

New Growth Points

Partnership for Growth with Government

Oxford



“Our vision is to transform the west end of the city centre to create a new vibrant urban quarter. This renaissance will strengthen Oxford's future as a modern city of learning, culture and innovation. We are delighted to be working in partnership for these ends”.

John Goddard, Leader of Oxford City Council

Oxford is a city of international importance and worldwide reputation. Currently the West End of Oxford does not match that reputation or live up to its potential as an urban experience of the highest quality. Development in much of the rest of the city centre is severely constrained by the shortage of land and the need to protect its outstanding heritage. The transformation of the West End offers a rare opportunity to create a new quarter of the city whilst adding to and complementing the range of facilities in the centre of Oxford for local people and visitors. This renaissance is not just about the redevelopment of land and property but also about utilising local assets to benefit local communities, creating sustainable economic, social and environmental opportunities, enhancing the city's vitality and attracting investment.

This programme for the renaissance of the West End is being led by a strong partnership between the City Council, Oxfordshire County Council and the South East England Development Agency. The programme has reached an important milestone just recently with the publication of the West End Area Action Plan Preferred Options document. This was published on 1st September for public consultation.

In supporting Oxford as a New Growth Point, the Government is entering into a long-term partnership with Oxford City Council, recognising their ambitions for growth, subject to the statutory regional and local planning process.

Oxford proposes to deliver an additional 5692 homes across the city by 2016. Of these 600–1000 homes would be delivered in the West End, 50% of which would be affordable.

Local partners' ambitions in the West End Area Action Plan include:

- A vibrant mix of new homes, retail and employment uses
- New community facilities and cultural attractions
- A framework of new public squares and spaces
- An improved network of bus routes and pedestrian and cycle connections
- Policies to ensure environmentally sensitive development

Across the city as a whole the council will be working to achieve:

- The development of houses and flats to suit the needs of smaller households
- 50% affordable housing on sites of 10 houses or more
- Extensive contributions from developers to ensure the assimilation of new developments into local areas which are supported by appropriate services and infrastructure
- High standards of sustainable development, including the inclusion of 20% on-site renewable energy

Levels of growth will be subject to comprehensive testing and public consultation through the regional and local planning processes to ensure that individual proposals are sustainable, acceptable environmentally and realistic in terms of infrastructure. For Oxford, future work will include addressing issues of sewerage capacity; working with Thames Water and the Environment Agency to deliver water efficiency savings and ensure sufficient water resources are available to support growth; completing a Flood Risk Assessment of the area surrounding the Ice Rink site and working with the Department for Transport to assess the impacts of growth proposals on the transport network and to develop sustainable transport solutions.

Achieving these ambitions will depend on a range of public and private funding programmes, including developer contributions. Government is committing to work with local partners to achieve sustainable growth to get the best outcomes from this investment and to help overcome obstacles to delivery. In support of Oxford's growth ambitions Government is allocating around £1.16m in 2007/08 from the first year's funding pot, subject to detailed negotiation and appraisal. Future funding is dependent upon the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review in 2007.

For further information please contact Michael Crofton Briggs, at Oxford City Council on 01865 252360 or by email: mcrofton-briggs@oxford.gov.uk.

As a New Growth Point Oxford City Council's aim is to build around 5,692 homes by 2016.