

2. Building on Oxford's economic strengths and ensuring prosperity and opportunities for all

2.1 Objectives

- To build on Oxford's economic strengths as a global centre for research, learning and health care
- To remain at the heart of the Oxfordshire economy and an important net contributor to the national economy in its key strengths in the knowledge intensive businesses (such as education, health, science and technology, and as a leading environmentally sustainable city)
- To reduce inequalities across Oxford, particularly in employment, health and education
- To provide a diverse range of employment opportunities to meet the needs of the city's businesses and residents, allowing Oxford to grow and function sustainably, and with a skilled workforce ready to fill the employment opportunities that arise

National Planning Policy says:

2.2 The Government's vision through the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) is "to build a strong competitive economy" and that local planning authorities "should plan proactively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st century". It states that the government is committed to ensuring that the planning system "does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth" (paragraphs 18 and 19).

2.3 The NPPF sets out requirements for local plans in this regard, local plans should:

- Set out a clear economic vision and strategy which proactively encourages sustainable economic growth
- Set criteria, or identify sites for investment to match the strategy and meet anticipated needs (for land or floorspace for all types of economic activity)
- Support existing business sectors and plan for new or emerging sectors; being flexible to meet needs not anticipated and allow rapid response to changing circumstances
- Plan positively for clusters or networks of knowledge driven, creative or high technology industries
- Identify priority areas for economic regeneration, infrastructure provision and environmental enhancement
- Facilitate flexible working practices
- Avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose (paragraphs 21 and 22)

2.4 The *Planning Practice Guidance* (PPG) sets out more detail on how to assess the economic development needs of an area.



- 2.5 The Government recently published the Green Paper: *Building Our Industrial Strategy* (January 2017). In it the Government sets out its objective to improve living standards and economic growth by increasing productivity and driving growth across the whole country. It identifies 10 pillars to drive forward the country's industrial strategy: science, research and innovation; skills; infrastructure; business growth and investment; procurement; trade and investment; affordable energy; sectoral policies; driving growth across the whole country; and creating the right institutions.

The Oxford story – background evidence and the Sustainability Appraisal:

- 2.6 Oxford has a diverse economy being a focal point for education, research and science. These 'knowledge intensive' sectors represent 73% of total employment in the city. It is one of the top five technology clusters in the world. As a globally known brand, Oxford has major assets which include two leading universities, and cutting edge research in areas including bio-tech, data science, quantum technology and robotics. The city is home to diverse international enterprises including BMW Mini, Oxford University Press, Sharp, Natural Motion, Unipart and Centrica among numerous others. Oxford's economy is broad-based and structurally resilient and provides one third of the county's jobs; home to around 4,600 businesses providing 114,000 jobs. There is a high level of in-commuting with 46,000 people coming into the city to work on a daily basis.
- 2.7 Oxford has extremely high employment levels; the Job Seekers Allowance claimant rate is low at 0.6% or 715 individuals (December 2015). Youth claimant count is also low at 0.3% or 85 people. However, 21% of the population is economically inactive (59% of economically inactive in Oxford being students, 2011 Census), just above the 19.9% South East average.
- 2.8 Oxford's importance as an employment location is further demonstrated by its job density; the ratio of all jobs to residents aged 16-64. The ratio is 1.08, well above that of the South East (0.83) and Great Britain (0.8). Oxford was relatively resilient to the global recession in 2008/9 but it highlighted the importance of Oxford and the UK economy. With the uncertainty of Brexit it is even more important to strengthen the economy, as set out in the 'Building Our Industrial Strategy' Green Paper.
- 2.9 The Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership or OxLEP (of which the City Council is a board member) has published the *Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan* (refreshed March 2017). This sets out the long term vision and ambitions for economic growth in the county. The overall vision for the *Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan* is that by 2030 "Oxfordshire will be recognised as a vibrant, sustainable, inclusive world leading economy, driven by innovation, enterprise and research intelligence."
- 2.10 The *Strategic Economic Plan* focuses on priority localities of the Oxfordshire Knowledge Spine, which includes Bicester, Oxford and Science Vale. The Plan recognises that Oxford's world-class education research and innovation underpins growth and that continued investment is needed to develop the infrastructure necessary to realise its full potential. The plan states that Oxford city accounts for just under a quarter of the county's population but around 30% of all its jobs.
- 2.11 *The Oxfordshire Economic Forecasting Report* (2014) was produced by SQW and Cambridge Econometrics to support the *Strategic Housing Market Assessment* (SHMA) and to provide evidence to inform the *Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan* (SEP). This included some planned economic growth forecasts for the County and individual districts. The job forecasts

Oxford has a diverse economy being a focal point for education, research and science.

showed an expected increase of 88,200 new jobs within the County as a whole, to 2031, and of these 24,300 new jobs were forecast to take place within Oxford. The *Employment Land Assessment* (detailed below) notes that this Oxford projection has been significantly exceeded to date.

- 2.12 *The Oxfordshire Innovation Engine* (2013) report was commissioned by the Oxford and Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership together with the University of Oxford. The report seeks to identify ways to realise the growth potential of “Oxfordshire’s high tech cluster of businesses, research establishments and support providers”. The report recognises that ‘Oxford is the service centre for the wider economy, it has the fastest growing, best educated workforce, and it is the main centre of research and spin outs in the County’.
- 2.13 *The Oxford Economic Growth Strategy* (Oxford Strategic Partnership 2013) developed a clear vision for the future, which at its heart seeks to build on Oxford’s strengths to ensure the city continues to make its contribution to the national economy. The productivity and competitiveness of the city is clearly expressed in its contribution to the national economy, Oxford ‘contributes £4.5bn to the UK economy, which is the fifth highest GVA per capita of all UK cities. The strategy recognises that “growth needs to be managed carefully to ensure it is sustainable and balanced;” but highlights the opportunities for Oxford with its ‘unique combination of factors for business growth’ that are not replicated elsewhere, which comprise links and proximity to research excellence that are essential to leading businesses.
- 2.14 The City Council’s *Corporate Plan* recognises that Oxford is the economic and cultural hub of Oxfordshire’s world-class knowledge economy and that Oxford is a diverse economy: a global centre for education, health, bioscience, digital and car manufacturing, a lead area for publishing and creative industries and high performance engineering, and a growing high-tech sector. The Corporate Plan also acknowledges the challenges faced by Oxford including a lack of land, shortage and cost of housing a barrier to recruitment and retention and labour shortages.
- 2.15 Oxford successfully implemented an Article 4 Direction which restricts the loss of Key Protected Employment Sites in the Local Plan 2001-2016 through permitted development rights. This is to protect against changes of use where planning permission is not required on sites that provide an important contribution to Oxford’s economy. The Article 4 Direction would continue to protect buildings on these sites from changes from employment uses, although it would not be protected against comprehensive redevelopment. In directing that the Article 4 direction should come into force, the government (through the Secretary of State) has recognised the important role that employment sites make in sustaining the quality and diversity of the economy in Oxford and has approved a distinct and locally-specific approach to policy making for the city.
- 2.16 *The Employment Land Assessment* (2016) states that the total demand for new B1 floorspace is forecast to be between 65,800m² and 105,000m². The demand for B2/B8 floorspace is between -0.1 ha and 21.9ha. The report concludes that, the demand for B1 floorspace in particular but also B2/B8 use, is well in excess of the current supply. This reflects the findings from previous economic studies and the views of property agents secured through the assessment. The Local Plan 2036 will therefore need to explore how to support existing employment sites; re-evaluate the role and designation of district centres/employment clusters; and encourage the intensification and modernisation of sites.

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2.17 The SA identified potential positive effects of protecting and encouraging the modernisation and intensification of category 1 and category 2 employment sites. In particular this approach would likely have positive effects in terms of the economy and employment, transport and vibrant communities objectives. The SA also highlighted potential positive impacts on vibrant communities, poverty social exclusion and inequality and education objectives as well as the economy and employment objective.

Responses to first steps consultation:

2.18 Some people thought that businesses should be encouraged to locate and grow in the city, however many respondents raised concerns about this. It was clear that most people felt there needed to be an appropriate balance between employment and housing. A lot of people suggested that Oxford's housing crisis needed to be addressed before more jobs were created. 65% of respondents to the leaflet questionnaire supported the statement: "We build on Oxford's economic strengths".

2.19 The first steps consultation highlighted that there was a broad agreement that employment sites should continue to be protected so that business can grow. There were numerous suggestions relating to employment sites with responses varying from protection to allowing their loss to other uses including housing. There was recognition that some employment sites were needed to support the economy. There was a strong desire to build housing as it was felt by some that increasing employment opportunities would only worsen the affordability issues for Oxford's current and future workforce.

Potential policy responses:

2.20 *Protecting Category 1 and 2 employment sites*

It is widely recognised that the shortage of housing in Oxford is a barrier to economic growth. However, the *Oxford Employment Land Assessment* (2016) also identifies the need to provide for additional employment development to meet the forecast demand to 2036. Coupled with the huge housing need, this presents a challenge for this Local Plan. Oxford needs to find an approach so that the barriers to economic growth (e.g. shortage of housing) and the drivers of economic growth (e.g. employment growth) can both be addressed appropriately and without detriment to one another.

2.21 The strategy proposes creating three categories of employment sites with a different policy approach for each:

2.22 **Category 1:** those sites which are important nationally and regionally to the knowledge economy or are significant employers or sectors in Oxford, primarily B1 (office) and B2 (industrial) uses. Provisionally these would be:

- University/research sites: University of Oxford Science Area; Old Road Campus; Radcliffe Observatory Quarter; Northern Gateway (when developed)
- Hospital research sites: John Radcliffe Hospital; Nuffield Orthopaedic Hospital; Churchill Hospital; Warneford Hospital
- Major publishing sites: Blackwells Publishing; Oxford University Press
- Major manufacturing /research sites: BMW (Mini); Unipart
- Major Science/Business Parks: Oxford Science Park; Oxford Business Park
- Larger knowledge – sector office uses: Oxford Centre for Innovation; Nielsen's

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- 2.23 **Category 2:** those sites that are important in providing local services and a diverse employment base as identified in the Employment Land Assessment. Provisionally these would be:

Clarendon House, Cornmarket Street	Phoenix Autos, Jeune Street
University Student Hub, Turl Street	Horspath Ind. Estate, Peterley Rd/Pony Rd
Launchpad, Said Business School	Printing works, Crescent Rd
Speedwell House, Speedwell Street	J H Cox Ltd, Builders Yard, 108 Temple Rd
Oxford Business Centre, Oxpens site	Green St. Bindery, 9 Green Street
Pembroke House, 36 Pembroke Street	Builders Yard, Travis Perkins, Cowley Rd
Workshops at 15-17 Edith Road	Bacordo Court, 79-83 Temple Road
King Charles House, Park End Street	The Tyre Depot, Marsh Rd
Fire Station	Magdalen Road and Newtec Place
Becket Street CarPark	One St. Aldates
Oxpens, Oxpens Road	North Bailey House, New Inn Hall Street
Island Site, Park End Street	Thomas Hull House, New Inn Hall Street
Telephone Exchange, St Aldate's	St. Aldate's Chambers, 109-113 St. Aldate's
Police Station	Ramsay House, St. Ebbe's Street
Clarendon Business Centre, Prama House, Banbury Rd	County Hall, New Road
Osney Mead	1-16 King Edwards Street
Clarendon Business Centre, Belsyre Court, Woodstock Rd	Old Rectory, Paradise Square
Oxfam House, 274 Banbury Rd, Summertown	Greyfriars Court, Paradise Square
Garage Repair workshop, 2A off Hayfield Rd	Unither House (Cooper Callas) 15 Paradise Street
Builders Yard Southmoor Road	58,59,60 St. Aldates
Summertown Pavilion 16-24 Middle Way	St. Aldates Courtyard
Jordon Hill Business Park, Banbury Rd	Royal Mail Depot, Kingsmead House
Site at corner of Hayfield Rd & Aristotle Lane	6-7 Worcester Street
Diamond Place and Ewart House	Boswell House, 1-5 Broad Street
Elsfield Way, Elsfield Hall	St. George's Mansions, George Street
Wolvercote Paper Mill	Frewin Chambers Cornmarket Street
Quarry Motoring centre, Green Rd	Blue Boar Court, Blue Boar Street
Warehouses off Kiln Lane, Shelley Close	Park Central, 40-41 Park End Street
Blanchfords Builders Yard, Windmill Rd	276-278 Banbury Rd, Summertown
Tyre and Exhaust centre, 72 London Rd	Suffolk House, 263 Banbury Rd
Former Pickfords, Sandy Lane W/Spring Lane	Lambourne House, 311-321 Banbury Rd, Summertown
Telephone Exchange and offices, St. Luke's Rd/Between Towns Rd	228-240 Banbury Rd
County Trading Estate Watlington Rd	Offices above M & S, Banbury Road
Harrow Road Industrial Estate, Watlington Rd	Mayfield House, 256 Banbury Road, Summertown
Chiltern Business Centre, Garsington Rd	264 Banbury Rd, Summertown
Nuffield Industrial Estate, Sandy Lane West	274 Banbury Rd, Summertown
Fenchurch Court, Bobby Friar Close	Milford House, 1A Mayfield Road
Blackbird Leys Central Area	267-269 Banbury Rd
Cowley Centre, Templar's Square	285 Banbury Rd
Littlemore Park, Armstrong Way	Cranbrook House, 287 Banbury Rd
Salter Brothers Ltd, Meadow Lane	Twining House, 280 Banbury Road
Dairy Depot, Old Abingdon Rd	BBC Radio Oxford, 265 Banbury Rd
Car and Exhaust depot, 302 Abingdon Rd	Swan Motor Centre, Between Towns Rd
The Old Music Hall, 106-108 Cowley Road	Crown House, 193 Cowley Rd
Cowley Marsh Depot	134A/B Cowley Road
Enterprise Centre, Standingford House, Cave Street	Advice centre, 44B Princes Street
	Lloyds Bank, London Rd, Headington

- 2.24 Category 2 employment sites provide local services and generally include a mix of B1 and B2. These sites have been identified in the *Employment Land Assessment* and been found to be well-performing. They provide a valuable employment contribution and the supporting infrastructure for the larger employment uses in Oxford. These businesses meet local needs and are less likely to be found on Oxford's large employment sites. They may offer skilled manual work and lower skilled jobs which are important to delivering a diverse range of employment opportunities in Oxford.
- 2.25 Retaining these employment sites for employment-generating uses serves to reduce commuting to work, as well as improving access to local jobs for

different sectors of the community. It is important to protect these sites to encourage opportunities for a diverse range of different businesses and employment but consideration should be given to opportunities to allow some to be developed for housing where strict criteria are met.

Opt 1: Protecting Category 1 employment sites

Policy approach	Consequences of approach/discussion
<p>A) Preferred option: Protect Category 1 sites, promoting modernisation and intensification to allow growth of these businesses and sectors on existing sites.</p> <p>Allow no other uses on these sites, except when they are directly linked to and are necessary to support the main use and there is no loss of employment.</p> <p>Provide a site specific policy framework for each site through an allocation in the Local Plan.</p>	<p>This approach would provide the strongest policy protection for the highest tier of employment sites. It would ensure that important sites underpinning the knowledge economy and significant employers in Oxford are not lost.</p> <p>As employment growth is allowed to continue through modernisation and intensification of sites, other land in the city can be used to address barriers to economic growth (e.g. lack of housing).</p> <p>A detailed assessment would be made to identify opportunities appropriate to the individual site strengths, constraints and land owner aspirations. This could for example identify sites where an element of housing linked to the specific employer could be provided on the site.</p> <p>It is likely that any future review of the Article 4 direction would include all these sites.</p>
<p>B) Alternative Option: Allow residential and other uses to be introduced on Category 1 sites, as long as no net loss of employment floor space results.</p>	<p>This option could erode Oxford's supply of employment land during the plan period; the loss of floorspace is only one aspect of the need to support economic success now and in future.</p> <p>This option could potentially deliver more housing (albeit not necessarily in the best locations for general housing), but it would significantly reduce opportunities for economic growth of these key businesses and sectors.</p> <p>Provision of staff accommodation on the sites for these key employers could assist in recruitment and retention and be an appropriate ancillary activity where it is clearly and formally linked to the employer.</p>
<p>C) Rejected option: Do not protect category 1 sites for employment uses but rely on national planning policy.</p>	<p>In this approach the market would control the future supply of land to meet Oxford's employment demand. There would be no certainty about the city's ability to meet future demand and it would entail the risk that these vital sites would be lost to non-employment uses through redevelopment.</p>

Opt 2: Protecting Category 2 employment sites

Policy approach	Consequences of approach/discussion
<p>A) Preferred option: Protect Category 2 employment sites from loss to other uses, promoting modernisation and intensification.</p> <p>Allow other uses on site only where a set of strict criteria are met. For example, where an employment use is retained with the same or greater number of employees as the previous active employment use. Other criteria could include provision of marketing evidence etc.</p>	<p>This approach provides significant protection for the second tier employment sites in recognition of the important role they play in Oxford's economy and in meeting future economic needs.</p> <p>These sites have been found to be well-performing in the ELA and to provide the diversity of employment opportunities that is one of Oxford's strengths.</p> <p>Whilst the focus is on the encouragement of modernisation and intensification, this approach would allow diversification into other uses on the basis that the level of employment is not diminished.</p> <p>Once lost, it is extremely unlikely Category 2 employment sites could be replaced elsewhere in Oxford hence the need to provide protection against their loss. It is likely that any future review of the Article 4 direction would include all these sites.</p>

B) Rejected Option: Do not protect Category 2 sites and allow redevelopment to other uses.

Lack of any protection for Category 2 employment sites would mean these sites would be very vulnerable to changes of use/redevelopment to other higher value land uses e.g. student accommodation, housing or retail. Once lost, it is unlikely Category 2 employment sites would be replaced elsewhere in Oxford.

2.26 Making best use of Category 3 employment sites

Category 3 employment sites are those currently in employment use but not identified in the Employment Land Assessment. They mainly comprise smaller sites and may not all be performing as well as those in Category 2. These sites may offer an opportunity to explore alternative uses in order to help deliver the aims and strategy of the Local Plan.

Opt 3: Making best use of Category 3 employment sites

Policy approach	Consequences of approach/discussion
<p>A) Preferred option: Allow the loss of other employment sites to alternative uses subject to some basic criteria.</p> <p>This would apply to all employment sites that are not identified under Category 1 or 2; or those that comprise low density B8 use (see separate option below).</p> <p>(Relates closely to options on low density B8 uses below.)</p>	<p>This approach would allow those sites not in Category 1 or 2 to come forward for redevelopment for alternative uses. This would allow additional sites to come forward for housing and other priority uses.</p> <p>Many of these sites are relatively small and are located in areas that would mean they could in principle be redeveloped for housing. Where such sites have been identified they are proposed for further consideration as housing (or other uses) sites in the sites section of the Preferred Options Document.</p> <p>It would be necessary to draft a general policy to embed this approach in the Local Plan. Such a policy would be likely include some basic criteria for assessing compliance of schemes, but for Category 3 sites a lower standard of evidence would be required to support change of use proposals.</p> <p>This approach would mean that these sites would not be subject to an Article 4 Direction in any future review of that regime.</p>
<p>B) Rejected Option: Protect all Category 3 sites (i.e. all sites currently in employment use excluding Category 1 and 2 sites) for their employment uses on the same basis as described above for Category 2 sites.</p>	<p>This approach would provide additional protection for all those sites currently in employment use but not included in the high categories described above. It would in effect be a blanket protection for all employment sites.</p> <p>The benefit of this approach would be that there would be a better supply of employment sites through the plan period, providing greater certainty that the forecast employment needs could be accommodated and that the diverse employment base is reinforced.</p> <p>The disadvantage of this approach would be that some of these sites may be less-well or underperforming in their current use and may offer alternative opportunities to provide much needed housing for example. If all sites were afforded the same protections as Category 2 sites this may sterilise sites and result in missed opportunities to help meet housing (or other identified) needs.</p> <p>The general thrust of government policy would not support a blanket protection approach to all sites.</p>

2.27 Controlling low density B8 uses

B8 warehousing uses can support local employers in sectors such as manufacturing and help to secure a range of job opportunities accessible to a wider range of skill-sets than just the knowledge economy. However they typically have a low job density and high land take on site and do not make efficient use of land which is particularly important given the shortage of land in Oxford. Some B8 uses are essential/important for Oxford (either as part of an existing economic activity by ensuring that important employers are able to contribute to the economy through the jobs they provide e.g. BMW-Mini/Unipart) or by providing essential local businesses in the city. Where B8 is not essential/important for Oxford, this does not represent

the most efficient use of land and could be encouraged to modernise into other employment uses (B1, B2) which have a greater worker density. B8 uses should only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where there is a particular identified need.

Opt 4: Controlling low density B8 uses

Policy approach	Consequences of approach/discussion
<p>A) Preferred option: Allow the loss of B8 to other B1, B2, Sui Generis employment uses and other non-residential uses that support the local economy or are of benefit to the local community. If there is no demand for alternative employment or community uses, consider loss to residential in suitable locations.</p> <p>Protect and allow new B8 uses only where they relate directly to or support existing or proposed Category 1 or 2 employment sites, e.g. warehousing supporting BMW-Mini plant.</p>	<p>This approach improves opportunities for more efficient use of land, higher worker densities and the ability to better meet the employment need as identified in the Employment Land Assessment.</p> <p>It would ensure that those B8 uses that are essential for Oxford are protected and encourages the development of employment sites important to Oxford's economy.</p>
<p>B) Alternative Option: Do not seek to control the development or loss of B8 uses</p>	<p>This approach would mean that opportunities for making more efficient use of sites and improving worker density are missed. It could also lead to further development of inefficient B8 uses that are not essential to be located in Oxford in lieu of other more pressing needs.</p>

2.28 Teaching and research

Hospitals and medical research

Oxford is a major centre for teaching hospitals and home to a cluster of acute and specialist medical organisations which together employ around 14,400 people, or 13% of the total workforce, supporting a further 2,700 jobs. These assets link closely with healthcare research undertaken at the universities. Oxford University's plans to expand medical and clinical research will create more opportunity for discovery and growth. The health sector in Oxford is a catalyst for the wider region's biotechnology sector which comprises 163 companies, of which 49 are based in Oxford. Oxford has numerous strengths in particular biotechnology subsectors, including drug discovery and development, diagnostics, medical technology and imaging.

2.29 Oxford is a world leader in medical research, in identifying causes of disease, improving diagnosis and prevention, and developing effective treatments and cures particularly cancer, stroke, malaria and HIV. Oxford is also an important centre for research into heart disease and musculoskeletal disorders and infectious diseases.

2.30 *University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University*

The success of Oxford's economy is shaped by the presence of its two growing universities; University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University.

2.31 The University of Oxford is world renowned and ranked first in the Times Higher Education latest global league table. The University of Oxford has around 12,000 full-time-equivalent employees (not including those employed solely by the colleges or by Oxford University Press, or casual workers).

2.32 Oxford Brookes University is regularly ranked as the best new university in the country, and has earned recognition for the quality of a number of its teaching areas. Oxford Brookes employs just under 2,000 full-time-equivalent staff.

- 2.33 The two universities have a significant economic impact on the city as employers, buyers of goods and services, host to over 30,000 students and also in terms of the research and development opportunities that they facilitate and inspire. The City Council is committed to supporting the sustainable growth of the two universities and to maximising the related economic, social and cultural benefits to the city.

Opt 5: Teaching and research

Policy approach	Consequences of approach/discussion
<p>A) Preferred option: Hospitals: Continue to protect existing hospital sites for hospital related uses, allowing some diversification.</p>	<p>Oxford has a number of large, established regional hospitals which are major teaching and research centres as well as being healthcare providers. A range of general and specialist treatments are provided and some of these sites are becoming hubs.</p> <p>The established hospital sites are important to the city, and are an important employer, that they should be protected, although it will be important that the policy is flexible and allows the hospitals to diversify, make efficient use of their land and respond to changing needs.</p> <p>The presence of the hospitals benefits the people of Oxford because cutting edge health care is available.</p>
<p>B) Alternative Option: Hospitals: Support hospital related uses in other locations or consolidation of sites if proposals meet certain criteria e.g. more efficient use of land; provide for future needs/modernisation; release land for other uses; improved access and transport links.</p>	<p>The Hospital Trusts may further develop their estate and service strategies later in the plan period so the Local Plan should be flexible to allow changes that would benefit the delivery of health care and medical research in Oxford. It will be important to be flexible to future needs, but potential alternative sites have not been suggested at this point, so sites cannot yet be identified for this use.</p>
<p>C) Preferred option: University of Oxford: Continue to locate academic core activities in central Oxford.</p> <p>Allocate new sites for further academic activities such as teaching research, administration and ancillary activities</p>	<p>The City Council wants to support the sustainable growth of the University of Oxford and its role in the city.</p> <p>The academic, teaching and student accommodation functions of the University of Oxford are currently focussed on a range of sites in and around the edge of the city centre with some (including Old Road Campus) outside the city centre.</p> <p>The University of Oxford is keen to develop the currently protected key employment site at Osney Mead for a range of university related uses; a preferred option for that site is set out in the Sites section of the Preferred Options Document.</p>
<p>D) Preferred option: Oxford Brookes University: Support the growth of Oxford Brookes University through the redevelopment and intensification of academic and administrative floorspace on their existing sites at Headington Hill and Gipsy Lane.</p>	<p>The City Council wants to support the sustainable growth of Oxford Brookes University and its role in the city.</p> <p>Oxford Brookes have in recent years been investing heavily in redeveloping their existing Gipsy Lane site and this is expected to continue on a phased basis.</p> <p>Oxford Brookes have indicated that they are likely to vacate their Marston Road site during the plan period so the preferred option does not include that campus, and it is considered for allocation in the sites section of the Preferred Options Document.</p>
<p>E) Alternative Option: Universities Do not have a specific policy for the universities but rely on other policies of the plan; for example on student accommodation.</p> <p>Deal with site-specific details through site allocations</p>	<p>It may not be necessary to include a specific policy (or policies) on the two universities but to instead express support and rely on the application of the general policies on any proposals they submit. Site allocations can be used to make provision for their needs and to deal with site-specific matters of detail.</p>

2.34 Sites for small businesses and start-up spaces for other employment uses (e.g. creative industries, virtual offices)

There are some 4,585 businesses in Oxford of which the largest proportion are micro businesses with 9 employees or less. 85% of the businesses in Oxford fall into this category. Small businesses (less than 100 employees) make up 11.7% of the total. This is almost double the proportion in Oxfordshire and the South East and highlights the importance of Oxford as a location and centre of small businesses. We need to provide flexible spaces for co-working in suitable locations so that both new and small businesses have the opportunity to grow. It is also important to create a 'pipeline' for the additional supply of office space in the city if Oxford is to play its role as a fast-growing city and generate more economic growth. Demand is currently outstripping supply in terms of high quality offices in the city, this is in part due to the lack of speculative office development coming forward from the market.

Opt 6: Sites for small businesses and start-up spaces for other employment uses (e.g. creative industries, virtual offices)

Policy approach	Consequences of approach/discussion
A) Preferred option (Combination of A + B): Support the development of start-up and small businesses on all Category 2 employment sites but not on Category 1 sites.	<p>This would allow diversification of Category 2 sites to continue to provide for local services and employment in preference to them being lost to other uses. Would help to provide a range of premises to meet different requirements.</p> <p>Protects those Category 1 sites important nationally and regionally to the knowledge economy and important employers in Oxford.</p>
B) Preferred option (Combination of A + B): Support the development of start-up and small businesses in city and district centres.	<p>Would provide new opportunities for start-up businesses. Would support the enhanced role of city and district centres. Could bring opportunities for new companies that would benefit from town centre locations.</p> <p>Likely to add diversity and variety, and help retain vitality and viability of centres. Would be most likely to support office-based businesses rather than B2/B8.</p> <p>May increase competition for much-needed housing in sustainable locations.</p>
C) Alternative Option: Support start-up and small businesses in any location if other policy requirements (e.g. access) are met.	<p>May increase competition for much-needed housing. Flexibility of location may help to meet a wider range of operation requirements beyond that of office space.</p> <p>A range of site sizes and locations is likely to help meet a variety of premises requirements.</p> <p>Locations may not be close to other employment uses or the right market to help companies flourish.</p>
D) Alternative Option: Do not specifically provide support for these uses, treat the same as other employment uses.	<p>Small businesses and start-ups may find it more difficult to succeed and compete, which could have knock-on effects for other businesses and the wider economy.</p>

2.35 New academic or administrative floorspace for private colleges/language schools

There are different types of private colleges in Oxford which teach a great variety of subjects to different age groups. Private colleges may include language schools, secretarial colleges and tutorial colleges. While these institutions have an educational role to play, and make some contribution to the local economy, the further expansion of this sector needs to be balanced with other key academic and economic priorities in the city particularly where expansion results in loss of other important land uses. In particular given the pressure on Oxford's housing stock, change of use from

offices, residential or student accommodation to teaching/administrative and residential uses for private colleges should be resisted.

Opt 7: New academic floor space for Private Colleges/language schools

Policy approach	Consequences of approach/discussion
<p>A) Preferred option: Restrict the expansion of existing language schools, summer schools and independent colleges for over 16s by only permitting further development up to a certain percentage increase, and only subject to clear demonstration of the positive benefits to the local economy. Limit such development to a point that it discourages new entrants to the sector.</p>	<p>It is difficult to view these uses as essential to the operation of the city when they are considered against the key academic and economic priorities.</p> <p>When viewed in the context of the need to find more sites for housing and employment uses, it is difficult to justify loss of suitable sites to private college and language school development. Whilst such colleges generate some employment, these jobs are often not provided at the density of alternative office-type uses and can be seasonal or short-term in nature.</p> <p>A policy approach could provide the opportunity for expansion up to a certain percentage increase on the basis that applicants demonstrate that there are clear positive benefits to the local economy.</p>
<p>B) Alternative Option: Restrict academic floorspace for private colleges and language schools to upper floors in the city and district centres provided no loss of employment, residential or student accommodation.</p>	<p>This option would provide an opportunity for such development, however only in appropriate locations and where other important uses are not lost as a result. It would ensure that opportunities for new academic floor space are in locations that are well-served by sustainable modes of transport. However, it could also mean that the potential is not realised for development in these locations of more intensive uses such as quality office space.</p>
<p>C) Rejected Option: Do not have a policy controlling the development and location of private colleges and language school academic floor space.</p>	<p>This could result in new academic floor space being developed at the expense of other more important uses (e.g. our key academic sectors, housing and employment).</p>



2.36 Opportunities for local employment, training and businesses

Oxfordshire's Strategic Economic Plan identifies that Community Employment Plans (CEPs) have an important role in supporting people to access job opportunities arising from new development. They include employer-led initiatives relating to both the construction phase for all large developments, and the end user phase of large commercial development, and include measures such as apprenticeships and training schemes, local procurement and links with schools and colleges. Other initiatives to help ensure local residents can live free from poverty include the Oxford Living Wage, which is a voluntary scheme whereby employers commit to pay a minimum wage to all staff over 18. This is set higher than the Government's National Living Wage, to reflect the high cost of living in Oxford.

Opt 8: Opportunities for local employment, training and businesses

Policy approach	Consequences of approach/discussion
<p>A) Preferred option (Combination of A + B): Require larger construction projects to ensure that opportunities are given to local firms to realistically bid for work.</p>	<p>This approach would require larger construction projects to formally consider the use of local firms and sub-contractors when letting contracts. For example a requirement could be made for the developer to set a benchmark measure (in co-ordination with the City Council) for the local spend on a project by measuring the spend with each sub-contractor based on their office location and the distance from the site.</p>
<p>B) Preferred option (Combination of A + B): Require larger construction projects to provide training and employment opportunities for local people through a Community Employment Plan.</p>	<p>This approach would require larger construction projects to enter into a Community Employment Plan as part of legal agreement attached to a planning permission. Such plans could include commitment to providing work experience (with linked opportunities for job interviews), visits and workshops for those in construction training and apprenticeships for example. It could require measures of local employment such as a percentage of those construction employees living within set distances of the site for example. This approach would enable monitoring of the effectiveness of such plans.</p>
<p>C) Alternative Option: Do not place requirements on developments to provide training and employment opportunities for local people.</p>	<p>There would be less opportunity and no certainty of achieving local business support and investment in local skills by the development sector without such requirements.</p>