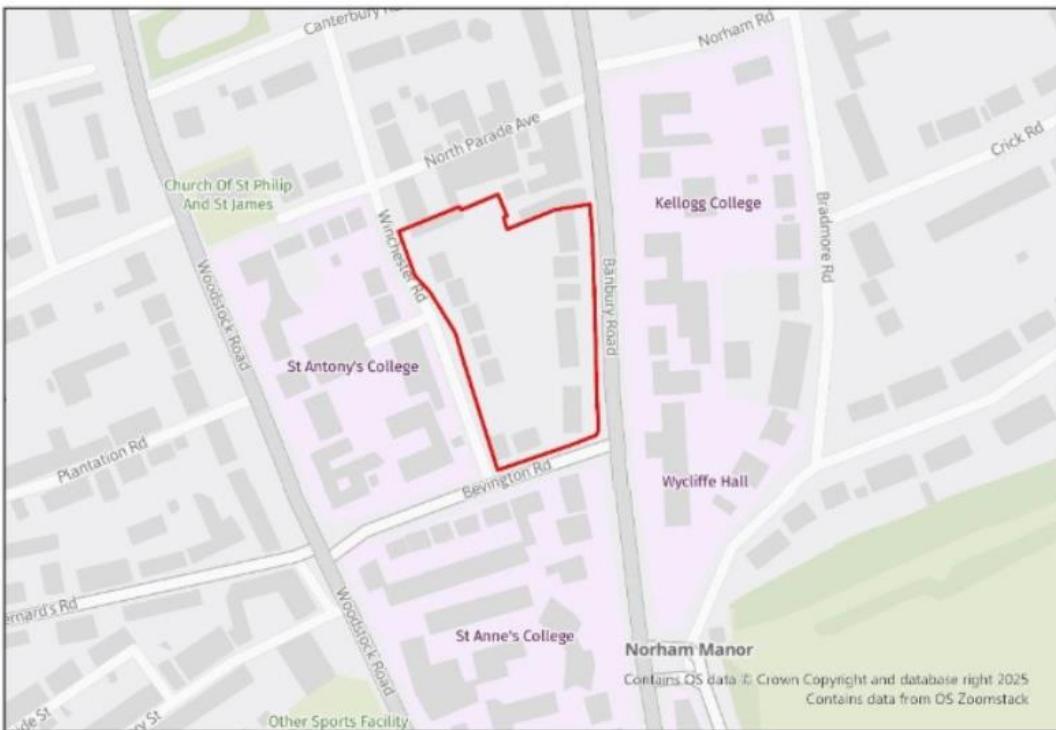


## **Site capacity assessment – Local Plan 2045**

<b>Site name</b>	Banbury Road University Sites – Parcel B
<b>LP2045 Site Allocation</b>	SPCW1
<b>Site size (ha)</b>	1.26

### **Site location**



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### **A) Site overview**

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

- The site is located in the north of Oxford and includes a number of existing University properties located on Winchester Road, Bevington Road and Banbury Road in academic use or being used for student accommodation.
- The existing buildings are substantial Victorian and Edwardian Villas which make up the frontage of the plots that make up the site. Those fronting onto Banbury Road are grander with more generous plots than those on Winchester and Bevington Roads.
- To the north of the site sits North Parade, a narrow street of small-scale buildings in comparison to the much larger villas. This villas in this vicinity of Banbury Road contain several academic buildings associated with the University and are characterised with numerous large trees present along the frontage.
- The site is not in an area of significant deprivation (within the 20% least deprived areas in country).
- The site is not within a city/district centre and is closest to Oxford City Centre (1.2km walk).

#### **Site photos**



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## B) Open space, nature and flood risk

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

#### **Green infrastructure**

- The site itself is characterised by numerous attractive looking trees, both within the site and alongside the perimeter fronting onto the three highways. One of these (in front of 10 Winchester Road) is protected by the Oxford City Council Winchester Road (No.1) Tree Preservation Order 2008, whilst the others (of a certain size) benefit from limited protection due to the site lying within a conservation area. The trees will provide valuable ecosystem services, whilst those which are more visible from the highways are important to public amenity in the area.
- The general abundance of greening across the site, despite the level of existing development along the edge of the site, suggest that the site is likely to score above the policy target for the Urban Greening Factor at present.

#### **Biodiversity and ecology**

- The site contains no nature conservation designations but has potential for nature conservation interest (University Parks Local Wildlife Site is within 200m of the site).
- Surveys undertaken (in association with planning application 22/02849/FUL) identified numerous bat roosts on part of the site bounded by Bevington Road.

#### **Blue Infrastructure**

- Whilst the site and its surroundings are in Flood Zone 1, patches of surface water flood risk are present within the site.

#### **Land Quality**

- No significant contamination issues likely.

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

- The existing trees should be retained where possible, particularly those along the frontage of Banbury Road which contribute positively to public amenity in the area. There are numerous trees within the site which will influence the developable area of the site and its capacity. Opportunities exist to plant new trees to benefit public

amenity and enhance the character of the Listed Building within the site and the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area.

- The site likely already scores above the UGF target; however, proposals will need to ensure that overall score is not reduced. High quality features, such as the mature trees should be retained in the first instance. Where green features are lost, this may necessitate some improvement of existing lower quality areas of greening elsewhere.
- The surveys undertaken in association with planning application 22/02849/FUL identified that numerous bat roosts are present. Appropriate mitigation will need to be considered as part of any redevelopment including ensuring that roosting opportunities remain post-development.

## C) Historic environment, character and local context

### *Description of current context*

#### Historic environment

- The site is located entirely within the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area (NOVSCA).
- There is one Grade II listed building within the site located at 59 Banbury Road.
- There are several other Grade II listed buildings within the vicinity of the site, notably across the other side of Banbury Road including Wycliffe Hall, Wykeham House, 60 and 62 Banbury Road and Gees' Restaurant immediately adjacent to the north of the site.
- There are no view cones running through the site, although views to/from the listed buildings will likely be important components of their setting.
- The site is of archaeological interest as it is located on the line of a Bronze Age linear barrow cemetery and there is potential for prehistoric and Roman remains. This will require further investigation as part of any redevelopment.

#### Built environment

- The existing buildings within the site are substantial Victorian and Edwardian Villas which make up the frontage of the plots that comprise the site. Those fronting onto Banbury Road are grander with more generous plots than those fronting the other two roads. These buildings exhibit distinctive characteristics of the Victorian Gothic architectural language that makes a significant contribution to the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area as a whole.
- Building heights across the site are generally 3 to 4 storeys. All buildings are set back within their plots, particularly those that front onto Banbury Road.
- The NOVSCA and listed building setting would be a key consideration. Both the buildings within site and immediate vicinity are predominantly constructed from a light-coloured brick with many of the buildings containing interesting design features including decorative brickwork or lintels, arched windows.
- There is extensive greenspace between the properties fronting Banbury Road and the pavement. This together with the wide tree lined streets adds to the suburban character of the conservation area.
- The site is located in the north of the city, within the North Oxford (Victorian Suburbs and Villages) (4A) Character Area, noted for large areas of Victorian housing laid out in a regular street pattern, with the generous proportion of the street blocks reflecting the scale of individual properties. Wide streets are bordered by generous front gardens and trees within private gardens contribute to the leafy character of the area. These mature private gardens can play an important role in the ecological fabric, providing a mosaic of habitat including mature trees, dead wood, ponds, scrub and flowering plants. The assessment notes the area to have overall high landscape quality and historic integrity due to the unique Victorian suburb but low biodiversity value. The area is noted to be highly sensitive to

change as a result of its distinctive street and block pattern, the distinctive architectural fabric and its cultural connections to the University.

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

- This site is enclosed by properties fronting onto three highways, with the northern boundary largely forming the rears to commercial properties on North Parade. Any potential development is therefore likely to be located within the gardens of the villas fronting onto Banbury Road and Winchester Road. It will be important that the height, massing and position of any new buildings are sensitively designed in a way that does not harm (and ideally enhances) the setting of North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area and those listed buildings both within and near to the site.
- May need to investigate potential archaeological remains.
- To remain in keeping with the character of the buildings fronting onto Banbury and Winchester roads, it is likely that the most appropriate approach will be to keep a relatively low density at a similar height and at a limited scale.
- By its nature, any proposed development will narrow the openness between those buildings on Banbury Road and Winchester Road. Where possible generous gaps should be retained between the new plots to retain the open character of the site and enhance the green setting.
- Materials used for new development can take inspiration from the existing Conservation Area as well as the Listed Building on the site, such as through use of light-coloured bricks.

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

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

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

- Some of the properties along the Banbury, Bevington and Winchester Roads have vehicular access into their respective property. There is a small car park to the rear of no.43 Banbury Road, accessed via Bevington Road.

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

- The western extent of Bevington Road currently restricts access to vehicles turning from Woodstock Road, providing a dedicated cycle only access. However, the remaining extent of Bevington Road is lined with on street parking bays on both sides of the carriageway and does not prioritise cycling.
- This is a backland site, predominantly comprising rear gardens of properties on the Banbury and Winchester roads, therefore access across the site is presently very limited.

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

- The site is a 1.2km walk to Oxford city centre and the various amenities it offers.
- In terms of public transport, the site is very well served by frequent buses to the city centre and in the opposite direction towards Summertown District Centre via Woodstock Road and Banbury Road. The nearest bus stop (Bevington Road on Banbury Road) being less than 200m from the current access point to the site.

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

- There is potential to remove the parking provision off Bevington Road and to enhance non-vehicular movement through the site.
- Additional measures to help prioritise active travel could be incorporated in the site such as dedicated foot and cycle paths and connections, and reducing the priority given to cars and other vehicles.
- Any new access into the site is likely to be pedestrian/ wheeling and cycling only. This reflects the status of Banbury Road as an Active Travel Primary Route as

classified in the Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan (COTP) as well as the heritage sensitivity of the site with the mature trees lining Banbury Road enhancing the character of the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area.

## **E) Other considerations**

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

#### **Amenity**

- Some noise impacts from the Banbury Road which runs adjacent to the site but not expected to be significant.
- The site is currently in use by The University of Oxford for both academic and accommodation purposes. Any redevelopment which reflects the current uses is unlikely to significantly affect the existing level of amenity both within the site and its immediate surroundings.
- Site is not in proximity to a current air quality hotspot, although the entire city is an Air Quality Management Area.

#### **Infrastructure needs**

- N/A

## **F) Landowner aspirations**

The site is currently and is planned to remain in academic use with an aspiration to increase the amount of student accommodation that is currently provided on site. Planning application 22/02849/FUL was granted permission in November 2024 for 130 new graduate student rooms across six new buildings with the conversion and upgrade of the existing detached twin villa at 43-45 Banbury Road (currently in academic use). A new academic building for the Southeast Asian Studies Centre comprising approximately 1,150 m<sup>2</sup> of space for teaching, research and academic office space is also included.

## **G) Any extra work needed to inform allocation? (won't apply to all sites)**

The early review of potential sustainability impacts arising from developing this site (see individual site assessment form supporting Sustainability Appraisal) identified the potential need for mitigation in relation to significant negative impacts (scored as --) against the following criteria:

- SA objective 11 – specifically, listed buildings due to such assets being onsite and conservation areas as the site is entirely located within the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area.

## **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, although these are not design guidelines:

- Starting point was considering the planning application approved in November 2024.
- The floor plans indicate that efficient use has been made of the garden land to the rears of the buildings fronting onto Banbury and Winchester roads. Buildings ranging from one to four storeys have been included and reflect the scale of the

existing development and have been designed taking account of the heritage sensitivities of the site.

- The site is mixed use as academic floorspace is also proposed. This new academic building is four storeys high and sits towards the south-western corner of the site away from Banbury Road.
- Several trees are required to be removed to enable development, therefore numerous new semi-mature trees are incorporated into the site. The parking spaces off Bevington Road and those within the front gardens of Banbury Road will be removed and replanted with trees, which also enables development to occur within the site. The only parking spaces provided are four disabled spaces within the frontage of 11 Winchester Road.
- Taking the above into account, the number of graduate student rooms (and their dwelling equivalent) proposed in the approved planning application is considered to be an appropriate minimum number for the site.