



Oxford's Economy

*(including strategy
for employment
sites and
assessment of
employment land
supply)*

**Oxford Local Plan
2040**

**BACKGROUND
PAPER 6a**

Local Plan 2040 Background Paper: 6a Oxford's Economy

This background paper addresses Oxford's economy and discusses the overall employment strategy for the plan. It also sets out the city's employment land needs and how these will be met over the plan period.

SA Objective 12: *To achieve sustainable inclusive economic growth, including the development and expansion of a diverse and knowledge-based economy and the culture/leisure/visitor sector*

SEA theme: *Population, Material Assets*

1. Introduction

1.1 This background paper starts with a review of the national, regional and local policy framework in relation to employment and the economy. It then moves on to examine the current situation in Oxford and considers the likely future without the plan. .

1.2 It includes a discussion about how Oxford is meeting its employment needs through a locational strategy which seeks to make the best use of existing employment sites and through restricting additional employment opportunities to these well-performing existing sites and to the city's most inherently sustainable locations. The background paper also describes the floorspace position for employment land in the city, setting out where a surplus and shortfall exists and how the plan seeks to address these.

2. Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Framework

2.1 The NPPF sets out a requirement for a clear economic vision and strategy, which positively encourages sustainable economic growth and is responsive to Local Industrial Strategies and local economic development and regeneration policies. It also sets out that Local Plans should develop policies that help to create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt to meet anticipated needs over the Plan period.

2.2 The NPPF sets out a key economic objective which requires policies 'to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy'. This aims to ensure 'that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity.' Planning policies are also required to 'create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt' and to positively respond to the 'need to support economic growth and productivity'.

2.3 The NPPF highlights the importance of meeting the specific locational requirements of networks and clusters including the knowledge and data driven sectors, creative or high technology industries. National advice also requires a policy approach that 'should allow each

area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses’, and address ‘the challenges of the future’. This is considered to be particularly important where ‘Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation’ and in ‘areas of productivity’ which should ‘capitalise on their performance and potential.’

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

2.4 The PPG includes guidance about how local authorities should prepare and maintain an evidence base regarding the economic needs of their area. In working out the business needs for an area, consideration should be given to a range of factors including evidence of market demand; wider market signals relating to economic growth, diversification and innovation; the existing stock of land for employment uses and the recent pattern of employment land supply and losses. It also sets out a method for assessing economic land availability.

Oxford Cambridge Pan-Regional Partnership

2.5 In January 2023, the Government confirmed support for the establishment of an Oxford to Cambridge Pan Regional Partnership following a proposal by leaders from local councils, local enterprise partnerships, the Arc Universities Group and the area’s transport body – England’s Economic Heartland. The Government backing for the partnership unlocks access to up to £2.5m of funding to support priorities to deliver sustainable growth and environmental enhancements across the region.

2.6 The Partnership’s role is to champion the region as a world leader of innovation and business, acting to achieve environmentally sustainable and inclusive growth. It aims to strengthen cross-boundary collaboration among its partners to focus on tackling the issues that matter to the people who live and work in the region.

PwC Good Growth Cities Index 2023

2.7 PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) produce an annual Good Growth for Cities Index. The most recent version of this Index, published in May 2023, which compares 50 UK cities using a number of different metrics, saw Oxford ranked as the top performing city, as it has been since 2017. Oxford outperforms the UK average on jobs, income, life expectancy, skills, owner-occupier rates, the environment and safety.

2.8 As well as recognising the city's strengths, the report also highlighted challenges for Oxford which “threaten to constrain economic growth and wellbeing going forward”. These challenges include the fact that Oxford is one of the most unaffordable cities, with similar housing, inequality and social mobility issues to London. Other challenges include the compact nature of the city, with limited physical space for new housing, as well as transport congestion issues.

Fast Growth Cities – 2021 and Beyond – Centre for Cities

2.9 The Fast Growth Cities Report 2021 provides an update to the Centre for Cities 2016 report. The cities that make up the Fast Growth Cities group (comprised of Oxford, Cambridge, Milton Keynes, Norwich, Peterborough and Swindon) are considered to be some

of the most successful and innovative places in the UK. The Fast Growth Cities Report focuses on six key areas:

- Labour markets, skills and education;
- Businesses and growth;
- High Streets and city centres;
- Housing and planning;
- Transport; and
- The economic impact of the pandemic.

2.10 The report recognises that the Fast Growth Cities group contains some of the UK's most successful cities, many of which (including Oxford) have a significant impact beyond their boundaries.

Oxfordshire's Innovation Engine 2023 – Advanced Oxford

2.11 Oxfordshire's Innovation Engine 2023 reassesses the Oxfordshire's Science and technology ecosystem providing an update from the 2013 Innovation Engine Report – Realising the Growth Potential. The report looks forward, but also back over the past decade to see whether the growth potential has been achieved. The report recognises that despite the challenges associated with collecting reliable economic performance data that Oxfordshire appears to have a thriving and diverse innovation ecosystem. It sets out that while the region's knowledge economy has grown, high and medium-tech manufacturing has declined (although this may be more down to a more mature ecosystem).

2.12 There is a growing stock of innovation space with many new developments in the pipeline which will add much needed capacity into the system in the next five years. Housing and transport continue to be key challenges and need to be addressed. Other infrastructure needs investment too, particularly data connectivity and supply of power.

2.13 The report makes six recommendations if Oxford's innovation ecosystem is to continue to flourish, strengthen and play a pivotal role in making the UK a beacon for science, technology and innovation:

- Strengthen leadership across the region in relation to innovation;
- The City Council and County Council need to work together to develop a much-needed future-looking transport system which is Oxfordshire wide, not just focused on the city of Oxford;
- Grow and diversify the number of risk capital investors operating within the region;
- Develop a new, clear strategy, with collective buy-in, for inward investment into the region. Different players within the ecosystem need to work together to ensure that Oxfordshire is open, coherent and can respond to potential investors;
- Join up nodes of innovation across the region and help internal and external stakeholders to navigate the landscape through better defined pathways and connectors; and
- Develop a suite of communication tools and assets, tailored to the needs of different audiences, which can be used by all players, to tell Oxfordshire's innovation story.

Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP)

2.14 Oxfordshire's wider economic vision and strategy are contained within several documents produced by the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP). These include the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), Local Industrial Strategy (LIS), and its supporting Local Investment Plan (LIP). The SEP was first produced in 2014 and was refreshed in 2016. OxLEP are in the process of developing a refreshed SEP which will drive productivity, prosperity and wealth for all whilst accelerating Oxfordshire's transition to net-zero. At the time of writing the refreshed Strategic Economic Plan 2023 was in preparation and is due to report later in 2023. The LIS was published in July 2019 and as such represented the county's pre-covid growth ambitions to double Oxfordshire's economy from £23bn in 2019 to £46bn in 2040. Following the pandemic, OxLEP produced an Economic Recovery Plan (ERP) in December 2020. The main aim of the ERP was to have a near term focus covering an immediate response and recovery period of 24 months. One of the "overall messages" coming out of the ERP was that:

A strong economic base in industries less impacted by COVID-19 restrictions means that Oxfordshire's economy has been more resilient to the Pandemic than most areas of the UK. Oxfordshire's strength in Professional, Scientific and Technical Services and high-value Manufacturing has mean that impacts have been limited to a degree by the ability to work flexibly and by continued demand for high-quality products. Reflecting the resilience of the County's economy, the short-run impact of COVID-19 is expected to be less pronounced in Oxfordshire, whilst Oxfordshire's recovery will also outperform the UK average, resulting in a smaller relative fall in 'lost growth'.¹

Oxford City Council Economic Strategy 2022-32

2.15 Oxford's Economic Strategy seeks to establish a new standard for economic inclusion in the city, underpinned by the strength of an impactful global city, evolving in a way which recognises environmental limits and harnesses the opportunity of a zero carbon economy.

2.16 The Economic Strategy highlights Oxford's significant specialisms as:

- Health and Life Sciences; Technology and Digital; Creative Production; Green and Low Carbon; Visitor Economy; and Social Enterprises and co-operative businesses

2.17 Oxford's Economic Strategy recognises that Oxford's economy has a positive global impact and as a hub of education and knowledge, it has a clear purpose to address many of societies' challenges through science and technology. Oxford City plays a key role developing research and incubating early-stage companies. It is one of Oxfordshire's most sustainable locations to locate employment, due to its critical mass, and connectivity to transport and research assets. It recognises Oxford's physical capacity constraints, and the need to deliver commercial floorspace in such a way that does not compromise wider placemaking, zero carbon and green and sustainability objectives.

¹ <https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/sites/default/files/uploads/Oxfordshire%20ERP%20-%20Economic%20Baseline%20Assessment%20141220.pdf>

2.18 The City’s ambition is to ensure that the anticipated growth is of good quality, in the right location, supported by appropriate infrastructure and contributes to an inclusive economy.

Oxford City Centre Action Plan 2021-2030

2.19 The City Centre Action Plan (CCAP) sets out four workstreams, each intended to focus on a different thematic area of work. Each workstream is defined by a series of objectives, under which projects are identified. The four workstreams are:

- Connectivity and access:
 - o To be delivered by limiting private vehicles, reducing conflict and congestion and creating spaces for buses, bikes and people;
- Public realm and animation:
 - o To be delivered by improving the public realm and providing events and experiences to animate it and boost dwell times;
- Getting the mix right:
 - o To be delivered by building on Oxford’s world-class innovative and creative spirit, enhancing the city centre as a place to live, start and grow a business, visit, and play; and
- Get the basics right:
 - o To be delivered by creating an inclusive, safe, and attractive city centre that mediates and promotes a diverse range of activities and uses.

2.20 The City Centre Action Plan also includes a series of objectives under each workstream. Not all of these can be directly influenced by the Local Plan 2040 as some need to be undertaken in partnership with colleagues, for instance, at the County Council.

Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA)

2.21 Following the collapse of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 in summer 2022, the City Council, working together with Cherwell District Council, decided to jointly commission new evidence on housing and employment need. This evidence was to support the Oxford Local Plan 2040 and is called the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment² (HENA). It replaced the previous evidence on housing and employment need – the Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment (OGNA). The OGNA was produced to support the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. This new evidence - the HENA - was consulted on in early 2023 as part of a supplementary Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation to the Oxford Local Plan 2040.

2.22 The Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA) provides “*an integrated evidence base to help identify the appropriate level and distributions of housing and employment over the period to 2040*”. It includes the provision of a detailed, up-to-date

² Housing and Economic Needs Assessment, Icen/ Cambridge Econometrics, (2022) 2022
https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/8683/housing_and_economic_needs_assessment_hena_-_final_report_2022

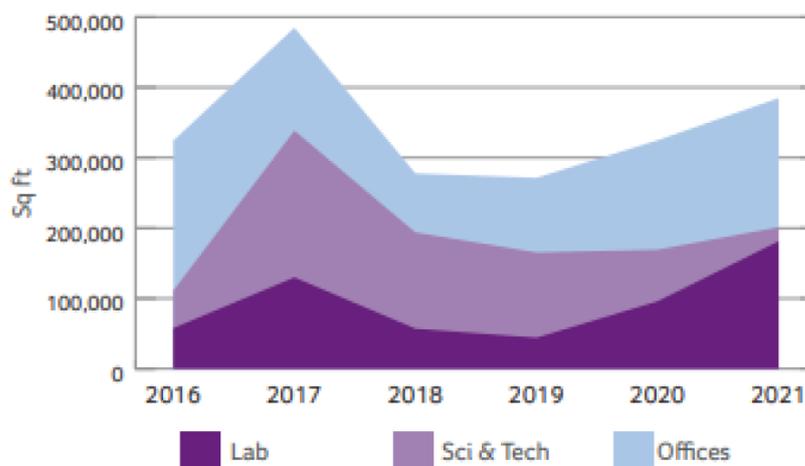
And Errata Note (June 2023) https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/8682/hena_errata_note_-_23_june_2023

commentary on Oxfordshire’s employment market (both for office and industrial market trends) and provides an updated assessment of employment land needs.

Office Trends (including R&D)

2.23 The HENA considers that the trend for the wider office market is one of occupiers seeking to consolidate (and reduce) their office space on lease events as home working has reduced the scale of overall physical space needs. The market has seen a number of larger corporate occupiers downsize including Oxfam, British Gas and a number of solicitors and accountancy firms – again influenced by a shift towards more flexible working patterns. The mainstream market is seeing a “flight to quality” and VSL’s 2021 market report identified 4 major professional service occupiers that reduced their floorspace by 40-60% in 2021. Whereas demand for lab/ R&D space in Oxfordshire is reported as “strong with requirements for incubator space, grow on space and HQ facilities”.

2.24 The report describes a “two-speed” market highlighting the different demands for laboratory/ R&D space versus the wider office market. It recognises that the market is “increasingly oriented towards lab and other R&D spaces” with lab lettings having risen notably since 2019. In 2021, lab lettings accounted for 50% of all take-up based on VSL’s 2021 Market Report. Figure 1 shows the composition of take-up along the A34 corridor.



Source: VSL Oxfordshire Commercial Property Market Update 2021

Figure 1 – composition of take-up along the A34 corridor

2.25 The HENA considers that the market for laboratory space is strong in Oxfordshire. This is due to the close established partnership network between the Universities and industry. Oxford University was recently ranked 1st of universities in the UK, and globally³ and it has a global brand and significant research depth. This research depth generates volumes of spin-out companies through the successful commercialisation of academic innovation. Of spin-outs from UK universities over the 1998-2008 decade, Oxford University accounted for 16% ranking it number 1 and generating a total value of £6.4billion.

³ <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/university-oxford>

2.26 Supporting this entrepreneurial ecosystem is Oxford Science Enterprises (OSE) which since its foundation in 2015 has invested £0.5billion and provided access to start-up space focused on three high-growth sectors – life sciences, health tech, and deep tech. There is also a strong investment market, with commercial investment volumes reaching £805million in 2021, as reported by Savills. These inward investments result from businesses’ desire to co-locate with world-class academic institutions. The HENA cites recent examples of lab space being delivered in Oxfordshire, including OxBox, Oxford Biomedica’s new 84,000 sq.ft⁴ facility in life sciences, which opened in January 2021 and numerous others in the pipeline.

2.27 The HENA reported that strong recent demand has led to a position where lab space was in short supply at the start of 2022. VSL reported unsatisfied demand for between 400,000-600,000 sq.ft⁵, whereas Savills Spotlight on Oxford’s Offices and Laboratories (March 2022) estimates today’s occupier requirements is for a couple of million square feet⁶ from companies looking to get into the Oxford market⁷.

2.28 The HENA reports that Savills describe the situation as follows:

What is clear, as seen in other markets across the UK, is the availability of Grade A office and laboratory space, which is severely limited in Oxford in the city centre and key ring road locations. The development pipeline for this year and 2023 is very low. The strength of the science sector, driven by the global reputation of the academic institutions, as well as the city’s contribution to the global pandemic, has ensured the city is a top target location for companies, of all sizes, working within the many areas of human health.⁸

2.29 The HENA recognises the role of key development sites in the city including the Oxford Business Park (now ARC Oxford), Oxford Science Park and Oxford North as being important for the future development of the office/ lab market with the city.

Industrial Market Trends

2.30 The HENA acknowledges that vacancy rates in the wider industrial market are low and are forecast to decline in the medium term, suggesting high demand and low levels of supply will continue. Floorspace supply is most constrained in Cherwell, Oxford and South Oxfordshire.

2.31 Across Oxfordshire 45% of leasing activity is for space over 10,000sqm (most of which is strategic logistics). However, the Oxford market has no leasing greater than 10,000sqm. The Oxford market is therefore characterised by a prominence of small-to medium-sized leases. The HENA recognises that there are several key development sites for commercial industrial space at various locations across the county.

⁴ 84,000 square feet is approximately equivalent to 7,800sqm

⁵ 400,000-600,000 square feet is approximately 37,000-55,000sqm

⁶ A couple of million (e.g., 2million square feet) is approximately 186,000sqm

⁷ Savills Spotlight: Oxford Offices and Laboratories, March 2022

⁸ Savills Spotlight: Oxford Offices and Laboratories, March 2022

Employment Need

2.32 The HENA also addressed employment land needs in Oxford. A HENA Addendum Note clarified that Oxford city's employment floorspace need is between 269,200sqm – 348,870sqm. Following the publication of the main HENA Report (2022) an Errata Note was issued by the authors (Iceni) to update selected tables that related to employment floorspace needs.

2.33 The original HENA had erroneously added floorspace figures for Cherwell (Table 8.17) to the floorspace needs for Oxford for warehousing. Correcting for this table, Table 1 below shows the appropriate figures for total floorspace need in Oxford city by employment use for the period 2021-40.

Scenario	Offices	R&D	Industry	Warehousing	Total
Oxford - Low	68,690	106,110	39,950	54,450	269,200
Oxford – High	82,810	166,230	39,950	59,880	348,870

Table 1: Total Employment Floorspace Needs 2021-2040 (replacing figures in Table 8.18) sqm

2.34 There are potential downside risks to economic growth, and it remains possible that macro-economic events and funding constraints may slow projects down or lead to some not progressing. Given the current economic uncertainties, the HENA has taken a cautious approach to economic forecasting.

2022 Interim Employment Land Needs Assessment Update

2.35 In 2022 Lichfields produced an Employment Land Needs Assessment Update Interim Report (the 2022 Interim ELNA) which was based on the previous Oxfordshire growth need assessment work which was replaced by the HENA following the collapse of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. The 2022 Interim ELNA Report suggested that Oxford city's employment land need should be 296,000sqm. This is within the range identified by the HENA in Table 1 above. It also provided a supply position but that has subsequently been updated by work published in Appendix 1 of this background paper.

Employment Land Supply

2.36 Oxford City Council has undertaken a review employment land supply in the city using a several sources. These included a detailed review of planning permissions which had been granted since the start of the plan period (i.e., from March 2020). It also looked at the potential supply from live planning applications. The final source of supply came from discussions with landowners about their future ambitions for their land.

2.37 Appendix 1 to this Background Paper, sets out the overall known supply position for Oxford. Table A1 shows is that there is more than sufficient employment land available to meet the identified employment land needs within the city during the plan period to 2040. Table A2 shows those sites where the supply position is not known at the present time.

2.38 Table A3 provides a high-level analysis of the employment land supply position in Oxford. This table looks broadly at whether the need for different types of employment land is being met in the city. What this table shows is that there is a surplus of potential supply for office/ R&D floorspace and a potential shortage of industrial/ warehousing land available to

meet the need identified in the HENA within the plan period. It is worth noting that some of the additional identified supply referred to in Table 1a is highly sensitive to emerging masterplan assumptions and it is possible that not all this capacity may necessarily be delivered within the plan period. This is because it is dependent upon the phasing of individual development proposals.

2.39 Table A4a of Appendix 1 looks at those sites allocated in the plan where employment is a primary use in the allocation, or where the sites are delivering significant employment floorspace within the plan period. This table shows the availability of these sites within the plan period. Table A4b looks at those sites allocated in the plan where employment uses are mentioned in the policy as, for instance a complementary or optional supporting use. This table shows the availability of these sites within the plan period.

Strategic objectives from the Local Plan 2040

2.40 Oxford will be a fair and prosperous city with a globally important role in learning, knowledge and innovation

- We continue to build on the city's strengths in knowledge, healthcare and innovation.
- We continue to support the city's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and build resilience to future pandemics and economic challenges/shocks.
- There are ongoing opportunities for education, learning and skills development.

3. Current situation

National Industrial Strategy/ Build Back Better/ Central Government Growth Ambitions

3.1 The NPPF gives a clear steer towards supporting economic growth through planning policies and it is clear significant weight should be placed on the need to support sustainable economic growth and productivity. The Government considers that there are clear links between innovation and productivity, which is why the Government's 2017 Industrial Strategy committed to spending 2.4% of GDP on Research & Development Uses (R&D) by 2027 (and 3% thereafter).

3.2 The Government published a Research & Development Roadmap in July 2020, detailing how it will enhance the UK's science, research and innovation capabilities and publish several detailed strategies. In March 2021, a policy paper *Build Back Better: our plan for growth*, which replaced the 2017 Industrial Strategy and set out the Government's plan to support economic growth through "significant investment in infrastructure, skills and innovation". In order to reach the R&D investment target, the Government recognised that a significant increase in both public and private investment in R&D would be required.

3.3 A financial commitment has been made to increase public investment in R&D (both by the Chancellor in the Autumn Statement (November 2022) and the Prime Minister in

January 2023). The commitment is to increase “public funding in R&D to £20bn to enhance our world leading strengths in AI, life sciences, quantum, fintech and green technology”.⁹

3.4 *Build Back Better (BBB)*¹⁰ recognised that the UK is one of the best places in the world for life sciences stating, “over many decades the UK has established clusters of the most advanced scientific research facilities anywhere in the world, made possible by top class universities including in Oxford...”

3.5 *BBB* sets out how increased investment in R&D is directly linked to innovation which in turn drives productivity and states that innovation is key to economic growth, and firms that consistently invest in R&D are more productive than those which don’t. *BBB* also includes recognition of the development of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine. This recognition pays tribute to the fact that the “University of Oxford’s Jenner Institute and Oxford Vaccine Group have been at the forefront of scientific endeavour to develop vaccines for diseases of major global importance for more than 30 years”.¹¹

3.6 *BBB* refers to the importance of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc (now the Pan-Regional Partnership), where a Spatial Framework has been developed which will set ‘the long-term, holistic strategy for infrastructure investment to support jobs, unlock clean growth, and achieve net zero alongside environmental sustainability; cultivating the Arc’s potential to become a global innovation powerhouse.’ The Government has now confirmed the “funding for the next stage of East West Rail, which will connect communities and create jobs”.

3.7 The Spring Budget 2023¹² highlighted that boosting the supply of commercial development, in particular lab space, is key to supporting R&D needs and driving investment into high value industries across England, such as the life sciences and advanced manufacturing sectors in the Oxford-Cambridge corridor.

Importance of Oxford to the national economy

3.8 Oxford is home to around 4,950 active businesses¹³, collectively employing approximately 117,000 people in full-time work¹⁴. The city is home to the highest employment rate in the county of 128,000 jobs. Oxford’s importance as an employment location is clearly demonstrated by its job density ratio (jobs to residents aged 16-64) of 1.10 (2021), which is above the South-East (0.85) and Great Britain (0.85). In 2019 it was estimated that Oxford contributes £6.8bn to the national economy annually.

3.9 The University of Oxford generates more spin-outs than any other university in the country having created 205 spin-outs since 2011, the University celebrated the creation of its

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-speech-on-making-2023-the-first-year-of-a-new-and-better-future-4-january-2023>

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/build-back-better-our-plan-for-growth>

¹¹ <https://www.research.ox.ac.uk/area/coronavirus-research/vaccine>

¹²

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1142902/Web_accessible_Budget_2023.pdf

¹³ Census 2021

¹⁴ Employee Jobs, <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157324/>

300th company creation in 2023¹⁵. Research and development, (R&D) is one of the current growth sectors in Oxford linked directly to the Universities and hospitals. The Covid-19 Pandemic and the ground-breaking research on vaccines with the development of the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine has helped to highlight Oxford's global importance and its contribution to both the national and local economy. The strong links between healthcare in practice and research are critical.

3.10 Research by the Centre of Cities in 2021 showed the importance of the fast-growing cities¹⁶, such as Oxford, and the need to build on their respective strengths as a crucial means of achieving future growth. Innovation systems, such as those established within the city comprise business dynamics, skilled labour and innovative outputs such as patents which together provide the platform for delivering economic growth. The 2021 study confirmed that innovative places, such as Oxford, are likely to be the first places to benefit from the ongoing change in the economy, since they are directly involved in the development of solutions or have the right dynamics to adapt their business models.

3.11 Oxford is therefore well placed to help to drive forward national economic growth through the ground-breaking research and development undertaken within the city, which benefits from its strong links between the University of Oxford and the hospitals together with key related commercial firms that are established in the city.

3.12 In 2023, the importance of "Innovation Hotspots" was highlighted by the Centre for Cities in a separate report¹⁷. Hotspot areas, such as Oxford, involve the clustering of businesses and cutting-edge industries. These areas have been more productive and have grown faster since the financial crisis than those areas that do not benefit from clustering.

3.13 The Labour Market profile for Oxford indicates that since it peaked in 2018 at 144,000, the number of jobs in Oxford has been reducing. It fell most rapidly between 2019 and 2020, where the number of jobs in the city reduced by 9,000 from 142,000 to 133,000. The most recent figures (2022) suggest that there are now 128,000 jobs based in Oxford¹⁸.

Availability of broadband

3.14 Good broadband connections are essential for many highly skilled jobs. Oxford is well-covered by ultrafast broadband connections.

Feedback from previous consultations

3.15 Feedback was received from a number of stakeholders as part of the Preferred Options consultation. Written responses were received from a wide variety of organisations, some of which had polarised views in relation to key issues.

3.16 Respondents included the two Universities, Oxford colleges and the Science Park and ARC Oxford (formerly known as the Business Park). There were also responses from the

¹⁵ <https://www.ox.ac.uk/news/2023-05-23-oxford-retains-top-spot-spinouts>

¹⁶ <https://www.centreforcities.org/publication/fast-growth-cities-2021-and-beyond/>

¹⁷ <https://www.centreforcities.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Innovation-hotspots-September-2023.pdf>

¹⁸ <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157324/report.aspx?town=oxford#tabjobs>

neighbouring Oxfordshire district councils, the Green Party, the CPRE as well as organisations such as POETS and Need not Greed Oxfordshire.

3.17 Some stakeholders considered that that it was vital to meet the city's employment land needs within Oxford. Others considered that employment-generating uses should be supported throughout the city and not simply restricted to the city's existing employment site network, while certain respondents that housing should be considered over employment as they considered that as more office staff were working from home, there was less need for additional employment floorspace.

3.18 Some respondents considered that it was important that the plan followed a higher economic growth scenario. These respondents expressed concern that if a higher economic growth scenario was not followed then it would be difficult to deliver sufficient floorspace to enable Oxford and Oxfordshire to remain a global economic centre.

3.19 Feedback was also received from a number of stakeholders as part of a second Regulation 18 consultation (Reg. 18 Part 2) which took place in early 2023. The purpose of the Reg. 18 Part 2 consultation was to seek views on the City Council's updated housing and economic needs evidence – the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA), following the collapse of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (and its supporting evidence base). A consultation report was published in August 2023 which summarised comments made in response to this consultation.

3.20 The comments received showed that either the respondents were in support of a lower growth scenario (based on the standard method) or they were in support of one of the employment-led scenarios (the Cambridge Econometrics Baseline (CE Baseline) Scenario, or the Economic Development Led (ED-Led) Scenario), both of which resulted in a higher level of growth than the Government's standard method. The City Council's preferred scenario was the CE Baseline Scenario which resulted in an annualised housing need of 1,322 dwellings per year.

3.21 Some respondents considered that the Council's preferred scenario would fail to provide enough homes to realise the economic growth ambition articulated by the ED-Led scenario and others wanted further explanation as to why the ED-Led scenario had been discounted. Some even considered that abandoning the realistic ED-Led scenario was "unnecessarily pessimistic and a disproportionate response" suggesting that an intermediate position between the CE Baseline and ED-Led scenarios would have been more appropriate.

3.22 Responses in support of the employment-led scenarios were countered by respondents in support of using the standard method to calculate housing and employment need. Some respondents did not consider that there were 'exceptional circumstances' to justify a departure away from the standard method, whereas others consider that the employment-led scenarios (particularly the ED-Led scenario) were flawed for a variety of reasons including methodological and otherwise.

4. Likely trends without a new local plan

4.1 In the absence of a plan, the importance of the role that Oxford plays to the national economy would continue. This is because of the close ties between research and development (in particular, those associated with the University of Oxford and the hospitals) and the spin-out companies that are generated due to this close relationship. These innovations through research and development, are an essential part of Oxford's economy both locally and nationally.

4.2 The new Local Plan provides an opportunity to ensure that sites allocated for employment uses make the best use of land and contribute to wider plan objectives such as sustainable travel, zero-carbon, and enabling the co-ordinated delivery of infrastructure to help mitigate the impacts of development. Without the plan, there is less certainty that these objectives would be met and as such the city would be unlikely to grow to meet its full potential.

4.3 Despite this, Oxford would be likely to continue to attract direct investment projects. External uncertainties created by the Covid-19 pandemic, the impacts of Brexit and the war in Ukraine would remain with the consequential impact on supply chains.

4.4 Without a new plan in place, given the significant demand for new employment floorspace in the city, there is a risk that sites allocated for other uses (e.g., housing) may come under pressure to be developed for employment uses.

4.5 In the absence of a Local Plan for the city, it is likely that Oxford's key sectors (education and health) would continue to be linked with innovative research and development however the comprehensive redevelopment and regeneration of certain key sites may prove more difficult.

4.6 Without a Local Plan, the benefits of this economic growth may not be felt by all. For instance, it is less likely that Oxford's economy would become as inclusive as it might with the plan's policies in place. This is because it is likely that there would be less opportunities for local people to improve their skills and training and it would also be likely that there would be less prospects for SMEs and start-ups to find affordable workspaces in the city.

5. Developing the Employment Strategy: Striking a balance between space for economic uses, housing and supporting infrastructure

Future employment land needs

5.1 It is well documented that there is a shortage of land in Oxford and a historically there has been a strong demand for housing. More recently, demand for certain types of employment land have increased and this has put increased pressure on the limited available land in the city.

5.2 The continued accelerated growth of science and technology has been putting pressure on the city's traditional office stock and although this sector has a lower employment density than traditional offices, there has been an increased demand for this R&D/ lab-based floorspace. There is also increased potential for the repurposing of vacant office and retail floor space within the city and district centres, with the dual purpose of bringing activity back to such spaces as well as driving innovation and economic growth.

5.3 The Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA, Icení and Cambridge Econometrics, 2022) considers future needs for employment land and floorspace to 2040. It addresses the need for office, land/R&D, industrial and warehouse/distribution uses. Due to the unique nature of Oxford's economy, it is likely that other sectors such as higher education and health that do not occupy employment space in conventional terms will also influence the demand and supply of employment space in the city.

5.4 Whilst Oxford has significant provision of these other employment types, which do have their own needs, they are not the focus of the assessment of employment need as these uses are not generally considered to be employment-generating uses (i.e., employment within Use Classes E(g), B2 or B8). The main need, on key NHS or university owned and occupied sites, is linked to the dominant land use or landowner and these sites are not considered to make up the supply of employment land. These other sectors, while they do require physical space in the city, are often "self-sufficient", using their own land for their own purposes (rather than for more widely commercial purposes).

5.5 Whilst the job forecast scenarios in the HENA did include reference to these sectors, the floorspace need identified *only* related to employment uses in Use Classes E(g), B2 and B8. There is an additional potential land need for the academic and health sectors however this will be in addition to the floorspace need identified in the HENA. Given Oxford's limited land availability, any increased floorspace for these sectors is likely to be delivered on sites already in existing academic/ health ownership through an approach of intensification and modernisation.

5.6 Econometric forecasts take account of differences in expected economic performance moving forward relative to the past. However, a detailed model is required to relate net forecasts to use classes and from that to estimate gross floorspace and land requirements. The HENA takes the following approach to assessing the need for employment floorspace in

the city over the plan period. Consideration has been given to the impacts of trends in home working, especially in light of changes since the Covid-19 pandemic began:

- Firstly, it considers net floorspace changes, drawing on a range of different models – the econometric forecasts (for labour demand); trends in net changes in employment floorspace; trends in net absorption (i.e. in occupied floorspace); and net completions/deliveries;
- Secondly, it considers net to gross relationships – considering what adjustments should be applied to take account of losses, and issues around replacement demand;
- Thirdly, it identifies what safety margin or flexibility is necessary to provide a choice of sites, recognising that businesses’ floorspace needs are not homogenous, and to provide some flexibility for delivery slippage/ non-delivery of sites.

5.7 The HENA calculates a need for employment floorspace in a range of between 269,200-348,870sqm.

Employment Land Supply

5.8 Table A1 of Appendix 1 sets out the known supply position for employment floorspace likely to come forward within the plan period. What this shows is that there is 170,999sqm of consented floorspace, while live permissions account for a further 183,839sqm of employment floorspace. Taken together there is currently sufficient employment floorspace within the planning system to deliver the HENA’s ‘high’ growth scenario which was derived from the Economic Development led ‘employment-based’ jobs forecasts.

Office/ R&D Uses

5.8 Table A3 of Appendix 1 shows that there is a surplus of supply of office/ R&D floorspace when compared to the employment land needs identified in the HENA. Table A1 provides a breakdown of that supply. Table A1 shows that 475,526sqm¹⁹ (78% of identified supply) is proposed to come forward on existing Category 1 and 2 employment sites. This aligns with the city’s employment strategy, which does not allocate new land for employment uses and supports the intensification and modernisation of existing employment sites.

5.9 Oxford’s West End and the Botley Road Retail Park are identified in an Area of Focus in the Oxford Local Plan 2040. Table A1 of Appendix 1 shows that there are a number of sites proposing employment floorspace (assumed to be office/ R&D floorspace) in this city centre location. It is worth noting that some of the proposals are live planning applications on sites already within Use Class E. Without wishing to prejudice these applications, it is worth noting that a degree of flexibility exists where a change of use is proposed from one use within Use Class E to another. For example, if a redevelopment proposal involved the loss of retail floorspace and proposed an equivalent increase in office/ R&D floorspace, such a proposal may benefit from permitted development rights providing other conditions of the Use Classes Order are met. Given the permitted development rights, there is a degree of flexibility involved when considering changes of use within Use Class E of the Use Classes Order. Table

¹⁹ Using the lower end floorspace estimates for ARC Oxford/ Oxford Business Park, Oxford Science Park and Osney Mead.

A1 shows that there is 115,712sqm²⁰ of additional floorspace proposed in the West End of the city centre and at Botley Road Retail Park. These proposals account for 19% of the supply of office/ R&D floorspace.

5.10 Employment land supply in the city centre comes from several sources. As set out above, some of the city centre employment land supply is proposed on sites already within Use Class E. In addition to the live planning applications there are two site allocations where employment floorspace is proposed. These site allocations are the Nuffield Sites (consisting of the former Island site, the Worcester Street car park and the land south of Frideswide Square) and the Oxpens site. Both allocations propose a mix of uses on their respective sites including residential, employment and complementary town centre uses (e.g. retail, cafés and evening economy uses). They both include minimum residential allocations (which also enables the delivery of student accommodation in line with Policy H9, given their city centre locations). In line with the Oxford's employment strategy, the city (and district) centres, as highly sustainable locations, are considered to be appropriate for the delivery of new employment floorspace. The delivery of employment floorspace in the city (and district) centres (alongside other town centre uses such as residential, student accommodation, retail and hotels) can ensure the vitality and viability of these centres and help to deliver a vibrant and sustainable city.

5.11 The plan's employment strategy focuses new employment floorspace, through a process of modernisation and intensification, towards the city's network of existing employment sites. As is set out above, the current supply position attributes 77% of the plan's identified employment supply to the city's existing network of Category 1 and 2 employment sites. The plan's employment strategy also guides new employment floorspace to the city's most inherently sustainable locations, i.e., the city and district centres. 17% (102,205sqm) of employment land supply as set out in Table A1 is attributed to the city centre. Employment floorspace in the city and district centres (alongside other town centre uses such as residential, student accommodation, retail and hotels) and can ensure the vitality and viability of centres and help to deliver a vibrant and sustainable city.

5.12 When the supply of office/ R&D from Category 1 and 2 employment sites is added to the supply proposed in Oxford's West End and at Botley Road Retail Park, it accounts for 97% of the total employment land supply in the city.

5.13 The remainder of Oxford's office/ R&D supply comes from extant permissions on scattered sites and two live planning applications. One application proposes the redevelopment of Class E floorspace at the Kassam Stadium and other is for an "innovation centre" at Thornhill Park, a former employment site where the provision of employment (Class E office) use is a policy requirement of both the extant Local Plan 2036 (Policy SP47), and the Oxford Local Plan 2040 (Policy SPE15).

²⁰ Excluding floorspace at Osney Mead as it has already been included as a Category 2 employment site (above).

Industrial uses

5.13 The HENA considers that there is a need for 39,950sqm of industrial floorspace within the plan period to 2040. In September 2023, BMW Group announced investment of more than £600 million in the MINI factories at Oxford and Swindon, with Oxford to be developed “for the production of the new generation of electric MINIs”. The press release sets out that the Oxford plant is gearing up to build two new all-electric MINI models from 2026 and by 2030 production volume is to be exclusively electric²¹.

5.14 Following this announcement, a planning application was submitted for 29,900sqm of gross floorspace (26,350sqm net) at MINI Plant Oxford. It is clear that BMW Group are keen that Oxford remains firmly at “the heart of the brand”²² and that MINI Plant Oxford has the potential to meet some of the industrial floorspace need for the city even though that floorspace would not be more widely commercially available.

Making the best use of land – the approach to new and expanded B8 uses

5.15 Given the limited land available within the city, it is important to make the best and most efficient use of that land. Policy E1 of the Local Plan 2040 requires that new development on employment sites makes the best and most efficient use of land and premises and that the intensification and modernisation of the city’s existing network of employment sites is supported.

5.16 Warehousing and storage solutions are often necessary to support the operational requirements of the city’s most important (Category 1) employment sites. These sites often make significant contributions to the national economy or can be major local employers. The plan recognises the importance of allowing the city’s Category 1 employment sites the ability to grow and be developed in ways that ensures that they continue to contribute to the economy and support local jobs. Policy E2 sets out that new and expanded B8 uses are therefore only supported where it can be demonstrated that the use is essential to support the operational requirements of a Category 1 employment site.

5.17 New B8 uses are often low density and can have a high demand for land, which is in short supply in the city. Therefore, by linking new and expanded B8 uses to the Category 1 employment sites and ensuring that these uses are essential to support their operational requirements, it enables these important sites to continue to function in a way maximises their contributions to the local and wider economy.

Supporting appropriate employment uses in the city

5.18 There is a sufficient supply of office and R&D floorspace available to meet the employment land needs identified in both scenarios of the HENA. With regards to office/R&D, there is a potential surplus supply of between 344,497 – 375,327sqm (Table A3, Appendix 1). There is also a potential shortage of future supply to meet industrial/

²¹ <https://www.press.bmwgroup.com/global/article/detail/T0436894EN/mini-plant-oxford-goes-electric:-%C2%A3600m-investment-for-all-electric-mini-production-in-the-uk?language=en>

²² <https://www.press.bmwgroup.com/global/article/detail/T0436894EN/mini-plant-oxford-goes-electric:-%C2%A3600m-investment-for-all-electric-mini-production-in-the-uk?language=en>

warehousing needs. This shortfall has been identified as being between 40,243 – 45,673sqm (Table A3, Appendix 1).

5.19 It is not the case however, that land identified for office/ R&D uses can simply be re-allocated or re-provided for industrial/ warehousing uses. Oxford's employment strategy protects the city's most important employment sites (Category 1 and 2) and restricts additional employment floorspace to the existing network of employment sites and to the city and district centres. As set out above, 97% of additional office/ R&D floorspace supply is being put forward through an approach of modernisation and intensification of employment uses at existing Category 1 and 2 employment sites, (such as the Science Park and ARC Oxford/ Oxford Business Park) and through the redevelopment and regeneration of sites in the West End of Oxford's city centre, which includes the largest single regeneration opportunity – Osney Mead.

5.20 In the city centre, where land values are at a premium, it would disincentivise landowners to bring forward large scale industrial/ warehousing uses in this location. The frequent need for large vehicles to access these types of employment spaces also means that the cramped city centre, away from the strategic road network is not a suitable location for these types of employment uses. Notwithstanding this, some small scale B8 uses may be needed to support the operational requirements of category 1 employment sites (wherever they are located).

Housing on employment sites

5.22 The Local Plan 2040 recognises Oxford's acute housing need and as such supports the delivery of an element of housing on all of the city's employment sites. The same overall criteria exist for assessing proposals for residential development on the city's employment sites. For the city's poorly performing or located Category 3 employment sites, their complete loss to residential development is supported in the plan. For the Category 1 and 2 sites, more stringent criteria around the loss of floorspace are proposed. For instance, on Category 1 sites proposals that involve a loss of employment floorspace will be generally resisted, whereas on Category 2 sites the loss of employment floorspace will be supported if the number of jobs in employment-related uses is retained. Residential development proposals on Category 1 and 2 sites should not prejudice the site's present or future continued use as an employment site. It is also important that any residential development coming forward on Category 1 and 2 employment sites results in well-located, and well-designed homes being provided which link well with existing communities.

5.23 It is important that the delivery of housing is prioritised within the city boundaries to help meet the acute shortage. Without the continued delivery of housing in the city, the key sectors of the economy will not be able to continue to contribute to the national economy. Ensuring that housing continues to be delivered in the city helps Oxford realise its social and economic potential.

Availability of employment sites

5.24 Tables A4a and A4b of Appendix 1 provide a summary of the availability of allocated sites within the plan period to develop for employment uses. Table A4a shows those sites where employment uses are allocated as a primary use. This table shows that each site allocation is available and a number of proposed allocations benefit from live planning applications.

5.25 Table 4b shows those sites with the potential to deliver an element of supporting employment uses due to their location or their existing or previous uses. Three of the sites are located in district centres and as such an element of employment floorspace may be suitable as part of redevelopment or regeneration proposals. The other two site allocations previously contained Class E floorspace and so it is not unlawful to seek to provide some employment floorspace in these locations. Either way, the two remaining site allocations both benefit from live planning applications which clearly demonstrates that these sites are available.

Supporting infrastructure

5.26 Restricting additional employment floorspace to existing employment locations and encouraging the modernisation and intensification of these sites can help bring forward supporting infrastructure in such a way that it enables improvements to be realised. These development opportunities can help to bring forward accessibility improvements through supporting infrastructure such as the re-opening of the Cowley Branch Line to passenger traffic.

6. Conclusions

6.1 The extant Local Plan 2036 supported sustainable employment growth by protecting key employment sites either for their existing use or for their redevelopment for continued employment uses through modernisation and intensification. This was because of their importance to the local and national economy and due to the risk of their loss to other uses. Given the high demand for certain types of employment (office/ R&D) floorspace in the city the Oxford Local Plan 2040 builds on the extant approach.

6.2 Three options were considered for a locational employment strategy as part of the Preferred Options (Reg.18 Part 1) Consultation which took place in Autumn 2022. Two alternative strategies were proposed. One of the alternatives allowed the “growth of employment-generating uses throughout the city”, while the other focused on providing “a broad employment base for the city” and would have involved the protection of a much greater range of employment sites. Both of these strategies would have provided more potential opportunities for employment development to be realised in the city.

6.3 Oxford’s chosen strategy protects the city’s most important employment sites while encouraging their modernisation and intensification and restricts new employment floorspace opportunities to the existing network of employment sites and to the city’s most inherently sustainable locations (i.e., the city and district centres).

6.4 The employment strategy does not allocate new land for employment uses. Instead, through an approach of modernisation and intensification, the city's employment strategy encourages existing employment sites make the best use of their land providing not only the opportunity for employment-related uses but also for housing to come forward on any category of employment site.

6.5 Section 5 above provides a detailed discussion regarding each element of the city's employment land needs and how the employment strategy is appropriate for the city.

6.6 Policies E1 and E2 are set out below:

Policy E1: Employment Strategy

All new development on employment sites needs to show that it is making the best and most efficient use of land and premises and positively promotes sustainable development through the upgrading and re-use of existing buildings and does not cause unacceptable environmental impacts.

New employment-generating uses and intensification of existing sites:

Planning permission will only be granted for new employment generating uses within Category 1 and 2 employment sites or within the city and district centres.

Planning permission will be granted for the intensification and modernisation of any Category 1 or 2 employment site.

Planning permission will only be granted for the intensification and modernisation of a Category 3 employment site where that site is located within the city or a district centre. Outside of these locations, Category 3 employment sites can only be regenerated for employment purposes if better and more intensive use is made of the site through the redevelopment, up-grading or re-use of existing under-used buildings. Proposals for additional employment floorspace on Category 3 employment sites outside the city and district centres must follow the sequential approach for new town centre uses as set out in Policy C1.

Re-development of brownfield Category 1, 2 and Category 3 employment sites in the city and district centres, with new buildings, must use sustainable methods of construction and materials and be operationally energy efficient.

Category 1 and 2 employment sites are listed in Appendix 3.1 and 3.2 and are shown on the policies map. All other employment sites are Category 3 employment sites.

Loss of employment floorspace

- A) planning permission will not be granted for development that results in a net loss of employment floorspace on Category 1 sites (unless it can be fully justified that the site will remain fully operational for its employment use, and as long as the number of jobs related to employment generating uses at the site is retained).
- B) planning permission will be granted for development that results in a net loss of employment floorspace on Category 2 sites providing the number of jobs in employment-related uses at the site is retained.
- C) planning permission will be granted for the loss of any Category 3 employment sites to other uses. Proposals for residential development will be supported.

Residential development on employment sites:

Proposals for residential development on any category of employment sites will be assessed by a balanced judgement which will consider the following objectives (in addition to the considerations regarding loss of floorspace or jobs outlined above, which still apply):

- D) the desirability of meeting as much housing need as possible in sustainable locations within the city;**
- E) the need to avoid loss or significant harm to the continued operation or integrity of successful and/ or locally useful, or high-employment business and employment sites and the need to avoid impairing existing business operations through the location of incompatible residential uses in close proximity to exiting employment uses;**
- F) the essential importance of creating satisfactory residential living conditions and a pleasant residential environment with a sense of place, connected by safe walking routes to shops, schools and open space, community facilities and public transport; and**
- G) the desirability of achieving environmental improvements such as remediation, planting, biodiversity gains, sustainable development forms, improvements in highway conditions and the improvement of living conditions for existing residents.**
- H) Be well designed in terms of scale and massing, compliment the surrounding development and contribute towards the creation of a sense of place and be well connected to services and public transport / active travel opportunities;**
- I) Provide an acceptable level of amenity for future occupiers, in accordance with Local Plan standards; and**
- J) Not be located next to incompatible uses, by virtue of their noise / disturbance or operational issues.**

Policy E2: Warehousing and Storage Uses

Planning permission will only be granted for new or expanded warehousing and storage uses if it is within an existing employment site (of any category) and where it can be demonstrated in the planning application that the use is essential to support the operational requirements of a Category 1 employment site.

Planning permission will be granted for the loss of B8 space (on any category site) where it is not essential to support a Category 1 employment site.

Planning permission will be granted for redevelopment of an existing car showroom for housing where the site is considered suitable for such an alternative use.

In all cases the suitability of the proposed use will be assessed against the site-specific circumstances.

Appendix 1: Supply Tables

Table A1: Identified employment land supply for the plan period

Site Category	Site name	Consented Supply	Live applications 31/10/23	Additional identified supply	Total supply	Description	Use Classes
Category 1 Oxford North	Oxford North	87,300			87,300	Hybrid planning application 18/02065/OUTFUL was granted in 2021. It involved outline consent for 87,300 sqm of employment floorspace made up of 58,200sqm of office/ R&D uses and 29,100sqm of light industrial uses. A full permission was also granted under the same application for part of phase 1a of the development which includes 15,850sqm of employment floorspace.	Office/ R&D 58,200 Industrial 29,100
Category 1 ARC Oxford/ Oxford/ Oxford Business Park	ARC Oxford/ Oxford Business Park plots without consent			29,840 – 117,495*	70,882 – 170,855	There are three plots of land available for future development not currently subject of a live planning application. Plots 2 and 4 that total around 1.8ha, could potentially accommodate between 14,400 sqm (under a plot ratio of 0.8) and 56,700sqm (under a plot ratio of 3.15ha). Plot 1 (around 1.93ha) could potentially accommodate between 15,440sqm (under a plot ratio of 0.8) and 60,795sqm (plot ratio 3.15). *Business Parks traditionally are developed with a plot ratio of around 0.8, however more recent proposals have come forward at ARC Oxford/ Oxford Business Park with higher plot ratios. For example, plot 2000 has a proposed plot ratio of 3.15 (using total class E floorspace - 35,691sqm – to calculate the plot ratio).	Assumes all future floorspace in Use Class E (office/ R&D)
	Plot 2000		23,373 – 35,691			A planning application (22/02880/RES) has been submitted for Plot 3 (advertised as Plot 2000 of 1.13 ha). This application proposes an additional 23,373 sq.m of employment floorspace (total class E floorspace 35,691)	Office/ R&D
	Plot 1	0				Plot 1 granted planning permission through Reserved Matters application (reference 20/01237/RES). It would have provided 9,293sqm additional employment floorspace, however, ARC has not implemented permission Expired 13 May 2023. (See above for Plot 1 floorspace estimates).	n/a

Site Category	Site name	Consented Supply	Live applications 31/10/23	Additional identified supply	Total supply	Description	Use Classes
	Trinity House	17,669				Redevelopment of Trinity House (22/03067/FUL) was granted planning permission in October 2023. The consented supply is 20,410sqm for research and development (17,669 net)	Office/ R&D
Category 1 Oxford Science Park	Oxford Science Park				97,395 – 121,336	The Oxford Science Park contains a number of vacant plots. There are a number of recently permitted and live planning applications associated with these plots.	
	Plot 16	19,823				Application reference 19/02003/FUL (approved December 2021) proposes 19,823 sqm of additional employment floorspace.	Office/ R&D
	Plot 27		9,306			Application reference 22/02555/FUL proposes 9,306 sqm of Class E floorspace	Office/ R&D
	Plots 23-26	41,598 – 65,539				Application reference 22/02168/FUL (approved October 2023) proposes 41,598sqm of Class E (commercial) floorspace across 3 buildings on 4 plots. Total class E floorspace is 65,539sqm.	Office/ R&D
	Littlemore House and Plot 18 (Ellison Insitute)		26,668			Application reference 22/02969/FUL proposes 26,668sqm net of Class E (commercial floorspace). Site includes plot 18 within the Science Park and Littlemore House on Armstrong Road which lies just outside it.	Office/ R&D
Category 1 MINI Plant Oxford	MINI Plant Oxford (BMW)		26,350		26,350	Application reference 23/02166/FUL proposes 29,990sqm (26,350 net) additional B2 floorspace at MINI Plant Oxford.	Industrial 26,350
West End and Osney Mead Area of Focus	Osney Mead Industrial Estate			248,540-337,540	248,540-337,540	<p>This site is currently a mixed-use employment site and is currently designated a Category 2 employment site. The total approximate existing floorspace is 79,000 sqm GEA (76,463 sqm GEA in Class E(g), B2 and B8).</p> <p>The comprehensive masterplan being developed for this site will provide a mix of employment-led, education, and residential uses. This site is projected to have the potential to generate between 325,000 sqm GEA and 414,000 sqm GEA (248,537-337,537sqm when existing employment floorspace is subtracted).</p> <p>The comprehensive masterplan is at early stages and future planning application(s) pertaining to the extant site allocation will be subject to</p>	Assumes all future floorspace in Use Class E (office/ R&D)

Site Category	Site name	Consented Supply	Live applications 31/10/23	Additional identified supply	Total supply	Description	Use Classes
						<p>detailed engagement with the City Council regarding land uses and quantum.</p> <p>The development will come forward in phases, with the initial phases currently assumed to be delivered and occupied by 2027. The delivery timeframes will be dictated by the dates that the necessary planning consent(s) are obtained.</p>	
	Nuffield College sites			28,500	28,500	The Nuffield College sites include the former Island Site, the Worcester Street car park, and the Land South of Frideswide Square. Additional capacity for employment floorspace has been identified by the landowner.	Assumes all future floorspace in Use Class E (office/ R&D)
	Oxpens		64,057		64,057	Current outline application (reference 22/02954/OUT) includes at least 64,057sqm Use Classe E (commercial) floorspace (assumes additional floorspace (15,498sqm) for hotel and additional basement floorspace (11,419sqm) is delivered for associated building uses).	Office/ R&D
	Clarendon Centre		9,648		9,648	Application reference 21/00110/FUL proposes 9,361 sqm of B1(a) office (5106 net gain) and 4,542 sqm of B1(b) Research and Development floorspace as well as retail and other town centre uses within the West End.	Office/ R&D
	135-137 Botley Road		13,507		13,507	Application reference (22/03076/FUL) proposes 13,507 sqm of additional class E floorspace at Units 1 & 2, 135-137 Botley Road.	Office/ R&D
Category 2	County Trading Estate		632		632	Application reference 23/01950/FUL submitted for 935 sq.m (123sq.m net) B8 and 509 sq.m (509 sq.m net) Class E (office)	Office 509sqm B8 123sqm
n/a	Ozone Leisure Complex		7,973		7,973	Ozone Leisure Complex is an existing Class E use adjacent to the Oxford Science Park. Application reference 23/01198/FUL submitted for 10,929sq.m (7,973sq.m net) of Class E (commercial) floorspace	Office/ R&D
n/a	Thornhill Park		2,325		2,325	Site included previous Class E use on site. Application reference 21/01695/FUL proposed a residential-led mixed use scheme including 2,325sqm for an innovation centre (Class E).	Office

Site Category	Site name	Consented Supply	Live applications 31/10/23	Additional identified supply	Total supply	Description	Use Classes
Other scattered sites		4,609			4,609	Reported permissions at January 2022 showed that for office/ R&D there was a net increase of 6,025sqm, whereas a net loss of 1,416sqm industrial/ warehousing floorspace was reported.	Office/ R&D 6,025sqm Industrial/ warehousing 1,416sqm
TOTALS		170,999 – 194,940	183,839 – 196,157	306,880– 483,535	661,718 – 874,632	TOTAL Office/ R&D: 607,561 – 820,475sqm TOTAL Industrial/ Warehousing: 54,157sqm	

Table A2 Employment sites where the redevelopment potential is currently unknown

Site Category	Site Name	Total Area (ha)	Description
Category 1	Unipart Group	31.5	Unipart Group owns 31.5 ha south of MINI Plant Oxford. This includes existing industrial buildings. Site has potential to be redeveloped later in the plan period.
Category 2	Horspath Industrial Estate	6.45	The site comprises an existing distribution and industrial location with no further capacity for additional development apart from future intensification/redevelopment potential.
Category 2	Oxford Trade and Nuffield Industrial Estate	4.5	These are two adjacent sites with a total area of 4.5ha. These comprise a well-established distribution and industrial location with no capacity for additional development apart from future intensification/redevelopment potential.
Category 2	Garsington Road Cluster	n/a	This cluster comprises a number of Category 2 sites located in the vicinity of Garsington Road. The sites are primarily occupied by distribution and industrial occupiers alongside 3 office buildings. Vacant premises in July 2022 include Units 8-14 Fenchurch Court (830 sq.m) and Units 6-15 Chiltern Business Centre (1,200 sq.m).
West End Regeneration Sites	Oxford Railway Station and Becket St. Car Park	n/a	There is an emerging masterplan which is at an early stage of development. The City Council is leading on the delivery of the masterplan, in partnership with Network Rail and the County Council. The redevelopment of this site includes the potential to bring forward a mix of uses (including employment development) to support the funding

			case for the delivery of the station. The precise mix of uses has not yet been determined and will be brought forward as part of the masterplanning process.
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Table A3 Demand/ Supply Balance (Lower end floorspace estimates)

	Oxford 'low' growth*	Oxford 'high' growth*
Office and R&D E(g)(i),(ii) (sqm)		
Floorspace need	218,300	249,040
Supply	607,561**	
Balance (+)/(-)	+389,261	+358,521
Industrial and Warehousing E(g)(iii), B2, B8 (sqm)		
Floorspace need	94,400	99,830
Supply	54,157	
Balance (+)/(-)	-40,243	-45,673

* The Oxford 'low' and 'high' growth scenarios have been derived from the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA) 'employment-led' job forecasts. The 'low' growth scenario was derived from the CE Baseline scenario, while the 'high' growth scenario was derived from the Economic Development led scenario.

** lower end floorspace estimates for ARC Oxford/ Oxford Business Park and Osney Mead have been included (i.e., 70,882sqm at ARC Oxford/ Oxford Business Park, 97,395sqm at Oxford Science Park and 248,540sqm for Osney Mead).

It is worth noting that if the higher floorspace estimates are used to calculate the supply/ demand balance for office/R&D, the supply position increases further. There is a surplus of 602,175sqm under the 'low' growth scenario, and 571,435sqm under the 'high' growth scenario.

Table A4a Main site employment site allocations, confirming availability for development, or landowner intention to develop

Proposed Site Allocation	Proposed Uses	Explanation/ details of landowner conversations	Site Available
Northern Gateway (Oxford North)	Employment uses as consented. Policy SPN1 proposes limited additional floorspace.	Planning permission granted for 87,300sqm of employment floorspace. Site under construction.	Yes
ARC Oxford (previously Oxford Business Park)	Policy SPS1 proposes Class E employment uses and B2 uses.	Planning application submitted for "Plot 2000" for 23,400sqm additional employment floorspace. Landowner intention to redevelop.	Yes
MINI Plant Oxford	Policy SPS4 proposes B2, Class E employment uses and B8 uses	£600million investment for Oxford site announced in September 2023. Planning application submitted for over 26,000sqm of additional industrial floorspace.	Yes
Oxford Science Park	Policy SPS5 proposes Class E employment uses	Several live applications currently under consideration for plots 23-26, plot 27 and plot 18.	Yes
Unipart	Policy SPS7 proposes Class E employment uses, B2 and B8 uses.	Currently in operational use. Landowner intention to redevelop later in plan period.	Yes
West End Sites	SPCW5 (Oxpens) proposes a mix of uses including employment uses	Planning application submitted for a mixed use scheme including up to 64,100sqm of Class E (commercial) floorspace	Yes
	SPCW6 (Nuffield Sites) proposes a mix of uses across including employment uses	Landowner intention to redevelop sites within the plan period.	Yes
Osney Mead	SPCW7 proposes a mix of uses including Employment and R&D uses	Landowner intention to comprehensively redevelop the site however flood risk/ land assembly constraints could mean that delivery extends beyond plan period.	Yes
Botley Retail Park	SPCW8 proposes a range of Class E employment uses.	Planning application submitted for just under 17,000sqm of Class E (commercial) uses.	Yes

Table A4b Other Site allocations where employment uses are mentioned in the policy

Proposed Site Allocation	Proposed Uses	Explanation/ details of landowner conversations	Site Available
Diamond Place and Ewert House	SPN3 proposes a range of uses including Class E employment uses.	Proposals are at an early stage. Landowner intention to redevelop site within plan period.	Yes
Kassam Stadium (Ozone Leisure Park)	Policy SP2 proposes a range of uses including commercial uses within the existing area of the Ozone Leisure Park Site.	Planning application submitted for just under 8,000sqm of additional Class E (commercial) floorspace	Yes
Blackbird Leys Central Area	Policy SPS9 proposes a range of uses including start-up employment units.	Planning permission granted (October 2023) for a mixed-use scheme including Class E (community and retail) use.	Yes
Templars Square	SPS12 proposes a range of uses including “other” employment such as office and small workshops”	New owners are at an early stage in their developing their proposals but have expressed an intention to redevelop within the plan period. The site benefits from an extant permission obtained by previous owners.	Yes
Thornhill Park	SPE15 proposes some employment use (class E)	Planning application shows intention to deliver an innovation centre as part of a residential-led mixed use development.	Yes