

Welcome



Thank you for attending our exhibition.

Thank you for attending our exhibition. You may be aware that the five District Councils and the County Council are currently considering how to support the likely growth of the Oxfordshire economy over the next 20 years. Each of the local authorities is working to provide sustainable solutions to the delivery and management of this growth. Here we are setting out our vision for the South Oxford Science Park.

This site is on the edge of Oxford, close to existing transport links, jobs and facilities. Our proposals make the most of the location and provide new infrastructure, further job opportunities, increased public transport, pedestrian and cycle routes as well as much needed housing of all types.

By focusing development here, we can provide a sustainable solution to housing need while protecting other parts of South Oxfordshire from less sustainable development while would provide fewer benefits for existing communities.

This exhibition outlines the key considerations for any development at this site. It covers information identifying the opportunities to provide new housing and employment on site, how the transport links will work and what new facilities will be available to the community.

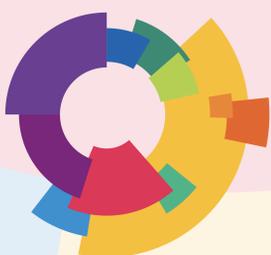
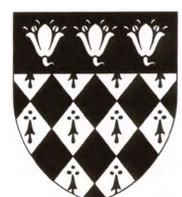
Members of the technical team are on hand to answer any questions and discuss the proposals with you. This includes experts on landscape, ecology and drainage. All of the plans and diagrams on show are draft and subject to change as the proposals for this site progress.

Magdalen College and Thames Water are in the process of preparing an outline planning application for the site. The objective of this exhibition is to set out what we believe the opportunity is and why this is the most sustainable option for growth to meet the needs of the area.

We would like to hear your thoughts on the site, our draft proposals, the opportunities and the issues that will need to be addressed.

Please do feel free to fill in a feedback form and leave it with us, or alternatively contact us via the website.

Thank you for attending, we look forward to talking with you.



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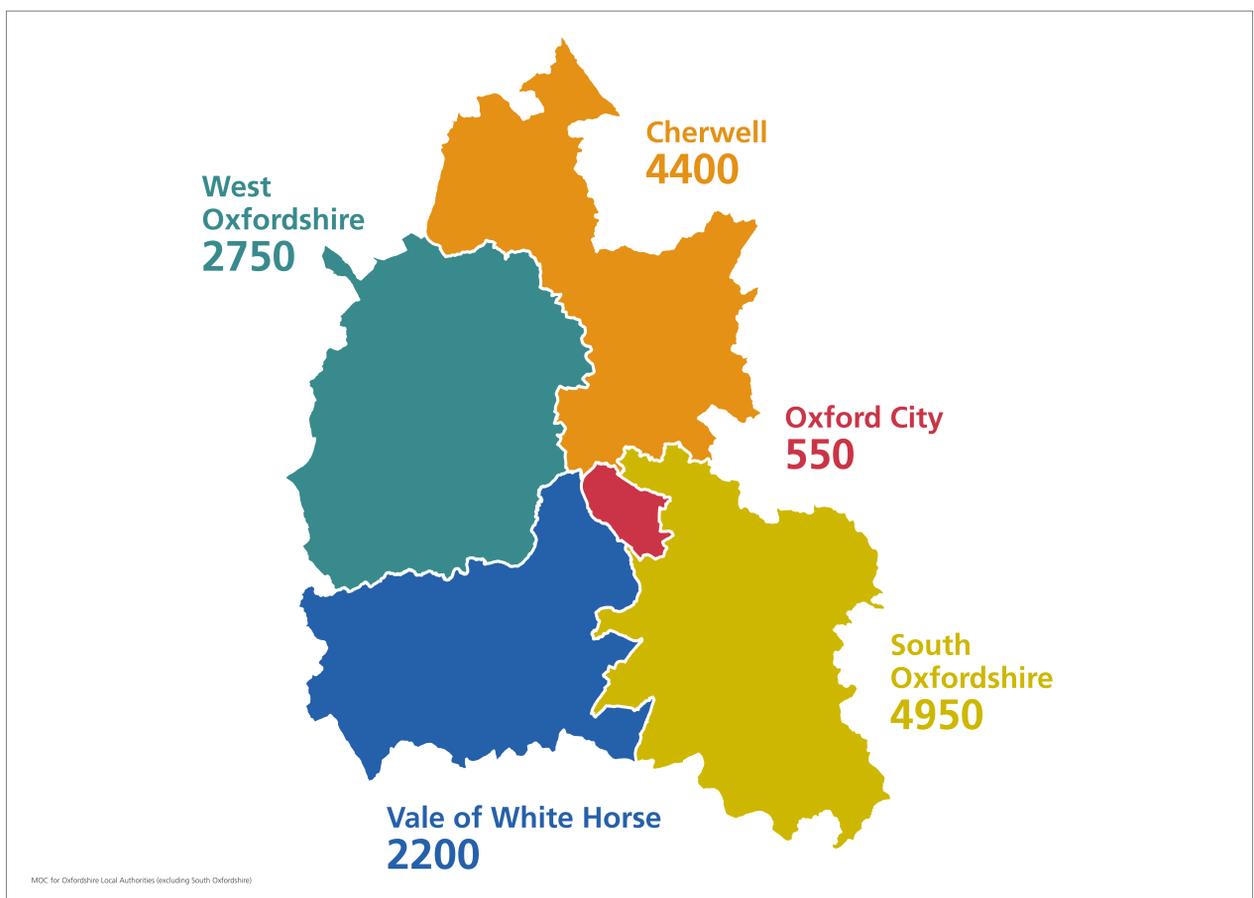
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Background Context



As stated in the Oxfordshire Innovation Engine Report (2013), Oxfordshire and Oxford support one of the most important concentrations of high value businesses in Europe. However, the full potential of this sub-regional economic cluster is not being realised and its contribution to the expansion of the UK economy is being compromised. One of the principal contributing factors associated with constrained economic growth in Oxfordshire is the lack of housing.

The Government's recent announcement of substantial new investment in frontier science and technology puts Oxfordshire in a strong position to strengthen its leading position in the scientific sectors and to contribute to greater productivity in the UK economy. There are important decisions to be made about how best to deliver the expected growth in jobs and housing to secure sustainable development.

The 2014 Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (April 2014) established the need for 100,000 new homes across Oxfordshire, with 28,000 required to meet the housing needs of Oxford City and some 15,500 for South Oxfordshire. Evidence on the physical capacity of Oxford City to accommodate housing growth has been provided by Oxford City Council's 2014 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and more recently in the 2016 Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA). Both confirm that Oxford is unable to physically accommodate the required number of homes.

In the wake of the SHMA the Oxfordshire Districts and County Council have been working together to agree how best to meet Oxford's housing needs. This work has been led by the Oxfordshire Growth Board. In 2016 a Memorandum of Co-operation (MOC) between all Oxfordshire authorities (with the exception of South Oxfordshire Council) agreed the apportionment of Oxford's unmet housing need across the adjacent districts (see graphic above).

The site is within the administrative area of South Oxfordshire District Council and is in the Oxfordshire Green Belt. For South Oxfordshire the MOC establishes that the housing apportionment for South Oxfordshire District Council is 4,950 homes. The apportionment of housing for South Oxfordshire District was informed by a range of detailed evidence base studies including a 'Detailed Assessment of the Areas of Search'. This work has identified that development at the site at Grenoble Road would not have a negative affect on the openness or purposes of the Green Belt and is as being capable of delivering 2,200 new homes in the period to 2031.

We are developing our proposals and seeking the views of the community to enable us to demonstrate how this site can address the chronic shortage of homes in Oxfordshire, particularly those which are genuinely affordable.



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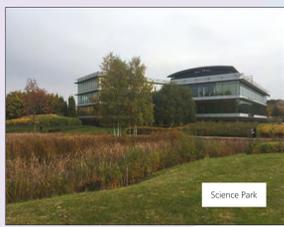
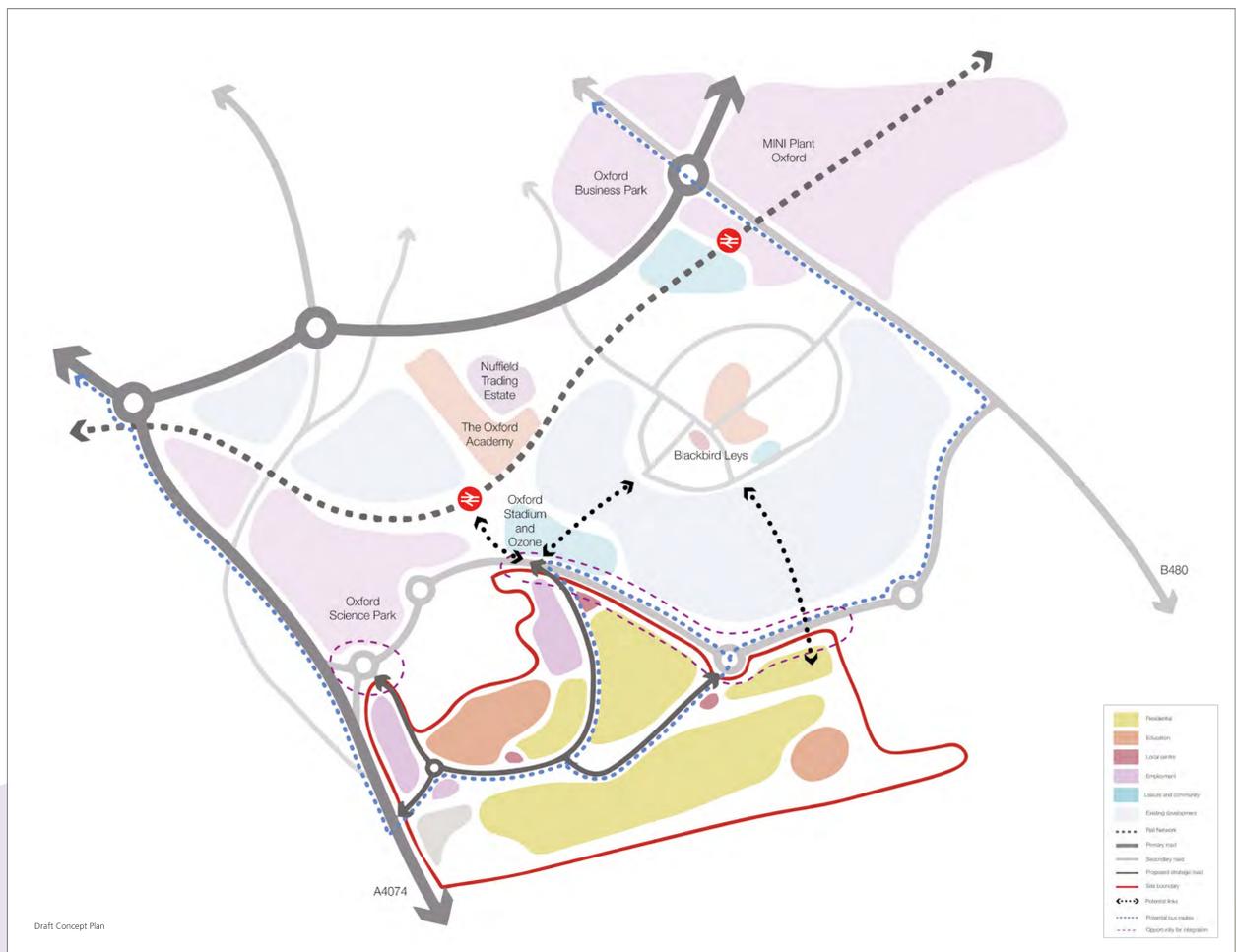
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Location and Local Connections

The location of the South Oxford Science Village is unique in facilitating the potential for a truly connected mixed-use community. It can complement existing uses with new facilities for the benefit of current and new residents and employees.



The South Oxford Science Village is located on the edge of the existing urban area, which enables it to support facilities already available, and to share new facilities with existing residents. As the location is close to existing employment and leisure uses, trips by car will be fewer than would be generated by a development located by a more isolated village, or a new development in the countryside where the range of facilities would be much smaller.

Because the South Oxford Science Village would be close to a wide range of employment, leisure, shops and services, many journeys would be made on foot (or by bicycle). Coupled with the existing bus routes serving the whole city, this would greatly reduce the amount of new vehicle traffic from the development. A similar proposal based further from the urban area, even if only 5 miles away, would mean that most journeys would likely be made by car.

The Ozone Leisure Park, a short walk from the northern boundary, accommodates the Vue Cinema, bowling alley, restaurants and cafes. Greater Leys local centre is nearby, as is the Blackbird Leys Centre which includes a number of shops and local services as well as a new leisure centre with a 25m swimming pool. The Oxford Academy is also within walking distance.

Oxford Business Park, the BMW plant and Unipart, all providing extensive employment areas, are all within cycling distance, as is the Oxford Retail Park which includes a Tesco Superstore.

Oxfordshire County Council has indicated that they would like to provide a new park and ride on the A4074 on the edge of the city of Oxford. The proposals would deliver such a park and ride, which would assist further in reducing car journey distances and in reducing traffic congestion.



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Landscape and Historic Environment

Landscape Character

The site is located on the edge of Oxford on an area of low-lying ground. Further to the south and east the ground level rises to a ridge on which the villages of Garsington and Toot Baldon are located.

There are significant urban features on the southern edge of Oxford that influence the character of the site. These features include the Oxford Science Park, Kassam Stadium, the Sewage Treatment Works, electricity pylons and sub-station as well as roads and housing in Blackbird Leys.

These features mean that the character of the site is not exclusively rural, despite its largely agricultural use, but reflects the nature of the adjoining urban area.



Visual Amenity

A detailed appraisal of visual amenity in the area has been undertaken from local public rights of way and other routes through the local landscape.

The visual appraisal has found that views of the site are limited by the character of the site and local features including: the adjacent urban development, surrounding higher ground, changes in levels within the site and presence of trees and hedgerows. Consequently, only parts of the site are visible at any one viewpoint.

From most viewpoints, the urban character of the edge of Oxford has an adverse effect on the views of the area and its scenic quality. For example, tower blocks within Blackbird Leys and overhead cables can be seen from the Thames Path.

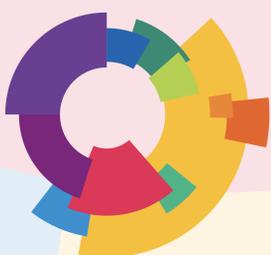
There are some elevated views towards the site from 'middle distance' viewpoints around Garsington and Toot Baldon.

Historic Environment

The site does not contain any historic features that have been identified as being of importance. In the wider area, there are historic features of acknowledged importance including listed buildings located predominantly in the surrounding settlements and also in some isolated farmsteads. Some of the local settlements also contain Conservation Areas, for example at Garsington and Toot Baldon.

Previous investigations have identified the presence of archaeological finds to the north and south west of the site from the Iron Age, Romano-British and Anglo Saxon periods. The eastern boundary of the site is marked by the course of a former Roman road.

A range of field studies is being undertaken to assess the presence of archaeological finds within the site, including the use of geophysical survey and trial trenching. In the event that significant archaeological finds are found on the site a strategy will be devised to avoid, mitigate or offset the effects of development on these heritage assets.



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Ecology



The majority of the site comprises large arable fields that are of limited ecological value. Several valuable ecological features have been identified, including:

- › Sandford Brake County Wildlife Site (CWS) adjacent to the eastern site boundary;
- › trees and hedgerows, including Bushy Copse, along the southern site boundary;
- › seasonally-wet stream and pond;
- › wintering and breeding farmland birds; and
- › bats that may be roosting in some of the trees on the site.

In response to these findings, the emerging proposals for the site have sought to retain and enhance the site's valuable ecological features. The key design principles that have shaped the emerging masterplan are as follows:

- › substantial landscape buffers to Sandford Brake CWS and Bushy Copse;
- › buffer and enhanced hedgerow and tree network, where possible;
- › retain and enhance the seasonally wet stream;
- › retain the pond and create new permanent waterbodies that also assist with sustainable drainage requirements;
- › create new wetland, grassland and woodland habitats that enhance opportunities for notable species to be supported by the site and local area; and
- › maintain and create a network of wildlife corridors across the site that link with the wider landscape.

Owing to the relatively limited ecological value of the existing intensively-farmed arable fields the scheme offers considerable potential to deliver ecology benefits, principally through the creation of new woodland and wetland habitat that will provide increased opportunities for wildlife such as birds, bats and amphibians.



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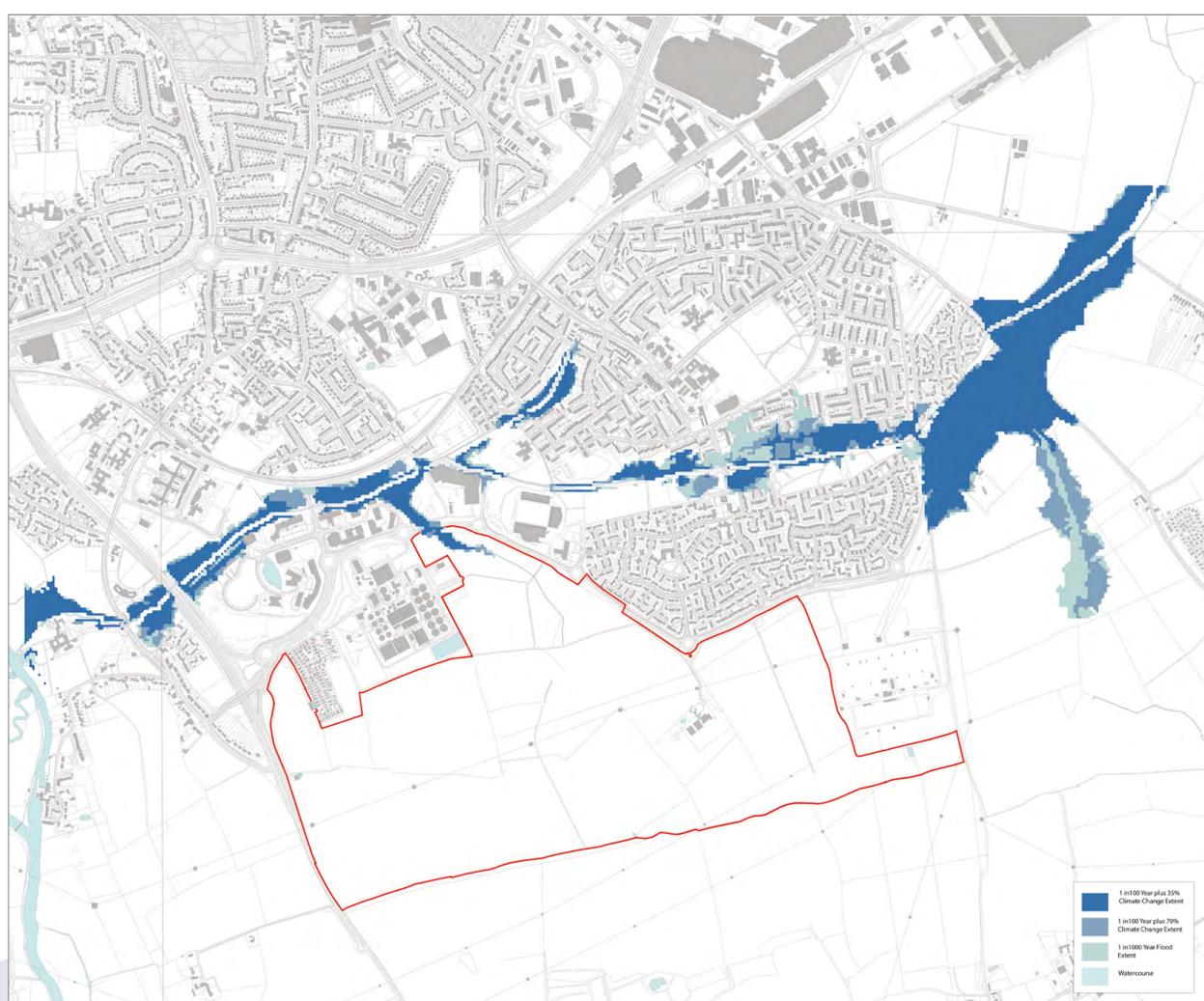
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Flooding and Drainage



Flooding is not an issue on this site. The majority of the site is located within Flood Zone 1, which has a 'Low Probability' of flooding. A small part of the northern section of the site associated with the watercourse which drains into the Littlemore Brook is located within Flood Zone 2 'Medium Probability' and Flood Zone 3 'High Probability'. The masterplan reflects these areas of constraint by avoiding any development within them.

It is proposed to manage surface water from the proposed development through the incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs). Infiltration drainage systems will be utilised where ground conditions permit, although investigations show these have limited potential. Therefore, it is proposed to use ponds and swales within the green corridors, combined with permeable paving and green roofs within the development parcels to treat and store runoff. Taken together these measures will ensure that flows from the site to nearby watercourses will be limited to the same level as run-off from greenfields. The proposed SuDS features can also provide ecological and biodiversity benefits within the open spaces and the green corridors of the site.



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Sewage Treatment Works



Thames Water own and operate the sewage treatment works. Odour from the works can at times be noticeable in the area.

The development proposals offer the opportunity to significantly reduce the odour associated with the plant through investment in control measures that would be funded through the development of the site.

Odour monitoring and the collection of meteorological data has been ongoing at the site for some time and this work has informed models that map the existing odour contours on the site and the effectiveness of technical measures to reduce odour.

These plans identify the existing extent of the odour and the potential improvements that could result from mitigation measures implemented with the development.



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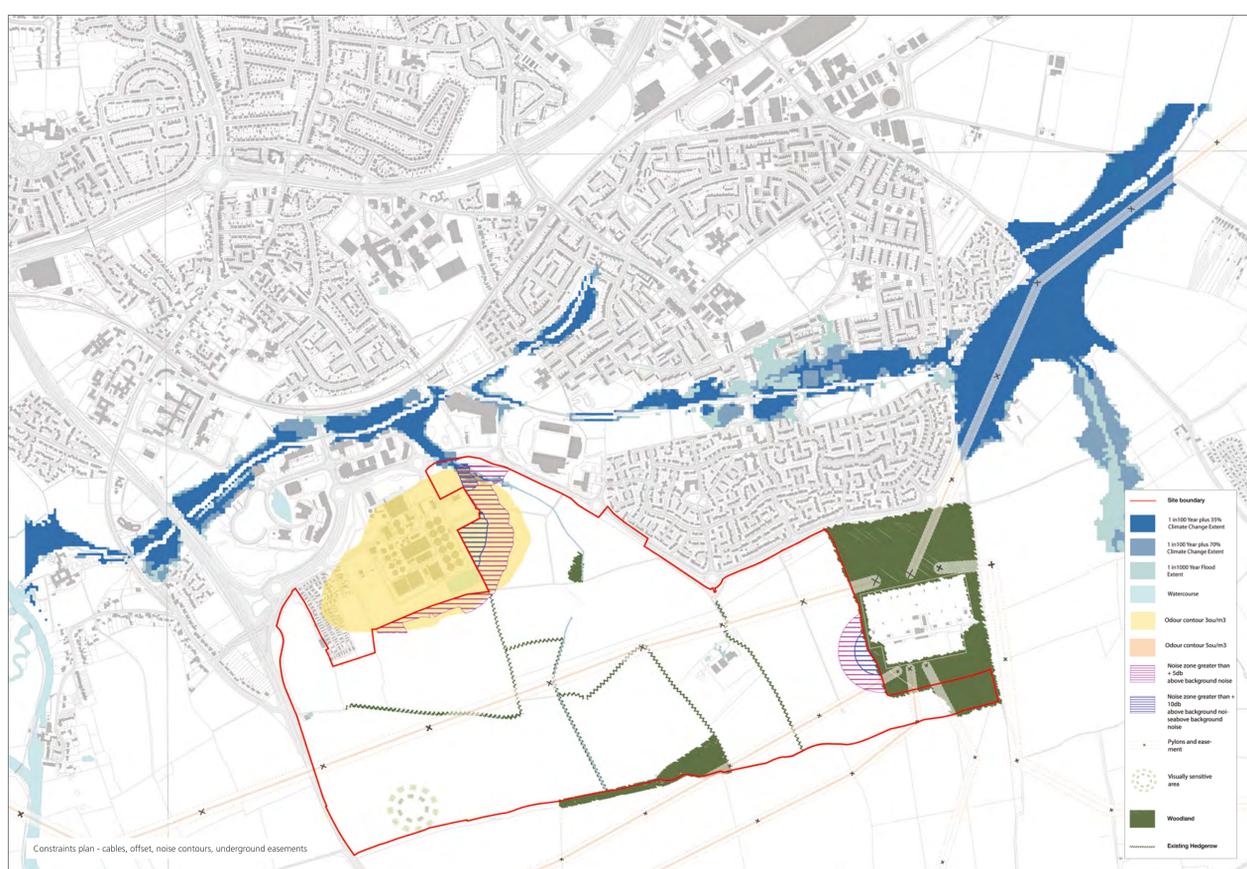
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Summary of Technical Considerations

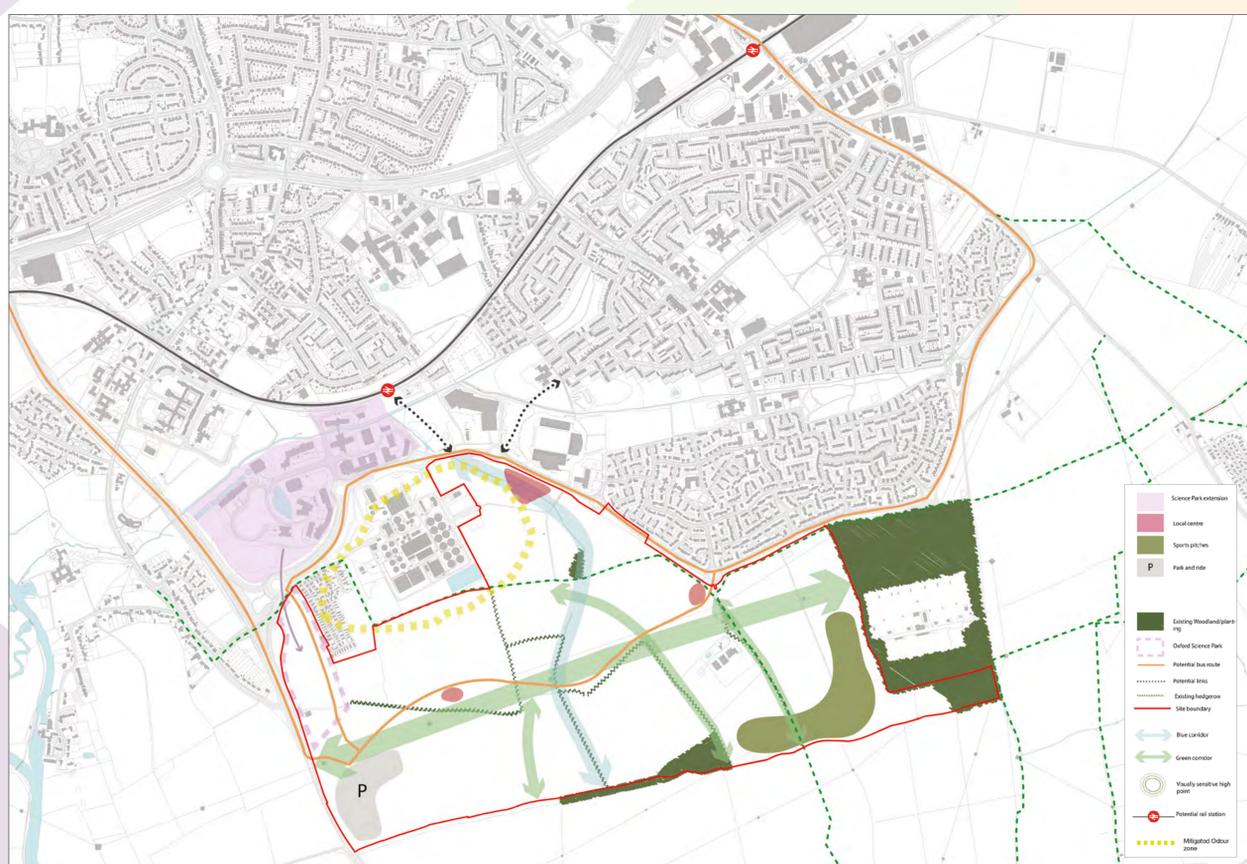


There is an electrical substation located to the east of the site from which a number of overhead cables are routed. 400kV and 133kV cables cross the site, with the higher voltage cables running east-west almost through the centre of the site.

A high pressure main runs through the site to the sewage treatment work. This can be diverted as part of the proposals.

There are some parts of the site that could be subject to raised noise levels, mainly from the sewage treatment works and the electrical substation. These raised noise levels can be reduced by design, or avoided through the location of development in the masterplan.

The consultant team are on hand to answer any questions you have about the constraints and opportunities relating to this site.



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Masterplan



The illustrative masterplan is in draft form, and will be subject to further discussion, including comments received at this exhibition. It has been informed to date by a series of technical and environmental studies as well as design workshops that have refined the proposals. This process has included an early review of the vision and development framework by the national Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE).

The masterplan contains the following key elements:

- > about 3,000 homes including affordable housing;
- > employment land in the form of an extension to the Oxford Science Park providing space for approximately 1,500 jobs, as well as separate provision for workshops, studios, start-up and co-working spaces;
- > two primary schools and a University Technical College;
- > a large amount of open space including sports pitches, parkland, natural wildlife areas and woodland planting;
- > a park and ride site with access direct from Reading Road; and
- > a large local centre adjacent to the Kassam Stadium, and two local centres providing local shops and community facilities.

The University Technical College will be operated by Magdalen College Oxford, one of the owners of the site, and would complement the existing Academy to the north of Grenoble Road.



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Green Infrastructure Plan



This site presents a great opportunity to deliver an exceptional development that works with the green and open features present.

The site contains extensive areas of open space and other green space, which is collectively referred to as the Green Infrastructure Strategy. The Strategy integrates ecological networks with landscape features, flood control measures, cultural associations with the landscape as well as a network of routes for pedestrians and recreation. The key features of the Green Infrastructure Strategy include:

- > Conservation Park containing retained ecological features including hedgerows, deciduous woodland, field ditches and conversion of agricultural land into meadow grassland;
- > Sustainable Urban Drainage systems provide a comprehensive network of features to rapidly filter and redistribute drained surface water into the green corridors;
- > central pylon corridor includes low level planting with seasonal interest;
- > the setting to Toot Baldon is respected by ensuring the south-eastern corner of the site is kept free of development and lighting and is heavily planted with trees to provide screening;
- > urban shared space off Grenoble Road integrates the existing stream into a re-profiled channel that features retained, pollarded willow trees;
- > Sandford Brake Community Wildlife Site is retained and additional broadleaf woodland is proposed to extend this feature to the southern boundary, as well as provide tree canopy shelter for wildlife;
- > Thames Viewpoint provides long-distance views towards the River Thames from within the site and contains new woodland that creates a soft buffer to this localised area of high ground, screening the development in views from the Thames Path;
- > Shakespeare's Way is a locally promoted public right of way that has been integrated into the masterplan, and features new tree and low-level shrub planting to provide filtered views across the site, while offering new opportunities for onward pedestrian and recreation connections throughout the site.



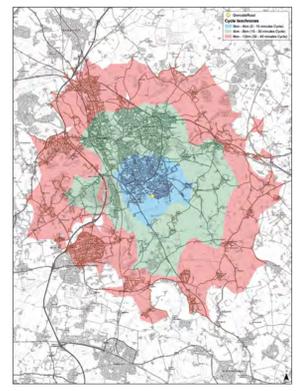
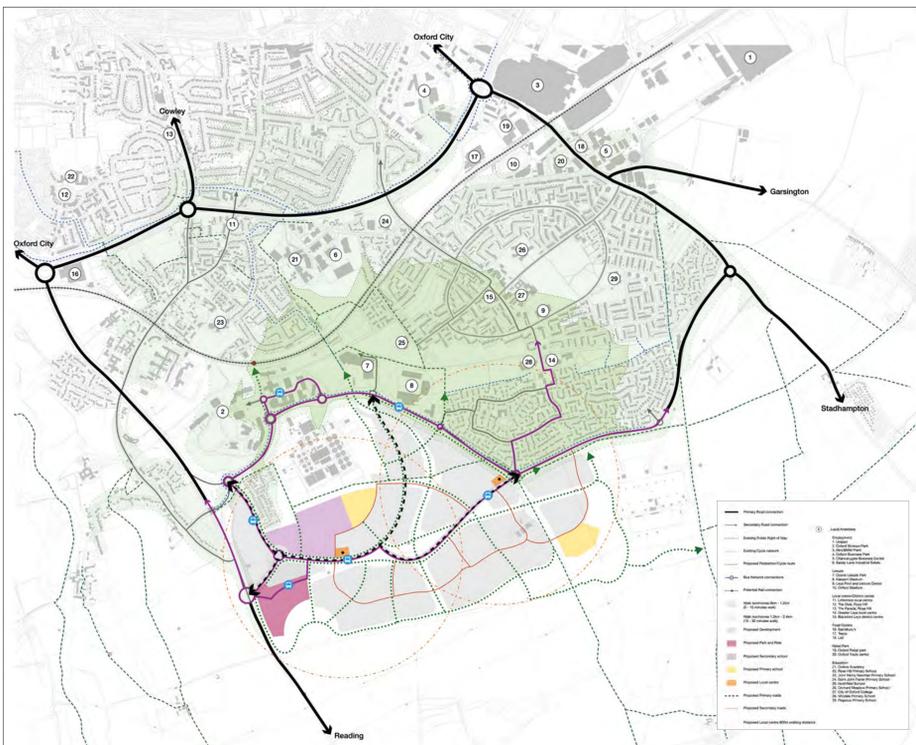
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Sustainable Transport Strategy



Local Jobs	Walking		Cycling	
	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
Oxford Science Park	5	20	2	7
Unipart	33	53	11	18
Mini	28	48	9	16
Oxford Business Park	41	61	14	20

Local Education				
The Oxford Academy	16	33	5	11

Leisure				
Ozone Leisure Park	3	19	1	6
Kassam Stadium	3	19	1	6
Leys Pool & Leisure Centre	11	32	4	11

Note: Journey times rounded to nearest minute

Many studies, including by the Oxfordshire Growth Board, have identified this site as an exceptionally sustainable location for development. Key to this is the close proximity to existing transport links.

The effects of travel to and from a site are often the most challenging problems for any new development. The location of the site on the edge of Oxford has a number of advantages:

- it enables new residents to walk and cycle to nearby jobs (for example at Oxford Science Park, Unipart, Mini, Oxford Business Park), local schools (The Oxford Academy) and leisure (Ozone Leisure Park, Kassam Stadium, Leys Pool and Leisure Centre).
- it creates the opportunity to connect into and enhance existing pedestrian and cycle networks as well as build upon the existing bus network.

Consequently, a high number of shorter distance travel journeys would be able to be undertaken on foot and by bicycle. The site is therefore in a highly sustainable location to meet Oxford's housing needs.

The proposals will be designed to enhance provision for walking and cycling including along Grenoble Road and routes into Greater Leys and Littlemore.

For longer distance journeys the site will deliver high quality public transport. The location of the site enables these services to be provided directly to a variety of destinations in Oxford including the City Centre, Cowley and Headington.

The site will also facilitate Park and Ride on the A4074 Reading Road serving both the City Centre and east Oxford. Interchange of bus services in Cowley and on Abingdon Road will cater for onwards travel.

These measures are consistent with the County Council's proposed measures for the area contained in the Oxford Transport Strategy. The County Council's bus rapid transit includes routes that extend south of the City to the site and the Council's rail strategy identifies the aspiration to re-introduce passenger rail services on the Cowley branch line to the north of the site with a new station at the Science Park.

This range of measures, when implemented, will ensure that there a range of choices for how people travel to and from the site, including sustainable modes such as walking, cycling and bus.

In addition, the provision of jobs opportunities together with housing, schools and shops, alongside existing leisure uses and community facilities means that people are more likely to walk and cycle to access these services rather than if the houses were built in a more remote location.



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Next Steps



Thank you for attending today, hopefully you found the information useful.

Please do take the time to fill in a feedback form and leave it with us. Please ask for a freepost envelope if you want to take them away and return them to us later.

You can also provide feedback via our website. We will continue to update the site as the proposals progress so do keep in touch.

All feedback we receive will be considered as we develop our proposals and finalise the planning application. We will set out in a Statement of Community Involvement, that will accompany the planning application, how we have responded to feedback from the local community.

In the meantime, we look forward to continuing the discussion about this site and the future of development in South Oxfordshire.

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