

Statement of Common Ground between Oxford City Council and Lincoln College

Submission Draft (Regulation 19) Oxford Local Plan 2045

June 2026

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Statement of Common Ground ('SoCG' or 'Statement') has been prepared between Oxford City Council and Lincoln College ('the parties') for the Oxford Local Plan 2045. This SoCG reflects and confirms the current position on matters agreed by both parties with regard to the Duty to Cooperate. This SoCG reflects the latest position on matters agreed by the parties with regards to the Submission Version of the Draft Oxford Local Plan 2045 and is provided without prejudice to other matters that the parties may wish to raise.

1.2 Oxford City Council is producing a new Local Plan covering the period to 2045. The area covered by this Statement is Oxford, which is the area covered by the Local Plan. Where matters arise that are cross-boundary, the Council is also working with its neighbouring local authorities and other SoCGs have been prepared on cross boundary matters.

2.0 Background and duty to cooperate

2.1 Lincoln College is an academic college of the University of Oxford. As landowner of an allocated site within the Local Plan 2045 – and of an existing allocation via Policy SP43 in the adopted Oxford Local Plan 2036 - they are a key stakeholder for the Council to work with as part of its Duty to Cooperate on the preparation of the new Local Plan.

2.2 Oxford City Council and Lincoln College have been engaging closely together throughout the formulation of the Local Plan 2045. Lincoln College have provided feedback at each of the key stages of the Local Plan consultation process, including Preferred Options consultation, Draft Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation and Proposed-Submission Draft Local Plan Regulation 19 consultation. The relevant consultation summary reports detail summaries of this feedback. The City Council's Planning, Heritage and Design Officers have also engaged with Lincoln College at key points outside of the formal consultation cycle via face-to-face or virtual meetings in order to discuss the shaping of policies, the drafting of supporting evidence, and to collaborate and seek to resolve areas of disagreement wherever possible.

2.3 The Proposed-Submission Draft Local Plan Regulation 19 consultation saw Oxford City Council publish its full Local Plan and supporting evidence base which it proposed to submit for examination to Central Government in early 2026. As per the relevant legislation/regulations, this version of the Local Plan was one that the City Council considered to be 'sound' for adoption, meeting the specific requirements for soundness as are outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework. Following the consultation, feedback from Lincoln College indicated there were a number of areas in relation to the draft policies and supporting evidence underpinning them which they considered did not meet the tests of soundness for adoption without additional modification.

2.4 Both prior to and following the end of the consultation on the Proposed-Submission Draft Local Plan Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan on the 13th March 2026, Oxford City Council and Lincoln College have been engaging together on the issues which Lincoln College have identified with the Local Plan and supporting evidence. This further engagement between the City Council and Lincoln College has included two direct meetings to discuss the identified issues (taking place 5th March 2026 and 8th April 2026) as well as engagement via email. The aim of this collaboration has been to identify means of resolving these issues, either through modifications to the Local Plan itself or further evidence work that would help to address Lincoln College's concerns, and ultimately result in a Local Plan submission that could be supported by Lincoln College without objection.

2.5 Lincoln College has also undertaken pre-application discussions (25/02678/PAC) with the City Council on its proposal for the provision of graduate accommodation comprising approximately 56 student units in a mix of one and two bedroom provision with associated development at the College Sports Ground at Bartlemas Close. The pre-application discussions are taking into account the emerging policy including the modifications agreed in this SoCG.

3.0 Strategic matters

3.1 There were a number of issues which Lincoln College have identified through the Proposed-Submission Draft Local Plan Regulation 19 consultation. Reference should be made to their letter dated 13th March 2026 for full details; however, in summary, these were focussed on three key points:

1. Support for Policy H1 (Housing Requirement) - Lincoln College agree that the approach of the Local Plan to maximise the delivery and capacity of suitable housing sites in the City – including those drawn from previously allocated sites in the Oxford Local Plan 2036 - and to promote the efficient use of land/site is consistent with the soundness tests set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
2. Objection to Policy H3 (Affordable Housing from other development types), on the basis that it should not apply to student accommodation on existing university or college sports pitches, and a suggestion that this change be made to the proposed policy wording.
3. Support for Policy SPE7 (Lincoln College Sports Ground) subject to amendments which are set out in greater detail below.

3.2 Discussions between the two parties since the Regulation 19 consultation have been focussed on seeking to clarify and understand the key issues and then to proactively put forward ways to overcome these. This ongoing dialogue has resulted in a proposed minor and main modifications to the policies in question which Oxford City Council and Lincoln College have come to agree would be beneficial changes that could be made to the Local Plan in order to resolve Lincoln College's identified concerns.

3.3 A full list of these proposed modifications agreed between the two parties is included in the Table at Appendix A of this statement – as well as listed in the Schedule of Minor Modifications and Schedule of Main Modifications submitted separately with the full Local Plan submission.

3.4 In relation to the overarching concerns highlighted under para 3.1, the parties agree that the proposed modifications set out in the appendix will address the majority of concerns raised.

3.5 At time of the submission of the Local Plan, there remain some areas where common ground has not been reached. Common ground has not been reached in relation to proposed amendments to Policy H3 regarding affordable housing contributions.

4.0 Other matters

4.1 In addition to the modifications to policies highlighted above, Appendix C sets out an agreed indicative timescale for delivery of housing on the Lincoln College Sports Ground site. Oxford City Council's broad assumptions about delivery timescales for the trajectory in no way precludes development commencing sooner if a future planning application moves more quickly, in the same way as the numbers in the site allocation policy are a minimum and do not preclude planning proposals for higher capacity numbers

5.0 Concluding remarks

5.1 Oxford City Council and Lincoln College have worked closely together throughout the Local Plan preparation process and the subsequent discussions between January and April 2026 reflect this positive, collaborative approach to the Local Plan between the parties. The discussions have been productive and the City Council is appreciative of the comprehensive and constructive feedback that officers at Lincoln College have provided in a timely and positive manner. This Statement of Common Ground and the accompanying Appendices set out the changes that the two parties have agreed to in order to overcome the majority of issues Lincoln College had initially identified.

5.2 Whilst this additional work and engagement between the two parties has allowed us to find common ground on nearly all issues, notwithstanding those set out earlier, both parties will continue to work together wherever possible on issues that arise during the examination process.



Signed on behalf of Lincoln College

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Title: , Lincoln College

Date: 5 JUNE 2026



Signed on behalf of Oxford City Council

Title: David Butler, Director of Planning & Regulation, Oxford City Council

Date: 08/06/26

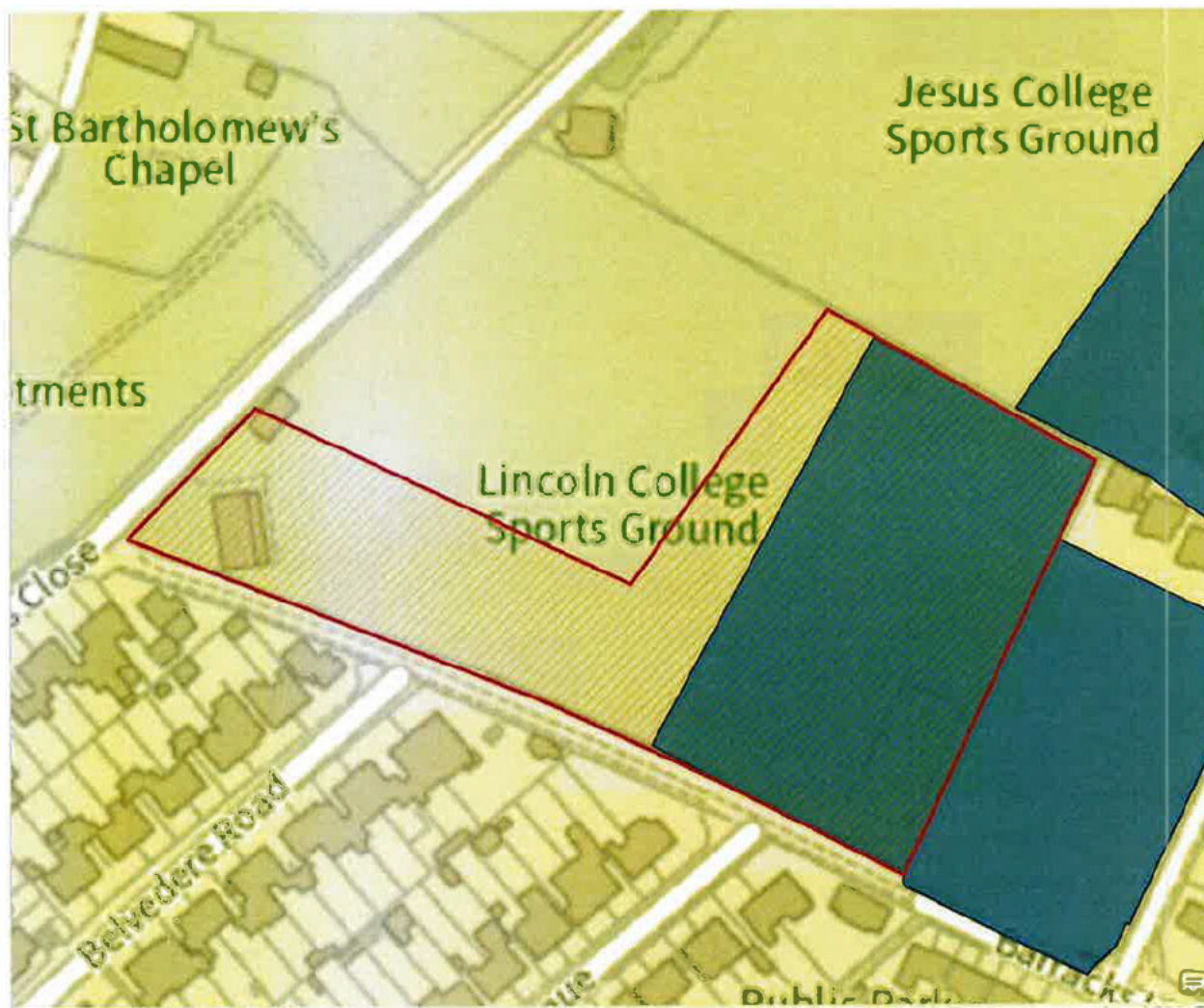
Appendix A - Lincoln College Regulation 19 feedback and City Council responses

The table in this appendix sets out the City Council's responses and proposed amends to the Local Plan agreed with Lincoln College to address their Reg 19 comments. It address comments on policies in chapter 1-7 first and then comments on sites.

Policy/section	Summary of Lincoln College Reg 19 comment	Lincoln College Reg 19 suggested change	Oxford City Council response/proposed modification	Type of modification or action
Policy H1: Housing Requirement	Policy is considered sound - support efforts to maximize the deliverability and capacity of suitable housing sites in the City.	N/A	Support is noted, no further action proposed.	None
Policy H3: Affordable Housing from other development types	Policy is considered to be unsound as not justified (criterion b). Lincoln College do not agree that affordable housing contributions should be required from the redevelopment of existing university sports pitches.	Amend the wording of Policy H3/ the Glossary to include sports pitches within the definition of an "existing or proposed university or college campus site".	In order to be considered a university or college campus some form of academic uses would also need to be present on the site. These uses are set out in the Glossary. An isolated sports pitch would not meet the requirements to demonstrate wider academic use and therefore cannot be considered to meet the criteria set out in Policy H3. As such, the proposed amendment will not be taken forward.	None
Policy H8: Location of new Student Accommodation	Policy is considered sound. Additionally, Lincoln College comments that it is essential that the Local Plan 2045 fully recognises, supports and builds upon the vitally important economic and educational role of the Colleges, Universities and other educational institutions in the City, whilst managing the requirements of students in Oxford along with the considerable needs of other groups in the City for general market and affordable housing.	N/A	Support is noted, no further action proposed.	None
Policy SPE7: Lincoln College Sports Ground	Policy is considered to be unsound as not justified (criterion b). In order to ensure that suitable access can be provided to the site, and to respond to the surrounding heritage and urban design constraints, an amendment to the red line site area plan would be required.	Extend the red line site area to include the land running along Barracks Lane edge to the corner with Bartlemas Close.	Extend the red line site area to include the land running along Barracks Lane edge to the corner with Bartlemas Close as per the drawing attached at Appendix B.	Main

	Policy is considered to be unsound as not justified (criterion b). In order to ensure that suitable access can be provided to the site, and to respond to the surrounding heritage and urban design constraints, an amendment to the red line site area plan would be required.	Extend the red line site area to include the land running along Barracks Lane edge to the corner with Bartlemas Close.	Add the following wording (underlined) to the site allocation policy SPE7 under paragraph e) to provide clarity about the sensitivities along the extended site boundary on Bartlemas Close: The Crescent Road View Cone crosses the south of the site; proposals should be designed in a way that responds to this protected view (Policy HD6). This could be achieved by creating a graduation of height, lower on the southern edge and increasing in height towards the north, as well as appropriate massing and considering variations in roof forms. <u>Development proposals located on the eastern corner of the site between Bartlemas Close and Barracks Lane should be designed in a way that integrates sensitively with the existing street scene, landscape character and neighbouring residential context, whilst respecting the character, appearance and significance of the Conservation Area.</u> Gaps between buildings should be sufficient to retain the sense of openness and views of the green backdrop which enhance the setting of the Conservation Area (Policy HD3).	Minor
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Appendix B – Proposed Amended Site Allocation Map



Appendix C – Delivery Timescales

The following table provides a summary of Oxford City Council's delivery assumptions about the Lincoln College Sports Ground site in the table. Oxford City Council's broad assumptions about delivery timescales for the trajectory in no way precludes development commencing sooner if the planning application moves more quickly, in the same way as the numbers in the site allocation policy are a minimum and do not preclude planning proposals for higher capacity numbers

Site name	Lincoln College Sports Ground			
Site allocation reference in OLP2045	SPE7			
SHLAA reference	32			
Minimum number of dwellings in OLP2045 policy (if applicable)	24			
Delivery estimate	Years 1-5 2025/26-2029/30	Years 6-10 2030/31-2034/35	Years 11-15 2035/36-2039/40	Years 16-20 2040+
	0	0	24	0
Current planning status	Existing (LP2036) and emerging (LP2045) site allocation Application being worked up, pre-app taking place.			