Oxford Local Plan 2045 Hearing Statement

Oxford North – Stage 2 Hearing Statement

Date of report: 10 November 2026

savills

1. Introduction

1.1 Savills (UK) Ltd have been instructed by Thomas White Oxford (TWO) Ltd and Oxford North Ventures (ONV) Ltd to provide the following response in relation to the Stage 2 Matters Issues and Questions (MIQs).

1.2 We have confirmed that we do not wish to participate in the Hearing session associated with the Part 2 Hearings, however, will be available to answer questions should the need arise. We, however, provide the following clarifications in relation to the questions set out in the MIQ's.

1.3 The responses are provided with reference to the specific question numbers as set out in the MIQ document. All references to 'the Representation' made in the responses below relate to the representation submitted by Savills on behalf of TWO and ONV in March 2026.

2. Matter 10 – Climate Change

Issue 1 – Net Zero Buildings, Embodied Carbon and Retro-Fitting – Policies R1, R2 and R3

1. Is the principle of net zero carbon buildings, including preventing the use of fossil fuels for cooking and heating, justified by available evidence and consistent with national planning policy?

It is recognised that the road to net zero will require the continued reduction of the use of fossil fuels. Oxford North actively utilises renewable energy supplies and maximises the use of photo voltaic panels on the roofs of building to reduce the demand for energy.

2. What evidence is there to demonstrate that the requirements of Policy R1 can be achieved for the development types supported by the Plan, including high-energy uses such as commercial and economic development?

The Council have not produced detailed evidence of their own to demonstrate that the requirements of Policy R1 can be achieved. The Council's evidence comprises a review of other evidence which, in relation to high energy demand buildings notes that often the policies for EUI targets cannot be met and that off site generation is required to meet the requirements of the policy.

3. What is the justification for using a total Energy Use Intensity ('EUI') figure, rather than, for example, a Target Emission Rate ('TER')? What are the EUI targets based on and are they justified and achievable?

The use of EUI targets, especially for high energy demand buildings such as the research and development laboratories at Oxford North is unrealistic and unachievable. Whilst the policy notes that exceptions to the requirements can be supported where there is 'robust justification' it is not clear from the policy what would be.

The Written Ministerial Statement into this matter specifically identified that a percentage uplift of Target Emission Rates was a preferable solution for reducing energy use in buildings.

4. Have the requirements of Policies R1 and R2 been subject to appropriate viability testing? Combined with other policy requirements, will the development proposed by the Plan be viable and developable?

No Comment

5. Is it sufficiently clear what is required of householder planning applications and small scale developments, such as the alteration and enlargement of existing homes?

No Comment

6. What is expected of development proposals under Policy R2a)? Is the policy requirement justified and effective?

No Comment

7. What are the thresholds in Policy R2 based on?

No comment

8. What is the justification for Policy R3c), which refers to "professional advice"? How does this relate to the acceptability of a development proposal? Is the policy justified and effective?

No Comment

Issue 4 – Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage – Policies G7 and G8

1. Where site allocations are concerned, will development proposals be able to meet the requirements of Policy G7, having particular regard to criterion q) and the restriction of built footprints?

No Comment

2. What is the justification for setting out the requirements for surface water runoff in Policy G8? Would this apply to all development proposals, and if so, is the approach proportionate?

The Surface water run-off hierarchy and the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems is acknowledged however, the Council should recognise that the listed options are not feasible on all sites not just because of ground conditions but also to enable the efficient use of land which is required by other policies of the plan. The policy should be amended to ensure that there is flexibility to enable alternative drainage strategies to be provided where justified.

3. Is the requirement for compliance with external guidance in Policy G8, which falls outside the scope of the development plan, justified?

The reliance on guidance outside of the development plan calls into question the weight that guidance should have in the determination process. Furthermore, referring to specific guidance which may be superseded could result in compliance with guidance which is out of date

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