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Introduction

1. This report is a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the emerging Oxford West End and Osney Mead Area draft document that will become an adopted Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The report is carried out in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme, and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes

2. The purpose of West End and Osney Mead Area SPD is to show developers how developments should be designed to fit into the context of the whole area. This includes design guidance and indications of how land uses will be distributed across the area, the quality and priority of infrastructure expected, (including public realm and green infrastructure).
3. The policy framework for the West End & Osney Mead Area SPD is found in the Oxford Local Plan 2036 (OLP 2036) and broader national planning policy. The proposed SPD will be for town and country planning and will set detailed design guidance through a development framework for the area. Alongside the strategic Local Plan 2016-2036, the SPD will inform the future consent of a project(s) within Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations 2017¹. The relevant section of the EIA Regulations 2017 is Schedule 2 (10b) *urban development project*.
4. The SPD is a site-specific document, supporting Policies AOC1, SP1 and SP2 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 with further detail and guidance on the future development of the West End and Osney Mead. As an SPD, it does not contain statutory planning policies and requirements, but it will become a material consideration when considering a planning application for the site, setting out how the policy requirements can be met.

The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme

5. Without the SPD, the existing Local Plan policy framework for the area would continue to exist, and it is likely that projects could continue to come forward. However, without the SPD, and supporting spatial framework, it is likely that there would have been less of a focus on certain aspects of the environment and wider benefits that support the area as a whole may not have been realised or considered. When each of the options are considered, an option which looks at not including particular text or guidance on a particular topic area are also considered. Generally speaking, these options have not been taken forward. The options tables consider this aspect in more detail.

The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;

¹ The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 SI No. 571

6. The requirement for SEA was identified through the *Strategic Environmental Assessment Combined Screening & Scoping Report March 2021*, which was consulted on alongside the early vision and scoping consultation for the West End and Osney Mead SPD². The requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is set out in the regulations³. There is also practical guidance dating from 2005 entitled “A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive”⁴. These documents were used as the basis for the screening and scoping report.
7. The SEA Combined Screening and Scoping assessment suggested that the following SEA topics were “scoped in” to further SEA assessment. These are as follows: Water; Air quality; Climatic Factors; Cultural Heritage; and Inter-Relationships (movement and access). It is considered that the rest of the SEA topics were considered sufficiently through the Sustainability Appraisal (which includes SEA) of the OLP 2036.
8. The SEA Combined Screening and Scoping Report 2021 recognised that previous assessment work had taken place during the production of the Oxford Local Plan 2036. In particular, the 2021 Screening and Scoping Report recognised that:

“As part of the work developing the Local Plan, a sustainability appraisal was undertaken for the overall plan as well as for site allocations that comprise the West End area... The Sustainability Appraisal for the Oxford Local Plan 2036 also addressed the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects.”
9. The Combined Screening and Scoping Report also set out that the SPD would not add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan, but rather supplement them in order to coordinate forthcoming developments to ensure good design, provide high quality infrastructure, as well as ensure cohesion between the proposed spatial framework and on-going development and masterplanning in the area.

Any existing environmental problems and protection objectives which are relevant to the plan

10. The Combined Screening and Scoping Report considered the need for further Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) work as a result of the SPD. The Combined Screening and Scoping Report stated:

An HRA was carried out in support of the Oxford Local Plan 2036. This HRA concluded that the policies in the Local Plan 2036 would not cause any likely significant effects on the integrity of the Oxford Meadows SAC. As the SPD will not introduce new requirements beyond those in the Oxford Local Plan 2036, no further HRA is anticipated.
11. Natural England were consulted on the above and advised stated in their response to the 2021 Combined Screening and Scoping Report that while they appreciated that the SPD would not introduce new requirements beyond those assessed in the HRA of the Oxford Local Plan 2036, they advised that the SPD should be taken through an HRA screening

² https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/download/1216/west_end_and_osney_mead_spd

³ Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (no. 1633)

⁴ A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, 2005, ODPM

process to confirm that the likely significant effects on the Oxford Meadows SAC could be ruled out and formally recorded.

12. Oxford City Council has not undertaken a new screening assessment for the SPD as the land-use allocations set out in the Local Plan have not changed and as such the screening assessment undertaken to support the Oxford Local Plan 2036 is still considered up-to-date.

Likely significant effects on the environment

13. The SEA Regulations require that a report is published for consultation alongside the draft SPD that identifies, describes and evaluates the likely significant effects of implementing the plan [i.e. the SPD], and of reasonable alternatives. The report must be taken into account, alongside consultation responses, when finalising the SPD. This report explains how alternative options were developed and appraised, and how this appraisal was taken account of in the draft SPD.
14. The West End and Osney Mead SPD does not contain statutory planning policies and requirements, but it will become a material consideration when considering a planning application for the site, setting out how the policy requirements can be met. The alternatives are focused on the options emerging within the scope of the SPD
15. This part of the report presents the information regarding the consideration of reasonable alternatives across a number of 'themes' considered in the development of the SPD. The SEA Regulations are not prescriptive as to what constitutes a reasonable alternative, stating only that the Environmental Report should present an appraisal of the "plan and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan". In accordance with the SEA Regulations the Environmental Report must include:
 - An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with; and
 - The likely significant effects on the environment associated with alternatives/ an outline of the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of the alternatives appraised.
16. The likely significant effects of the alternative options within each theme have been appraised against the SEA topics that were scoped in in the SEA Combined Screening and Scoping assessment, which were:
 - Water;
 - Air quality;
 - Climatic Factors;
 - Cultural Heritage; and
 - Inter-Relationships (movement and access).
17. Options for the SPD have been appraised to consider whether, in the opinion of officers, having regard to the evidence base (including the West End Spatial Framework), there are any likely significant effects of the SPD, either in whole or in part, in relation to the "scoped-in" aspects of the SEA "environment". The tables on the following pages examine options and likely impacts and provide a prose narrative as to likely positive, negative, or neutral impacts. Consideration was also given to the nature of the impacts (in particular what was considered was whether they were significant or not. In making this assessment, consideration was given to short, medium and long-term, permanent and temporary and positive and negative effects as well as cumulative impacts.

Appraisal of alternative options against SEA themes

18. The options and alternatives tables below were have been framed around the key themes which the SPD was identified as needing to address. Each tables sets out a range of options that have been considered under the following themes:

- Urban design and heritage
- Sustainability (including responding to climate change)
- Arts and cultural
- Land use
- Public realm
- Movement
- Economic development and equalities
- Green and blue infrastructure
- Sites

Urban design and heritage

19. Options were assessed for addressing urban design were focussed on presenting guidance on how design can consider existing context of the West End and surrounding area such as heritage and heights (option 1), as well as an option for providing guidance on heights for new buildings and making most efficient use of the land (option 2). An option has also been assessed for providing specific guidance for heritage assets and for designing in a way that allows these to be celebrated (option 3). The option of not including guidance on heritage or design within the SPD was also considered but ultimately rejected (option 4).

Table 1 – Options appraisal for the theme of Urban design and heritage

	Alternative option 1	Alternative option 2	Alternative option 3	Alternative option 4
	Include design guidance that ensures design is sensitive to existing heritage assets, including on heights and that it is adaptable	Include design guidance on heights that is tailored to the West End, aiming to balance the need to make efficient use of land, focusing on potential positive contributions of high buildings and where they would be harmful.	Include specific guidance for heritage assets in the West End and design guidance aimed at allowing these to be celebrated.	Do not include guidance on design or heritage
Water	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Air Quality	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Climatic Factors	Likely positive impact to climate adaptation, although minimal in addition to existing Local Plan polices	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Cultural Heritage	Likely minor positive impact on heritage	Likely minor positive impact on heritage. Existing Local Plan policies protect heritage assets. This approach would aim to specifically look at what that means for high buildings in the West End, balancing pressures.	Likely minor positive impact on heritage.	Neutral
Inter-relationships (movement and access)	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Conclusion	Selected option	Selected option	Selected option	Rejected option
Reasoning	The West End has an important heritage, reflected in its built form, and including its	The area is very sensitive to heights, and is in the area of influence of the 'dreaming	There is much to draw out in the heritage of the West End, so this approach is selected.	This would lose one of the key opportunities of the SPD, to have a holistic view of urban design in the area,

	Alternative option 1	Alternative option 2	Alternative option 3	Alternative option 4
	Include design guidance that ensures design is sensitive to existing heritage assets, including on heights and that it is adaptable	Include design guidance on heights that is tailored to the West End, aiming to balance the need to make efficient use of land, focusing on potential positive contributions of high buildings and where they would be harmful.	Include specific guidance for heritage assets in the West End and design guidance aimed at allowing these to be celebrated.	Do not include guidance on design or heritage
	archaeology. The significance of features should not be overlooked, and this approach ensures that.	spires' so this approach is beneficial.		drawing out how heritage should influence design and ensuring coherence.

20. As Table 1 highlights, none of the options were concluded to have negative effects for the SEA topics scoped into the assessment and all three of the selected options were concluded to have minor positive effects for cultural heritage. Option 1 was also concluded to have minor positive effects for climatic factors, for its minimal benefits in supporting climate adaptation.

Sustainability strategy

21. In developing the SPD a number of options were considered which addressed sustainability, particularly the response to climate change. Option 1 considered how centralised low-carbon energy generation might be addressed in the document as a means of delivering carbon reduction, this was ultimately rejected as previous work had been unable to find a site which could accommodate this and there are strong policies in the Local Plan which address carbon reduction already that could be relied upon without the need for a separate approach for the West End (option 2). The approach to developing the SPD was also guided by the option of developing all proposals with zero carbon objectives in mind (option 3) along with ensuring that the need for adaptation to climate change is also considered throughout (option 4).

Table 2 – Options appraisal for the theme of sustainability

	Alternative option 1 Include proposals for centralised low-carbon energy generation	Alternative option 2 Do not include proposals for centralised low-carbon energy generation but rely on Local Plan policies about carbon reduction in new developments	Alternative option 3 Develop all proposals with the route to zero carbon in mind, including for example encouraging active travel through public realm design	Alternative option 4 Highlight the need for climate adaptation, for example for multi-functional green features that slow infiltration and that can store flood water, as well as planting to create shade.	Alternative option 5 Do not underpin proposals with considerations about sustainability
Water	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Air Quality	Potential minor positive impact	Neutral	Positive impact	Neutral	Neutral
Climatic Factors	Positive impact	Neutral	Positive impact	Positive impact	Neutral
Cultural Heritage	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Inter-relationships (movement & access)	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Conclusion	Rejected Option	Selected Option	Selected option	Selected option	Rejected Option
Reasoning	This option could have benefits but work has previously taken place to try and identify a site and means of	LP policies are strong and will have the right outcomes re carbon efficiency so there are few obvious benefits to	It's important this is a golden thread in order to maximise opportunities.	Climate change is an inevitability, so adaptations are vital, especially in an area of high flood risk. The	This may mean the opportunities to secure important sustainability benefits, such as addressing

	Alternative option 1 Include proposals for centralised low-carbon energy generation	Alternative option 2 Do not include proposals for centralised low-carbon energy generation but rely on Local Plan policies about carbon reduction in new developments	Alternative option 3 Develop all proposals with the route to zero carbon in mind, including for example encouraging active travel through public realm design	Alternative option 4 Highlight the need for climate adaptation, for example for multi-functional green features that slow infiltration and that can store flood water, as well as planting to create shade.	Alternative option 5 Do not underpin proposals with considerations about sustainability
	achieving this and that did not have a successful outcome. It may come forward on larger site as a means of achieving LP policy requirements, but there is no need to promote this approach for the sake of it when there are strong LP policies.	being precise about how it is achieved.		high flood risk and minimum space mean that multi-functional green infrastructure is vital, and the SPD can set out the importance of this and how to maximise benefits.	climate change, within the West End are not fully realised.

22. There were no negative impacts identified with any of the options considered under this theme, and several likely positives under options 3 (for air quality and climatic factors) and 4 (climatic factors).

Arts and Cultural Strategy

23. Four options were assessed under the theme of arts and culture, three of which were selected. Option 1 was about promoting a mix of uses in the West End so that leisure and creative uses occur alongside industry and was determined as a good way to bring about collaboration and cross-fertilisation of ideas which are key to a successful innovation district. Option 2 was that space is made for culture within design proposals, which was supported by option 3, that would see public realm incorporated as a contributor to cultural identity in an area. The option of not including guidance within the SPD was not selected as it could risk missing opportunities to embed this theme into the West End area.

Table 3 – Options appraisal for the theme of arts and culture

	Alternative option 1 Promote a mix of uses within buildings so leisure and creative uses may be next to industry	Alternative option 2 Ensure design proposals make space for culture to thrive	Alternative option 3 Incorporate public realm as a contributor to the cultural identity of the area, with spaces to act as venues and key areas as focal points.	Option 4 Do not include guidance on arts and cultural uses.
Water	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Air Quality	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Climatic Factors	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Cultural Heritage	Potential positive impact	Potential positive impact	Potential positive impact	Neutral
Inter-relationships (movement and access)	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Conclusion	Option selected	Option selected	Option Selected	Rejected option
Reasoning	This will ensure cross-fertilisation of ideas, which is vital in achieving the goals of an innovation district.	Redevelopment of the West End is an opportunity to put culture and art at the heart of the community, and this helps to ensure the opportunity is taken.	Putting cultural activity at the heart of sites will help galvanise positive social and economic change.	This may mean the opportunities to galvanise change through art and culture are not fully realised.

24. The effects on the SEA topics from the options assessed were all determined to be neutral other than under the topic of Cultural Heritage, for which options 1 to 3 were deemed to have a potential positive impact.

Land use strategy

25. Under the theme of land use, three options were considered in developing the SPD. Option 3, which would have been to not include any guidance within the document was rejected, whilst the two other options were selected. Option 1 was to promote mixed-use neighbourhoods and being explicit that a range of uses are important for establishing a successful innovation district. This option would be reinforced by a second approach which was to encourage innovative and meanwhile uses across the area.

Table 4 – Options appraisal for the theme of land use

	Alternative option 1 Promote mixed-use neighbourhoods and reiterate that a successful innovation district needs a range of employment types including creative, leisure attractions and people living alongside	Alternative option 2 include encouragement of innovative and meanwhile uses	Alternative option 3 Do not include guidance on a land use strategy
Water	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Air Quality	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Climatic Factors	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Cultural Heritage	Likely positive impact from cross-fertilisation of ideas and a mix of uses as reflects the historic use of the area.	Likely positive impact from cross-fertilisation of ideas and a mix of uses as reflects the historic use of the area.	Neutral
Inter-relationships (movement and access)	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Conclusion	Option selected	Option selected	Rejected option
Reasoning	Establishing the West End as a key area of innovation is part of the vision for the area and mixed use neighbourhoods are a defining element of these spaces.	Innovative and meanwhile uses can support the vision for the area and help to sustain activity and life as the area develops.	This may mean the opportunities to galvanise change and support the area in developing in line with the vision are missed.

26. Options 1 and 2 were both determined to have likely positive impacts under the SEA theme of Cultural Heritage, all other impacts under the remaining SEA topics were considered to be neutral.

Public realm strategy

27. Under the theme of public realm, options for the SPD that were considered included, showing locations for new public spaces (option 1), including proposals along water courses that can significantly boost Oxford’s riverside character and manage water in public realm (option 2) and including proposals for street design that support active travel like walking and cycling (option 3). A rejected option would have been not to include a public realm strategy in the SPD.

Table 5 – Options appraisal for the theme of public realm

	Alternative option 1 Show locations for new public spaces (on key larger development sites).	Alternative option 2 Include proposals along water courses that can significantly boost Oxford’s riverside character and include water management features in the public realm.	Alternative option 3 Include proposals for street design that ensure they are friendly for pedestrians and cyclists.	Alternative option 4 Do not include proposals for a public realm strategy.
Water	Neutral	Likely positive impact	Neutral	Neutral
Air quality	Neutral	Neutral	This would likely have a positive impact	Neutral
Climatic Factors	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Inter-relationships (movement and access)	Likely positive – helping to define legibility and bringing activity to the area that will encourage people to move through these spaces.	Likely positive – can encourage active travel – make travel easier particularly during high heat/summer	Likely positive – supporting active travel through the area and beyond	Neutral
Conclusion	Option selected	Option selected	Option selected	Rejected option
Reasoning	These would help ensure they are delivered in the most suitable locations, where they can add most value and be successful.	Watercourses are an important part of Oxford, but their leisure and biodiversity potential is not always utilised to its fullest extent. This will help draw	This option would help to ensure a legible and easier to navigate network of streets. Would help to secure opportunities for promoting active/sustainable travel.	This may mean the opportunities to bring about a high quality public realm are missed.

		out key ways they can be enhanced.		
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28. Impacts on the SEA topics from the four options considered were either neutral or likely positive, particularly under the topic of inter-relationships (movement and access).

Movement strategy

29. Under the topic of movement, the first option considered was prioritising active travel options within the proposals of the SPD. Option 2 was to set out expectations for street/route design in the supporting Design Guide, whilst an additional option which related to analysing and addressing barriers to movement within the West End was also considered (option 3). A further option would have been to not include any guidance relating to movement (option 4) and this was ultimately rejected.

Table 6 – Options appraisal for the theme of movement

	Alternative option 1 Prioritise active transport options and promote pedestrian and cyclist friendly design measures	Alternative option 2 Include in the Design Guide expectations for what's expected in the design of streets/routes at different levels of the hierarchy	Alternative option 3 Analyse barriers to movement and propose or re-iterate proposals for new crossing and access, e.g. Oxpens River Bridge	Alternative option 4 Do not include guidance on the movement strategy
Water	Neutral/ Potential positive – less pollutant run-off from vehicles	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Air Quality	Likely positive/potential positive – less pollutants from vehicles	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Climatic Factors	Neutral/Potential positive – supporting active travel potentially reduces emissions from vehicles supporting net zero objectives (though minor)	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

Cultural Heritage	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Inter-relationships (movement and access)	Likely positive – supporting active travel through the area and beyond	Likely positive – supports more legible streetscape that is easier for people to move through.	Likely positive – supporting active travel through the area and beyond	Neutral
Conclusions	Selected option	Selected option	Selected option	Rejected option
Reasoning	This will help to support health and wellbeing of occupants, reduce impacts on air quality and support transition to net zero transport network.	This option would help to ensure a legible and easier to navigate network of streets for people moving through the space.	This option would support improved connections through the West End and support active/sustainable travel.	Opportunities to support sustainable/active travel within and to/from the West End could be missed.

30. Options 1, 2 and 3 were all assessed as having likely positive effects for the SEA topic of Inter-relationships (movement and access), option 1 was also concluded to have likely positives for most of the other SEA topics.

Economic development and equalities strategy

31. Options assessed under this theme included promoting a range of uses that can support an inclusive economy (option 1), promoting the importance of buildings in driving social interaction (option 2), and using the SPD to promote the integration of innovation with strong communities and mix of uses into the city's knowledge economy (option 3). An alternative option of not including guidance in this area was also considered but ultimately rejected because it was considered to not be in keeping with the vision set out for the West End.

Table 7 – Options appraisal for the theme of economic development and equalities

	Alternative option 1 Promote an inclusive economy by suggesting a range of businesses, including start-ups, studios, collaboration space and meanwhile uses	Alternative option 2 Promote the importance of buildings for social interaction	Alternative option 3 promote the integration of innovation as part of Oxford's knowledge economy with strong communities and a mix of uses	Alternative option 4 Do not include guidance on how to achieve economic and equalities objectives
Water	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Air quality	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Climatic Factors	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Cultural heritage	Potential small positive impact	Potential small positive impact	Potential small positive impact	Neutral
Inter-relationships (movement and access)	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Conclusion	Selected option	Selected option	Selected option	Rejected option
Reasoning	A range of businesses and spaces will support resilience in the economy of the area and ensure that the West End is a space that can be used by a variety of groups.	Spaces designed to promote social interaction will support mental health and wellbeing and also contribute to innovation/collaboration.	This is a key objective underpinning the vision for the West End area.	This is a part of the vision for the area and what it is intended to achieve, so shaping that through the SPD by setting out measures in the West End that would help meet the policy requirements is helpful and the option not to do that is rejected.

32. Of the options assessed, there is mostly considered to be a neutral impact. There could be a small positive impact on cultural heritage from options 1, 2 and 3 because these uses are in keeping with the heritage of the area and promote integration of the community with the space.

Green and blue infrastructure

33. Three options were considered under the theme of green and blue infrastructure, whilst a fourth option of not including guidance on this issue within the SPD was also assessed and ultimately rejected. Option 1 was to set out the expectation that existing streets are to be greened wherever possible along with new streets. Option 2 was to set out how the waterways in the area should be improved upon in terms of access, safety and enjoyment for pedestrians. The other option selected was to expect biodiversity enhancements within the network (option 3).

Table 8 – Options appraisal for the theme of green and blue infrastructure

	Alternative option 1 Expect greening of existing streets where possible and of new streets	Alternative option 2 Set out how waterways should be more accessible, enjoyable and safe for pedestrians	Alternative option 3 Expect biodiversity enhancements within the Green and Blue network	Alternative option 4 Do not include guidance on the Green and Blue network
Water	Likely positive	Neutral/potential minor negative impact from recreation/litter	Likely positive	Neutral
Air quality	Potential minor positive - Depends upon the design of the greening	Neutral	Potential minor positive - Depends upon the design of the greening	Neutral
Climatic Factors	Likely positive – greening is good for flood mitigation and also shade/cooling which supports climate adaptation	Neutral	Likely positive – greening is good for flood mitigation and also shade/cooling which supports climate adaptation	Neutral
Cultural heritage	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Inter-relationships (movement and access)	Potential small positive impact– can encourage active travel – make travel	Potential small positive impact– can encourage active travel – make travel	Potential small positive impact – can encourage active travel – make travel	Neutral

	easier particularly during high heat/summer	easier particularly during high heat/summer	easier particularly during high heat/summer	
Conclusion	Selected option	Selected option	Selected option	Rejected option
Reasoning	Greening can help secure a range of benefits for the West End, particularly with regard to building climate resilience and addressing flood risk.	Will support active travel through the area and improve access to blue infrastructure with potential for supporting health and wellbeing.	Important for supporting biodiversity in the area, and can secure wider environmental benefits in terms of climate resilience.	Opportunities for securing multi-functional benefits from green infrastructure could be missed. Greening is likely to be an important mitigation measure for flood risk on the site.

34. Across the options assessed, there were a range of neutral and likely positive impacts identified under the SEA topics, with one potential minor negative impact under topic of water from increased recreation/litter from more accessibility to water ways under option 2. Options 1 and 3 had the most likely positive impacts and there were also some from option 2. Options 1-3 were selected.

Sites

35. A range of options have been considered for four particular sites within the West End which the SPD could provide more specific guidance. Tables 9 to 12 set out below consider options for Osney Mead, Oxpens, Station Gateway and Frideswide Square and Castle Mill Stream. Each set of options considers the impact on the SEA topics of not including any detailed guidance, which was rejected for each sites, as well as three other alternatives which relate to more specific approaches to different elements of potential guidance for each site.

Table 9 – Options appraisal for the Osney Mead site

	Alternative option 1 Include an indicative street layout and hierarchy of streets	Alternative option 2 Include guidance on green infrastructure locations and types (e.g encourage tree planting, some pocket parks, multi-functional space including SuDS, biodiversity)	Alternative option 3 Include guidance on mix and built form, including indicative heights/densities, indicative street sections, buildings with ‘stacked’ uses	Alternative option 4 Do not include any detailed guidance
Water	Neutral	Likely positive	Neutral	Neutral
Air quality	Neutral	Potential minor positive - Depends upon the design of the greening	Neutral	Neutral
Climatic Factors	Neutral	Likely positive	Neutral	Neutral
Cultural heritage	Neutral	Neutral	Potential positive	Neutral
Inter-relationships (movement and access)	Likely positive – supports more legible streetscape that is easier for people to move through.	Likely positive – can encourage active travel – make travel easier particularly during high heat/summer	Neutral	Neutral
Conclusion	Selected option	Selected option	Selected option	Rejected option
Reasoning	This option would help to ensure a legible and easier to navigate network of streets for people moving through the space.	Would provide clarity on expectation regarding green infrastructure, might help to secure higher quality, more multi-functional greening.	Further guidance on built form and heights would help to ensure new buildings have a more positive impact on existing heritage, especially that sensitive to heights and roofscape of surrounding buildings.	Opportunities to influence the sustainable development of the site could be missed.

Oxpens

Table 10 – Options appraisal for the Oxpens site

	Alternative option 1 Include an indicative street hierarchy, including expectation of providing a landing point for a bridge across the Thames	Alternative option 2 Include specific expectations for Green Infrastructure, including enhancement of Oxpens Meadow, enhanced route alongside the river, provision of 'amphitheatre' for outdoor events, biodiversity enhancement	Alternative option 3 Include guidance on urban grain and form, including that commercial buildings should be designed to include flexible footprints and typologies, expectation of a 'dynamic' roofscape, active frontages on Oxpens Road.	Alternative option 4 Do not include advice relating to these features
Water	Neutral	Likely positive	Neutral	Neutral
Air quality	Neutral	Potential minor positive - Depends upon the design of the greening	Neutral	Neutral
Climatic Factors	Neutral	Likely positive	Neutral	Neutral
Cultural heritage	Neutral	Neutral	Potential positive	Neutral
Inter-relationships (movement and access)	Likely positive – supports more legible streetscape that is easier for people to move through. Improves connections through West End through to Osney Mead.	Likely positive – can encourage active travel – make travel easier particularly during high heat/summer	Neutral	Neutral
Conclusion	Selected option	Selected option	Selected option	Rejected option
Reasoning	This option would help to ensure a legible and easier to navigate network of streets for people moving through the space.	Would provide clarity on expectation regarding green infrastructure, might help to secure	Further guidance on built form and heights would help to ensure new buildings have a more positive impact on existing	Opportunities to influence the sustainable development of the site could be missed.

		higher quality, more multi-functional greening.	heritage, especially that sensitive to heights and roofscape of surrounding buildings.	
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Station Gateway

Table 11 – Options appraisal for the Station Gateway site

	Alternative option 1 Include as a broad principle that the re-design in the station area should create a strong sense of arrival	Alternative option 2 Include as a broad principle that the redesigned station area should create a multi-modal hub, allowing easy interchange between modes (bus, walking, cycling to/from train)	Alternative option 3 Include as a broad principle that the station area re-design should create a mixed-use precinct, with a rich mix of uses contributing to the feeling of arrival and potentially including commercial uses, cafes, community and arts uses.	Alternative option 4 Do not include any broad principles for development of this site.
Water	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Air quality	Neutral	Potential positive – supports sustainable travel and less reliance on private vehicle	Neutral	Neutral
Climatic Factors	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Cultural heritage	Neutral	Neutral	Potential small positive impact	Neutral
Inter-relationships (movement and access)	Likely positive	Likely positive	Neutral	Potential negative as wider context may not be taken into account
Conclusion	Selected option	Selected option	Selected option	Rejected option

Reasoning	It is useful to set out key principles that future proposals may be assessed against.	Including this as a key principle means that proposals will be assessed against this, helping to ensure there is a seamless interchange between modes, encouraging use of public transport, walking and cycling.	Including this as a key principle means that proposals will be assessed against this, helping to ensure they do provide a mix of uses that aids vibrancy and creates a better sense of arrival.	Opportunities to influence the sustainable development of the site could be missed.
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Frideswide Square and Castle Mill Stream

Table 12 – Options appraisal for the Frideswide Square and Castle Mill Stream site

	Alternative option 1 Give indications for public realm and movement alongside and through the site, including that there should be a route for buses along Park End Street and/or Hythe Bridge Street and that there should be cut-through/s for pedestrians from one street to the other.	Alternative option 2 Include indications for built form and urban grain, including that there should be a strong relationship between Worcester Street CP and Nuffield College, that there should be a range of sizes and types of business including for the evening economy and that there should be flexible floor plates.	Alternative option 3 Include expectations for green infrastructure including greening along Frideswide Square if feasible, public space along Castle Mill Stream and potential for ecology on rooftops.	Alternative option 4 Do not include these indications for this site in the SPD.
Water	Neutral	Neutral	Likely positive	Neutral
Air quality	Potential minor positive	Neutral	Potential minor positive - Depends upon the design of the greening	Neutral
Climatic Factors	Neutral	Neutral	Likely positive	Neutral
Cultural heritage	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

Inter-relationships (movement and access)	Likely positive	Neutral	Likely positive – can encourage active travel – make travel easier particularly during high heat/summer	Potential negative as wider context may not be taken into account
Conclusion	Selected option	Selected option	Selected option	Rejected option
Reasoning	Improvements to the flow of buses (which will need to be low emission in any event) is likely to help improve air quality.	This site is in a key location in the West End and there is potential for significant enhancement of the area from its development. This approach would help to ensure the potential benefits are realised.	Would provide clarity on expectation regarding green infrastructure, might help to secure higher quality, more multi-functional greening.	Opportunities to influence the sustainable development of the site could be missed.

36. For all the sites, across the options assessed, there were a range of neutral and likely positive impacts identified under the SEA topics. Options 1 and 3 had the most likely positive impacts and there were also some from option 2. Options 1-3 were selected for each site. Most potential positive impacts from site-specific detail being included in the SPD are likely for cultural heritage and air quality.

Conclusion

37. The above shows that no significant impacts are expected from the SPD on the themes scoped in as potentially being influenced by it. That is because the Local Plan contains the statutory policy framework and the SPD can only amplify the policies and add detail, rather than adding additional requirements or unjustified extra burdens. The SPD very clearly sets out how to design schemes to achieve the aims of the Local Plan for the area and will have beneficial effects because it looks at the bigger picture across the West End and enables a framework for all development to achieve continuity and an outcome greater than the sum of its parts. However, the impacts on SEA topics are minimal, and the potential for cumulative impacts is also minimal.

Measures to prevent, reduce and off-set as fully as possible any significant impacts

38. This stage is required as part of the regulations. However, in this case no significant negative effects are predicted by the SA, so mitigation measures are not included in this report.

Description of the monitoring measures envisaged

39. The SEA say that that the focus for mitigation and monitoring should be on any significant negative effects identified through the assessment. Because the SA did not predict any significant negative effects, no specific monitoring measures are proposed at this stage.