


OLP2040 Site assessment proforma (including Sustainability Appraisal)

Site name	Oxpens	Site location plan
HELAA reference (and OLP2036 Policy if applicable)	076 Policy SP1	
Ward	Osney & St. Thomas	
Site size	6.3ha	
Existing use	Ice rink, car park and some open space	

Stage 1 assessment – are there any clear conflicts with national planning policy and/or any insurmountable environmental or physical constraints?

Assessment criteria	Outcome	Comments
Is the site an SAC or SSSI?	No	
Is the site greenfield in flood zone 3b?	Yes	Greenfield part of the site lies within Flood Zone 3b (18%).
Is the site area less than 0.25ha?	No	
Is the site already at an advanced stage in the planning process (development commenced)?	Yes	An outline planning application (22/02954/OUT) was submitted for a mixed-use scheme including residential student accommodation, and commercial floorspace (class E and hotel). A full application was also submitted for enabling works.
Stage 1 conclusion <i>No clear conflicts with national policy or insurmountable environmental or physical constraints.</i> <i>Continue to stage 2 assessment.</i>		

Stage 2 assessment – Qualitative assessment of deliverability (incorporating Sustainability Appraisal)

SA Objective 1: To achieve the city's ambition to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2040. See SA Objective 8 for decision-making criteria

SA Objective	SA Objective 2: To build resilience to climate change, including reducing risks from overheating, flooding and the resulting detriment to well-being, the economy and the environment.	
Decision-making criteria	Is the use proposed suitable given the flood zone of the site?	
	SA rating	Comments
What flood zone is the site in	--	Site is partially within Flood Zone 3b (18% of site lies within Flood Zone 3b) (19% of site lies within Flood Zone 3a) (31% of site lies within Flood Zone 2) The land within Flood Zone 3b is greenfield and lies centrally within the lower part of the site.
Flooding of land surrounding site for access/ egress	-	The initial parts of the route are within Flood Zone 2. The hazard rating is generally low at the start of the route, however, there are pockets of greater hazard. Access/ egress from the site is over land at moderate risk/ hazard.

SA Objective	SA Objective 3: To encourage the efficient use of land through good design and layout, and minimise the use of greenfield and Green Belt land	
Decision-making criteria	Will the site make use of previously developed land/ buildings? Will the site be on Green Belt land?	
	SA rating	Comments
Previously developed land	0	Site comprises a mix of buildings and car park
Green Belt	0	Site is not in the Green Belt

SA Objective	SA Objective 4: To meet local housing needs by ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent affordable home	
Decision-making criteria	Will the site provide significant quantities of net new housing? Will it improve the availability of decent affordable housing?	
	SA rating	Comments
Housing provision	++	Site allocated for at least 450 homes.
Affordable housing provision	+	Site expected to be policy compliant in terms of affordable housing delivery (40%)

SA Objective	SA Objective 5: To reduce poverty, social exclusion, and health inequalities	
Decision-making criteria	Will it improve opportunities for people in the most deprived areas?	
	SA rating	Comments
Regeneration areas	0	The site is not in a Regeneration Area

SA Objective	SA Objective 6: To provide accessible essential services and facilities	
Decision-making criteria	Will it increase the provision of essential services and facilities?	
	SA rating	Comments
Community facilities	I	The site allocation suggests leisure and community uses as potential complementary uses that could be provided on-site but precise nature will depend on implementation.

See also SA Objective 8

SA Objective	SA Objective 7: To provide adequate green and blue infrastructure, leisure and recreation opportunities and make these readily accessible for all; and to conserve and enhance Oxford's biodiversity	
Decision-making criteria	Will it increase the provision of public open space? Will it protect and enhance existing flora, fauna and habitats?	
	SA rating	Comments
Public open space	I	Site likely to deliver public open space but given mixed use nature, precise levels may depend on implementation.
Ecology and biodiversity	+	<p>Previous ecological assessments and aerial imagery indicate the site does not contain any priority habitats or habitats of high distinctiveness. The site is dominated by developed land or cleared ground, with areas of grassland, scrub, scattered trees, and hedgerow / tree lines. Potential protected species constraints include roosting bats, foraging and commuting bats, nesting birds, reptiles, and badgers. The main constraint is the River Thames which runs along the site boundary. The river corridor should be protected and enhanced through development proposals. The area known as 'Oxpens Meadow' offers an opportunity to deliver significant ecological enhancement if management can be diversified.</p> <p>If existing trees are removed new trees should be planted to fully mitigate the impact on tree canopy cover green infrastructure in the area. New tree planting should be appropriate to ensure that the predicted tree canopy cover (% site area) following development (25 years) delivers policy and GI TAN expectations i.e., at least no net loss. Opportunities exist to plant new trees to improve connectivity within GI network.</p>

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SA Objective	SA objective 8: To reduce traffic and associated air pollution by improving travel choice, shortening journeys and reducing the need to travel by car/ lorry (also SA objective 1: To achieve the city's ambition to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2040)	
Decision-making criteria	Will it encourage walking cycling and use of public transport? Is the site within an Air Quality Management Area?	
	SA rating	Comments
Sustainable transport links (bus stop)	+	The nearest bus stop is only 4 minutes away, and there are frequent buses serving the Westgate shopping centre
Sustainable transport links (rail station)	+	This site lies about 800m from Oxford Station
Primary schools	-	The site lies more than 800m from the nearest Primary School
Secondary schools	-	The site lies more than 800m from the nearest Secondary School
GP surgeries	-	The site lies more than 800m from the nearest GP surgery
Post office	-	The site lies more than 800m from the nearest post office
Air quality	- -	The site lies within an AQMA

SA Objective	SA Objective 9: To achieve water quality targets and manage water resources	
Decision-making criteria	Does the site contain, or is it near, a water body?	
	SA rating	Comments
Water	-	The site is within 30m of the Thames

SA Objective	SA Objective 10: To promote good urban design through the protection and enhancement of the historic environment and heritage assets while respecting local character and context and promoting innovation.	
Decision-making criteria	Does the site contain any historical, or archaeological features?	
	SA rating	Comments
Archaeology	-	Site lies within the City Centre Archeological Area where remains are likely to be found
Conservation Areas & Register of Parks and Gardens (RPG)	0	Site does not lie within a Conservation Area or RPG
Listed Buildings	0	Site does not contain any Listed Buildings

View Cones	-	Site lies with a view cone
High Buildings Area	-	Site lies with a high buildings area

SA Objective	SA Objective 11: To achieve sustainable inclusive economic growth, including the development and expansion of a diverse and knowledge-based economy and the culture/leisure/ visitor sector	
Decision-making criteria	Will it support key sectors that drive economic growth? Will it increase the quantity and quality of employment opportunities?	
	SA rating	Comments
Support the knowledge-based economy	+	Site identified for mixed-use development which would include research / office space focused on the knowledge economy, so likely to create increase in jobs for the knowledge economy.
Support diversification or affordable workspace	+	Site has potential to delivery affordable workspace.

Other constraints which could affect suitability of site for development	
Can access for vehicles be achieved?	Yes, although given city centre location car parking likely to be strictly limited.
Can walking and cycling connections with the surrounding area be achieved?	Yes, but would significantly benefit from new Oxpens bridge providing link for Grandpont and Osney Mead to the City centre and Station.
Does the site include any significant physical features such as trees, rivers/streams or changes in ground level?	<p>The site includes Oxpens Meadow, which comprises a Field in Trust, which excludes development. The site provides the opportunity to make greater use of its frontage with the Thames.</p> <p>Site contains significant existing trees including along the river banks, a row of cedars next to the ice rink building and scattered alder trees in the car park which are important to public amenity in the area and will provide valuable ecosystem services. Existing trees will influence developable area of the site and its capacity. The quality of all existing trees should be assessed against the criteria in table 1 of BS5837:2012 (or its latest iteration). High quality trees must be retained unless there is a robust over-riding policy-based justification. Moderate and low-quality trees should be retained where it is feasible to do so. Opportunities exist to plant new trees to benefit public amenity in the area and to enhance the street scene along Oxpens Road.</p>

Are land contamination issues likely?	Yes. Site used to contain a petrol station so has potential for contamination.
Does the site adjoin a sensitive land use? Is there an adjoining land use that may cause disturbance or environmental issues such as noise or smells?	The site is not too far from the railway line, which does generate some noise through the regular passing of trains.

Stage 2 conclusion
<p>There are no significant conflicts with national policy or environmental or physical constraints to the development of this site.</p> <p>The site is located within the City Council's locally designated High Buildings Area, and within a view cone and is also within an area of archaeological potential. While not insurmountable, design sensitivity will be required.</p> <p>The site can therefore progress to stage 3.</p>

Stage 3 assessment – Qualitative assessment of deliverability and consideration of potential sustainability impacts. Identification of preferred options

Is there confirmed landowner intention to develop	An outline planning application has been submitted covering a large portion of the site. The outline application is for up to 234 residential units, 258 units of student accommodation, up to 90,974m ² of commercial floorspace (including a hotel, ground floor retail units and lab space for R&D. At the time of writing, this application (22/02954/OUT) was being considered by the Council alongside an application for detailed enabling works (22/02955/FUL).
Does the landowner specify types of development	Mix of uses including residential, student accommodation and commercial (class E) floorspace and hotel.

Stage 3 conclusion
Consider further for allocation for a mixed-use development including residential, student accommodation, commercial (class E) floorspace and hotel.