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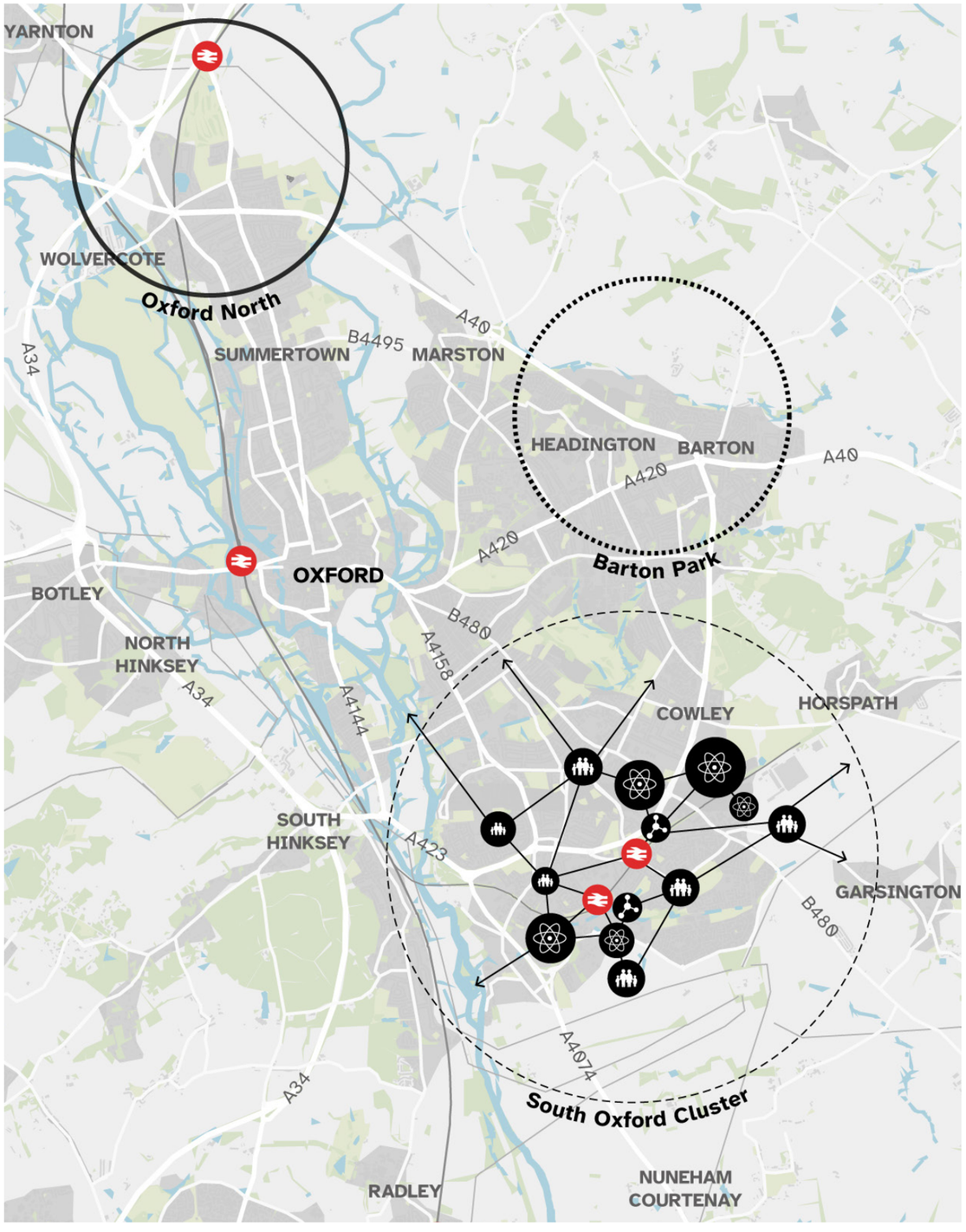
OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

Cowley Branch Line Densification Study

Stage 2
Developer Guidance
March 2026

Alan Baxter
50 YEARS
IN PRACTICE

LDĀDESIGN



↑ The Cowley Branch Line Area of Change within the wider Oxford context.

Vision

The vision for this guidance is to deliver good place-led growth within the Cowley Branch Line study area – the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change. Growth should reflect and make the most of the opportunities presented by improved connectivity and an intentional plan to encourage appropriate densification that responds to the City and local context.

The vision is predicated on the opportunities for growth and regeneration that are founded on the Oxford Local Plan, adjoining development proposals in South Oxfordshire, and an excellent public transport network. This includes opportunities realised through the planned investment in the Cowley Branch Line and associated walking, cycling and public transport connections to the stations from existing and future residential and commercial neighbourhoods - as well as the broader contribution the branch line can make to the continued growth of life sciences and innovation markets, both within the City of Oxford and in a regional, national and international context.

At its core, Oxford is a ‘compact City’ but it also has polycentric characteristics with several district centres in the wider suburbs. Our vision is to extend the compact development approach within the area of change. At a strategic level, this will limit sprawl and inefficient land use and retain the general character and morphology of the City, and where it does alter, ensure that it does so in a planned way, securing good growth and sustainable outcomes.

This guidance provides consideration of heritage and placemaking matters for the delivery of appropriate densification and provides a spatial strategy which directs where densification should be prioritised in order to maximise the opportunity for transport led growth whilst minimising harm to the special historic and landscape qualities of the City. It also ensures any new development comes forward within a framework for co-ordinated change, avoiding the potential for isolated, incremental change that does not form part of a wider strategic vision.

Endorsements

Oxford City Council
Cllr Alex Hollingsworth
Cabinet Member for Planning and Culture

Science is deeply woven into the fabric of Oxford's heritage. For centuries, the City has been a global centre of inquiry, discovery, and innovation - shaping knowledge and progress since the medieval period. This legacy continues to define Oxford's identity and its contribution to the world. The Cowley Branch Line area presents an exciting opportunity to extend this tradition - not only by supporting Oxford's continued role in science and innovation, but also by enabling the creation of inclusive, well-designed communities. This study provides valuable insight into how development in the area can be thoughtfully guided through high-quality placemaking and a respect for Oxford's unique character. In doing so, it will ensure that the City not only preserves its legacy but also strengthens its position as a global leader in science and innovation for the future.

Homes England
Julia Krause
Assistant Director, South East

As a historic City, Oxford holds a rich architectural heritage that should be preserved while embracing thoughtful and sustainable growth. Homes England is supportive of this guidance as it represents an important step towards delivering housing and employment growth in a way that is both ambitious and culturally sensitive. Crucially, the document provides a strategic approach for height-sensitive development and offers a shared framework that enables well-designed, context-aware proposals to come forward with confidence, helping to shape growth that works for both current and future generations.

Historic England
Tom Foxall
Regional Director, London & South East

Oxford's heritage is exceptionally important and world-renowned. A City of dreaming spires, but also of growth and innovation. Historic England supports this project's aspiration to unlock the development potential of this part of Oxford. This guidance helps to give greater certainty to prospective investors and developers, while also respecting the City's much-loved skyline and its important connections to the surrounding landscape. By carefully analysing how to guide sustainable growth, future generations can continue to appreciate Oxford's unique character.

Contents

This document has been prepared and
checked in accordance with ISO 9001:2015

Section 1.0
Introduction

↑ Visualisation of Cowley Branch Line.
(Image © Network Rail)

The Commission

Oxford is a City with a global reach founded on its cultural, historic and natural environment; its institutions including the University of Oxford's international reputation as a centre of learning and research; and the organisations and businesses that have established and continue to be attracted to invest.

At a more strategic level, the government announced its continued commitment to the Oxford - Cambridge Growth Corridor in 2024, and as a key part of the government's commitment to make the UK a global scientific superpower in 2024 and 2025.

Within this context, Oxford City Council ('OCC') - working with Oxfordshire County Council, local landowners, Network Rail and Department for Transport - is reviewing ways to reopen passenger services along the Cowley Branch Line.

This new rail service would be transformative, connecting existing employment sites, residential areas, and sites allocated for significant regeneration and densification, to the City centre in less than 10 minutes, and with the possibility of future direct connections to London via Oxford Parkway.

The historic core of Oxford and its landscape setting are of fundamental importance to the character and identity of the City. The internationally recognised 'dreaming spires' of world-class historic architecture, set amidst interweaving rivers and meadows and enclosed by wooded hills, have been celebrated in art and literature for centuries.

While the Cowley Branch Line falls within the relatively modern south Oxford suburbs, it occupies an important location between the historic core of the City and surrounding countryside, and any change within this area has the potential to influence character and identity of both.

It is clear that while Oxford has a major role to play in supporting sustainable economic growth (in part facilitated by the Cowley Branch Line), a careful balance needs to be struck between sustaining the City's vibrant economy and preserving the City's unique sense of place.

The Scope

Homes England - in partnership with OCC and Historic England – has commissioned this guidance in order to establish a bespoke study for the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change, recognising the unique opportunity for growth and densification within the Branch Line opportunity area, whilst ensuring any new development is shaped by an understanding of place, context and setting.

This guidance has been prepared by LDA Design, a consultancy of urban designers, landscape architects and planners with a common purpose to make great places shaped by an understanding of both context and opportunity. LDA Design work extensively within Oxford and were recently lead authors of the Oxford High Buildings TAN (2018).

In preparing this guidance, LDA Design were supported by Alan Baxter Ltd, urban designers and conservation specialists with extensive understanding of the local context and experience of heritage setting and impact.

The overall aim of the project is to:

> **"understand what extent of development is possible by providing further guidance on appropriate massing (including heights and density) and interpretation of context in the area of change around the Cowley Branch Line stations that balances heritage considerations (understanding and appreciating its significance) with other planning considerations (e.g. economic considerations) to aid in the delivery of good growth".**

This is a multi-stage project and a Stage 1 commission has already been completed which aimed to understand the heritage, townscape and visual baseline environment of the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change, with particular focus around proposed station locations. The Stage 1 Report (2024) is summarised in **Section 2.0** and included at **Appendix 1**.

The Stage 2 work seeks to build on the baseline analysis to identify a series of development outcomes and design principles to inform future change and growth within the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change. This Stage 2 work has utilised Homes England's Outcome Engagement Tool to facilitate collaboration between key stakeholders to understand and set the desired outcomes for the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change. The engagement and outcomes process is also summarised in **Section 3.0** and the 'Outcomes Report' is included at **Appendix 2**.

It should also be noted that the Stage 2 work will be proceeded by the 'Cowley Branch Line Spatial Delivery Framework' study. This study will explore further growth opportunities along the Cowley Branch Line; test different growth scenarios; and provide a strategic masterplan to help guide and coordinate development, infrastructure investment and landowner collaboration.

Formulating the guidance

This guidance has been prepared over a number of months, utilising a range of assessment and engagement tools. The flow diagram illustrates the broad process, and specific workshops / meetings are listed below. Further details of workshops / attendees can be found in **Appendix 3**.

- **4th November 2024** Developer meeting with Savills - Oxford Science Village site.
- **18th November 2024** Developer Workshop 1 with main developer group.
- **20th November 2024** Developer meeting with Firoka - Ozone / Kassam site.
- **28th November 2024** Developer meeting with Breakthrough Properties – Trinity House site.
- **5th December 2024** Development Workshop 2 with main developer group.
- **17th January 2025** Heritage Workshop 1 with main stakeholder group.
- **7th February 2025** Heritage Workshop 2 with main stakeholder group.
- **25th February 2025** Progress meeting 1 with Client team.
- **5th March 2025** Progress meeting 2 with Client team.
- **12th March 2025** Progress meeting 3 with Client team.

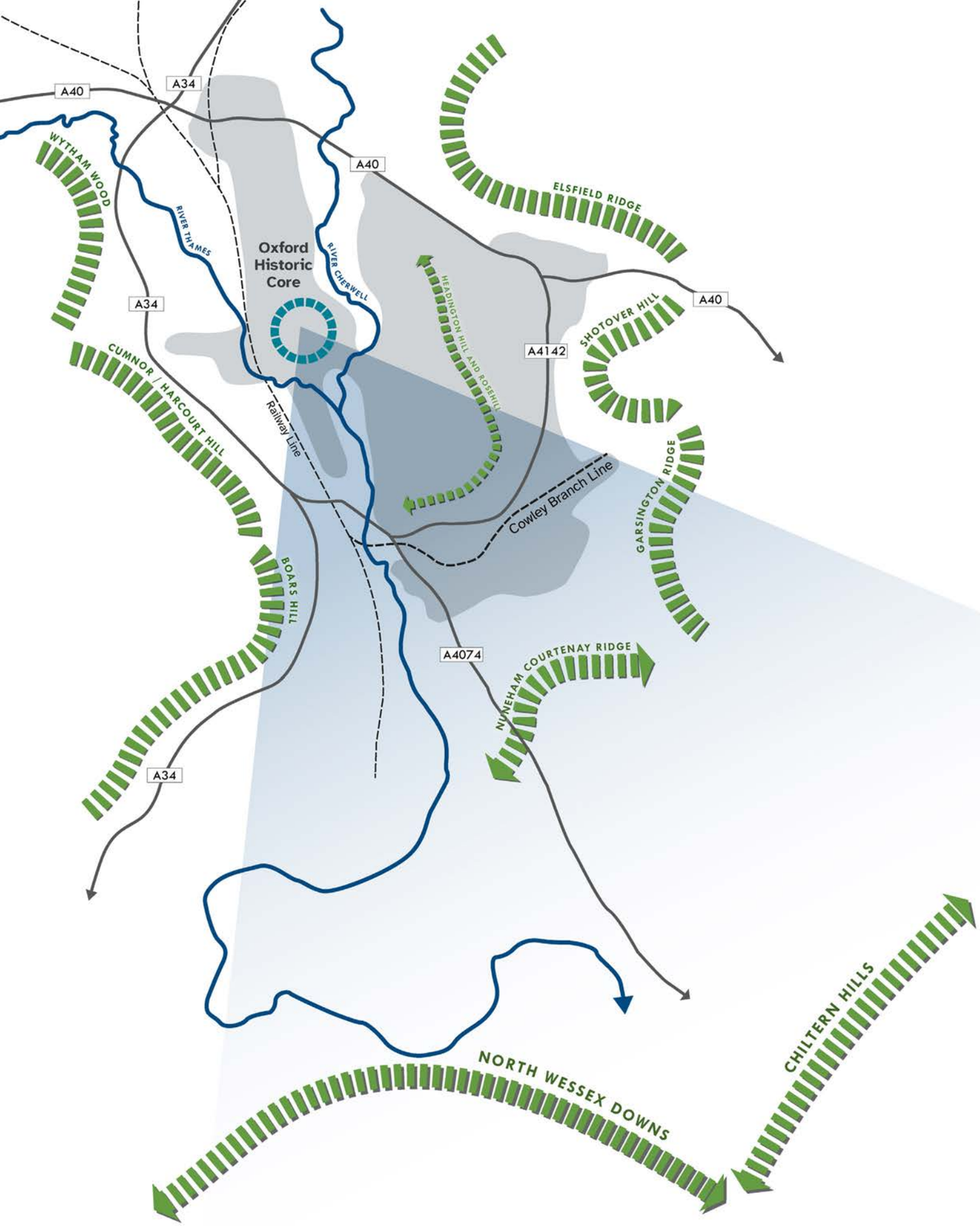
Section 2.0
Context

↑ View of Oxford from Boars Hill.

Introduction

The ambition for local growth is supported by improved connectivity through the Cowley Branch Line rail upgrades and associated plans in preparation by Oxford City Council for walking, cycling and public transport connections to the stations from and to existing and future residential and commercial neighbourhoods. Planning policy already supports the intensification and modernisation of sites within the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change, and policy and guidance also seeks to ensure the City's built heritage and its relationship to its landscape setting are conserved and protected.

This section provides an overview of the existing City context; the aspirations for the Cowley Branch Line; relevant planning policy and guidance; and the study area for this guidance.



↑ Oxford's Spatial Context.

The City and its Environment

Oxford's historic environment features an urban and architectural history that spans nearly 1,000 years. It has an exceptionally high number of heritage assets which are afforded significant protection, and which are essential to the visitor economy which helps to sustain the City. At its heart is the historic settlement, designated as Oxford's Central (City and University) Conservation Area. Over time the City has grown through the expansion and subsumption of outlying villages as part of 19th century suburban extensions, and later 20th century expansions including low density retail and industrial and employment development interspersed amongst the residential suburbs.

The City is in a valley bottom and straddles two rivers, the Thames and the Cherwell, which flow north to south to the west and east of the City centre respectively. The City's historic core developed on the dry terrace of higher land at the confluence of these rivers.

The river flood plains and meadows form green fingers that permeate the City north to south extending right into the historic City core.

The surrounding hills have often been described as an amphitheatre, with the wooded hills and valley sides to the east and west, as part of the 'Midvale Ridge' and the agricultural vales to the north and south of the City centre, that signal the location of the rivers. Further south the Chiltern Hills and North Wessex Downs are also key features.

In views from elevated locations within the City centre, the southern Oxford suburbs are not a prominent feature, typically characterised by relatively low level residential and commercial development.

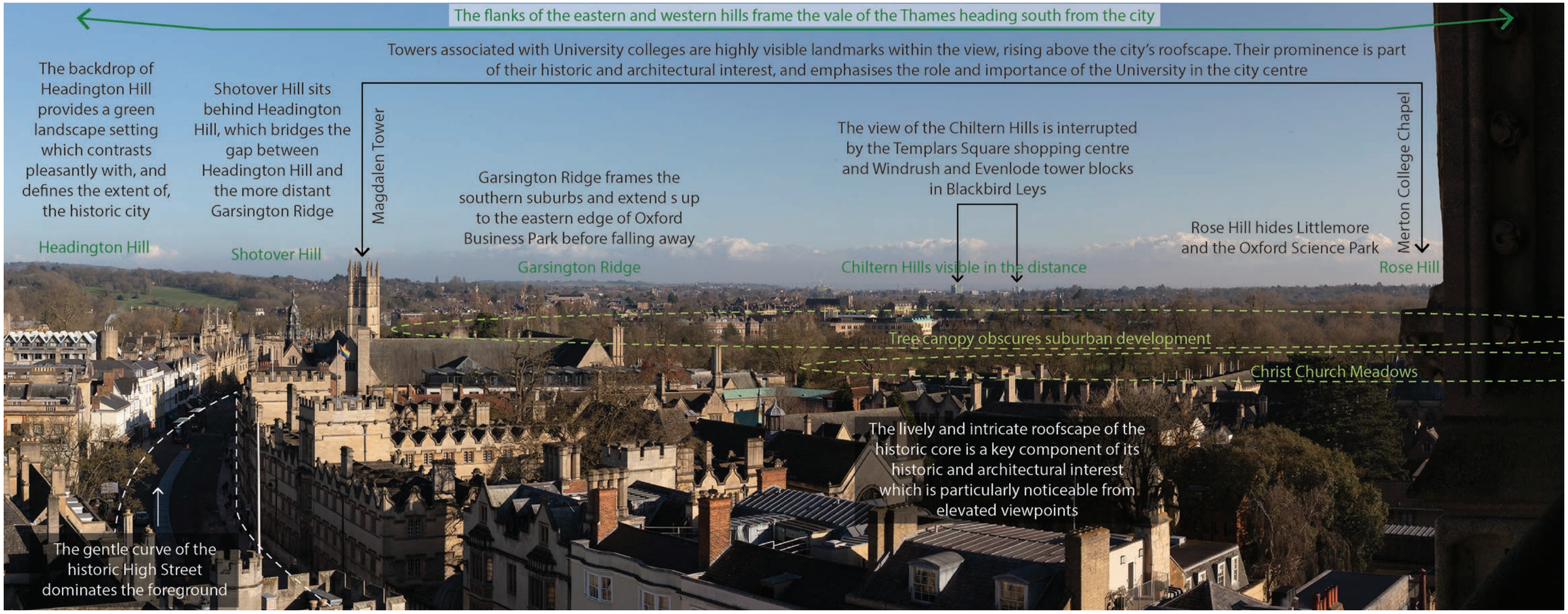
Key built 'landmarks' comprise Hockmore Tower, Temple Cowley; and Windrush / Evenlode Towers in Blackbird Leys. The Rose Hill ridgeline within the City screens views of Littlemore, the Kassam Stadium, and Oxford Science Park to the south-west. The landscape features within the view include Headington Hill / Shotover Hill to the east; River Thames corridor and Boars Hill to the west; and the Chiltern Hills in the distance - framed by the ridgelines to the east and west of City. There are also distant views of the North Wessex Downs along the Thames corridor.

At ground level, current development in the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change is not visible from the City centre.

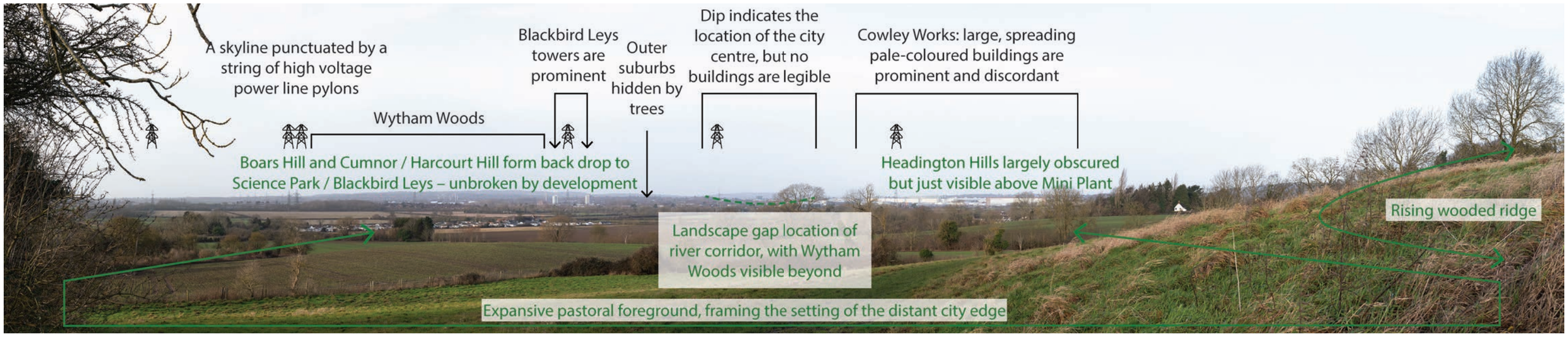
In views from the open countryside south of the City, the centre itself is not visible. The relatively low height of the southern urban fringe coupled with the strong landscape framework, means that the built up area of Oxford is not a prominent feature in view, save Littlemore and Windrush / Evenlode Towers and Blackbird Leys. Further east, the MINI Plant Oxford and Unipart Site are dominant features, comprising a variety of large scale, pale coloured structures. The landscape features within the view include Shotover Hill / Garsington Ridge to the east and Cumnor, Hinksey and Boars Hill / Wytham Woods to the west. The distant hills form a virtually unbroken backdrop to the City, save the interruption by the MINI Plant Oxford and Unipart Site.

Annotated photographs from St Mary's Church Tower in the City centre ("looking out"), and from rising ground on the edge of Garsington ("looking in"), are provided overpage, and indicate the nature and composition of the views. This is followed by figures that show the location and extent of key viewpoints and viewcones.

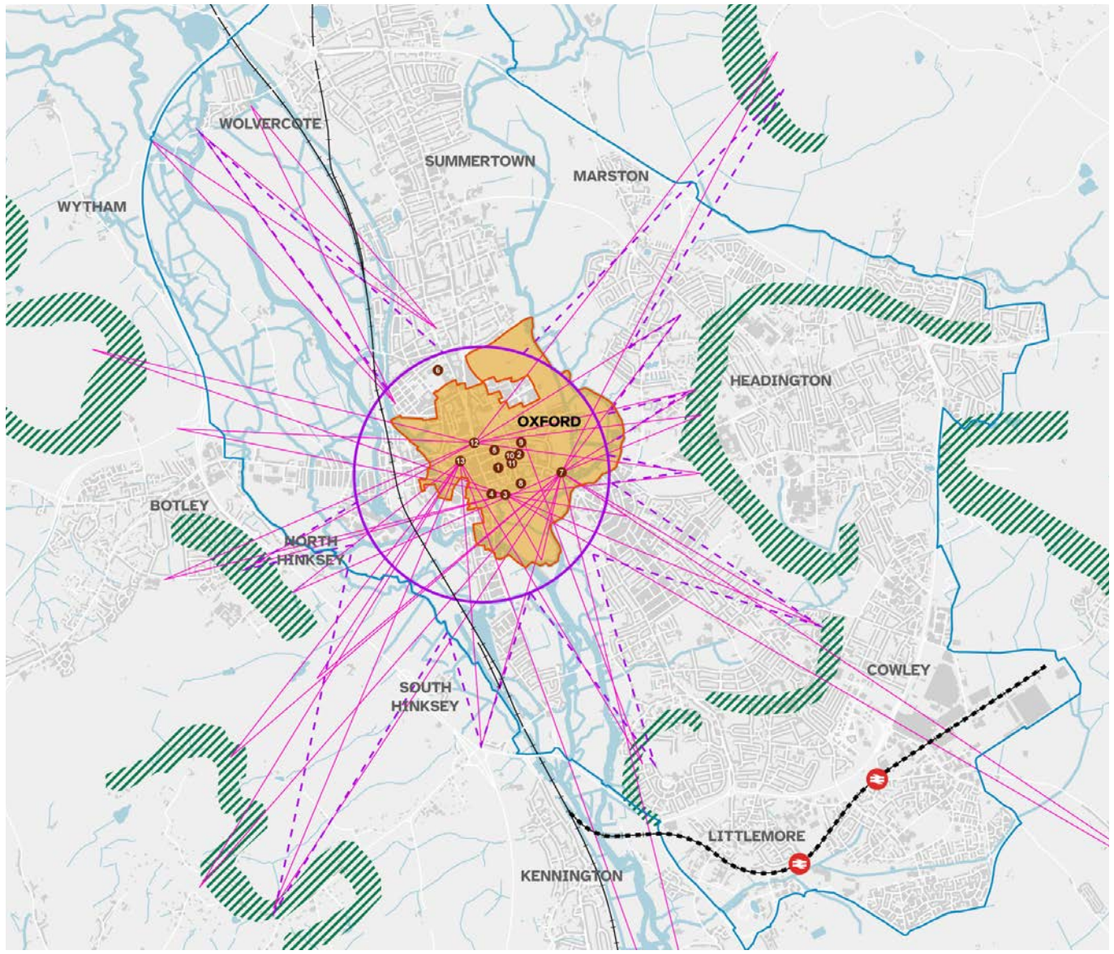
The Stage 1 work provides a detailed analysis of the City's townscape and landscape context.



↑ Annotated view from St Mary's Church Tower.



↑ Annotated view from Garsington.



↑ View Cones; Central Conservation Area; and Spire Locations.

Oxford City Boundary

High Buildings Area [1]

Central Conservation Area

Cowley Branch Line

Spire Locations[2]

1 – All Saint's (Lincoln College) Spire
2 – All Soul's Tower
3 – Christ Church Cathedral Spire
4 – Christ Church Tom Tower
5 – Exeter College Chapel
6 – Former SS Philip and James Church Spire
7 – Magdalen College Tower
8 – Merton College Chapel
9 – New College Tower
10 – Radcliffe Camera
11 – St Barnabus Church Tower
12 – St Mary's Church Spire
13 – St Mary's Church Spire
14 – Wesleyan Memorial Church Tower

View Cone (Oxford City Policies Map 2013)[1]

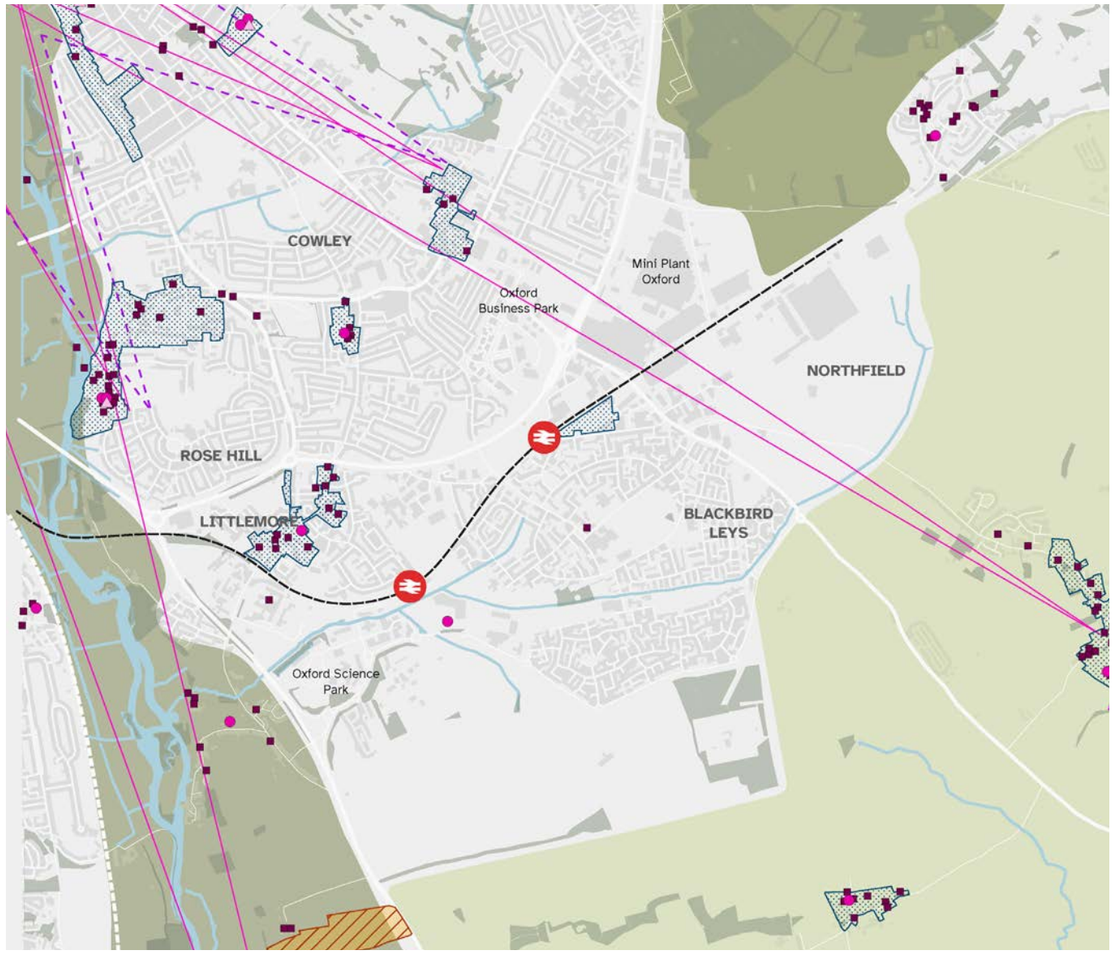
View Cone (Visual Setting of Oxford - Oxford City Landscape Character Assessment 2002)[2]

Ridgelines[2]

Notes:

1 - High Building Areas and View Cones digitised by LDA Design from Oxford City Policies Map 2013

2 - Spire Locations, Ridgelines and View Cones digitised by LDA Design from Visual Setting of Oxford - Oxford City Landscape Character Assessment 2002



↑ Designated heritage assets and View Cones along Cowley Branch Line.

Cowley Branch Line

View Cone (Oxford City Policies Map 2013)

View Cone (Visual Setting of Oxford - Oxford City Landscape Characterr Assessment 2002)

Conservation Area

Scheduled Monument

Listed Buildings

Grade I

Grade II*

Grade II

↑ Location of proposed stations along the Cowley Branch Line.

The Cowley Branch Line

The Cowley Branch Line in South Oxford is an existing railway line that currently operates for freight rail services only and has been closed to passengers since the 1960's. OCC and Oxfordshire County Council, working with Network Rail, landowners and other stakeholders, are currently developing proposals to reopen passenger services along the Cowley Branch Line.

Aspirations for the opening of the Cowley Branch Line include:

- Expansion and intensification of existing employment sites and supporting the delivery of 10,000+ jobs.
- New and improved active travel around the City (anticipated 1 million journeys per year).
- Includes sites allocated for intensification of employment uses.
- Potential to link to East West Rail in the future to provide connectivity to Milton Keynes and Cambridge.

The proposals seek to reopen the route to passenger services, with two new stations proposed at "Oxford Littlemore" and "Oxford Cowley" which would connect to Oxford Station in less than 10 minutes and improve the public transport options for journeys into and around the City, increasing overall capacity locally and reducing congestion on roads.

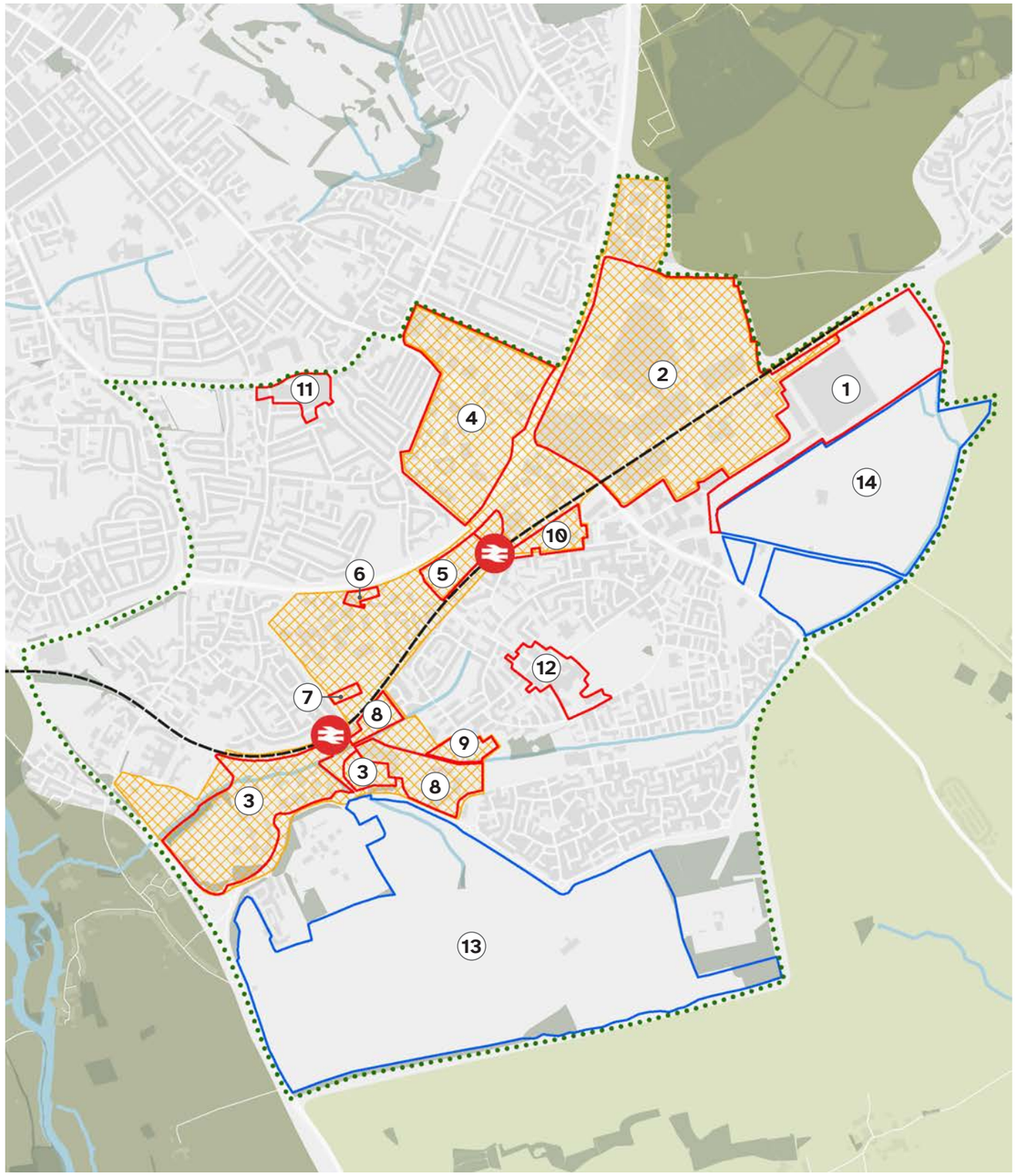
The reopening of the Cowley Branch Line will bring obvious benefits for Oxford City and be particularly transformational for the area surrounding the rail line and the new stations which will become the focus for sustainable growth and intensification of land aligned with the improved connectivity.

The adopted Local Plan seeks to make the best use of existing sites through intensification and modernisation to accommodate the forecast demand for new employment floorspace over the plan period and the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change is specifically earmarked for this purpose. The densification and repurposing of several key employment sites will help to deliver on the aspirations of the Oxford Economic Strategy 2022-2032 which seeks to drive up the established and expanding research and development sectors of the economy and build on Oxford's reputation as a leading City for innovation, science and research.

Work is ongoing to finalise the business and funding case to support the Cowley Branch Line upgrade and expansion, as well as developing detailed design proposals, including for the new stations. Delivery and funding is reliant on central Government, as well as funding from the City council.

Oxford City Council Cabinet Members agreed £2.5 million of developer funds towards the delivery stage of the scheme in their 2025/26 Budget in February 2025. Furthermore, on 23 October 2025, the Government announced £120m of funding to reopen the Cowley Branch Line to passengers and create two new stations at Oxford Cowley and Oxford Littlemore in south-east Oxford.

It is anticipated that subject to full funding and delivery agreements being in place, that the Cowley Branch Line could open by 2030.



↑ Extent of Local Plan site allocations and Cowley Branch Line Area of Change.

Oxford City Allocated Sites

South Oxfordshire Allocated Sites

Study Area

Cowley Branch Line Area of Focus

Site Allocations and Study Area

A number of strategic development sites are allocated around the Cowley Branch Line in the adopted Local Plan, and the corridor itself is identified as an 'Area of Change'. This area of change forms the study area for this guidance.

The anticipated 'change' includes the development of major employment sites to provide significant new floorspace and a greater mix and intensification of uses, particularly in response to Oxford's growth in the science and research and development (R&D) markets. It is also identified that there are a number of retail parks and local centres which are in need of modernisation and that will benefit from the general enhanced connectivity as a result of the station.

Details of the adopted Local Plan allocations are provided in Appendix 4.

Strategic sites allocated within the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change include:

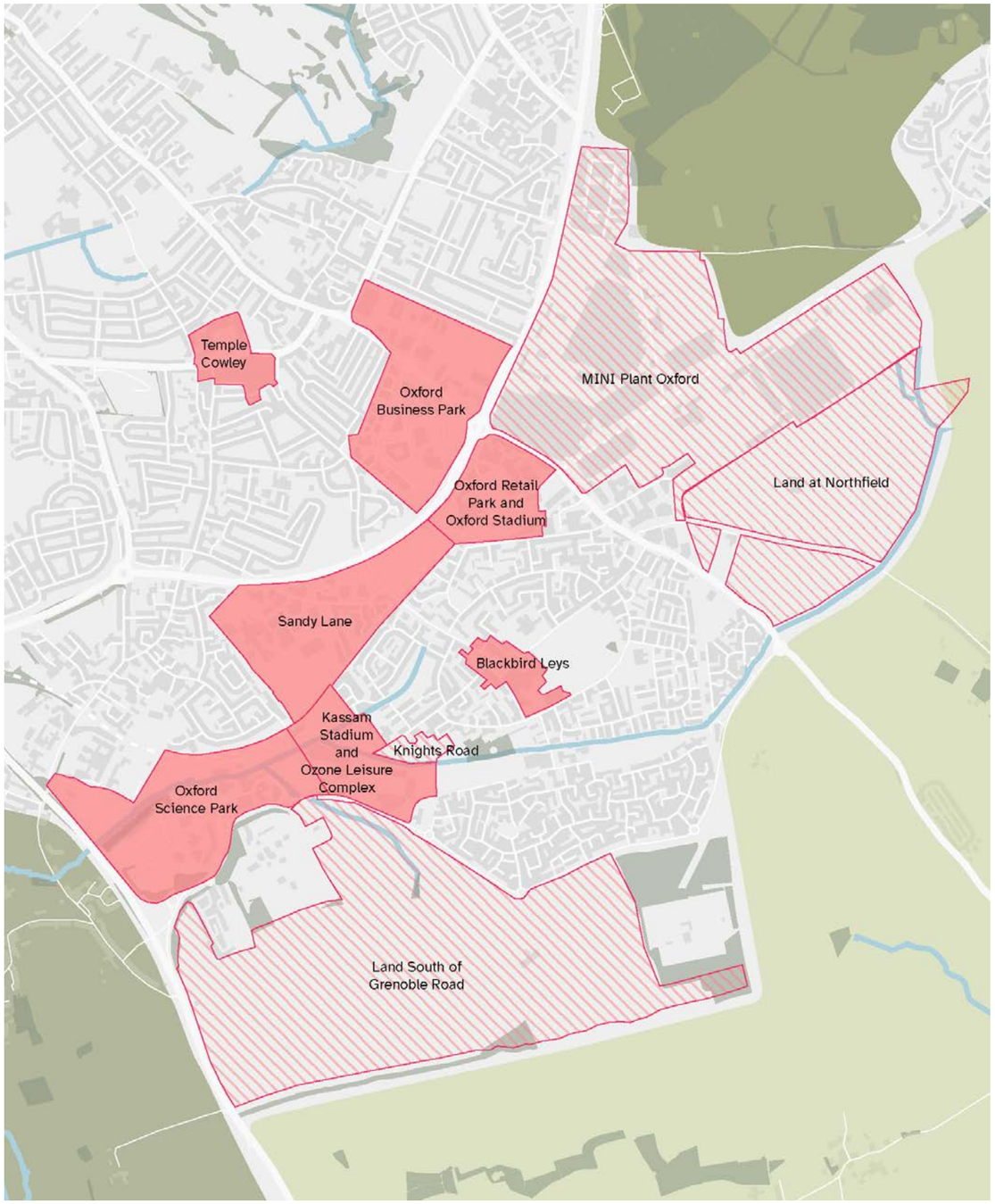
1. Unipart.
2. MINI Plant Oxford.
3. Oxford Science Park.
4. ARC Oxford (Oxford Business Park).
5. Sandy Lane Recreation Ground.
6. Northfield Hospital.
7. Edge of Playing Fields, Oxford Academy.
8. Kassam Stadium Sites.
9. Knights Road.
10. Oxford Stadium.

There are two further allocations / Areas of Change within close proximity of the Cowley Branch Line which are considered to be of relevance to the overall intensification and densification of the area. These are:

11. Cowley Centre - allocated for retail led mixed use development.
12. Blackbird Leys Central Area – allocated for intensified residential use and new commercial and community space.

In addition, the area will experience considerable transformation as allocations on the edge of the City, and in the adjoining South Oxfordshire administrative area, are delivered. These are:

13. Land South of Grenoble Road - allocated for approximately 3,000 new homes and 10ha of employment land incorporating an extension to the Oxford Science Park.
14. Land at Northfield - allocated for approximately 1,800 new homes and community services.



↑ Extent of Development Zones.

Development Zones - with detailed gudiance

Development Zones - not considered further as part of this study

Development Zones

For the purposes of this guidance, these sites have been grouped and categorised into 'Development Zones' that share common characteristics; will be subject to similar opportunities and constraints; and that all offer potential for redevelopment and densification. Guidance is prepared for each of the defined development zones.

The Development Zones have been defined as follows:

- **ARC Oxford** – existing campus science and business park with a mix of office and emerging R&D buildings and ancillary uses, set within landscaped setting with substantial surface car parking. Identified as a principal location for densification and growth of employment and science and innovation uses.
- **Oxford Retail Park and Oxford Stadium** - existing retail park (including large surface car parking area) and industrial estate to the north of the Cowley Branch Line, and Oxford Stadium / industrial estate to the south of the Branch Line. The area is not allocated in the Local Plan for development, however, the Retail Park is associated with the proposed location of a new Oxford Cowley station.
- **Sandy Lane East and West** – open space / playing pitches to the east of Sandy Lane, and existing industrial estate to the west of Sandy Lane, including some pockets of residential land use and the Oxford Academy school. The Sandy Lane east site is allocated for residential development and is located adjacent to the Retail Park / in close proximity to the new station. Smaller allocations at Northfield Hospital / Oxford Academy are also included.
- **Kassam Stadium and Ozone Leisure** – existing Oxford United Football Club (OUFC) stadium site and adjoining leisure complex, which includes large area of surface car parking. OUFC are seeking to relocate to a new stadium site and this part of the site is allocated for residential-led development.
- **Oxford Science Park** – existing campus business park with a mix of office and emerging R&D buildings and ancillary uses, set within a landscaped setting with substantial surface car parking. Allocated as a principal location for densification and growth of employment and science and innovation uses.
- **District Centres** - existing district centres at Cowley Centre and Blackbird Leys, allocated for mixed use development that includes employment, residential and community uses. This zone includes Temple Cowley Retail Park which may have future development potential.

The **MINI Plant Oxford / Unipart** – which is allocated as a principal location for employment uses - has not been considerd in detail at this stage. Where development comes forward on these sites it is likely to provide a supporting / complimentary role to the primary functions of these sites for car manufacturing and distribution. However, it is still considerd to form a strategic site along the Cowley Branch Line; and broad consideration is given to height and density in this area. The opportunity exists to consider this site in more detail as part of the subsequent 'Cowley Branch Line Spatial Delivery Framework' study.

Land at **Knights Road** has not been included within or as an individual Development Zones due to its small scale and recent permission for new homes.

The **strategic housing sites** (in South Oxfordshire) are not considered in detail as they fall outside of the Oxford City administrative area, however, they are referenced where considered to be of relevance to other development zones.

Planning Policy Context

The baseline policy position is that set out within the adopted Local Plan (2036). The policies map defines the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change and Policy AOC7 states:

"Planning permission will be granted for new development within the area of change where it would take opportunities to deliver the following, where relevant:

- To enhance existing tree cover and semi-rural landscape.
- To retain wildlife corridor function of the brooks.
- To safeguard land for proposed stations and access.
- To make more efficient use of space through intensification of existing sites:

    1. Rationalisation of parking and reduction in surface-level car parking.
    2. Improved connectivity between different parts of the area."

The Plan states that high density residential and employment development that makes efficient use of land will be expected. The Plan identifies "that development would need to be relatively tall (21m) before affecting views from St Mary's Tower. Buildings above this height will need careful design and justification. Consideration should also be given to the nature of surrounding uses and impact on conservation areas and listed buildings".

Other policies within the adopted Plan that are relevant to the scope of this study include, but are not limited to (paraphrased):

- E1 Employment Sites - Planning permission will be granted for the intensification, modernisation and regeneration for employment purposes of any employment site if it can be demonstrated that the development does not cause unacceptable environmental impacts and effects.
- RE2 Efficient Use of Land - Development proposals must make best use of site capacity, in a manner compatible with the site and surrounding area. It is expected that sites at transportation hubs and within district centres will be capable of accommodating development at an increased scale and density.
- DH1 High Quality Design and Placemaking - Planning permission will only be granted for development of high quality design that creates or enhances local distinctiveness.
- DH2 Views and Building Heights - The Council will seek to retain significant views both within Oxford and from outside of the City. Planning permission will not be granted for any building or structure that would harm Oxford's historic skyline.

At the time of writring, the production of the emerging Local Plan 2045 was well underway. As set out previously, the study area for the Stage 1 analysis was based on the (now withdrawn) Oxford Local Plan 2040.

Although, this guidance references terminology and site allocations contained within the extant Oxford Local Plan 2036, the principles and advice contained within it are equally applicable to the emerging Local Plan 2045 Cowley Branch Line area and equivalent site allocation policies, which are to provide the future local planning policy context for the City.

Guidance and Controls

This guidance forms part of a suite of other guidance documents that need to be considered when developing proposals for sites within Oxford City, and particularly within the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change.

The Stage 1 Report that supports this guidance identifies the relevant evidence base and guidance documents that set the baseline for this densification study and which have informed the subsequent recommendations and guiding principles set out in the guidance.

Relevant documents include:

- Oxford Adopted Local Plan 2016 - 2036.
- Technical Advice Notes (various) – principally the Oxford High Buildings TAN (2018).
- Assessment of the Oxford View Cones (2015).
- A Character Assessment of Oxford in its Landscape Setting (Update Addendum 2022).
- Conservation Area Appraisals (various) – principally the Littlemore Conservation Area Appraisal, Oxford Stadium Conservation Area Appraisal and the Oxford Central Conservation Area Appraisal.
- Oxford Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2023).
- Oxford Economic Strategy (2022).

Of particular relevance is the Oxford High Buildings TAN (2018). This was a City-wide study which identified areas of greater potential for height and taller buildings, having regard to assessed impacts on View Cones and designated heritage assets among other considerations, as well as setting framework guidance for the management of tall buildings and densification. Within that study, the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change is located within an ‘Area of Greater Potential for High Buildings’ and ‘Dynamic Areas’, suitable for densification.

Reference should be made to the Stage 1 Report which identifies relevant aspects from the High Buildings TAN and associated High Buildings Study Evidence Base Report to the Cowley Branch Line opportunity area.

Section 3.0
An Outcomes led Approach

↑ View of southern suburbs from St Mary's Church.

Placemaking Outcomes

This Stage 2 work has utilised Homes England's Outcome Engagement Tool to facilitate collaboration between key stakeholders in order to understand and agree the desired outcomes for the Cowley Branch Line study area. The engagement and outcomes process is summarised in this section of the guidance and the accompanying 'Outcomes Report'.

The Outcomes Report further describes the placemaking potential of the area and highlights how the growth and densification of the Cowley Branch Line study area will contribute to the overall success of the City and improve peoples' lives and wellbeing.

This section describes the emerging vision for the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change as a South Oxford Cluster; a City district comprising multiple linked places that deliver better outcomes for local communities and provides a platform for the expansion of employment sectors that are central to Oxford's and the UK's position in the global innovation market.

The placemaking conditions needed to support sustainable growth are explored further under the following headings:

- Cowley Branch Line Campus.
- Linked places.
- Local living.
- Connected communities.
- Contact with nature.
- Urban densification.

Placemaking Conditions

Cowley Branch Line Campus

The concept of the ‘Campus’, bringing together of land within the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change, can be seen as a unifying placemaking strategy, providing the framework for coordinated change, regeneration and economic-led growth. The Campus will deliver new life science laboratory and research development, commercial space, housing and social infrastructure within the areas of highest connectivity and linked to the Oxford Knowledge Spine, Oxford to Cambridge corridor and Golden Triangle. New housing is not only required to support the existing projected needs of the City but also to attract and retain the necessary workforce.

Linked places

In addition to new and expanded employment clusters, the areas around the proposed stations lend themselves to the creation of lively new urban quarters that are easily accessible and well connected. The stations are also in areas where multiple sites converge creating the opportunity to bring together living, working and ‘third place’ environments to meet.

Local living

There is a degree of diversity of communities across the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change and no single prevailing urban character. This provides the opportunity for new neighbourhoods to build their own character and identity driven by the needs of communities today. This also provides an opportunity to develop housing types and tenures that support the economic opportunity and address local housing need.

Connected places

Coordinating walking and cycling routes around the stations will secure better connectivity between communities and onwards to destinations across the City. Stations can help to bridge existing barriers and introduce a clearer and more intuitive choice of routes. The two stations will ensure focus can be placed on fewer strategic routes to the City centre and other City-wide destinations, ensuring priority for walking and cycling and an improved user experience.

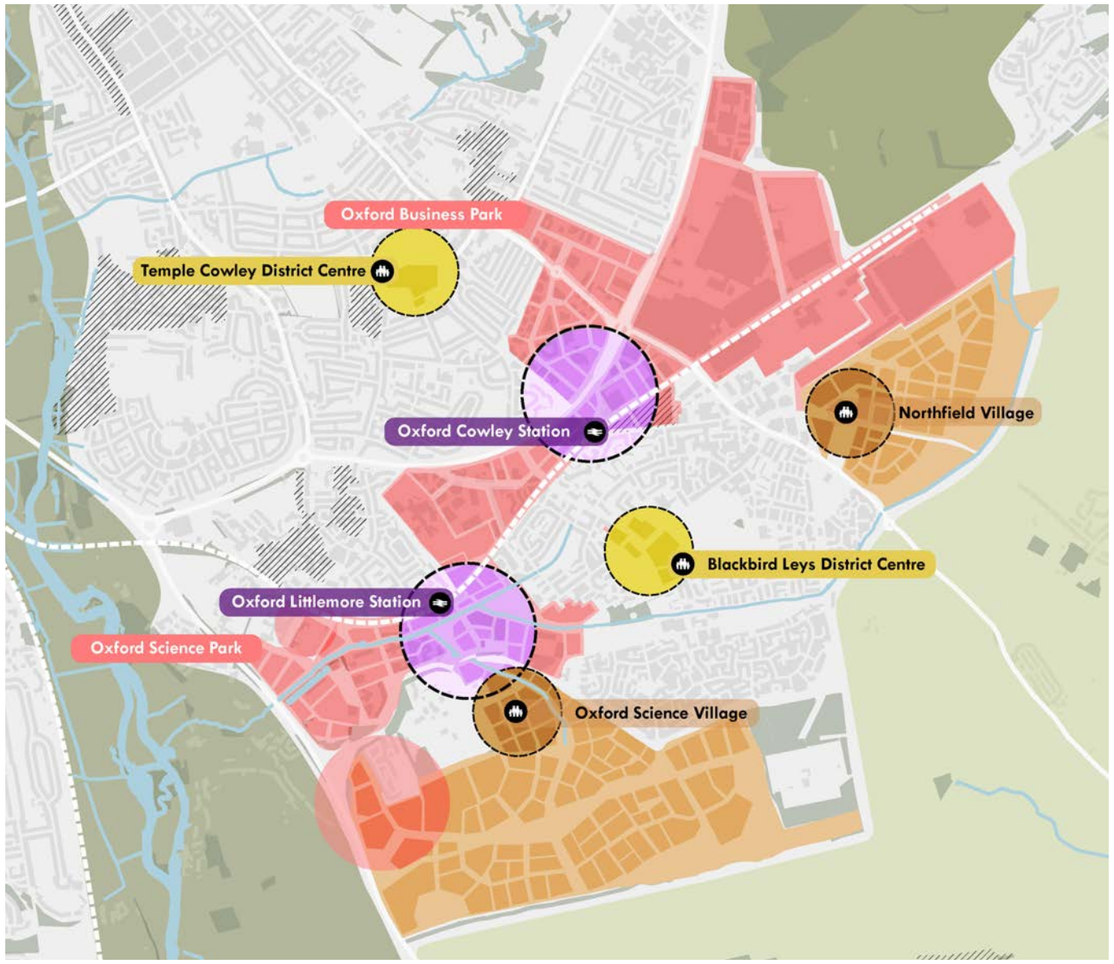
Contact with nature

In addition to new, high-quality landscape and open space provided as part of developments within the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change, there is an opportunity to identify strategic nature recovery projects in the wider area. Delivered in optimal locations, these projects offer the potential to deliver greater benefit to nature, instead of a piecemeal approach, and ensuring that development can be prioritised in the most sustainable locations.

Urban densification

While a considered approach will be required for each site that also considers wider townscape and heritage constraints, there are broadly five placemaking categories that can guide across the area. These are:

- Station quarters: the areas around the stations where living and working will overlap with the most urban character.
- The Campus: mixed use areas / science and business parks which are highly accessible to the stations.
- District centres: existing District Centres which can potentially accommodate further redevelopment.
- Neighbourhood centres: new mixed use community hubs where higher density can support walkable neighbourhoods.
- Residential neighbourhoods: areas that increase typical suburban densities in response to the highly accessible locations.



↑ Placemaking conditions for Cowley Branch Line Area of Change.

Section 4.0
Developer Guidance
The Spatial Strategy

↑ View from Carfax Tower.

Introduction

For each of the defined Development Zones, a summary is provided of the place; its local context; and its City-wide context. This is followed by recommendations for densification / height and detailed visual analysis.

A series of plans are included to illustrate existing land-use and environmental context; illustrative height parameters; and placemaking principles. Key designations and classifications are also indicatively mapped, including Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, key open spaces, green infrastructure and City wildlife sites (as defined by the Local Plan proposals map); and viewcones.

Densification can typically be achieved across all of the Development Zones within the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change through a combination of infill development; redevelopment of existing buildings / plots; and rationalisation of parking, subject to appropriate design. Increases in height are possible across all of the Development Zones albeit broad parameters are set to guide the scale of change in response to context.

Densification and general increase in height will help to deliver the growth opportunities intended as a result of the Cowley Branch Line and other investments, but it needs to respond appropriately to place. The design approach to taller buildings should also be carefully considered to ensure they provide variety in roof heights, massing and gaps through to the surrounding landscape and in accordance with the High Buildings Study.

Achieving Densification

The promotion of densification requires a balance to be reached of several factors including: building height; building mass related to typology and function; activation of streets and ground floor uses; high quality public realm and connections - including streets, cycle ways, and footpaths; and accessibility to good quality transport and the decrease in reliance of the car.

The developer guidance in **Section 4.0** provides guidance on these matters in relation to each development zone. In addition a series of three 'principles' have been devised to provide the framework for guiding densification and ensuring that development is appropriate for its context. These are:

The Place

Any given development within defined Development Zones should relate well to the existing site context / prevailing townscape character, and heritage significance, and make a positive contribution to the sense of place and identity.

Local Context

Any given development within the defined Development Zones area should positively respond to existing, consented and emerging context, including proposed new stations, such that there is a coherent pattern of built form.

City Context

Any given development within the defined Development Zones should respect key views into and out of the City, and not negatively impact on the overall historic environment, composition and character of Oxford in its landscape setting.

Height Parameters

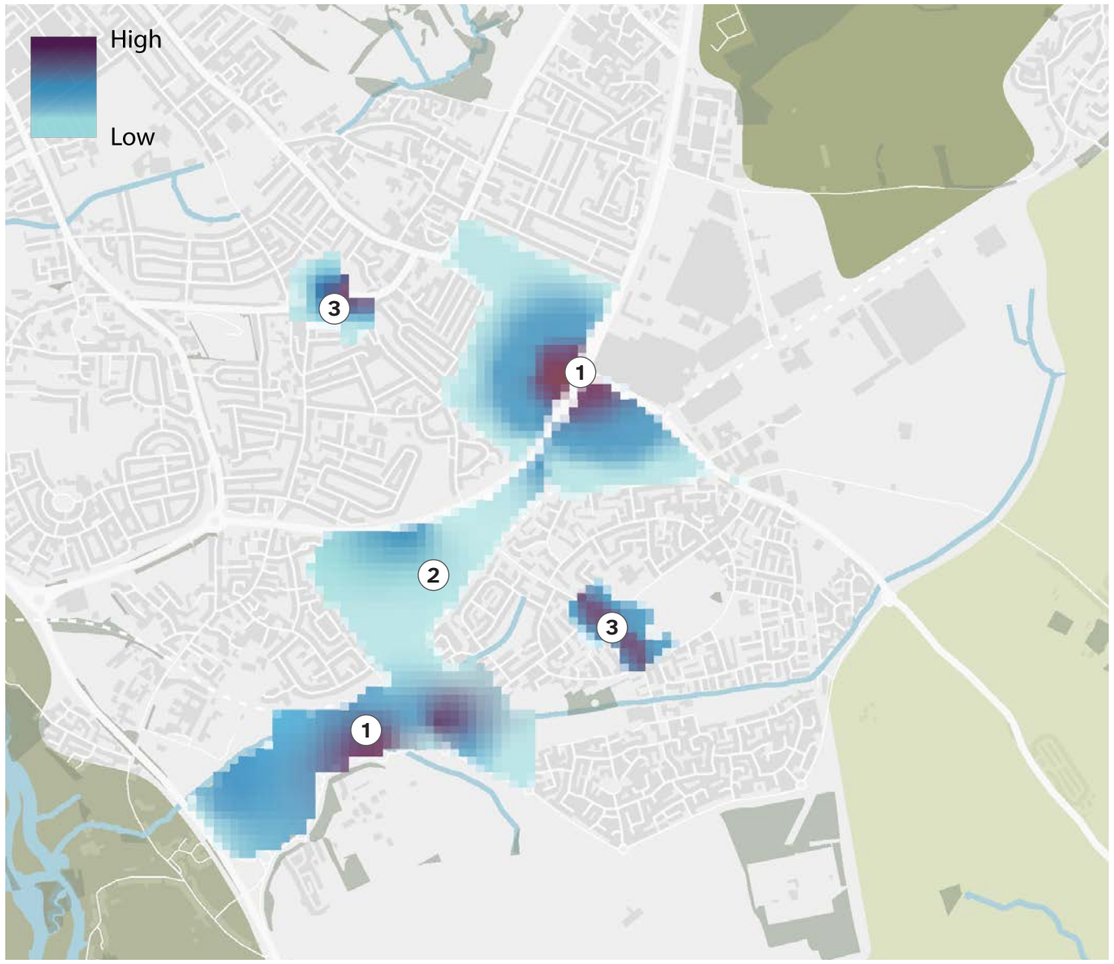
In relation to height parameters, the overarching strategy is to focus height around the Oxford Science Park and ARC Oxford. These locations all benefit from close proximity to the proposed stations and have an established character / identity as centres of science and innovation.

By association, the Kassam Stadium and Ozone Leisure site (to the east of the Oxford Science Park) and Oxford Retail Park and Oxford Stadium (to the south of ARC Oxford) have the potential to provide natural extensions to the existing science and business parks and benefitting from connectivity to the proposed stations.

The Oxford Science Park and ARC Oxford also play a key role as gateways into the City and highlight Oxford's leading role as a City of innovation. Oxford Science Park to the west serves as a gateway into Oxford from the south, along the A4074, and marks a transition from the countryside into the southern fringe of the City, while ARC Oxford is a focal point along the A4142 Eastern Bypass, and marks the gateway between the Blackbird Leys suburbs and the 'inner' City within the ring road.

Moderated heights can also be achieved around the Blackbird Leys District Centre and Templars Square District Centre as part of the ongoing redevelopment and diversification of these hubs.

This height strategy is illustrated on the plan opposite, while the plan over-page shows the height strategy relative to key environmental constraints.



↑ Illustrative height parameters.

Key principles:

1. Existing science and innovation clusters focus for height, close to stations and along key routes. Any development will need to allow for gaps through / between buildings to the surrounding hills / ridgelines through variations in height / orientation and careful consideration of upper stories and roofscape.
2. Reduction in height and density at edges (and between) the science and innovation clusters to maintain separate identity and to provide transition to surrounding residential areas and/or countryside.
3. Existing district centres also focus for height - with potential for other tall structures - but designed to maintain separate identity from the surrounding science and innovation clusters.

Views and Visual Testing

Visual testing on inward and outward views, to and from the City centre, also confirms the need to 'cluster' development around key locations to minimise changes to the landscape setting of the City and the setting of its heritage assets. The areas around Oxford Science Park and Oxford Business Park allow for this to happen, whilst largely retaining and protecting the prevailing landscape and visual context.

However, outer extents of the Cowley Branch Line study area need to be carefully controlled, providing a transitional zone between the built up area and River Thames corridor / western hills (Cumnor, Hinksey and Boars Hill) and eastern hills (Shotover Hill and Garsington Ridge).

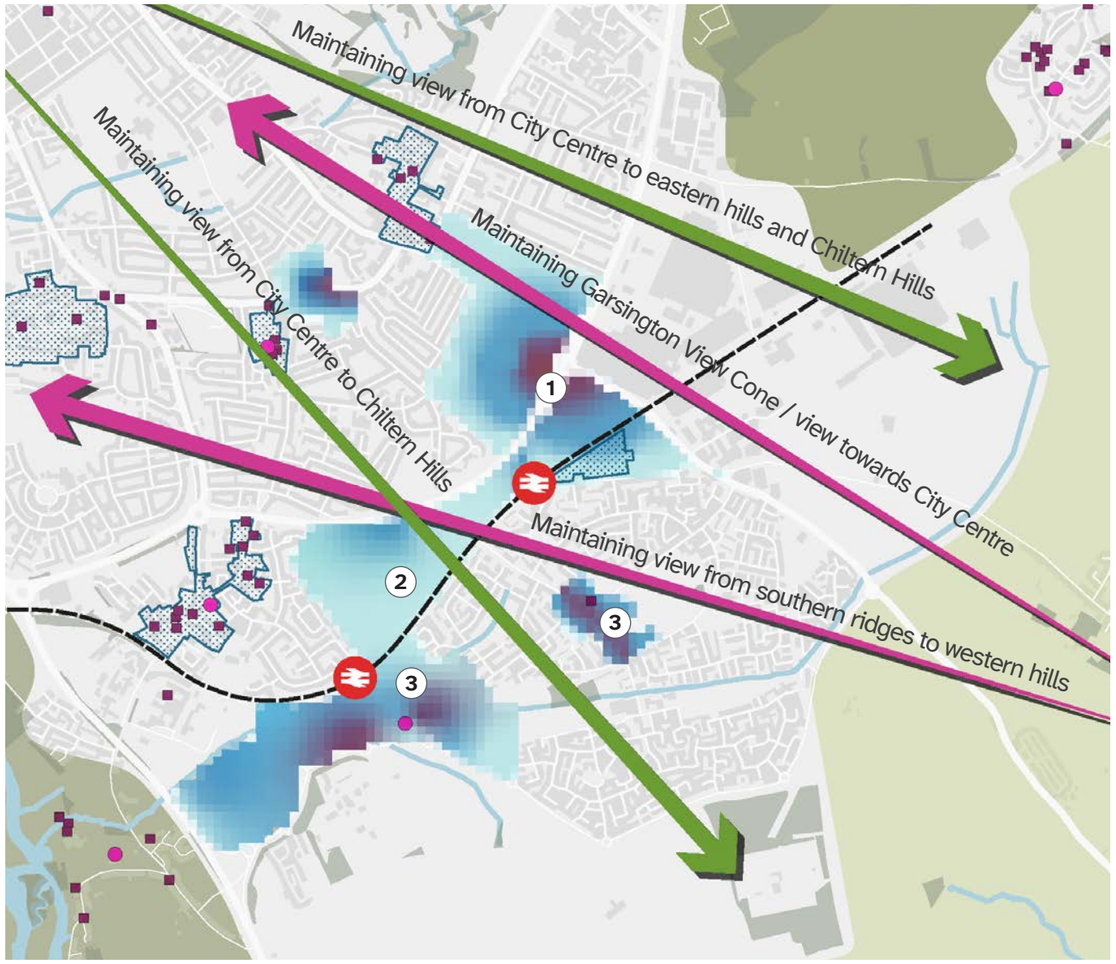
This distribution of height would ensure there are clearly defined focal points along the southern fringe of Oxford; avoiding a continuous 'wall' of development along the branch line; and maintaining the experience and appreciation of the landscape setting between clusters and individual buildings.

Views from St Mary's Church tower (a publicly accessible, elevated City centre location) and from Garsington (within the countryside to the south of the City) are used to describe and illustrate potential changes to inward and outwards views across the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change resulting from greater building heights.

The photos and illustrations below indicate the overall strategy for height across the study area, followed by the more detailed guidance for each development zone.

The illustrations have been developed using a range of techniques, including verified photography, VU.CITY modelling and conceptual arrangement and scale of buildings within each 'development zone'.

It should be noted that these are intended to illustrate the overall placemaking and height strategy, however, they are not accurate visual representations and they do not suggest a particular design response.



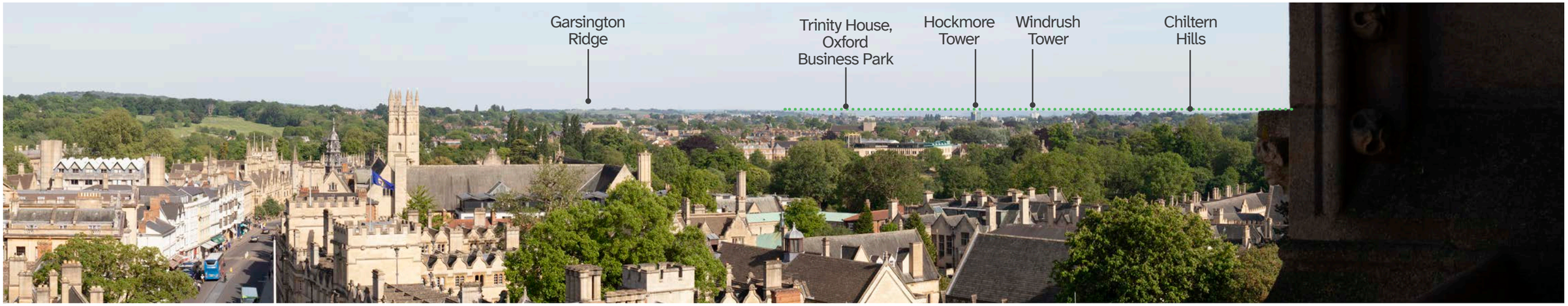
↑ Illustrative height parameters; key environmental constraints; and key views

Key principles:

1. Moderated heights to the north-east of the ARC Oxford Cluster maintains degree of openness along Garsington View Cone.
2. Moderated height at edges (and between) the science and innovation clusters maintains inward and outward views to / from key ridgelines.
3. Any redevelopment within Kassam Stadium and Ozone Leisure site and Blackbird Leys District Centre needs to carefully consider setting of Listed Buildings.

Cowley Branch Line
Conservation Area
Listed Buildings
Grade I
Grade II*
Grade II

Visual Analysis - St Mary's Church Tower



↑ Existing photograph from St Mary's Church Tower.

↑ Illustration of existing photograph from St Mary's Church Tower with potential development.

Key principles:

1. Oxford Business Park & Oxford Retail Park / Oxford Stadium - focus for height, grouped with permitted R&D development and defining key gateways / routes. Scale and mass of buildings can rise from moderated edges where adjoining lower-rise built areas, with height not to break distant ridgeline; and with a varied roofscape, creating visual interest and allowing for views through to the green back drop.

2. District Centres - focus for height / intensifying existing uses, with moderated heights at fringes to maintain separate identity with science and innovation clusters. Scale and mass of buildings not to break distant ridgeline, and to help 'landmark' the centres as local district or neighbourhood locations.

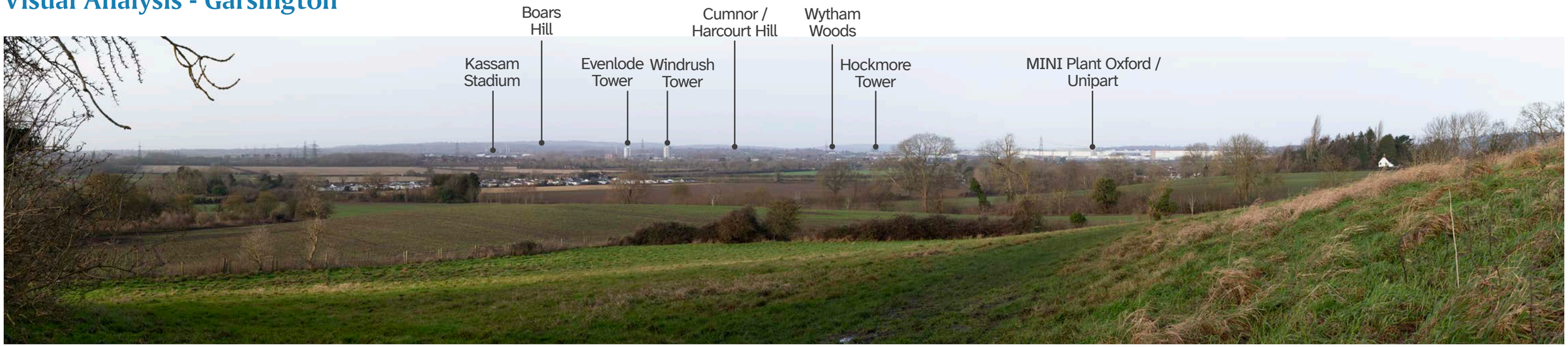
3. Sandy Lane - moderated heights to provide transition with surrounding residential areas / countryside and maintain visible 'gap' to the landscape and ridgelines on the horizon beyond.

4. Kassam Stadium / Ozone Leisure Site & Oxford Science Park - focus for height, largely screened from City Centre by intervening topography and vegetation, but with height not to break distant ridgeline.

Key:

- Kassam Stadium / Ozone Leisure Site
- Temple Cowley District Centre
- Blackbird Leys District Centre
- Oxford Science Park
- Oxford Retail Park / Oxford Stadium
- Oxford Business Park
- Sandy Lane
- Chiltern Hills Ridgeline

Visual Analysis - Garsington



↑ Existing photograph from Garsington.

↑ Illustration of existing photograph from Garsington with potential development.

Key principles:

1. Oxford Business Park & Oxford Retail Park / Oxford Stadium - focus for height, grouped with permitted R&D development and defining key gateways / routes. Scale and mass of buildings can rise from moderated edges where adjoining lower-rise built areas, with height not to break distant western ridgeline; and with a varied roofscape, creating visual interest and allowing for views through to the green back drop.

2. Sandy Lane - moderated heights to provide transition with surrounding residential areas / countryside and maintain visible 'gap' between development roofline and the landscape and ridgeline of the western horizon beyond.

3. District Centres - focus for height / intensifying existing uses, with moderated heights at fringes to maintain separate identity with science and innovation clusters. Scale and mass of buildings not to break distant ridgeline to the west, but should help 'landmark' the centres as local district or neighbourhood locations.

4. Kassam Stadium and Ozone Leisure Site - focus for height, as extension to existing science and innovation cluster. Scale and mass of buildings not to break distant ridgeline.

5. Oxford Science Park - focus for height, grouped with existing R&D development. Scale and mass of buildings not to break distant ridgeline and provide transition from more intensely developed areas of Kassam and Ozone to the countryside and River Thames corridor to west / south respectively.

Key:

- Kassam Stadium / Ozone Leisure Site
- Temple Cowley District Centre
- Blackbird Leys District Centre
- Oxford Science Park
- Oxford Retail Park / Oxford Stadium
- Oxford Business Park
- Sandy Lane
- Chiltern Hills Ridgeline

Visual Analysis - Other Views

While the views from St Mary's Church tower and Garsington are useful reference points, any major development proposals within the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change should consider effects on all relevant view cones and important City centre elevated viewing positions.

As illustrated by the photographs opposite, Oxford City centre has a varied and unique roofscape, set in the context of distant hills and ridges. Any new development needs to be sensitively designed to respond to this context.

The 'Developer Guidance' provided in **Section 6.0** provides further details of the expectations in relation to planning applications. All major development proposals should also be informed by accurate visualisations, prepared during the pre-application stage, to test and refine proposals; and prepared for the submitted application, showing the fixed scheme.

↑ Existing photograph from Carfax Tower.

↑ Existing photograph from St. George's Tower.

↑ Existing photograph from St Michael's Church.

Defining Height

In order to provide meaningful guidance on the likely appropriate building heights, the following information is provided for each Development Zone:

- Approximate site level (metres AOD) - derived from base mapping.
- Approximate existing building heights (metres) - derived from VU.CITY.
- Approximate proposed / recently permitted building heights (metres) - derived from planning applications.
- Acceptability of different building heights, based on broad storey height bands.

Typical storey heights for residential and R&D development typologies are illustrated in the graphic opposite. The number of storeys associated with R&D development typologies are used as a proxy when considering building heights for all employment-generatng uses. Non-R&D employment typologies should have regard to the corresponding height (m) rather than the number of storeys.

It should be noted that all height guidance is indicative only, based on high level desk / field study and modelling, and is not a substitute for the detailed design, assessment and testing process for individual development projects.

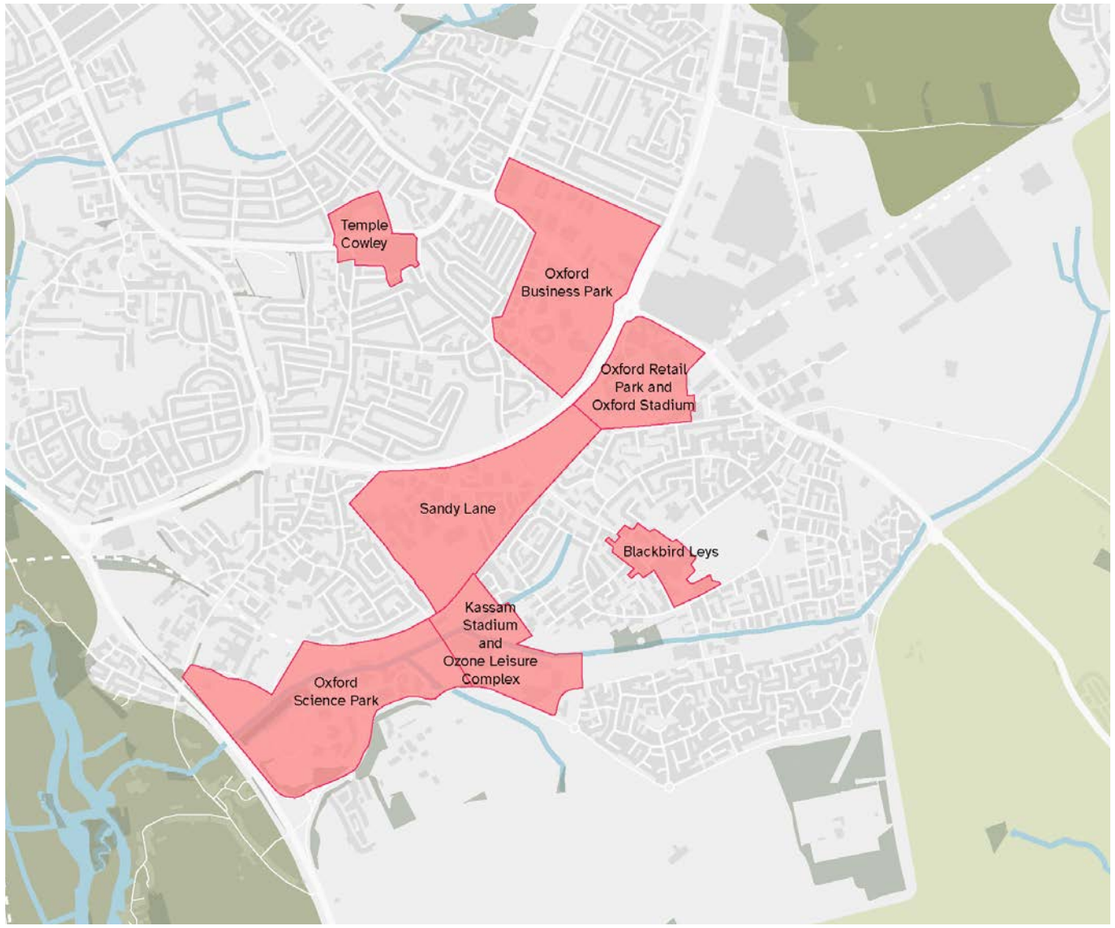
Building heights will also need to be informed by viability testing, which does not form part of this study.

All references to height include any associated roof plant; and in testing individual development projects, roof plant should be fully considered.

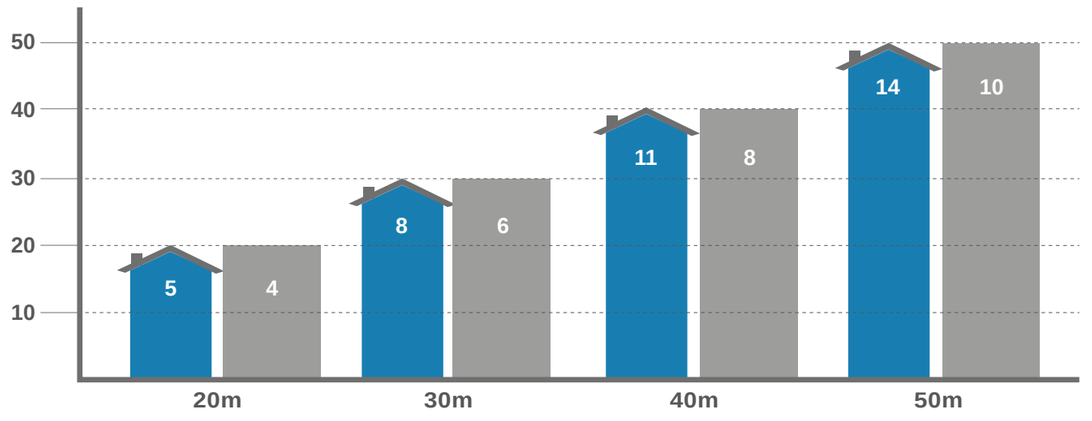
For each Development Zone the following visual / graphic material is presented:

- Photographs to show existing character.
- Plan to illustrate surrounding land-uses and context.
- Plan to illustrate indicative height parameters.
- Plan to illustrate a conceptual placemaking strategy and key principles for achieving densification.
- Existing photography from St Mary's Church Tower and Garsington.
- Inset of existing photograph with annotation of key features.
- Illustration of the existing photograph to show the potential development scenario.

When approaching height, consideration needs to be given as to how buildings relate to one another, not considering each site in isolation. Proposals should seek to respond to existing local context; emerging context at the time of application; and the broader opportunity for increased height and density as a result of planned growth and intensification.



↑ Extent of Development Zones.



↑ Typical storey heights for residential and R&D development typologies.

ARC Oxford | ARC

ARC Oxford

The Place

- Campus environment, with building set within estate roads and green spaces.
- Predominately a mix of offices and R&D buildings with some commercial uses, including hotel, nursery and gym.
- The site sits at around 70m - 75m AOD. Buildings typically 2 - 3 storeys (circa 10 – 15m) with flat or low roof profiles.
- Smaller scale development principally located around the periphery along the residential interfaces. Larger scale development principally located within the central area.
- No designated heritage assets or other environmental designations.
- Recent planning permissions include (mapped over page):

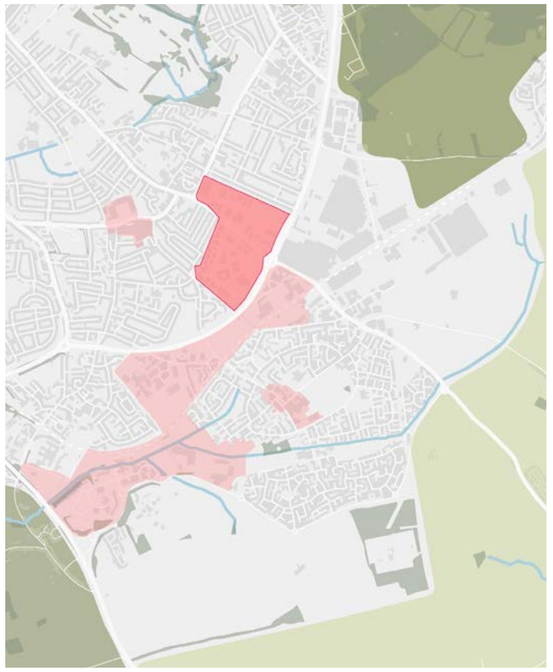
1. Trinity House (Ref 22/03067/FUL) - R&D building, 32m high.
2. Plot 4200, ARC Oxford (Ref 24/00335/FUL) – R&D building, 17m high.
3. Plot 5000, Arc Oxford (Ref 24/01302/FUL) - R&D building, 27m high.

Local Context

- Prominent frontage with the Eastern Bypass / Oxford ring-road.
- Garsington Road – a main route into the City – bisects ARC Oxford.
- Suburban residential land uses adjoin the business park to the north, south and west.
- Adjacent to the Oxford Retail Park to the south – connected by Garsington Road and underpass and the proposed Oxford Cowley station.
- Temple Cowley Conservation Area is adjacent and includes a number of listed buildings.

City Context

- Northern part of ARC Oxford (north of Garsington Road) falls within the Garsington View Cone.
- In views towards the City from the countryside to the south, ARC Oxford is not generally discernible and seen in context of and/or partially obscured by the MINI Plant Oxford. The rising ground of Wytham Woods is visible beyond the City to the north-west.
- In views from elevated locations within the City centre, ARC Oxford is not generally discernible, with the exception of Trinity House and Plot 5000. These buildings break above the suburban sky line, however, remain below the distant horizon line of the Chiltern Hills to the south-east.
- In views from the countryside and City Centre, taller buildings around Temple Cowley appears on the western edges of ARC Oxford.
- In views from the City Centre, the flanks of Shotover Hill appear on the eastern edges of ARC Oxford.



↑ ARC Oxford development zone.

↑ Buildings typically 2 - 3 storeys with flat or low roof profiles.

↑ Buildings set within estate roads and green spaces.

Design Guidance

Policy Context

- Planning permission will be granted for B1 and B2 employment uses at ARC Oxford. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

Future Vision

- Part of an established science and innovation campus close to the station with potential for redevelopment of existing plots / development on vacant land to provide further R&D uses.
- Potential for co-location with office space and supporting ancillary facilities to support active frontage opportunities along Garsington Road.
- Principles around the landscaped setting of the existing business park should be retained as well as ensuring connectivity both within the business park and to the adjacent station and surrounding neighbourhoods.

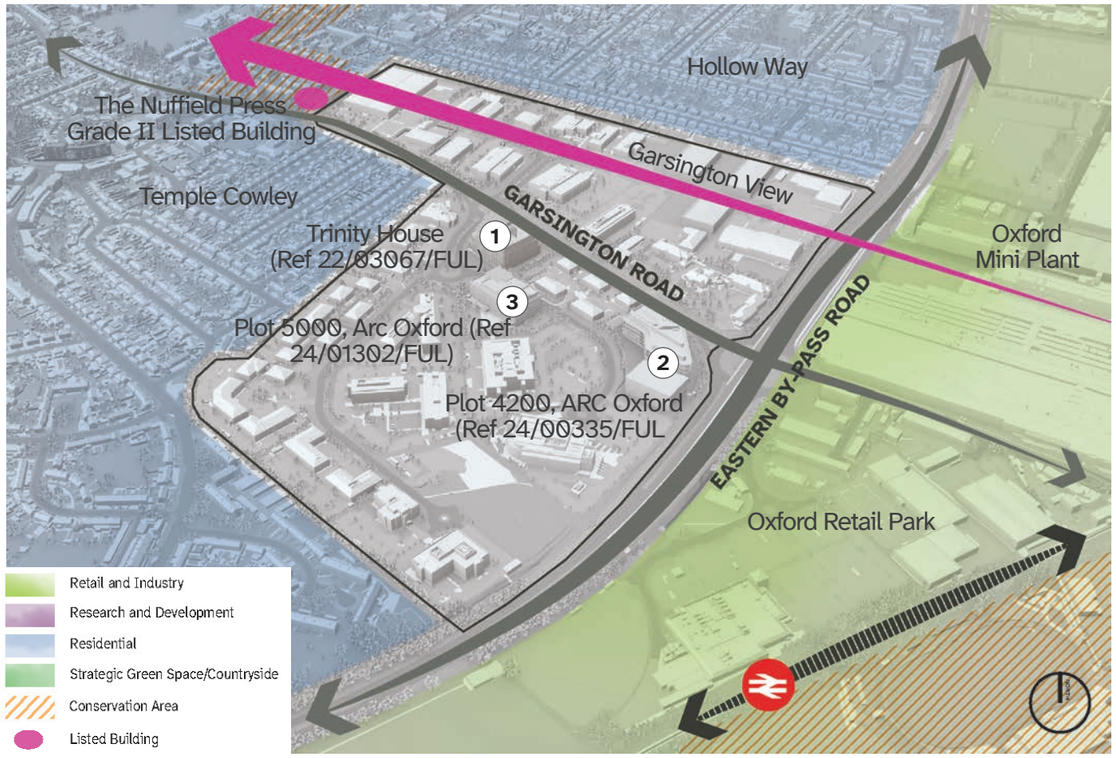
Achieving Densification

- Densification achieved mainly through reconfiguration / replacement / consolidation of existing buildings, particularly the low rise and dated office blocks; rationalisation of extensive surface parking; and increases in height parameters.
- Looser building arrangement expected to the interface with suburbs, with opportunities for greater density within the core of the Business Park.
- Internal movement network will be dependent on public and active transport connectivity. Given the proximity of the site to the station, it is anticipated that parking ratios will reduce to support densification.
- A high standard of public realm / landscaping and green space is required to support the workplace environment and provide important recreational opportunities, particularly given the distance to other open spaces.

Height Parameters

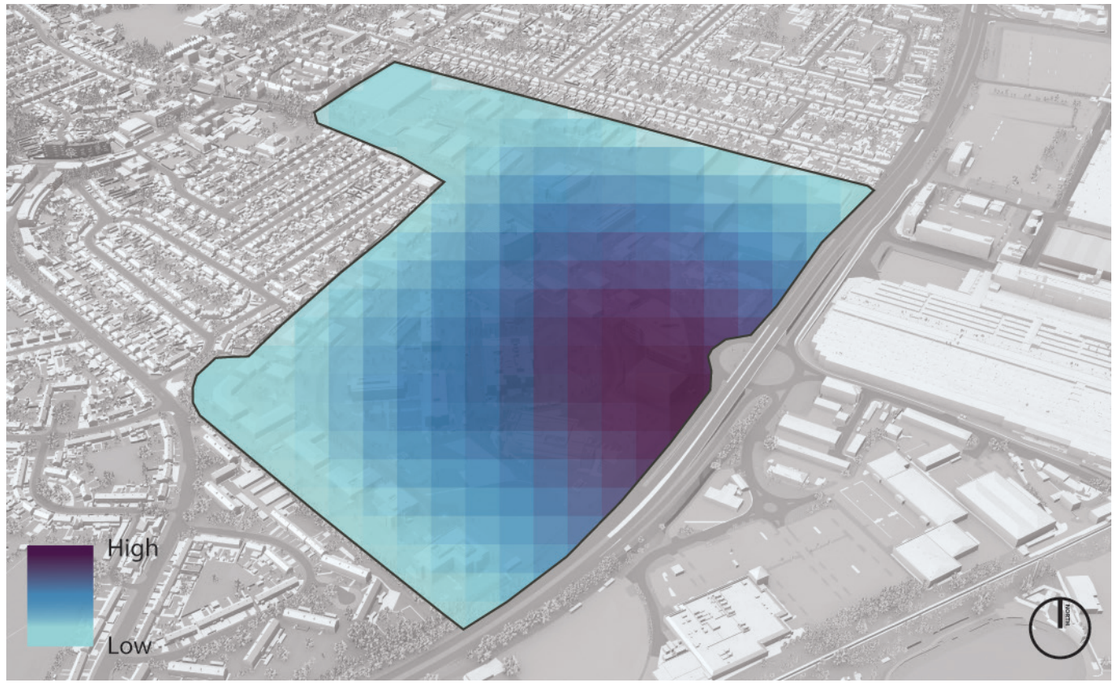
- Higher buildings will be most appropriate within the core of the Business Park and along the Garsington Road / Eastern Bypass frontage, where they will be grouped with recently permitted R&D development and will help to better define key gateways / routes.
- Given the prominence of ARC Oxford in the townscape - and potential impacts associated with higher buildings - there should be variations in scale and massing to limit the overall bulk of development; provide variation in roofscape; and allow views through the site to landscape beyond.
- Lower buildings will be most appropriate within the fringes of the Business Park to provide a suitable interface with surrounding residential areas.
- This arrangement will minimise the degree of obstruction to distant ridgelines in outward views from the City (Chiltern Hills) and inward views from the countryside (Wytham Woods); and will ensure a transition towards the eastern hills (Garsington Ridge and Shotover Hills).

ARC Oxford | ARC



↑ Land Use and Environmental Context.

3D model © VU.CITY 2025



↑ Illustrative height parameters.

3D model © VU.CITY 2025

Height Guidance

3 - 4 storeys R&D

Generally appropriate across the site.
Development of this scale:

- Will be consistent with the majority of existing building heights.
- Will provide an appropriate interface with surrounding low rise residential areas.
- Will create an appropriate setting to the Temple Cowley Conservation Area and its listed buildings.
- Will not be highly visible or prominent in outward views from the City and inward views from the countryside.
- Will not interrupt / break the distant ridgelines in outward views from the City (Chiltern Hills) and inward views from the countryside (Wytham Woods).
- Will ensure a transition to the ridgeline to the east (Garsington Ridge / Shotover Country Park) in both outward views from the City and inward views from the countryside.

5 - 6 storeys R&D

Most appropriate within the core of the Business Park, along the Garsington Road / Eastern Bypass frontage.

Development of this scale:

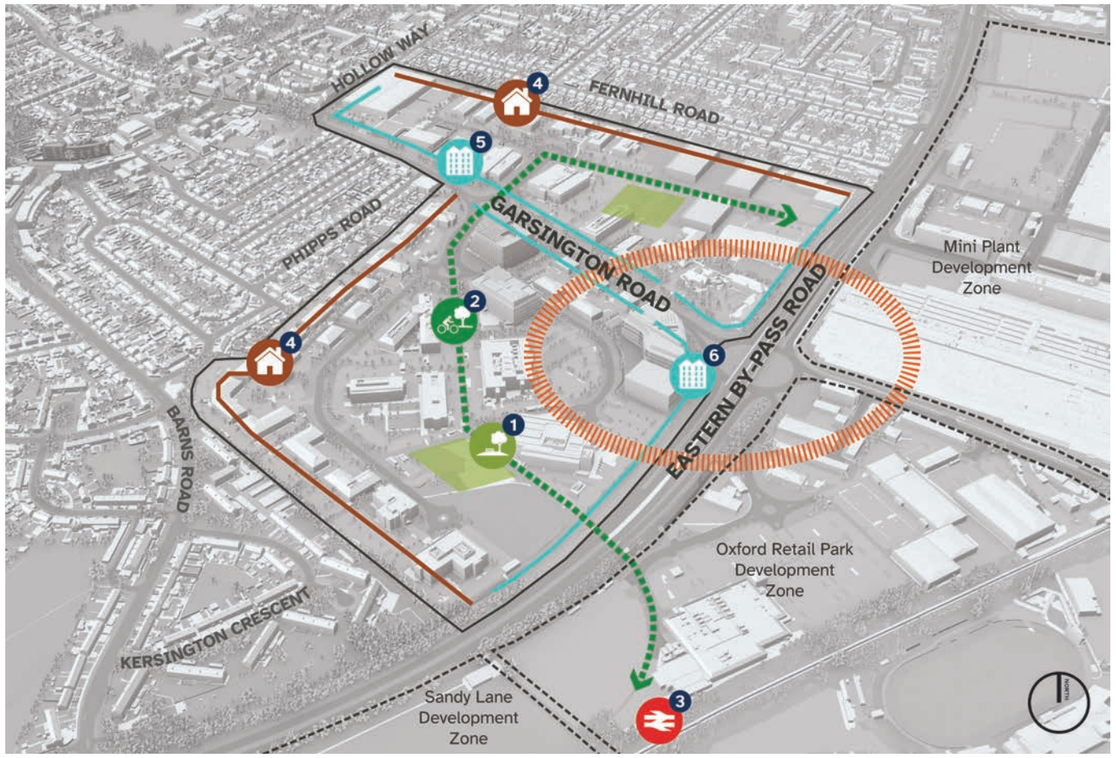
- Will identify ARC Oxford as a focal point within the Oxford suburbs.
- Will be consistent with the scale of recently permitted R&D development.
- Will help to better define key gateways / routes.
- Will become more visible in outward views from the City, but will not break the distant ridgeline (Chiltern Hills).
- Will become more visible in inward views from the countryside, but will not break the distant ridgeline (Wytham Woods).
- Will predominately fall outside of the Garsington View Cone.
- Will retain a separate identity with the Blackbird Leys cluster and Oxford Science Park cluster, with lower building heights on the fringes of ARC Oxford and across the Sandy Lane development zone.
- Careful articulation of upper storeys and roofs necessary to break up overall scale of the building and sufficient ‘breaks’ with adjacent structures to avoid bulk and mass.

7- 8 storeys R&D

Most appropriate in limited locations within the south-western part of the site, along the Eastern Bypass. Development of this scale:

- Will define key gateways / routes, particularly along the Eastern by-pass at the interface with Oxford Retail Park to the south.
- Will be in close proximity to the station.
- Will become prominent features in outward views from the City, but will not break the distant ridgeline (Chiltern Hills).
- Will become prominent features in inward views from the countryside, but will not break the distant ridgeline (Wytham Woods).
- Will fall outside of the Garsington View Cone.
- Will retain a separate identity with the Blackbird Leys cluster and Oxford Science Park cluster.
- Very careful articulation of upper storeys and roofs will be necessary to break up overall scale of the building, including reducing the footprint of upper levels.

ARC Oxford | ARC



↑ Placemaking principles.

Green Space
1 Public space to provide break in built form and location for local supporting services - café’s etc and orientation of entrances to development.

Green Link
2 Active travel green link connecting site to Cowley Station and forming setting for work environment and frame development areas.

Station
3 Cowley Station and associated new overbridge accessed via green link connecting to adjoining development zones.

Residential Interface
4 Redevelopment set back and lower height to support integration.

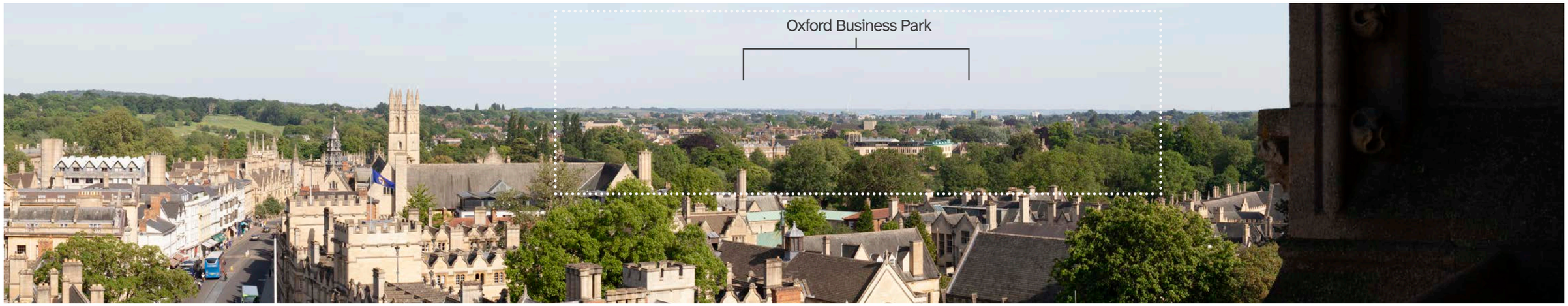
Frontage and Activation
5 Garsington Road attractive main approach to city with activated development facing the road with good public realm.

6 Frontage to Eastern Bypass – development height to respond to main elevated road.

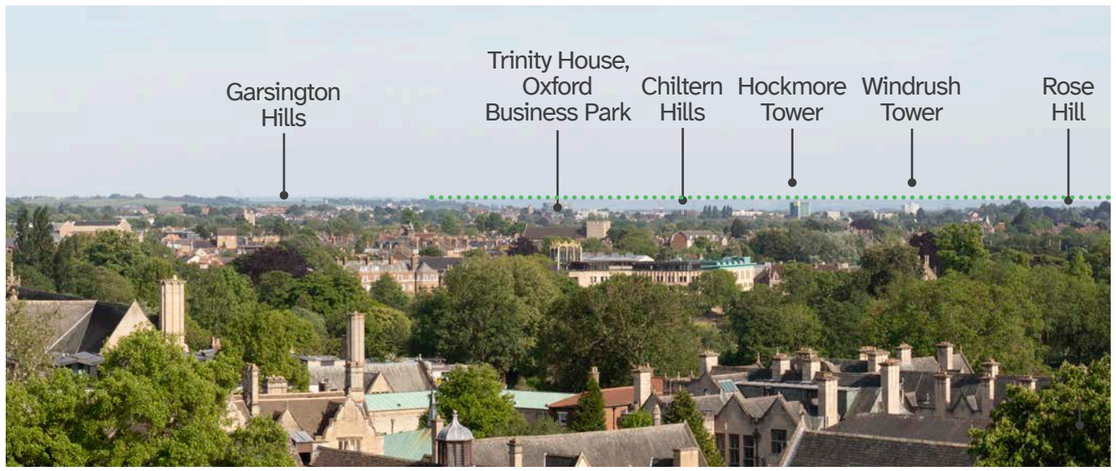
Height Cluster

ARC Oxford | ARC

Visual Analysis - St Mary's Church Tower



↑ Existing photograph.



↑ Annotated insert of existing photograph.

↑ Illustration of existing photograph with potential development (for illustrative purposes only).

Baseline context		ARC Oxford is not highly visible or prominent in outward views from the City, however, Trinity House is visible.
Heights strategy	(1)	Future development will become more visible / prominent, but clustered within a focussed area and not extending above the Chiltern Hills.
	(2)	Future development will retain a separate identity from the District Centre cluster through reduction in scale and massing at its western edge.
	(3)	Taller buildings will be designed / located to step height / massing centrally in the site and create appropriate step-down in height and intensity towards the edges and existing lower-rise neighbourhoods; provide variation in roofscape; and allow views through to landscape beyond.

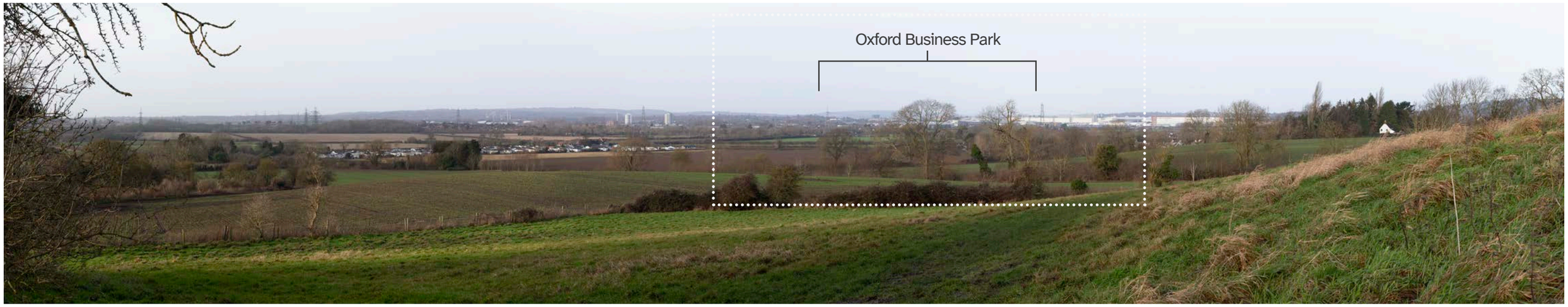
↑ Summary of baseline context and heights strategy (for specified view only).

Obstruction	There will be no obstruction to existing buildings. There may be some limited obstruction to Chiltern Hills ridgeline typically demonstrated by Trinity House, but buildings will not extend above this; Chilterns will remain visible to the east and west, between buildings / blocks.
Competition	There will be no competition with existing buildings and with overall horizon line, with little / localised competition with the Chiltern ridgeline.
Skylining	There will be some disruption to suburban skyline and 'adding' to the building massing precedent of Trinity House, but buildings will not extend above the Chiltern Hills horizon.
Character	Some change to character but overall landscape setting will be maintained and legible with sense of built districts set in the wider setting/ landscape backdrop.

↑ Analysis against High Buildings TAN 'visual tests' (for specified view only).

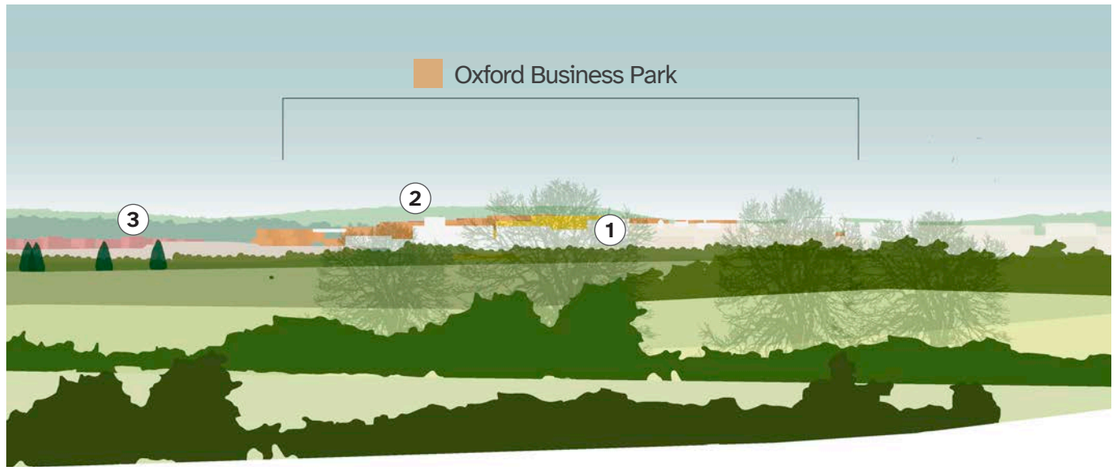
ARC Oxford | ARC

Visual Analysis - View from Garsington



↑ Existing photograph.

↑ Annotated insert of existing photograph.



↑ Illustration of existing photograph with potential development (for illustrative purposes only).

Baseline		Oxford Business Park not highly visible or prominent in inward views from the countryside.
Heights strategy	(1)	Future development will be partly obscured by any changes associated with Oxford Retail Park / Oxford Stadium and exisitng and any future development within the MINI Plant Oxford / Unipart site.
	(2)	Future development will become more visible / prominent than the existing Business Park, but redevelopment will be well-clustered, with a combined roofline profile that falls towards the edges / respects the landscape horizon profile of Wytham Woods to the west of the City.
	(3)	Sandy Lane area maintains separate visual identity from Blackbird Leys District Centre to the east and is lower in height compared to the Business Park.

↑ Summary of baseline context and heights strategy (for specified view only).

Obstruction	There will be no obstruction to existing buildings and little obstruction to Wytham Woods, with buildings sitting well below this backdrop.
Competition	There will be no competition with existing buildings and little competition with overall horizon line.
Skylining	There will be some disruption to suburban skyline, but buildings remain well below the Wytham Woods ridgeline.
Character	There will be some change to character but overall landscape setting will be maintained and clearly legible. Opportunity for the new roof-line / roof forms to create visual interest / legibility. Opportunity for visual distinction from Mini Plant and Unipart site, Oxford Retail Park and Sandy Lane, especially building type / scale.

↑ Analysis against High Buildings TAN ‘visual tests’ (for specified view only).

Oxford Retail Park and Oxford Stadium

The Place

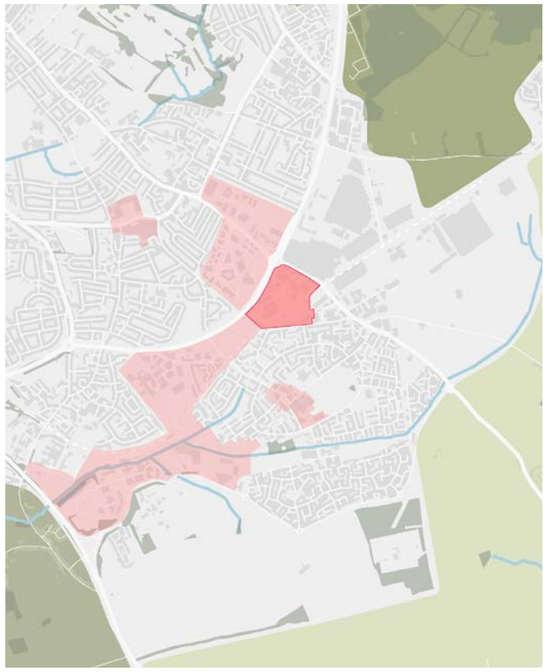
- Retail park and stadium site straddling the Branch Line. The site sits at around 65m - 70m AOD.
- Retail park to the north of the railway line, accessed via the Eastern Bypass / Garsington Road junction.
- Comprises large retail scale units (buildings typically circa 6 – 9m) and large areas of car parking.
- Oxford Stadium to the south of the railway line, along with industrial uses fronting on to Garsington Road / off Sandy Lane.
- Industrial buildings are typically circa 9 – 12m, while the stadium is circa 13m high.
- Oxford Stadium is a Conservation Area (representative of inter-war sport and entertainment associated with the growth of manufacturing).
- No significant planning permissions.
- Recent testing / optioneering for a mixture of laboratory and office spaces, undertaken by Spratley & Partners architects.

Local Context

- Prominent frontage with the Eastern Bypass (the Oxford ring-road) and Garsington Road (a main route into the City).
- Retail site adjacent to ARC Oxford and MINI Plant Oxford which together form a prominent ‘gateway’ at the junction of the Eastern Bypass and Garsington Road.
- Stadium site separated from retail park by railway line, with no connecting routes.
- Post war public housing development (Blackbird Leys) located in close proximity to the south of the Stadium Site, along Sandy Lane.

City Context

- Not within any View Cones.
- In views from the countryside to the south, the Retail Park / Stadium site is not generally discernible and seen in context of and/or partially obscured by the MINI Plant Oxford. The rising ground of Wytham Woods is visible beyond the City to the north-west.
- In views from elevated locations within the City centre, the Retail Park / Stadium site is not visible, but its broad location is distinguishable by taller buildings immediately north, within ARC Oxford.
- In views from the countryside and City Centre, taller building around Temple Cowley, appears on the western edges of ARC Oxford.
- In views from the City Centre, the flanks of Shotover Country Park appear on the eastern edges of ARC Oxford.



↑ Oxford Retail Park and Oxford Stadium development zone.

↑ Retail units and car parking to north of railway line.

↑ Industrial uses to the south of the railway line (along Garsington Road).

Design Guidance

Policy Context

- Planning permission will be granted for revival of the Oxford Stadium for greyhound racing and/or speedway, with supporting community or leisure uses, and could include enabling residential development within the existing stadium car park. Development should not affect the operation or heritage interest of the Oxford Stadium site.
- The retail park is not allocated for development.

Future Vision

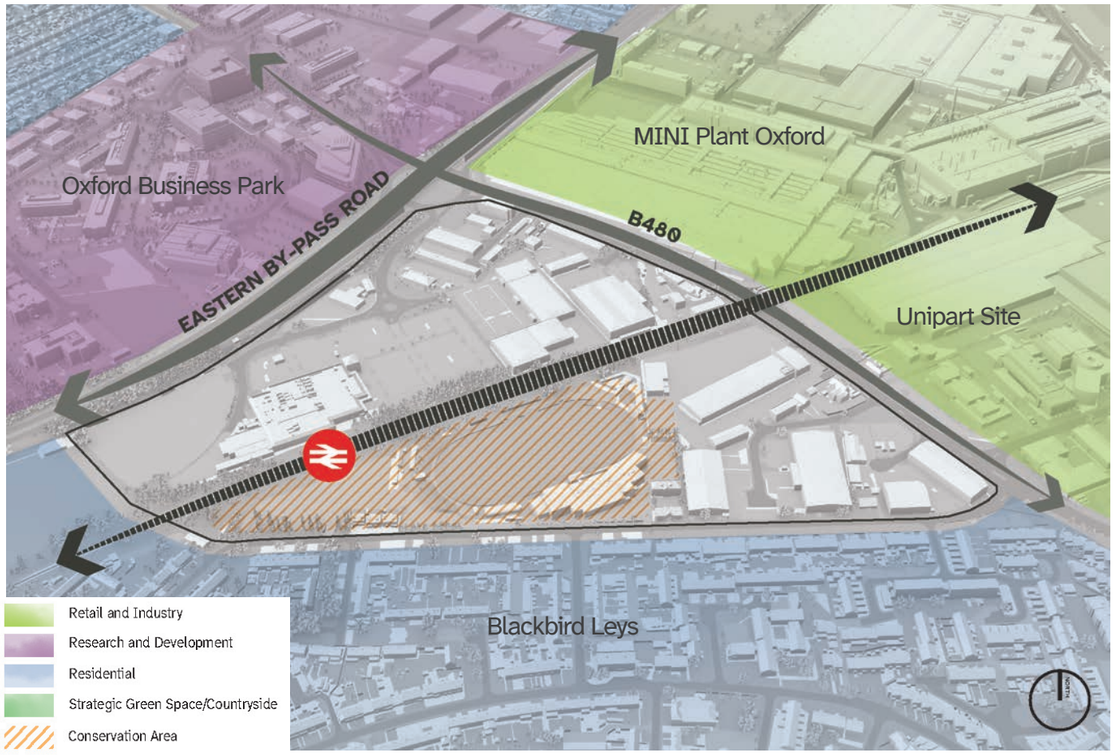
- Vision is dependent on the long-term future of existing uses, however, the retail part of the site could represent a logical location for an extension of the Oxford Business Park campus, encompassing the new station.
- This could include co-location with office space and supporting ancillary facilities to support active frontage opportunities along Garsington Road.
- While the stadium requires long-term preservation to sustain the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, the opportunity exists for redevelopment and densification within parking areas and existing industrial development to the east.

Achieving Densification

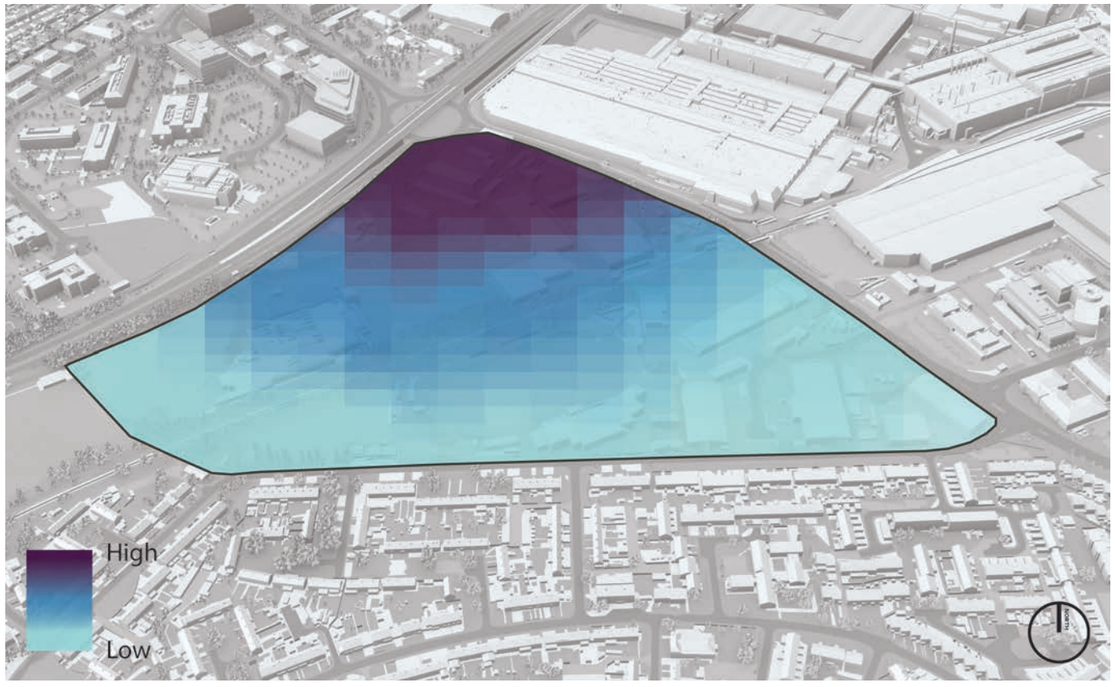
- Densification will be achieved through redevelopment from industrial operational land and low density retail park development and associated parking areas to higher intensity R&D campus development and mixed residential and commercial development.
- The site is characterised by two distinct areas separated by the existing rail line and is a deep and expansive plot that will require a movement and green infrastructure framework connecting to existing and enhanced links outside the development zone to the east and south, to support the establishment of a good workplace and residential environment and place.
- Activated frontages to the Eastern Bypass and Garsington Road will support definition of place and lower scale development adjoining the existing residential interface at Sandy Lane.
- Opportunities for the reuse of rail route through the development zone north of the Cowley station, should be explored to support densification with a further station at the Mini Plant. If this is not feasible, the rail corridor provides a key masterplan framework opportunity.
- The proximity of the Cowley station with no significant barrier to movement from existing roads is noted.

Height Parameters

- Higher buildings will be most appropriate within the retail park and along the Garsington Road / Eastern Bypass frontage, where they will be grouped with recently permitted R&D development and will help better define key gateways / routes.
- Lower buildings will be most appropriate within and around the Oxford Stadium site to provide an appropriate interface with surrounding residential areas.
- This arrangement will minimise the degree of obstruction to distant ridgelines in outward views from the City (Chiltern Hills) and inward views from the countryside (Wytham Woods); and will ensure a transition towards the eastern hills (Garsington Ridge and Shotover Hills).



↑ Land Use and Environmental Context.



↑ Illustrative height parameters.

Height Guidance

3 - 4 storeys R&D

Generally appropriate across the site.
Development of this scale:

- Will be taller than the majority of existing building heights, but broadly in character with larger scale industrial uses in the surrounding townscape.
- Will provide an appropriate interface with surrounding residential areas.
- Will protect the character of the Conservation Area.
- Will not be highly visible or prominent in outward views from the City and inward views from the countryside.
- Will not interrupt / break the distant ridgelines in outward views from the City (Chiltern Hills) and inward views from the countryside (Wytham Woods).
- Will ensure a transition to the ridgeline to the east (Shotover Country Park) in both outward views from the City and inward views from the countryside.

5 - 6 storeys R&D

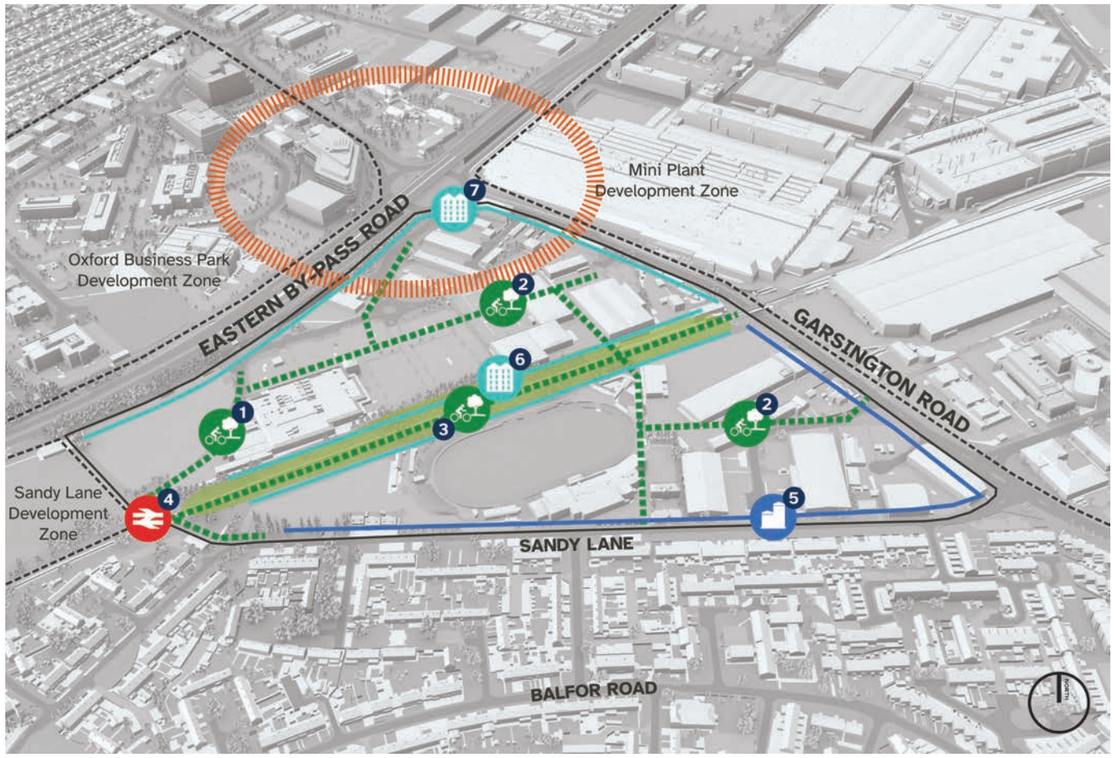
Most appropriate within the existing retail area. Development of this scale:

- Will adjoin the station.
- Will be consistent with the scale of recently permitted R&D development within the ARC Oxford to the north.
- Will define key gateways / routes along the Eastern Bypass and Garsington Road.
- Will become more visible in outward views from the City, but will not break the distant ridgeline (Chiltern Hills).
- Will become more visible in inward views from the countryside, but will not break the distant ridgeline (Wytham Woods).
- Careful articulation of upper storeys and roofs will be necessary to break up overall scale of the building and sufficient ‘breaks’ provided with adjacent structures avoid bulk and mass.

7- 8 storeys R&D

Most appropriate within limited locations within the northern part of the retail area.
Development of this scale:

- Will adjoin the station.
- Will complement the nature and scale of densification of ARC Oxford.
- Will define key gateways / routes, particularly the Eastern Bypass.
- Will become prominent features in outward views from the City, but will not break the distant ridgeline (Chiltern Hills).
- Will become prominent features in inward views from the countryside, but will not break the distant ridgeline (Wytham Woods).
- Very careful articulation of upper storeys and roofs will be necessary to break up overall scale of the building, including reducing the footprint of upper levels.



↑ Placemaking principles.

3D model © VU.CITY 2025

Green Link

1 Key green link between Oxford Business Park and Oxford Retail Park development zones and Cowley station.

2 Opportunities to establish through routes in deep plot to break up building mass and form green setting/open space for development.

3 Possible repurposing of rail line corridor assuming no further rail line/station beyond Cowley - providing key structuring opportunity for green space in deep development plot and green link connection.

Station

4 Cowley station and proposed new active travel bridge crossing connecting east and west side of development zone and with Sandy Lane development zone.

Redevelopment Area

5 Important development interface with Sandy Lane.

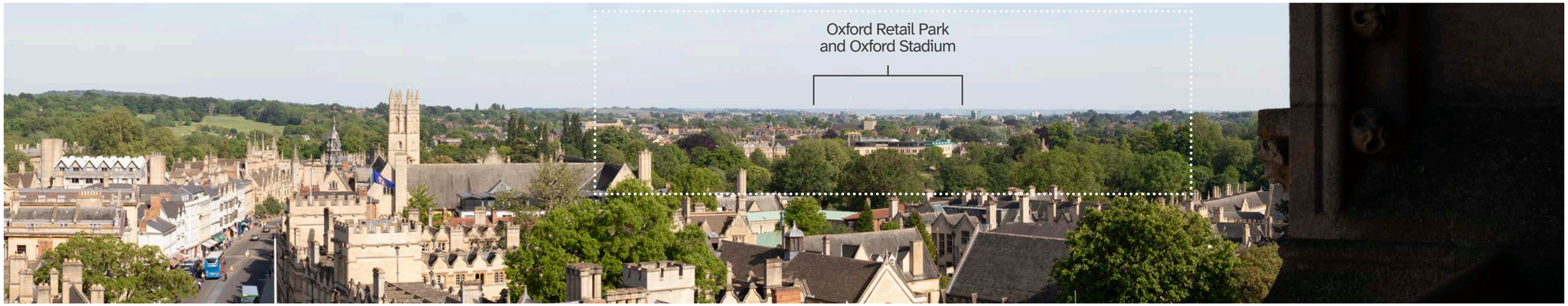
Frontage and Activation

6 Possible repurposing of rail line corridor assuming no further rail line/ station beyond Cowley - providing context for activation of interfacing development zones.

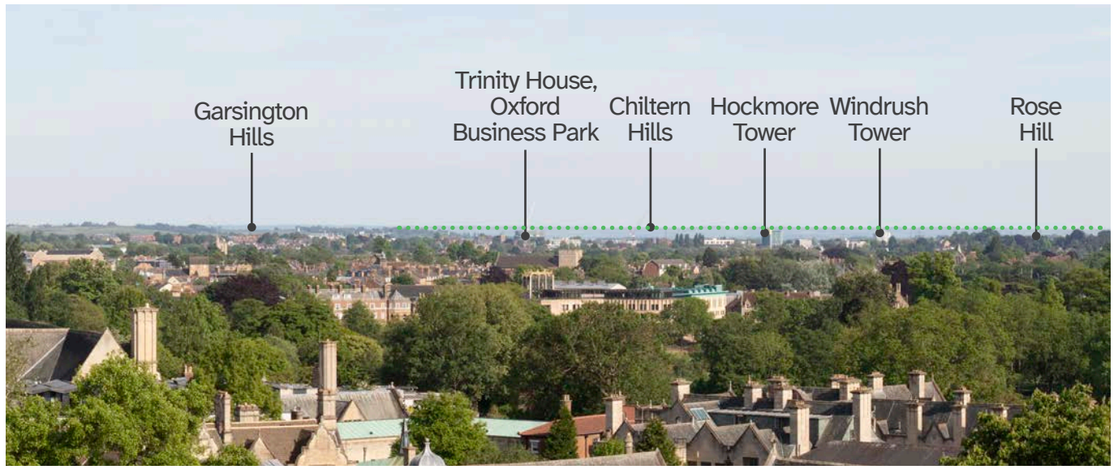
7 Main development frontage extends along Eastern Bypass and western end of Garsington Road forming key approach to city.

Height Cluster

Visual Analysis - St Mary's Church Tower



↑ Existing photograph.



↑ Annotated insert of existing photograph.

↑ Illustration of existing photograph with potential development (for illustrative purposes only).

Baseline		Oxford Retail Park and Oxford Stadium not visible in outward views from Oxford.
Heights strategy	(1)	Future development will be largely obscured by any changes associated within Oxford Business Park cluster which Oxford Retail Park and Stadium are beyond.
	(2)	Future development will retain a separate identity from the District Centre cluster through reduction in scale and massing at its western edge. It is expected that the built forms of the local District Centre(s) will be more distinctive than the built forms of the Retail Park.

↑ Summary of baseline context and heights strategy (for specified view only).

Obstruction	There will be no obstruction to existing buildings. Some obstruction to Chiltern Hills but buildings do not extend above this horizon, and large 'uninterrupted' visual gaps remain to east and west of Oxford Retail Park and Stadium.
Competition	There will be no competition with existing buildings and little competition with overall horizon line of the Chiltern Hills.
Skylining	There will be some disruption to the intermediate suburban skyline behind, but buildings do not extend above the Chiltern Hills far horizon.
Character	There will be limited change to character, with change occurring mainly as a result of changes within the Oxford Business Park which will mask visibility.

↑ Analysis against High Buildings TAN 'visual tests' (for specified view only).

Visual Analysis - View from Garsington

↑ Existing photograph.

↑ Annotated insert of existing photograph.

↑ Illustration of existing photograph with potential development (for illustrative purposes only).

Baseline		Oxford Retail Park and Stadium not highly visible or prominent in inward views towards the City from the countryside.
Heights strategy	(1)	Future development will become more visible / prominent but will be perceived as contiguous with the existing built-up areas of Oxford Business Park and MINI Plant Oxford / Unipart site on this edge of the City.
	(2)	Future development will sit below the Wytham Woods ridgeline on the horizon.

↑ Summary of baseline context and heights strategy (for specified view only).

Obstruction	There will be no obstruction to existing buildings and little obstruction to the Wytham Woods ridgeline, with buildings sitting well below this backdrop.
Competition	There will be no competition with existing buildings and little competition with overall horizon line.
Skylining	There will be some disruption to suburban skyline, but buildings will remain well below the Wytham Woods ridgeline.
Character	There will be some change to character but overall landscape foreground setting will be maintained and clearly legible; opportunity for perimeter landscape responses to help integrate development on this edge of Oxford.

↑ Analysis against High Buildings TAN ‘visual tests’ (for specified view only).

Sandy Lane

The Place

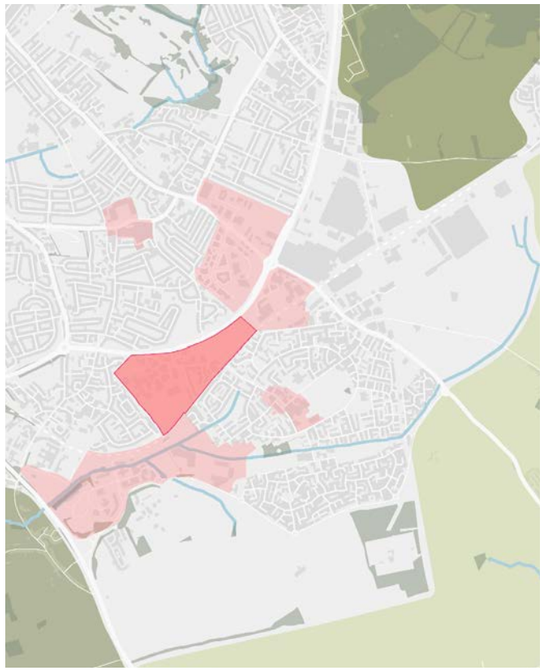
- Open space / playing pitches to the east of Sandy Lane. The site sits at around 65m - 67m AOD.
- Existing industrial / commercial uses to the west of Sandy Lane, including some pockets of residential land use and the Oxford Academy secondary school. The site sits at around 62m - 70m AOD.
- Building heights vary across Sandy Lane west, with the maximum building heights (of the industrial uses) at around 14m.
- Oxford Academy school includes playing fields to the north and south, creating a 'gap' with the adjoining Ozone / Kassam Stadium site.
- No designated heritage assets or other environmental designations.
- Recent planning permissions include (mapped over page):
  1. Eastpoint (Ref 24/01631/FUL) - 3 no. R&D buildings, approx. 20m high.
  2. Northfield House (Ref 21/03328/OUTFUL) - 2 no. residential buildings, approx. 15m - 20m high.

Local Context

- Bound by the Eastern Bypass (Oxford ring-road) to the north and Cowley Branch Line to the south.
- Suburban residential land uses surrounding the area, although generally separated by surrounding infrastructure.
- Adjacent to Oxford Retail Park to the north-east / proposed Oxford Cowley station.
- Adjacent to Oxford Science Park to the south-west / proposed Oxford Littlemore station.
- Littlemore Conservation Area to the west, encompassing historic village centre with multiple listed buildings including parish church.

City Context

- Not within any View Cones.
- In views from the elevated locations within the City centre and countryside to the south, Sandy Lane is not visible, screened by surrounding built development.
- In elevated views from the City Centre and surrounding countryside, taller buildings around Temple Cowley appear on the eastern edge of Sandy Lane / define the western edge of ARC Oxford; while taller buildings around Blackbird Leys coincide with the Sandy Lane site.



↑ Sandy Lane development zone.

↑ Open space east of Sandy Lane.

↑ Industrial / commercial (Eastpoint) uses to the west of Sandy Lane.

Design Guidance

Policy Context

- Planning permission will be granted for residential development and enhanced outdoor sport facilities at Sandy Lane east. Residential development should be located on the western part with access from Blackbird Leys Road. Some appropriately sited land should be safeguarded to allow for future development of a passenger station for the Cowley Branchline.
- Sandy Lane west is not allocated.

Future Vision

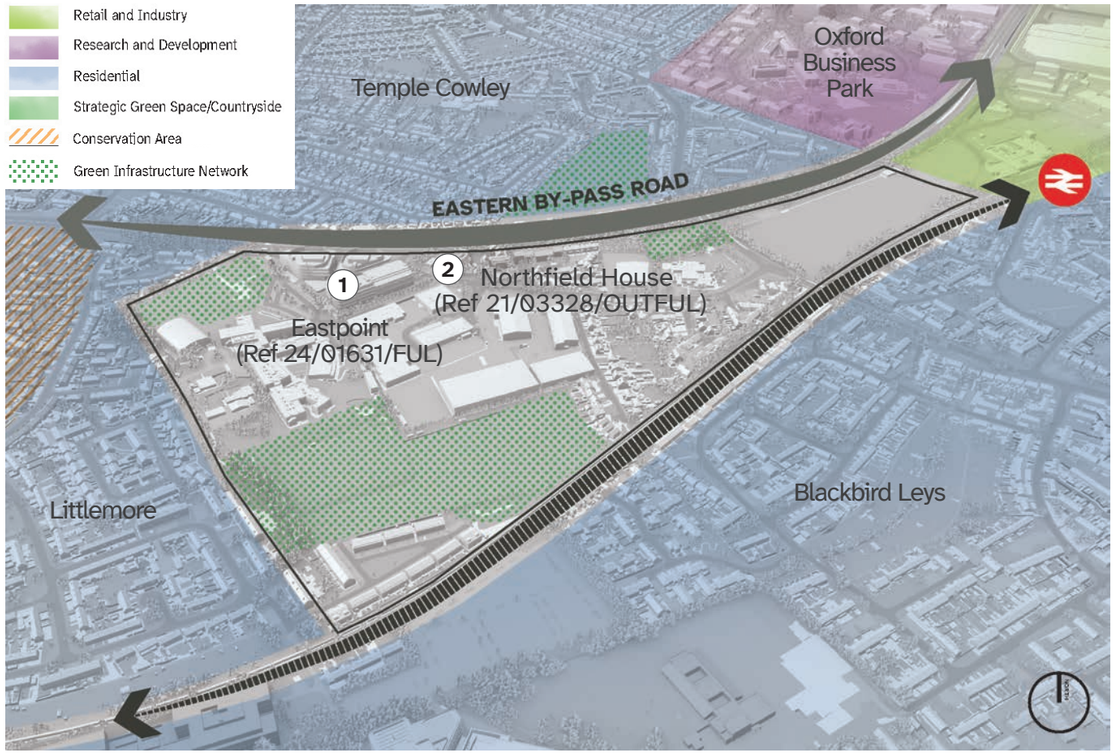
- Sandy Lane east provides an opportunity for a vibrant, high density residential development in close proximity to the new station and as a transition to larger scale to the wider, extended Oxford Business Park campus.
- Consideration should be given to the relocation / provision of sports facilities to maximise the development opportunity.
- Sandy Lane west presents more limited opportunities for redevelopment / densification due to existing community uses but some potential for an enhanced cluster of R&D uses around Eastpoint.

Achieving Densification

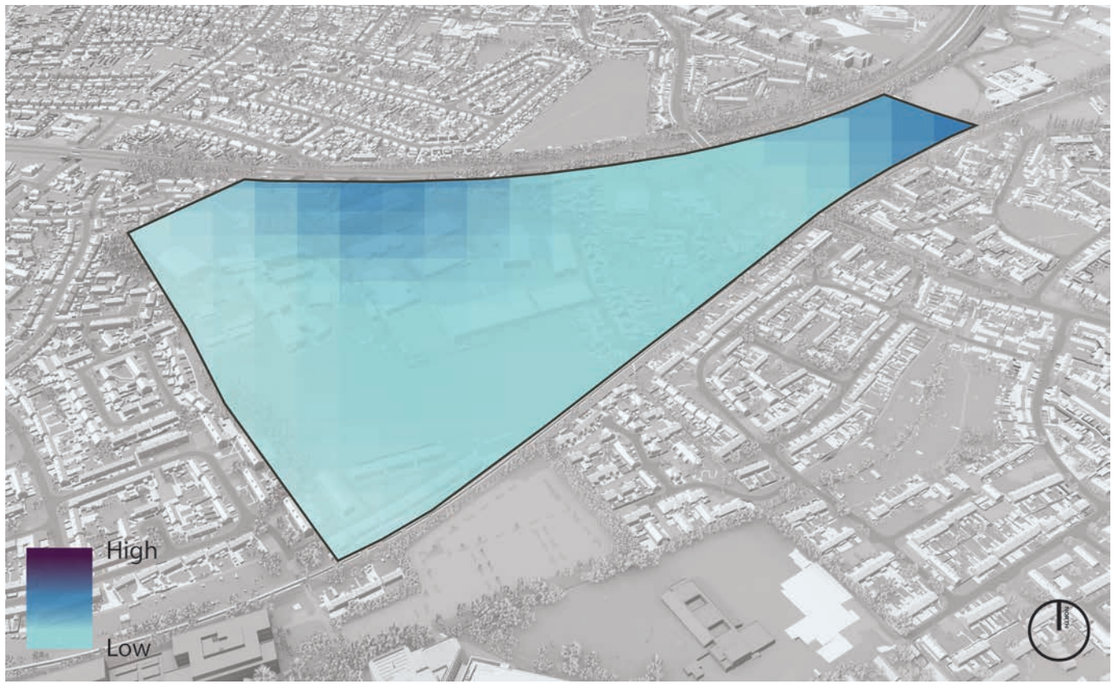
- The allocated Sandy Lane site requires the relocation of sports pitch facilities to permit full site development between the Cowley Branch Line and the Eastern Bypass. If relocation is not possible, development should align the rail corridor with a clear opportunity for positive response to either side of the rail line and sports pitch. The site forms a key interface with the proposed Cowley station and proposed overbridge that should be addressed through good design and activated frontages.
- The wider area of focus is diverse and low density and includes existing residential, employment / commercial uses and social infrastructure including schools. Densification would be achieved through redevelopment of the existing developed areas. Densification on existing commercial development areas and rationalising of school campus facilities may also release development capacity. Deep plots are currently devoid of a movement or green link / space framework which would be required to underpin densification and redevelopment. Movement routes through the development zone should be activated to support placemaking.
- The interface of any redevelopment / rationalising of the existing senior school and existing commercial areas with existing retained residential areas inside and outside the development zone would require sensitive integration.

Height Parameters

- Generally lower-rise development across the development zone to provide separation between the Oxford Business Park cluster and the Blackbird Leys District Centre.
- Opportunities for localised areas of height around the proposed station, as a transition to / part of the Oxford Business Park campus; and around Eastpoint, to help distinguish this as an employment hub.



↑ Land Use and Environmental Context. 3D model © VU.CITY 2025



↑ Illustrative height parameters. 3D model © VU.CITY 2025

Height Guidance

3 - 4 storeys R&D and/or 4 - 5 storeys residential / mixed use

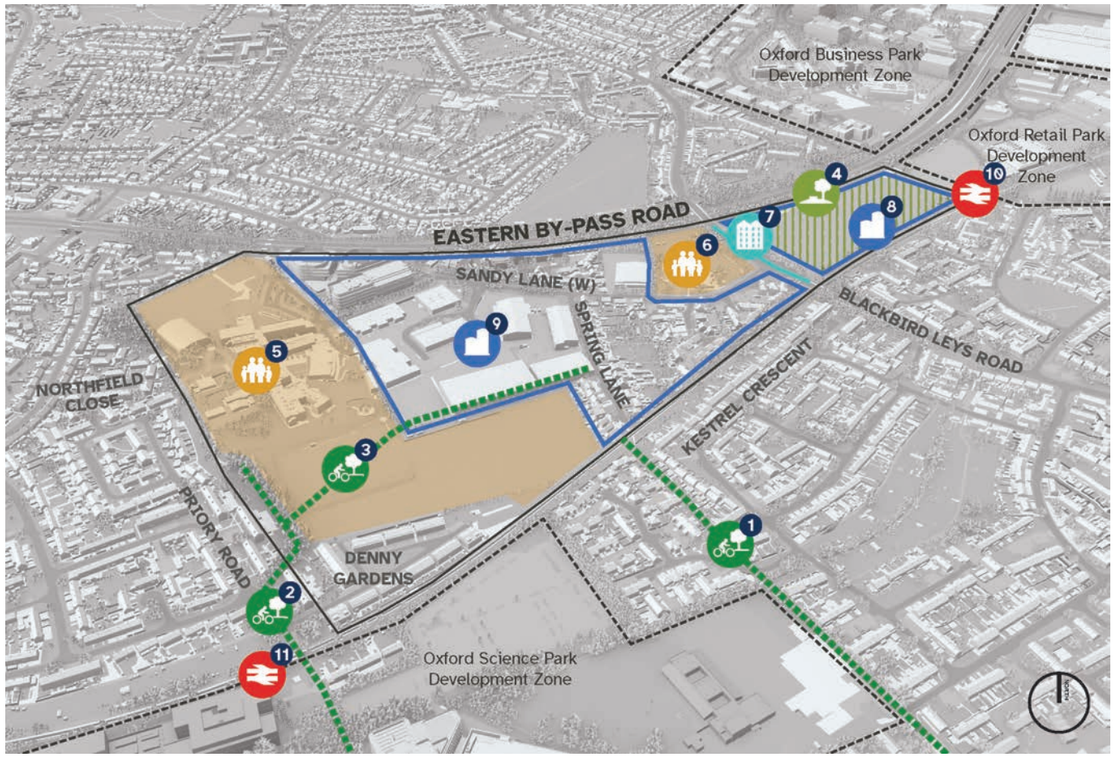
Generally appropriate across the site.
Development of this scale:

- Will be consistent with existing building heights.
- Will provide an appropriate interface with surrounding residential areas.
- Will not be highly visible or prominent in outward views from the City.
- Will not interrupt / break the distant ridgelines in outward views from the City (Chiltern Hills) and inward views from the countryside (Rose Hill).
- Will maintain a sense of separation between clusters of taller development around ARC Oxford, Blackbird Leys Centre, and Oxford Science Park.

5 - 6 storeys R&D and/or 6 - 7 storeys residential / mixed use

Likely to be acceptable in limited circumstances, subject to more detailed assessment and design.

Widespread buildings at this scale unlikely to be acceptable due to potential impacts on townscape / landscape character and views.



↑ Placemaking principles.

3D model © VU.CITY 2025

Green Link

1 Sandy Lane forms key connection to surrounding urban area and wider focus area.

2 Priory Road forms key connection to surrounding urban area and wider focus area inc access to Cowley Station.

3 Opportunity for connections between Priory Road and Spring Lane links to subdivide deep plot should school site be redeveloped.

Green Space

4 Potential retention of sports pitches as part of housing development – if not relocated off site.

Social Infrastructure

5 Assumed retained Delilah High Senior School - forms important interface for adjoining redevelopment area, Denny Gardens and existing residential area. If site to be redeveloped as deep plot – access off Northfield Close anticipated and positive interface/ access via northern interface.

6 Assumed retained St John Fisher Primary School – site if redeveloped forms key road frontage site to Blackbird Leys Road and Sandy Lane (W) junction.

Frontage and Activation

7 Adjoining development plots interface with key road link, providing access to deep plot - redevelopment areas and connection to and frontage to Eastern Bypass.

Redevelopment Area

8 Housing development plot fronting rail corridor/ possible retained sports pitches and forming context for proposed Cowley station.

9 Commercial development plot forming frontage to Eastern Bypass, Sandy Lane (W) and rail corridor - green links and interfaces form important context for quality of work environment.

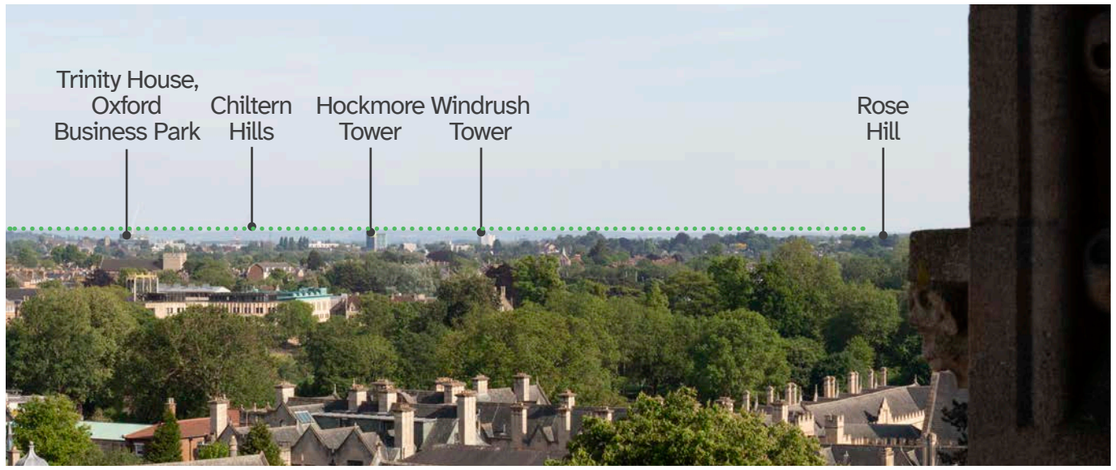
Station

10 Cowley station site and associated proposed bridge forms key interface between Sandy Lane and Oxford Retail Park development zone.

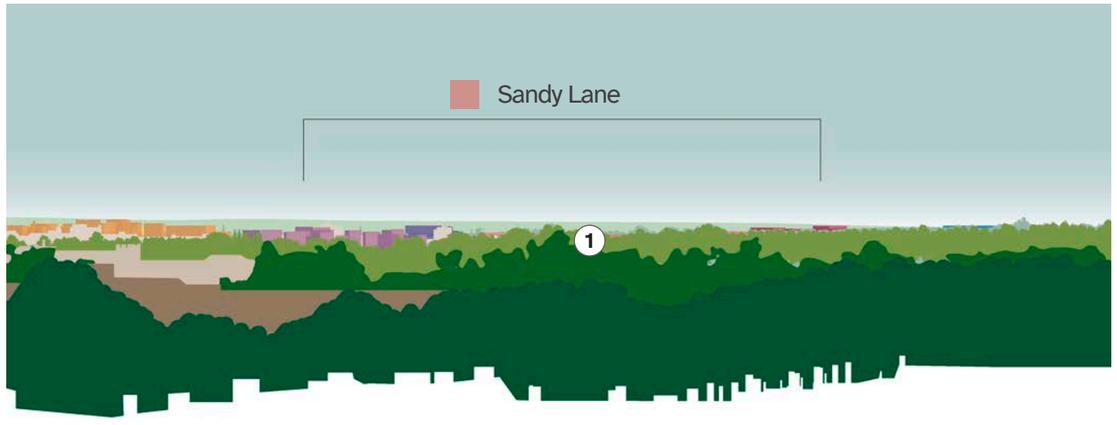
11 Littlemore station site accessed from Sandy Lane development zone via Priory Road green link.

Visual Analysis - St Mary's Church Tower

↑ Existing photograph.



↑ Annotated insert of existing photograph.



↑ Illustration of existing photograph with potential development (for illustrative purposes only).

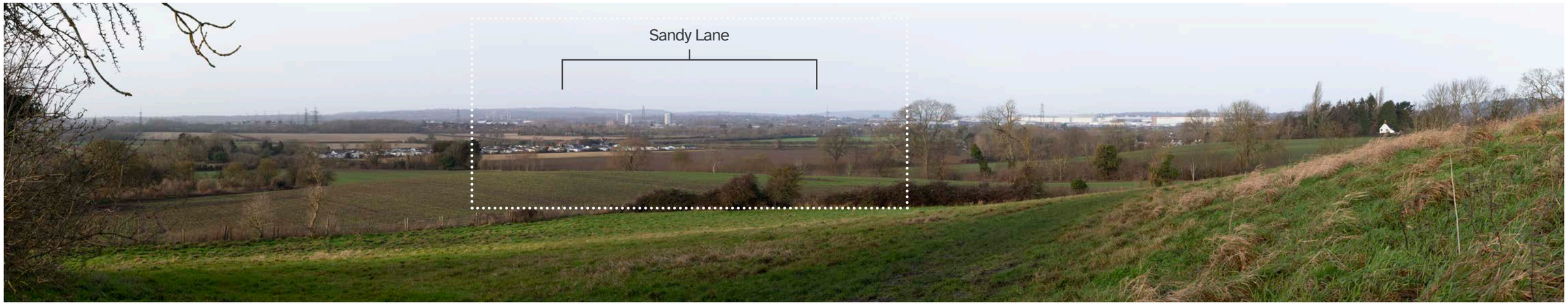
Baseline	Sandy Lane site not visible in outward views from the City.
Heights strategy (1)	Future development will not be highly visible or prominent.

↑ Summary of baseline context and heights strategy (for specified view only).

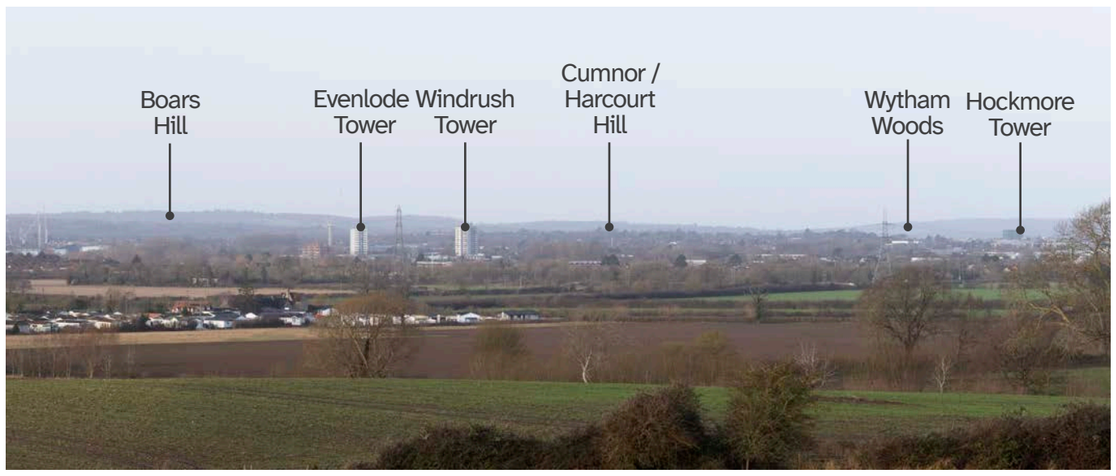
Obstruction	No obstruction with any existing buildings or distant ridgeline.
Competition	No competition with any existing buildings or features.
Skylining	No disruption to skyline.
Character	Minor change to character locally but overall and wider built / landscape setting and hierarchy maintained.

↑ Analysis against High Buildings TAN 'visual tests' (for specified view only).

Visual Analysis - View from Garsington



↑ Existing photograph.



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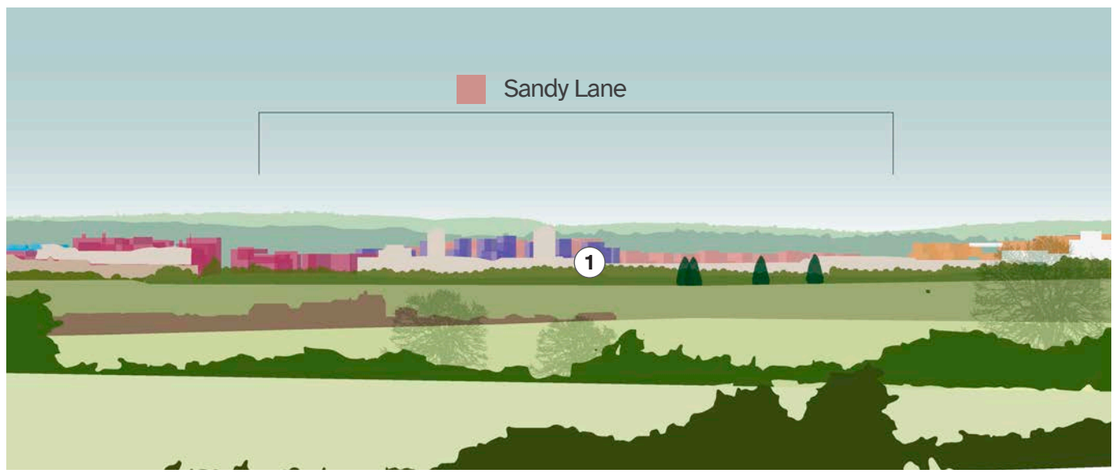


↑ Illustration of existing photograph with potential development (for illustrative purposes only).

Baseline		Sandy Lane site not visible in outward views from the countryside.
Heights strategy	(1)	Future development will not be highly visible or prominent, and largely screened by any future development as part of the Blackbird Leys District Centre.

↑ Summary of baseline context and heights strategy (for specified view only).

Obstruction	There will be no obstruction with any existing buildings or distant ridgeline.
Competition	There will be no competition with any existing buildings or features.
Skylining	There will be no disruption to skyline.
Character	There will be no change to overall character. Opportunity for distinction from other Branch Line sites developments, and to positively manage cumulative visibility, through design strategy.

↑ Analysis against High Buildings TAN ‘visual tests’ (for specified view only).

Kassam Stadium and Ozone Leisure Complex

The Place

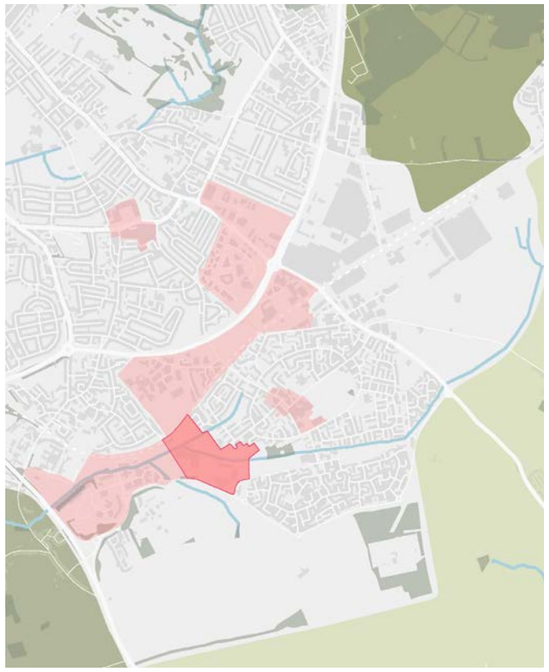
- Predominately leisure uses and large areas of surface car parking. The site sits at around 60m - 63m AOD.
- The existing Oxford United Football Club (OUFC) stadium and hotel located to the east of the site. The Stadium is around 20m high.
- The Ozone Leisure complex is located to the west of the site, and includes cinema, bowling alley, and restaurant. The Ozone Leisure building is around 20m high.
- Overflow parking is located to the north of the site, and the development zone includes the Orion Academy school and playing fields to the north-east.
- Grade II* listed Minchery Farmhouse within the south-west corner of the Site and the archaeology of the medieval Littlemore Priory.
- Recent planning applications include (mapped over page):
  1. Former Bingo Hall (Ref 23/01198/FUL) - R&D building, approx 25m high - under consideration
  2. Ozone Leisure Park (Ref 25/01588/FUL) - Mixed R&D and leisures uses, up to approx. 44m high - under consideration

Local Context

- Bound by the Branch Line to the north and Grenoble Road to the south.
- Adjacent to Oxford Science Park to the west.
- Minchery Lane runs between the site and Oxford Science Park - is a key pedestrian / cycle route into the City, crossing under the Branch Line.
- Suburban residential land uses adjoin the site to the north and east, although generally separated by the Branch Line (to the north) and by open space and school playing fields (to the east).
- Adjoins Sewage Treatment Work and open countryside to the south, albeit this area is allocated for Oxford Science Village.
- Historic villages of Littlemore and Sandford-on-Thames in close proximity, including a Conservation Area and multiple listed buildings.
- The Grade II* Listed Minchery Farm (also known as Littlemore Priory) is located within the development zone. Proposals for Plot 27 - within the Oxford Science Park - includes the creation of a 'Priory Garden' led by the archaeological understanding of the site.

City Context

- Not within any View Cones.
- In views from the elevated locations within the City centre and countryside to the south, Kassam Stadium and Ozone Leisure Complex not visible, screened by intervening topography and vegetation around Rose Hill.
- In views from the surrounding countryside, the Kassam Stadium is a prominent structure in view. Other land-uses within the site are visible but largely screened by vegetation in and around the site.
- The rising ground of Wytham Woods is visible beyond the City to the north-west.



↑ Kassam Stadium and Ozone Leisure Complex development zone.

↑ Ozone leisure complex and car parking.

↑ Kassam Stadium.

Design Guidance

Policy Context

- Planning permission will be granted for a residential-led development and could include commercial, leisure, education and other ancillary uses. The football stadium should remain unless it has been replaced elsewhere in Oxford or in proximity to Oxford.

Future Vision

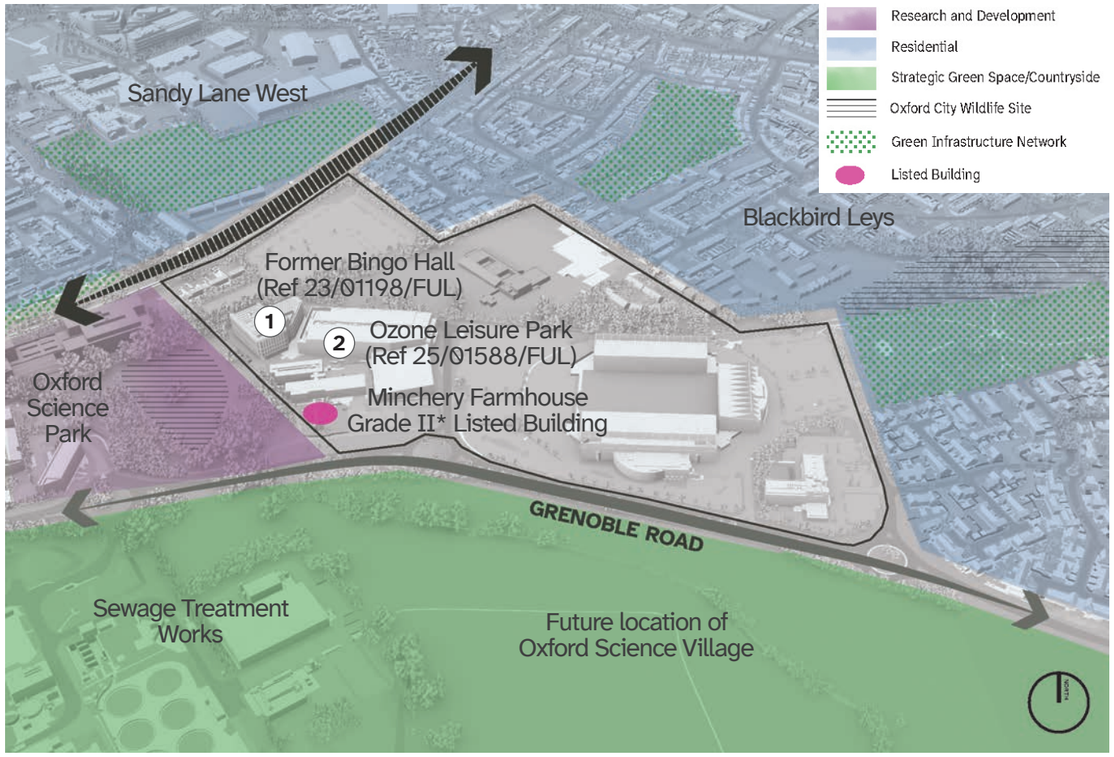
- The football stadium is relocating, providing a unique opportunity for mixed used development close to the new station.
- There are opportunities to consolidate the existing leisure uses to deliver a mixed use development.
- R&D uses would be most suitable to the west of the site, adjoining the branch line and at the interface / clustering with Oxford Science Park. Residential uses would be most suitable to the east, providing a transition with surrounding residential land uses.
- Commercial uses should be carefully considered given proximity to Blackbird Leys District Centre and district centres proposed as part of the Oxford Science Village.
- The Littlemore Priory and its associated archaeological remains should inform place making and interpretation of the site's history.

Achieving Densification

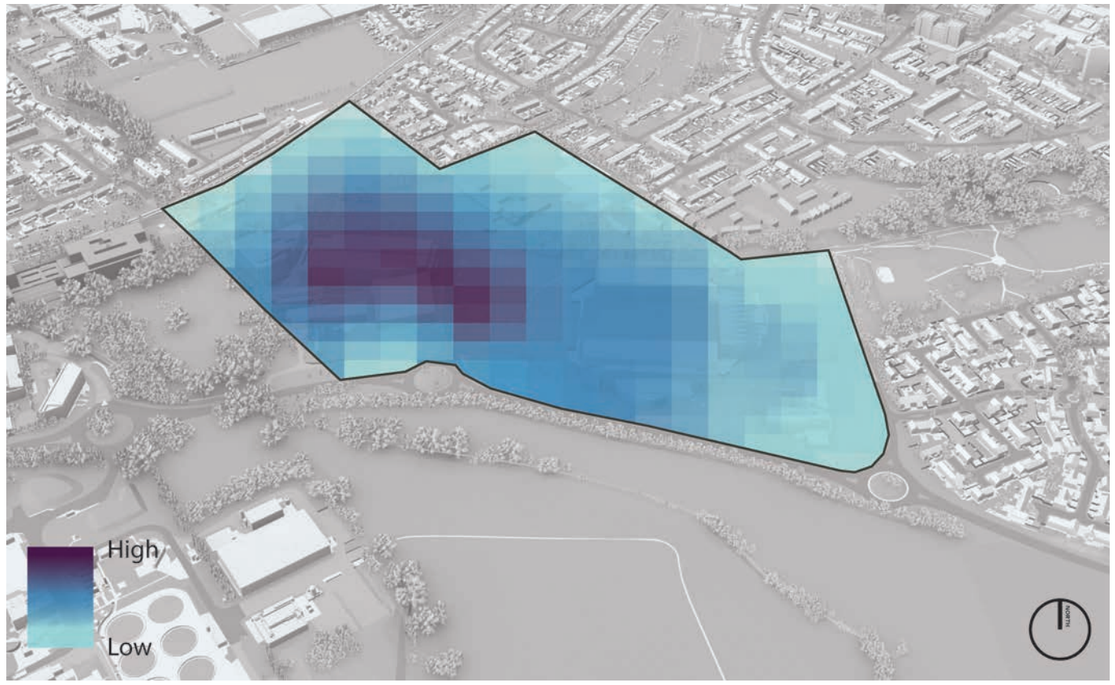
- The development zone comprises a series of allocated sites for development and a wider focus area extending across the existing Kassam stadium and the Orion Academy. Densification would be achieved through redevelopment of the existing developed areas and/or rationalising of school campus facilities.
- Deep plots are currently devoid of a clear movement or green space framework which would be required to underpin densification, creating vibrant, inclusive and connected places.
- The development zone includes two significant natural green links: Northfield Brook and Littlemore Brook which connect out of the zone, to Spindleberry Nature Park and Fry's Hill Park which provide a valuable context for densified development providing significant open / natural assets to support dense development.
- The development zone's proximity to the Littlemore station connecting via Priory Road forms a key part of the densification opportunity.

Height Parameters

- Higher buildings will be most appropriate to the central and western part of site, closest to the Oxford Science Park.
- Lower buildings will be most appropriate within the eastern part of the site, providing an appropriate interface with surrounding residential areas and maintaining separation with the Blackbird Leys District Centre to the east.
- This arrangement will ensure the majority of built form is not visible from the City, sitting below the intervening ridgeline (Rose Hill). In inward views from the countryside, built form will remain well below the distant ridgeline (Boars Hill) .
- Lower heights in the south east corner to respond to the setting of the Grade II* Minchery Farmhouse.



↑ Land Use and Environmental Context.



↑ Illustrative height parameters.

Height Guidance

3 - 4 storeys R&D and/or 4 - 5 storeys residential / mixed use

Generally appropriate across the site.
Development of this scale:

- Will be consistent with the majority of existing building heights / with adjoining Oxford Science Park.
- Will provide an appropriate interface with surrounding residential areas.
- Will respond to the character of Grade II* listed Minchery Farm.
- Will not be visible in outward views from the City (screened by Rose Hill and intervening woodland).
- Will not be highly visible in inward views from the countryside.

5 - 6 storeys R&D and/or 6 - 7 storeys residential / mixed use

Most appropriate within the central and western parts of the Site, along the Grenoble Road frontage and towards the Science Park, whilst retaining an area of lower height around Minchery Farm.

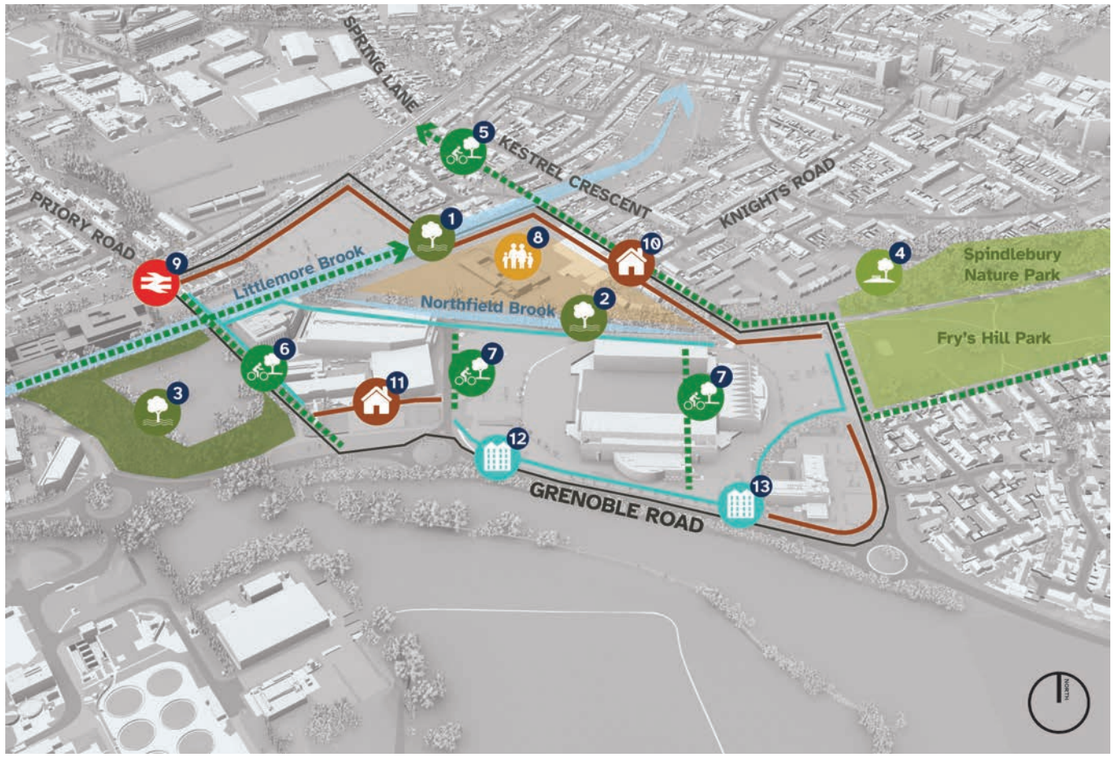
Development of this scale:

- Will be consistent with the scale of recently permitted R&D development within the Science Park / former bingo hall.
- Will define key gateways / routes.
- Will not be visible in outward views from the City and inward views from the countryside (screened by Rose Hill and intervening woodland).
- Will become more visible in inward views from the countryside, but will not break the distant ridgeline (Boars Hill).
- Will retain a separate identity with the Oxford Business Park cluster and with lower building heights across the Sandy Lane site.
- Careful articulation of upper storeys and roofs will be necessary to break up overall scale of the building and sufficient ‘breaks’ provided with adjacent structures avoid bulk and mass.

7 - 8 storeys R&D and/or 8 - 9 storeys residential / mixed use

Most appropriate in limited locations within the western part of the site, along Grenoble Road and at the interface within the Science Park, whilst retaining an area of lower height around Minchery Farm. Development of this scale:

- Will define key gateways / routes.
- Will be in close proximity to the station.
- Will not be highly discernible in outward views from the City and inward views from the countryside (substantially screened by Rose Hill and intervening woodland).
- Will become prominent features in inward views from the countryside, but will not break the distant ridgeline (Boars Hill).
- Will retain a separate identity with the Oxford Business Park cluster and with lower building heights across the Sandy Lane site.
- Very careful articulation of upper storeys and roofs will be necessary to break up overall scale of the building, including reducing the footprint of upper levels.



↑ Placemaking principles.

3D model © VU.CITY 2025

Green Infrastructure

1. Littlemore Brook and footpath.
2. Northfield Brook.
3. Existing trees associated with Science Park development plot contribute to greening of active travel route.

Green Space

4. Spindleberry Nature Reserve/Fry’s Hill Park and path connections to Spring Lane form important context and interface for redevelopment.

Green Link

5. Spring Lane forms key connection to surrounding urban area and wider focus area.
6. Priory Road forms key connecting link to wider area and forms green approach from active travel route including existing trees associated with Science Park development plot and new station providing activation.
7. Opportunities to establish through routes in deep plot to break up building mass and form green setting/open space for development.

Social Infrastructure

8. Assumed retained Orion Academy - forms important interface for adjoining redevelopment area, existing residential area and Northfield Brook. If site to be redeveloped as part of deep plot – access for active travel assumed to be off Spring Lane and positive interface/ access via Grenoble Road /stadium redevelopment area.

Station

9. Littlemore station site accessed via Priory Road green link and accessing adjoining development area at Oxford Science Park.

Residential/Sensitive Interface

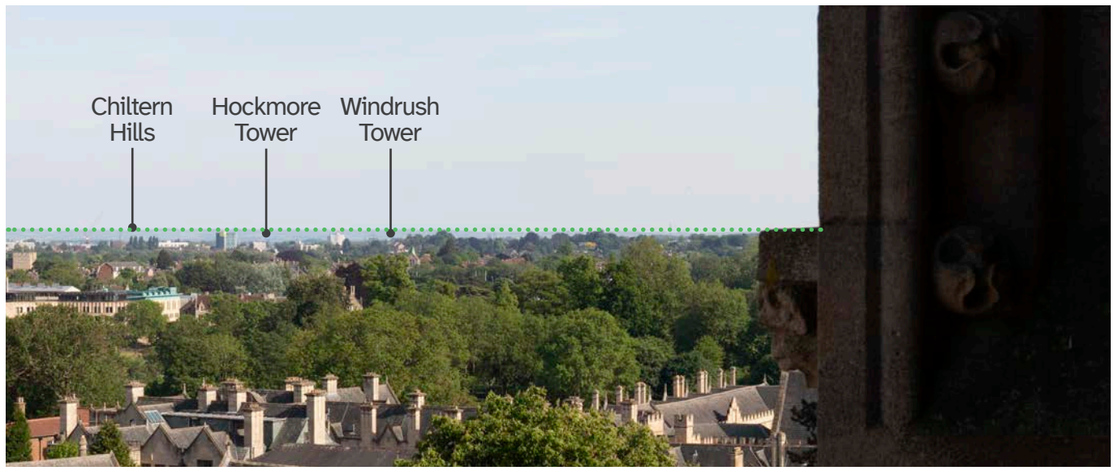
10. Residential interface forms key consideration in redevelopment area.
11. Development response to address Minchery Farmhouse – Grade II* listed building and the archaeological remains of the medieval Littlemore Priory.

Frontage and Activation

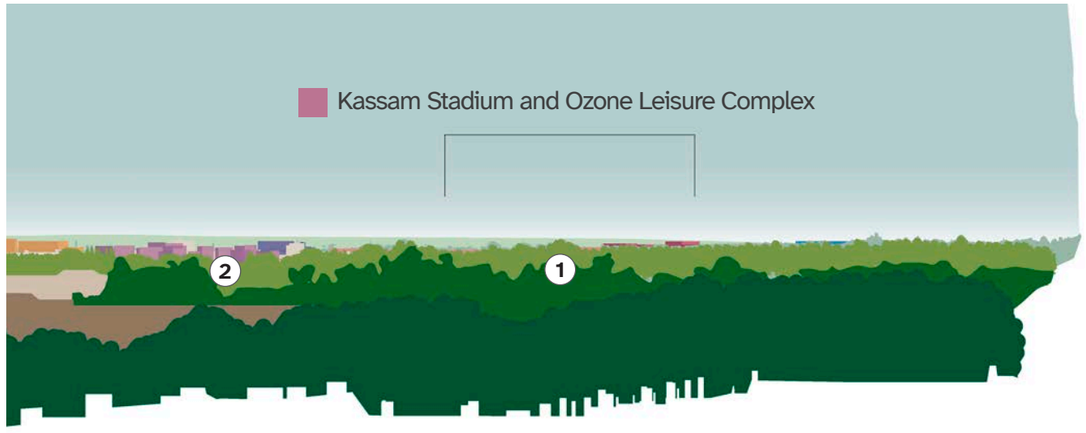
12. Explore interface and connections to development proposals south of Grenoble Road.
13. Important frontage to Grenoble Road A4074 and frontage to development site - green infrastructure forms important context for quality of work environment.

Visual Analysis - St Mary's Church Tower

↑ Existing photograph.



↑ Annotated insert of existing photograph.



↑ Illustration of existing photograph with potential development (for illustrative purposes only).

Baseline	Kassam Stadium and Ozone Leisure Complex site not visible in outward views from the City, screened by intervening landform / vegetation (Rose Hill).
Heights strategy	(1) Future development may break above Rose Hill ridgeline in limited places, but will not be highly visible / prominent feature.
	(2) Future development will remain separate from the District Centre cluster.

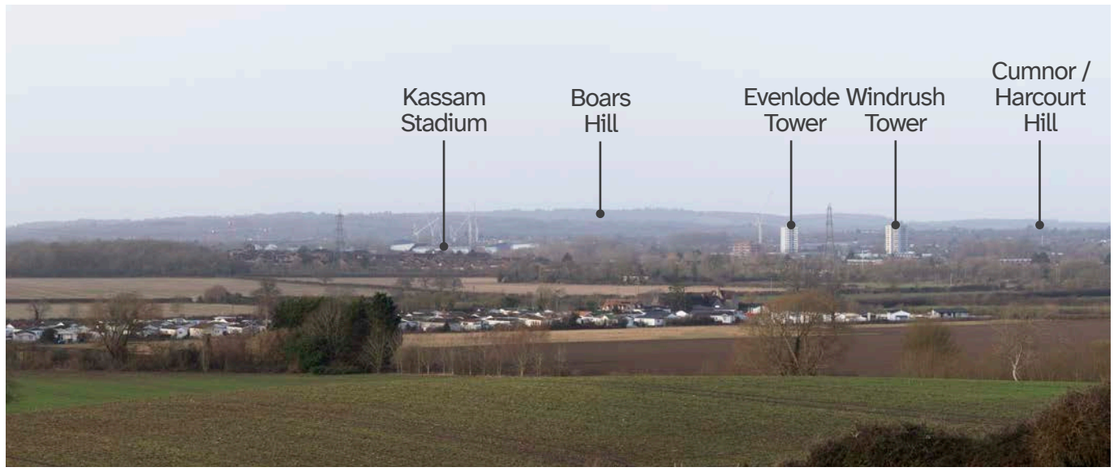
↑ Summary of baseline context and heights strategy (for specified view only).

Obstruction	There will be no obstruction with any existing buildings or features.
Competition	There will be little competition with any existing buildings or features. The Rose Hill ridge will remain the prominent feature in view.
Skylining	There will be minimal disruption to skyline and clustered within a focussed area.
Character	There will be little change to overall character. It is expected that the built forms of the Kassam Stadium, and Ozone Leisure Complex local District Centre(s) will be distinctive from the built forms of the local District Centre(s).

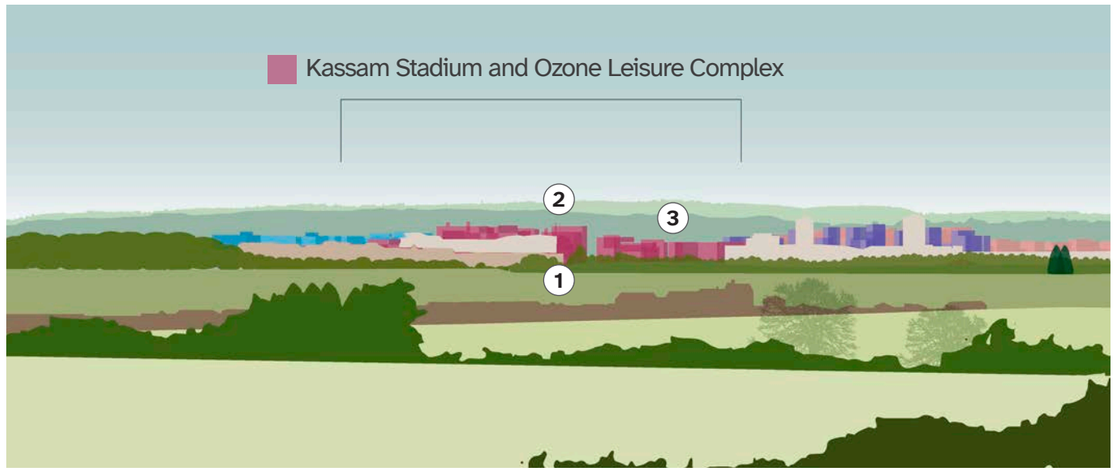
↑ Analysis against High Buildings TAN 'visual tests' (for specified view only).

Visual Analysis - View from Garsington

↑ Existing photograph.



↑ Annotated insert of existing photograph.



↑ Illustration of existing photograph with potential development (for illustrative purposes only).

Baseline		Kassam Stadium and Ozone Leisure Complex site is visible in inward views from the countryside, with Kassam Stadium being the most prominent feature.
Heights strategy	(1)	Future development will be more visible / prominent, but clustered within a relatively focussed area.
	(2)	Future development will sit below Boars Hill ridgeline.
	(3)	Lower buildings within the eastern part of the site provide an appropriate interface with surrounding residential areas and maintains sense of separation with the Blackbird Leys District Centre to the east.

↑ Summary of baseline context and heights strategy (for specified view only).

Obstruction	There will be no obstruction to existing buildings. Some obstruction to Boars Hill but buildings do not extend above this landform horizon; overall appearance / composition of Boars Hill is maintained as a backdrop.
Competition	There will be no competition with existing buildings and little competition with overall landscape backdrop.
Skylining	There will be some disruption to the visibility of suburban areas locally beyond, but buildings will sit well below the Boards Hill ridgeline / horizon.
Character	There will be some change but overall landscape setting and legibility of developed areas of Oxford and the surrounding landscape is maintained.

↑ Analysis against High Buildings TAN ‘visual tests’ (for specified view only).

Oxford Science Park

The Place

- Campus environment, with buildings set within a generous framework of estate roads, public realm and green spaces.
- Green infrastructure, including trees, streams and amenity, is a key characteristic of the campus, and the site is enclosed by trees. Littlemore Brook runs through the site to the north.
- The site sits at around 55m - 60m AOD.
- Predominately a mix of office and R&D buildings.
- Buildings typically 2 - 4 storeys (circa 10m – 20m).
- Recent planning permissions include (mapped over page):

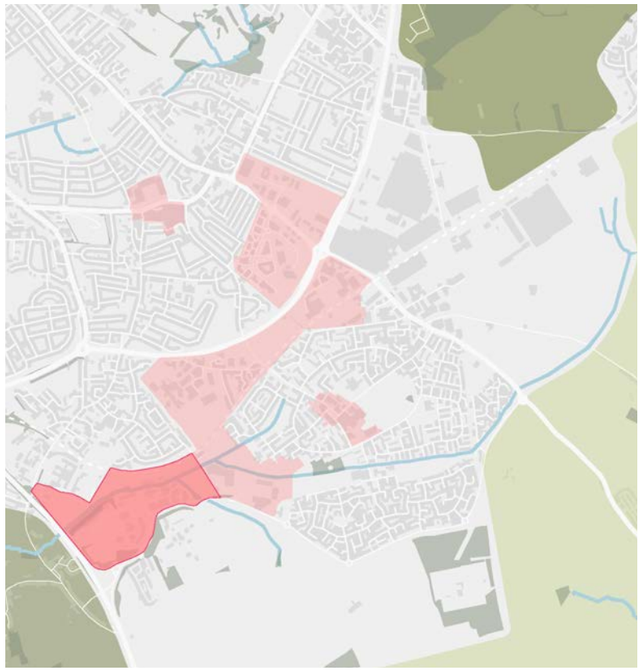
1. Plots 23 - 26 (Ref 22/02168/FUL) - 3 no. R&D buildings, approx. 27m high.
2. Ellison Institute (Ref 22/02969/FUL) – R&D building, approx. 29m high.
3. Plot 16 (Ref 19/02003/FUL) - 2 no. linked R&D buildings, approx. 20m high - includes provision for the Cowley Littlemore Station.
4. Plot 27 (Ref 22/02555/FUL) - R&D building, approx. 23m high.

Local Context

- Bound by the Cowley Branch Line to the north, Grenoble Road to the south and A4074 to the west.
- Adjacent to Kassam and Ozone site to the east.
- Minchery Lane runs between the site and Kassam and Ozone - is a key pedestrian / cycle route into the City, crossing under the Branch Line.
- Suburban residential land uses adjoin the site to the north and west although generally separated by the Branch Line (to the north) and A4074 (to the west).
- Adjoins Sewage Treatment Work and open countryside to south, albeit this area is allocated for the Oxford Science Village.
- Adjoins the Grade II* listed Minchery Farmhouse / archaeological remains of the medieval Littlemore Priory within the Kassam and Ozone site.
- Historic villages of Littlemore and Sandford-on-Thames in close proximity, including a Conservation Area and multiple listed buildings.

City Context

- Not within any View Cones.
- In views from the elevated locations within the City centre and countryside to the south, the Science Park is not visible, screened by intervening topography and vegetation around Rose Hill.
- In views from the surrounding countryside, the Science Park is largely screened by vegetation around the site. The rising ground of Wytham Woods is visible beyond the City to the north-west.



↑ Oxford Science Park development zone.

↑ Green infrastructure is a key characteristic, including Littlemore Brook.

↑ Buildings set within a framework of public realm and green spaces.

Design Guidance

Policy Context

- Planning permission will be granted for B1 employment uses that directly relate to Oxford's key sectors of research led employment. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits. Development should be designed to enhance the external appearance of the science park and to optimise opportunities to enhance the landscape.

Future Vision

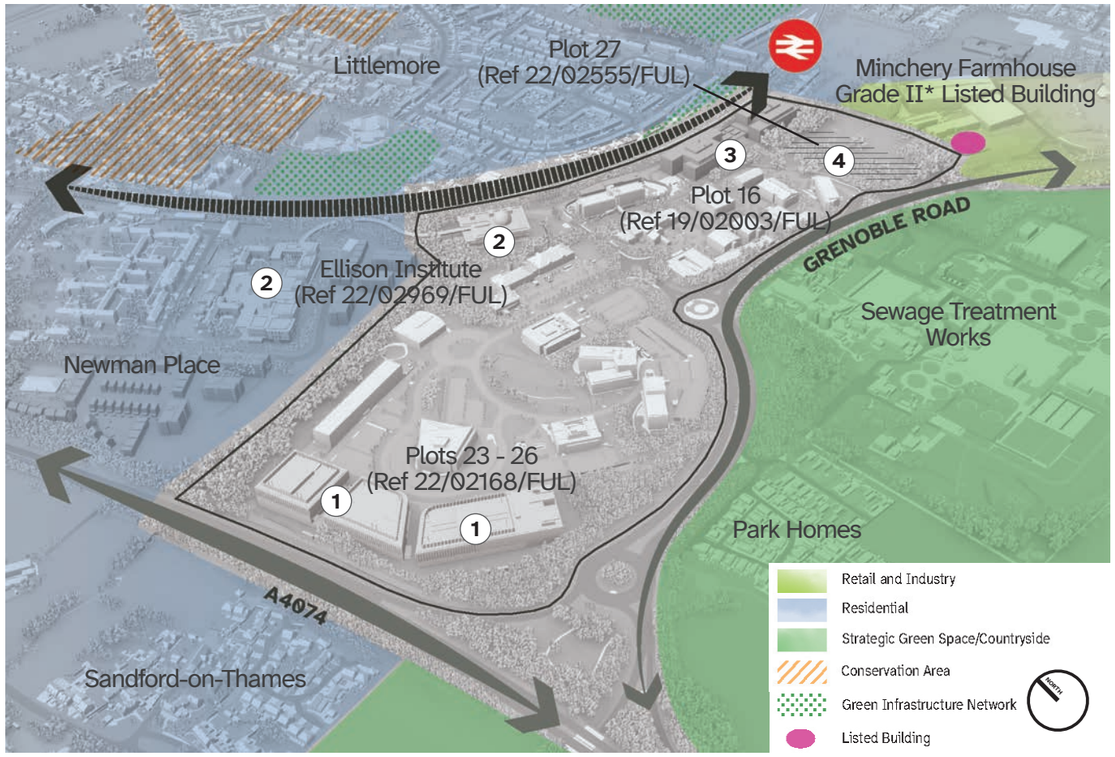
- Part of an established science and innovation campus close to the station with potential for redevelopment of existing plots / development on vacant land to provide further R&D uses.
- Landscaped setting of the existing science park should be retained as well as ensuring connectivity both within the science park and to surrounding neighbourhoods.

Achieving Densification

- The science park is the subject of ongoing applications for new plot development. New applications are bringing forward larger buildings for R&D uses with reduced parking provision and a focus on modal shift.
- The campus is characterised by a strong green setting providing a relatively open campus environment and a central green space. Densification can be delivered through appropriately located taller development and reduced car parking standards to liberate developable area, assuming that the broad character of the science park will be retained.
- The proximity of proposed housing development south of Grenoble Road and connection to existing housing via Priory Road and the Littlemore station will support active travel and sustainable transport to support mode shift and densification opportunities.

Height Parameters

- Higher buildings will be most appropriate to the central and eastern part of site, closest to the Kassam Stadium and Leisure Complex, with some moderation to respond to the setting of the Grade II* listed Minchery Farmhouse.
- Lower buildings will be most appropriate within the western part of the site, providing a transition to the countryside edge of Oxford / towards the western hills and river corridor, however, taller buildings can broadly be accommodated across the site.
- This arrangement will ensure the majority of built form is not visible from the City, sitting below the intervening ridgeline (Rose Hill). In inward views from the countryside, built form will remain well below the distant ridgeline (Boars Hill)



↑ Land Use and Environmental Context.

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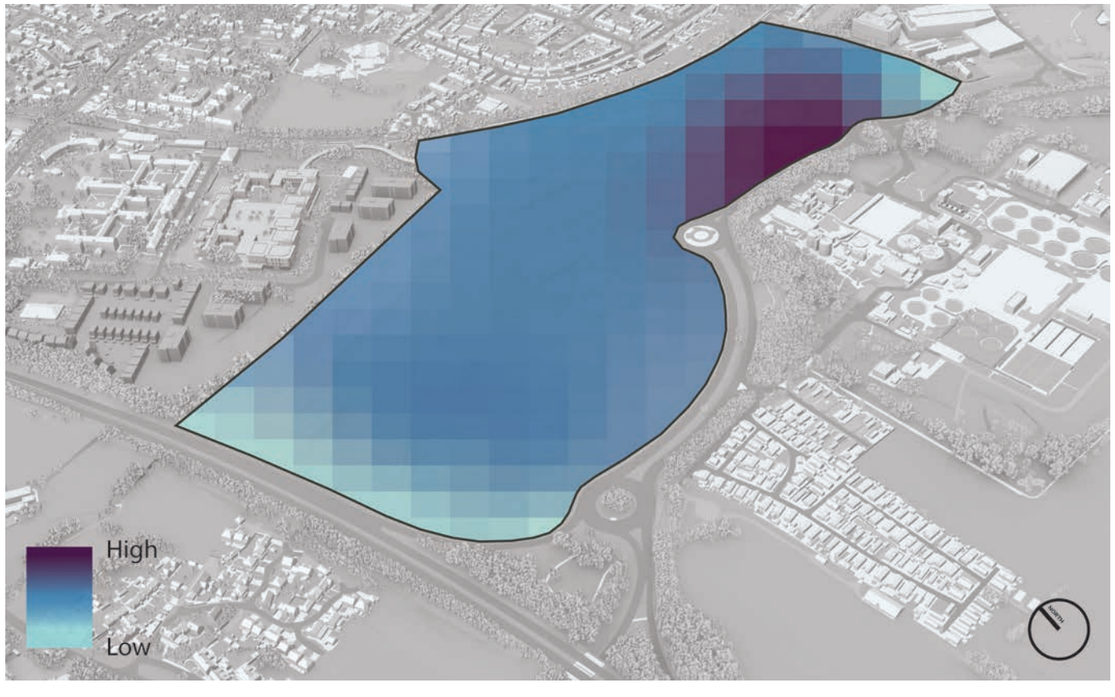


↑ Illustrative height parameters.

3D model © VU.CITY 2025

Height Guidance

3 - 4 storeys R&D

Generally appropriate across the site.
Development of this scale:

- Will be consistent with the majority of existing building heights.
- Will provide an appropriate interface with residential areas.
- Will not be visible in outward views from the City (screened by Rose Hill and intervening woodland).
- Will not be highly visible in inward views from the countryside.

5 - 6 storeys R&D

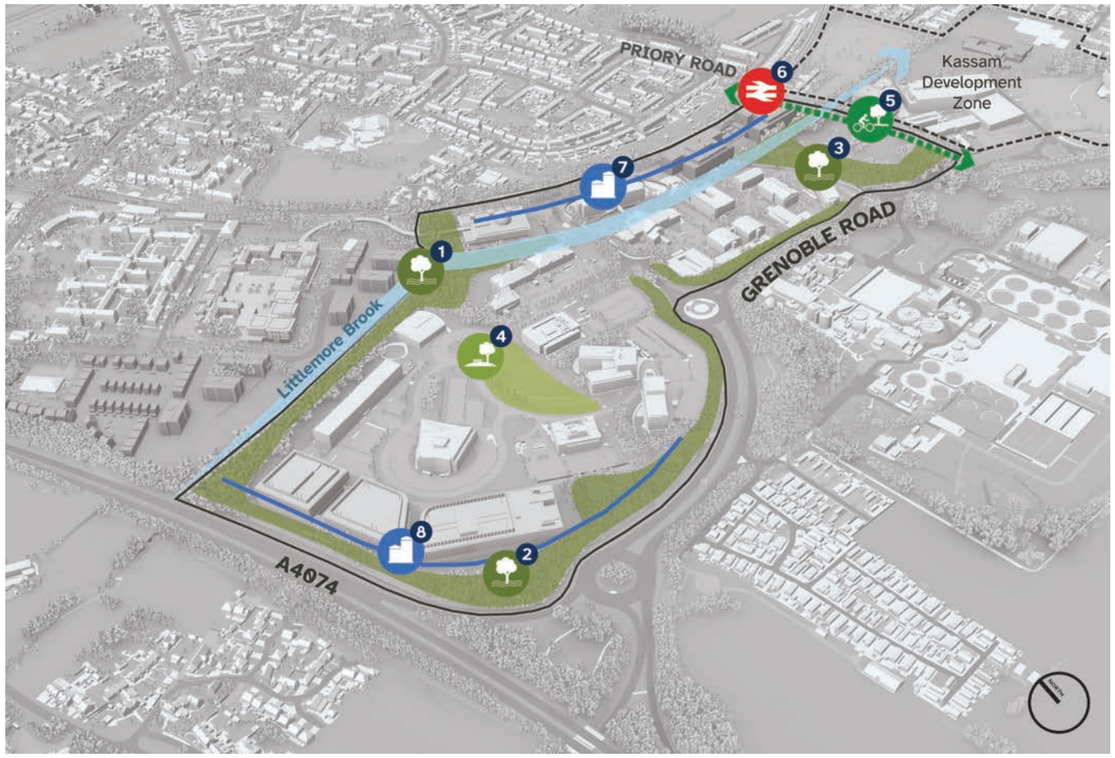
Generally appropriate across the site.
Development of this scale:

- Will be consistent with the scale of recently permitted R&D development within the former bingo hall within the Ozone Leisure complex.
- Will define key gateways / routes.
- Will not be visible in outward views from the City and inward views from the countryside (screened by Rose Hill and intervening woodland).
- Will become more visible in inward views from the countryside, but will not break the distant ridgeline (Wytham Woods).
- Will create a sense of transition towards the Sandford-on-Thames / river corridor to the west.
- Will retain a separate identity with the ARC Oxford / Retail Park area, with lower building heights across the Sandy Lane site.
- Careful articulation of upper storeys and roofs will be necessary to break up overall scale of the building and sufficient ‘breaks’ provided with adjacent structures to reduce overall bulk and mass.

7 - 8 storeys R&D

Most appropriate in locations within the eastern part of the site, along Grenoble Road and at the interface with the Kassam / Ozone site. Development of this scale:

- Will define key gateways / routes.
- Will be in close proximity to the station.
- Will not be highly discernible in outward views from the City and inward views from the countryside (substantially screened by Rose Hill and intervening woodland).
- Will become prominent features in inward views from the countryside, but will not break the distant ridgeline (Wytham Woods).
- Will retain a separate identity with the Oxford Business Park / Retail Park area, with lower building heights across the Sandy Lane site.
- Very careful articulation of upper storeys and roofs will be necessary to break up overall scale of the building, including reducing the footprint of upper levels.



↑ Placemaking principles.

3D model © VU.CITY 2025

Green Infrastructure

1 Littlemore Brook retained and protected as key site asset and setting for workplace.

2 Planted edge frames existing science park site to form green setting and control extent of visibility of built development on approach to Oxford and along Grenoble Road.

3 Existing incidental naturalistic green space forming buffer with adjoining Kassam/Ozone development zone and opportunity for workspace setting.

Green Space

4 Existing green space forms focus of existing science park masterplan and workspace environment – assumed for retention and possible enhancement to reflect more natural aesthetic/connection with nature along with new plot landscape treatments.

Green Link

5 Priory Road forms key connecting link to wider area and forms green approach from active travel route including existing trees associated with Science Park development plot and new station providing activation.

Station

6 Station site forms key entrance to development zone and access off Priory Road green link.

Redevelopment Area

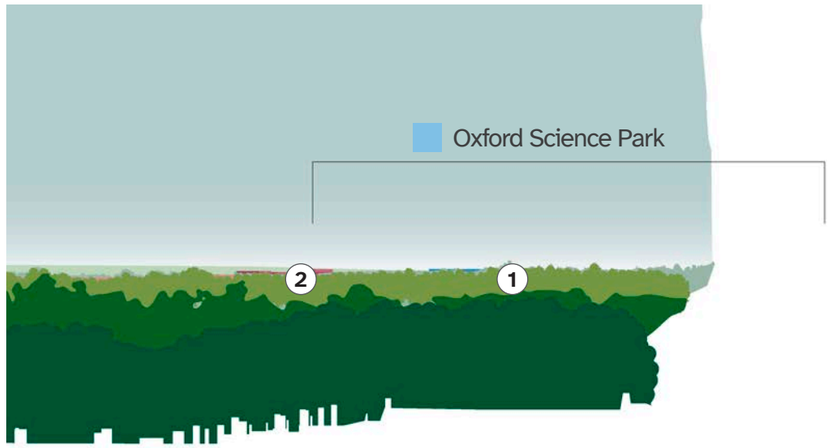
7 Important development interface with rail line corridor and connection to Littlemore station activating frontage.

8 Commercial development plots forming frontage to A4074 and approach to Oxford and frontage to development site - green infrastructure forms important context for quality of work environment.

Visual Analysis - St Mary's Church Tower

↑ Existing photograph.

↑ Annotated insert of existing photograph.



↑ Illustration of existing photograph with potential development (for illustrative purposes only).

Baseline		Oxford Science Park site not visible in outward views from the City, screened by intervening landform / vegetation (Rose Hill).
Heights strategy	(1)	Future development may break above Rose Hill ridgeline in limited places, but will not be highly visible / prominent feature.
	(2)	Future development perceived as part of cluster with Kassam Stadium and Ozone Leisure Complex.

↑ Summary of baseline context and heights strategy (for specified view only).

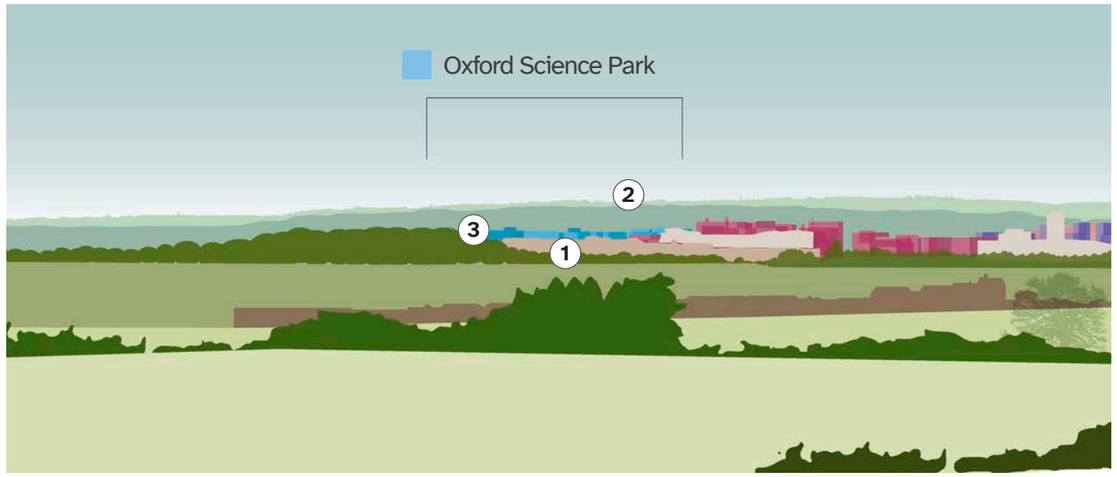
Obstruction	There will be no obstruction with any existing buildings or features.
Competition	There will be little competition with any existing buildings or features. The Rose Hill ridge will remain the prominent feature in view.
Skylining	There will be minimal disruption to skyline and clustered within a focussed area.
Character	There will be little change to overall character.

↑ Analysis against High Buildings TAN 'visual tests' (for specified view only).

Visual Analysis - View from Garsington

↑ Existing photograph.

↑ Annotated insert of existing photograph.



↑ Illustration of existing photograph with potential development (for illustrative purposes only).

Baseline		Oxford Science Park site is not highly visible in inward views from the countryside due to intervening vegetation within and around the Science Park.
Heights strategy	(1)	Future development will be more visible / prominent, but clustered within a relatively focussed area.
	(2)	Future development will sit well below Boars Hill.
	(3)	Lower buildings within the western part of the site will provide a transition to the countryside, river corridor and hills to the west.

↑ Summary of baseline context and heights strategy (for specified view only).

Obstruction	No obstruction to existing buildings. Some obstruction to Boars Hill but buildings do not extend above this and overall appearance / composition of the ridge is maintained.
Competition	No competition with existing buildings and little competition with overall ridgeline.
Skylining	Some disruption to suburban skyline, but buildings do not extend above distant ridgeline of Boars Hill.
Character	Minor change to character but overall urban / landscape setting hierarchy of foreground, intermediate, and backdrop/ horizon landscape maintained.

↑ Analysis against High Buildings TAN ‘visual tests’ (for specified view only).

District Centres - Blackbird Leys

The Place

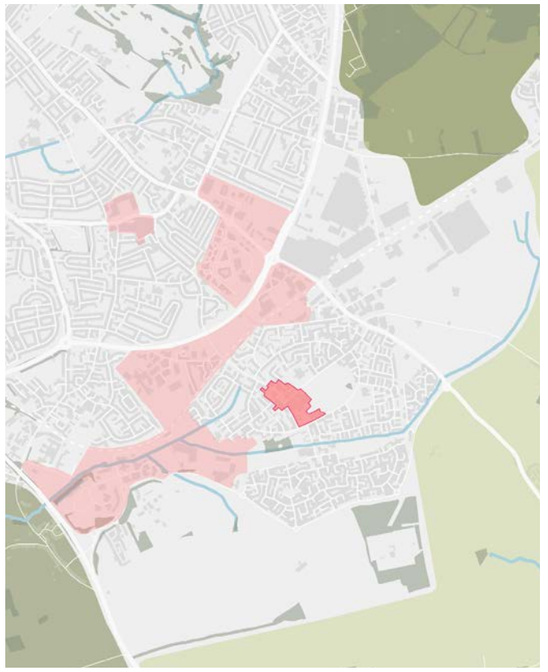
- Existing district centre, comprising shops, public house, library, church, City of Oxford College and residential uses.
- Clustered around the junction of Blackbird Leys Road, Knights Road and Cuddesdon Way, with a small civic space at the centre.
- The site sits at around 65m AOD.
- Evenlode and Windrush residential tower blocks are prominent/landmark buildings at around 48m high.
- Planning permission has been approved for Blackbird Leys District Centre and Knights Road (Ref: 23/00405/OUTFUL) development. This is a multi use/building scheme, comprising around 300 homes; new and improved shops; new community centre; green spaces and improved road infrastructure/cycle routes. The tallest elements are up to 45m.

Local Context

- Within and part of the fabric of Blackbird Leys residential area.
- Adjoins large area of public open space within the centre of Blackbird Leys.
- The development zone includes the Grade II Listed The Church of the Holy Family. This building is in a poor state of repair and an application for listed building consent for its demolition has been approved (LPA ref. 20/00688/LBC).

City Context

- Not within any View Cones.
- In views from the elevated locations within the City centre and countryside to the south, the Blackbird Leys District Centre is clearly identifiable by the Evenlode and Windrush residential tower blocks.
- In views from the elevated locations within the City centre the Evenlode and Windrush residential tower blocks sitting just above the rising ground of the Chiltern Hills.
- In views from the surrounding countryside, the Evenlode and Windrush residential tower blocks sit below the rising ground of Boars Hill.



↑ District Centres - Blackbird Leys development zone.

↑ Evenlode tower on approach to Blackbird Leys district centre.

↑ Windrush tower and adjoining library and City of Oxford College.

Design Guidance

Policy Context

- Planning permission will be granted for a mixed use development that includes retail, employment units, residential development and community facilities. Other uses should be appropriate to a district centre and could include education, live / work units, and sport and leisure facilities.

Future Vision

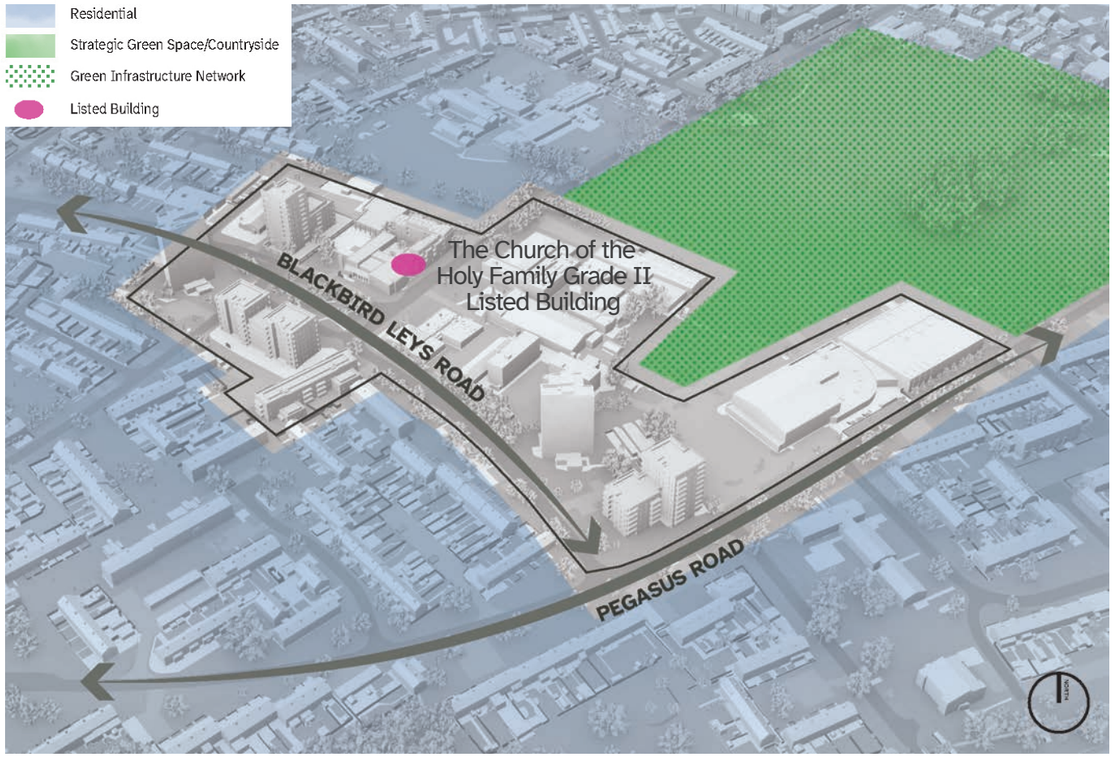
- The redevelopment of Blackbird Leys centre has already been permitted and will include the delivery of new homes, commercial and community uses.
- The redevelopment of The Church of the Holy Family will also form part of the future built environment.
- The opportunity exists to further intensify uses within and around the District Centre, within the corridor between the Evenlode and Windrush residential tower blocks.
- Any further redevelopment and densification should be residential led, with little opportunity for R&D uses.

Achieving Densification

- A masterplan for the redevelopment of Cowley has been prepared by Catalyst (Peabody) and Oxford City Council.
- A planning application has been approved to deliver that masterplan including new residential apartments, dwellings and retail and commercial space, social infrastructure including community centre off Knights Road including new public open space.
- The development zone delivers densification through the introduction of additional mid rise development and supporting improvements and additional provision of public open space to define place and support new residential need.
- The development zone adjoins Blackbird Leys Park and establishes improved connection to existing green links.

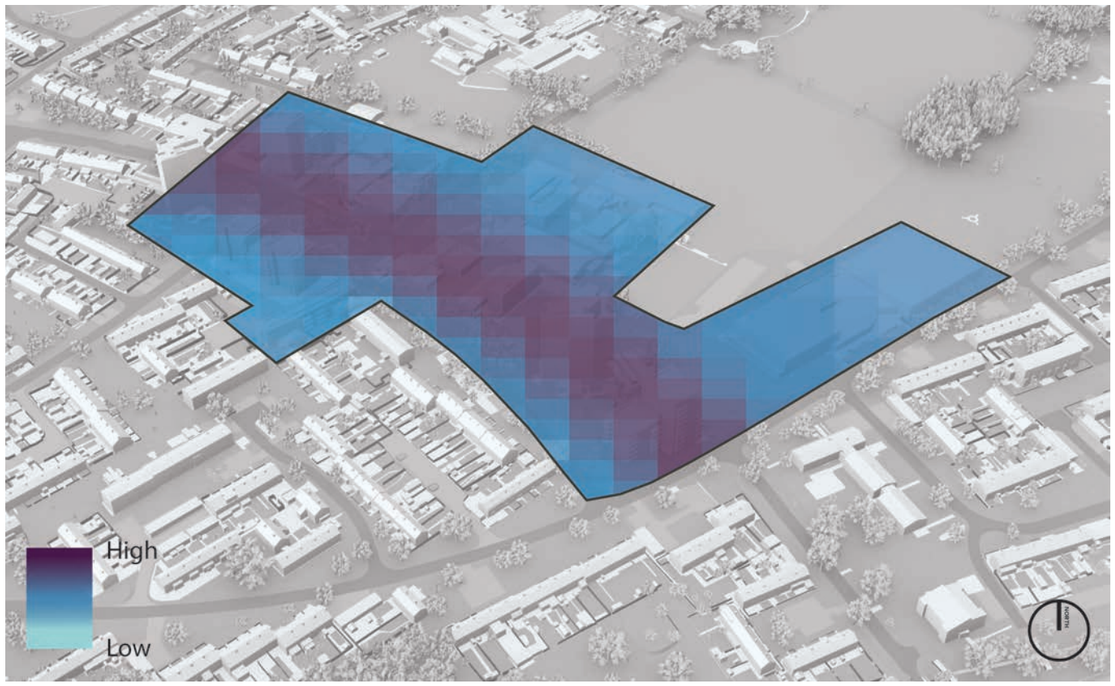
Height Parameters

- Higher buildings will generally be appropriate across the site.
- Lower buildings will be most appropriate at the interfaces with surrounding residential uses.
- This arrangement will ensure the majority of built form is seen in the context of the existing residential tower blocks, retaining a clearly defined cluster between the Oxford Business Park and Oxford Science Park.



↑ Land Use and Environmental Context.

3D model © VU.CITY 2025



↑ Illustrative height parameters.

3D model © VU.CITY 2025

Height Guidance

4 - 5 storeys residential / mixed use

Generally appropriate across the site.
Development of this scale:

- Will provide an appropriate interface with residential areas.
- Will not be visible in outward views from the City and inward views from the countryside.

6- 7 storeys residential / mixed use

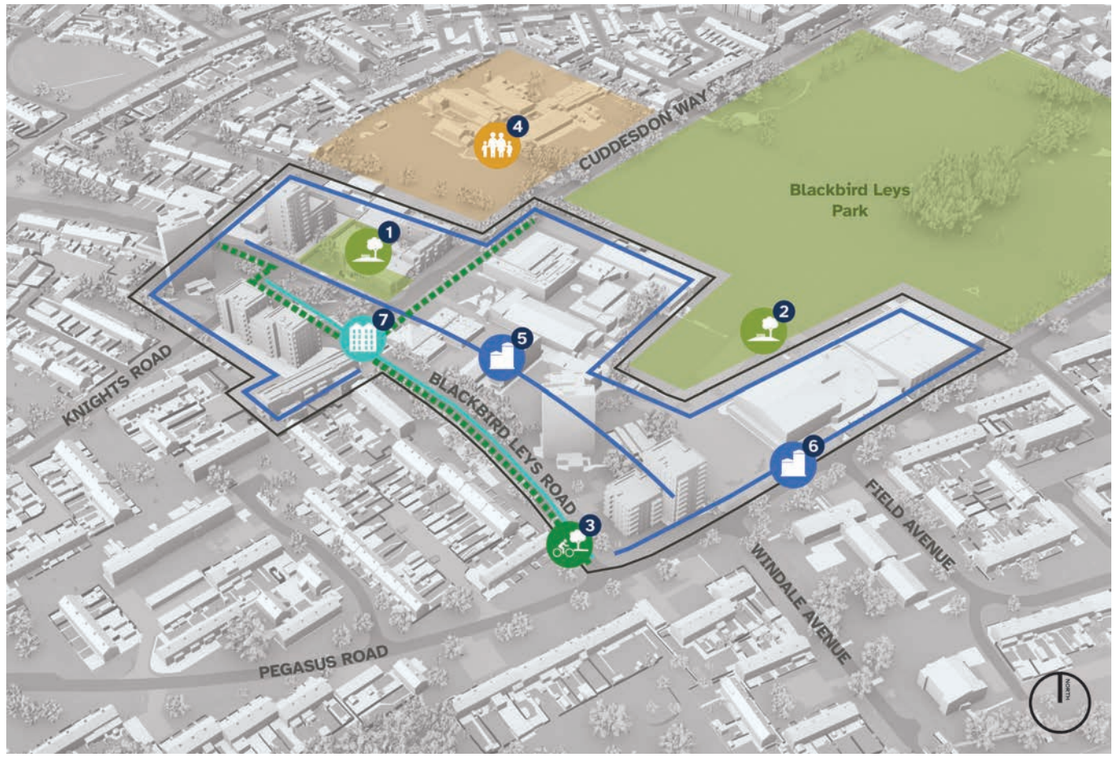
Generally appropriate across the site.
Development of this scale:

- Will define key gateways / routes.
- Will not be highly visible in outward views from the City and inward views from the countryside.
- Provide transition and variation between surrounding residential areas and taller elements within the approved District Centre.

8 - 9 storeys + residential / mixed use

Most appropriate along the Blackbird Leys road corridor. Development of this scale:

- Will define key gateways / routes.
- Will be perceived in the context of other taller buildings within and around the District Centre.
- Will be visible in outward views from the City and inward views from the countryside but within a relatively narrow extent between the existing residential towers.
- Will not break the distant ridgeline of the Chiltern Hills and Wytham Woods.
- Will retain a separate identity with the Oxford Business Park cluster to the east and Oxford Science Park cluster to the west.
- Careful consideration should be given to the distribution of any new buildings / relationship to existing / approved taller buildings, along with the articulation of upper storeys and roofs to break up overall scale of built form.



↑ Placemaking principles.

3D model © VU.CITY 2025

Green Space

1 New public space approved as part of Cowley district centre redevelopment masterplan.

2 Blackbird Leys Park - public park forms key open space focus for the area with important interface with residential areas and green links.

Green Link

3 New green link strategy for Blackbird Leys Road extending past/through district centre approved as part of Cowley district centre redevelopment masterplan.

Social Infrastructure

4 Assumed retained Mabel Prichard Primary School provides green interface with Cuddesdon Way and interface with redevelopment area.

Redevelopment Area

5 Potential spine within redevelopment zone for taller buildings – some redevelopment approved as part of Cowley district centre redevelopment masterplan.

6 Key development interface with green space/social infrastructure/residential areas - opportunities to explore connection to nearby streets to the east.

Frontage and Activation

7 Proposed redevelopment approved as part of Cowley district centre redevelopment masterplan.

District Centres - Temple Cowley

The Place

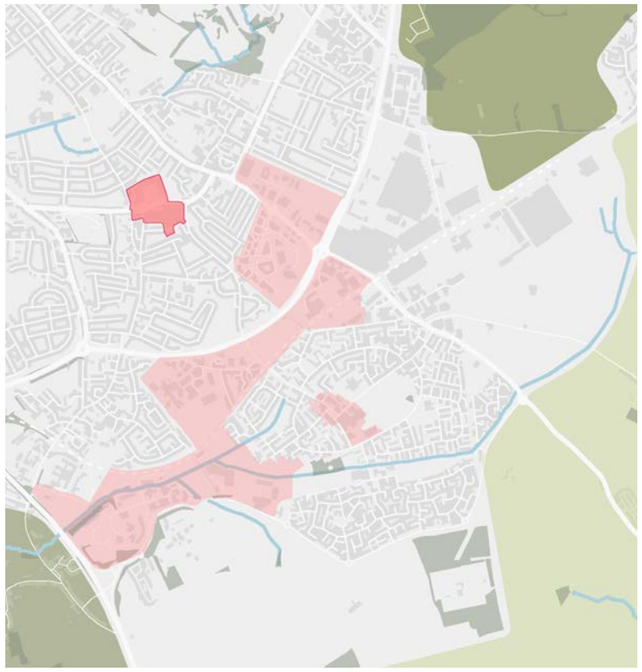
- Existing district centre, comprising Templars Square shopping centre, multi-storey car parks and Hockmore Tower, a residential block sitting above the shopping centre.
- To the north lies Templars Retail Park, comprising large scale 'out of town' retail units.
- Templars Square shopping centre sits at around 70m AOD. Templars Retail Park sits at around 65m AOD.
- Hockmore Tower is a prominent / landmark building at around 102m AOD.
- Planning permission has been approved for partial redevelopment of the Temple Cowley District Centre (Ref: 16/03006/FUL), comprising residential, retail and hotel uses, but has never commenced / permission has lapsed.

Local Context

- Within and part of the fabric of Temple Cowley residential area.
- The Temple Cowley Conservation Area and listed buildings are located to the east.
- There are a number of Listed Buildings immediately to the west of Templars Square shopping centre, along Beauchamp Lane.

City Context

- Not within any View Cones.
- In views from the elevated locations within the City centre and countryside to the south, the Temple Cowley District Centre is clearly identifiable by Hockmore Tower.
- In views from the elevated locations within the City centre, the Hockmore Tower sits below the rising ground of the Chiltern Hills.
- In views from the surrounding countryside, the Hockmore Tower sits below the rising ground of Wytham Woods.



↑ District Centres - Temple Cowley development zone.

↑ Templars Square shopping centre and Hockmore Tower.

↑ Templars Retail Park.

Design Guidance

Policy Context

- Planning permission will be granted for a retail-led mixed use development at Cowley Centre which should include residential development and could include community and leisure facilities. Development should achieve high standards of design in the public realm and open space.

Future Vision

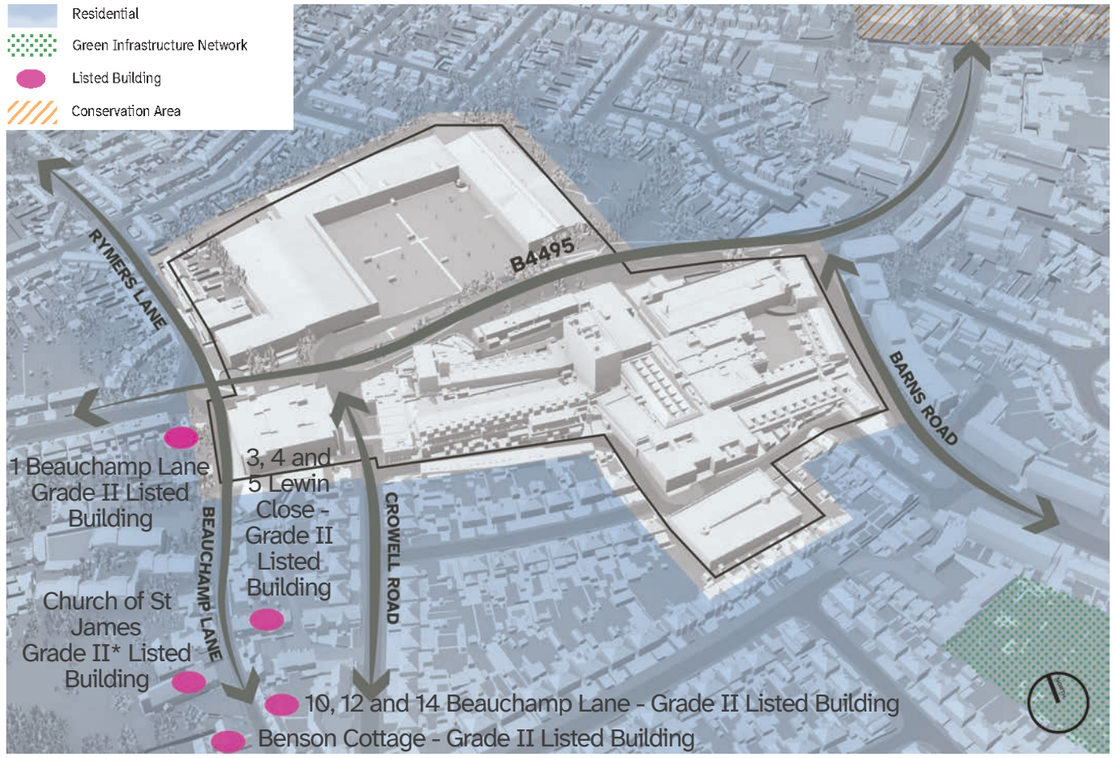
- The opportunity exists to comprehensively redevelop the site making more efficient use of land through infill and higher density development.
- Any further redevelopment and densification should be residential led, with little opportunity for R&D uses.
- The opportunity exists for taller buildings within and around the District Centre, however, taller buildings need to be carefully located to avoid cumulative impacts with taller buildings within other development zones.
- Development also needs to be sensitive to the location and proximity of near by Listed Buildings.

Achieving Densification

- Densification can be achieved within the development zone through redevelopment of the retail park area in the northern portion of the development zone and reduction in parking provision. To the south, rationalisation of the shopping centre and associated podium blocks into a series of consistent mid rise blocks should deliver development capacity through the reestablishment of open streets and a clear movement framework.
- Densification should be supported by the provision of a green link and activated frontages along Between Towns Road and Barns Road and assumed opportunities for a good public transport hub / set down area to support modal shift and reduced dependency on cars.
- Existing green space and improved connection to surrounding and adjoining streets should provide a setting for densification.

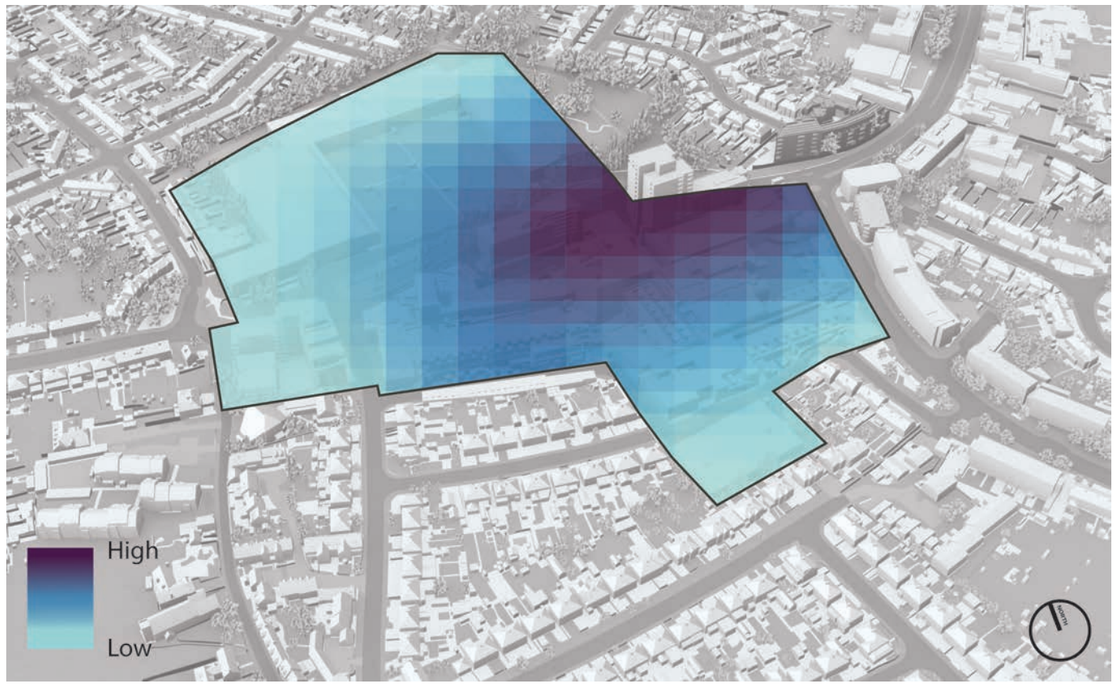
Height Parameters

- Higher buildings will be most appropriate to the east of the site, avoiding the creation of an overly expansive cluster when viewed in the context of the Oxford Business Park cluster.
- This arrangement will also avoid the 'joining' up of the Oxford Business Park cluster and Blackbird Leys District Centre in inward and outward views to and from the City.
- Lower buildings will be most appropriate at the interfaces with surrounding residential uses, however, the character of the area is already of larger buildings juxtaposed with smaller-scale residential uses.



↑ Land Use and Environmental Context.

3D model © VU.CITY 2025



↑ Illustrative height parameters.

3D model © VU.CITY 2025

Height Guidance

4 - 5 storeys residential / mixed use

Generally appropriate across the site. Development of this scale:

- Will be consistent with the majority of existing building heights.
- Will provide an appropriate interface with residential areas.
- Will not be visible in outward views from the City and inward views from the countryside.

6- 7 storeys residential / mixed use

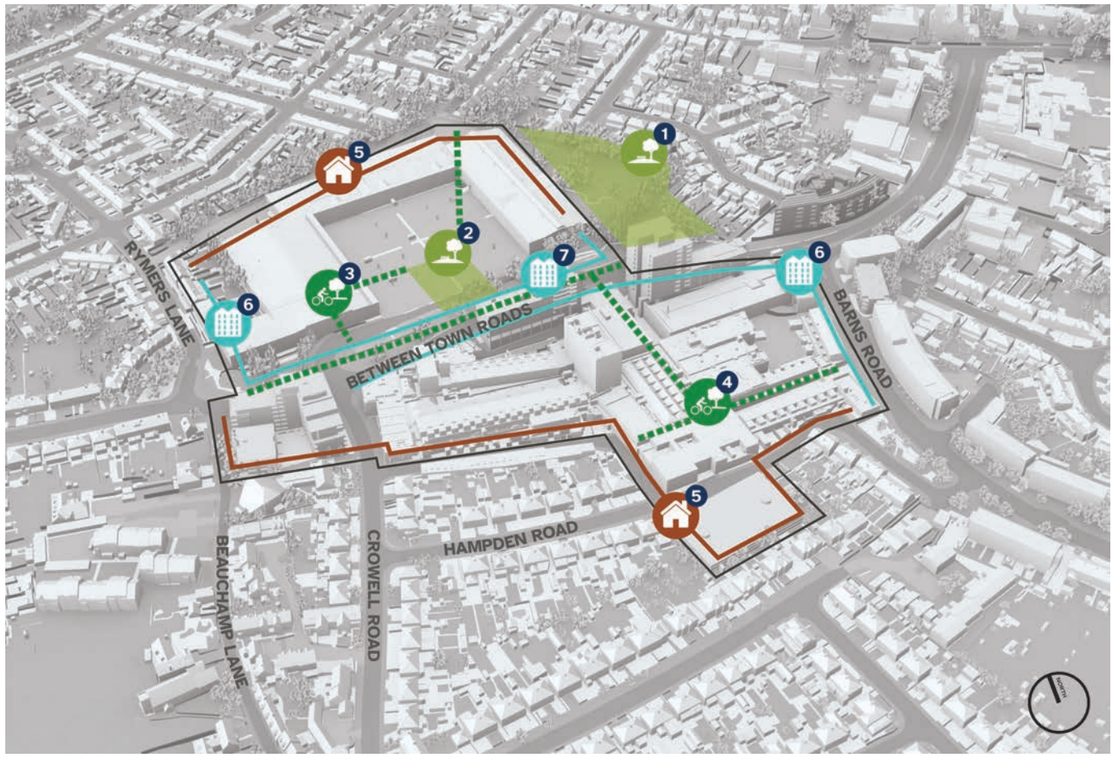
Generally appropriate in location to the east of the site. Development of this scale:

- Will define key gateways / routes.
- Will not be highly visible in outward views from the City and inward views from the countryside.
- Provide transition and variation between surrounding residential areas and taller elements within the District Centre.
- Will maintain sense of separation between clusters of taller development around the Oxford Business Park cluster, Blackbird Leys District Centre, and Oxford Science Park cluster.

8 - 9 storeys + residential / mixed use

Most appropriate in limited locations to the east of the site, along the Between Towns Road frontage / junction of Barns Road. Development of this scale:

- Will define key gateways / routes.
- Will be perceived in the context of other taller buildings within and around the District Centre.
- Will be visible in outward views from the City and inward views from the countryside but perceived as part of the Oxford Business Park cluster.
- Will not break the distant ridgeline of the Chiltern Hills and Wytham Woods.
- Will retain a separate identity with the Blackbird Leys District Centre and Oxford Science Park cluster.
- Careful consideration should be given to distribution of any new buildings / relationship to taller buildings, along with the articulation of upper storeys and roofs to break up overall scale of built form.



↑ Placemaking principles.

3D model © VU.CITY 2025

Green Space

1 Local green space – opportunities to improve access and frontage to public space and redevelopment interface.

2 Deep plot to west of Between Towns Road lies at lower level – redevelopment should consider public space to front main road extending through the development zone.

Green Link

3 Deep plot to west of Between Towns Road lies at lower level – redevelopment should consider green links extending through the development zone to break up development and form connections to adjoining existing routes/public space and form green/open space setting.

4 Opportunities to establish through routes in deep plot including open streets should be considered to stitch district centre into local area.

Residential Interface

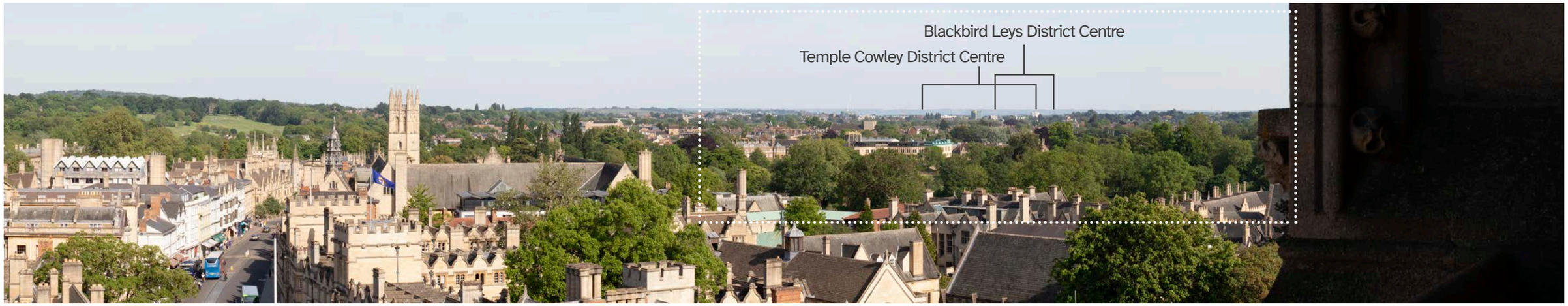
5 Residential interface forms key consideration in redevelopment areas inc relationship of servicing of district centre and deep plot redevelopment areas.

Frontage and Activation

6 Between Towns Road, Barns Road, Cromwell Road and Rymers Lane should be characterised by active frontage.

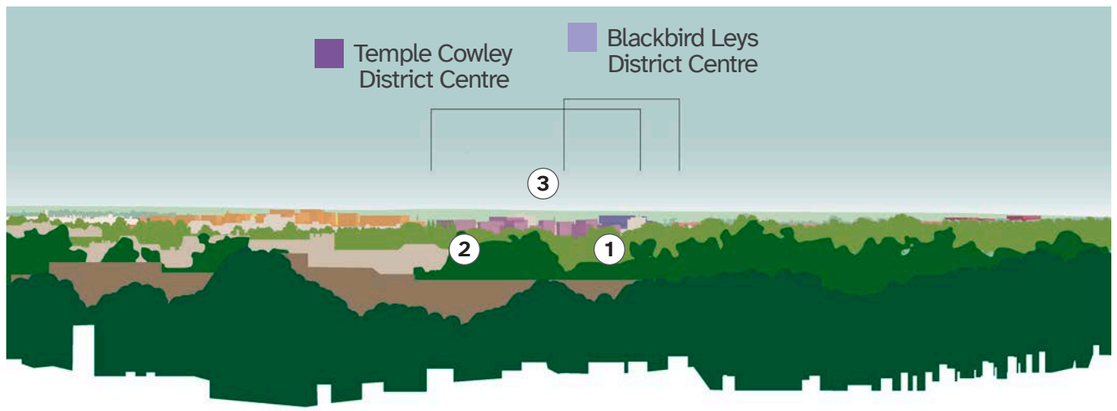
7 Main development frontage extends along Between Towns Road and forms key route within the redevelopment zone and opportunity for green link.

Visual Analysis - St Mary's Church Tower



↑ Existing photograph.

↑ Annotated insert of existing photograph.



↑ Illustration of existing photograph with potential development (for illustrative purposes only).

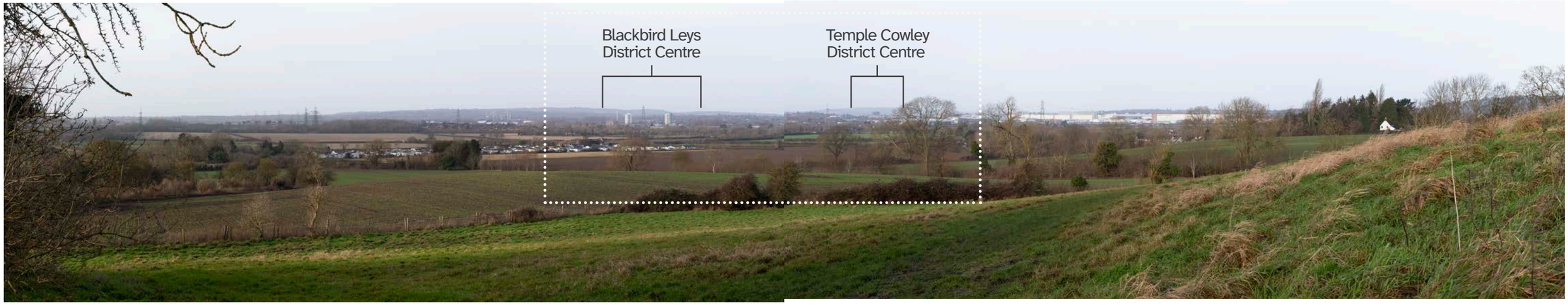
Baseline		Existing District Centres not highly visible or prominent features in view, but evident from isolated, taller structures.
Heights strategy	(1)	Within the Blackbird Leys District Centre, opportunity for additional taller buildings but consolidated between existing residential towers to 'cluster'.
	(2)	Within Templars Square District Centre, ensure visual transition to provide separation with Oxford Business Park cluster to the west.
	(3)	Future development will sit below Chiltern Hills horizon.

↑ Summary of baseline context and heights strategy (for specified view only).

Obstruction	There will be no obstruction to existing buildings. Some obstruction to Chiltern Hills but with visible gap to remain between the District Centres and other clusters; buildings do not extend above the Chilterns horizon.
Competition	There will be no competition with existing buildings and little competition with overall horizon line.
Skylining	There will be some disruption to suburban skyline, but buildings do not extend above the Chiltern Hills ridgeline.
Character	There will be some change to character but overall landscape setting and legibility maintained.

↑ Analysis against High Buildings TAN 'visual tests' (for specified view only).

Visual Analysis - View from Garsington



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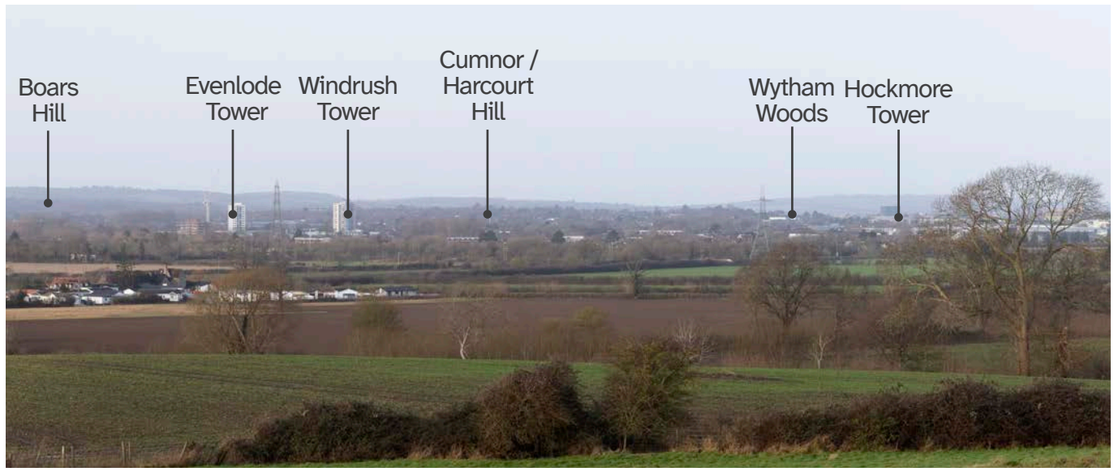


↑ Annotated insert of existing photograph.

↑ Illustration of existing photograph with potential development (for illustrative purposes only).

Baseline	Existing District Centres not highly visible or prominent features in view, but evident from isolated, taller structures.
Heights strategy	(1) Within the Blackbird Leys District Centre, future development consolidated between existing residential towers.
	(2) Lower buildings within the eastern part of the site maintains sense of separation with Oxford Science Park cluster to the west.
	(3) Within Temple Cowley District Centre, future development will become more visible / prominent but will be perceived as part of the Oxford Business Park cluster. Future development will sit below the Wytham Woods ridgeline.

↑ Summary of baseline context and heights strategy (for specified view only).

Obstruction	There will be no obstruction to existing buildings and little obstruction to the distant ridgelines of Wytham Wood / Boars Hill, with buildings sitting below this backdrop.
Competition	There will be no competition with existing buildings and little competition with overall horizon line.
Skylining	There will be some disruption to suburban skyline, but buildings remain well below the distant ridgelines.
Character	There will be minor changes to character but overall landscape setting and legibility maintained.

↑ Analysis against High Buildings TAN ‘visual tests’ (for specified view only).

Section 5.0
Design Guidance
Design Requirements and Case Studies

↑ View from St George's Tower, Oxford Castle.

Introduction

The detailed design of new buildings is an important part of achieving successful densification and increased heights. This section provides further principles for articulation and shaping; colour and material; and integration of roof plant.

A range of case studies have also been provided, demonstrating how densification has been achieved both locally, in Oxford; and elsewhere within the UK.

The selection of case studies is intended to demonstrate a variety of design responses and techniques that have been used to achieve well designed, 'dense' development in urban and suburban contexts. The case studies focus on R&D development, given the inherent challenge of sensitively designing buildings with larger footprint and floor heights. It should be noted that the selection of case studies is not exhaustive, nor do they indicate a preferred or defined approach to design.

Additional Design Guidance

Articulation and shaping

- As much care should be shown to designing the upper storeys and roofscape of buildings as their elevations, so that roof forms and roof line have a positive impact on the quality of the urban experience, the setting of neighbouring areas and the historic environment.
- An animated and lively roofscape is one of the defining historical characters of Oxford. Historically, even large buildings had animated rooflines with many vertical accents. Large, long unbroken flat roofs are therefore not consistent with the City's architectural and urban character and will not be supported without convincing explanation.
- Where buildings are visible in longer views, the shaping of upper storeys and roofs should be designed so that building forms and this articulation is legible and effective at distance in longer views, including providing variation in the skyline. Proposals should avoid monotony of built form and mass when viewed at distance.

Use of materials

- Where buildings will be visible in elevated views from the City Centre and / or long-range views from outside the City, materials should be chosen to avoid competition with the historic environment and landscape setting of the City and draw attention away from these significant elements of City character. Muted tones and non-reflective materials, for example, may mitigate impact of development on the landscape backdrop and on the character and significance of the City's historic environment.
- The selection of materials and colours should be informed by colour analysis of the local townscape and landscape, and an Environmental Colour Study / Assessment undertaken where necessary.

Integration of plant

- Visible or poorly integrated mechanical and electrical engineering plant could be detrimental to the quality of the places created along the Cowley Branch Line; to the City's historic environment and its setting; and the landscape context of the City, when it is viewed locally and across the City. Therefore, the design of MEP plant should be fully integrated into the form and appearance of proposed development, with full consideration for its appearance in close and distant views.

Case Studies

An understanding of successful development is important to illustrate and guide how growth and densification can be achieved within the Cowley Branch Line study area. A selection of case studies are presented in this section, and new case studies will be added to the Developer Guidance periodically.

Key case studies of R&D developments within Oxford, Cambridge and London that are considered to have been successfully articulated and integrated into the existing townscape, are highlighted below.

These case studies draw out common themes and lessons that have been addressed consistently through engagement. They are presented here as examples of best practice and provide a common reference point for developing design proposals in the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change in future.

↑ Case study locations.

234 Botley Road

Client

Columbia Threadneedle

Architect

Foster and Partners

- Design evolved through a collaborative formal Pre-Application process and design review including 6 officer meetings and 2 design review sessions.
- Focus placed on creating an active ground floor to surrounding area and increasing public permeability from important public streets into the site.
- Building massing of main façades broken up visually by the architectural language of the building cores. Building façade details also emphasise vertical elements.
- Roof areas are considered as the 5th elevation, ensuring the overall visual integration of the building into the City scape and avoiding detracting features, mesh screens and planting are incorporated to disguise plant rooms.
- Flues are integrated as an architectural feature rather than appearing as industrial chimneys.
- Design process included reducing height or building mass in areas of constraint and reallocating this to other parts of the site.
- Material selection references Oxford's built landscape in terms of colour and tone. Instead of stone, proposed materials maximise low carbon, recycled content and longevity.
- Focus on sustainable means of travel to surrounding area with car parking minimised on plot, maximising space for building space and landscape.
- Sustainability benchmarked against BREEAM, WELL and ActiveScore certifications and targets.

↑ 234 Botley Road.

Ellison Institute

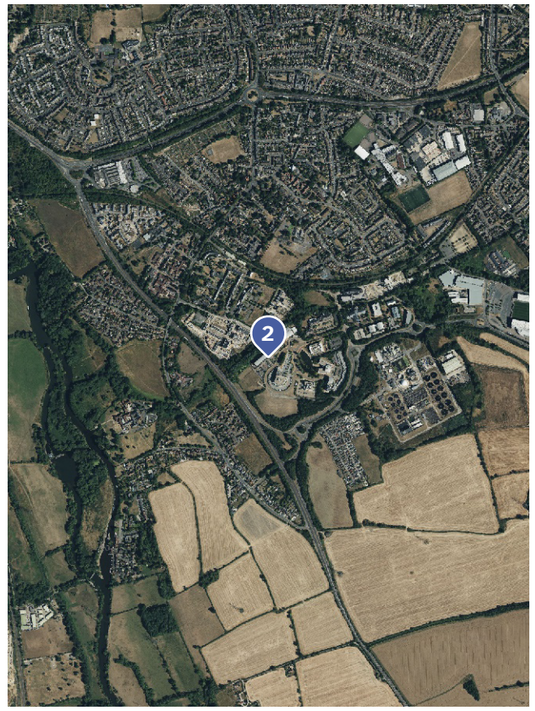
Client

Ellison Institute

Architect

Foster and Partners

- Design evolved through a collaborative formal Pre-Application process, design review and stakeholder engagement including officer meetings and 3 design review sessions.
- Buildings integrate into surroundings through either outward facing buildings or offering views through clear pavilion blocks with views to internal courtyard.
- Activation to public areas is established through positioning of uses such as the restaurant in more prominent locations.
- Building heights and massing are sensitive to Littlemore House (non-designated heritage asset) and neighbouring buildings.
- Parking and plant are placed underground where possible to avoid additional building height.
- Flues are incorporated as feature architectural elements to celebrate the function of the buildings.
- Long elevations are broken up with vertical 'blades' and variation in massing and building line.
- Undercroft parking maximises plot area available for building space, retained landscape features and courtyard garden.
- Building materials draw on local character and aesthetic, balancing this with durability, maintenance and embodied carbon.
- Sustainability benchmarked against BREEAM and WELL certifications and targets.



↑ Ellison Institute.

Eastpoint Business Park

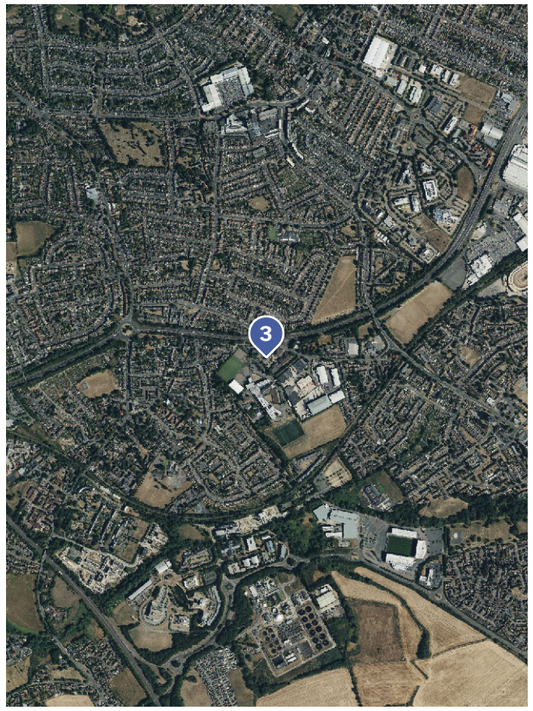
Client

Railpen

Architect

Scott Brownrigg

- Design evolved through a formal Pre-Application process and design review including 6 officer meetings and design review session.
- Focus placed on activation of adjoining public street and increased permeability for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Building form is large and marks a significant increase in density and scale for the area. This is consistent with the aspiration for intensification of employment uses within the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change.
- Variation in building height introduced through the engagement process to create articulation and reduce impact on adjacent Conservation Area.
- A smaller pavilion is included alongside 3 larger buildings to break up the overall massing and allows permeability through the site for visitors.
- The buildings incorporate horizontal bands which add significant depth to the building façade and introduce space to incorporate planting.
- Flues appear as a continuation of the horizontal banding on the building façade with the intention of increasing the cohesion between these features and the rest of the design.
- Building offsets are created from neighbouring homes to protect amenity.
- Car parking consolidated into travel and energy hub leaving more space for building and landscape areas.
- Sustainability benchmarked against BREEAM, WELL and Active Travel Score certifications and targets.



↑ Eastpoint Business Park.

Tribeca, Camden

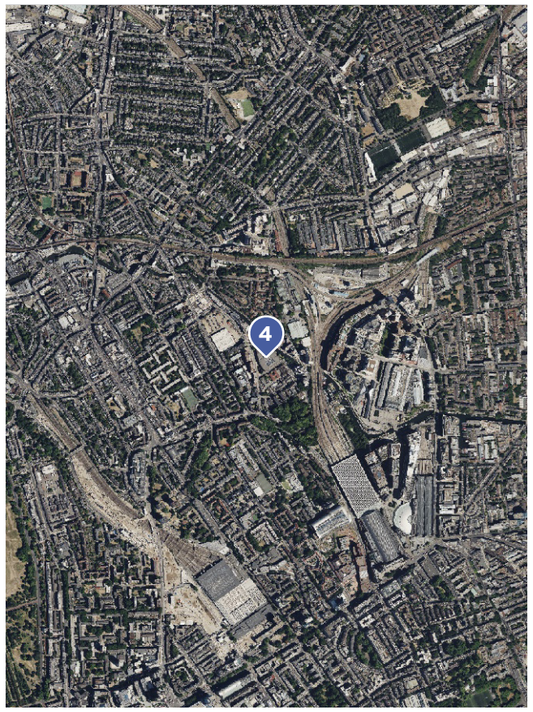
Client

Reef Group

Architect

Bennetts Associates

- Tribeca is the largest purpose-built life sciences development in the Kings Cross Knowledge Quarter in London.
- Positioned on the Regent's Canal, the plans seek to create vibrant public spaces that will transform the area into an inviting place for all.
- Tribeca aims to become a destination incorporating waterfront spaces, City living and a food and drink offer alongside life science workspace and labs.
- The scheme includes 4 separate buildings offering purpose built lab space that can accommodate a range of flexible life science tenant fit-out options.
- Committed to recycle or reuse 95% of the waste from the existing buildings on the site. This includes use of Earth Block cast from excavated subsoil from the construction site.
- Apex building has 8 floors (including basement) the ground floor incorporates support and amenity space with the upper floors accommodating labs and life science space.
- The upper two floors of the Apex building are set back, reducing height on the canal side and creating a large roof terrace.
- The Reflector building provides lab space over 10 floors. The uppers of the Reflector building are defined by double storey stepped volumes in metal fin panels. The three volumes each have a distinct tone. This tonal range is intended to break down the mass into visible sections.
- Vertical emphasis is provided in the Reflector building with two storey metal fins to the tiered upper volumes.



↑ Tribeca, Camden.

Belgrove House, Kings Cross

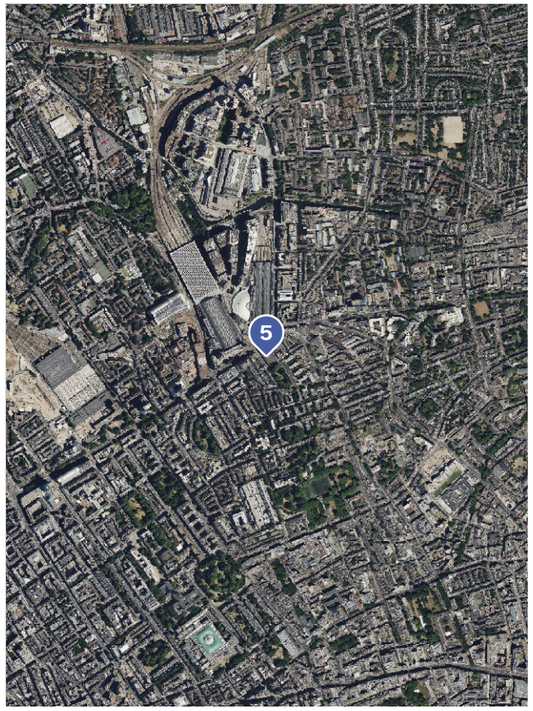
Client

Precis Advisory

Architect

Allford Hall Monaghan Morris

- Belgrove House provides specialised office and lab space for the life science sector, located within the knowledge quarter in Kings Cross.
- Research labs and write up spaces are located on the largest footprints on floors one to three providing visibility from surrounding streets into the research taking place. Office space is located on floors five to nine on a smaller footprint. This means the taller part of the building occupies a smaller footprint reducing the overall building massing.
- The ground floor provides combined occupant and public access including café, event, meeting, exhibition and education space.
- Operational energy is reduced through an innovative ‘biophilic’ double-skin façade. This allows ventilation and provides space for, and views through, planting incorporated in the façade.
- Externally expressed risers provide air distribution and solar-shading to façades reducing heat gains. The large air risers are a visual expression of the building’s operational design and provide a distinctive vertical feature.
- External terraces at levels four and five create outdoor amenity space for occupants and a distinct identity when viewed from surrounding streets.
- The building design adopts circular economy principles, conserving resources and reducing waste and is informed by Whole Life Carbon Assessment.
- The building incorporates multiple planted terraces, landscape plan to surrounding streets and incorporates planting into all four sides of the building.



↑ Belgrove House, Kings Cross.

330 Gray’s Inn Road

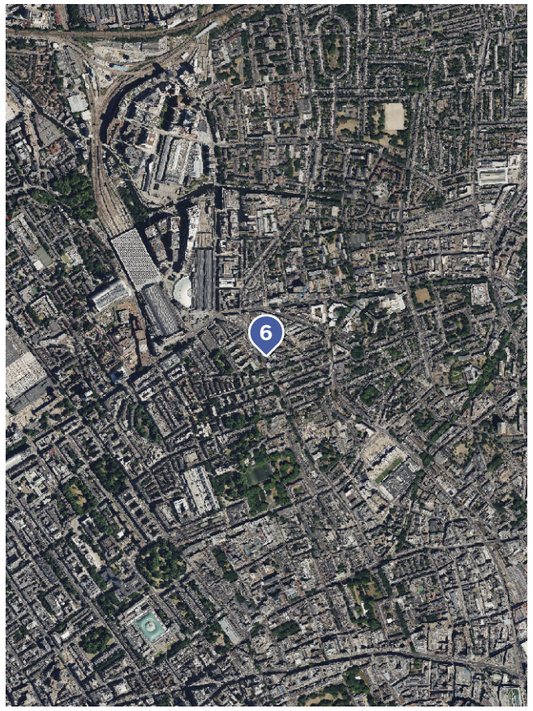
Client

Groveworld

Architect

Allford Hall Monaghan Morris

- A mixed-use, high density scheme comprising 5 buildings in Kings Cross. Uses include a hotel, office space, gym, residential units and public space.
- Located on the border of two conservation areas, the design seeks to address both. Varied architectural treatment allows each of the 5 buildings to respond to their historic context.
- The design was progressed through extensive pre-application discussions with planning officers. A collaborative approach was taken including meetings, workshops, design sessions and dedicated meetings with heritage, transport and sustainability specialists.
- Building heights vary significantly across the scheme and design proposals seek to respond to the variety of heights nearby. The hotel and residential uses form the tallest buildings of the masterplan.
- The office building is seven storeys providing flexible space for a variety of tenants, with two floors of specialised laboratory-enabled space fit for knowledge quarter uses.
- Public facing uses are incorporated in the ground floor of the office building opening onto a new courtyard.
- The office building incorporates a distinctive saw tooth roof form to echo the industrial architectural character of the conservation area.
- Massing of the office building is shaped by engagement, townscape analysis, visual impact and daylight studies. Massing is set back on two floors to reduce the overall impact.
- The office building provides a large flexible floorplate articulated in two overall volumes that can respond to varying conditions on opposite sides of the building.
- Space on the ground floor and the first floor have been designed as lab enabled spaces providing a variety of sized floor plates for different sized companies.
- Additional riser space for lab-services can be accommodated within the building structure depending on future tenant requirements.



↑ 330 Gray’s Inn Road.

The Fenway, Cambridge Science Park

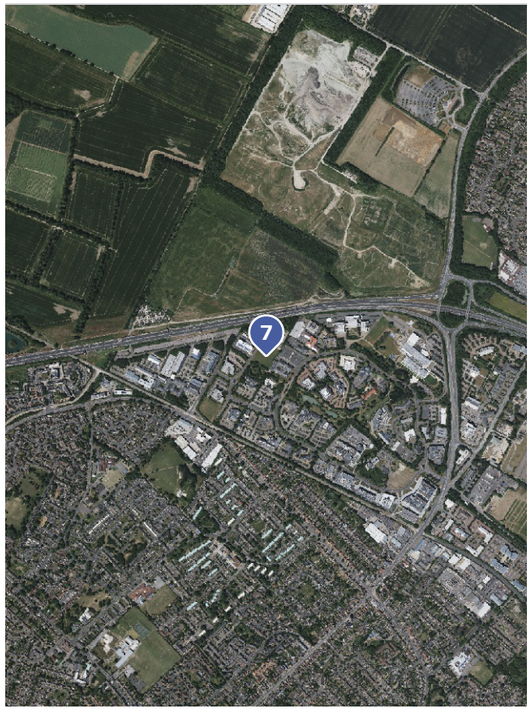
Client

Brockton Everlast

Architect

Sheppard Robson and Hawkins Brown

- This project consists of four new flexible lab and office buildings integrated into the landscape of Cambridge Science Park.
- The scheme puts people first by prioritising pedestrians over cars and opening up the core of the site for a welcoming public realm with space for planting and nature.
- Designs were developed through a two-year engagement process with the local planning authority, stakeholders and design review panels.
- Co-ordination of the internal and external spaces generates a ground-floor experience characterised by human scale and a generosity of space.
- The proposed buildings are larger than the existing buildings on site to take the opportunity to make more efficient use of a previously developed site. The increased building massing is offset by the inclusion of generous spaces between buildings along with tree planting to help give structure.
- The proposed building height is generally consistent. There are variations in layout and elevational treatment to create variety in building form. The proposed marker building would be approximately four metres taller than the other three new buildings, to serve a landmark building at the entrance.
- All buildings are designed to have a human scale, incorporating colonnades to provide shelter and encourage engagement with the surrounding amenity spaces.
- Colonnades form an integral part of the building design. They help re-enforce the human scale by providing a design feature that breaks down the visual mass of the buildings and give focus to the ground floor experience. The colonnades also identify the entrance points to the buildings.
- The scheme is aiming to set a new environmental benchmark using BREEAM, LEED, WELL and NABERS accreditations.
- Landscape elements have been drawn into the building interiors and extended up the façades, creating a series of buildings that appear nested in their natural setting. Large landscaped terraces are a feature of all buildings.



↑ The Fenway, Cambridge Science Park.

Unit 440, Cambridge Science Park

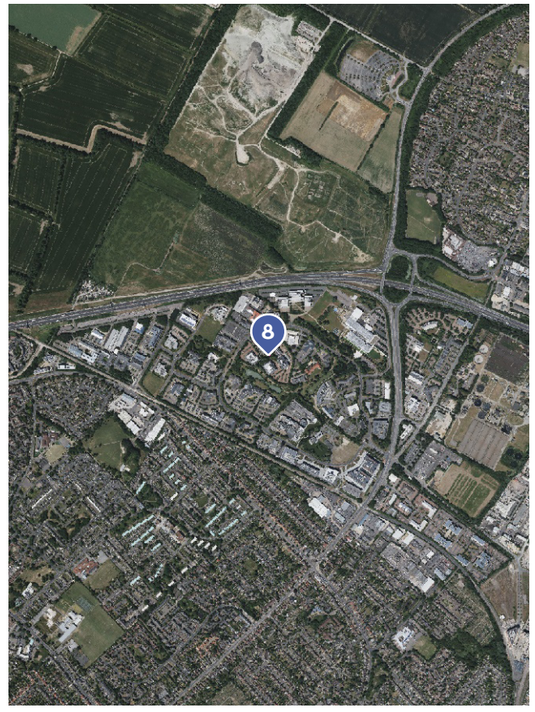
Client

Trinity College

Architect

Allies and Morrison

- A new landmark office and lab building at Cambridge Science Park on the northern edge of the City. Designed as ‘a pavilion in the park’.
- The five storey (plus plant) building features a distinctive façade with fins that act as shading devices to control solar gains and minimise glare. The spacing of the fins varies on each elevation to respond to the solar conditions on each side of the building as well as introduce variation and a dynamic visual composition.
- The external fins help to obscure views of plant and flues on the roof. Photovoltaic (PV) panels will be provided above the roof plant level.
- The building is significantly larger than the surrounding buildings within the science park, which are typically three storeys. A well detailed façade with refined external materials and finishes creates a landmark building that helps to mitigate the scale of the building.
- The ground floor of the building is not clad and includes a large amount of glazing which allows for a level of transparency at street level.
- The structure utilises a hybrid timber-concrete composite design, which is intended to significantly reduce embodied carbon while maintaining functional flexibility for laboratory and office spaces.
- Targets BREEAM ‘Excellent’ and 20% biodiversity net gain.
- The landscape surrounding the new building integrates with the existing green spaces at the science park, and is designed to enhance biodiversity and stormwater management.
- The design includes a central courtyard that allows natural light and ventilation, as well as a south-west facing terrace with views over Cambridge.



↑ Unit 440, Cambridge Science Park.

Maurice Wohl Clinical Neuroscience Institute, King's College

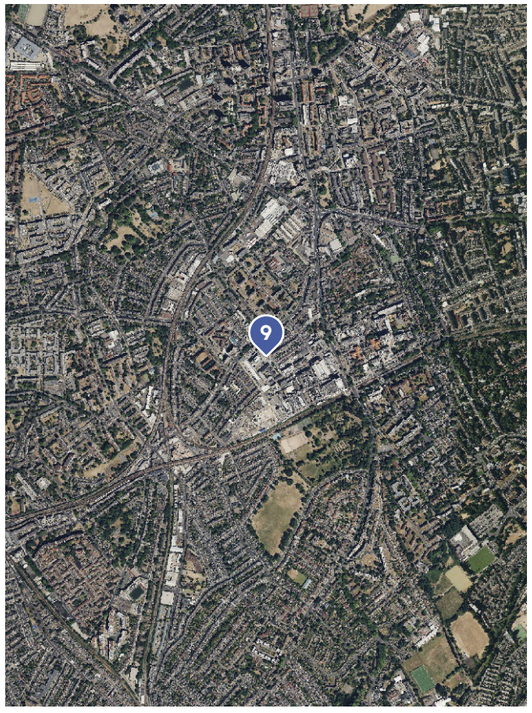
Client

King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Architect

Allies and Morrison

- The centre provides flexible accommodation that includes laboratories for stroke and head injury, neurogenetics, epilepsy and neurodegeneration research, as well as a series of office, seminar and clinical spaces.
- Positioned on a compact site, the building responds to both the scale of large institutional buildings to the west and a more domestic scale of terraced housing to the east. The scale of the building transitions between these two conditions with a change and stepping down in scale. The main body of the building matches the height of the institutional buildings while the smaller scale write-up spaces have been fragmented into a series of pavilions that follow the curve of the street, adopting a familiar domestic rhythm and scale.
- These new pavilions are orientated towards the main hospital, so that they do not overlook the surrounding residential streets.
- The building provides a visual identity for the campus by establishing the Institute as a key focal point facing the original Edwardian hospital and enclosing a new public courtyard.
- The laboratory spaces are enclosed by a perforated 'veil' of brass panels. These are controlled independently by researchers to manage solar gain and privacy. The 'veils' also provide a distinctive, animated and responsive façade.



↑ Maurice Wohl Clinical Neuroscience Institute, King's College.

- The perforated metal 'veil' extends to conceal the plant at roof level and gives a lightweight quality to the top of the building.
- The BREEAM excellent institute exceeds good practice laboratory energy benchmarks through passive design, low carbon strategies and the energy efficient design of the building and its systems.

Marshgate, UCL East

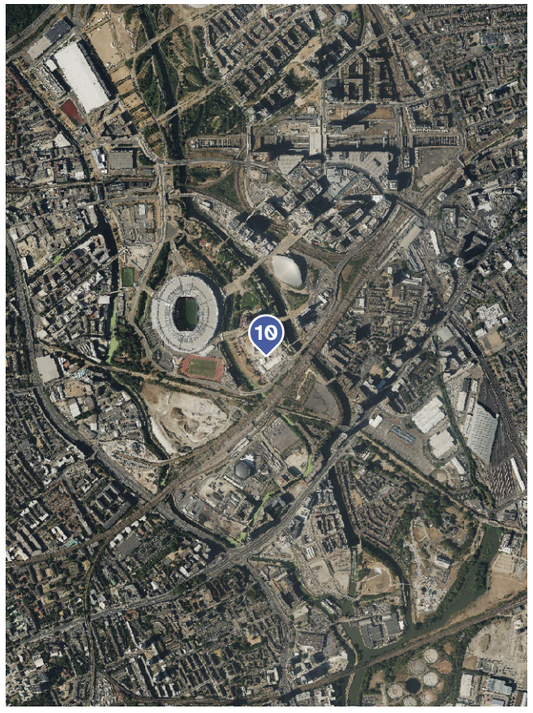
Client

University College London

Architect

Stanton Williams

- Marshgate is the first part of the UCL's new campus in East London. It is located on the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. The building features a range of academic spaces including labs, but also includes retail, community and engagement uses.
- The internal layout of the building is based on a concept of creating a series of 'neighbourhoods' each with its own double-height collaboration space for informal meetings or exhibitions.
- The design incorporates a 'fluid zone' over the lower floors. These floors include a network of publicly accessible spaces, with a café, public art displays and activities designed to draw schools, community organisations and the public into the life and heart of the building.
- The design process has involved consultations with public stakeholders, Design Council / Commission for Architecture and Built Environment (CABE), UCL's Bartlett School of Architecture, LLDC's Quality Review Panel and Built Environment and Access Panel (QRP and BEAP) and pre-application meetings with LLDC officers.
- The concept for the building is to create a sculptural form which has a strength of appearance to sit alongside the powerful forms of the London Stadium, London Aquatics Centre and the ArcelorMittal Orbit. The solid form has voids carved out to define large circulation and social space and openings in the façades responding to key relationships with surrounding areas.



↑ Marshgate, UCL East.

- The outer surface of the building comprises a series of vertical fins or blades, orientated to shield the interior from the sun. This approach visually maintains a single architectural form and allows full height glazing to be located at the back of the vertical blades.
- The building is 10-11 storeys. The usable space is spread over nine floors, with the upper floors taken up with plant. Plant is screened by the façade treatment contributing to the unified sculptural form.
- BREEAM Excellent-rated, the all-electric building is powered in part by renewable electricity, with the aim to reach net zero carbon by 2035 in keeping with the district's wider sustainable energy strategy.

Section 6.0
Developer Guidance
Achieving Successful Development

↑ View of Oxford from Garsington.

Introduction

A thorough pre-application process is fundamental in limiting planning risk for applicants and ensuring appropriate, well designed and considered proposals are brought forward. When considering areas or proposals for higher density development this is particularly important, given the understanding of local context and opportunity that is required and consideration of the balance in protecting and achieving each. Early testing and engagement on development proposals within the Cowley Branch Line study area is critical to achieving the desired outcomes.

A focus on the submission of the planning application, rather than the eventual permission, will lead to delays and frustration during the determination period. Investment ‘up front’ to fully explore design and build consensus around placemaking and density will ultimately result in the most efficient decision-making process.

Pre-application Engagement

The expectations for pre-application stage are as follows:

Behaviours

Developers and OCC will be expected to operate in an open and transparent way, working collaboratively to achieve the best outcomes for the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change.

Planning Performance Agreement (PPA)

OCC strongly advises entering into a PPA to provide a framework, agreed between OCC and the applicant or potential applicant, for considering major development proposals within the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change. The PPA helps to set an agreed framework for both parties to work to in terms of meetings and resourcing required and importantly, the PPA process can include building a shared understanding of the vision and objectives for the project; identifying the information requirements necessary to address the issues raised by a proposed development; and mapping the process for wider stakeholder engagement.

Further details of the Council's PPA process can be found at www.oxford.gov.uk/making-planning-application/pre-application-planning-advice

Oxford Design Review Panel (ODRP)

The ODRP was set up in 2014 in partnership with OCC to provide pre-application design advice to applicants. The ODRP promote high quality design to help create better buildings, streets and public spaces in the City.

All applications for major development proposals within the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change are expected to be taken forward to ODRP. It might be appropriate to have multiple ODRP's during the pre-application process in order to test and refine proposals.

Further information on the ODRP can be found at www.oxford.gov.uk/making-planning-application/design-planning-process

Community Engagement

The opportunity to deliver benefits and enhancements to local communities through development is encouraged and should be explored. These opportunities should be informed by the people affected and seek to respond to local needs. Prior to submission of applications, development proposals should be subject to discussion with the local community and people impacted. This is important in urban and brownfield locations where new and existing populations will co-exist. Consultation can be proportionate to the nature of the proposals.

Statutory Engagement

Engagement with statutory and non-statutory consultees is also expected and encouraged. This includes specialist heritage groups such as Historic England, Oxford Preservation Trust, Oxford Civic Society and Oxford Architectural and Historic Society, as well as other landowners (e.g. Network Rail).

Impact Appraisals

OCC will expect applicants to prepare initial townscape / landscape, visual and heritage appraisals to support pre-application discussions. These appraisals should follow best practice guidance and advice, as set out in the proceeding section.

Such appraisals should provide information on opportunities and constraints; potential environmental impacts; proposed design and mitigation measures. They should also reference and include any pre-application visual material.

Visualisations

OCC will expect to see visual material early on in the pre-application process for all major development proposals within the Cowley Branch Line study area. This should include:

- A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) study to determine potential visibility of the proposed development.
- VU.CITY visualisations from agreed viewpoints.
- Visualisations from agreed viewpoints.

All applications for major development proposals within the Cowley Branch Line study area are expected to utilise VU.CITY. This is a fully interactive, continually updated digital model of key UK cities, including Oxford. A model of the proposed development can be easily 'loaded' into VU.CITY to test design and assess impacts from any location within the City. This is a common approach and requirement being adopted by many urban planning authorities.

VU.CITY should be used throughout the pre-application process in conjunction with other 3D visualisations, but has particular value in testing early models and multiple viewpoints.

It should be noted that VU.CITY's main limitation is that the model is of the urban area and does not include the landscape surrounding Oxford. This can make the analysis of the relationship between the City and it's landscape Please add a short sentence to note VU.CITY's limitations in not having the local hills modelled and therefore VU.CITY analysis needs to be undertaken with the TVIA/LVIA work to understand both local and distant impacts.

Further information can be found at https://www.VU.CITY/

All visualisations should be produced to the Landscape Institute guidance 'Visual Representation of Development Proposals'. This guidance proposals sets out four 'types' of visualisations that can be used. They are as follows:

- **Type 1:** Annotated viewpoint photograph, using annotations to represent context and outline or extent of development.
- **Type 2:** 3D Wireline / Model, representing the 3D form of development in its context (but not overlaid onto a photograph).
- **Type 3:** Photomontage / Photowire, representing the appearance, context, form and extent of development overlaid onto a photograph.
- **Type 4:** Photomontage / Photowire (survey / scale verifiable), representing the scale, appearance, context, form, and extent of development overlaid onto a photograph.

Visualisations should be used as an iterative design tool to 'test' the design of the proposed development – rather than being produced towards the end of the pre-application process as an illustration of the fixed scheme. It is accepted that visualisations can be more time consuming to produce (in comparison to say VU.CITY visualisations), and applicants should work with OCC to agree a proportionate approach to preparing visualisations.

Submission

The expectations for the submission of planning applications are set within the current OCC Planning Application Validation Requirements. OCC have also prepared a 'Validation Strategy' which highlights the most common reasons for applications to be made invalid.

Particular requirements for major development proposals within the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change are captured below. This is not an exhaustive list, and - as part of the pre-application process - OCC will be able to advise of specific requirements.

Landscape (Townscape) and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)

All applications for all major development proposals within the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change should be accompanied by an LVIA, either as a standalone report or as part of an Environmental Statement (ES), in order to determine the effects of the proposed development, and any cumulative effects, on character and views. The LVIA should be prepared in accordance with the following guidance documents:

- The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition, Landscape Institute with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013 (GLVIA3).
- Landscape Institute Technical Note 2024-01 - Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of GLVIA3.
- Landscape Institute Technical Note 06/17 – Townscape Character Assessment.
- The Oxford High Buildings TAN.

Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA)

All applications for all major development proposals within the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change should be accompanied by a CHIA, either as a stand-alone report or as part of an Environmental Statement (ES), in order to determine the effects of the proposed development on heritage assets. The CHIA should be prepared in accordance with the following guidance documents:

- Historic England's Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: the Setting of Heritage Assets ('GPA3', 2nd ed., 2017).
- Historic England's Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 4: Tall Buildings (2022).
- Relevant Conservation Area Appraisals.
- The Oxford High Buildings TAN.

In understanding and assessing impacts on the historic environment – both close and distant - applicants will be expected to follow the methodology on heritage significance used in the Assessment of the Oxford View Cones (2015) and apply the four-step process set out in Historic England's guidance note GPA3. A views assessment is a useful and established tool in such an assessment, but applicants are advised that setting and views are not one and the same thing (see GPA3) and the impact assessment must consider the full potential impact of development on the setting of heritage assets across the City and not just the impact on specific views.

View Cones Assessment

All applications for all major development proposals within the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change should be accompanied by an assessment of the impact on those view cones identified within the Local Plan and within the 'A Character Assessment of Oxford in its Landscape Setting'.

The View Cones Assessment should be jointly undertaken by the Landscape and Heritage consultant working on the application, and – subject to the scale and complexity of the project – could either be a standalone study or form part of the LVIA / CHIA. The methodology used should be in line with that adopted in the Assessment of the Oxford View Cones report (2015).

Visualisations

All applications for major development proposals within the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change should be accompanied by all the visualisations prepared during the pre-application stage, including 'final' visualisations of the submitted, fixed scheme.

Final visualisations should be Type 4: Photomontage / Photowire, showing the scale and appearance of the proposed development, including materials. Visualisations used to test and refine the proposals are equally as important as final visualisations, in order to demonstrate the iterative design process undertaken.

Design Detail

The Design and Access Statement, and any accompanying Design Codes, should also be used to demonstrate how the design of the proposed development has been informed by context.

This should include details of the iterative design process undertaken and clearly explain the options considered and the justification for the final scheme design.

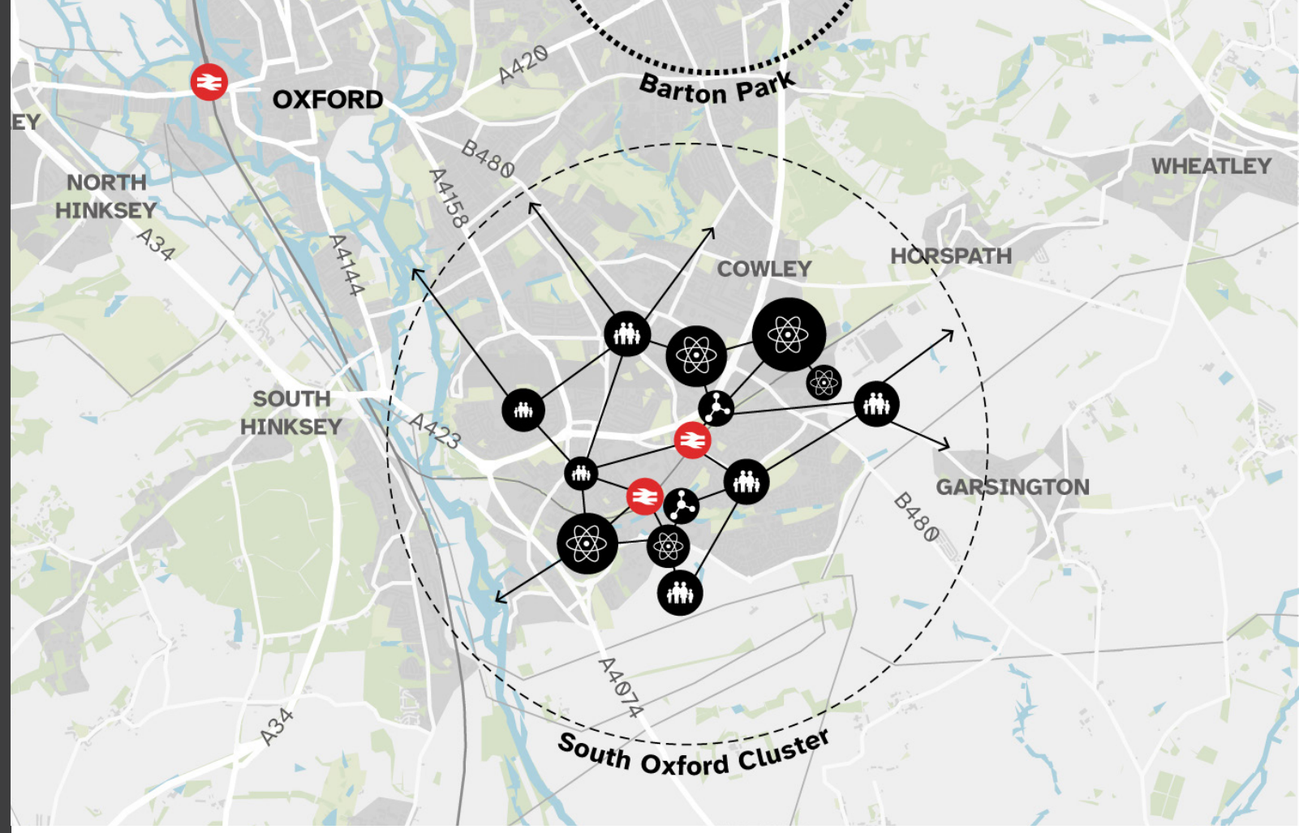
Colour Studies

Environmental Colour Studies / Assessment is the process of collecting and analysing colours within a landscape or townscape, to inform and guide choices in relation to the use of colour in that particular environment.

The Landscape Institute Technical Note 04/2018 - Environmental Colour Assessment provides further information of the objectives and principles of Colour Studies / Assessment, and highlights the role in helping shape development proposals.

Details of colour selection should be included in the Design and Access Statement, and if necessary, a more detailed Colour Study / Assessment prepared.

Section 7.0
Conclusion



↑ The Cowley Branch Line Area of Change within the wider Oxford context.

Summary

The vision is to deliver good place-led growth within the Cowley Branch Line study area – the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change. Growth should reflect and make the most of the opportunities presented by improved connectivity as a result of the planned investment in the Cowley Branch Line and associated walking, cycling and public transport connections to the stations from existing and future residential and commercial neighbourhoods - as well as the broader contribution the Branch Line can make to the continued growth of life sciences and innovation markets, both within the City of Oxford and in a regional, national and international context.

Densification can typically be achieved across all of the Development Zones within the Cowley Branch Line Area of Change through a combination of infill development; redevelopment of existing buildings / plots; and rationalisation of parking, subject to appropriate design. Increases in height are possible across all of the Development Zones albeit broad parameters are set to guide the scale of change in appropriate response to City and local context.

Height should be focussed on the existing science and innovation clusters, which are close to stations and along key routes. A reduction in height and density at edges (and between) the science and innovation clusters will be necessary to maintain their separate identity and to provide transition to surrounding residential areas and/or countryside. Existing district centres are also a focus for density, with potential for other tall structures.

Visual testing on inward and outward views, to and from the City centre, also confirms the need to ‘cluster’ development around key locations to minimise changes to the landscape setting of the City and the setting of its heritage assets.

Next Steps

It is expected that any development projects coming forward within the Cowley Branch Line study area will be guided by this study. Planning applications will need to clearly demonstrate how the evidence / principles set out within the Guidance have informed the design of development.

OCC will also continue to consult on the guidance and make sure the various stakeholders are aware of the development principles established for the Cowley Branch Line study area. This will include engagement with Officers, Members, interest groups, and developers.

For any further information on the guidance, please contact the Planning Policy Team:

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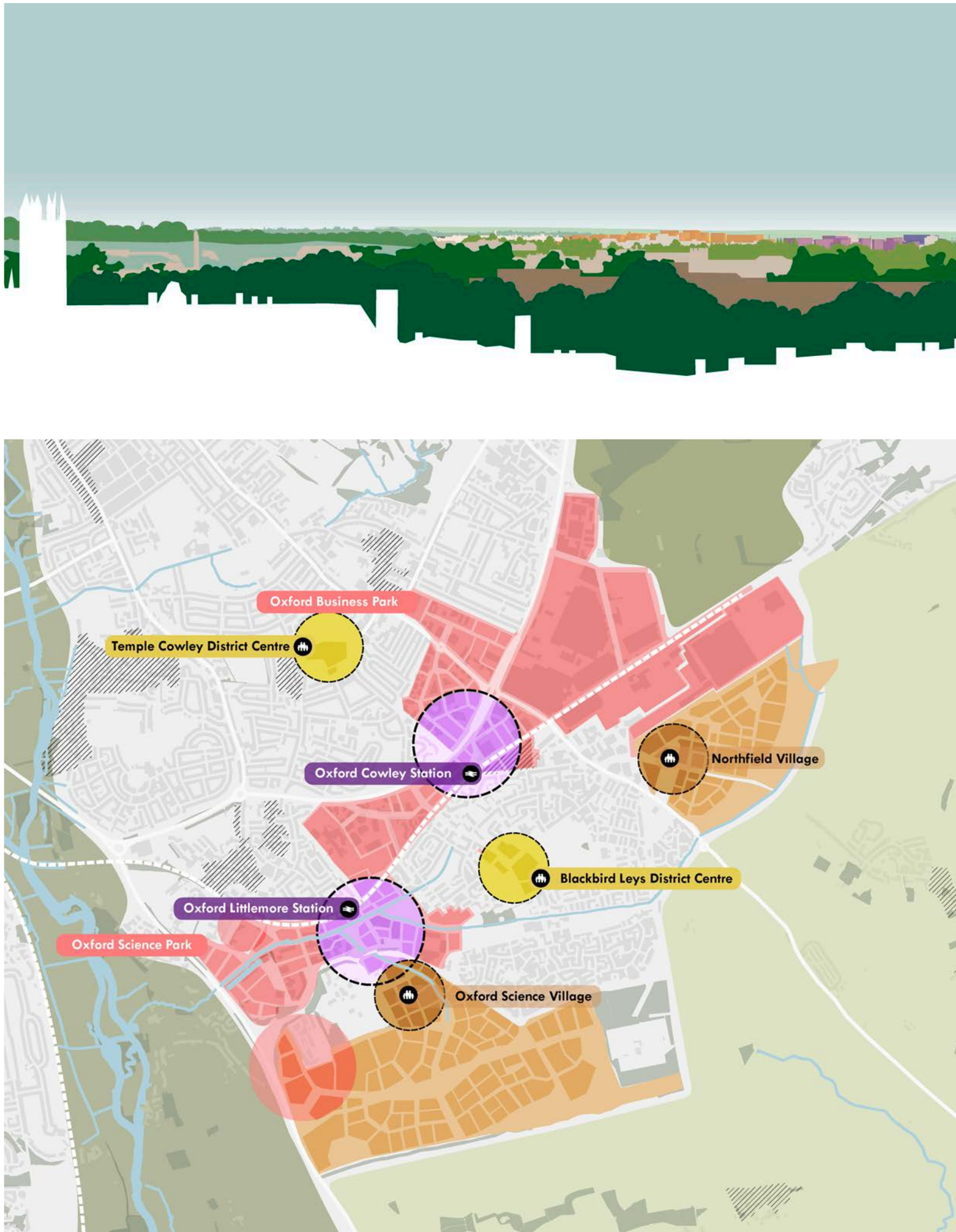
Town Hall
St Aldate's
Oxford
OX1 1BX

Telephone:
01865 252847

Email:
planningpolicy@oxford.gov.uk



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