not cover embodied carbon.</p> <p>There is an opportunity for the Oxfordshire Plan to be ambitious in terms of setting standards for sustainable design and construction. Reducing ambitions will likely result in additional future need to retrofit properties to achieve net zero carbon. A key challenge in Oxfordshire is how the retrofit of existing properties will be achieved to achieve net zero carbon.</p> <p>Alternative 1 is not the preferred option as different targets and timescales for achieving net zero carbon development in Local Plans could hinder efforts to achieve net zero carbon emissions in Oxfordshire during the lifetime of the Plan.</p> <p>Alternative 2 is not the preferred option as failure to introduce more stringent national standards for the design and construction of new development could hinder Oxfordshire's efforts to achieve net zero carbon emissions during the lifetime of the Plan.</p>

Theme	Options		Justification for Selection of Preferred Approach over Reasonable Alternatives
	Preferred Approach	Alternatives Considered	
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 1124</p>	<p>Policy 02 – Energy: The preferred policy option is to maximise the use of renewable energy in new developments in Oxfordshire.</p>	<p>1) Do not set county wide targets for renewable energy in new developments and to defer to Local Plans and individual developments.</p>	<p>Increasing the amount of energy generated from renewable sources will be essential in achieving net zero carbon targets. The preferred policy approach is most ambitious in increasing renewable energy and reducing fossil fuel dependency and will ensure that rising demands for electricity are matched with zero carbon energy provision, to achieve a net zero carbon energy balance and to support efforts to achieve net zero carbon emissions over the lifetime of the Oxfordshire Plan.</p> <p>Alternative 1 is not the preferred option as establishing different approaches to renewable energy generation for new developments through Local Plans could undermine efforts to achieve targets for net zero carbon emissions in Oxfordshire over the lifetime of the Plan.</p> <p>Alternative 2 is reasonable as the continued decarbonisation of the National Grid will help to ensure that a zero-carbon energy balance could be achieved nationally and locally during the lifetime of the Plan, particularly with increased renewable energy generation locally. It is not the preferred option as a lower target would potentially fall short of local targets of net zero carbon emissions during the lifetime of the Plan.</p>
		<p>2) Set a percentage target for renewable energy generation in new developments e.g., minimum 10%.</p>	
	<p>Policy 03: Water Efficiency: The preferred approach is for the Oxfordshire Plan to set ambitious minimum water efficiency standards for new development Oxfordshire.</p>	<p>1) Require water neutrality in Oxfordshire.</p>	<p>Setting water efficiency requirements for non-residential development and strategic growth locations and the most ambitious possible water efficiency standards for new homes would help to ensure that new development limits its contribution to water stress. The preferred option is considered appropriate given increasing pressures on water resources, both within Oxfordshire and across the wider region. Setting ambitious policies in the Oxfordshire Plan is consistent with the opportunity that the Oxfordshire Plan represents to deliver long-term transformational change and to address the impacts of climate change. Local plans could provide further detail as appropriate.</p>
		<p>2) Set less ambitious water efficiency standards in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. align with the current optional requirement of 110 litres per person per day for new homes;</li> </ul>	

Theme	Options		Justification for Selection of Preferred Approach over Reasonable Alternatives
	Preferred Approach	Alternatives Considered	
Page 1125		<p>ii. do not set water efficiency standards for non-residential development; and</p> <p>iii. encourage (rather than require) development at strategic growth locations identified in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 to maximise water efficiency through the delivery of community-scale rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling schemes.</p>	<p>Alternative 1 could be implemented alongside the preferred option of setting ambitious minimum water efficiency standards for new development in Oxfordshire. Although this would represent a transformational change and would further help to address the impacts of climate change, it is not the preferred option as at it is unclear how this approach could be delivered, funded and monitored.</p> <p>Alternatives 2 and 3 are not the preferred approach as it would not represent transformational change and does not recognise opportunities to do more to address the impacts of climate change.</p>
		<p>3) Do not have a strategic policy on water efficiency in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. Leave it to Local Plans to set policies in relation to water efficiency.</p>	
	Policy 04: Flood Risk: The preferred approach is for the Oxfordshire Plan to provide a strategic planning framework for managing flood risk in Oxfordshire.	<p>1) Include a strategic flood risk policy in the Oxfordshire Plan but reduce the scope of this policy.</p> <p>2) Do not have a strategic policy on flood risk in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. Leave it to Local Plans to set</p>	<p>Utilising natural flood management methods, the application of SuDS and supporting a catchment-based approach to flood risk is in line with national policy and best practice.</p> <p>The Environment Agency highlighted that there is a significant amount of existing built development in the functional floodplain (flood zone 3b) in Oxfordshire and that opportunities should be taken to:</p> <p>a) improve the resilience of development in flood zone 3b to flood risk; and</p>

Theme	Options		Justification for Selection of Preferred Approach over Reasonable Alternatives	
	Preferred Approach	Alternatives Considered		
Page 1126		policies in relation to flood risk.	<p>b) consider the cumulative impacts of small scale development in flood zone 3b on flood risk.</p> <p>The preferred option framework would follow the Environment Agency's advice and set out flood risk requirements relevant to development across Oxfordshire. In taking this approach, the impact on design (specifically building heights) needs to be considered. However, given the severity of the risks associated with flood risk, the preferred approach prioritises flood resilience. If this approach is consistently applied, then over time building heights would become more aligned as increasing numbers of homes are rebuilt or raised. Local plans could provide further detail as appropriate.</p> <p>Alternatives 1 and 2 are not the preferred option as there is a risk that local plans might set different flood risk management requirements across Oxfordshire. This could result in less certainty and clarity for developers and communities. It may also make it more difficult to meet proposed ambitions around the delivery of transformational change and addressing the impacts of climate change.</p>	
	Improving environmental quality	Policy 05: Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Characters: The preferred policy option is to establish a positive strategy for the protection and enhancement of landscape and townscape features in Oxfordshire, due to the significance and importance of these features on the identity, sense of place, health and well-being and prosperity of Oxfordshire's communities.	No reasonable alternatives identified.	It is considered necessary for the Oxfordshire Plan to have regard to the landscape and townscape character of the county in terms of shaping policies, defining the spatial strategy and determining the spatial distribution of growth. Further detailed evidence on landscape sensitivity and impacts will be required as the Oxfordshire Plan evolves, but it is important to recognise the importance landscape and townscape character will have on determining the overarching spatial strategy for the Oxfordshire Plan.
		Policy 06: Protection and Enhancement of Historic Environment: The preferred policy option is to establish a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of Oxfordshire's historic environment, due to the significance and importance of Oxfordshire's historic environment on	No reasonable alternatives identified.	Protection and enhancement of the historic environment is fundamental to sound spatial planning for Oxfordshire. It is therefore considered necessary that the Oxfordshire Plan should have regard to the location, scale and importance of Oxfordshire's heritage assets in terms of shaping policies, defining the spatial strategy and determining the spatial distribution of growth. Further detailed

Theme	Options		Justification for Selection of Preferred Approach over Reasonable Alternatives
	Preferred Approach	Alternatives Considered	
	the identity, sense of place, health and wellbeing and prosperity of Oxfordshire's communities.		evidence on heritage impact will be required as the Oxfordshire Plan evolves.
Page 1127	Policy 07: Nature Recovery: The preferred option is to identify those parts of the county that are important for establishing a well-connected ecological network and to use this mapped resource to shape the policies, define the spatial strategy and determine the spatial distribution of development in the Oxfordshire Plan.	1) Do not progress Nature Recovery Network map in Oxfordshire Plan and leave to subsequent Nature Recovery Strategy for Oxfordshire to define. Defer to established approach of site, species and habitat protection, Conservation Target Areas and application of mitigation hierarchy for biodiversity to be applied through Local Plans.	<p>Oxfordshire Plan provides an opportunity to plan for ecological connectivity at a landscape scale. The preferred approach of utilising the draft Nature Recovery Network to shape the Oxfordshire Plan will ensure that future development and ecological enhancements are directed to locations where they can minimise harm and secure the greatest benefits in supporting nature's recovery and building resilience in communities and ecosystems to climate change.</p> <p>Alternative 1 is not preferred as the Oxfordshire Plan provides an opportunity to plan more holistically for ecological connectivity at the landscape scale. Not utilising the draft Nature Recovery Network to shape the Oxfordshire Plan spatial strategy might undermine future efforts to establish ecological networks and to plan for nature recovery through a future Nature Recovery Strategy.</p>
	Policy 08: Biodiversity Gain: The preferred option is to set an ambitious target for biodiversity net gain as a standalone policy as one of the primary mechanisms through which nature's recovery can be delivered through the Oxfordshire Plan. Setting an ambitious target above national requirements emphasises the importance of supporting nature's recovery and improving environmental quality through the Oxfordshire Plan.	1) Establish differential biodiversity net gain targets for different parts of the county with higher target (25%) in high value parts of the county including green belt, AONBs, Conservation Target Areas, as well as Broad Areas for Growth identified in the Oxfordshire Plan and a lower target (10%) for the rest of the county.	<p>Although it is recognised that there could be viability implications for achieving higher biodiversity net gain targets in parts of Oxfordshire, the preferred approach acknowledges that higher targets are being sought within individual developments and strategic developments in other parts of the County. A more ambitious target set for biodiversity net gain to account for past losses and degradation of the environment. Opportunity to test ambitious target for the whole of the county. This approach is supported by Natural England and is consistent with proposed approach through OxCam Arc.</p> <p>Alternative 1 may assist drawing out the challenge of viability that is anticipated in different parts of the County, whilst prioritising areas where biodiversity net gain from development is particularly sensitive and necessary.</p> <p>Alternative 2 is not preferred as reliance on the UK wide 10% net gain would fall short of Oxfordshire's efforts to support nature's recovery and account for past losses to biodiversity.</p>

Theme	Options		Justification for Selection of Preferred Approach over Reasonable Alternatives
	Preferred Approach	Alternatives Considered	
Page 1128		2) Leave to national standards and do not set minimum biodiversity net gain targets in Oxfordshire Plan 2050.	
	Policy 09: Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services: The preferred option is to identify the parts of the county that are important and valuable for natural capital and ecosystems services and to use this mapped resource to shape the policies, define the spatial strategy and determine the spatial distribution of development in the Oxfordshire Plan	1) Include natural capital considerations within place shaping principles rather than defining Oxfordshire wide approach to the assessment of supply and demand for ecosystem services.	This is an emerging policy area for which it is considered important to establish the baseline evidence for Oxfordshire. The preferred policy of utilising the Natural Capital mapping to shape the Oxfordshire Plan will ensure that future development and environmental enhancements are directed to locations where they can minimise harm and deliver multiple benefits for the environment and communities as well as building resilience in communities and ecosystems.  Alternative 1 is not preferred because it would represent a more traditional approach to green infrastructure delivery established in adopted Local Plans and would not capitalise on the detailed evidence available to shape the Oxfordshire Plan.
	Policy 10: Green Belt: The preferred option is for the Oxfordshire Plan to focus on Green Belt enhancement.	No reasonable alternatives identified.	The preferred policy is considered to strengthen the important roles that the Green Belt plays, as well as supporting key objectives of the Oxfordshire Plan to improve the health and wellbeing of communities, deliver environmental enhancements and support nature's recovery.
	Policy 11: Water Quality: The preferred approach is for the Oxfordshire Plan to provide a strategic planning framework for the protection and enhancement of water quality in Oxfordshire. This framework would set minimum standards for development in Oxfordshire.	2) Do not have a strategic policy on water quality in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. Leave it to Local Plans to set policies in relation to water quality.	Water quality is a cross-boundary strategic planning matter. Having a strategic policy would help to ensure a consistent approach to the protection and enhancement of water quality across Oxfordshire. It would also provide a framework for improving water quality wherever possible, aligning with proposed ambitions around environmental improvement and nature recovery. Local plans could provide further detail as appropriate.  Alternative 1 is not preferred as there is a risk that local plans might take different approaches to water quality. This could result in less certainty and clarity for developers and communities. It may also

Theme	Options		Justification for Selection of Preferred Approach over Reasonable Alternatives
	Preferred Approach	Alternatives Considered	
Page 1129			make it more difficult to meet proposed ambitions around environmental improvement and nature recovery.
	Policy 12: Air Quality: The preferred approach is for the Oxfordshire Plan to provide a strategic planning framework for the protection and enhancement of air quality in Oxfordshire. This framework would set minimum standards for development in Oxfordshire.	1) Include a strategic air quality policy in the Oxfordshire Plan but reduce the scope of this policy. For example: do not require air quality assessments for major development proposals.	The preferred strategic policy would help to ensure a consistent approach to the protection and enhancement of air quality across Oxfordshire. It would also provide a framework for improving air quality wherever possible, aligning with proposed ambitions around environmental improvement and creating strong and healthy communities. Local plans could provide further detail as appropriate.  Alternatives 1 and 2 are not the preferred option as there is a risk that local plans might take different approaches to air quality. This could result in less certainty and clarity for developers and communities. It may also make it more difficult to meet proposed ambitions around the delivery of transformational change, environmental improvement and creating strong and healthy communities.
		2) Do not have a strategic policy on air quality in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. Leave it to Local Plans to set policies in relation to air quality.	
Creating strong and healthy communities	Policy 13: Healthy Place Shaping and Health Impact Assessments: The preferred policy option is to include a Health Impact Assessment policy within the Oxfordshire Plan, requiring major developments to be supported by an HIA.	1) Do not include a standalone policy, and instead weave healthy place shaping principles through the Oxfordshire Plan, allowing individual Local Plans to implement their own healthy place shaping principles as appropriate.	The preferred policy helps to emphasise the importance of healthy place shaping in the Oxfordshire Plan, particularly the need to explicitly address the existing and projected health and wellbeing needs of an area. It would allow for clear guidance to be provided for when and where the preparation of a HIA would be appropriate.  Alternative 1 is not preferred because it would risk an inconsistent approach to HIAs in local plans, or even a lack of a HIA policy.
	Policy 14: Health Infrastructure: The preferred approach is an enabling policy that aims to set out a framework in which the land use and planning elements of future health reorganisations might be considered, recognising that many of the issues	1) Leave these considerations to future Local Plans.	Although this could be left to future Local Plans, the definition of a policy to enable forward health infrastructure planning by the Local Planning Authority in conjunction with the health bodies, developers, local communities and Parish/Town Councils is considered a strategic priority for the Plan.

Theme	Options		Justification for Selection of Preferred Approach over Reasonable Alternatives
	Preferred Approach	Alternatives Considered	
Page 1130	arising will be matters that impact across more than one local planning authority.		Alternative 1 is not preferred because there is a risk that the cross-boundary nature of health estate changes will be lost. A strategic approach that brings together more than one local planning authority is likely to be more effective in securing influence over the actions proposed by the NHS.
	Policy 15: High Quality Design for New Development and Garden Town Standards for New Settlements: The preferred policy is to establish a strategic framework that individual local plans can respond to taking account of local circumstances.	1) Leave design matters for local plans and, neighbourhood plans based on national guidance.	The preferred policy of would provide a consistent strategic framework for new development in Oxfordshire, with local plans and other documents providing more locally-specific detail at an appropriate scale.  Alternative 1 is not the preferred option because it would miss an opportunity to set an Oxfordshire-wide high-quality design ambition.
	Policy 16: Leisure, Recreation and Open Space Facilities: The preferred policy option is to leave local plans to set policies for local (non-strategic) leisure, recreation, community and open space facilities, with the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 setting a policy for strategic facilities that serve communities both in the county and further afield.	1) Include a policy that seeks to protect the existing indoor and outdoor sports facilities and open spaces within the County. Those within built up areas are most likely to be at threat from other forms of development. A policy which acknowledges the importance of retaining existing open spaces within built-up areas and seeks to protect them would do more to secure the future of these types of facilities within the built-up areas. Access to any new private facilities would also be encouraged.	The definition of a policy to enable forward recreation facility planning by the Local Planning Authority in conjunction with the health bodies, developers, local communities and Parish/Town Councils is considered a strategic priority for the Plan.  Alternative 1 is not the preferred policy because it could be regarded to be non-strategic.
	Policy 17: Towards a Net Zero Transport Network: The preferred option is to support the emerging active travel policies of the LTCP, expected to focus	1) Leave to future Local Plans.	The preferred policy is considered to provide strategic direction on this cross-boundary issue. It will help complement major planned investment, including service and station improvements enabled

Theme	Options		Justification for Selection of Preferred Approach over Reasonable Alternatives
	Preferred Approach	Alternatives Considered	
Planning for sustainable travel and connectivity	on developing an active travel network for the county and further developing Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans at key settlements.		through East West Rail, and other major rail capacity investment proposed as part of the 'Oxfordshire Connect' priorities arising out of the Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Study.  Alternative 1 is not preferred given the strategic and cross boundary nature of the transport network.
	Policy 18: Sustainable Transport in New Development: The Preferred policy option seeks to set a standard framework for considering these matters across development in Oxfordshire.	1) Leave to future Local Plans.	The preferred option for the Oxfordshire Plan takes account of the Oxfordshire Electric Vehicles strategy which recommends that future planning policies should seek to meet or exceed those targets set out for Oxford City. Building on national planning guidance, the recent local plan policies and the government proposals for building regulations, there is an opportunity through the Oxfordshire Plan to set out a common minimum standard for all new developments that support the move towards 100% uptake of Electric Vehicles. There is also an opportunity to plan for this provision alongside the energy and digital networks within any development.  Alternative 1 is not preferred given the strategic and cross boundary nature of the transport network.
	Policy 19: Supporting Sustainable Freight Management: The preferred policy option would close the current planning policy gap and provide a strategic framework for considering freight issues as proposals come forwards.	1) Leave to the OxCam Arc Spatial Framework and/or future Local Plans.	This planning issue is not considered to be matter that is well suited to consideration through individual local plans given the strategic nature of freight movement and goods management across Oxfordshire and the need for consistent criteria for consideration of proposals. Therefore, a strategic framework in the Oxfordshire Plan is the preferred option.  Alternative 1 is not preferred because these matters are not considered well suited to consideration through individual local plans given the strategic nature of freight movement and goods management across Oxfordshire and the need for consistent criteria for consideration of proposals.

Theme	Options		Justification for Selection of Preferred Approach over Reasonable Alternatives
	Preferred Approach	Alternatives Considered	
Page 1132	Policy 20: Digital Infrastructure: The preferred policy sets out an Oxfordshire-wide approach delivering digital infrastructure through development.	1) Leave to future Local Plans.	<p>The preferred policy is considered to be the best way to ensure that development proposals take into account national strategy and guidance as well as securing the scale of investment needed to secure a full rollout of investment.</p> <p>Alternative 1 is not preferred given the opportunity for the Plan to provide strategic direction on this cross-boundary issue.</p>
	Policy 21: Strategic Infrastructure Priorities: The preferred policy option seeks to ensure that the Oxfordshire Plan and the OXIS are aligned, given the significance of strategic infrastructure that frequently crosses more than one local planning authority.	1) Safeguard land for strategic infrastructure priorities.	<p>Alongside other evidence, the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) Stage 1 report will help inform the refinement of Oxon Plan spatial options towards a preferred option at the next stage of the plan. It is also intended that a final Stage 2 report will be produced to assess strategic infrastructure priorities to 2050 and consider how these align with the preferred spatial options. It is expected that this will provide a strategic infrastructure framework for delivery of infrastructure needs alongside new development and inform the more detailed planning for sites at the local plan level.</p> <p>Alternative 1 is not preferred as this should be considered in more detail in the individual local plans that follow the completion of the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) programme.</p>
Creating jobs and providing homes	Policy 22: Supporting the Creation of Jobs: The preferred policy does not propose to identify specific requirements for job numbers as there is too much uncertainty later on in the plan period. However, this preferred policy would play a role in providing a strategic framework for emerging Local Plans to work with.	1) OGNA trajectories range from an additional 20,000 to 45,000 jobs. See additional options appraised in Chapter 4.	<p>The Oxfordshire 2050 Plan is looking to secure a progressive change to business working practices to 2050. The two alternatives are considered to be traditional rather than transformational. In addition, recent changes to Use Class orders (new Class E) has made calculating floorspace requirements difficult. Therefore, the preferred policy option is likely to be the better option as it provides an overarching positive strategy which Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans can build on.</p>
		2) Use a floor space calculation of new B Class employment.	
	Policy 23: Protection of Economic Assets: The preferred policy option seeks to secure a consistent long-term approach across Oxfordshire to ensure that investment continues to flow to support the	1) Leave to future Local Plans.	<p>Strategic economic assets are considered to be at the heart of Oxfordshire economy. The preferred policy is therefore considered to be necessary to enable sensible forward planning by site owners and business operators about their future site and building needs for new</p>

Theme	Options		Justification for Selection of Preferred Approach over Reasonable Alternatives
	Preferred Approach	Alternatives Considered	
Page 1133	business and science park network as major economic assets. The preferred policy supports a flexible intensification of economic activity at these sites, with repurposed buildings and site layouts, new build and extensions as required.		<p>economic purposes, for science, technology and innovation, as business needs change, in both the rural and urban parts of Oxfordshire. The aim is also to seek to ensure that the network of sites continues to support new innovative economic uses, but also becomes more sustainable, not just as buildings are upgraded, but as sites seek to reduce their carbon footprint and increase their take up of renewable energy, whilst supporting new aspects of the economy of Oxfordshire as innovation continues and key sectors continue to evolve.</p> <p>Alternative 1 is not preferred because it would miss the strategic opportunity from an Oxfordshire-wide approach. Strategic economic assets are at the heart of Oxfordshire the economy.</p>
	Policy 24: Town Centre Renewal: The preferred policy approach seeks to provide the local planning authorities with an enabling policy with which to respond quickly to support new economic opportunities in the city and town centres across Oxfordshire that arise. It establishes a framework policy to support long-term action at the local level following the major changes to retail and the hospitality sector accelerated through the COVID-19 pandemic period.	1) Leave to future Local Plans.	<p>Establishing an Oxfordshire-wide framework is judged the right means to enable forward planning by developers in conjunction with the local planning authorities and the local business community and Parish/Town Council affected.</p> <p>Alternative 1 is not preferred because the opportunity for the Plan to enable forward town centre renewal planning would be missed.</p>
	Policy 25: Visitor Economy: The preferred policy option seeks to set in place a positive strategic framework to address large tourism proposals that are likely to impact on more than one local planning authority.	1) Leave to future Local Plans.	<p>It is considered necessary to provide strategic direction on the determination of major tourism developments that have an impact beyond more than one District or the city. The Plan aims to set out a positive approach to encouraging new sustainable tourism development, in appropriate places to benefit urban and rural Oxfordshire and supporting a coordinated approach to infrastructure to support sustainable tourism development and investment.</p> <p>Alternative 1 is not preferred because the opportunity for the Plan to enable forward visitor economy planning would be missed.</p>

Theme	Options		Justification for Selection of Preferred Approach over Reasonable Alternatives
	Preferred Approach	Alternatives Considered	
Page 1134	Policy 26: Culture and Arts: The preferred policy option aims to advance these cultural and creative industries in Oxfordshire by supporting new strategic cultural and arts facilities across the county that will have regional, national and international draw.	1) Leave to future Local Plans.	It is considered necessary to provide strategic direction on the determination of major culture and arts developments that have an impact beyond more than one District or the city. The Plan aims to set out a positive approach to encouraging new culture and arts development, in appropriate places to benefit urban and rural Oxfordshire and supporting a coordinated approach to infrastructure.  Alternative 1 is not preferred because the opportunity for the Plan to enable forward culture and arts planning would be missed.
	Policy 27: Meeting Skills and Educational Needs: The preferred policy option seeks to ensure that there is a framework policy in place to enable future development or the land use aspects of the reorganisations of skills and education facilities to be considered in a consistent way, especially where the provision reaches beyond administrative boundaries.	1) Leave to future Local Plans.	It is considered necessary to provide strategic direction on the determination of major developments focussed on developing skills and education that have an impact beyond more than one District or the city. The Plan aims to set out a positive approach to encouraging new training and education development, in appropriate places to benefit urban and rural Oxfordshire and supporting a coordinated approach to infrastructure.. This particular issue has arisen in a number of Duty to Cooperate discussions with neighbouring Councils.  Alternative 1 is not preferred because the opportunity for the Plan to enable forward training and education planning would be missed.
	Policy 28: Homes: How many? Commitments and Locations	OGNA trajectories range from an additional 25,000 to 77,000 homes. See additional options appraised in Chapter 4.  Furthermore, five strategic spatial options have been considered and appraised separately below. These options take into account the locations for growth set out	Deferred for further consideration at the Regulation 19 Stage based on the findings of the consultation process, the OGNA Range and existing committed growth across the five adopted Local Plans.

Appendix D  
Reasons for the selection of policies in light of the reasonable alternatives

Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (Reg 18)

Theme	Options		Justification for Selection of Preferred Approach over Reasonable Alternatives
	Preferred Approach	Alternatives Considered	
		in the five adopted local plans.	
	Policy 29: Urban Renewal: The preferred policy option for the Oxfordshire Plan is to put in place a framework policy to guide the development of options to renew areas over the next 20 to 30 years.	1) Leave to future Local Plans.	The preferred policy is considered necessary to enable forward urban renewal planning by the Local Planning Authority in conjunction with the health bodies, developers, local communities and Parish/Town Councils is considered a strategic priority for the Plan.  Alternative 1 is not preferred because the opportunity for the Plan to enable forward urban renewal planning would be missed.
Page 1135	Policy 30: Affordable Housing: The preferred policy focusses on achieving maximum levels of affordable housing are delivered on new residential sites across Oxfordshire. This would mean that the detail surrounding tenure mix and affordable housing requirements (expressed as a percentage) would remain a decision for Local Authorities to include in their local plans in light of local evidence. The Oxfordshire Plan would not set a county-wide figure for affordable housing.	1) Instead of leaving tenure mix to Local Plans, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 could set tenure mix targets across Oxfordshire. This would be added to the policy set out above. Suggested targets (that reflect existing Local Plans) are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40% Affordable Rented</li> <li>• 35% Social Rented</li> <li>• 25% other routes to affordable housing (including shared ownership and first homes).</li> </ul>	This is a sensitive area of policy and one that will have to be subject to viability testing, particularly given there is significant variation across the county as to what is achievable and deliverable from an affordable housing perspective. Affordable housing delivery is a key strategic matter for Oxfordshire.  Alternative 1 is not the preferred approach as it could potentially overlook the differences in the housing market across Oxfordshire. It would also be difficult to ensure that the policy has the necessary flexibility to plan over the longer term to 2050, when the needs of Oxfordshire might change.  Alternative 2 is not preferred because the opportunity for the Plan to enable forward affordable housing planning would be missed.
		2) Do not include an affordable homes policy in Oxfordshire Plan and instead leave to Local Plans	

Theme	Options		Justification for Selection of Preferred Approach over Reasonable Alternatives
	Preferred Approach	Alternatives Considered	
Page 1136	Policy 31: Specialist Housing Needs: The preferred policy is to set a framework on specialist housing for the local plans to work with.	1) Support the delivery of specialist housing where meeting an identified need (i.e. for older people, students and key workers), in appropriate locations and where proposals conform with Local Plan policies.	<p>There are county-wide similarities with specialist housing that could benefit from a strategic level policy. A flexible policy approach is preferred because it enables districts to identify and meet their own needs, while recognising the importance of meeting the needs of an ageing population, a significant student population, particularly in Oxford and meeting the needs of key workers and improving the ability to retain staff. A policy in the Oxfordshire Plan could provide high level support for the delivery of specialist housing, recognising the role the local plans will play in setting out the levels of appropriate specialist housing that should be delivered.</p> <p>Alternative 1 is not preferred because it is considered that further details would compromise the flexibility of such a policy and would need supporting evidence that is currently unavailable.</p> <p>Alternative 2 is not preferred because the opportunity for the Plan to enable forward specialist housing needs planning would be missed.</p>
		2) Leave to future Local Plans, allowing them to define different thresholds for specialist accommodation as appropriate.	
	Policy 32: Gypsies, Travellers, Travelling Showpeople: The preferred policy is to set out an Oxfordshire-wide need figure and local planning authority breakdowns in 5-year tranches for each authority and set out locational criteria for the provision of pitches	No reasonable alternatives identified.	<p>Considering gypsy and traveller needs at a county wide strategic scale provides an opportunity to identify appropriate locations for new sites in appropriate locations as part of a coherent spatial strategy for the county.</p> <p>Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the preparation of the GTAA has been delayed with the household surveys unable to be completed prior to this consultation. It is anticipated these will resume shortly and the final GTAA will be published at the next stage of consultation (Regulation 19).</p>
Spatial Strategy Options: No one option appears able to accommodate all of the proposed additional Plan growth on top of the growth associated with the existing five adopted Local Plans. It is therefore	Option 1: Focus on opportunities at larger settlements & planned growth locations	Deferred for further consideration at the Regulation 19 Stage based on further evidence.	

Theme	Options		Justification for Selection of Preferred Approach over Reasonable Alternatives
	Preferred Approach	Alternatives Considered	
	<p>anticipated that a mix of options will be defined at the Regulation 19 Stage.</p>	<p>Option 2: Focus on Oxford-led growth</p>	
		<p>Option 3: Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors &amp; at strategic transport hubs.</p>	
		<p>Option 4 – Focus on strengthening business locations.</p>	
		<p>Option 5 – Focus on supporting rural communities.</p>	

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## Oxfordshire Joint Statutory Spatial Plan

# Statement of Community Involvement July 2021

Produced by:



Supported by:



## **Statement of Community Involvement**

### **How the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 will be prepared with Community and Stakeholder Engagement**

**July 2021**

#### **Introduction**

1. This is the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. It has been endorsed by the Oxfordshire Growth Board and formally adopted by the Oxfordshire District Planning Authorities in July 2021. The previous SCI was adopted in February 2019.
2. This version provides updated information on the progress of the Oxfordshire Plan, including how community and stakeholder engagement will operate during the COVID-19 outbreak.
3. The six Oxfordshire Councils and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OXLEP) have agreed the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal with Government. Under the terms of the Deal the local authorities have committed to producing a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan (Oxfordshire Plan 2050) for submission to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination by September 2022 and adoption by May/June 2023, subject to examination process.
4. The Oxfordshire Plan will provide an Oxfordshire-wide, integrated strategic planning framework and supporting evidence base to support sustainable growth across the county to 2050, including the planned delivery of the new homes and economic development, and the anticipated supporting infrastructure needed.
5. Once adopted, the Oxfordshire Plan will be a formal Development Plan Document (DPD), prepared under Section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) which enables two or more local planning authorities to agree to prepare a joint Plan. Oxfordshire County Council will support the plan preparation process. More details on the plan can be found in the Scoping Document<sup>1</sup>.
6. A JSSP Project Board was established in July 2018 to guide the preparation of the JSSP. The Oxfordshire Growth Board which includes the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) monitor progress on the Oxfordshire Plan, and approve its budget, reviewing the achievement of milestones as part of an annual review.
7. The Oxfordshire Plan is being prepared with community and stakeholder involvement at each stage of its development.
8. This SCI sets out how the Oxfordshire authorities inform, involve and consult interested parties on the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan and when they will be engaged in the process. This SCI is specific to the production of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. The Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) also have their own individual SCIs related to the production of their Local Plans.
9. This SCI will ensure that the Oxfordshire Plan is shaped by early, proportionate and meaningful engagement between plan makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and statutory consultees.

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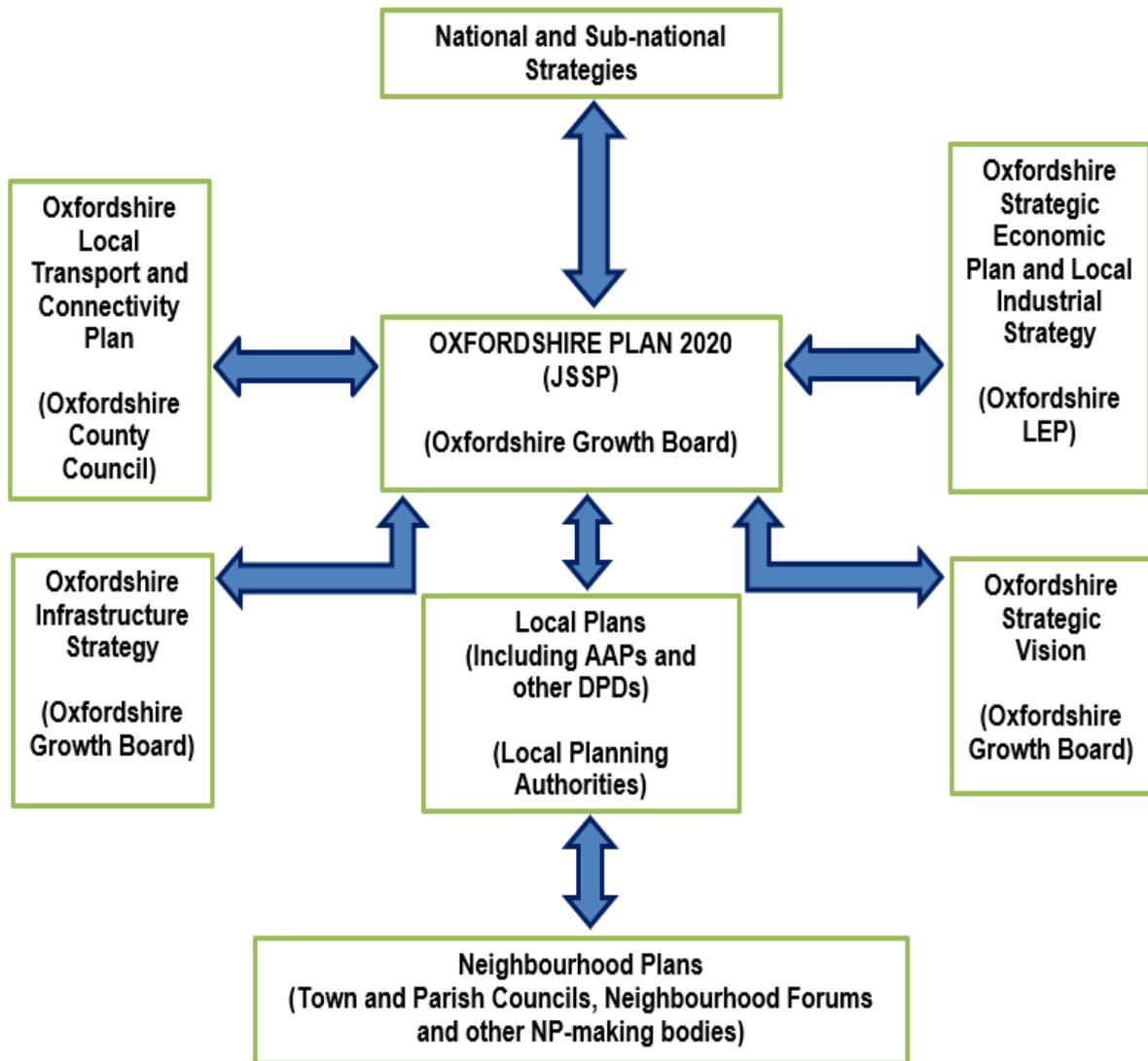
<sup>1</sup> <https://oxfordshireplan.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/JSSP-Scoping-document-October-2018.pdf>

10. The outcomes of the consultation processes set out in this SCI will be an important element of the considerations of the LPAs in developing the Oxfordshire Plan alongside other material matters such as the evidence base and the Sustainability Appraisal etc.
11. The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 will build on the current suite of adopted Local Plans that are in place for the period from 2011 to 2031/5/6, depending on the District covered; as well as the Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) and will link to the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) and a new 2050 Transport Vision and Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy. The Plan will also integrate with the higher-level spatial framework being developed for the Oxford-Cambridge (OxCam) Arc.
12. The Oxfordshire Plan will identify the overall quantum of housing and economic growth within Oxfordshire to be planned for the period after the end of the current suite of adopted Local Plans through to 2050 and its distribution across the county. The Oxfordshire Plan will also identify strategic priorities, and the strategic infrastructure (through OXIS) necessary to deliver the spatial strategy. Its preparation will include the calculation of new housing need figures based upon the methodology in the National Planning Policy Framework and taking into account the implications of the OxCam Arc.
13. The Oxfordshire Growth Board has also prepared a Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire<sup>2</sup>. The Vision will be used to help create an agreed set of long-term, strategic economic, infrastructure and environmental priorities designed to deliver the outcomes that local people want. The development of the Oxfordshire Plan will ensure its policies are aligned to this Strategic Vision.
14. The Oxfordshire Plan will be formally adopted by the individual LPAs and will provide a high-level framework for the review and roll-forward of the Local Plans and related Neighbourhood Plans. Fig.1 shows the relationship between the Oxfordshire Plan and other relevant plans.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.oxfordshireopenthought.org/strategic-vision>

## Relationship between the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and Other Plans



### Duty to Cooperate

15. LPAs, County Councils and other public organisations have a Duty to Co-operate with one another, particularly in the context of strategic cross boundary matters.
16. The way the Oxfordshire local authorities are working together under the Duty to Co-operate to complete the Oxfordshire Plan is set out in an Oxfordshire-wide Statement of Common Ground.

### How we will involve Stakeholders during the COVID-19 Outbreak

17. As a result of current public health guidelines related to COVID-19, some changes are needed to our current consultation methods to reflect the government restrictions in place and importantly protect the health of our communities, residents and staff.
18. In July 2020 the Government introduced a range of temporary measures to make it easier to undertake planning consultations within the current public health guidelines. *The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning, Development Management Procedure, Listed Buildings etc.) (England) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020* amended the existing *Regulation 35 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012*. The amendments to the previous regulations

removed the requirement that hard copies of documents have to be made available for public inspection in a place considered appropriate. Instead, it is possible to comply with Regulation 35 by making plan documents available on the web.

#### *Availability of documents*

19. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, hard copy documents cannot be held at the deposit locations<sup>3</sup> set out in the previous Statement of Community Involvement (2019). Therefore, all relevant consultation documents will be made available online via our website. Paper copies will be available on request to those who are unable to access the website. We will also raise awareness of the publication of documents and/or consultations via our website, social media, an email to those on our mailing list and through a press release sent to local media.

#### *Public events, meetings, workshops, exhibitions and focus groups*

20. Additionally, public events, meetings, workshops, exhibitions and focus groups will currently not be able to take place in person. Instead, we will undertake all public engagement virtually, using online meeting systems, web pages and social media.

#### *How to Comment on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050*

21. As previously, stakeholders can respond to consultations online or by post. A comments form will be produced at each stage of involvement. The form will be able to be used through the portal, or alternatively the form or letters can be emailed or posted to us. Receiving comments through both electronic and handwritten formats will ensure those without internet access will not be disadvantaged in terms of engagement.
22. We will encourage electronic engagement as the primary portal for consultation and will encourage people to make use of the Oxfordshire Open Thought engagement platform. Both Oxfordshire Open Thought and the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 website will set out the information we are seeking at each consultation stage, together with clear instructions on how to register comments. This will offer an easy method for response and in turn will help speed up our analysis of the comments received. We will provide a report on the results of the consultation at each stage of the project.
23. The Councils will comply with the obligations under the General Data Protection Regulations, and the principles of the Data Protection Act, in how they manage any personal data collected through consultation processes.
24. The above temporary measures have been put in place to minimise the impacts of the restrictions on people engaging with the development of the Oxfordshire Plan and Oxfordshire Plan consultations. These measures will remain in place until December 2021 and are subject to change according to COVID-19 and prevailing health advice.

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<sup>3</sup> The previous deposit locations included all council head offices and libraries throughout Oxfordshire.

## **Who will we be engaging with during the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan?**

25. There are a wide range of groups we will engage with during the Plan preparation process. These include:
- statutory consultees as set out in the relevant regulations, including neighbouring councils (see Appendix 1);
  - local service providers and other key general consultation bodies who may have an interest in the Oxfordshire Plan (see Appendix 1);
  - other interested groups, businesses, developers, landowners, agents, Town Councils and Parishes, voluntary groups; and
  - residents (residents will be encouraged to register on our consultation database).
26. A public-sector Equality Duty came into force on 5 April 2011. It means that public bodies must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It also requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination
  - advance equality of opportunity
  - foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.
27. The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012 identify specific and general consultation bodies that must be consulted when preparing Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents (list provided at Appendix 1). Specific consultation bodies must be consulted where the proposed subject matter will be of interest to them. There is also a requirement to invite representations from such residents and persons carrying on business as considered appropriate. There will be many additional parties and individuals interested in the development of the plan and their involvement will be encouraged and facilitated.
28. The Oxfordshire Councils intend that all people should have the opportunity to have their say in how the county is spatially planned irrespective of their differences; including by way of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation. Research may be commissioned to understand public attitudes on relevant topics. Documents will be written in plain English. To achieve value for money and to ensure that consultation is proportionate to the issues being considered, the translation of documents into other languages will be balanced against the cost, time constraints and the available resources.
29. An Oxfordshire Plan consultation database containing specific and general consultees and others that have expressed an interest to be consulted is currently maintained in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation. Where consultation is required, all those on the consultation database will be consulted. When an individual or organisation makes a representation on the Oxfordshire Plan or its supporting documentation, they will be added to the consultation database.

## **When will we involve Stakeholders?**

30. Relevant regulations set out the formal stages in the preparation process of the Oxfordshire Plan, i.e. when we must formally publish the documents for comment and for how long. This SCI reflects how these requirements will be met. Additional days will only be added where statutory Public Holidays (England) fall within the formal consultation period.
31. Plan preparation will involve engagement with specific stakeholders, prescribed bodies, partners and consultees to inform the identification of issues and options. Notwithstanding the above, engagement with specific stakeholders will be undertaken

on a continuous basis to ensure options are thoroughly tested and policy preparation is robust. At each stage of the project, consultation plans will be designed selecting from a wide range of engagement tools and methods including for example use of social media, the press, local and parish newsletters, advertising, questionnaires and events. We may use panels or reference groups as part of this engagement as well as undertake additional research such as an opinion poll. Events will be carefully planned to maximise accessibility. They are also likely to be undertaken virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic in the interest of public health.

32. There will be opportunities to comment on the draft Oxfordshire Plan 2050 when it is formally published and to be involved during its examination by an independent Inspector.
33. A Sustainability Appraisal is an integral part of the plan preparation process and is required for DPDs. It looks at the environmental, social and economic effects of a plan to make sure that the plan promotes sustainable development and takes the most appropriate approach given reasonable alternatives. At each stage of the Plan's preparation there will be a corresponding stage of the Sustainability Appraisal which will be made available for comment during public consultation.
34. Different levels and methods of community involvement will be appropriate as the Oxfordshire Plan progresses through the plan-making process. Table 1 sets out the key consultation stages and milestone dates in the preparation of the Plan, together with the different groups we have involved in the plan-making process so far, and how we proposed to involve them in future. As Table 1 demonstrates, extensive consultation has already taken place at this early stage in the plan-making process. We have provided feedback on consultation responses received so far (in the form of a consultation summary report, published on our website) and will continue to do so at each future stage of consultation.

#### **Review of the SCI**

35. The SCI will be updated if a review is required due to changes to:
  - Legislation/national policy
  - Local decisions
  - Changes to consultation methods and technology
  - Revised COVID-19 public health guidance

**Table 1: Consultation stages in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 preparation process**

Who was/will be involved?	What were we/are we consulting on?	How did we consult, or how are we consulting? (methods are likely to include)
<b>Stakeholder Launch Consultation - (December 2018)</b>		
Informal dialogue with targeted stakeholders and other interested bodies as appropriate - focusing on the challenges/opportunities for developing strategy options	An event for key stakeholders (including duty to co-operate bodies) to introduce the Oxfordshire Plan project and to ask for their initial views on what the Oxfordshire Plan's vision, aspirations and objectives should be.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oxfordshire Plan 2050 website</li> <li>• Contact consultees/ organisations by email</li> <li>• Stakeholder meeting/workshop</li> <li>• Press release</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report – (7<sup>th</sup> January – 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019)</b>		
Consulted people/organisations listed in the Regulations and others as appropriate	The formal consultation sought to elicit views on whether the scope of the document was appropriate as set out considering the role of the Oxfordshire Plan to help meet and manage Oxfordshire's growth needs and development ambition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email contact</li> <li>• Oxfordshire Plan 2050 website</li> <li>• LPA Websites</li> </ul>
<b>Call for Strategic Development Options (to be considered through the plan)</b>		
Landowners, developers, agents, general public	To identify options for the availability, suitability and deliverability of land for strategic growth that should be considered through the plan process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted e-mail contact</li> <li>• Oxfordshire Plan 2050 website</li> <li>• LPA websites</li> </ul>
<b>Consultation on Vision, Aspirations and Objectives (Reg.18 Part 1) – (11<sup>th</sup> Feb 2019 – 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019)</b>		
Consulted people/organisations listed in the Regulations, general public and other interested bodies as appropriate.	Publish document - six weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oxfordshire Plan 2050 website</li> <li>• Contacted consultees/ organisations by email</li> <li>• Social media posts</li> <li>• Events/ exhibitions</li> <li>• Press release</li> <li>• Documents available to view in council buildings</li> </ul>
<b>Call for Ideas Consultation - (21<sup>st</sup> February – 12<sup>th</sup> April 2019)</b>		

<p>Consulted people/organisations listed in the Regulations, general public and other interested bodies as appropriate</p>	<p>This consultation aimed to give the public an opportunity to present ideas as to where the most suitable places for residential development and economic growth might be. – six weeks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oxfordshire Plan 2050 website</li> <li>• Contacted consultees/ organisations by email</li> <li>• Events/ exhibitions</li> <li>• Press releases</li> <li>• Documents available to view in council buildings</li> </ul>
<p><b>Oxfordshire Plan Stakeholder Event - (May 2019)</b></p>		
<p>Targeted stakeholders</p>	<p>A further event for key stakeholders (including duty to co-operate bodies) to help refine the Oxfordshire Plan’s vision, aspirations and objectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oxfordshire Plan 2050 website</li> <li>• Contact consultees/ organisations by email</li> <li>• Stakeholder meeting/ workshop</li> <li>• Press release</li> </ul>
<p><b>Oxfordshire Open Thought - (1<sup>st</sup> June – 14<sup>th</sup> August 2020)</b></p>		
<p>Consulted people/organisations listed in the Regulations, general public and other interested bodies as appropriate.</p>	<p>This followed a recognition that the shift in timeline presented an opportunity for further engagement while also seeking to address feedback from the Reg 18 part 1 that suggested the Plan need to be bolder and more innovative.</p> <p>Open Thought sought to consider three main challenges facing the county in the future – climate change, connectivity, and living and working. While the themes were wider than the scope of the Plan, the engagement sought to gain potential policy ideas for the Plan by tapping into the knowledge and expertise within the county.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oxfordshire Open Thought website</li> <li>• Contact consultees/ organisations by email</li> <li>• Social media posts</li> <li>• Press releases</li> </ul>
<p><b>Consultation on Preferred Strategy (Reg.18 Part 2) - (July/August/September 2021)</b></p>		

Consult people/organisations listed in the Regulations, general public and other interested bodies as appropriate.	Consulting upon Policy and Spatial Growth Options (including scale and Broad Locations of Growth) – ten weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oxfordshire Plan 2050 website</li> <li>• Contact consultees/organisations by email</li> <li>• Virtual events including webinars and workshops</li> <li>• Social media posts</li> <li>• Press Release</li> </ul>
<b>Consultation on Submission (Draft) Plan (Reg. 19) – (May/June 2022)</b>		
Consult people/organisations listed in the Regulations, general public and other interested bodies as appropriate.	Consulting on the Draft Submission Plan document - six weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oxfordshire Plan 2050 website</li> <li>• Contact consultees/organisations by email</li> <li>• Virtual events including webinars and workshops</li> <li>• Social media posts</li> <li>• Press release</li> </ul>
<b>Examination - (November/December 2022)</b>		
Notify people/organisations listed in the Regulations and others as appropriate via Programme Officer	Publish dates and programmes associated with Examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oxfordshire Plan 2050 website</li> <li>• Contact consultees/organisations by email</li> <li>• Press release</li> <li>• Social media posts</li> </ul>
<b>Consultation on Inspectors main modifications to the draft plan (if any)</b>		
Notify people/organisations listed in the Regulations and others as appropriate via Programme Officer	Potential main modifications to JSSP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oxfordshire Plan 2050 website</li> <li>• Contact consultees/organisations by email</li> <li>• Press release</li> <li>• Social media posts</li> </ul>
<b>Receipt and Publication of Inspector's Report - (February/March 2023)</b>		
Notify people/organisations listed in the Regulations and others as appropriate via Programme Officer	Only distributed for information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oxfordshire Plan 2050 website</li> <li>• Contact consultees/organisations by email</li> <li>• Press release</li> <li>• Social media posts</li> </ul>
<b>Adoption (subject to examination)</b>		
May/June 2023 - No further consultation		

## Appendix 1: Consultation Bodies

### Specific Consultation Bodies<sup>2</sup>

- (a) the Coal Authority
- (b) the Environment Agency
- (c) the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (known as Historic England)
- (d) the Marine Management Organisation
- (e) Natural England
- (f) Network Rail Infrastructure Limited (company number 2904587),
- (g) Highways England (formerly the Highways Agency)
- (h) a relevant authority any part of whose area is in or adjoins the local planning authority's area<sup>3</sup>
- (i) any person—
  - (i) to whom the electronic communications code applies by virtue of a direction given under section 106(3)(a) of the Communications Act 2003 and
  - (ii) who owns or controls electronic communications apparatus situated in any part of the local planning authority's area
- (j) if it exercises functions in any part of the local planning authority's area—
  - (i) The NHS Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (formerly the Primary Care Trust established under section 18 of the National Health Service Act 2006(g) or continued in existence by virtue of that section)
  - (ii) a person to whom a licence has been granted under section 6(1)(b) or (c) of the Electricity Act 1989
  - (iii) a person to whom a licence has been granted under section 7(2) of the Gas Act 1986(
  - (iv) a sewerage undertaker; and
  - (v) a water undertaker
- (k) the Homes and Communities Agency

### Other Consultees

#### General Consultation Bodies<sup>4</sup>

- (a) voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit any part of the local planning authority's area
- (b) bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the local planning authority's area
- (c) bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the local planning authority's area
- (d) bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the local planning authority's area
- (e) bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the local planning authority's area

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<sup>2</sup> As set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

<sup>3</sup> Neighbouring authorities: Buckinghamshire Council; Cotswold District Council; Gloucestershire County Council; West Northamptonshire Council; Reading Borough Council; Stratford-on-Avon District Council; Swindon Borough Council; Warwickshire County Council; West Berkshire Council; Wiltshire Council; Wokingham Borough Council; Wycombe District Council

<sup>4</sup> As set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

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# Oxfordshire Plan 2050

## Statement of Common Ground

Second Regulation 18 Consultation

July 2021



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## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground documents the cross-boundary strategic planning matters being addressed through the production of the Oxfordshire Plan and the progress made in co-operating to address these matters up to the second Regulation 18 (preferred options) consultation.
- 1.2 As co-operation to address cross-boundary strategic planning matters will continue throughout the plan-making process, updates to this Statement of Common Ground will be published at future stages as appropriate (as set out in Section 10).
- 1.3 This Statement of Common Ground has been produced in accordance with Paragraph 27 of the National Planning Policy Framework<sup>1</sup> (NPPF) and the approach set out in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

## 2 The Oxfordshire Plan 2050

- 2.1 The Oxfordshire Plan is a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan (JSSP) which is being jointly prepared by the five local planning authorities in Oxfordshire: Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council (referred to throughout this document as 'Oxfordshire's City and District Councils').
- 2.2 Oxfordshire's City and District Councils are working in close partnership with Oxfordshire County Council and Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) throughout the plan-making process.
- 2.3 The Oxfordshire Plan will provide a long term, strategic planning framework for Oxfordshire. It will set out the level of growth to be delivered in Oxfordshire to 2050 and the spatial strategy for the distribution of growth in Oxfordshire to 2050. It will also set out a number of strategic planning policies around five key themes:
  - i. Addressing climate change
  - ii. Improving environmental quality
  - iii. Creating strong and healthy communities
  - iv. Planning for sustainable travel and connectivity
  - v. Creating jobs and providing homes
- 2.4 A core team has been established to co-ordinate the production Oxfordshire Plan, which includes officers seconded from Oxfordshire's City and District Councils and Oxfordshire County Council.
- 2.5 The Oxfordshire Plan is being developed by consensus, with officers and elected members, from all the Oxfordshire authorities and OxLEP, working together at every stage of plan-making process to ensure that individual and collective views are taken

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (February 2019) National Planning Policy Framework

into account. Further detail on the joint working arrangements established to deliver the Oxfordshire Plan is provided in the Duty to Co-operate Statement.

- 2.6 At each key stage of the plan-making process, Oxfordshire's City and District Councils will be asked to formally approve the emerging Oxfordshire Plan and its supporting documents (for example at the Regulation 18 and 19 stages).
- 2.7 The Oxfordshire Plan will be adopted by each of Oxfordshire's City and District Councils. It will then form part of each authority's development plan, providing the strategic planning framework for future local plans and decision-making on development proposals.

### **3 Scale of Cross-Boundary Strategic Planning Matters**

- 3.1 In producing the Oxfordshire Plan, there are a range of scales at which cross-boundary strategic planning matters need to be considered. These can be broadly grouped into three categories:

- i. **Cross-boundary strategic planning matters within Oxfordshire**

As a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan, being produced by five local planning authorities, co-operation to address cross-boundary strategic planning matters within Oxfordshire is the foundation of the Oxfordshire Plan.

Oxfordshire County Council, with an administrative area spanning all five local planning authority areas, is a key partner in the production of the Oxfordshire Plan. Oxfordshire County Council has responsibilities including minerals and waste planning, transport, education, flood risk and public health.

OxLEP also spans all five local planning authority areas and is key partner in the production of the Oxfordshire Plan. OxLEP champions Oxfordshire's economic potential on the national and international stage to attract jobs and investment into the County and ensures that the voices of businesses are heard.

Oxfordshire does not currently have a Local Nature Partnership (LNP). However, progress is being made to establish a LNP for Oxfordshire. Should an LNP be formed during the plan-making process, the LNP would also become a key partner in the production of the Oxfordshire Plan.

Oxfordshire's City and District Councils are engaging constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with each other, Oxfordshire County Council and OxLEP to maximise the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan in addressing cross-boundary strategic planning matters in Oxfordshire in accordance with the Duty to Co-operate. Further detail on the joint working arrangements established to deliver the Oxfordshire Plan is provided in the Duty to Co-operate Statement.

## **ii. Cross-boundary strategic planning matters with areas adjoining Oxfordshire**

As functional relationships do not end at Oxfordshire's boundary, cross-boundary strategic planning matters with local authorities, LEPs and LNPs that adjoin Oxfordshire are also being considered throughout the plan-making process.

Oxfordshire's City and District Councils are engaging constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with the local authorities, LEPs and LNPs adjoining Oxfordshire to maximise the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan in addressing cross-boundary strategic planning matters in accordance with the Duty to Co-operate. Further detail on the engagement undertaken to date and how this is informing the production of the Oxfordshire Plan is provided in the Duty to Co-operate Statement.

## **iii. Wider cross-boundary strategic planning matters**

Cross-boundary strategic planning matters across other relevant geographies are also being considered throughout the plan-making process as appropriate.

Oxfordshire is a key component of the Oxford-Cambridge (OxCam) Arc - a strategic 'arc' in central England which is home to a unique business, science and technology ecosystem. The OxCam Arc also covers the ceremonial counties of Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire. The government has committed to producing a Spatial Framework for the OxCam Arc, which will focus on strategic opportunities for growth and environmental improvement that cross administrative boundaries and require more joined up thinking across the area.

Oxfordshire is also part of England's Economic Heartland (EEH) - a strategic collaborative partnership, stretching from Swindon to Cambridgeshire and from Northamptonshire to Hertfordshire, with a shared commitment to realise the region's economic potential while achieving net-zero carbon. EEH is the sub-national transport body for the region, with a transport strategy that establishes a 30 year strategic vision for the region's transport system. EEG also works with delivery partners to identify investment priorities, secure funding and deliver schemes.

Wider cross-boundary strategic planning matters may also relate to other geographies such as river catchments, water resource zones or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Wider cross-boundary strategic planning matters include those identified as being relevant to Prescribed Bodies<sup>2</sup>. This includes the Environment Agency, Historic England, Natural England, Civil Aviation Authority, Homes England,

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<sup>2</sup> Prescribed Bodies as defined by The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Part 2. Regulation 4.

Clinical Commissioning Groups, The Office of Rail and Road, Highways England and the Mayor of London.

Oxfordshire's City and District Councils are engaging constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with relevant Prescribed Bodies to maximise the effectiveness of the Oxfordshire Plan in addressing cross-boundary strategic planning matters in accordance with the Duty to Co-operate. Further detail on the engagement undertaken to date and how this is informing the production of the Oxfordshire Plan is provided in the Duty to Co-operate Statement.

## 4 Geographical Area

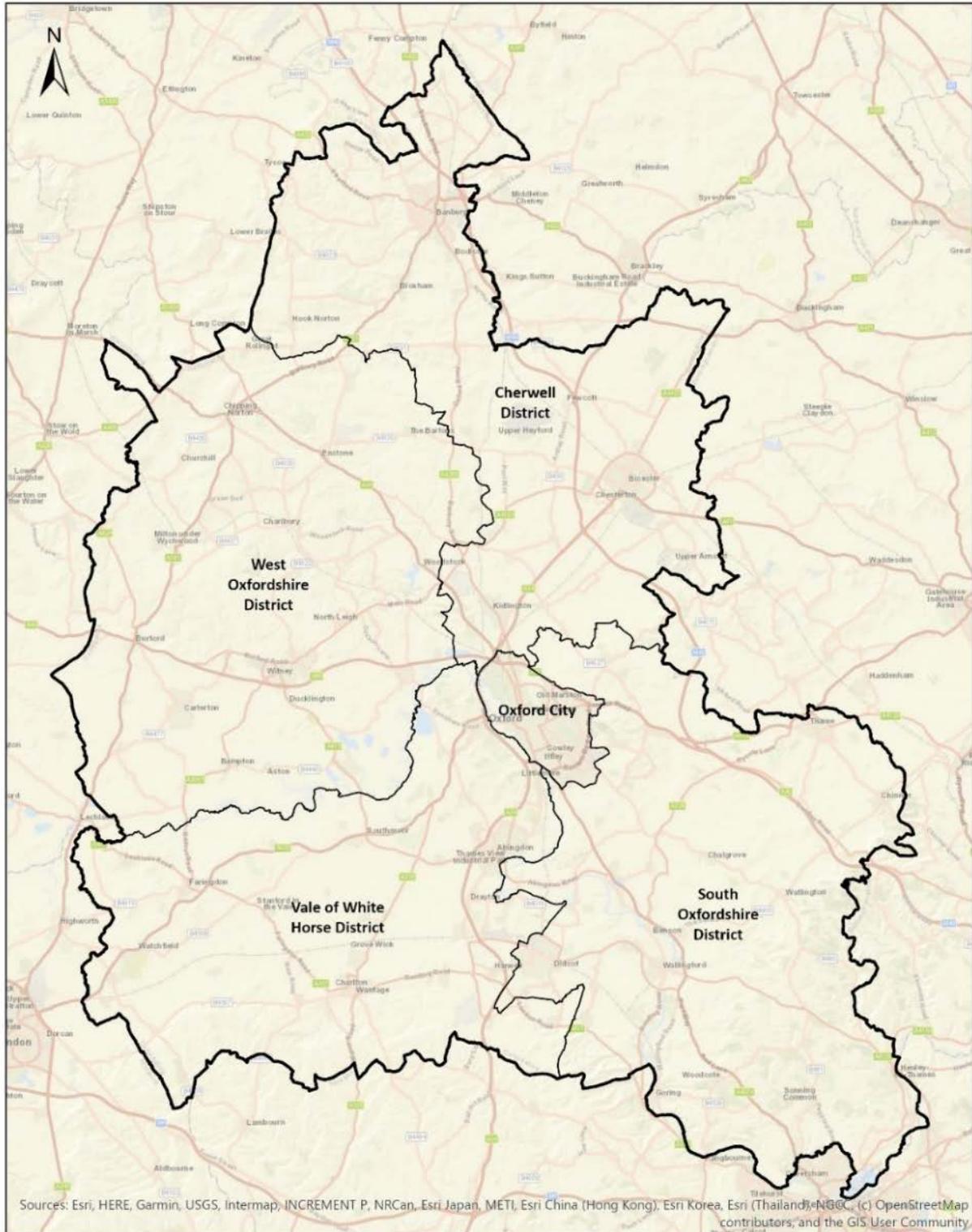
- 4.1 The geographical area covered by this Statement of Common Ground is the county of Oxfordshire (Figure 1).
- 4.2 This Statement of Common Ground focuses on the geographical area of Oxfordshire for the following reasons:
- i. It is the geographical area covered by the Oxfordshire Plan;
  - ii. It reflects the Oxfordshire housing market area;
  - iii. It reflects the Oxfordshire functional economic market area, the area covered by OxLEP and the area covered by the Strategic Economic Plan and the Local Industrial Strategy, as well as related strategies on energy, skills and Covid-19 economic recovery;
  - iv. It reflects the administrative area of Oxfordshire County Council providing consistency in relation to county matters such as transport (including consistency with the adopted Local Transport Plan<sup>3</sup> and the emerging Local Transport and Connectivity Plan), education and public health;
  - v. There is a long history of co-operation and joint working in Oxfordshire in relation to cross-boundary strategic planning matters, including the production of shared evidence such as the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (2014) and the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) (2017);
  - vi. There are established governance and joint working arrangements, including the Oxfordshire Growth Board - a joint committee with the leaders of all six Oxfordshire authorities as the core voting members. The Oxfordshire Growth Board also includes associate members from the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Universities, Oxfordshire Skills Board, Environment Agency, Homes England, Network Rail and Highways England;
  - vii. It is consistent with the area covered by the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal, which was signed with the UK Government in 2018; and
  - viii. No cross-boundary strategic planning matters with authorities adjoining Oxfordshire, Prescribed Bodies or other geographical areas have been

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<sup>3</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (September 201) Connecting Oxfordshire: Local Transport Plan 2015 - 2031

identified that require a statement of common ground at this stage. In particular, there are no known issues of unmet housing need arising in neighbouring housing market areas that Oxfordshire's City and District Councils are being asked to accommodate.

**Figure 1: Administrative and geographical areas covered by this Statement of Common Ground**



- 4.3 Further detail on the background to joint working in Oxfordshire, established governance and joint working arrangements and the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal is provided in the Duty to Co-operate Statement<sup>4</sup>.
- 4.4 The need for a statement of common ground, or additional statements of common ground, covering alternative geographical scales will be considered as work on the Oxfordshire Plan progresses.

## 5 Parties Involved

- 5.1 The plan-making authorities responsible for the joint working detailed in this Statement of Common Ground are:
- Cherwell District Council
  - Oxford City Council
  - South Oxfordshire District Council
  - Vale of White Horse District Council
  - West Oxfordshire District Council
- 5.2 The additional signatories to this Statement of Common Ground, who have a role in the strategic matters identified and with whom Oxfordshire's City and District Councils need to co-operate with in order to plan for these matters, are:
- Oxfordshire County Council
  - Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership
- 5.3 The need for additional signatories, such as authorities adjoining Oxfordshire, Prescribed Bodies and/or infrastructure providers will be considered as work on the Oxfordshire Plan progresses.

## 6 Strategic Matters

- 6.1 The cross-boundary strategic planning matters that are addressed in this Statement of Common Ground and the parties that are signatories to those matters are set out in Table 1.
- 6.2 The cross-boundary strategic planning matters to be addressed by the Oxfordshire Plan were originally identified through the Oxfordshire Plan Scoping Document (October 2018), which was jointly produced by Oxfordshire's City and District Councils at the commencement of the project. However, the strategic planning matters to be addressed by the Oxfordshire Plan have evolved over time in response to the outcomes of joint working, engagement (including the first Regulation 18 consultation and engagement under the Duty to Co-operate) and emerging evidence.
- 6.3 The cross-boundary strategic planning matters to be addressed by the Oxfordshire Plan may continue to evolve as the plan-making process progresses.

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<sup>4</sup> Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Duty to Co-operate Statement Second Regulation 18 Consultation (July 2021)

**TABLE 1: Strategic Matters covered by this Statement of Common Ground and Relevant Signatories**

		Signatories					
		Cherwell	Oxford City	South Oxon	Vale of White Horse	West Oxon	Oxon County Council
Cross Boundary Strategic Planning Matters	Theme One: Addressing Climate Change						
	Climate Change (including mitigation and adaption)	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü
	Water Resources / Water Quality	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü
	Flood Risk	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü
	Theme Two: Improving Environmental Quality						
	Natural Environment / Green Infrastructure	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü
	Landscape Quality and Character	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü
	Contaminated Land	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü
	Theme Three: Creating Strong and Healthy Communities						
	Healthy Place-Shaping	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü
	Community Facilities (inc. health and education)	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü
	Heritage and Historic Environment	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü
	Theme Four: Planning for Sustainable Travel and Connectivity						
	Transport	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü
	Other Infrastructure (including water supply)	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü
	Theme Five: Creating Jobs and Providing Homes						
	Economy and Employment	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü
	Retail/Leisure/Other Commercial Development	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü
	Housing Requirements	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü
	Housing Supply	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü
Gypsies, Travellers, Caravan Dwellers, Travelling Showpeople	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü	
Boat Dwellers	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü	
Green Belt	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü	ü	

## 7 Record of Agreement: Oxfordshire's City and District Councils

7.1 This is a record of progress made by Oxfordshire's City and District Councils in co-operating to address cross-boundary strategic planning matters through the production of the Oxfordshire Plan up to the second Regulation 18 (preferred options) consultation.

### Governance and Joint Working

7.2 As a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan, being produced by five local planning authorities, co-operation and joint working to address cross-boundary strategic planning matters is the basis of the Oxfordshire Plan.

7.3 Officers (at all levels) and elected members from Oxfordshire's City and District Councils have worked together to identify and agree the policy and spatial options set out in the second Regulation 18 (preferred options) consultation document.

7.4 Each council will formally approve the documentation for publication and consultation at the second Regulation 18 stage, following appropriate scrutiny arrangements.

7.5 Established joint working arrangements will continue throughout the plan-making process. Further detail on these arrangements is provided in the Duty to Co-operate Statement<sup>5</sup>.

### Oxfordshire Plan Scope

7.6 Oxfordshire's City and District Councils agree that the Oxfordshire Plan will:

- relate to cross-boundary strategic planning matters of relevance to the whole of Oxfordshire, with detailed and more locally specific policies to be provided by local and neighbourhood plans as appropriate;
- seek to address the cross-boundary strategic planning matters identified in Table 1, recognising that this list of strategic matters may continue to evolve during the plan-making process;
- establish the housing requirement for Oxfordshire from 2020-2050 and seek to meet that requirement within the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area;
- establish the strategy for the distribution of development in Oxfordshire to 2050, including the identification of broad locations for growth (with detailed allocations to come forward through future local plans), based upon an understanding and appreciation of both the environmental quality and natural capital of Oxfordshire;
- outline the strategic infrastructure required to support development in Oxfordshire to 2050;

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<sup>5</sup> Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Duty to Co-operate Statement Second Regulation 18 Consultation (July 2021)

- seek to deliver ‘good growth’ as defined by the Oxfordshire Growth Board’s ‘Strategic Vision for Long-Term Sustainable Development to 2050’ (known as the ‘Strategic Vision’);
- seek to realise transformational opportunities associated with producing a joint strategic plan to 2050, whilst also responding appropriately to the uncertainty associated with planning for the longer-term; and
- seek to add value, as an additional layer sitting between national and local planning policy and guidance.

7.7 At this stage, how the Oxfordshire Plan will meet the scope set out in paragraph 7.6 is being explored through a range of policy and spatial options.

### Policy Options

7.8 Oxfordshire’s City and District Councils have worked together to identify and agree a range of policy options based on the cross-boundary strategic planning matters identified in Table 1. This includes the identification and agreement of preferred policy options. Identified policy options will be tested through the plan-making process, including through the second Regulation 18 consultation.

### Spatial Options

7.9 Oxfordshire’s City and District Councils have worked together to identify and agree five spatial options:

*Option 1:* Focus on opportunities at larger settlements and planned growth locations

*Option 2:* Focus on Oxford-led growth

*Option 3:* Focus on opportunities in sustainable transport corridors and at sustainable transport hubs

*Option 4:* Focus on strengthening business locations

*Option 5:* Focus on supporting rural communities

7.10 It is agreed that the Oxfordshire Plan’s spatial strategy may comprise components from more than one of the spatial options.

7.11 The shared principles underpinning the spatial options are:

- All options should help deliver the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision and the Oxfordshire Plan's Vision and Objectives. They seek to align environmental, social and economic objectives - though each option does this in different ways and to varying degrees because each is based on a different key driver for transformation.
- Options should make effective use of land by planning positively for re-use of previously developed or brownfield land, including under-utilised land and buildings as urban regeneration schemes.
- All options should prioritise the environment as a common thread that flows from the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision. This includes climate change, nature recovery,

natural capital and enhanced resilience. This means there is no separate environment-led option.

- All options support the City of Oxford as the key driver for good growth within Oxfordshire.
- All options give priority to national policies that protect areas or assets that are of particular intrinsic importance and are likely to endure over the whole Plan period and are likely to impact on the distribution of development at the strategic scale.
- All options will seek to influence and shape the priorities within the emerging Spatial Framework for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.
- All options recognise that in the short-term, adopted local plans will be particularly important in shaping Oxfordshire's spatial strategy, but that over the longer-term – the 30-year time-span of the Oxfordshire Plan – there is greater scope to effect change, but also greater uncertainty.

7.12 It is agreed that the Oxfordshire Plan's spatial strategy and broad locations for growth will be identified through a joint assessment process as set out in the 'Next Steps: Proceeding from Regulation 18 to Regulation 19' section of the second Regulation 18 consultation document.

### Evidence

7.13 Oxfordshire's City and District Councils agree that the Oxfordshire Plan will be founded on a robust and proportionate countywide evidence base.

7.14 Oxfordshire's City and District Councils have jointly commissioned a range of evidence to inform the Oxfordshire Plan. This includes:

- Habitats Regulations Assessment (early risk assessment)
- Health Impact Assessment
- Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment
- Oxfordshire Gypsy, Traveller, Travelling Showpeople and Boat Dwellers Accommodation Assessment
- Oxfordshire Strategic Water Cycle Study
- Sustainability Appraisal
- Transport Evidence

7.15 Much of this evidence will continue to be developed to inform the production of the Regulation 19 draft plan.

7.16 Further evidence will also be jointly commissioned prior to Regulation 19. This includes a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Heritage Impact Assessment, Air Quality Impact Assessment and Viability Assessment.

7.17 In addition, the Oxfordshire Plan will also be informed by a range of other countywide evidence, which has been developed with other partners, including:

- Local Energy Oxfordshire (Project LEO)
- Natural Capital Evidence

- Oxfordshire Energy Strategy
- Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation Project
- Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS)
- Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network
- Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS)

## **8 Record of Agreement: Oxfordshire County Council and Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership**

- 8.1 This is a record of progress made by Oxfordshire’s City and District Councils in co-operating with Oxfordshire County Council and OxLEP to address cross-boundary strategic planning matters through the production of the Oxfordshire Plan up to the second Regulation 18 (preferred options) consultation.

### **Governance and Joint Working Arrangements**

- 8.2 Oxfordshire’s City and District Councils are working in close partnership with Oxfordshire County Council and OxLEP throughout the plan-making process. Details of established joint working arrangements are provided in the Duty to Co-operate Statement<sup>6</sup>. These joint working arrangements will continue throughout the plan-making process

### **Oxfordshire Plan Scope**

- 8.3 Oxfordshire County Council and OxLEP support the scope of the Oxfordshire Plan as set out in paragraph 7.6.

### **Policy and Spatial Options**

- 8.4 Oxfordshire County Council and OxLEP have been involved in the process of identifying the policy and spatial options set out in the second Regulation 18 (preferred options) consultation document. Co-operation has taken place where cross-boundary strategic planning matters identified as being relevant to Oxfordshire County Council and OxLEP are being addressed (Table 1).
- 8.5 Oxfordshire County Council and OxLEP agree that the policy and spatial options identified, including preferred policy options, are appropriate for testing through the plan-making process, including through the Regulation 18 consultation.

### **Evidence**

- 8.6 It is agreed that the Oxfordshire Plan will be informed by relevant evidence and align with relevant strategies produced by Oxfordshire County Council and OxLEP.
- 8.7 Relevant evidence and strategies produced by Oxfordshire County Council include the emerging Local Transport and Connectivity Plan, the Minerals and Waste Local Plan, public health data, historic environment records and education provision.

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<sup>6</sup> Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Duty to Co-operate Statement Second Regulation 18 Consultation (July 2021)

- 8.8 Relevant evidence and strategies produced by OxLEP include the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan and the Local Industrial Strategy, as well as related strategies on energy, skills and Covid-19 economic recovery.

## **9 Governance Arrangements**

- 9.1 The Statement of Common Ground for the Oxfordshire Plan will be maintained by the Oxfordshire Plan core team in their role as coordinators of the production of the Oxfordshire Plan on behalf of Oxfordshire's City and District Councils.
- 9.2 The Statement of Common Ground for the Oxfordshire Plan will be signed by a senior member or senior responsible officer from Oxfordshire City and District Councils, Oxfordshire County Council and OxLEP.

## **10 Timetable for Review**

- 10.1 Co-operation between Oxfordshire's City and District Councils, in close partnership with Oxfordshire County Council and OxLEP, is integral to the production of the Oxfordshire Plan as a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan for Oxfordshire. Engagement between the partners is embedded at every stage of the plan-making process.
- 10.2 The Statement of Common Ground for the Oxfordshire Plan will be reviewed and updated throughout the plan-making process.
- 10.3 As a minimum, the Statement of Common Ground will next be updated and published at the Regulation 19 consultation stage, when the content of the proposed submission plan has been agreed.
- 10.4 Additional updates to the Statement of Common Ground may be required in the following circumstances:
- i. If additional formal stages of consultation are added to the Oxfordshire Plan timetable; and/or
  - ii. If there is any other significant change in circumstance or position where a revision to the Statement of Common Ground is considered necessary, appropriate and proportionate.
- 10.5 The need for a Statement of Common Ground, or additional Statements of Common Ground covering alternative geographical areas or with additional signatories, will be considered as work on the Oxfordshire Plan progresses, informed by relevant evidence and engagement.

## 11 Signatures

### **Cherwell District Council**

Signature: 

Name: David Peckford

Position: Assistant Director – Planning and Development

Date: 01/07/21

### **Oxford City Council**

Signature:



Name: Adrian Arnold

Position: Head of Planning

Date: 01/07/2021

### **South Oxfordshire District Council**

Signature: 

Name: Adrian Duffield

Position: Head of Planning

Date: 01/07/21

### **Vale of White Horse District Council**

Signature: 

Name: Adrian Duffield

Position: Head of Planning

Date: 01/07/21

**West Oxfordshire District Council**



Signature:

Name: Giles Hughes

Position: Chief Executive

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> June 2021

**Oxfordshire County Council**



Signature:

Name: Rachel Wileman

Position: Assistant Director Strategic Infrastructure and Planning

Date: 01/07/21

**Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership**



Signature:

Name: Nigel Tipple

Position: Chief Executive

Date: 29/06/21

# Agenda Item 9

 <p><b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b></p>	<p><b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b></p>
<p>Name and date of Committee</p>	<p><b>Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Wednesday 8 July 2021</b></p>
<p>Report Number</p>	<p><b>Agenda Item No. 9</b></p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p><b>Council Priorities and Service Performance Report 2020-21 Quarter Four</b></p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Accountable member</p>	<p>All relevant Cabinet Members</p>
<p>Accountable officer</p>	<p>Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Tel: (01993) 861658 Email: giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Summary/Purpose</p>	<p>This report provides details of service performance during Q4</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p><a href="#">Annex A</a> – Council Plan Annual Statement Annex B – Performance Indicator report</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>That the Committee reviews, and challenges as appropriate, performance for 2020-21 Q4</p>
<p>Corporate priorities</p>	<p>Climate Action: Leading the way in protecting and enhancing the environment by taking action locally on climate change and biodiversity Healthy Towns and Villages: Facilitating healthy lifestyles and better wellbeing for everyone A Vibrant District Economy: Securing future economic success through supporting existing local businesses and attracting new businesses to deliver the economic ambitions of the Local Industrial Strategy Strong Local Communities: Supporting and building prosperous and inclusive local communities Meeting the Housing Needs of our Changing Population: Securing the provision of market and affordable housing of a high quality for a wide range of householders making their home in West Oxfordshire</p>
<p>Key Decision</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Exempt</p>	<p>No</p>

## **I. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. The Council monitors service performance each quarter as well as progress towards achieving the aim and priorities set out in the Corporate Plan at the end of Q2 and Q4.
- 1.2. Performance in those service areas relating to the work of this Committee is provided in this report.

## **2. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK - PERFORMANCE REPORTING**

- 2.1. A high level Commissioning Framework was approved by Cabinet in October 2020. The Commissioning Framework identifies that the provision of robust performance data – quantitative and qualitative, together with a robust analysis of that data and evidence – is vital to ensure that the Council has the information to assess whether its commissioned services are being delivered to a high quality.
- 2.2. A new performance management framework has been developed; a much broader framework than previous frameworks. It sets out six key strands of information on which assurance needs to be provided, with a key shift in focus from performance monitoring to performance management:
  - Business analytics and service assurance
  - Place based measures and comparators
  - Publica Business Plan strategic actions
  - Council Plan priority actions
  - Project and programme management assurance
  - Risk and opportunity management
- 2.3. The quarterly performance report will continue to evolve in line with the Performance Management Framework as well as feedback from senior officers and Members.
- 2.4. As an example of this, a selection of publically available benchmarking data has been included in the Q4 Performance Indicator report on a trial basis. Benchmarking can be a useful tool for driving improvement; by comparing our performance with other similar organisations, we can start a discussion about what good performance might look like, and why there might be variations, as well as learning from other organisations about how they operate (process benchmarking).
- 2.5. Two comparator groups that are commonly used to benchmark Councils' performance are: all shire districts councils and CIPFA Nearest Neighbours (NN). Whilst performance benchmarking can be useful as a tool for driving improvement, it is important to remember that performance needs to be viewed within context i.e. a range of both internal and external factors contribute to the level of performance achieved; therefore benchmarks should be used as a 'guide' and as a starting point for discussion.
- 2.6. The Commissioning Framework also sets out the relationship between Publica and the Council and their respective responsibilities. Publica's Executive Director (Commissioning) is accountable to the Council for the services commissioned from Publica, and also for the services commissioned by Publica from third parties on behalf of the Council. Publica must ensure that it provides the necessary information to the Council so it can assess whether the commissioned services are being delivered in accordance with the agreed quality and

standard. The Council's Chief Executive is responsible for reviewing and approving the information provided in this report prior to its publication.

- 2.7. The Council's Chief Executive has received a report on service performance, and he has assessed it in line with the high level Commissioning Statement. He has noted the progress that has been made to deliver the actions in the Council Plan as well the lower level of operational performance in Q4 as a result of the ongoing pandemic and its impact on resources and the delivery of services. The Chief Executive has also noted the continued impact of Covid-19 on communities, businesses, customers, services, and staff as the nation moves from response to recovery and back to response again. He has drawn particular attention to the following:
- i. The nation entered its third lockdown on 5 January 2021. Many services continue to support residents, communities and businesses that have been impacted by Covid-19 as part of their every day job. Enormous efforts continue to be made by a number of services in supporting businesses to access grants, carrying out 'track and trace', and operating the Community Response hub (call handling, outbound calling, complex welfare support and problem solving, food parcel delivery and welfare checks, and signposting those that need support to the relevant organisations). In 2020-21, the Council distributed a total of £39,595,446 in business grants;
  - ii. The Council's leisure centres have been severely impacted by Covid-19 and three national lockdowns, when the facilities were required to close down. Following the end of the third lockdown, leisure centres were re-opened for some outdoor activities on 29 March 2021, and potentially all facilities and activities could be fully re-opened from 21 June, subject to the Government agreeing to the stage four easing of the national lockdown. The Council agreed a contract variation with the service provider and further financial recovery packages to cover the period until March 2021. Some government grant funding has been available to cover Council losses; and a further tranche of funding was made available through Sport England to cover costs incurred by leisure operators during the lockdown, and to support the re-opening;
  - iii. Affordable housing has continued to be delivered in the District and demonstrates the success of the strategic sites included in the Local Plan in bringing forward housing numbers. During the year, 374 affordable homes were delivered exceeding the Local Plan target by 100 units;
  - iv. Similar to other councils throughout the country, the Council's business rates collection figure (in year) has been understandably impacted by Covid-19. The Government has gone some way in helping certain businesses such as retail with 100% business rate relief, but there are still businesses that are struggling financially. The Council is distributing a number of support grants to eligible businesses, however, there is no requirement to use it to pay for business rates.

### 3. COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 3.1. The West Oxfordshire District Council Plan Annual Statement (attached at Annex A) presents a narrative of progress towards each of the Council priorities, drawing together specific examples of successful actions, such as:
- Adoption of Carbon Action Plan and Climate Change Strategy by Full Council;
  - Submission of Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan to the Planning Inspectorate, setting out strategic planning policy for zero-carbon development;

- Appointment of Market Towns Officer to work with Witney, Chipping Norton and Carterton on Town Plans as a means of supporting economic recovery from Covid-19;
- Application of Health Impact Assessments to major planning applications as a means of delivering 'healthy place-shaping';
- Scoping work underway to explore the establishment of well-being hubs, as a means of enabling partner organisations (other public service providers and the Voluntary and Community Sector) to work alongside each other to provide accessible and joined up services for residents.

#### **4. SERVICE PERFORMANCE**

- 4.1. Since the start of the pandemic, many services, both customer facing and support services have been impacted by Covid-19; the Council's leisure facilities have had to close during multiple lockdowns and tier restrictions, while other services including housing, revenues and benefits, planning, land charges and customer services have experienced higher workloads due to customer demand or because colleagues were supporting residents, communities, and businesses through the crisis. Support services such as ICT, Accountancy and Accounts Payable have also played a part in supporting the administration of business grants and other payments. The majority of staff have continued to deliver services from home which has meant that services have had to adapt and find new ways of working. This has presented a major challenge for some services such as planning and food safety and resulted in backlogs. The impact of these challenges coupled with delivering key projects such as the new revenues and benefits system has affected performance in some areas.
- 4.2. The services which relate to the work of this Committee are Housing Support, Planning and Strategic Housing, Land Charges, and Leisure and Communities; and the relevant indicators are listed at the front of the Performance Indicator report at Annex B with pages **12 to 21** of that Annex providing the further relevant information.
- 4.3. Of the eight targeted indicators, five indicators achieved their targets (Green), two indicators achieved their targets 'within tolerance' (Amber), and one indicator did not achieve its target (Red). The number of households in emergency accommodation over 28 days was set to 'Amber' to recognise that the service has worked hard to place all households into emergency accommodation that have approached the Council, and then created exit plans to move them on to more secure tenancies. The households that remain in emergency accommodation for longer periods of time will generally have more complex needs. A full report is attached at Annex B.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1. None

#### **6. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1. None

#### **7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 7.1. None

**8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

8.1. None

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WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL PLAN ANNUAL STATEMENT  
**April 2020 - March 2021**

Our vision is to support West Oxfordshire to be fit for the future through:



**1. Climate Action**

Leading the way in protecting and enhancing the environment by taking action locally on climate change and biodiversity.



**2. Healthy Towns and Villages**

Facilitating healthy lifestyles and better wellbeing for everyone.



**3. A Vibrant District Economy**

Securing future economic success through supporting existing local businesses and attracting new businesses to deliver the economic ambitions of the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy.



**4. Strong Local Communities**

Supporting and building prosperous and inclusive local communities.



**5. Meeting the Housing Needs of our Changing Population**

Securing the provision of market and affordable housing of a high quality for the wide range of householders making their home in West Oxfordshire.



**6. Modern Council Services and Sustainable Finance**

Delivering excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council.

## Introduction

Following the launch of the [West Oxfordshire Council Plan 2020 – 24](#) in January 2020, Officers have embarked on delivering the projects defined as a means of achieving the Council Plan vision to support West Oxfordshire to be fit for the future through delivery of its priorities.

The context for delivering the Council Plan has changed significantly given the Coronavirus pandemic that required the Council to pivot its focus towards responding to the sudden challenges posed by the pandemic, principally supporting West Oxfordshire residents, its business and economy, and community and voluntary sector during the series of lockdowns experienced over the first year of the Council Plan. This involved redeployment of 100+ staff and in so doing enabled support for vulnerable members of the community at the same time as continued delivery of key public services. Whilst focus shifted to the pandemic, work has continued to progress against each of the priorities, albeit perhaps in a different way to that anticipated during the creation of the Council Plan. This agility and ability to adapt to changing circumstances, and indeed the unprecedented situation, reflects well on the Council and its staff and demonstrates that they have remained true to the vision in the Council Plan to be ‘fit for the future’.

This Annual Statement details progress against each of the 6 Council Plan priorities and should be read in conjunction with the [WODC Annual Monitoring Report \(AMR\)](#) for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. The AMR is structured around the 6 Council Plan priorities, setting out progress against the Local Plan as the strategic development framework for the District. By priority, an outline of the current district context in terms of background/contextual information and what has happened during the AMR period is provided. Facts and figures are used to illustrate the Council’s progress/patterns of change against a number of indicators – such as carbon emission reductions, amount of recycling, visitor numbers to leisure centres, and local workforce structure. This detailed overview also highlights what is on the horizon by way of activity, which aligns with the actions that underpin the 6 Council Plan priorities and delivery of the Council’s vision to be ‘fit for the future’.

## Covid-19 Response and Recovery Planning

A short summary of the Council's response to the pandemic is provided below which illustrates the far reaching impact of the pandemic and efforts to meet the needs of West Oxfordshire's local economy, the voluntary and community sector and local residents.

### WODC Covid-19 Response Summary:

Given the Council's responsibility for delivering services to over 100,000 residents, Covid-19 has been an unprecedented challenge which required us to react quickly to changing circumstances in order to support local business and economy, the voluntary and community sector and local residents. We have maintained essential services whilst redeploying staff to new areas of work to help deal with the crisis.

There has been a dynamic and inspiring community sector response across West Oxfordshire to the challenges introduced through the pandemic. Local groups, towns and villages have mobilised to support their communities and the Council has developed a Community Hub team to work effectively with voluntary sector partners and volunteers.

Collaboration with our partners at a County-wide level was required in order to respond to the crisis. In particular, close coordination and good communication between the County, City and District Councils, with the NHS and OxLEP, to support vulnerable people and align programmes to support local businesses.

The following statistics for the 2020/2021 financial year outline some of what the Council has achieved during the Covid-19 lockdown period working with key partners:

- 1,430 residents have been given support with complex needs
- 1,017 vulnerable residents have been contacted by Councillors
- Grants totalling £39,595,446 paid to businesses in West Oxfordshire
- 6,217 shielded residents called during lockdown.

In tandem with supporting local business and economy, the voluntary and community sector and local residents through the pandemic, considerable effort was invested in planning for recovery from the impacts of the pandemic and in the longer term, the District's renewal. It was recognised that the joint work with local communities, and with Oxfordshire's partners, undertaken in the early months of the pandemic provided strong foundations from which to develop a recovery plan.

A cross-party Covid-19 Advisory Group was established comprising Councillors working with Officers to consider how we will address challenges and opportunities arising from the pandemic through support to enable communities and businesses to thrive in a post-Covid world. A series of workshops were held to devise four Covid-19 Recovery Themes of Economy, Community, Climate and Council, Service Delivery and Finance. These are closely aligned

with the 6 Council Plan priorities as a means of ensuring that actions prioritised as part of the District's Covid-19 recovery effort and investment in this will also positively contribute to achieving the vision of the Council Plan. Full Council considered the [West Oxfordshire Covid-19 Recovery Plan](#) in October 2020 and this provides the Council with a helpful framework for ensuring that the wide ranging impacts of the pandemic are mitigated against and adapted to.

Whilst this Annual Statement focuses on progress against the Council Plan, activity underway and what is on the horizon in relation to achieving the Covid-19 Recovery Themes is also referenced due to the close alignment of these two areas of activity.

## Climate Action: Leading the way in protecting and enhancing the environment by taking action locally on climate change and biodiversity

### Covid-19 Recovery Theme: Climate

Over the last year Full Council approved two commitments in the Council Plan:-

- The Carbon Action Plan (October 2020), incorporating the Pathway to Achieving Carbon Neutral by 2030
- Climate Change Strategy (February 2021), focussing on climate action.

Together these set out a comprehensive, clear and robust strategy for the Council's response to the climate and ecological emergency.

[The Carbon Action Plan](#) defines 'The Pathway to Achieving Carbon Neutral by 2030'. It:

- Presents extensive data on WODC's Green House Gas (GHG) emissions
- Presents the GHG account as a baseline and measure of WODC's current impact on climate change, thus calibrating the success of future action taken to reduce/remove emissions
- Defines a set of Guiding Principles for planning future activity by WODC towards its target
- Sets out a process for the monitoring and review of action in progress and planned, keeping the Plan live and responsive to external influences, technological changes and innovation
- Leads by example, establishing an assessment methodology and Guiding Principles that other partners working across the District can apply to their own projects.

[The Climate Change Strategy](#) provides a framework for achieving the Council's clear and robust strategic priorities for climate action. Informed by extensive consultation, the Strategy enables the targeting of resources in a structured way. It enables WODC to contribute strategically to climate action for Oxfordshire and the South East whilst also taking local, grassroots action on five core themes of activity: 1) Protect and restore natural ecosystems, 2) Energy, 3) Active travel and low carbon transport, 4) Standards in new development, and 5) Engage, support and educate.

With the Strategy in place, the Council has the means to:

- Influence and shape strategy and policy for climate at County and Regional level
- Communicate its local response for the purposes of sharing best practice
- Contribute positively to the national effort – channelling any funding to achieve local outcomes

- Listen and respond to community views on climate action.

The Council has focussed on producing planning policy to achieve net-zero carbon development of 2,200 homes at Salt Cross Garden Village. The [Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan](#) (SCG VAAP) has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for hearing in Summer 2021. If the policies for the Salt Cross Garden Village remain intact then this will provide a template for other developments within the District.

In addition to the SCGV AAP, a Sustainability Standards Checklist has been developed by an internal working group with input from planning policy, development management, biodiversity, landscape, climate and conservation heritage specialists. This was approved by Full Council in February 2021. The Checklist incorporates all elements of environmental sustainability for consideration in planning, including an expectation on applicants to consider tree planting and biodiversity. A commitment to securing the benefits of the Checklist has been made by the Council through the funding of a Sustainability Planning Specialist for 12 months to ensure that these are applied to development proposals going forward. The Standards relate to Water use and flood risk; Biodiversity; Green and Active Travel; Aligning with net-zero carbon; Sustainable construction; and Materials and waste.

Planning permission has recently been granted for a Solar Farm on land to the west of Eynsham, within proximity to the Strategic Development Area West Eynsham and the Salt Cross Garden Village.

Turning to the Council's overarching goal to enhance our natural environment and boost biodiversity through the establishment of robust, resilient, and well-functioning ecological networks several strands of activity have been underway over the last year.

WODC has played a proactive role as a District partner of the Oxfordshire Growth Board which has recently engaged in a draft Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire which commits specifically to protecting and enhancing our natural environment, whilst pursuing a zero-carbon future. The Environment Advisory Group, on which the District lead executive member sits, exists to embed critical environmental thinking across the Growth Board's programmes (e.g. Healthy Place Shaping) and link closely with other existing partnerships such as the Local Nature Partnership which is currently in formation.

The establishment of an Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership is particularly relevant to the Council achieving its ambition to safeguard West Oxfordshire's natural environment. This strategic forum will exist to guide nature recovery in an integrated way to produce multiple benefits for local people, the economy and the environment. Stakeholder engagement in December 2020 and March 2021 confirmed strong support for an Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership and detailed work is now underway on its Governance arrangements with its formal launch anticipated in September 2021.

A further Oxfordshire-wide partnership approach towards biodiversity enhancements is the Nature Recovery Network of which WODC is a contributor. The Nature Recovery Network is working to produce a Nature Recovery Strategy (a statutory requirement of the Environment Bill) that will endeavour to protect and enhance the natural environment as well as guiding the development of planning policies. An overarching aim of the NRN is to double the extent of land of high value for nature by 2050. The [Oxfordshire Plan 2050](#) provides an opportunity to use the [draft Nature Recovery Map](#) and [recommended associated policies](#) to help plan for nature's recovery at a county-wide level and to set the framework for future Local Plans. WODC sits on the NRN and actively supports the maintenance of Oxfordshire's Conservation Target Areas and Local Wildlife Sites Projects through their consideration via the planning process. Recent examples include delegation of authority to Woodstock Town Council to take forward an application via Natural England to

designate the Local Wildlife Site 'Woodstock Water Meadows' as a Local Nature Reserve and additionally has provide £4,000 grant funding to the Local Wildlife Trust and Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre who run the Local Wildlife Sites project.

The Windrush in Witney and Lower Windrush Valley Project are a key policy consideration for the development of the East Witney Strategic Development Area, informing new access arrangements between the new built area of Witney and the landscape surrounding it. Of particular note is the landscape and ecological value within the Windrush Valley just north of the A40 which forms part of the East Witney SDA area.

A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Mechanism for securing a positive contribution to biodiversity is required of major (and some minor) applications for compliance with Local Plan Policy H3 'Bio-diversity and Geo-diversity'. The [Interim Biodiversity Net Gain Guidance for Developers and Ecological Consultants](#) has been in operation since April 2020, providing guidance to developers to ensure that sufficient information is submitted to demonstrate Biodiversity Net Gain. Furthermore, the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre has supported WODC to screen biodiversity metric calculations submitted to ensure that they achieve a Net Gain for Biodiversity. The first Biodiversity Net Gain payment has been made to fund off-site BNG provision arising from development of the Windrush Industrial Park. The payment of £112,290 was secured for the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment to deliver 9.41 biodiversity units which represents a significant step for the financial contribution towards nature's recovery within West Oxfordshire.

At March 2021, 15 planning applications were applying the BNG approach. This progress is being fed into a [national research project](#) at the Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology to identify how BNG is contributing towards nature's recovery at the UK level and inform what happens when BNG becomes mandatory.

Work has also progressed on a draft Green Infrastructure Strategy Supplementary Planning Document which would guide where investment is required for people and wildlife e.g. BNG payments could be used in specific locations. This will incorporate [Building with Nature](#) principles to provide planners and developers with evidence-based, how-to, guidance on delivering high-quality green infrastructure. In support of this approach, a Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund (NEIRF) bid has been submitted by WODC in March 2021 to fund a Natural Capital Investment Strategy for West Oxfordshire. This Strategy will develop investment and revenue-stream opportunities for Green Infrastructure, natural capital, biodiversity net gain, and carbon balance within key strategic opportunity areas for the district. The £99,000 bid (outcome due in June 2021) is supported by the Council's partners Oxfordshire County Council, District/City Council partners, BBOWT, Lower Windrush Valley Project, The Wychwood Project, Evenlode Catchment Project and the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment. This collaborative effort between climate and planning Officers demonstrates an understanding of revenue stream models for natural capital with benefits for habitat creation for both biodiversity and natural flood risk management.

Finally, early work has commenced on a WODC Biodiversity Plan. This will define a biodiversity work programme to include development of Land Management Plans for land within the Council's stewardship, with ecological enhancement a key priority identified in the Covid-19 Recovery Plan. A Biodiversity and Countryside and Land Management Officer has been funded as part of the Council's investment in the recovery to deliver these benefits for the Council's estate.

## What's on the Horizon?

- Continued partnership work to further develop the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, including further exploration of how the Draft Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Map can be used to inform the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and the proposed review of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan due to commence in autumn 2021.
- Continued development of land management plans and ecological appraisal to conserve and enhance the ecological condition of Council's own land.
- Implementation of the Sustainability Standards Checklist to planning applications.
- Appointment of an Energy Projects Specialist to assist in realising the ambition of the Carbon Action Plan.
- Sustainability assessment of Council offices, involving modelling of energy performance and assessment of waste, water and cycle storage facilities undertaken. Recommendations for retrofit to be considered.
- Launch of the Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership.
- Consultation on draft Green Infrastructure Strategy Supplementary Planning Document.

## Healthy Towns and Villages: Facilitating healthy lifestyles and better wellbeing for everyone

### Recovery Theme: Communities

The value in adopting a ‘healthy place shaping’ approach in new and existing developments is highlighted in the Council Plan. A [Health Impact Assessment \(HIA\) toolkit](#) and methodology has been approved by the Oxfordshire Growth Board in January 2021 and is now to be applied to the delivery of the local plan and major developments. HIA is a practical approach used to judge the effects a proposed development may have on the health and wellbeing of different groups of people. It is a tool used to identify the health impacts of a plan or project and to develop recommendations to maximise the positive impacts and minimise the negative impacts, while maintaining a focus on addressing health inequalities. By bringing such health considerations to the fore, HIAs add value to the planning process. The findings of HIAs are used to make recommendations to decision makers as to how any negative health impacts of a development can be reduced, and any positive health impacts maximised.

It is intended that this methodology will be used by developers and consultants when preparing major development proposals to help shape and inform design choices. The Council has recently requested HIAs for major development applications in Witney and Woodstock which were submitted and are currently being assessed against the Toolkit and Methodology for conformity. Further efforts to augment healthy place-shaping in the District through development is evident in the draft Supplementary Planning Document for the East Chipping Norton Strategic Development Area. This new development of 1,200 homes, along with around 5 hectares of business floorspace and a range of supporting services and facilities and green space and biodiversity enhancements, presents a further opportunity to create an area which puts the health and well-being of its residents (incoming and existing) at its heart.

Healthy Place Shaping has been further augmented by Policy 4 in the Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan which requires a ‘Rapid Health Impact Assessment’ to accompany any planning application for major development at the garden village. This must demonstrate alignment with the emerging Oxfordshire HIA methodology, to fully identify the needs of everyone in how they live and work, access and use all types of infrastructure, services and networks.

Consultants were commissioned to undertake a Built Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy for the District in March 2020 and significant steps have been taken towards achieving this key action identified in the Council Plan. Initial work involved an audit of current indoor leisure facilities stock across the District. Sport England are modelling leisure facility need against projected population growth for the District (due June 2021). In addition to this preparatory work towards the Built Indoor Leisure Facility Strategy, a Focus Group to consider need in the Witney area and scope for a relocated Windrush Leisure Centre (‘Windrush 2’) is imminent and the outcomes of this will be supplemented by a resident’s online survey to help inform the required facility mix for any new Windrush 2.

Collectively the outputs of the initial audit, modelling against population growth and stakeholder consultation will inform a needs analysis of indoor Leisure facilities – addressing current, latent and unmet need for built leisure facilities across West Oxfordshire. This will form the basis of the Built Indoor Leisure Strategy & associated Action Plan.

Turning to measures of health and well-being across the District, the March 2021 [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\)](#) provides information about Oxfordshire's population and the factors affecting health, wellbeing, and social care needs. A strong feature of the JSNA is a consideration of the wider determinants of health which is valuable to the District in planning its support to local health and well being. It is informed by research undertaken between November 2020 – February 2021 and is endorsed by the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board.

Community profiles for West Oxfordshire are provided on the [places page of Oxfordshire Insight](#), presenting a range of population and health and wellbeing statistics including:

- Population by age
- Deprivation and children in poverty
- Public Health indicators
- Physical activity and child obesity
- Unpaid care and care homes
- GP practice data for selected health conditions (diabetes, dementia and depression)
- House prices and commuting

Of particular note is a February 2021 updated community profile for [Witney](#).

### **What's on the Horizon?**

- Deployment of a Healthy Place Shaping Partner funded by Sport England via Oxfordshire County Council's Public Health Team to WODC to support the adoption of a Healthy Place Shaping approach.
- Built Indoor Sports Facility Strategy (including proposals for relocation of Windrush Leisure Centre) to Cabinet for Adoption in Summer 2021.
- New Playing Pitch Strategy for the District to provide an assessment of the need for playing pitches and recommendations for improving provision, informed by consultation with user group representatives.
- Developing, with partners, a masterplan for the redevelopment of Hanborough Station.

## **A Vibrant District Economy: Securing future economic success through supporting existing local businesses and attracting new businesses to deliver the economic ambitions of the Local Industrial Strategy**

### **Recovery Theme: Economy**

The Council Plan identified two strategic areas for economic growth which the Council is also committed to delivering through their inclusion in the Local Industrial Strategy: the Carterton Technology Hub and the Garden Village Science Park. Progress has been made on each.

*The Carterton Technology Hub* seeks to unleash the economic role, potential and value of Carterton through a new Technology Hub. Local market strengths include many small businesses with specialisms in high-tech manufacturing and engineering in addition to RAF Brize Norton. There is a local imbalance of jobs to workers leading to around 60% out-commuting (including to nearby Witney), indicating both the need and opportunity to diversify the local economy. A strategic outline case has been developed which has informed a proposition paper to the OxLEP, thus further evolving the business case for the project which was successfully made through its inclusion in the adopted Local Plan. Next steps include a detailed feasibility study and SWOT analysis informed by input from a wide range of stakeholders previously engaged in the concept through the Local Plan process. Carterton Town Council is identified as a potential lead partner – supported by WODC and involving the MOD, RAF, OxLEP, local businesses and residents. This endeavour will be further supported through Oxfordshire County Council's 'Access to Carterton Strategy'. Work on this to date has identified a 'preferred options package' comprising three distinct schemes to improve Carterton's strategic connectivity: B4477 Carriageway Improvement Scheme; West Facing Slips at B4477/A40 Junction and wider benefits schemes and; Witney to Carterton cycleway along Witney Road.

*The Salt Cross Science and Technology Park* allocated as part of the new 'Garden Village' strategic development area in the adopted Local Plan, includes a 40 hectare science and technology park that will attract high growth businesses giving them the space to grow and create high value jobs in line with the ambitions of the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy. The Area Action Plan includes a policy detailing the requirements of the park which will deliver, within an extensive network of green and blue infrastructure, 80,000m<sup>2</sup> of science, technology, engineering and high tech related business floor space. Concurrently an Outline Planning Application has been received by site promoter, Grosvenor Estates, which proposes 57,000m<sup>2</sup> of B-Class land uses as part of an employment area with the proposed uses to be determined at the Reserved Matters Application stage of the planning process. Once the Area Action Plan has been adopted this will be used to set the policy context against which the planning application for Salt Cross will be determined, of which the Science and Technology Park is part.

In close proximity to the Salt Cross Science and Technology Park is Hanborough Station and this is identified within the Council Plan as a focus for partnership effort to secure new and upgraded infrastructure, including short and long-term enhancements to the Cotswold railway line. The Hanborough Station Sub-Group of the North Cotswold Line Task Force has been established, bringing together the five county councils and Local Enterprise Partnerships covering the 86-mile route between Hereford, Worcester and Oxford, together with the Cotswold Line Promotion Group, Network Rail and the Great Western Railway.

In January 2020, the Task Force submitted its case to the government for a doubled two trains per hour North Cotswold Line service between Worcestershire, Oxford and London and we are awaiting the assessment of the case by the Department for Transport and Network Rail. In parallel, the Task Force set out its aspirations for additional local trains as a metro-style service between Hanborough and Oxford to support West Oxfordshire housing growth, the visitor economy and to encourage a shift from road to rail for journeys to Oxford or London. The Sub-Group will develop the case for these local services, plans for expanded passenger facilities at Hanborough Station, and engage with local stakeholders and communities.

On the theme of lower carbon transportation, the value of provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCP) as a means of improving the public realm in our town centres was identified as an action towards achieving a vibrant district economy, in addition to meeting zero carbon ambitions. Two approaches to this are underway:

1. WODC direct procurement of Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP) in Council-owned car parks: Viability assessments of car parks within the Council's stewardship for installation of EVCP have been undertaken in partnership with the Oxfordshire Park and Charge team. Six car parks have been selected as part of Tranche One for EVCP during Spring and Summer 2021: Hensington Road, Woodstock; Back Lane, Eynsham; Woodford Way, Witney; Woodgreen Offices, Witney; Black Bourton, Carterton; and New Street, Chipping Norton.
2. An Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (OEVIS) is being developed to set a consistent design and technical standard for EV infrastructure across the County. WODC is inputting to the strategy which is being coordinated by the iHub Innovation Team at Oxfordshire County Council.

The Covid-19 pandemic has expedited the need to target efforts to support the vitality and viability of our market towns and this is captured in the West Oxfordshire Covid-19 Recovery Plan. The Council has funded a dedicated Market Towns Officer to work with Witney, Chipping Norton and Carterton to develop Town Covid-19 Recovery Plans which respond to the specific needs of each. Town Centre Covid-19 Recovery Groups have been established to engage key stakeholders to identify the unique impacts of the pandemic on their town, the (short and longer term) opportunities that have arisen, and identify a set of initiatives that will help realise the potential of the town. This activity will inform the Covid-19 Recovery Plan for each town, aiming to support local businesses and strengthen the visitor economy.

In addition to the Town Covid-19 Recovery Plans, the Council is procuring a place promotion app to support local business, with the predicted impact being an increase in footfall across the town centres by encouraging repeat purchases and attracting new visitors to West Oxfordshire. The loyalty app will list events and interactive trails in addition to presenting users with discounts and offers at local businesses. The Council has also partnered with Makespace Oxford as part of a launch of a £1.7 million programme to breathe life back into high streets through the [Meanwhile in Oxfordshire Project](#). This initiative is designed to encourage selected vacant units in our high streets to be filled with a variety of offerings, from retail to creative and co-working spaces as a means of mitigating the negative impact of empty units on the high street.

The Council has submitted in January 2021 a representation to a Government consultation on proposals to allow all uses falling within the Use Class E to be converted to residential use under permitted development (i.e. no planning permission required for change to residential use), irrespective of scale and

location. The Council has advised Government that whilst fully supportive of housing delivery where need is evidenced, key uses in town centres including currently occupied commercial properties, will be lost to residential creating an imbalance of uses that harms town centre vitality and viability and that beyond town centres, key uses in rural areas will be lost to the detriment of local communities (leading to unsustainable patterns of development and commuting). The Council will continue to seek to protect the vitality and viability of town centres and rural economic sustainability through its role as Local Planning Authority.

The Council is continuing to support local businesses who are having to adapt to changing Covid-19 restrictions, and multiple lockdowns through the distribution of a large range of business grants made available by central government. A total of £39,595,446 has been paid over the 2020 - 21 financial year. Financial support has also been made available to those individuals having to self-isolate under the Test and Trace support payment. Since 5 November 2020, a number of grants has been made available to businesses that have been required to close under the Tier system or national lockdowns, or were able to remain open but were severely affected by Tier restrictions:

- Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed, Mandatory) – a total of £5,690,759 was paid out to 3214 businesses in retail, leisure, hospitality, accommodation and events which were mandated to close between 5 November 2020 and 31 March 2021;
- Additional Restrictions Grant (Discretionary) – a total of £1,310,902 was paid out to 834 businesses from November to the 4 April 2021. This grant is available for businesses that do not have a business rate assessment of their own as well as other businesses with a rateable value that have remained open but have been severely impacted by the pandemic. This category includes charity properties and regular market traders;
- Local Restrictions Support Grant (Open) - a total of £ 769,273 was paid to 1,515 businesses that remained open but were severely impacted by restrictions;
- Christmas Support Payment for wet-led pubs scheme – one-off grants of £1,000 were paid to 37 businesses between December 2020 and February 2021;
- Closed Businesses Lockdown payment – 779 businesses were supported with a one-off payment. A total of £3,821,000 was paid out between 5 January 2021 and 4 April 2021.

### What's on the Horizon

- 'Access to Carterton' – public consultation on 'preferred options package'
- Installation of Electric Vehicle Charging Points in the aforementioned six WODC owned car parks across the District
- Development and implementation of Town Centre Covid-19 Recovery Plans for Carterton, Chipping Norton and Witney
- Launch and roll out of Loyal Free place promotion app
- Development of Masterplan for Hanborough Station

## Strong Local Communities: Supporting and building prosperous and inclusive local communities

### Recovery Theme: Communities

The response to the pandemic has really shone a spotlight on the importance of this priority – we have witnessed a dynamic and inspiring community sector response across West Oxfordshire to the challenges introduced by the pandemic. Local Groups, towns and villages have mobilised to support their communities and the Council established a Community Response Hub to further augment these efforts and work effectively with voluntary sector partners and volunteers. There has also been a strong collaborative effort to tackle the crisis, where the Council has sought, together with the County, City and District Councils, the NHS and OxLEP to support vulnerable people and align programmes to support local businesses.

These collaborative efforts between ourselves and partners, and the communities we serve must continue and be built upon in order to respond to any local Covid-19 outbreaks, address any local food security issues (£59k of funding has been awarded to Food Banks and community food projects), and meet any duties to support those who are vulnerable. This work will complement delivery of other aspects of the Council Plan identified under this priority, as described further below. Examples of efforts include:

- Recruitment of staff to work with new Mutual Aid groups to sustain them as an invaluable resource to tackle loneliness and isolation in our communities
- Research into the establishment of Wellbeing Hubs is underway, as committed to in the Covid-19 Recovery Plan. This model would see the co-location of statutory and Voluntary/Community sector partners alongside housing associations to deliver easy to access services. Early conversations are underway, and current and planned provision has been mapped so that gaps in provision can inform where there is opportunity to complement and support existing service delivery to residents.
- West Oxfordshire Citizens Advice working on behalf of the Council to provide £63,655 to those struggling to afford food under the Covid-19 Winter Grants Scheme (funded by Oxfordshire County Council)
- Recruitment of additional staff to allow the Community Response Hub to continue to support residents with significant wellbeing challenges
- Approval of funding for Oxfordshire '[Reducing the Risk](#)' charity to provide Domestic Abuse Champion training in addition to securing a two year extension to the Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse contract
- Approval of funding for two local West Oxfordshire charities, the [Witney Hub](#) and the [APCAM Group](#), to deliver mental health services for young people and their families
- The Go Active Get Healthy Diabetes service has moved online and provides help for residents to become more active as a means to manage their diabetes.

A commitment in the Council Plan to direct our management of property assets through a new Asset Management Plan to achieve improvements in the joint use of sites through the [One Public Estate](#) programme has moved a step forward with completion of a series of feasibility reviews of sites in Welch Way, Witney. Following this scope for feasibility work on partnership owned sites to consider options for development that suit all partner's needs is to be

assessed – in accordance with the principles of the One Public Estate programme. The next action will be to undertake a draft scoping exercise to which input will be invited from all partner organisations.

Further to the focus on assets at Welch Way, Witney, a number of public sector partners (District and Oxfordshire County Council and the NHS) with offices in Witney are assessing the scope for co-location of office space as a means to reduce office space requirements. This conversation has been expedited by the disruption to established ways of working by the Covid-19 pandemic. The next step is to undertake an appraisal for the repurposing of local authority office space in Witney in order to enable and promote flexible working across agencies. Careful consideration will be given to how we can work more efficiently on a smaller footprint whilst garnering the benefit of a significant reduction in town centre office footprint and a reduction in travel time for staff through the facilitation of greater home working.

A further commitment to working with partners to promote West Oxfordshire as a visitor attraction (whilst protecting its essential character) is made in the Council Plan and the pandemic has placed a new emphasis on the visitor economy as tourism patterns have changed with a drop in international visitors to the District (and the wider Cotswolds) against a backdrop of greater domestic tourism demand.

A grant of £90k was secured from the Discover England Fund which will contribute to the roll out of the [Uncover the Cotswolds](#) project, increasing exposure of new/little known experiences to a wider market. Engagement with local tourism businesses provided an overview of some of the challenges faced by the visitor economy in the wake of the pandemic and this continues to inform the Council's approach to supporting the visitor economy to recover and renew post-Covid. Given the significant contribution the visitor economy makes to West Oxfordshire it is evident that there is a particularly acute need for support.

Early focus has been on improving the online capabilities of local tourism businesses, including to become bookable online (e.g. via Visit England's Tourism Exchange Great Britain platform). A partnership initiative '[The Real Cotswolds](#)' project has been launched (with Wake up to Woodstock for Woodstock and with the Witney Chamber of Trade for Witney) to enhance destination marketing. This project will continue to develop digital town guides for Burford, Chipping Norton, Witney and Woodstock. A suite of [free training modules](#) for local tourism businesses has also been commissioned.

### What's on the Horizon?

- Roll out of scheme 'Move Together' from May 2021 which has been externally funded to improve mobility amongst the most frail and lonely residents
- West Oxfordshire Citizens Advice Bureau will continue to support the community through a dedicated funded role to provide guidance on benefits, welfare and debt advice.
- Roll out of Visit England funded promotion of businesses that are fully bookable online from May 2021.

## Meeting the Housing Needs of our Changing Population: Securing the provision of market and affordable housing of a high quality for a wide range of householders making their home in West Oxfordshire

### Recovery Theme: Communities

A significant step towards achieving this priority has been accomplished with the publication of the draft [Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document](#) (AH SPD) which has been subject to two rounds of consultation to address stakeholder representations. Once adopted, the detailed guidance it provides will steer the successful implementation of Local Plan Policy H3 on the delivery of affordable housing. At this stage the AH SPD will become a material planning consideration.

Local Plan Policy H3 requires the provision of on-site affordable housing as part of larger market housing schemes of 11 or more units varying by location from 35% - 50%. In addition, smaller market housing schemes of 6-10 units within the Cotswolds AONB are required to make a financial contribution towards the provision of affordable housing within the District. The policy also addresses the issue of housing mix and the provision of affordable housing in rural areas including through rural exception sites. By providing additional guidance on the implementation of these requirements, the AH SPD seeks to set out a range of options and requirements to secure delivery of successful affordable housing schemes across the District that meet the housing needs of our changing population.

Options for delivery are presented including criteria for identifying qualifying sites; the size of affordable homes needed, the preferred tenure mix, rural exception sites and self and custom build schemes. Delivery is addressed through requirements relating to design criteria, accessibility and adaptability, space standards, zero carbon homes and modern methods of construction. Specific delivery mechanisms are articulated including housing options for the Armed Forces and also Key Workers and Community Led Housing.

Finally, exploration of two new routes to affordable housing in the District are presented:

- A) *The Blenheim Approach:* WODC is working closely with Blenheim Estate on an innovative model for delivering an increased level of affordable housing at between 60 – 80% of market rental costs. This model has been successfully implemented in Long Hanborough and will also be offered on their other sites for development at Woodstock East. It is the intention of Blenheim to retain ownership of the rental properties so they can be held in perpetuity for local people, especially those within the key worker categories.
- B) *Partnerships with Legacy Landowners:* WODC is also interested in partnering with other legacy landowners to accelerate delivery of affordable housing in the district and the AH SPD invites those landowners (particularly in smaller rural settlements) who are considering development as part of their long term legacy planning to engage with them to explore the scope for delivering affordable housing through rural exception sites.

Further to the achievement of the AH SPD, progress towards the delivery of Shared Ownership Affordable Housing in the district has been made. In partnership with the Oxfordshire Growth Deal and Heylo Housing, WODC has been able to develop a programme whereby 43 homes will be made

available as shared ownership rather than them being sold on the open market as originally intended. Heylo Housing are a Registered Provider; who are able to negotiate bulk acquisition of new homes from developers for use as shared ownership housing.

In 2020-21 374 new affordable homes have been completed in the District, far greater than the Local Plan identified need of 274. It is anticipated that this target will again be exceeded in 2021-22. In addition to this the Council is exploring a range of housing products for existing and upcoming developments to broaden the range of Low Cost Home Ownership products available. These include [Discount Market Sale](#), [Build to Rent](#), and [Rent to Buy](#).

The Council is working directly with Blenheim Estates to bring forward strategic sites and rural exception schemes that propose low carbon development and additional affordable homes. It is also working with other landowning organisations who are seeking to develop and manage their own affordable housing stock and with specialists and co-housing groups to bring forward self-build co-housing on large strategic development sites. Also in partnership, the Council is collaborating with Parish Council's and Registered Providers to bring forward smaller schemes to help meet local need for affordable housing.

Within the West Oxfordshire Local Plan there is a requirement for sites of over 100 homes to provide suitable [self-build/custom finish plots](#). Self-build is also promoted through a Council maintained [self-build register](#) which can be accessed on the Council website and additional guidance is provided in the aforementioned Affordable Housing SPD.

In terms of fulfilling the Council's obligations to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsy and Travelling Communities, two planning consents have been given to intensify the use of two existing sites in Minster Lovell and Bampton to provide more accommodation for this group.

### What's on the Horizon?

- Adoption of Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document late Summer 2021.
- The Council is working with Registered Providers to assist and also partner with a Registered Provider Housing Company planning for strategic sites that will provide 100% affordable schemes. Year 2021/22 will see delivery of additional affordable homes that have been funded using Oxfordshire Growth Deal funds (facilitated by WODC), and in some cases with S106 receipts. These will include Extra Care and General Needs apartments and houses for affordable rental and shared ownership at: Rockhill, Chipping Norton; Lavender Place, Bampton and additional shared ownership properties in Witney and Minster Lovell. Delivery will continue on further schemes beyond 2022.
- WODC has commissioned a study into the potential for a 'living rent' from Oxford Brookes University that will identify how it may benefit certain groups of people in need of affordable housing. Once these findings are known, Officers will work on incorporating these into guidance/policy.

## Modern Council Services and Sustainable Finance: Delivering excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council

### Recovery Theme: Modern Council Services and Sustainable Finance

Achievement of the aforementioned 5 Council Plan priorities are dependent on the Council having a sound financial footing. It has been the case for some time that local government finances have been constrained in part by local government finance grant cuts and increasing service costs pressures. These have been further amplified by the pandemic (greater draw on Council services, extraordinary service costs and lost revenue streams) and this, coupled with future limitations to incentive based funding such as the New Homes Bonus, present the Council with a challenge to match delivery ambitions to our revenue stream.

An [Investment Strategy](#) was approved by Full Council in October 2020 which sets out a range of tools and activities to help improve the general approach to matching income and expenditure across the activities of the District Council. The strategy starts from a premise that there is a significant funding gap that needs to be closed and capital investment is a major tool available to the Council to achieve this so long as it covers the revenue implications of that investment and makes an appropriate return. Capital Investment provides a route to delivering the ambitious programme of the Council set out in the Council Plan.

The priorities for the Investment Strategy were identified as:-

- Climate Change and Green Infrastructure
- Economic Development and Jobs Infrastructure
- Housing Infrastructure

The strategy identified the need to provide a revenue return in the order of 3.5% above borrowing costs in the long term to ensure that the investments were financially sustainable and helped bridge an emerging forecast budget gap. An amount of £15m was set aside in the 2021/22 capital programme to support the strategy.

To date two acquisitions have been completed in addition to an item that was approved prior to the investment programme.

- A property to provide emergency housing accommodation was purchased with a net cost to the Capital Programme of just over £1m. This will not only deliver 16 units of emergency accommodation but will also deliver a return on capital of in excess of 12%.
- An opportunity arose to marry the freehold of land the Council already owns with some industrial units on land in a growth area of the district. This provided a strategic opportunity for the Council to increase its control over the site which will provide future redevelopment opportunities. The investment of circa £2.5m will not only secure the site and support jobs in the district but also deliver a return on capital of approaching 10%.
- The Council invested £2m in a solar project within the district which delivers both renewable energy and local community benefits. The loan delivers a return on capital of 3.85% in addition to the climate and community benefits.

Taken together these three items deliver strongly on each of the Council priorities and also contribute almost £375,000 to closing the revenue funding gap set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Turning to modernisation of Council service delivery, provision of digital options for businesses and residents as a means of offering more choice for accessing services have been progressed in this first year of the Council Plan. Customers can access Council services more conveniently via a range of online self-serve tools, whilst still having access to an advisor on the phone or face to face if preferred.

Central to this digitalisation of Council services is the Salesforce platform which has enabled the following:

- Salesforce BOT available 24/7 to answer customer queries or signposts to necessary information. It can transfer the enquiry to Customer Services if unanswered. 80% of all enquiries have been answered by the BOT without any need for transfer to Customer Services demonstrating efficiency. The BOT's performance will be continually monitored and its configuration modified as new services are added to its functionality.
- Salesforce Live Chat capability launched on the Council's website allowing customers to interact in real time with Customer Services. This was particularly valuable in supporting the CS team to handle the Covid-19 demand as well as particular events such as the change to the waste contract.
- Support the administration of the Discretionary Business Grants under Covid-19. An online form/flow was built in less than 2 weeks to perform eligibility checks so we only received valid grant applications. Salesforce was used by both Customer Services and back office staff to process applications and create necessary payment files for progressing through the General Ledger and our BACS payment systems.

The Business Grants system built in Salesforce will continue to evolve to keep pace with Government changes to grants. Of particular note is the evolution from single payment functionality to allow multiple payments per application. In total £39,595,446 was paid out in the 2020-21 financial year to local businesses.

The roll out of Civica system has enabled modernisation of our Revenues and Benefits system. This will help to streamline processes and improve efficiency by having one annual billing and one benefit uprating process. Additionally, Civica has functionality for customers to be able to self-serve.

### **What's on the Horizon?**

- Council to take a decision on integrating Salesforce with a new digital Waste Management System (Yotta) to enable monitoring of missed bin collections and a means for customer requests for replacement containers. Ubico (waste contractor) is able to via use of tablets in their service trucks to update progress of rounds and identify any exceptions, e.g. households who have not presented their bins for collection.



WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Delivering great services locally

PERFORMANCE REPORT:  
**January 2021 - March 2021**

## KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS LIST

Finance and Management O & S Committee	Economic and Social O & S Committee	Environment O & S Committee
Customer satisfaction – face to face	Number of households living in emergency accommodation for under 28 days	Number of fly tips collected
Customer satisfaction – web	Number of households living in emergency accommodation for over 28 days	Percentage of fly tips that result in an enforcement action taking place
Customer satisfaction – telephone	Number of Long Term Empty properties	Percentage of high risk notifications risk assessed within one working day
Customer satisfaction - email	Percentage of major planning applications determined	Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales
Percentage of calls responded to within 20 seconds	Percentage of minor planning applications determined	Residual household waste per household (kg)
Percentage of telephone calls abandoned by the customer	Percentage of other planning applications determined	(Cumulative) Percentage of household waste recycled
(Cumulative) Percentage of council tax collected	Percentage of planning appeals allowed	(Cumulative) Percentage of household waste by waste streams
(Cumulative) Percentage of business rates collected	(Cumulative) Number of affordable homes delivered	Number of missed bin per 100,000 scheduled collections
(Cumulative) Average number of days taken to process new housing benefit claims	Percentage of land charge searches dispatched within 10 working days	Total hours spent undertaking on and off-street parking enforcement visits
(Cumulative) Average number of days taken to process housing benefit change of circumstances	Number of visits to leisure centres	
(Cumulative) Percentage of housing benefit overpayment due to LA error/Admin delay	Number of gym memberships	

## A note on performance benchmarking

Benchmarking can be a useful tool for driving improvement; by comparing our performance with other similar organisations, we can start a discussion about what good performance might look like, and why there might be variations, as well as learning from other organisations about how they operate (process benchmarking).

A selection of publicly available benchmarking data has been included in the 2020-21 Q4 performance report on a trial basis. Two comparator groups that are commonly used to benchmark Councils' performance are: all shire district councils and CIPFA Nearest Neighbours (NN). The CIPFA NN Model is based on family groups; it adopts a scientific approach to measuring the similarity between councils taking into account a range of demographic and socio-economic characteristics. The standard model provides the 15 nearest neighbours to each council. In contrast, the all shire districts comparator group is a much larger dataset of 192 councils, and there will inevitably be a much greater variation between the councils in this group.

When we embark on performance benchmarking, it is important to understand that we are often looking at one aspect of performance i.e. the level of performance achieved. Although the CIPFA NN Model groups councils on the basis of similarity, these factors are external and based on 'place'. The model does not take into account how services are resourced or compare in terms of quality or level of service delivered, for example, how satisfied are residents and customers? Furthermore, each council is unique with its own vision, aim and priorities, and services operate within this context.

Therefore, the benchmarking data provided in this report should be viewed as a 'guide' and as a starting point for discussion. It is important to understand performance within context, and there will be a variety of internal factors that determine performance including costs, workloads and quality.

### Note

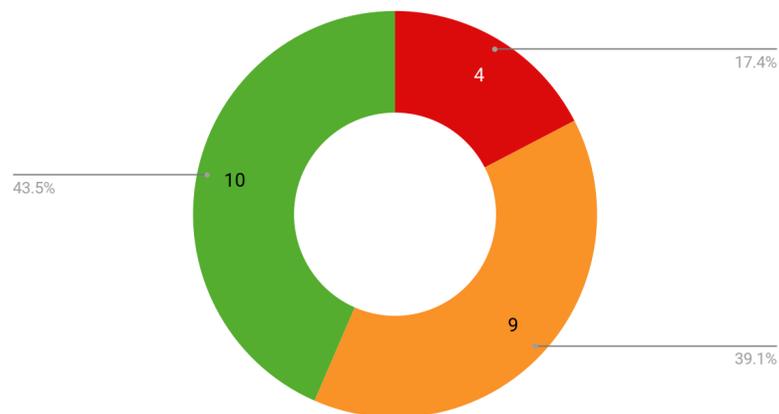
The data has been extracted from LG Inform, a benchmarking tool, which contains a range of routinely published data. It should be noted that:

- the extracted data may differ from the Council's own data;
- the median and top (best 25%) quartile lines are based on annual outturns but applied to the quarterly data;;
- 2020/21 benchmarks are not yet available, so the previous year's benchmarks have been used

# KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS

## At a glance...

Summary of Performance



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### OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Many services have been impacted by Covid-19, and have had to either cease or find new ways of working during multiple national lockdowns. Other services have experienced higher workloads to meet customer/client demand or are supporting communities and businesses which are affected by the pandemic.

Some services continue to be significantly impacted by Covid-19 such as business rates collection, leisure facilities and food safety inspections. In addition, the implementation of a new revenues and benefits system combined with year end activities, has placed additional burdens on the service.

To comply with Covid-19 guidance and restrictions, the majority of staff are still working from home. Although many services have been able to deliver services 'virtually' and customer satisfaction for services delivered by phone remains high, other services such as Planning have found the process less efficient

Indicator	Status
Customer satisfaction - phones	Green
Customer satisfaction - F2F	n/a
Customer satisfaction - website	Orange
Customer satisfaction - email	no target set
% calls responded within 20 secs	Red
% abandoned calls	Red
CT collection rate	Orange
NNDR collection rate	Orange
Average days to process HB new claims	Red
Average days to process HB change events	Green
% HB overpayment	Orange
Households in Emergency Accommodation under 28 days	Orange
Households in Emergency Accommodation over 28 days	Orange
% major applications determined within time	Green
% minor applications determined within time	Green
% others applications determined within time	Red
% planning appeals allowed	Green
Affordable homes delivered	Green
% land charge searches dispatched within time	Green
% high risk notifications assessed within time	Green
% high risk food premises inspected within time	Orange
Residual waste per household (kg)	Green
% overall recycling rate	Green
Missed bins per 100,000	Orange
Leisure visits	no target set
Gym memberships	no target set
Parking enforcement hours	Orange

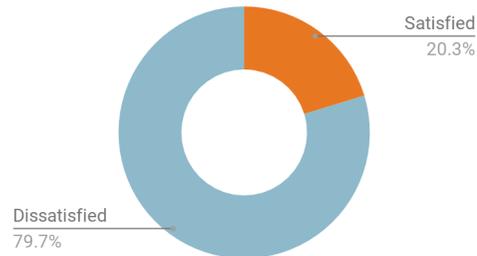
# CUSTOMER SERVICE

## Customer satisfaction

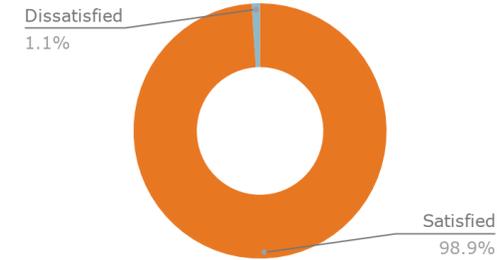
Face to face - no surveys due to Covid19



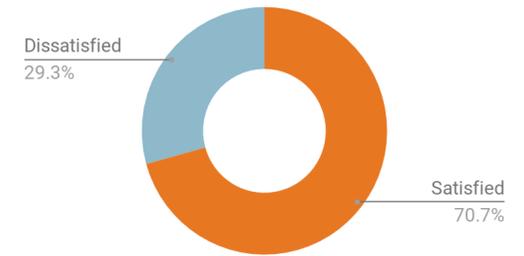
Website - 148 respondents



Phone - 1023 respondents

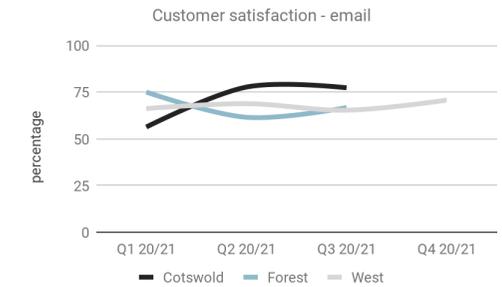
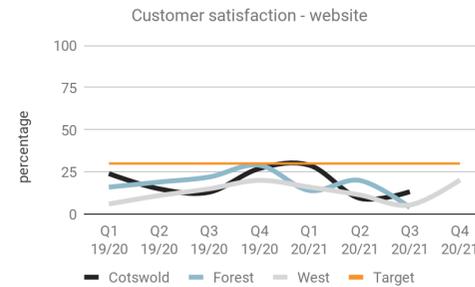
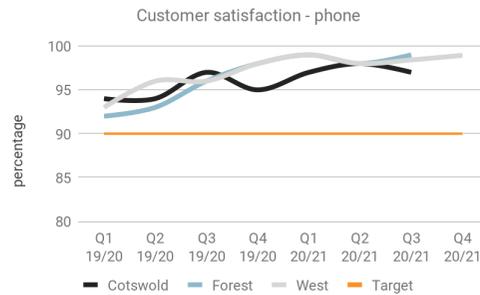


Email - 266 respondents



## What's the trend?

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### OBSERVATION

The nation emerged from the third lockdown on the 29 March 2021 in phased stages. Although Woodgreen and the Town Centre shop re-opened to customers from 12 April 2021, footfall is currently low. Satisfaction surveys for services delivered by phone, website and email continue to be conducted.

Satisfaction for services delivered by the Council's website has shown improvements this quarter. Projects to review web content and improve the customer experience are in progress. However, the number of responses to the website survey, although up on the previous quarter at 345 (from 56) remains an extremely small proportion of the 594,893 visitors despite the process for rating the website and leaving feedback being simple. It is likely that the results from the survey are unrepresentative. An analysis of the survey data was completed to understand the issues and to determine whether satisfaction is with service provision or the website. A significant proportion of the qualitative feedback was found to be about service provision or were categorised as user error e.g. mistyping a postcode rather than comments about content or website functionality improvements. Therefore, this indicator has been set to 'Amber'. A new framework to measure the effectiveness of the Council's website and gather customer feedback is planned.

Satisfaction ratings for services delivered by phone continue to be high.

# Telephone calls - response and abandonment

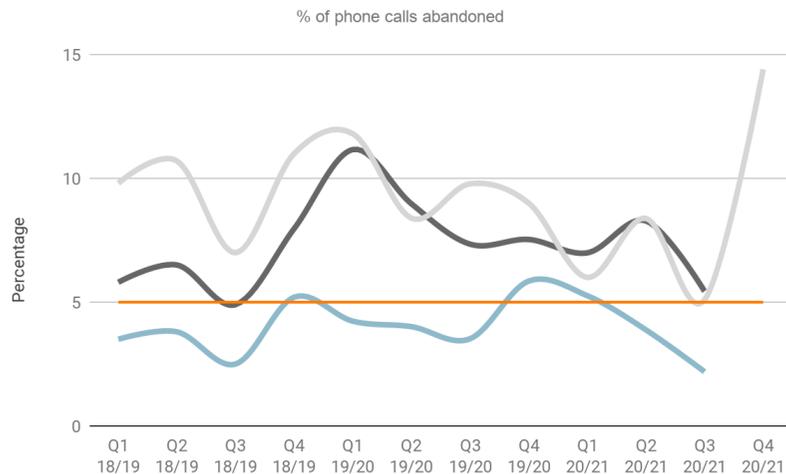
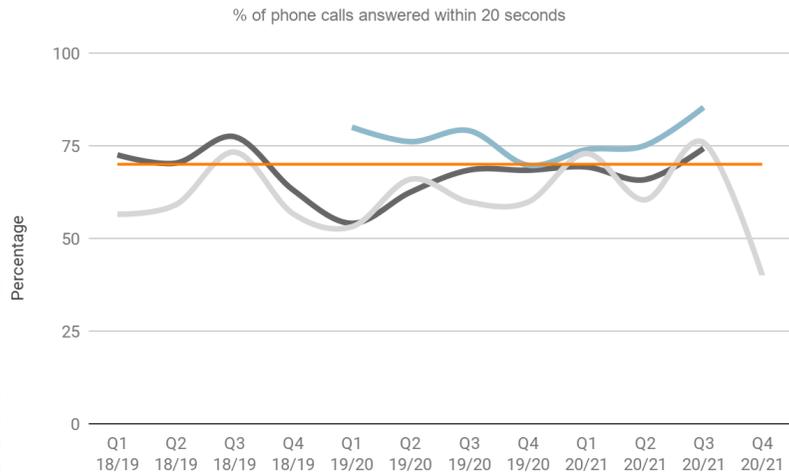
Target

Cotswold

Forest of Dean

West Oxfordshire

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## OBSERVATION

The service is currently reviewing its indicators and targets in preparation for 2021/22 to ensure that they are appropriate to customers' needs; so for example, ensuring that satisfaction for our services remains high while also taking into account the benefits of channel shift and providing more options for accessing our services.

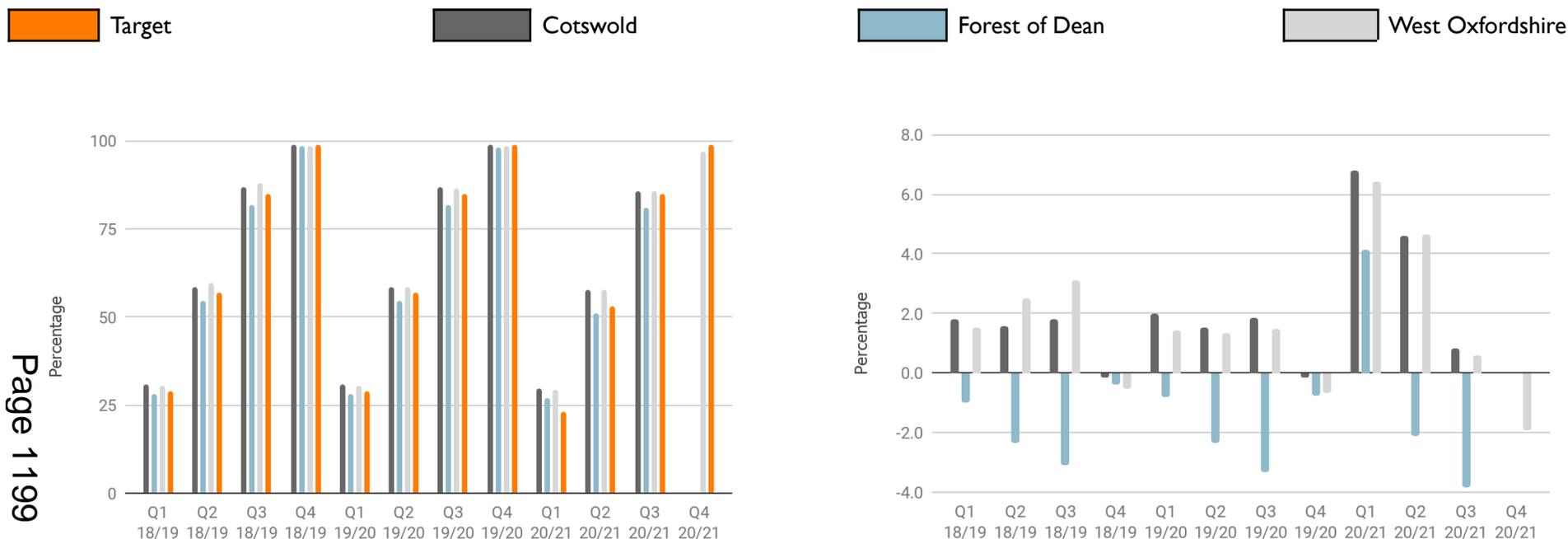
Workloads are generally higher in Q4 due to normal annual billing processes. However, performance has reduced significantly due to staff turnover during the quarter and higher call volumes related to Covid-19, for example, responding to Covid-19 business grants calls and supporting calls to the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable, as well as taking garden waste payments and queries.

In addition, the time spent on a call increased as staff supported calls from revenues and benefit customers which involved the manual collection of information while the new system was being implemented. The call abandon rate increased due to the service managing call volumes by revising call waiting messages which provided advice /sign post customers to alternative ways to complete their transactions. Advisors are working to reduce the backlog of voicemails and emails that have built up; and recruitment to vacant posts has just taken place.

Note: a high abandon rate is not a sign of poor performance as customers may abandon their calls for many reasons including completing their transactions on the Council's website

## Revenues and Benefit

### (Cumulative) Percentage of council tax collected & the difference between the percentage of council tax collected and the target



Page 1199

#### OBSERVATION:

At the end of Q4, the collection rate was just over one percentage point lower than previous years.

Due to the impact of Covid-19, all recovery action was paused initially following government guidance and Member decision; and the service worked with customers to re-align payment instalments. The service had the go-ahead at the end of September 2020 to re-commence recovery actions such as reminders and final payment letters. Some householders' income will have been impacted by job loss and furlough; the service is contacting customers by phone and email, as well as including a letter with reminders to encourage customers to contact the Council if they are experiencing problems with council tax payments. Furthermore, those residents in receipt of council tax support received an additional payment to their accounts from the government's Covid-19 Council Tax hardship fund.

Currently, the Magistrates Courts are not holding any liability order hearings which will mean the Council is unable to enforce any debts incurred in 2020/21. The debt will be rolled over into the new financial year, and added to residents' new payment schedules; and recovery action will continue

**(Cumulative) Percentage of business rates collected & the difference between the percentage of business rates collected and the target**

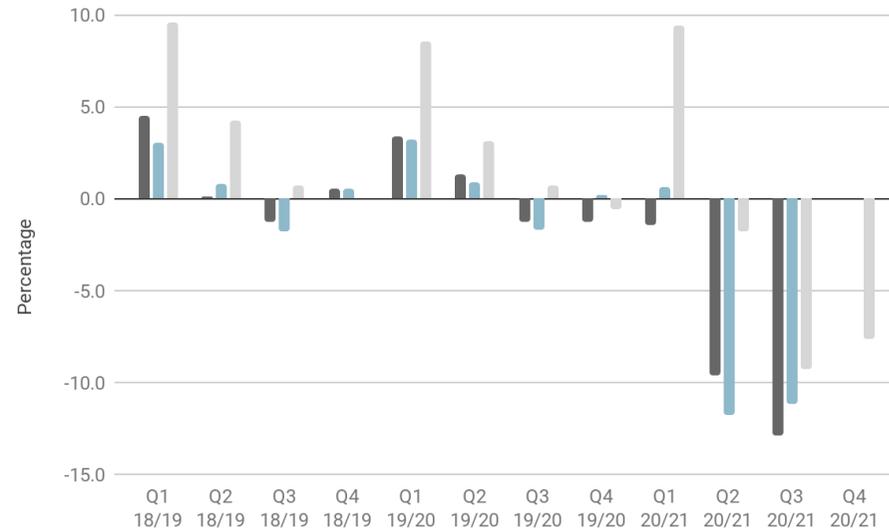
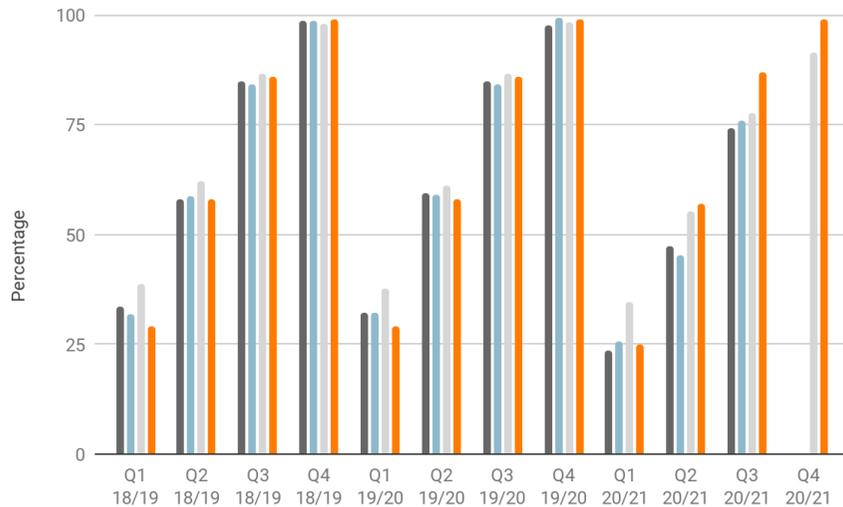
Target

Cotswold

Forest of Dean

West Oxfordshire

Page 1200



**OBSERVATION:**

The collection rate at the end of Q4 was around six percentage points lower than previous year; Covid-19 is having a major impact on business rate collection figures throughout the country.

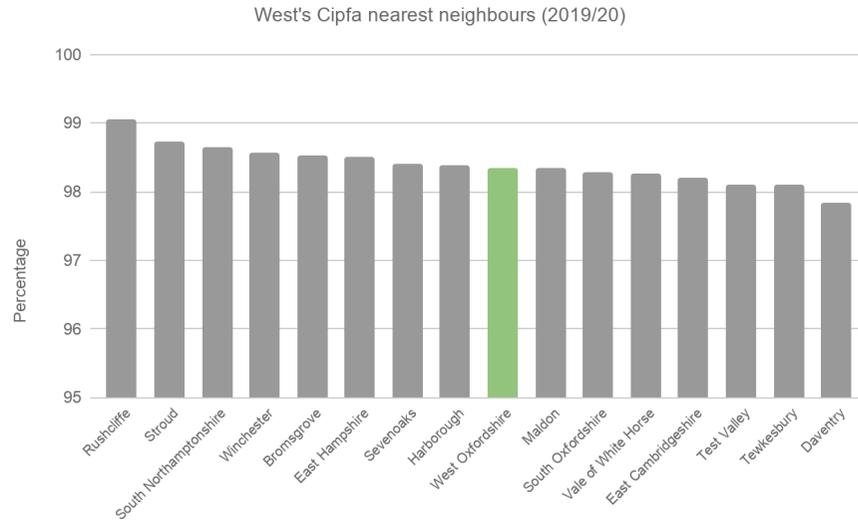
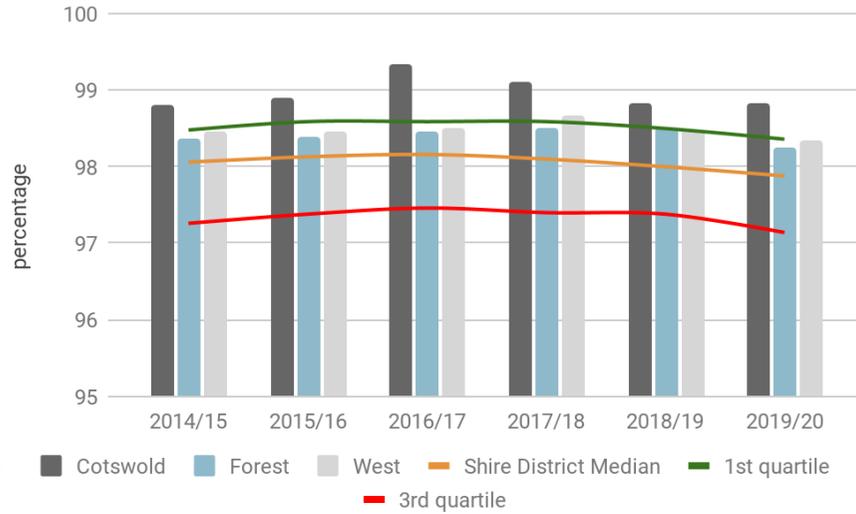
Due to the impact of Covid-19 restrictions and three national lockdowns, many businesses had to close for several months of the year or operate under restrictions. Following an initial pause in undertaking recovery action, the service is sending out reminders, phoning and emailing businesses to encourage them to contact the Council so that we can support them via manageable repayment plans. Currently, the Magistrates Courts are not holding any liability order hearings which will mean the Council is unable to enforce any debts incurred in 2020/21, so the debt will be rolled forward into the next financial year, and added to the new payment instalments for 2021-22.

Government has gone some way in helping certain businesses with 100% business rate relief, but there are still those businesses which have seen an impact on their out turn which have not received any assistance and are therefore struggling financially. A further tranche of business grants became available to cover the second and third lockdowns, and the Council is continuing to distribute a number of grants that are available to eligible businesses.

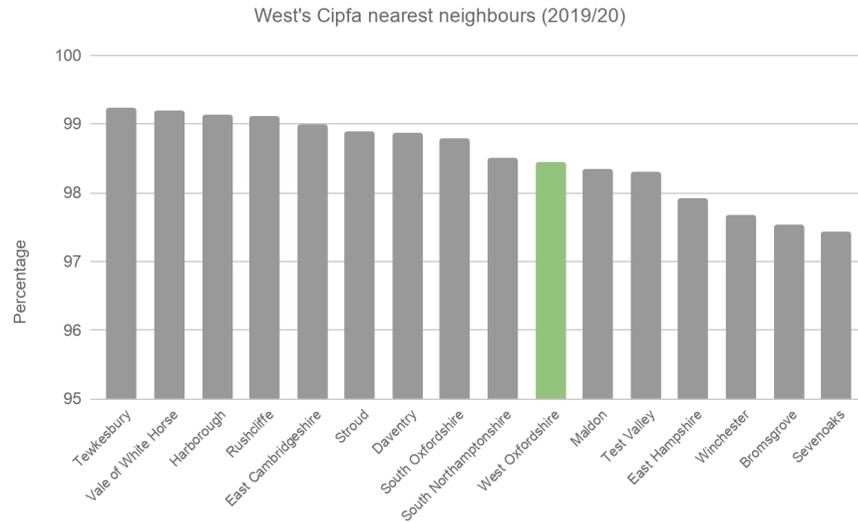
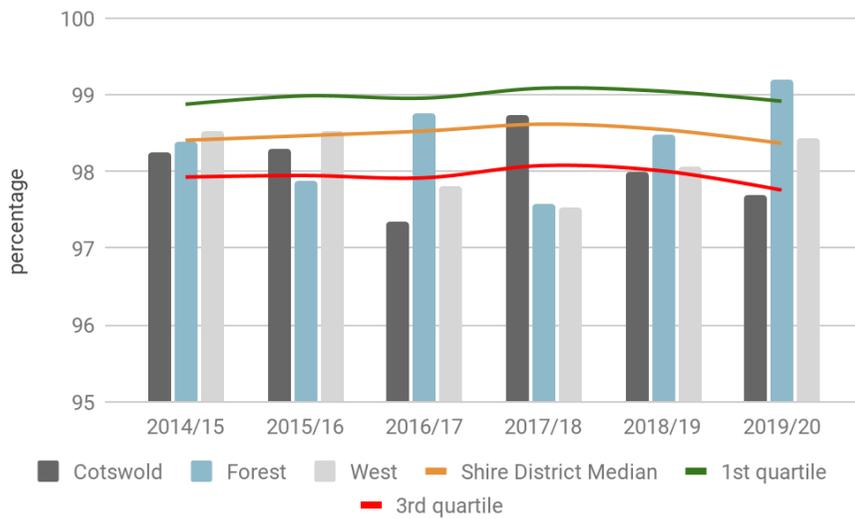
Note: central government funding to cover business rates relief is not included in the outturn

# Benchmarks against all Shire Districts and Cipfa nearest neighbours for council tax collection rates and business rates collection rates

## Percentage of council tax collected



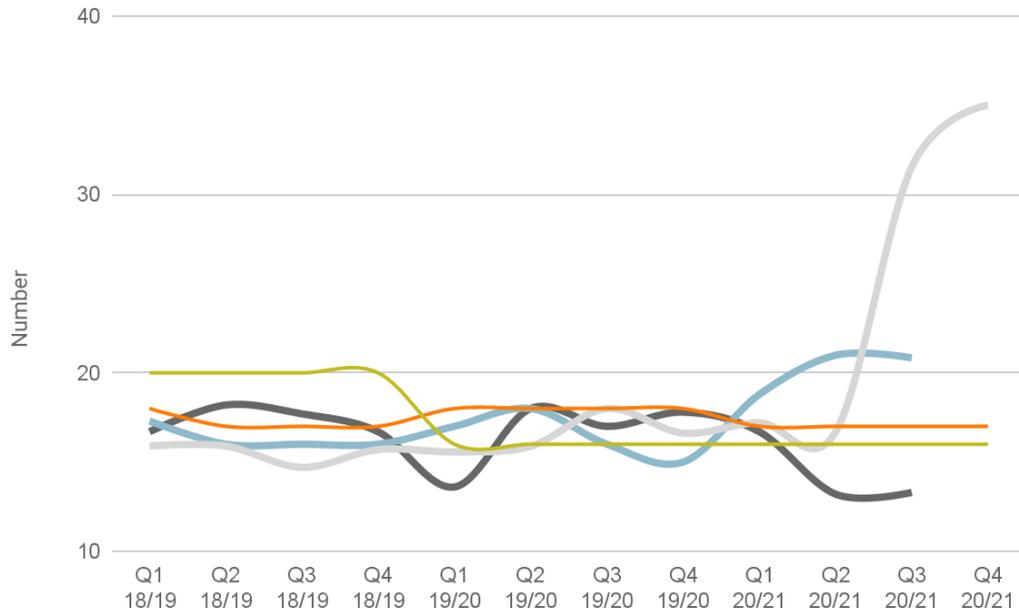
## Percentage of business rates collected



**(Cumulative) Average number of days taken to process new housing benefit claims**

Target
  Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire
  Shire Districts' Median

Page 1202



**OBSERVATION:**

At the end of Q4, processing times have increased significantly due to the implementation of a new revenues and benefits system on 4 February. Prior to 'go live', there was a period of downtime between switching the old system off and the new system on, which created a backlog of applications which staff have been working through. During Q4, a range of end of year activities are administered including the benefit uprating and rent increases which require system parameter changes and testing, which has placed additional burdens on staff.

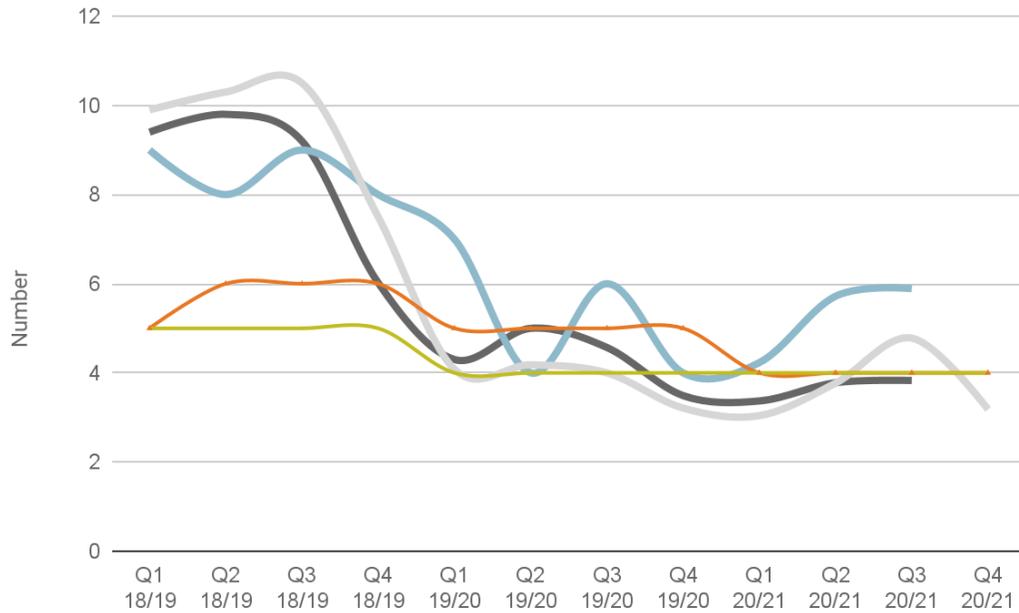
Furthermore, capacity has been reduced in the service as staff have taken time out to train Customer Services Advisors, while other officers have supported 'Track and Trace'. However, there are benefits of the new system including the ability to make online applications, and once the open portal is implemented later in the year, the back office system will be automatically updated.

Although performance was off target due to many external factors, assurances can be given that not one claimant suffered any financial loss or experienced any threat to their new or ongoing tenancy. If there was any threat to the claimant because of delays in administering their claim, the Council would have provided an emergency payment.

To manage workloads, the service has accessed support on demand from an external source.

Note: due to the significant reduction (over 70%) in new housing benefit claims since the implementation of Universal Credit in November 2017 in West Oxfordshire District, this indicator has become obsolete. It is proposed that a new indicator to measure Council Tax Support processing times is introduced as the majority of Universal Credit claims will have an associated CTS claim

**(Cumulative) Average number of days taken to process housing benefit change of circumstances**



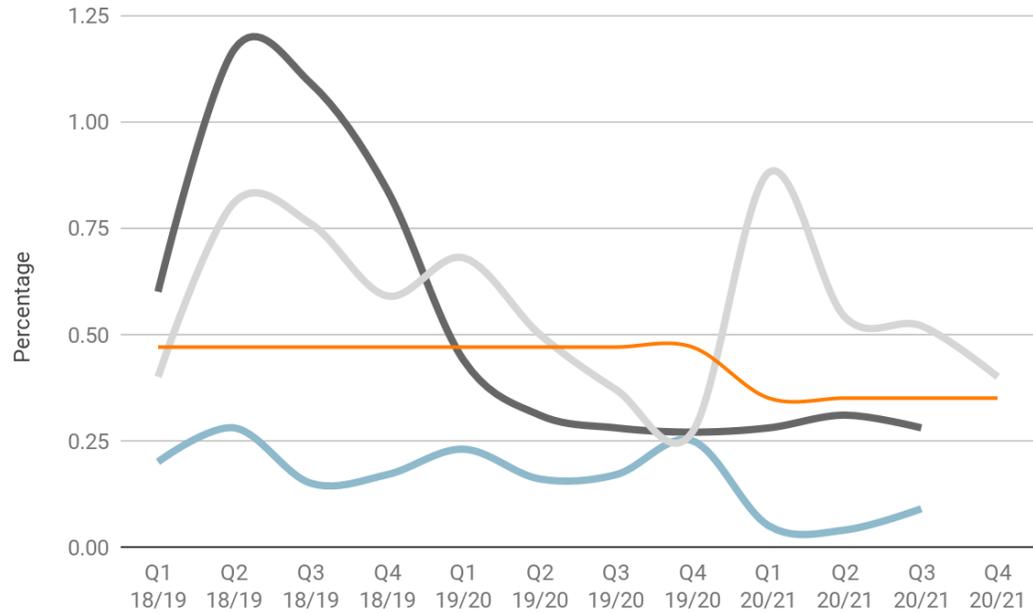
**OBSERVATION:**

Despite the additional workloads associated with the implementation of a new revenues and benefits system and year end activities, performance has come in on target at the end of Q4. Some of the annual changes such as rent increases are simple to process and can be applied in bulk which has helped to reduce the average processing time

**(Cumulative) Percentage of housing benefit overpayment due to LA error/Admin delay**



Page 1204



**OBSERVATION:**

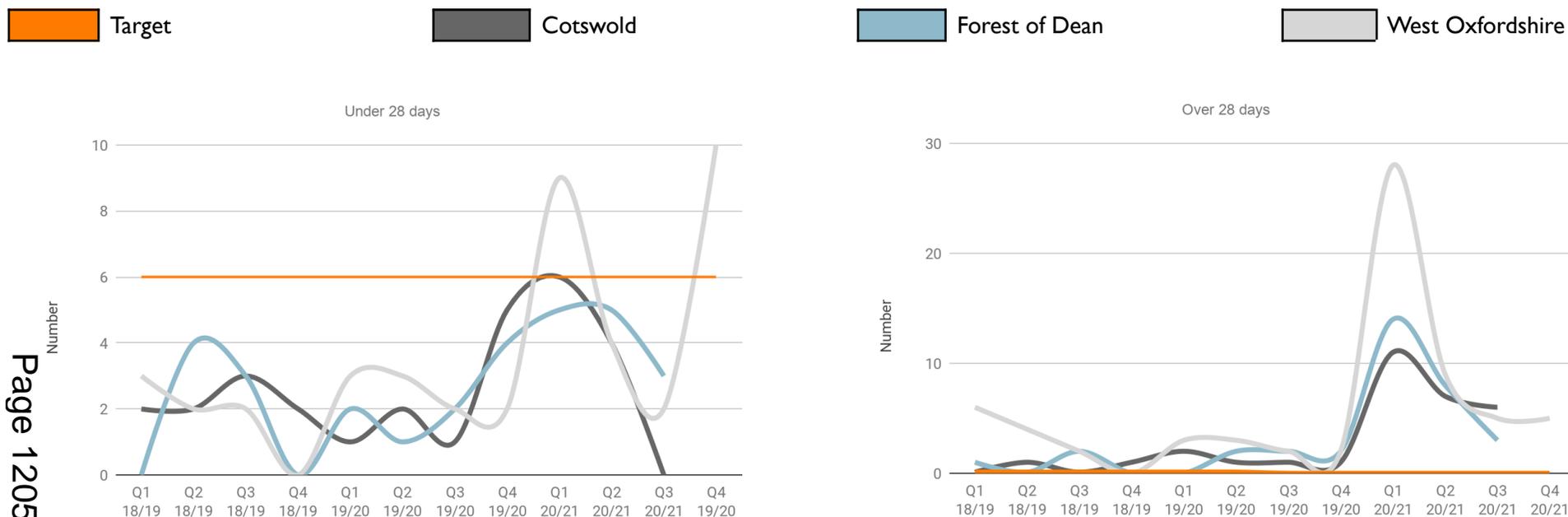
The service continues to involve a number of staff in quality assurance. Due to the high volume of change of circumstances, a sampling approach is taken, and areas which have high error rates such as calculation of earnings, are targeted

There was a small number of errors relating to high value overpayments in Q4 of the previous year which were amended in Q1. We were expecting the spike to flatten out over the course of the year, and to achieve the annual target; however, the backlog created by the implementation of the new revenues and benefits system resulted in an increase in admin delay.

The bulk processing of some end of year changes in Q4 such as rent increases has helped to bring the outturn closer to the target

## Housing Support

(Snapshot) Number of households living in emergency accommodation for under 28 days & over 28 days



Page 1205

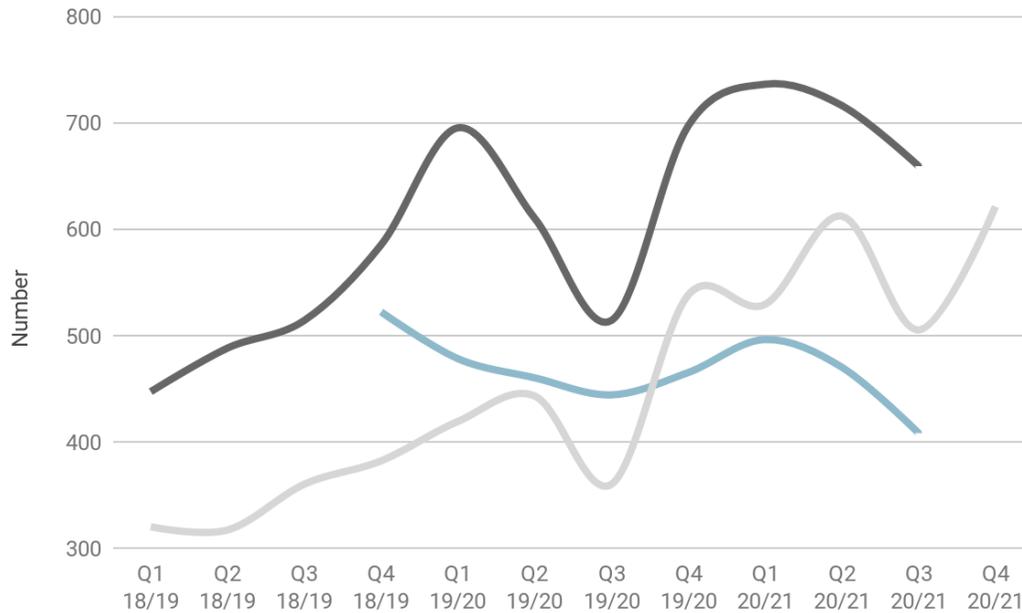
### OBSERVATION:

At the beginning of the first lockdown, councils were required to place all clients who are rough sleeping or at risk of imminent homelessness regardless of priority need who have approached the Council, into emergency accommodation, which resulted in a spike in numbers.

The number of households living in emergency accommodation started to decrease as exit plans were created to move households into more secure tenancies including private rented, housing association, and supported accommodation. In addition, some households and rough sleepers chose to leave emergency accommodation.

In Q4, the number of homelessness presentations started to increase again as the nation entered the third lockdown, and as a result of the cold weather. The majority of the households in emergency accommodation over 28 days tend to be single people affected by the pandemic (rather than in priority need) who are difficult to move on due to the lack of one bedroom accommodation. The Oxfordshire councils are working together to the same standards; and hostels are helping to move people on creating greater fluidity and throughput

**(Snapshot) Number of Long Term Empty properties**



Page 1206

**OBSERVATION:**

Overall, the number of long term empty properties in the District is increasing which is likely to be due to a number of factors.

Initially, there was a pause in house moves which is likely to have contributed to the increase. In addition, no site visits to inspect properties were being undertaken by the LTE officer due to Covid-19.

The LTE post is responsible for monitoring properties and working with landlords to support them to bring their properties back into use. This post became vacant in September but has recently been recruited to. The new post will concentrate on those properties where the Council might be able to influence or take action, rather than on those properties that are being well maintained.

Cottsway has re-commenced the planned demolition of housing association properties, but there are still some retirement properties that have not sold

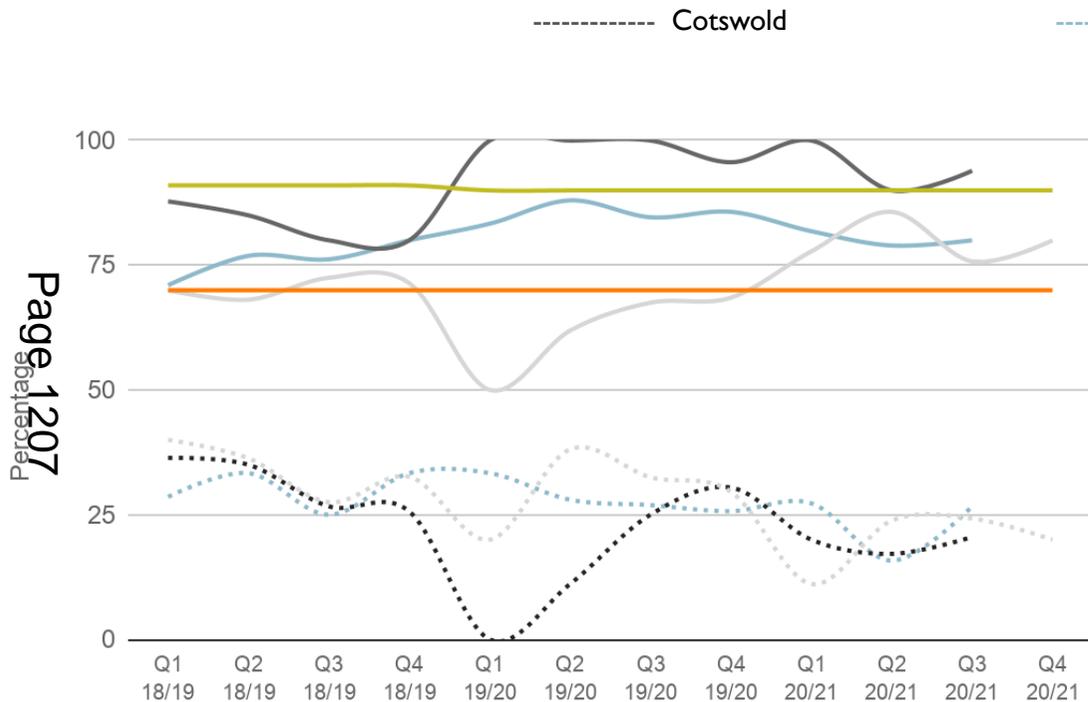
## Planning and Strategic Housing

### (Cumulative) Percentage of major planning applications determined

% of all applications completed within an agreed timeframe



% of all application completed within 13 weeks



Page 1207

#### Note

The charts for the planning performance measures have been separated to demonstrate the number of applications that are completed within the set time frames and the number that are completed as a result of an agreed extension of time.

Extensions of times are often a result of consultees requesting changes to the scheme or because the consultee response is essential but has not been received within the timetable. They are also used where officers are working proactively with applicants to improve schemes and make developments acceptable

#### OBSERVATION:

Seven major applications were determined in the quarter; and 40 for the year compared to 54 for the same period a year ago.

The service has reported that the number of applications received over the summer and then throughout the rest of the year has been a record nationally and that this trend is reflected locally. The increasing numbers coming through combined with reduced efficiency in the planning process as a result of Covid-19 has created a backlog. The departure of two senior planners and a planner has placed additional pressure on the team which is already overstretched. Recruitment is in hand but performance is slipping, and recruitment of agency staff is under consideration to fill the gaps.

The Planning team has found home working and the restrictions imposed by Covid-19 has created additional burdens as not all aspects of this statutory process can be or are best achieved electronically. In addition, home working has reduced communication between officers, and therefore there is less support for officers which is affecting morale. Validating planning applications for accuracy has proved particularly problematic as a home based exercise as details of the application have to be cross checked against a number of plans and maps which can be achieved much easier using paper versions in the office. A new validation process was implemented over the Christmas/New Year at all three partner Council sites which should help to improve performance generally. Other tasks that are achieved more easily in the office include redacting and printing documents e.g. site notices.

The restrictions imposed by Covid-19 have resulted in additional preparation time required for committee meetings, and site visits which need to be unaccompanied and pre-arranged, often with a follow up online meeting or phone call.

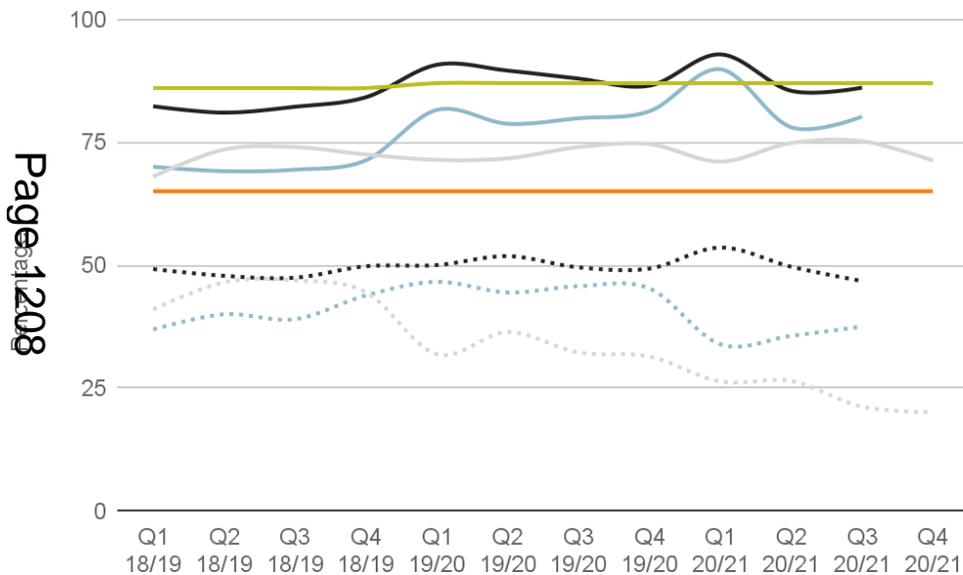
Some consultees such as the County and the Environment Agency are struggling to meet response target dates which is also impacting on determination times.

## (Cumulative) Percentage of minor planning applications determined

% of all applications completed within agreed timescales



% of all applications completed within 8 weeks



### OBSERVATION:

Eighty-four minor applications were determined in the quarter and 334 for the year compared to 382 for the previous year.

The challenging work conditions coupled with vacant planning posts and higher volumes of applications coming through has created a backlog which is impacting on performance. Planning officers are typically dealing with twice as many 'live' applications than in pre-covid times.

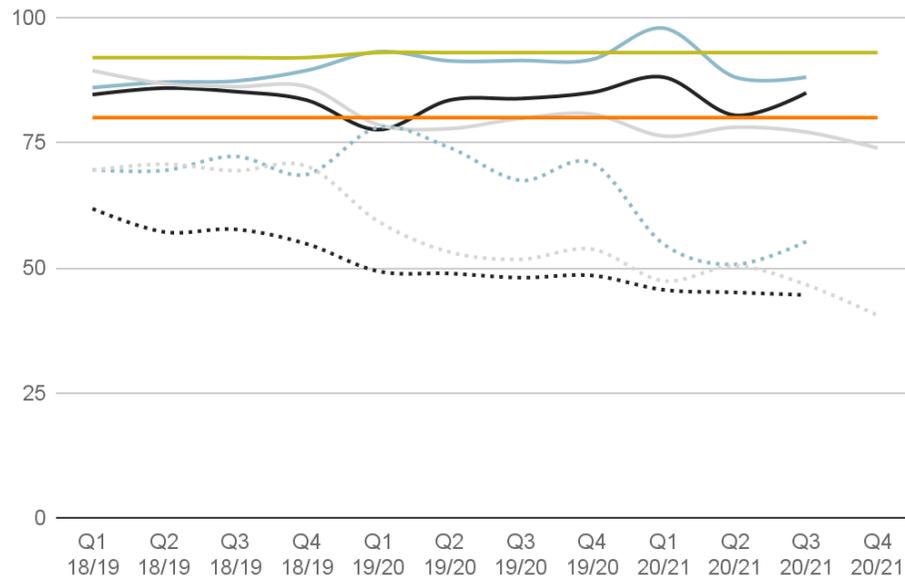
Registration/validation has proved particularly problematic as a home based exercise; although a new validation process was implemented at all three partner Council development management services over the Christmas/New Year period which once embedded should help increase resilience and performance generally. In addition, a number of improvement projects are scheduled which the Customer Experience Improvement Team (CEIT) will help deliver alongside the planning service. However, with such high workloads in the Planning service, the current focus for both the CEIT and the Planning teams is to clear the backlog of applications awaiting validation

## (Cumulative) Percentage of other planning applications determined

% of all applications completed within agreed timescales



% of all applications completed within 8 weeks



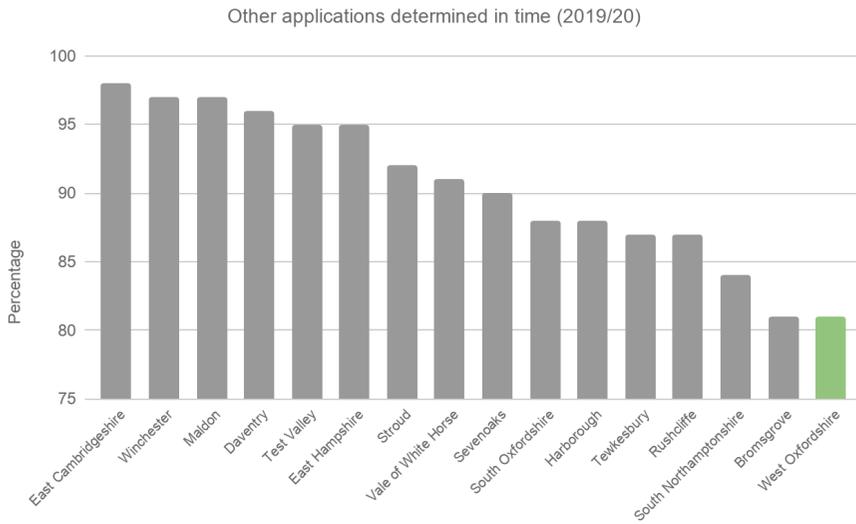
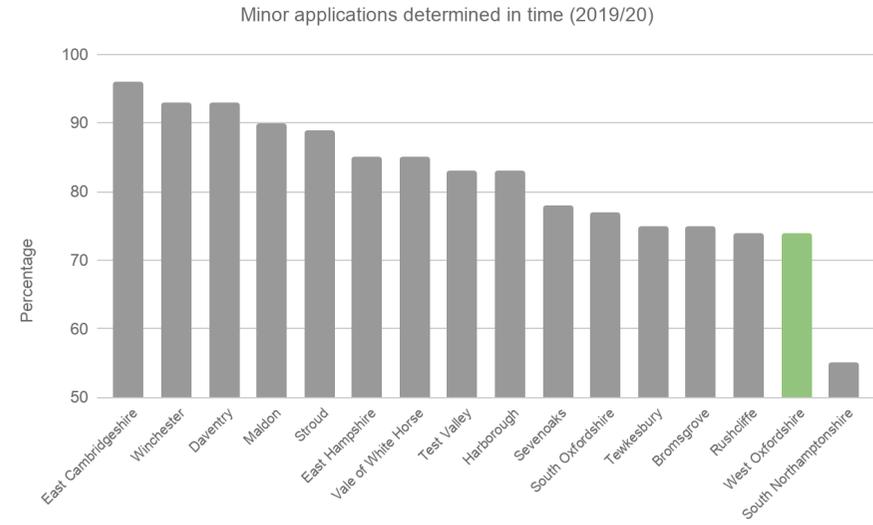
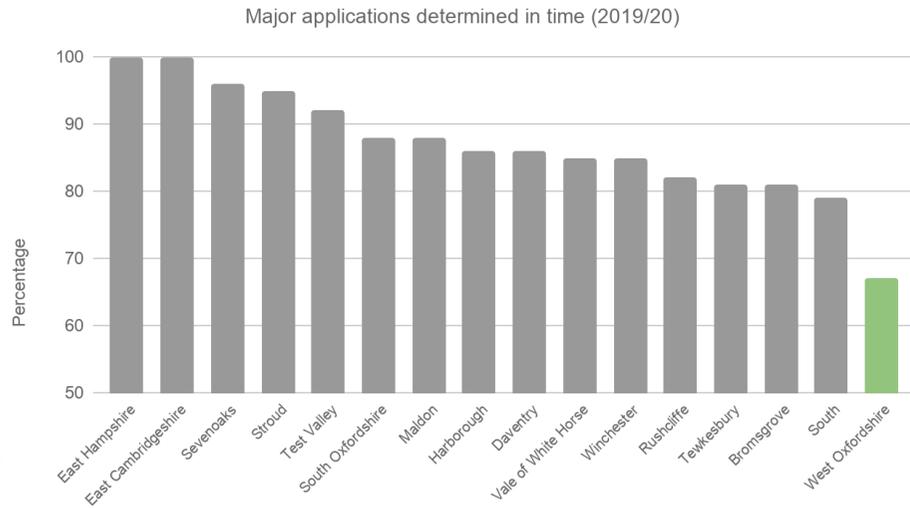
### OBSERVATION:

283 other applications were determined in the quarter and 991 for the year compared to 895 for the previous year.

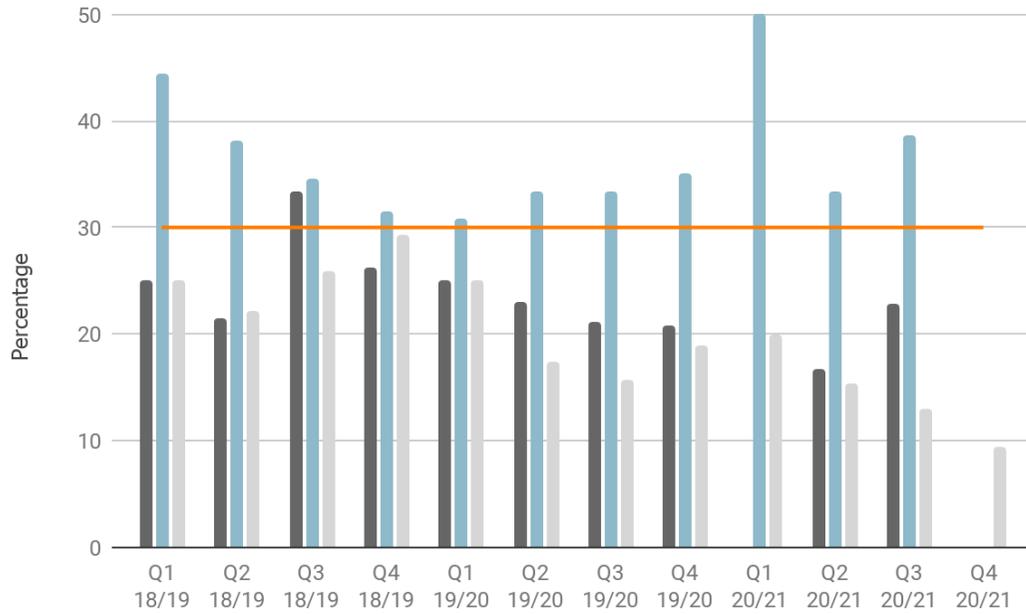
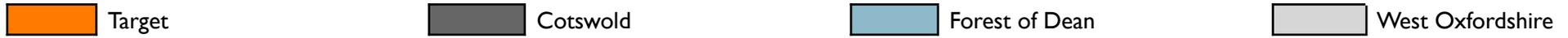
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Registration/validation has proved particularly problematic as a home based exercise; although a new validation process was implemented at all three partner Council development management services over the Christmas/New Year period which once embedded should help increase resilience and performance generally. In addition, a number of improvement projects are scheduled which the Customer Experience Improvement Team (CEIT) will help deliver alongside the planning service. However, with such high workloads in the Planning service, the current focus for both the CEIT and the Planning teams is to clear the backlog of applications awaiting validation

## Benchmarks against Cipa nearest neighbours for % of planning application determined within agreed timescales

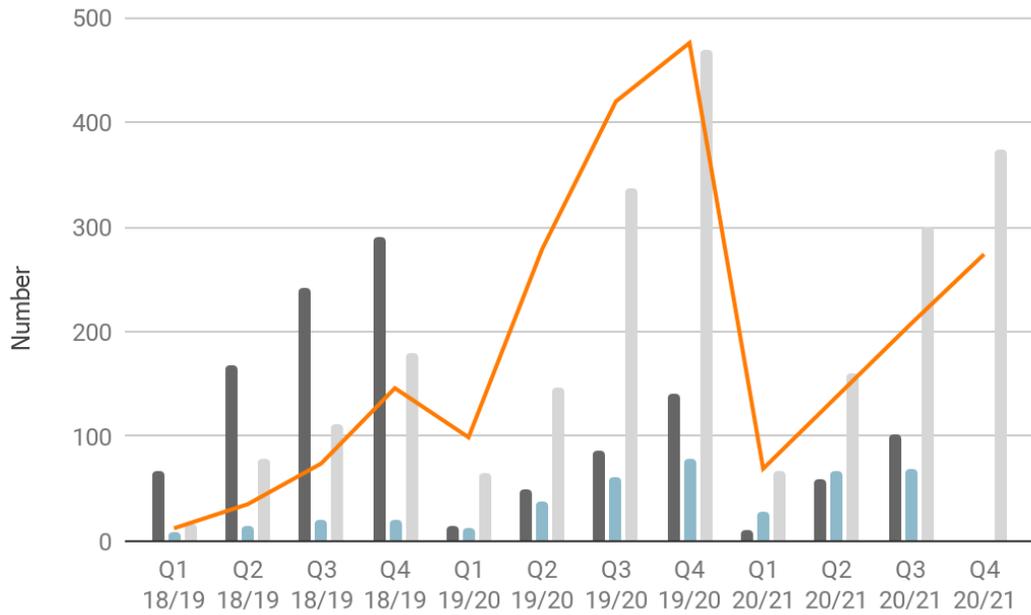
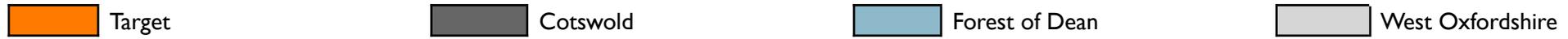


**(Cumulative) Percentage of planning appeals allowed**



**OBSERVATION:**  
 None of the fifteen planning appeals determined in Q4 were allowed.  
 During 2020-21, three out of 32 appeals were allowed

**(Cumulative) Number of affordable homes delivered**

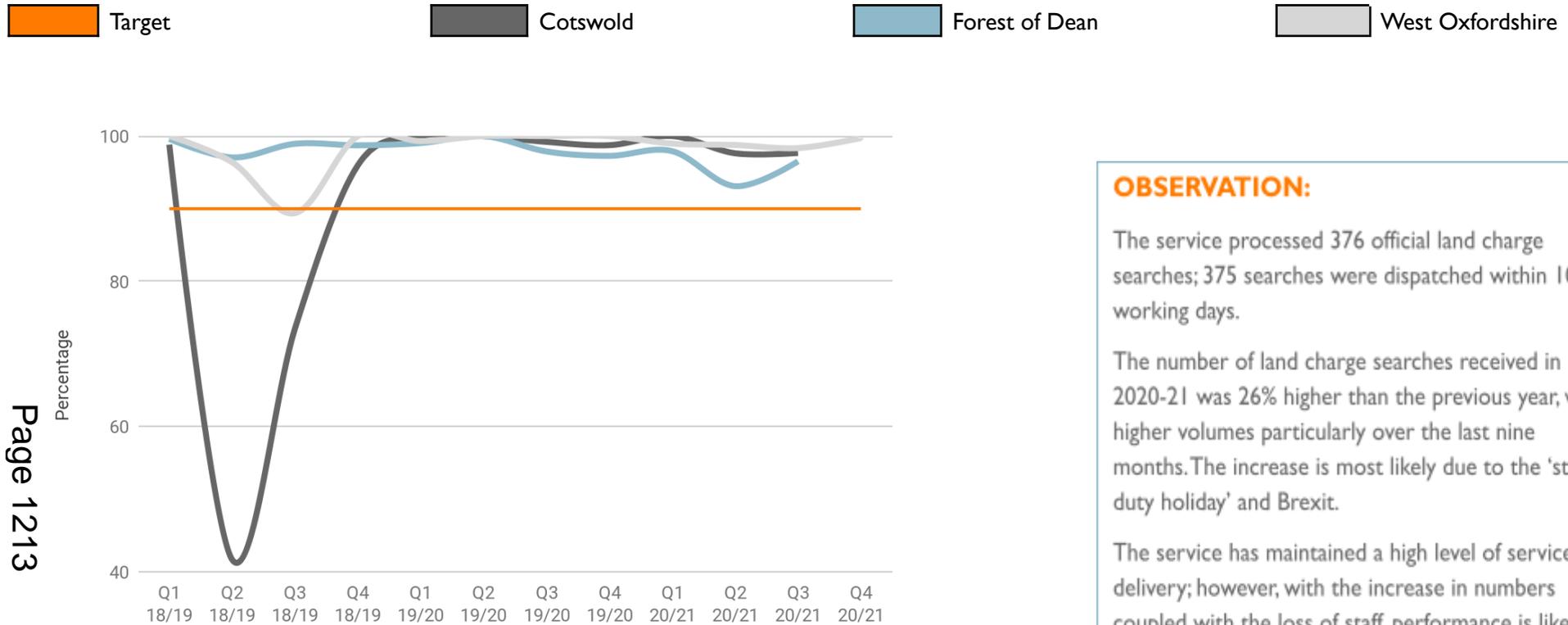


**OBSERVATION:**

Seventy-four affordable homes reached practical completion in Q4 for rent (53) and low cost home ownership (21), and a total of 374 for the year. 116 affordable homes were delivered by Cotswold, 123 by Sage, and 51 by Aster. The remaining units were delivered by Sovereign, Clarion and Blenheim (10 homes at Long Hanborough). Additionally, seven discount market sales have been delivered in Witney.

Clarion and Greensquare report that their Q4 completions for sites in Minster Lovell and Burford are lower than expected due to issues with material supply and staffing related to Covid-19 and a general labour shortage. These homes are now likely to be completed in the first six months of 2021/22

## Percentage of land charge searches dispatched within 10 working days



### OBSERVATION:

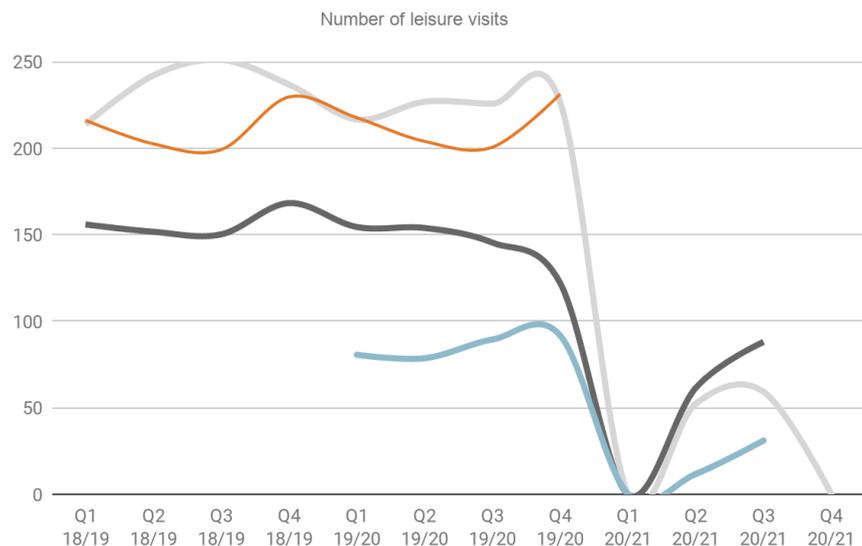
The service processed 376 official land charge searches; 375 searches were dispatched within 10 working days.

The number of land charge searches received in 2020-21 was 26% higher than the previous year, with higher volumes particularly over the last nine months. The increase is most likely due to the 'stamp duty holiday' and Brexit.

The service has maintained a high level of service delivery; however, with the increase in numbers coupled with the loss of staff, performance is likely to fall

## Leisure

### Number of visits to leisure centres & (Snapshot) Number of gym memberships



Page 1214

#### OBSERVATION:

During the 2020/21, there have been three national lockdowns; March to June 2020, November 2020, and January to March 2021 which resulted in the closure of the Council's leisure facilities.

The Government set out the roadmap for 2021 for emerging out of the third lockdown which allowed leisure centres to re-open from 29 March (for outdoor activities with limited numbers and social distancing), this was followed by the return of indoor swimming and gym sessions from 12 April 2021. The current forecast is for a full return of all activities with no social restrictions from 21 June.

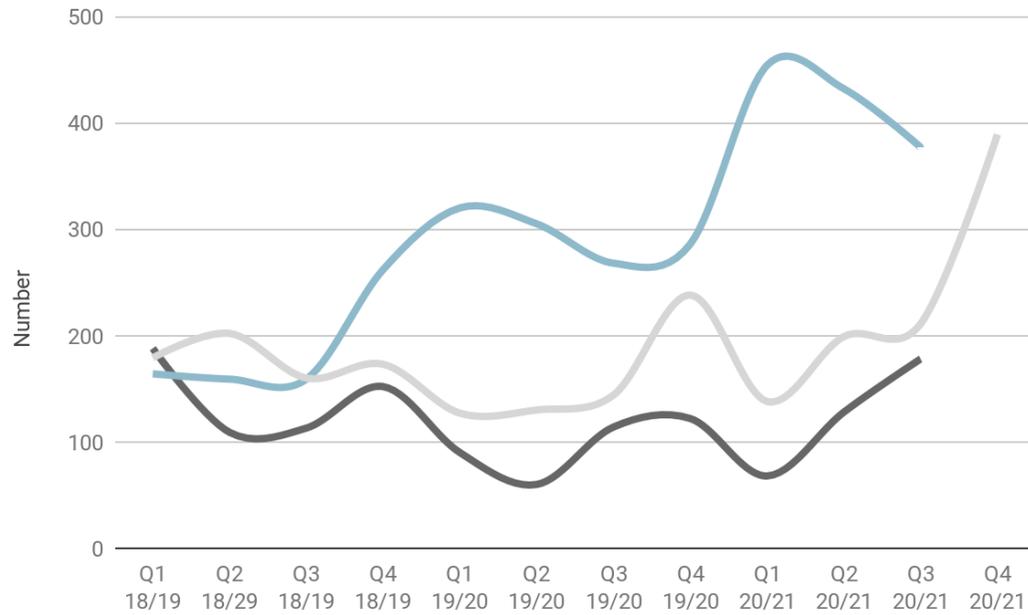
During 2020/21, the Council has given financial support packages to leisure operators to ease cash flow issues. Some grant funding has also been available from the government to cover Council losses through waiving management fees. A further tranche of funding was made available through Sport England that was directly applied to covering costs that the leisure operators were experiencing in lockdown, and to support re-opening.

Note: Gym memberships were frozen during the first and third lockdowns. No targets were set for 2020-21

## Environmental and Regulatory

### Number of fly tips collected

Cotswold      Forest of Dean      West Oxfordshire



#### OBSERVATION:

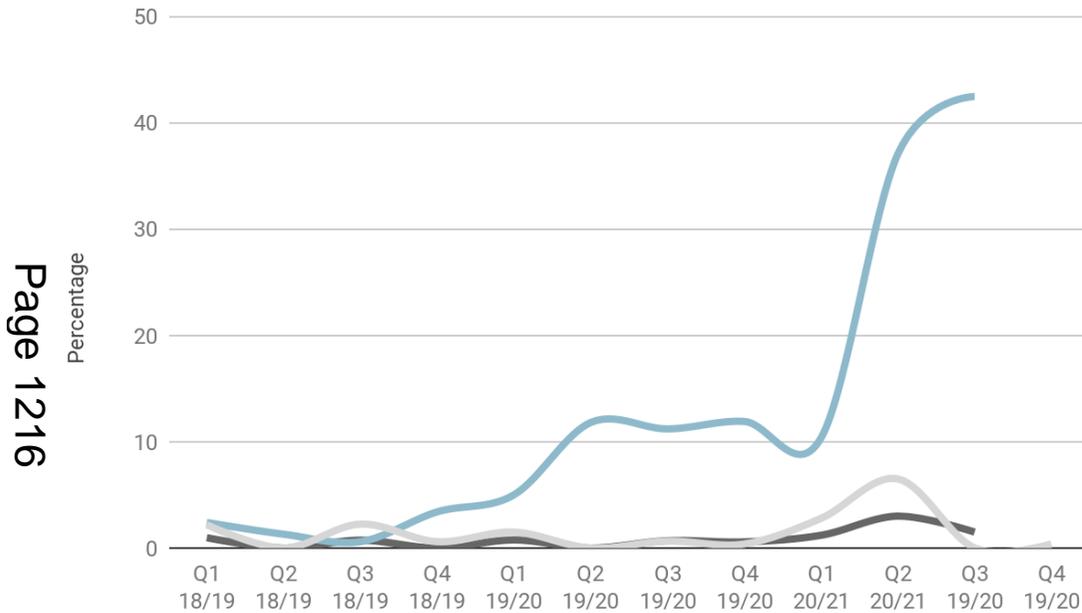
Due to Covid-19, increases in fly tips have been reported nationally which appears to be reflected locally in particular over the last quarter. Recycling centres were closed in the first lockdown but have since been operating a booking system.

In addition, the fly tipping service was redesigned in Q3 with the introduction of new on-line forms and web pages making it easier and quicker for residents to report fly tips.

A high percentage of the fly tips at the Forest of Dean are at recycling sites, which are not counted by West and Cotswold

Percentage of fly tips that result in an enforcement action taking place (defined as a warning letter, fixed penalty notice, simple caution or prosecution)

Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire



**OBSERVATION:**

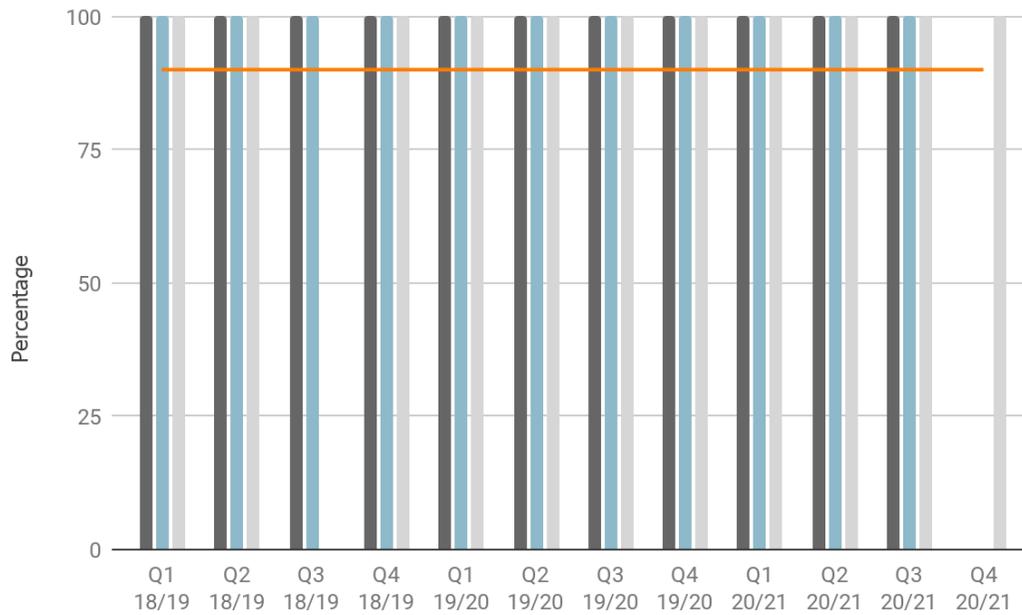
In Q4, there were 521 notifications of fly tips, up from 301 notifications in the previous quarter. Two enforcement actions were issued, one Fixed Penalty Notice and one warning letter. In addition, officers have been focussing on tackling fly tips at bring banks, and issuing letters to residents.

There was an increase in enforcement activity in Q2 following the implementation of a new enforcement pack allowing cautions to be issued via the post. However, a short term loss of experienced resources in the team has resulted in less enforcement activity over the last six months. Recruitment to the vacant post is expected to commence shortly.

In addition, the fly tipping service was re-designed for Cotswold and West. A 'support service triage' has been set up to free up specialist officer time to deal with the fly tips that can be investigated further. In Q4, 34 fly tips were referred to ERS specialists for further investigation. The change in service will require time to 'bed in', and it is likely that the referral criteria will need to be broadened to ensure that a sufficient number of referrals come through for investigation.

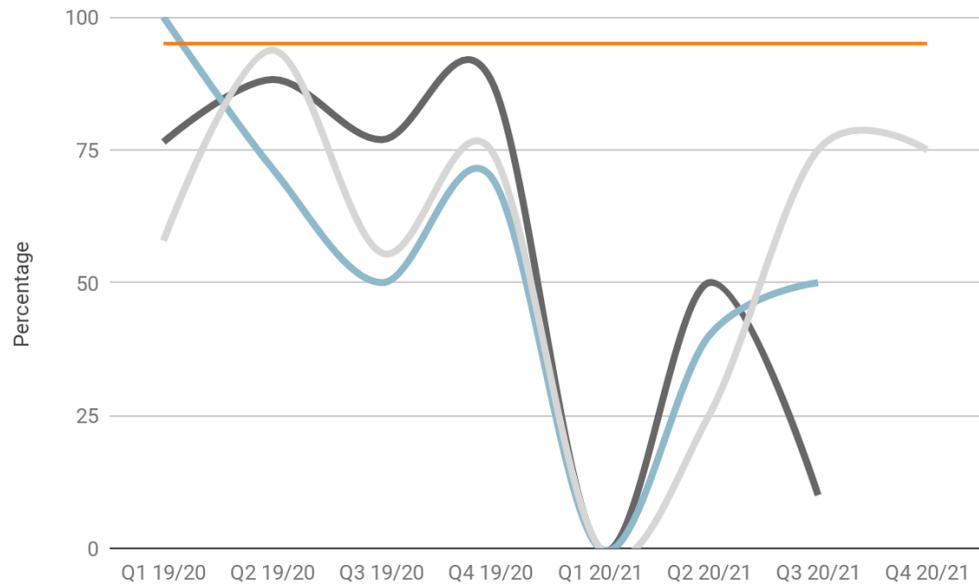
Cotswold and West operate a small multidisciplinary team. In contrast, at Forest of Dean, there is a dedicated Community Warden team, which has also implemented a new enforcement pack

**Percentage of high risk notifications (including food poisoning outbreaks, anti-social behaviour, contaminated private water supplies, workplace fatalities or multiple serious injuries) risk assessed within 1 working day**



**OBSERVATION:**  
 Five notifications in Q4, one oil spill, one report of flooding, two reports of sewage problems and one campylobacter case.  
 All notifications were assessed within one day

## Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales



Page 1218

### OBSERVATION:

This indicator has been set to 'amber' to recognise that the service has been impacted by Covid-19 restrictions.

During the year, there have been three national lockdowns. During these periods, remote inspections have been conducted, and site inspections were undertaken when the Covid infection rates had reduced to a level when it was safe to go out.

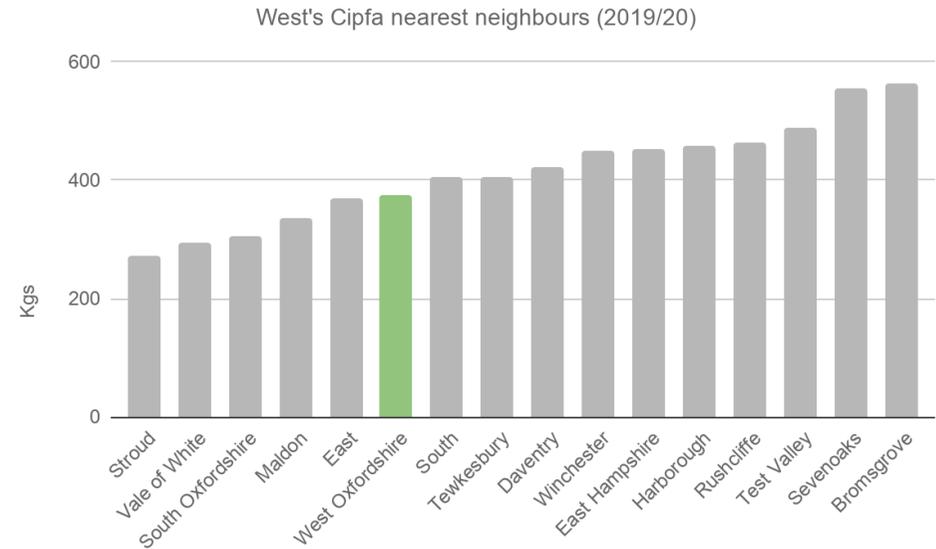
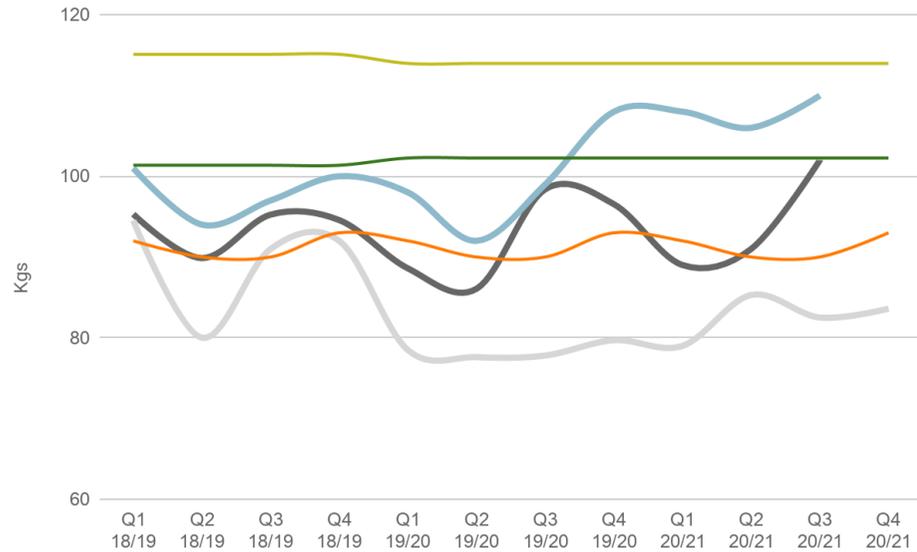
Four high risk food inspections were due in Q4, and all four received a remote inspection.

Following a risk assessment on site visits, and staff consultation, some staff commenced site inspections at the beginning of March 2021 (with the use of PPE) as the infection rate in Oxfordshire had reduced significantly. Two of the four food inspection due have been completed, although one was completed outside of the 28 day timescale. The two outstanding inspections relate to care homes which are excluded from site visits unless deemed necessary.

A backlog of other types of inspections including the inspection of new food businesses, has built up over the year, and the service is awaiting further guidance from the FSA in June on how to deal with the backlog.

All work deemed 'high priority' by the FSA has been undertaken and a site visit has taken place when required.

## Residual household waste per household (kg)



Page 1219

### OBSERVATION:

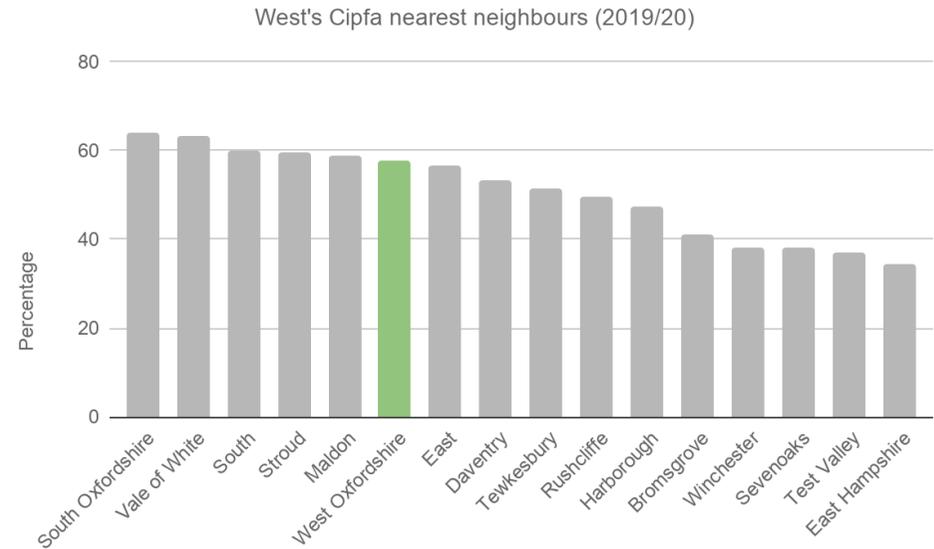
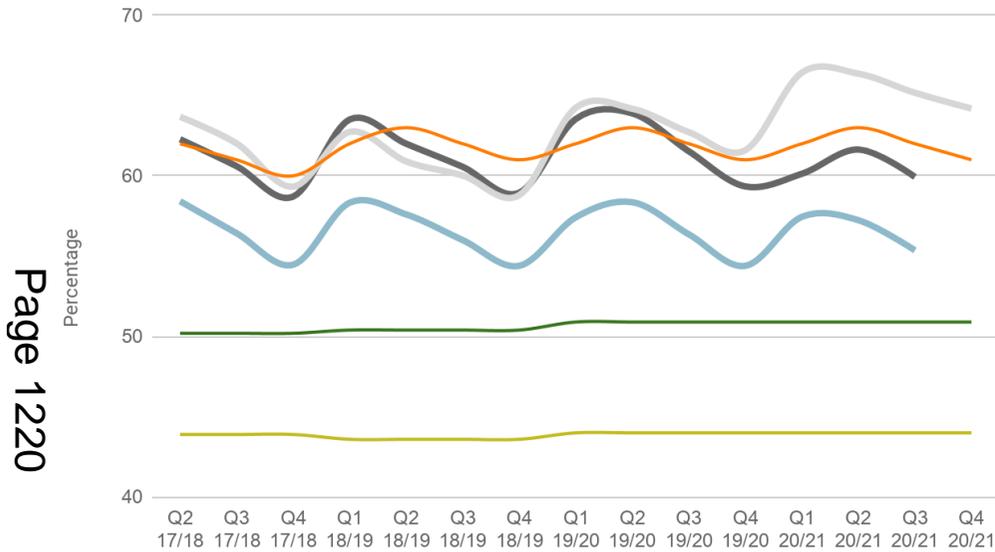
Due to the impact of Covid-19, all waste and recycling stream tonnages have increased, and reached a peak in October 2020 but appear to be slowly reducing again.

The amount of residual waste produced during the year increased by over 10% compared to the previous year. All excess recycling and food waste is being collected at the kerbside if presented correctly.

Both the Council and the Oxfordshire Recycles (OCC partnership work) are using their social media channels to promote waste reduction

Note: These figures are provisional

**(Cumulative) Percentage of household waste recycled**



Page 1220

**OBSERVATION:**

Due to the impact of Covid-19, residents are presenting higher amounts of all types of waste.

Dry recycling tonnages for the year were up over 35% on the previous year, garden waste tonnages were up 15%, and food tonnages, nearly 16%.

The combined recycling rate for the year was 64.2% compared to 61.6% a year ago; the increase was mainly driven by the increase in dry recycling.

The dry recycling rate was 29.6% (up 2.7 percentage points on the previous year), the composting rate was 24.4% and food waste sent for anaerobic digestion was 10.2%. Note that these figures are provisional.

The service is working closely with UBICO; and all additional recycling and food waste presented correctly at the kerbside by residents is being collected.

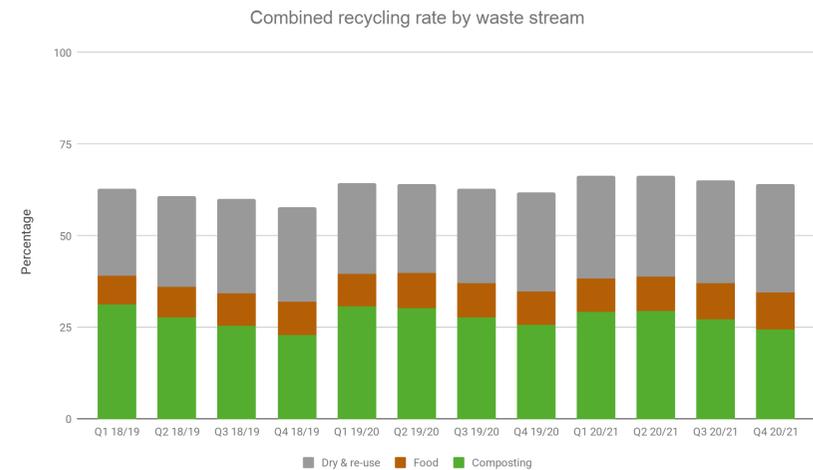
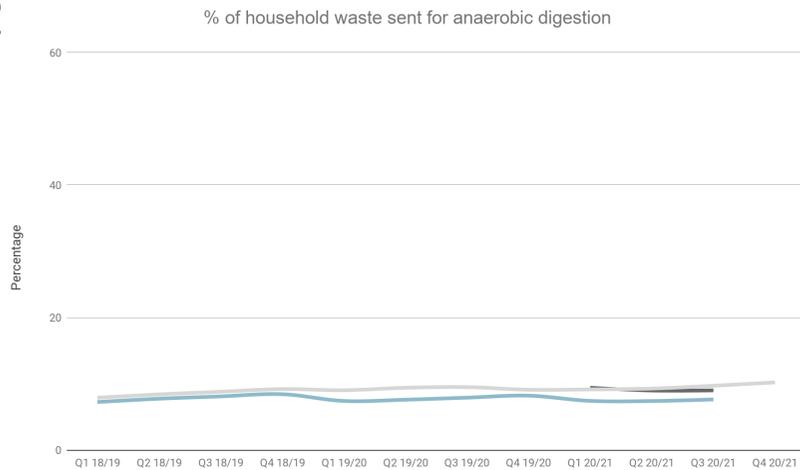
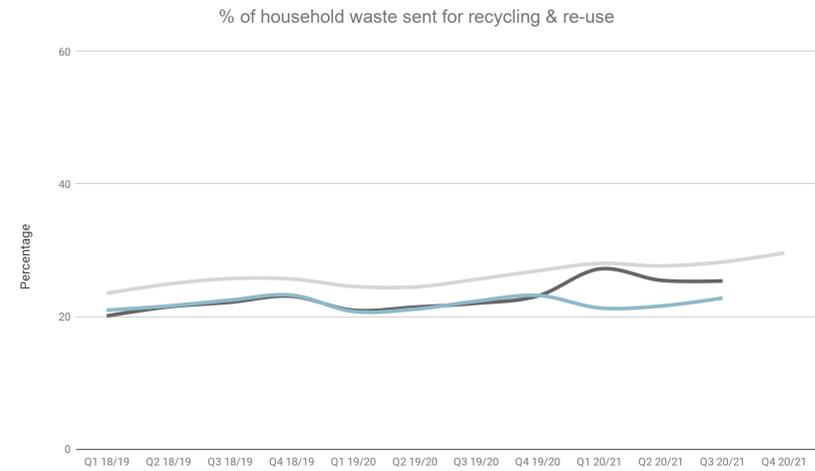
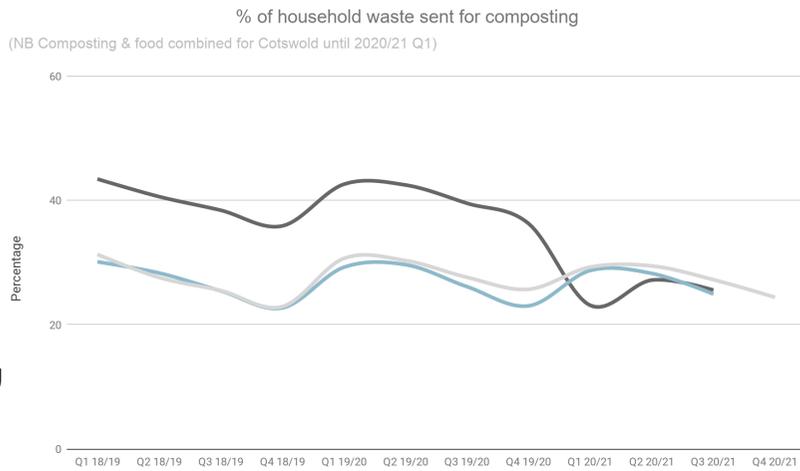
Note that the quarterly recycling targets are profiled to account for seasonal differences. The data is also presented cumulatively which will flatten out some of these differences

# (Cumulative) Percentage of household waste recycled by waste stream

Cotswold

Forest of Dean

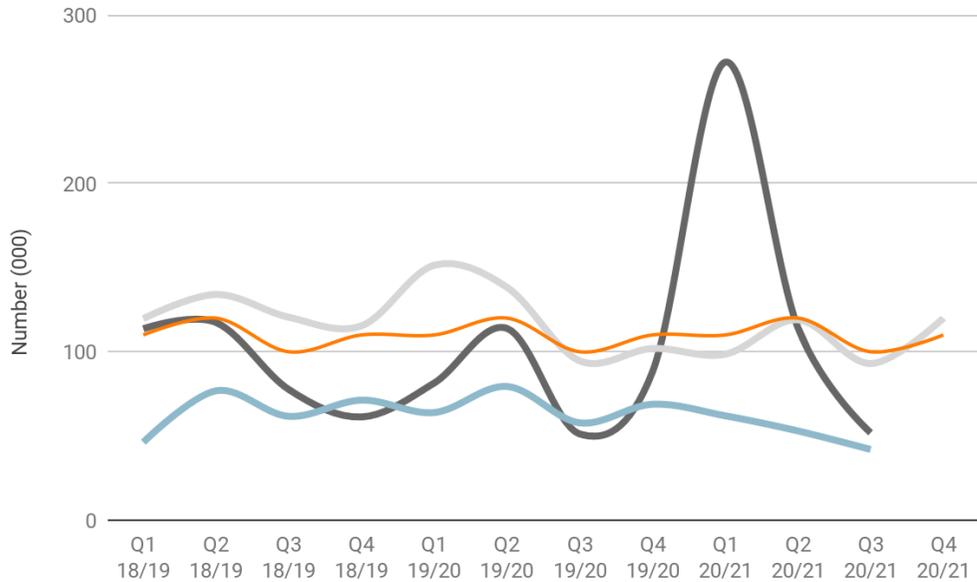
West Oxfordshire



## Number of missed bin per 100,000 scheduled collections



Page 1222



### OBSERVATION:

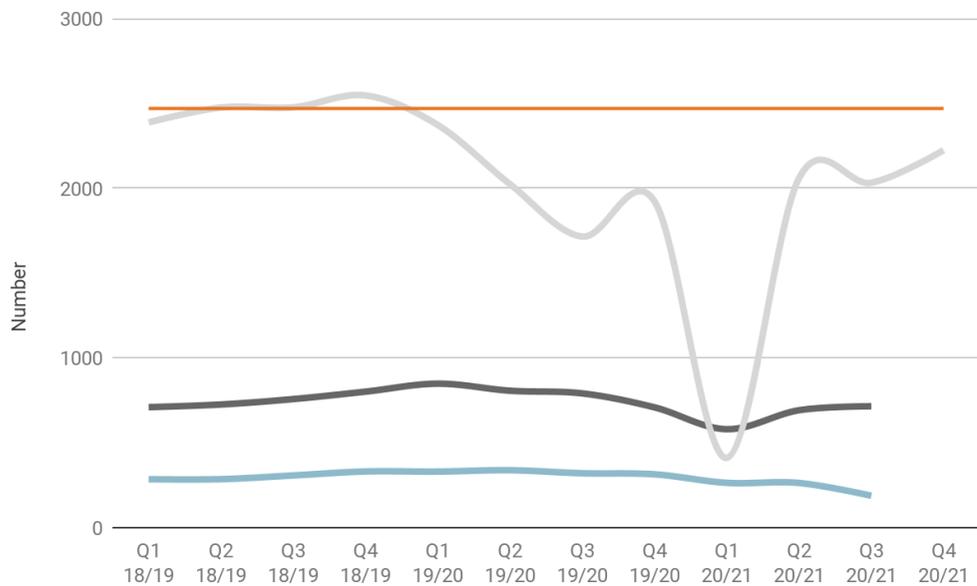
Overall, there have been improvements over the last year, and performance has generally remained within the target despite an increase in the number of misses in the early part of the financial year due to staff absences related to Covid-19, and the use of more agency staff who did not possess local knowledge.

The number of misses also increased in Q4 which was due to a lack of capacity in customer services who would usually challenge reports of missed bins where appropriate, as well as a delay in distributing waste and recycling containers which can result in residents leaving out excess waste in sacks for collection.

The service is working closely with UBICO to reduce the number of missed bins

## Parking

### Total hours spent undertaking on and off-street parking enforcement visits



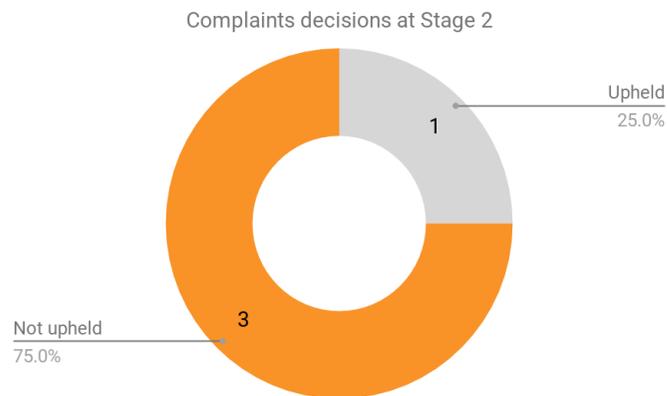
#### OBSERVATION:

All enforcement activities were suspended on 23 March until 15 June 2020 due to Covid-19. Following the first lockdown, enforcement officers have been taking a light touch approach to enforcement with the issuing of warning notices; and staff were redeployed to support communities.

The nation entered a third lockdown in January 2021. Although usage levels in car parks continue to be relatively low, enforcement officers have been patrolling the car parks and ensuring that they are safe, while supporting food deliveries and track and trace when requested.

From April 2021, there will be a return to full enforcement activities

## COMPLAINTS - ARE WE DOING THE 'DAY JOB' REALLY WELL FOR OUR COUNCILS?



### OBSERVATION:

A new Customer Feedback Procedure went live on the 1st July 2020. The Corporate Responsibility team is managing all complaints allowing services to focus on delivery.

The new process has the following stages:

Stage 1: Acknowledgement and Assessment

Stage 2: Investigation

Stage 3: Appeal

The complaints shown below only include upheld or partially upheld complaints

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Service area	Description	Outcome/learning	Stage	Decision	Response time (days)
Revenues & Benefits	Inaccurate advice on Covid Business Grants resulting in the complainant feeling unfairly disadvantaged	On investigation, it was found that some information regarding the case had not been logged on the system resulting in inaccurate advice being given. An apology was offered, and the Grant Assessment Team processed the application as a matter of urgency	II	Upheld	5



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 <b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>	<b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
Name and date of Committee	<b>Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee 8 July 2021</b>
Report Number	<b>Agenda Item 10</b>
Subject	<b>Committee Work Programme 2021/2022</b>
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr Andrew Beaney Chairman Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee Email: <a href="mailto:andrew.beaney@westoxon.gov.uk">andrew.beaney@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Democratic Services – <a href="mailto:democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk">democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To provide the Committee with an update on the recent review of the Work Programme for 2021/2022.
Annex	<a href="#">Annex 1</a> – Work programme for 2021/22
Recommendation	That the Committee manages its 2021/2022 Work Programme and adds items which fall into their remit.
Corporate priorities	To enable the Committee to review its Work Programme and support the Council's priorities to protect the environment whilst supporting the local economy, to meet the current and future needs of residents and to provide efficient and value for money services, whilst delivering quality front line services.
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	None

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. At the Committee's meeting in September 2020 it reviewed progress on its work programme for 2019/20 and agreed a programme for the remainder of 2020/21, having regard to the changes to the approach to scrutiny work adopted by Council on 22 October 2008.

## **2. MAIN POINTS**

- 2.1. Attached at [Annex I](#) is the Work Programme for 2021/2022 for discussion and approval.
- 2.2. Members are asked to note the following amendments and/or updates to the work programme since it was last discussed:

- Consultation on the Oxfordshire Local Plan

The papers for this item are not due to be published until after the dispatch of this agenda – we will circulate them separately as soon as we have them.

- Housing Act and service update

An All Member briefing has been organised for Monday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2021 and invitations will be sent out in due course. Therefore, this item has been removed from the agenda for this month.

- NHS Dental Service provision

Following the last meeting officers requested an update from NHS England and have received a briefing note from Oxfordshire CCG (see attached appendix).

- Report on preparation for the arrival of refugees from Afghanistan

Following discussions with officers, we were advised that as a Council we have not received any formal communication relating to West Oxfordshire District Council's involvement in the Afghan Resettlement Programme. Gloucestershire County have been actively working on the programme for around a month and officers have provided a briefing note (see attached appendix).

## **3. FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1. There are no financial or legal implications arising directly from this report.

## **4. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1. Not applicable

## **5. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1. Whilst there may be climate change implications arising from specific items within the Work Programme, there are none arising directly from this report.

## **6. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS**

- 6.1. In accordance with the Constitution of the Council, Committee has the power to investigate any matters it considers relevant to its work area, and to make recommendations to the Council, the Executive or any other Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council as it sees fit.

## **7. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1. None

## Economic and Social Committee – Work Programme 2021 / 2022

8 July 2021

	Title	Format	Lead Officer / Cabinet Member	Next report / Anticipated Completion Date	Comments
1	Presentation by representatives of GLL Better (Greenwich Leisure Limited), the Council's Leisure Services Provider.	Presentation & Q&A	Stuart Wilson / Councillor Mead & rep from GLL.	Provisionally re-arranged from 27 May 2021	To update on work before, during & after Covid. (previously an annual update). Slipped from January 2021.
2	Consultation on the Oxfordshire Local Plan	Report	Oxfordshire Growth Board	8 July 2021	Papers published 2 July – will be circulated late for this meeting.
3	Housing Act and service update	Written report	Jon Dearing	26 July 2021	All Member Briefing to be delivered
4	Enforcement Powers in the Planning Act	Verbal Update	Jon Dearing / Councillors Davies & Haine	8 July 2021	Update on enforcement rules and progress of work / cases
5	Council Priorities and service Performance Report – quarter 4	Written report	Giles Hughes / Michele Mead	8 July 2021	
6	Report on preparation for the arrival of refugees from Afghanistan	Report	Jon Dearing	8 July 2021	See Briefing Note attached

## Economic and Social Committee – Work Programme 2021 / 2022

16 September 2021

	Title	Format	Lead Officer / Cabinet Member	Next report / Anticipated Completion Date	Comments
1	REEMA North Site, Carterton update (Jon Wooden, Deputy Head Estates)	Verbal Update	Giles Hughes /	16 September	Representative to attend the meeting
2	Upgrade to WO public space CCTV provision & monitoring arrangements	Verbal update	Councillor MacRae / Andy Barge	16 September	
3	Re-use of IT equipment	Report	Phil Martin	16 September	

### Other Reports

Report Title	Frequency	Reason
Council Priorities and Service Performance Report 2020-21 Quarter One	Quarterly	<b>Quarter 1 – September 2020</b> <b>Quarter 2 – tbc</b> <b>Quarter 3 – April 2021</b> <b>Quarter 4 – 8 July 2021</b>
Upgrade to WO public space CCTV provision & monitoring arrangements	Verbal update	Councillor MacRae / Andy Barge
RAF Brize Norton	As required	Business model for housing on site – last update given January 2020 and briefing note circulated February 2020. 21/01/2021 – GH / NL to find out if there is any update that can be delivered at the next meeting

## Economic and Social Committee – Work Programme 2021 / 2022

Report Title	Frequency	Reason
Health Care Provision in Oxfordshire	Ongoing	To provide an update on the impact since Covid and how it will be looked at in recovery work, impact of PHE removal in September & how WODC can help with changes.
Housing Act and service update	Annual Update required	Report to be submitted to July 2021 meeting.
Enforcement Powers in the Planning Act	Update required particularly on enforcement	Report to be submitted to July 2021 meeting.
Domestic Violence	As requested	Presentation received at June meeting was comprehensive.
NHS Dental Services in WODC, especially Carterton		See Briefing Note attached

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## The Impact of COVID-19 on Access to Dental Services

COVID-19 has had a greater impact on dentistry than some services due to the close proximity dental teams are in when treating patients with an open mouth in a confined space. Additional infection, prevention, control measures (IPC) must be adhered to in order to reduce the risk to dental teams, patients and the wider population. IPC guidelines include specific requirements when undertaking Aerosol Generated Procedures (AGPs) which are used for treatment including fillings, scale and polish, root treatment and crown preparation. This requires a fallow time after treatment to allow aerosols to settle before an enhanced clean can be carried out. Fallow time was initially 1 hour but reduced to 30 minutes in many cases by the end of 2020. As most dental procedures involve the use of AGPs this has had a significant impact on capacity and the number of patients that can safely be seen. It is unlikely that these restrictions will be lifted until the pandemic is deemed to be over which means that capacity will continue to be reduced for some considerable time.

While access to dental care is limited across the country due to COVID-19, practices are concentrating on the provision of urgent care and treatment for patients with the greatest clinical need.

### Background

During the first wave of the pandemic all dental practices were required to close for face-to-face care from 25 March 2020 until at least 8 June 2020. This was in the interests of patient and dental team safety. Although closed, practices provided remote advice, analgesia (to help to relieve pain) and anti-microbials (to treat infection) where appropriate (AAA). Following clinical assessment where this did not address a patient's needs dental practices were then able to refer patients to Urgent Dental Care (UDC) Hubs that were set up to treat patients with the most urgent need.

In the second phase of the pandemic as infection rates dropped, there was a phased reopening of practices for face-to-face care, with all open by 20 July 2020 at the latest. All practices with an NHS contract are required to deliver a set amount of treatment in any one year. For dentists and their teams to see as many patients as possible, but in a safe manner, NHS England and NHS Improvement worked closely with Ministers and determined for the period 20 July to 31 December 2020 this would be a minimum of 20% of historic levels of NHS activity in recognition of the 1 hour fallow time and enhanced clean required. For the period 1 January to 31 March 2021 practices were required to deliver 45% of their contracted activity (70% for orthodontics) which reflected fallow time reducing to 30 minutes in many practices followed by the enhanced clean. From 1 April 2021 practices are now required to deliver 60% of their contracted activity (80% for orthodontics).

Practices may have to temporarily close if members of the dental team or their household are required to self-isolate. Practices may also have to temporarily stop provision of treatment involving AGPs where they have been unable to obtain their usual make of respirator mask and need to be fit tested to a new model. In both of these instances, where patients require face-to-face urgent care before they are able to reopen, the practice can refer patients to UDC Hubs which remained open when practices resumed face-to-face care for this reason.

### Current situation

Although this gradual increase in activity has improved access to urgent dental care and is starting to deliver routine care for those with the greatest clinical need, it is still some considerable way from 100% of usual activity. It has also not addressed the backlog of care that built up during 2020/21 when practices were closed during the first quarter, when 20% of historic activity was delivered during quarters 2 and 3 and 45% of contracted activity during quarter 4. The resulting backlog is going to take some considerable time to address.

The ongoing reduction in activity and backlog means that many patients, including those with a regular dentist, are unable to access routine care at the current time. Although many patients have historically had a dental check-up on a 6 monthly basis, NICE guidance states this is not clinically necessary in many instances and clinically appropriate recall intervals may be between 3 to 24 months dependent upon a patient's oral health, dietary and lifestyle choices. Therefore, many patients who are attempting to have a dental check-up may not clinically need this at the current time. While practices continue to prioritise patients with an urgent need, where they have the capacity to provide more than urgent care they will prioritise according to clinical need such as patients that require dental treatment before they undergo medical or surgical procedures, those that were part way through a course of treatment when practices closed, those that have received temporary urgent treatment and require completion of this, looked after children and those identified as being in a high risk category and so have been advised they should have more frequent recall intervals.

Although practices have been asked to prioritise patients with an urgent need, it may be necessary for patients with an urgent need to contact more than one practice as each practice's capacity will change on a daily basis dependent upon the number of patients seeking care and staffing levels. Where a practice has the capacity to do so, they will assess patients over the telephone to establish whether the patient requires AAA. If it is established a patient requires a face-to-face appointment, the practice can arrange for them to attend an urgent appointment at the practice or in some instances refer the patient to a UDC Hub.

### **NHS and private dental care**

While most practices provide both NHS and private care, we have made it very clear to all practices that they must spend an equal amount of time on NHS care now as they have historically, albeit much of their surgery time will not be spent on face-to-face care due to the fallow time between patients. In some instances, practices may have filled their NHS appointments but still have private appointments available.

### **Finding a dentist**

Details of practices providing NHS dental care can be found on: <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-dentist> or by ringing 111 who will provide details of local dental practices providing NHS care. However, for the reasons outlined above, at the current time it is unlikely that they will be able to accept patients for non-urgent care or those people not considered as having greater clinical need.

### **Improving access**

Funding has been offered to all practices across the South East region to increase access by providing additional sessions outside of their normal contracted hours, for example in the evening or at weekends. These sessions are for patients who do not have a regular dentist and have an urgent need but have experienced difficulty accessing this or have only been able to receive temporary care (such as AAA, a temporary filling or first stage root treatment) and require further treatment. There are 16 practices in Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire that currently have the staffing levels to safely undertake additional sessions which equates to 133 additional hours per week, specifically for patients that would be new to those practices. The offer of additional sessions remains open so that should other practices subsequently determine they have the staffing levels to safely deliver additional sessions, these will be established.

Should any patient need urgent dental care and the practice that provides this is only able to provide temporary care, they will be able to contact one of the following practices to obtain longer term treatment. This is only for urgent care and these practices will unfortunately not be able to provide routine care.

- Gentle Dental practice, 6 Chapel Hill, Tilehurst, RG31 5DG 0118 945 2900
- Burghfield Dental Care, Burghfield Common, Berkshire, 01189 833563
- Shinfield Dental Centre, Reading, Berkshire, 0118 988 3178
- Loddon Bridge Road Dental Practice, Reading, Berkshire, 01189 692935
- Smile Dental Care, Twyford, Berkshire, 01189 321803
- Moonlight Dental Surgery, Slough, Berkshire, 01753 526301
- SC Dental Studio, Slough, Berkshire, 01753 550888
- Smile Dental Care Cippenham, Slough, Berkshire, 01753 577017
- Linden Dental Surgery, Maidenhead, Berkshire, 01628 621810
- Busby House Dental Centre, Didcot, Oxfordshire, 01235 816486
- Bourbon Street Dental Surgery, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, 01296 331100
- Haddenham Dental, Haddenham, Buckinghamshire, 01844 292118
- Risborough Dental Practice, Princess Risborough, Buckinghamshire, 01844 345192
- The Chesham Dentist, Chesham, Buckinghamshire, 01494 776 550
- Valley Dentalcare, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, 01494 510260
- Beaconsfield House Dental, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, 01494 730 940

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## **Afghanistan Resettlement Programme – Information Update as of 30 June 2021**

From Paula Massey Coordinating Officer re: Afghan Resettlement Programme

I would like to confirm that to date; I have not received any formal communication relating to West Oxfordshire District Council's involvement in the Afghan Resettlement Programme.

Gloucestershire County have been actively working on the programme for around a month now and below you find my recent briefing note for reference.

Please find below an update on the current situation relating to the Home Office request for assistance in the resettlement of British Forces Afghan families and to provide some clarity on our involvement.

### **Background**

The UK has been running a scheme to support locally employed staff (LES) in Afghanistan, often in dangerous and challenging situations, in recognition of their commitment and bravery shown supporting UK forces since 2013.

Those who qualify and choose to relocate to the UK with their families are not expected to return to Afghanistan. After completing five years limited leave, they can apply for permanent residence in the UK, free of charge, ensuring that they can settle here permanently and continue to build their lives and future here.

People coming to the UK under this scheme may arrive either as a whole family unit or with the lead person arriving first and their dependents joining them at a later point, depending on their individual circumstances.

### **What this means to Cotswold and Forest of Dean District Councils**

- The Strategic Housing Partnership (SHP) has confirmed that Gloucestershire will offer to take 35 families over the next three months through the scheme. Communicated as a support-only offer, to the Home Office (HO).
- Gloucestershire Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (GARAS), have confirmed that they are able to deliver the support element: from preparing properties for move-in and collecting at the airports, to providing the wider support during the first 4 months – but need us to help them in identifying the properties to meet the ambition set by Leadership Gloucestershire.
- Each District to identify suitable properties working with Social Housing Providers and Private Sector Landlords (PRS) where they do not hold their own housing stock and liaise accordingly with GARAS.
- Gloucestershire County Council will circulate press release with approval from SHP, asking Landlords for help.

- To incentivise PRS Landlords, the SHP has agreed that the Partnership will guarantee 6-months of rent. 4-months advance via the HO payment, with the Partnership using the Housing Rescue Fund or other COMF funding to make up the shortfall where required.
- Communication to be opened up with MOD facilities in our Districts. If they are unable to offer any accommodation a follow up request will be for voluntary support eg. painting/decorating; moving furniture; driving etc.
- Sufficient funds from the wider Resettlement Scheme are available to manage any wrinkles. Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service (GFRS) as owners of the wider resettlement scheme will nominate a lead to take over the coordination of this going forward. Meanwhile to maintain momentum, coordination is via nominated Officers and GARAS.
- Sue Pangbourne, Executive Director, Service Delivery is our representative at the SHP.
- Paula Massey, Enabling Manager is the nominated coordinating Officer.
- There are no specific decisions or actions needed from districts at this time.

 <b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>	<b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
Name and date of Committee	<b>Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Thursday 8 July 2021</b>
Report Number	<b>Agenda Item No. 11</b>
Subject	<b>Cabinet Work Programme</b>
Wards affected	All
Accountable members	Michele Mead, Leader of the Council <a href="mailto:michele.mead@westoxon.gov.uk">michele.mead@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Keith Butler Head of Democratic Services Tel: 01993 861521 Email: <a href="mailto:keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk">keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To give the Committee the opportunity to comment on the Cabinet Work Programme published on 22 June 2021.
Annexes	<a href="#">Annex 1 – Cabinet Work Programme published 22 June 2021.</a>
Recommendation	That the Committee decides whether to express a view to Cabinet on relevant issues in the Work Programme for the period.
Corporate priorities	To maintain and enhance West Oxfordshire as one of the best places to live, work and visit in Great Britain and to meet the current and future needs of residents.
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	None

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. The Cabinet Work Programme is produced on a monthly basis in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Regulations relating to publicity for Cabinet decisions that came into force on 10 September 2012. The programme sets out the Cabinet's work programme for the following three months, as applicable.
- 1.2. The programme [published on 22 June](#), covering the period to September 2021 is included in the [Annex to this report](#), for comment.

## **2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 2.1. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

## **3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1. None

## **4. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1. Not applicable

## **5. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS**

- 5.1. The Committee may take such action as it considers appropriate within its terms of reference

## **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 6.1. None

## Cabinet Work Programme published 22 June 2021

No.	Proposed Decision and (if applicable) reason(s) the matter is proposed to be considered in private	Key Decision (Yes/No)	Likely to be considered in private (Yes/No)	Decision-maker	Date of Decision	Documents	Notes
1.	Approval of proposed standard fees for Legal and Estates	No	No	Cabinet	21 July 2021	None	
2.	Approval of Oxfordshire Plan 2050 for consultation purposes	No	No	Cabinet	21 July 2021	None	Will first be considered by Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee
3.	Consideration of options for the future use of the Witney Town Centre Shop	Yes	No	Cabinet	21 July 2021	None	
4.	Consideration of options for the future of 33A High Street, Burford (Visitor Information Centre)	Yes	No	Cabinet	21 July 2021	None	
5.	Approval of charges for the delivery of waste and recycling containers	No	No	Cabinet then Council	21 July 2021	None	Will first be considered by Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

No.	Proposed Decision and (if applicable) reason(s) the matter is proposed to be considered in private	Key Decision (Yes/No)	Likely to be considered in private (Yes/No)	Decision-maker	Date of Decision	Documents	Notes
6.	Investment property in Poole - surrender and grant of new lease  Proposed to be considered in private because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 - "information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person".	Yes	Yes	Cabinet	21 July 2021	None	
7.	Finance outturn report 2020/21 and recommended additions to the capital programme	No	No	Cabinet then Council	21 July 2021	None	
8.	Approval of upgrade to West Oxfordshire's public space CCTV provision and monitoring arrangements	Yes	No	Cabinet	15 September 2021		Considered by Economic & Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 November 2020
9.	Adoption of Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document	No	No	Cabinet then Council	15 September 2021	None	consultation draft and consultation responses
10.	Approval of revised draft Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document for consultation	Yes	No	Cabinet	15 September 2021	None	consultation draft and consultation responses