

Site capacity assessment – Local Plan 2045

Site name	John Radcliffe Hospital
LP2045 Site Allocation	SPE5
Site size (ha)	27.75

Site location



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A) Site overview

Description of current context

- The John Radcliffe Hospital is a large tertiary teaching hospital that forms part of the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.
- The hospital complex occupies the hilltop that was formerly the Headington Manor House Estate with views over the city which results in the site being very prominent in views across Oxford.
- Site is not located within a regeneration area
- Headington District Centre lies to the southeast of the site

Site photo



B) Open space, nature and flood risk

Description of current context

Green infrastructure

- Site contains many significant existing trees. Some of the trees are protected by their location within the Old Headington Conservation Area.
- There are some mature hedges on site.
- UGF - Preliminary analysis suggests that the limited presence of green infrastructure features on the site currently means it is likely to score below the G3 target.

Biodiversity and ecology

- The site contains no nature conservation designations but has potential for nature conservation interest.
- The site boundary contains Section 41 (Priority/ Principal) habitats that fall within the LPA Biodiversity Duty. Deciduous Woodland. Extent needs to be confirmed from TVERC database.

Blue Infrastructure

- Watercourses on site (along northwest, west and part southern boundaries) and culvert (beneath main access from Headley Way). Brook separating northern car parks.
- Patches of surface water flood risk present throughout site, with noticeably larger patches around the hospital buildings to the north west and south east.
- Southern part of the site is located within the boundary of the Lye Valley Impact Risk Zone which means there could be potential for impacts on the Lye Valley because of changes to surface water or groundwater flows/recharge.

Land Quality

- Potential land contamination due to current and historic use of land.

Analysis and urban design implications

- There is an opportunity to address excess of runoff at the John Radcliffe Hospital site by ensuring that any development at the site reduces rather than maintains existing levels. This could include improving existing landscaping features and incorporating SUDS into existing drainage features or introducing new SUDS in the form of ponds, wetlands or an on-site attenuation feature.

- Opportunities to enhance and increase tree planting on site. Also, to increase the quality and diversity of landscaping and planting.
- Existing drainage features such as the brook separating northern car parks should be maintained, enhanced and integrated into the landscape scheme, potentially creating wildlife corridors through the site.
- Green roofs would help mitigate surface water run-off
- Flat roofs onsite could accommodate solar panels
- Potential presence of contamination will need to be investigated and be remediated where necessary.

C) Historic environment, character and local context

Description of current context

Historic environment

- Part of the site (eastern and southern) falls within the Old Headington Conservation Area, with most of the site directly adjacent to it.
- Grade II listed Manor House, annex and boundary wall within site boundary on outer edge - views across the parkland to the Manor House are protected in the Conservation Area proposal.
- Other buildings onsite such as William Osler House are noted as positive buildings in the Conservation Area appraisal.
- There are many listed buildings and locally listed buildings adjacent in the Old Headington Conservation Area.
- The eastern part of the site has significant archaeological potential because it incorporates parts of the medieval village of Headington. Significant new development in undisturbed areas may require evaluation.
- Not within view cones but the site is very prominent in views across Oxford.

Built environment

- The site is located within an area of mixed character that includes large scale institutional buildings and residences. The site contrasts with the semi-detached houses of New Headington and the historic village structure of Old Headington Conservation Area adjacent.
- Buildings styles vary, some are modern and others older. There is a lack of architectural cohesion due to the typically piecemeal development of the site over time.
- Boundaries are characterised by mature trees and hedges which buffer residential neighbours from the hospital, Headington Cemetery and stone walls adjacent to the Old Headington Conservation Area.
- To the North, the site is defined by mature trees and car parks border two storey semi-detached dwellings and Headington Cemetery. To the East, tree cover and hedging is dense but with some breaks, buffering the site from Old Headington Conservation Area. To the South, tree cover on Cuckoo Lane separates Headington Hall and associated parkland with neighbouring residential apartment blocks. To the West, allotments and back gardens of two storey semi-detached dwellings border the site.
- There is scope for intensification and improved use of the space on the site, including infill development, the erection of new buildings, the use of higher buildings and rationalisation of car parking.
- The site lies within the Open Hills (With Institutions) character area (7C) and is adjacent to the interwar/postwar suburbs of New Headington (5E) and the historic village of Old Headington (3B).

Analysis and urban design implications

- Previous assessments and modelling have determined that sky-lining will occur in the St. Mary's view out of the city for buildings over 21m, change of character will occur in the Boars Hill View Cone for buildings over 18m and competition will occur in the Elsfield view cone for buildings over 18m.

- *For hospital uses it is anticipated that materials would be consistent with townscape character and be modern in style and materials. However, a more contextual approach could be taken to residential, student residential or key worker housing which would soften the impact of any new development and take inspiration from neighbouring areas. Material choice should not exacerbate the prominence of the hospital in views across the city or the view cones.*
- *It would be beneficial for the hospital if the site was developed for uses where the proximity of being adjacent to the hospital is important. Employment uses which have a particular need to be located close to the hospital, such as pharmaceutical companies needing access to patients for research purposes, would be suitable. It would also be beneficial to locate primary healthcare and a patient hotel on the site. Employer-linked housing that supports the main uses of the site will also be supported. Complementary uses which would also be suitable, but which should not dominate the new development on the site are general residential and student accommodation.*

D) Access, movement and layout

Description of current context

Access into the site

- *Pedestrians can access the site from Headley Way, Woodlands Road, Saxon Way and Osler Road. From Osler Road, a shared use foot/cycle way has been successfully integrated into the landscaping. Private roads provide pedestrian access from Sandford Road and Ivy Lane.*
- *Cyclists can access via the same entrances as pedestrians with dedicated on carriageway cycle lanes and segregated/ unsegregated shared use paths at the main entrance on Headley Way. From Osler Road there is a shared foot/cycle way leading towards the Women's Centre.*
- *Vehicles can access the site at the main entrance from Headley Way, from Osler Road and from Woodlands Road.*
- *Bus only access from Saxon Way.*
- *There is a helipad on the site – located adjacent to the Eye Hospital.*

Layout of the site

- *Levels change across the site – steep topography sloping to the south.*
- *Site is dominated by vehicles, with large areas of surface level car parking, loading bays and turning areas to navigate. There are also multi storey car parks. Some of the parking provision is dedicated for staff only. Congestion at the site entrance and demand for parking have been identified as issues.*
- *Footways are fragmented, causing tension between vehicles and pedestrians.*
- *There is limited dedicated off road cycle provision within the site meaning cyclists share the internal roads with cars, ambulances and service vehicles.*

Connectivity to wider area

- *The site is served by a number of public transport bus services.*
- *There are a number of footways and cycleways connecting the site to surrounding pedestrian and cycle infrastructure.*

Analysis and urban design implications

- *Opportunities to create new routes through the site for pedestrians and cyclists separating them from vehicles and servicing.*
- *Opportunities to provide space for cycle storage*
- *Redevelopment of the site offers opportunities to consolidate and rationalise car parking which could free up land for redevelopment/ intensification as well as presenting opportunities to improve landscaping and GI (e.g. open space for additional public access), Infilling plots would be unlikely to cause Secure by Design Issues if lighting and surveillance of the public realm were considered.*

- *There are three main areas with opportunity for intensification or new development:*
 - **The Northern Car Parks** - which are adjacent to residential on two sides and Headington Cemetery on the third. Given the neighbouring uses, there is an opportunity to accommodate a variety of residential typologies including key worker housing on these plots, which could grade up in height from the New Headington boundaries to the cemetery which is considerably higher owing to rising topography. Residential buildings could shield the hospital in views from the Elsfield viewcone. Proximity to the helipad would need to be considered if these plots were to be developed for residential use.
 - **Land between the ring road and Old Headington Conservation Area** - which is covered with low buildings of mainly industrial use and car parking. This area could be reorganised to provide greater separation between uses and rationalised, releasing land for more buildings of similar scale to the Wolfson Centre. This would have to be considered in views from the neighbouring conservation area.
 - **The main hospital campus** – which is surrounded by the ring road. This would be more suitable for large scale hospital blocks, infilling between existing blocks or building on car parks. Any proposals would need to be tested in views including from St. Mary's, or the Boars Hill and Elsfield view cones and provide adequate daylight, sunlight and privacy to buildings.

E) Other considerations

Other considerations to include in allocations?

Amenity

- *Site is operational 24 hours a day use so some element of noise will be expected.*
- *Helipad impacts on amenity may need consideration.?*

F) Landowner aspirations

Proposed use(s) Landowner has expressed an interest in delivering some employer-linked affordable housing on site in addition to maintaining hospital-related uses. Site likely to be developed in phases as part of hospital restructuring within the Local Plan time period.

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

N/A

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

- No specific figure identified within policy as site is in healthcare use.