

## **Site capacity assessment – Local Plan 2045**

<b>Site name</b>	Oxford North remaining phases
<b>LP2045 Site Allocation</b>	SPN3
<b>Site size (ha)</b>	13.28

### **Site location**



© Crown Copyright and database right 2025. Ordnance Survey AC0000808820

### **A) Site overview**

#### **Description of current context**

- This site falls within the broader area known as Northern Gateway and also benefits from outline planning permission as part of a hybrid planning permission 18/02065/OUTFUL ("Oxford North" development) covering a wider area of Northern Gateway. That permission will expire during the plan period if not fully built out.
- The Oxford North planning permission 18/02065/OUTFUL makes provision to deliver 480 homes and 87,300m<sup>2</sup> (B1) employment, as well as a 180-room hotel, 2500m<sup>2</sup> retail (A1 A2 A3 A4 A5), and 500m<sup>2</sup> community uses. The first phases have recently been built.
- The adjoining land to the south (001a2 Oxford North phase 1A & Canalside) has been recently built out under the hybrid planning permission for Oxford North. That development comprises residential, and employment related to research, innovation, and the knowledge economy.
- The land within this site, whilst included in the hybrid permission, is undeveloped and not all of it yet has reserved matters permissions to set out the detailed proposals. A comprehensive approach to the development of the remaining parcels of land is needed. This site allocation will help to ensure the efficient delivery of development and coordinated infrastructure delivery across the Northern Gateway area, to ensure the significant positive impacts on the supply of specialised employment floorspace and new homes.

- This site straddles the A44. The part to the east of A44 is open fields, bounded by the railway line and the Pear Tree Park & Ride site. The part to the west of the A44 adjoins the recent employment development.
- The site is within a key employment site, which is essential to the Oxford economy, and that of the wider “Knowledge Spine” in Oxfordshire.
- Northern Gateway area, within which this site lies, is the northern most point of Oxford so it is a key gateway site to the city, and it also means that the proposed development in adjoining Cherwell District is also important context for development in this location. The land to the north of Northern Gateway site lies in Cherwell district and is a site allocation for Oxford’s unmet need in the Cherwell Local Plan Partial Review for 1,360 homes (PR6a and PR6b). Proposals should therefore consider future connectivity with development of the sites in Cherwell and onwards to Oxford Parkway Rail Station, with potential for vehicular, pedestrian and cycle links.

#### Site photos



## B) Open space, nature and flood risk

### **Description of current context**

#### Green infrastructure

- Part of the site is cleared already. Preliminary analysis suggests that the presence of various green infrastructure features, particularly on the eastern part of the site, means the site is likely to score above the minimum thresholds for green surface cover as required by Policy G3; as such proposals will need to ensure that this score is retained (no net loss), demonstrated through submission of the Urban Greening Factor assessment. New development on the site will need to consider how existing green features, particularly higher scoring elements, can be retained. Sufficient replacements will need to be incorporated into the new design, or enhancement of existing green infrastructure that is being retained, to preserve the baseline UGF score as a minimum.

#### Biodiversity and ecology

- None within or adjoining site, but impact on nearby SSSI and SAC at Port Meadow needs to be considered.
- Eastern parcel is greenfield so measures will be needed to achieve UGF requirements and retain permeability of surface water.
- Small corner on western edge of the parcel on west of A44, and strip running down eastern boundary of the parcel to east of A44, is identified in the LNRS. LNRS suggests measures could include: Create new, varied ponds in suitable locations across all habitat types to increase biodiversity and create more clean water habitats; Enhance (or maintain a good condition of) existing neutral species-rich grasslands; Create and/or manage greenspaces and habitats in urban areas to enhance their condition to benefit wildlife, improve connectivity, and provide wider benefits; and create new woodland by planting trees (or enabling their natural regeneration) using species that are suited to the soil type and site conditions.

#### Blue Infrastructure

- There are balancing ponds within the site

#### Land Quality

- Contamination risks being addressed under current planning permission.

### **Analysis and urban design implications**

- Development must not affect the integrity of the SAC in terms of recreational pressure, hydrological regime, or air quality. The main risk to the SAC is from potential increased recreational pressure (including dog walking) from additional residents, and from potential increased air pollution from additional vehicle movements.
- Landscaping along streets and in public open space should help introduce high quality green features into the site, which will contribute to biodiversity net gain and achieving the required Urban Greening Factor score.
- Parts of the site which are currently fields/green open space will also need measures to retain permeability of surface water

## C) Historic environment, character and local context

### **Description of current context**

#### Historic environment

- None within the site, but close to Wolvercote Conservation Area designation so potential impacts on setting need to be considered.
- Evaluation failed to identify significant archaeology beyond surviving medieval ridge and furrow which was due to be partially integrated into the emerging landscaping of earlier phases. Roman interest (settlement activity) on northern periphery over the local authority border.

#### Built environment

- Site is at a gateway location, situated at the northern most edge of Oxford and the entrance to the city from the north.
- Being at the northern edge of the city also means the context of development in adjoining Cherwell District is also important context for development in this location.
- Adjoining development on earlier phases of Oxford North includes landmark buildings such as the Red Hall.
- The adjoining site to the north (Red Barn Farm) is also a site allocation for R&D and is likely to include landmark buildings, in response to the site constraints and opportunities.

#### ***Analysis and urban design implications***

- The design of new development in this area must be accessible, permeable and legible to ensure easy access to and through the site for all users with priority for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impacts on the significance of the Wolvercote Conservation Area (in accordance with HD1).
- Design of new development must create a sense of place which has its own identity and with continuous and well-connected streets with well-defined building frontages.
- Development must ensure that there is a clear distinction between the public and private realms to ensure both private and public spaces are well designed and defined. Careful consideration must be given to the positioning of windows and lighting in this development to ensure there is good surveillance of the public realm.
- High density and landmark buildings style of development is appropriate in this location, whilst taking into account potential impacts on setting of Wolvercote Conservation Area.

## **D) Access, movement and layout**

#### **Description of current context**

##### **Access into the site**

- Vehicle access can be achieved from the A44 (which runs through the site) and via the new link road which was implemented as part of Phase 1A.

##### **Layout of the site**

- The Parameter plan gives indicative uses but not detailed layout. The layout would need to respond to the adjoining railway line and orientation/design to mitigate noise.

##### **Connectivity to wider area**

- The area is fairly well connected in terms of pedestrian and cycle connections towards central Oxford. However, creation of good quality pedestrian and cycle links will be paramount, especially traversing the busy main roads.
- Site adjoins Pear Tree Park & Ride which has very frequent services towards the city centre. Oxford Parkway is approximately 2900m walk away and the route needs improvements to make it a more attractive option to users.

#### ***Analysis and urban design implications***

- Coordinated infrastructure delivery is key to the success of the wider Northern Gateway area within which this site falls.
- Development should prioritise good connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists, and access to public transport, towards the city and also towards the new residential developments on the unmet need housing sites in the adjoining Cherwell district.
- A coordinated and comprehensive package of transport measures is required for the Northern Gateway area within which this site falls, so that Oxford remains accessible and well-connected for residents, visitors, and businesses. Some key infrastructure is already being provided via HIF 2 /Growth Deal funding, City Deal funding, and the Oxford North development including: bus lane and bus stop upgrades around Pear Tree; junction signal improvements on A44; pedestrian access and crossings improvements around Pear Tree; cycle lanes; junction improvements at Canalside and central parcels of Oxford North; cycle

lane and bus lane improvements on A40; and pedestrian crossings and footpaths to connect the south of the site with Wolvercote.

- Vehicle access to the site would be from the A44 which transects the site and from the newly constructed internal link road (which links the A44 to the A40). The infrastructure is already in place, with a spur from the A44 and signalled junctions which have been completed as part of earlier phases.

## **E) Other considerations**

### ***Other considerations to include in allocations?***

#### **Amenity**

- Site is bounded by A34 to the west and the railway line to the east, with the busy A44 transecting the site roughly north to south. These are all significant transport corridors with noise and emissions implications and the roads are often subject to congestion.

#### **Infrastructure needs**

- Various infrastructure requirements and commitments are set out in the signed S106 for the Oxford North hybrid permission. The requirements are so significant that it impacted on viability of the scheme to such an extent that a reduced level of affordable housing contributions was found to be justified on the first phase of residential (Canalside).

## **F) Landowner aspirations**

Parameter plans from the hybrid permission show the site as mixed use including residential. Remaining permitted under the hybrid permission is 161 dwellings (319 dwellings already built out on Canalside of a total 480 dwellings in hybrid permission 18/02065/OUTFUL) and 34,000sqm employment.

Landowner confirmed (2025) intention to develop for mixed use including residential and further R&D.

## **G) Any extra work needed to inform allocation?**

HRA work was previously undertaken previously to support the Northern Gateway AAP. The HRA for the Northern Gateway concluded that there would not be likely significant effects on the Oxford Meadows SAC, resulting from the allocation of the site, (either alone, or in-combination with other relevant plans and projects).

The amount (and type) of development proposed within this site allocation policy is currently being delivered through approved planning permission 18/02065/OUTFUL and associated reserved matters. The amount (and type) of development set out in this policy aligns with the amount put forward in the Northern Gateway AAP (and which was assessed through its accompanying HRA). This policy therefore carries forward mitigation measures outlined through that work – namely, that residential development should provide an increased amount of public open space (15%).

## **H) Key considerations informing the minimum number of homes for the allocation policy**

Minimum capacity for the site has been calculated with the following assumptions:

- Site falls within a broader area known as “Oxford North” which already benefits from an extant hybrid planning permission 18/02065/OUTFUL (for 480 homes and up to 87,300 m<sup>2</sup> employment). The adjoining land, also within the hybrid permission, has been built out for R&D and residential (Site 001a2 Oxford North Phase 1A and Canalside). Delivering this level of growth at the site is within the tested limits of the Appropriate Assessment.

- This site is within the red line of the hybrid permission but does not yet have reserved matters to set out the detail. In the parameter plans it is indicated for residential and mixed use.
- The remaining residential not yet built from the outline permission is 161 dwellings (480 minus 319).
- Minimum residential to be delivered on site 001a1 is therefore 161.