

# OXFORD CITY CENTRE ACTION PLAN

2021 - 2030

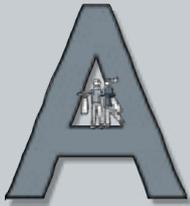
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## APPENDIX PROJECTS & PLACES

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## CITY CENTRE ACTION PLAN | VOLUME 1



### CONTEXT

Part A provides a headline profile of Oxford's city centre alongside a summary of its primary strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, as well as a summary of the actions already underway to support a positive recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.



### APPROACH

Part B defines a hierarchy of the Action Plan and presents the four distinct workstreams and their clear objectives, which drive the projects and commitments within the Action Plan.

## CITY CENTRE ACTION PLAN | VOLUME 2



### ACTION PLAN

Part C outlines the catalyst initiatives and projects that will support Oxford in achieving the objectives of this Action Plan, grouped by workstream. Full project details can be found in the Projects & Places Appendix.

### IMPLEMENTATION

Part D sets out how change will be coordinated across stakeholders. Responsibility for leading on and supporting delivery will be shared by a range of different organisations.



## CITY CENTRE ACTION PLAN | PROJECTS & PLACES APPENDIX

### PROJECTS

This section provides further detail on the catalyst initiatives and projects that will support Oxford in achieving the objectives of this Action Plan, grouped by workstream.

### STREET-BY-STREET

This section explores some potential location-specific opportunities and considerations for an improved public realm across Oxford city centre, to help define the scope for a public realm strategy.

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CITY CENTRE ACTION PLAN | **PROJECTS & PLACES APPENDIX**

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# PROJECTS

This section provides further detail on the catalyst initiatives and projects that will support Oxford in achieving the objectives of this Action Plan, grouped by workstream.

Throughout this section, the following names and acronyms are used to describe key actors who will be leading on delivering each action:

**CCMT** - Oxford City Council's City Centre Management Team

**The City** - Oxford City Council

**DMO** - Destination Management Organisation

**OCC** - Oxfordshire County Council

**ODS** - Oxford Direct Services

**OxLEP** - Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership

**OxWED** - Oxford West End Development Limited

**TVP** - Thames Valley Police

# CONNECTIVITY & ACCESS

## 1.1 CORE TRANSPORT SCHEME PROPOSALS U

### WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

The proposed Core Transport Schemes are a critical project for the city centre and wider city to tackle congestion and air quality problems and boost the potential of our key employment locations. It will enable the reprioritisation of road space for walking, cycling, public transport, taxis, civic space and businesses. The proposals aim to improve the quality of the environment for all those living, working and visiting the city centre and help unlock the potential of identified development sites. Public consultation on the proposals was undertaken in 2020. By reducing congestion it will also help deliver a less polluted city centre. The project has three key components:

- + A better, faster and more comprehensive public transport network.
- + A complete, high-quality walking and cycling network.
- + Reclaiming some of the road space currently used for private motor vehicles to provide more space for buses.

The proposals include a workplace parking levy and traffic filters, new and improved bus, cycling and walking routes. Funding is in place via the Housing and Growth Deal for all work up to and including the Outline Business Case stage, which is intended to enable funding for implementation.

This will unlock other projects around public realm and movement in this Action Plan.

Public consultation on the specific proposals is expected in Summer 2022.

### DELIVERY PARTNERS

**Primary:** Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford City Council jointly

**Supporting:** Bus companies, local businesses and residents alongside scheme development and appraisal consultants

NEW COLLEGE STREET



## WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

- + 68% of air pollution in Oxford is caused by traffic, and poor air quality affects everyone in the city, particularly the most vulnerable. By limiting the number of journeys through, not to, the city centre by private motor vehicles we expect to be able to significantly reduce congestion and improve air quality.
- + Implementing the proposals would enable a better, faster and more comprehensive public transport network and improved taxi mobility, alongside a high-quality, spacious walking and cycling network.
- + The project will enable a redesign of the bus movement network in the city centre, to unlock opportunities for improved public realm and pedestrianisation, both of which have proven economic benefits for businesses.
- + Tackling congestion and reprioritisation of road space will have the additional benefit of reducing demand to park private motor vehicles in the city centre, and so create new opportunities to repurpose space that is currently allocated to that use.



## PROGRESS AND ACTIONS

- + **Develop an outline business case**, comprising detailed scheme development and appraisal, modelling, legal and communications and engagement. Led by OCC and the City jointly.
- + **The Workplace Parking Levy Partnership**, formed in early 2021 to represent businesses likely to be affected by a workplace parking levy, alongside a wider engagement programme on the proposals, to clearly understand the wider impacts on businesses and residents.
- + **Oxford City Council is the first UK Local Authority to set tougher air quality standards than the current legal target** for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), through a citywide Air Quality Action Plan. The current legal annual mean limit value is 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup>, but several health studies have shown that there is no safe level of air pollution. Oxford's objective is to achieve a local annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> target of 30 µg/m<sup>3</sup> by 2025, putting down a marker for what local authorities can achieve and providing the framework for partners and funders to support a journey to the cleanest possible air.

**SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS**

**MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS**

**LONG TERM 5+ YEARS**

1.1 Core Transport Scheme Proposals

Business Case

Implementation

## CONNECTIVITY & ACCESS

### 1.2 ZERO EMISSION ZONE

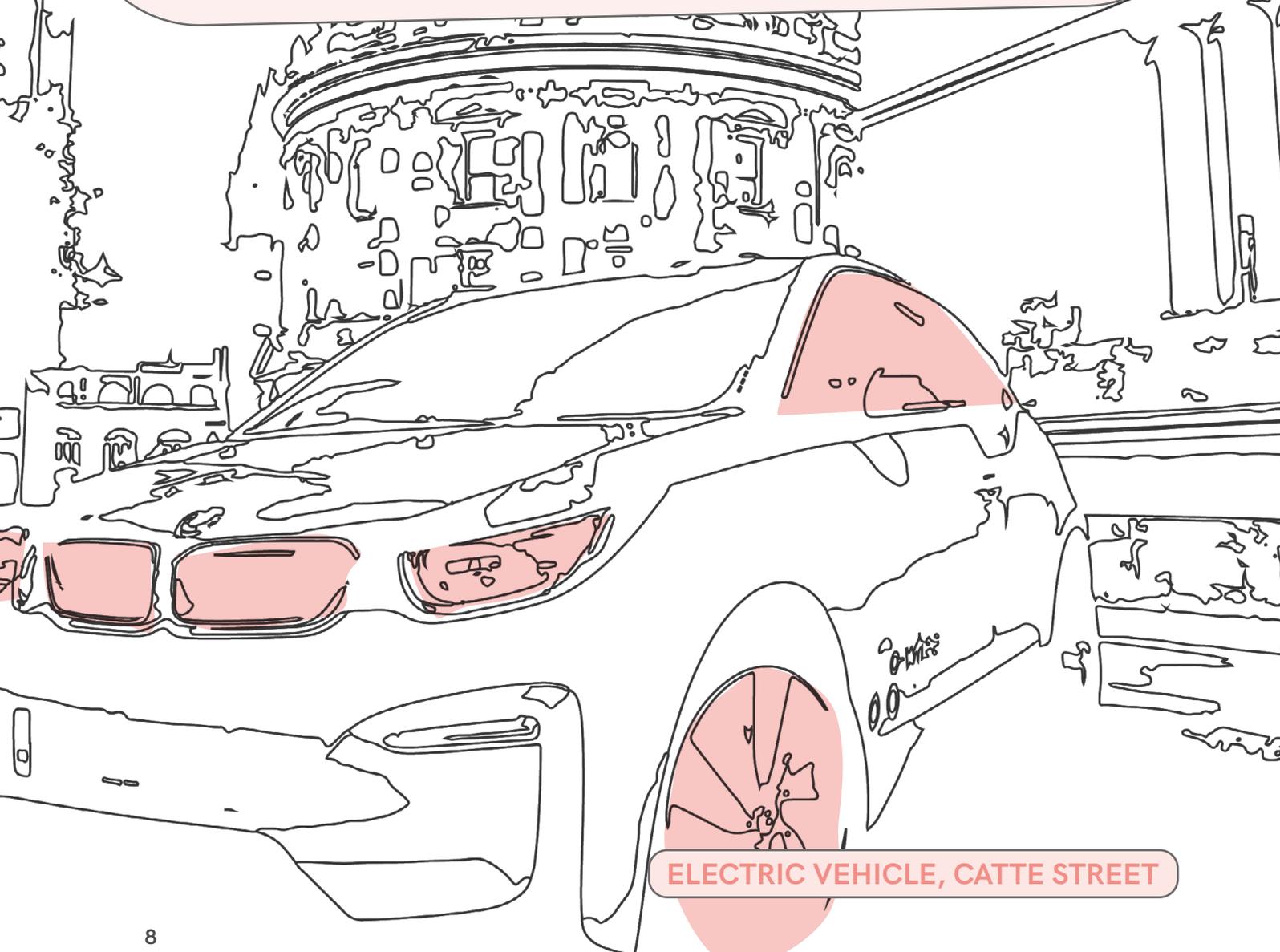
#### WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

As part of the Core Transport Proposals, the Oxford Zero Emission Zone aims to reduce air pollution levels, help tackle the climate emergency, improve the health of residents, workers and visitors in Oxford by introducing a charge for vehicles entering the zone, based on their emissions. Only 100% zero emission vehicles will be able to enter the zone free of charge. The Zero Emission Zone (ZEZ) was introduced as a pilot in February 2022, with proposals for a wider ZEZ to be consulted on in Summer 2022.

#### DELIVERY PARTNERS

**Primary:** Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford City Council are jointly leading and funding the development of proposals

**Supporting:** It is expected that the scheme will be self-funding when in full operation



ELECTRIC VEHICLE, CATTE STREET



## WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

- + Vehicle emissions cause significant harm to human health and contribute to climate change. In January 2020, a study from the Centre for Cities concluded that just under 6% of deaths in Oxford can be attributed to particulate air pollution.
- + The pollutant of most concern in Oxford city centre is nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), 75% of which comes from transport. Road transport also accounts for 16% of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions in Oxford.
- + During the national lockdown introduced in March 2020 to control COVID-19, people across the country enjoyed quieter streets and cleaner air; in Oxford city centre pollution dropped by 64% to a level not likely seen since the early 20th century - the ZEZ provides opportunity to retain some of these improvements.



## PROGRESS AND ACTIONS

- + **The ZEZ Pilot scheme** was approved in March 2021 for implementation in early 2022. Led by the City and OCC.
- + **Proposals for a wider ZEZ covering the whole city centre** are being developed. Pilot results will be reviewed to inform an extended scheme. Led by Oxfordshire County and Oxford City Councils.

**SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS**

**MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS**

**LONG TERM 5+ YEARS**

1.2 Zero Emission Zone

Pilot

Wider Implementation

# CONNECTIVITY & ACCESS

## 1.3 OXFORD RAILWAY STATION REDEVELOPMENT U

### WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

Oxford Railway Station will be undergoing significant transformation over the time horizons of this Action Plan to facilitate an anticipated doubling of passengers. The rail industry is seeking

The rail industry and local partners are seeking £150m-160m of investment to deliver capacity, journey time and safety improvements which include a new platform, and a western entrance with new station building on the Botley Road, to be delivered by 2024. This will support the nationally-significant East-West rail timetable requirements to be achieved including more trains to London, faster services and longer-term, potentially direct connections to Bristol.

Masterplan options are being developed to inform proposals for an enhanced multi modal transport interchange to the east of the station.

Proposals are also progressing for delivery of a Cowley Branch line to allow improved accessibility from the south and east by rail.

### DELIVERY PARTNERS

**Primary:** Network Rail, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council, GWR, OxLEP

**Supporting:** Specialist consultants, West End landowners, Rail operators, bus companies



FRIDESWIDE SQUARE



### WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

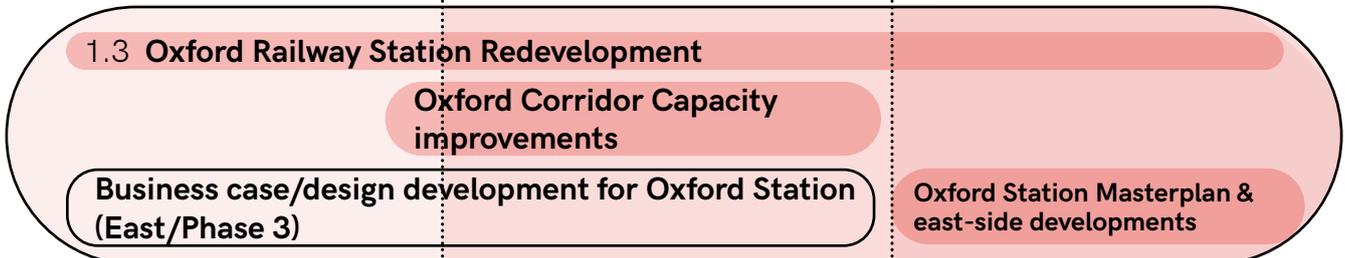
- + Redevelopment of Oxford Station is a vital project to raise the quality of the city centre, catalyse the redevelopment of Oxford's West End, and support East-West Rail.
- + Our aspiration is that Oxford becomes a 'national rail hub', providing an increase in capacity to support housing and job growth required in the city and region.
- + The Oxford Station redevelopment is an important project to set an improved arrival experience for the city, alongside enhancing rail services.



### PROGRESS AND ACTIONS

- + **The first funding instalment - £69m - was secured from DfT in May 2021**, to deliver elements of Oxford Phase 2. Further funding is needed to deliver the project and implement by December 2024. Led by Network Rail.
- + **£250,000 has been invested to develop masterplan options**, which will be used to advance a strategic outline business case for the works required to redevelop the eastern side of the station. Further funding is needed to continue beyond this initial work to refine options and develop a business case by 2024. These would then follow on from the Phase 2 works that are predominantly focused on the western side of the station.

**SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS**    **MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS**    **LONG TERM 5+ YEARS**



## CONNECTIVITY & ACCESS

### 1.4 OXPENS AND OSNEY MEAD CONNECTIVITY U

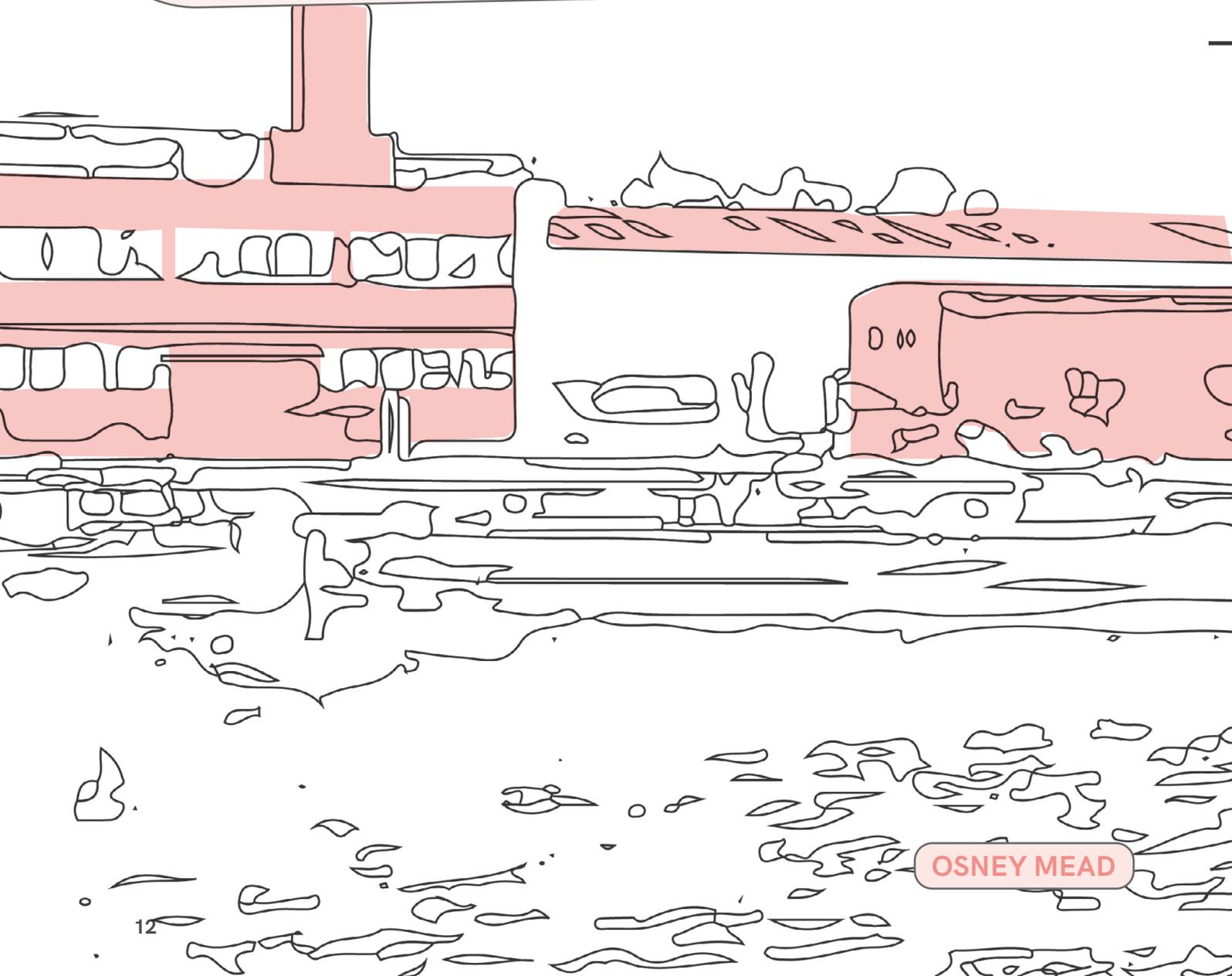
#### WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

The delivery of a new pedestrian/cycle bridge over the Thames between Oxpens and Grandpont as well as path improvements between the proposed bridge and Osney Mead will provide convenient, attractive and improved connectivity for walking and cycling between the city centre, Rail Station and Osney Mead.

#### DELIVERY PARTNERS

**Primary:** Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford City Council jointly

**Supporting:** Environment Agency, OxWED, Oxford University





## WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

- + Osney Mead is identified for development within the Oxford Local Plan 2036. The Plan identifies the need for the bridge to facilitate walking and cycling connectivity between Osney Mead and the city centre. These proposals are part of the wider West End development area.
- + The proposed bridge and path works will connect new development at Oxpens and Osney Mead and encourage walking and cycling from Osney Mead to the city centre through creation of an attractive and convenient route and river crossing.
- + To provide a route that is safe to use in times of flood.



## PROGRESS AND ACTIONS

- **£6m in funding has been secured** from the Growth Deal for the Osney Mead bridge. Led by the City.
- **£1.738m in funding has been secured** from the Housing Infrastructure Fund for pedestrian and cycle routes linking Botley, Hinksey, Osney Mead and Oxpens. Led by the City.
- + **Work on the feasibility, design and delivery of the proposal** is being procured. Delivery of the bridge and path improvements are anticipated for 2023 and 2022 respectively. Led by the City.

SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS

MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS

LONG TERM 5+ YEARS

1.4 Oxpens & Osney Mead Connectivity

Business Case / Design Development

Implementation

## CONNECTIVITY & ACCESS

### 1.5 NEW DELIVERY (AND COLLECTION) SOLUTIONS NS

#### WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

To reduce the impact of freight trips by large and / or polluting vehicles in and around Oxford city centre, we will work with Oxfordshire County Council as they develop the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan and revised Oxford Transport Strategy to explore options around freight consolidation, and develop proposals for new delivery and collection solutions that will also benefit Oxford's businesses.

#### DELIVERY PARTNERS

**Primary:** Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford City Council jointly

**Supporting:** University of Oxford, University colleges, CoHSAT, Oxford Brookes University, Delivery Operators, city centre businesses



## WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

- + The rate of “business to consumer” deliveries was already increasing before COVID-19, and the pandemic has clearly accelerated this trend. This contributes significantly to congestion on the Oxford ring road and approaches to the city centre.
- + Pollution levels are high in Oxford, and 75% of the city’s nitrogen dioxide pollution is caused by transport. More sustainable delivery and collection solutions would help reduce this.
- + Parking space required for deliveries has constrained city centre businesses’ abilities to enable “café culture” during the pandemic, hindering the economic survival of hospitality businesses.
- + Oxford residents and visitors would benefit from a safer and more attractive public realm; more reliable and efficient deliveries and journeys; and better air quality.
- + The popularity of takeaway options during lockdown, driven by huge marketing investment by delivery companies has significantly increased the number of delivery mopeds in Oxford city centre, and created issues of congestion, illegal parking, emissions, and noise concerns for residents and businesses, especially around new outside seating areas.



## PROGRESS AND ACTIONS

- + **Explore options for freight consolidation and sustainable delivery and collection options in Oxford** - work with Oxfordshire County Council from 2022 to identify resources and budget to develop options alongside development of the Oxford Transport Strategy.
- + **Continue work to create a collective / collaborative, sustainable delivery service among Covered Market traders**, and draw on the lessons of this initiative to extend it to other clusters of city centre businesses. This should introduce digital solutions for ordering and delivery consolidation as well as scheduling. Led by the City.

**SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS**

**MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS**

**LONG TERM 5+ YEARS**

1.5 New Delivery Solutions

Options development

Implementation

## CONNECTIVITY & ACCESS

### 1.6 VISITOR COACH STRATEGY U

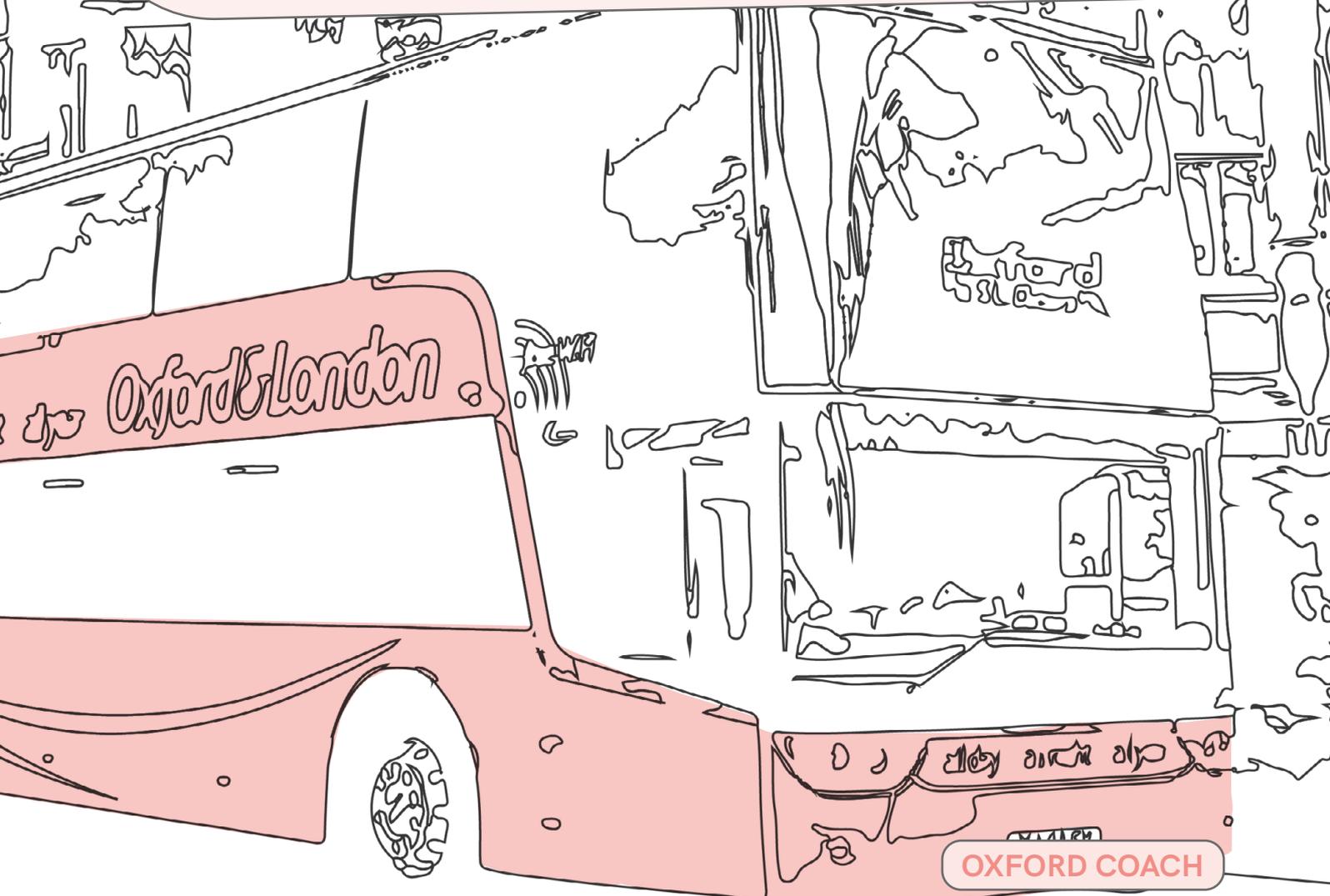
#### WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

A two-stage project to lessen the impact of visitor coaches on the city centre. Phase one will create additional temporary drop-off locations to ease the pressure on St Giles and work with coach operators and destinations to direct services to use the drop off nearest their destination and to then move on to agreed layover sites. Phase two, in the longer term, will reduce the number of city centre drop off locations, including exploring the potential to close the St Giles stop altogether, and replace them with edge of city facilities integrated with other transport options.

#### DELIVERY PARTNERS

**Primary:** Oxfordshire County Council supported by Oxford City Council

**Supporting:** Destination Management Organisation, tour operators, Oxford Bus Company, Stagecoach, city centre destinations





## WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

- + Current coach drop off points are inadequate and negatively impact residents, city centre businesses and the visitor arrival experience.
- + Coaches often park in residential side streets and resident bays, park over cycle lanes, carry out unsafe manoeuvres, idle, and drop off at unsafe or inappropriate locations.
- + There is a lack of adequate drop off and layover facilities for drivers. Creating welcoming and high standard facilities for coach arrivals will support a seamless arrival by coach, help improve the visitor experience and significantly reduce congestion.



## PROGRESS AND ACTIONS

- + **Develop a visitor coach strategy.** As coach numbers return to pre-COVID-19 levels, work with the county council to survey coach drivers and passengers as they arrive in the city centre and use the resulting data to work with partners on improvement proposals.
- + **Identify additional new drop off locations** on Speedwell Street and close to Westgate to reduce pressure on St Giles, and promote these to the coach operators. Led jointly by the City, OCC and DMO.
- + **Work with Oxfordshire County Council to identify controls and enforcement measures** to relieve pressure in the city centre - especially in the Ashmolean / St Giles area.
- + **Target the accreditation of a 'Coach Friendly' City** in the medium term of this Action Plan.

SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS

MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS

LONG TERM 5+ YEARS

1.6 Visitor Coach Strategy

# CONNECTIVITY & ACCESS

## 1.7 PARK & RIDE ENHANCEMENTS U

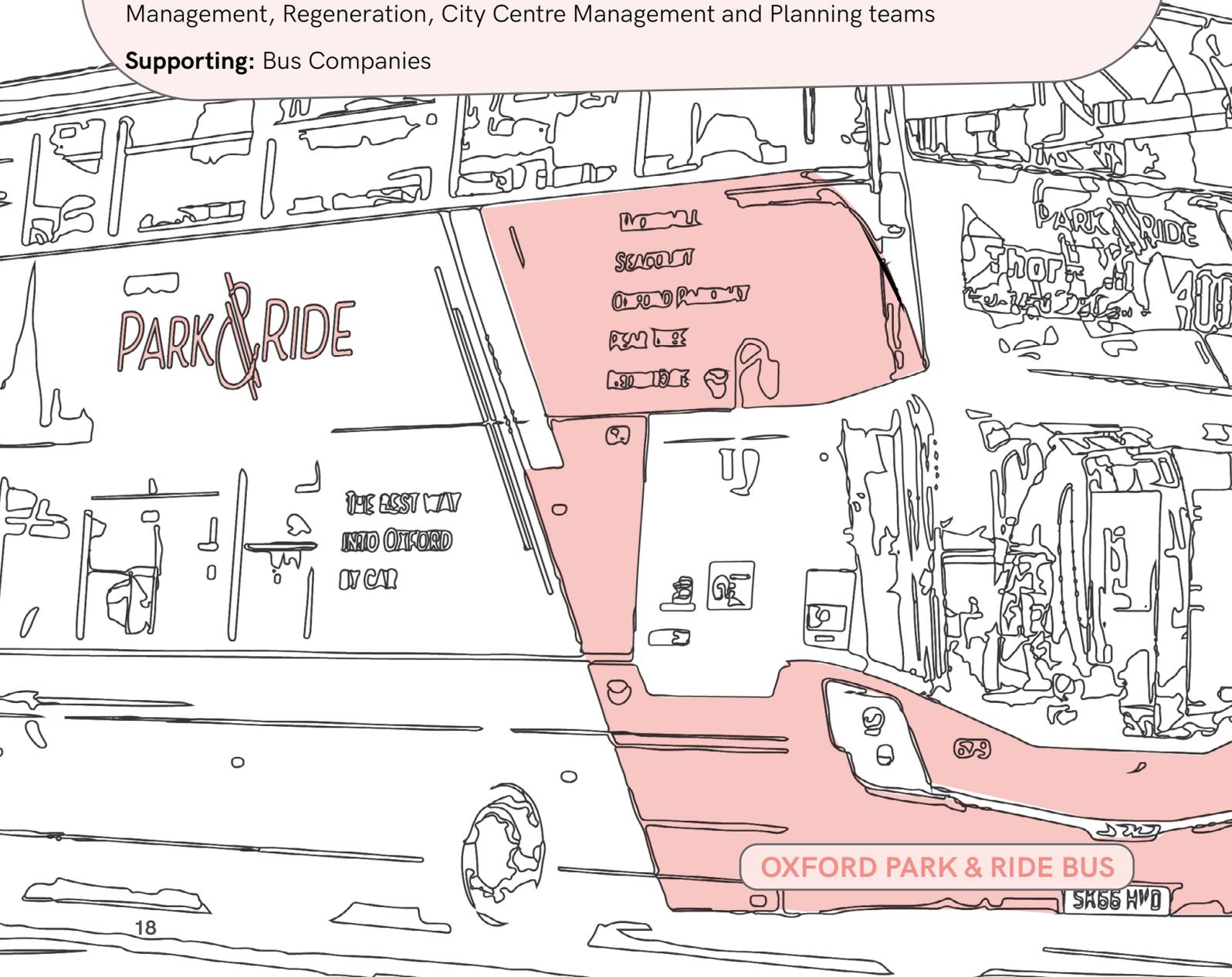
### WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

Oxford City Council seeks to work with Oxfordshire County Council to review the city's park & ride model as part of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) and revised Oxford Transport Strategy to evolve and enhance the offer of the existing park and ride sites to increase capacity in the city's outer ring. Oxford's park and ride system won national acclaim when first introduced and has since become a vital element of the city centre's reliance on public transport. This project will seek to identify facility and service improvements that will adapt the model following the pandemic and ensure it remains as an option to facilitate sustainable access to the city centre.

### DELIVERY PARTNERS

**Primary:** Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford City Council jointly, including its Parking Management, Regeneration, City Centre Management and Planning teams

**Supporting:** Bus Companies





## WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

- + Utilisation of the park and ride facilities have been hugely impacted by the pandemic, and further consideration of how this important infrastructure is supported in the future will be key, particularly in the context of the Core Transport Scheme proposals.
- + Enhancements will help us build on the initial success and to further reduce the number of private motor vehicle movements into the city centre.



## PROGRESS AND ACTIONS

- + **A Bus Service Improvement Plan was published** in 2021.
- + **Seacourt Park & Ride** was recently enhanced. Led by the City.
- + **Deliver a car park-bus fare joint-ticketing solution**, building on the existing joint ticketing system for families.
- + **Review park & ride requirements** to inform a strategy that can be embedded in the Oxford Transport Strategy. Led by OCC. This will include:
  - + Reviewing current and future park & ride capacity, considering the wider contexts of growth, transport proposals and changing travel patterns
  - + Consider approach to car parking and bus charges in the context of building on learning to extend cashless payment options.
  - + Consider the role of park & rides alongside the Visitor Coach Strategy
  - + Improve Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure at park and ride sites building on the work to date in delivering the EV Superhub at Redbridge Park and Ride and taking learnings from this to inform options at the other facilities
  - + Improve facilities for those who would like to cycle and / or walk in from park & ride sites
  - + Improve facilities for waiting passengers where practical and viable
  - + Improve visitor welcome, signage and information available at park & ride sites
  - + Consider real-time and digital products that enhance the function and experience of park & rides across the city, including real-time capacity tracking, integration with other transport and mobility information including buses and cycle hires, payment etc.

**SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS**

**MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS**

**LONG TERM 5+ YEARS**

1.7 Park & Ride Enhancements

Strategy development

Implementation

# PUBLIC REALM & ANIMATION

## 2.1 CITY CENTRE PUBLIC REALM & MOVEMENT STRATEGY NS

### WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

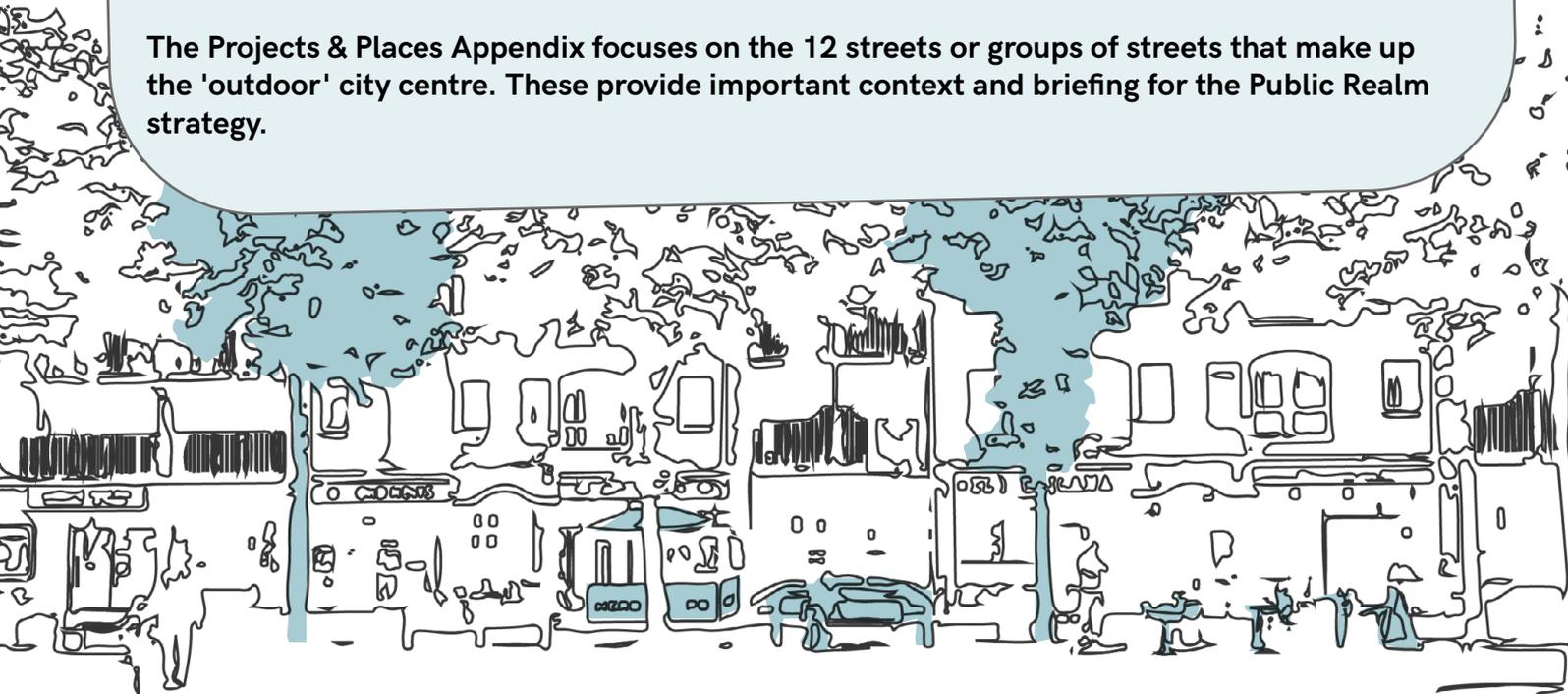
A strategy that revisits traffic management and road reprioritisation in the city centre in the context of reduced congestion from the Core Transport Schemes to support transition of more streets towards “café culture” and shared civic spaces, more segregated space for cyclists and buses on key routes, space for improved cycling infrastructure and additional on-street cycle parking in place of car parking and enabling deliveries and servicing to be better incorporated into road layouts. The public realm strategy will also set out wider public realm improvements including exploring improvement of public green spaces, planting, and waterways, and in best utilising these for climate change resilience and improving biodiversity- in the city centre. Street-specific opportunities are outlined in the Projects & Places Appendix to help define the scope for a public realm strategy.

### DELIVERY PARTNERS

**Primary:** Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City Council

**Supporting:** Bus companies, active travel advocacy groups, Inclusive Transport & Movement focus group, city centre landlords and businesses and consultancy support

**The Projects & Places Appendix focuses on the 12 streets or groups of streets that make up the 'outdoor' city centre. These provide important context and briefing for the Public Realm strategy.**





## WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

- + The proposed Core Transport Schemes are set to significantly reduce the amount of vehicle traffic in the city centre. This creates an opportunity to re-assign road space, shifting emphasis away from vehicles and towards pedestrians and cyclists.
- + Improving the public realm creates a more positive city centre experience for all those who use it. A growing body of evidence links active travel and an enhanced public realm with local high street benefits, increasing dwell times and, therefore, spend - thus supporting the vitality of the city centre.



## PROGRESS AND ACTIONS

- + **Identify resources and budget** to commence work on this as Oxford's Core Transport Scheme proposals are progressed, and alongside the Oxford Transport Strategy. Led jointly by the City and OCC.
- + **Include this study as a key section of the Oxford Transport Strategy refresh**, and explore potential funding streams. Led jointly by the City and OCC.
- + **Work with bus companies and active travel groups** to ensure good service and commercial viability, while also improving the city centre for walking and cycling and the creation of shared civic spaces. Led by the City.
- + **During summer and autumn of 2022, explore funding options and if available, develop the early phases of a public realm strategy.** The scope is to:
  - + Identify a movement framework that reprioritises road space to improve connections, manage traffic and create room for pedestrians, cyclists and buses to co-exist safely. Bus, cycle and pedestrian, freight/access routes must be taken into account when considering enhancements to individual streets, specifically as they are identified with the Oxford Local Walking and Cycling Plan. Schemes must consider impact on people with access issues.
  - + Identify and provide design guidance for the implementation of new civic spaces facilitated by the reprioritisation of space.
  - + Identify opportunities to help integrate growth areas into the city centre.
  - + Audit city centre parking to identify potential reallocation opportunities.
  - + Provide public realm opportunities and guidelines that respond to the street strategies in this Action Plan and cover:
 

+ Ground surfaces	+ Signage
+ Street furniture	+ Lighting
+ Planting	+ Public Art

SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS

MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS

LONG TERM 5+ YEARS

### 2.1 Public Realm & Movement Strategy

Strategy development

Implementation

## 2.2 INTERIM PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS NS

### WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

There are several interventions in the street-by-street focus set out in the Projects & Places Appendix that are not reliant on movement and, therefore, can be progressed alongside development of the wider public realm strategy. There will also be interim measures that can be undertaken in lieu of longer term solutions without undermining the longer term approach. We will initiate public realm improvements that support the city centre's unique identity and strengthen its economy that are not reliant on strategic interventions. This will require identifying necessary improvements and projects, establishing funding sources and, where funding is available, consulting on and delivering improvements.

### DELIVERY PARTNERS

**Primary:** Oxford City Council Regeneration, City Centre Management and planning teams; Oxfordshire County Council

**Supporting:** University of Oxford and its colleges, businesses focus group, Oxford City Inclusive Transport & Movement Focus Group, Cultural Partners, City Centre Taskforce, businesses, Thames Valley Police

**The Projects & Places Appendix focuses on the 10 streets or groups of streets that make up the 'outdoor' city centre.**

OUTDOOR SEATING



## WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

- + Not all public realm improvements are reliant on changes in movement or more strategic interventions. Some are set out in the Street-by-Street section of the Projects & Places Appendix, and can - subject to funding - be progressed with key partners while the wider strategy is considered.
- + During the COVID-19 pandemic, City Council surveys found that pedestrianisation schemes saved businesses and jobs by increasing consumer spend and satisfaction.
- + Outdoor seating initiatives introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic were popular with hospitality businesses, customers and visitors alike. In the longer term, a café culture will add to the positive experience of visitors and to dwell times, as will a regular programme of events and performance activity.



## PROGRESS AND ACTIONS

- + **Maintain, audit and extend where possible current outdoor seating initiatives.** Explore potential funding options and if available use this to support businesses to maintain the initiatives that are not reliant on a wider movement framework to continue beyond the current expiry, which for most is 2022. Led by the City, working with OCC.
- + **Audit not-yet-involved hospitality businesses for their interest in outside seating options**, such as wide pavements or loading & parking bays. Audit led by the City, with any jointly-agreed work to be undertaken with OCC highways teams.
- + **Explore potential funding options and if available, develop and deliver a programme of art and performance-based activity** in public spaces and suitable vacant units which do not affect the wider movement network. Led by the City, working with Cultural Partners, businesses and landlords / agents.
- + **Explore, with landlords, street specific frontage changes and design** which adhere to guidance provided in the Shopfront and Signage Design Guide (Project 2.3), including opportunities to decorate hoardings and create window displays in vacant units while works are underway. Led by the City.
- + **Review all outside seating areas in light of the Vehicles As Weapons safety conversation**, and adjust road layouts and protection measures as required. Led jointly by the City and OCC
- + **Develop advisory briefings on low energy heating and lighting for outside seating areas.** Led by the City.

SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS

MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS

LONG TERM 5+ YEARS

2.2 Interim public realm improvements

## PUBLIC REALM & ANIMATION

### 2.3 CITY CENTRE SHOPFRONT DESIGN ADVICE

#### WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

Oxford City Council has developed a Shopfront and Signage Design Guide, which takes the form of a planning Technical Advice Note (TAN) accompanying Oxford's Local Plan 2036. This has the aim of conserving and enhancing Oxford's architecture, public realm, heritage and image. The Design Guide seeks to assist owners and tenants of shops and other commercial premises in the design of shopfronts and advertisements, and will also assist planning officers in their assessment of shopfront and signage applications. Its objective is to enhance and improve the character and appearance of shopfronts and signage of buildings within the city by establishing a set of design principles and good practice examples. The current planning and enforcement regulations will still apply to unauthorised shopfronts and signage.

#### DELIVERY PARTNERS

**Primary:** Oxford City Council Planning and Heritage, and City Centre Management teams

**Supporting:** City Centre Taskforce, Local Businesses and property owners





### WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

- + Oxford city centre is famous for its world-class architecture and historic environment. In order to ensure that this architecture and unique setting is celebrated, it is essential that city centre shopfronts are well maintained, and that new signage is sensitive, well designed and well maintained.



### PROGRESS AND ACTIONS

- + **The TAN has been completed and published** on Oxford City Council's planning webpages: [link](#).
- + **Encourage building owners, landlords and incoming occupiers to draw on the Shopfront and Signage Design Guide.** Led by the City.
- + **Explore the option of designating an Area of Special Control** within the city centre. This will have the aim of improving the centre's public amenity value and be informed by the design principles of the Shopfront and Signage Design Guide. Led by the City.

SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS

MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS

LONG TERM 5+ YEARS

2.3 Shopfront Design Advice

# GETTING THE MIX RIGHT

## 3.1 OXFORD WEST END U

### WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

Oxford West End is the largest-scale mixed-use development Oxford city centre has seen and is one of the largest urban transformation opportunities in the UK. Building on initial phases at the Westgate Centre and The Jam Factory, a series of coordinated developments are being brought forward as part of an over-arching vision co-created by local landowners and stakeholders to deliver an innovation district. Together these have the scale to meet the urgent demand for start-ups, spin-outs, and HQs in the city centre, alongside much needed new homes.

Together, the partners will:

- + Transform the area by delivering a co-ordinated programme of low carbon developments and infrastructure to the west of Oxford's city centre, creating over 13,000 net additional jobs in Oxford and around 1,000 new homes by 2040.
- + Create a focal point for life sciences, energy, AI, and creative sector activities.
- + Deliver a national rail hub that facilitates east-west rail across the ARC to Cambridge, a range of new and enhanced city to city connections and strong local metropolitan transit and active transport mobility options.
- + Attract and retain academic talent from the University of Oxford, Oxford Brookes University, and City of Oxford College, and work with local partners including The Oxford Trust to nurture a networked, entrepreneurial environment.
- + Introduce pedestrian and cycle routes, providing better access around the city and to key destinations such as bus stops, the railway station and Westgate; and plentiful high quality secure cycle parking, as part of all new developments.

### DELIVERY PARTNERS

**Primary:** University of Oxford, OxLEP, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford West End Developments (OxWED), Network Rail, Nuffield College and Christ Church College

**Supporting:** Oxford Brookes University, Activate Learning (City of Oxford College) and the Oxford Trust



## WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

Over the last 15 years, Oxford's contribution to the UK economy has been impressive. Yet, the evidence shows that the city is facing barriers to its overall potential. Supply-side limitations are Oxford's biggest barrier to growth.

- + Demand exceeds supply for housing - especially affordable housing - employment space, (start-up, office, R&D and lab) and labour. Oxford West End provides a long awaited, much needed opportunity for a mixed-use expansion of Oxford city centre.
- + Oxford ranks 45th out of 63 cities in the UK for business start-up rates and 58th in terms of GDP per worker.
- + Certain sectors are under-represented in the city, particularly the city centre.
- + There is a high rate of leakage of both knowledge and capital from the city, showing that Oxford could still drive more value from its innovation capacity, both for local people and for the UK.



## PROGRESS AND ACTIONS

2021

- + **Implemented new partnership arrangements** to bring oversight, align with on-going work, help shape the overall ambition for the area, support inward investment from both the public and private sectors, and ultimately help ensure delivery of the opportunity.
- + **Secured first tranche of £162m from DfT for Network Rail** to deliver Station Phase 2 and submit prior approval. Led by Network Rail.
- + **Launched a vision, place branding and investment prospectus** to support case for investment. Led by the City.

# GETTING THE MIX RIGHT

## 3.1 OXFORD WEST END - CONTINUED



### PROGRESS AND ACTIONS - CONTINUED

2022

- + **Submit the Oxpens planning application.** Led by OxWed.
- + **Promote the Oxford West End** and pursue inward investment opportunities with Government agencies and the private sector. Led by City Council working with West End Partners.
- + **Adopt the West End Spatial Framework** Supplementary Planning Document by the end of 2022. Led by the City working with partners.
- + **Facilitate a major development programme** to come forward in a coordinated way. Planning applications are expected on Nuffield Ltd. development sites at Frideswide Square and the Island site between Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street. Further Local Plan allocations in the West End includes the Worcester Street Car Park. Led by the City and landowners working with partners.

2023

- + **Deliver rail enhancements** and new western entrance (phase 2) by 2024. Led by Network Rail.
- + **Deliver major development sites and supporting infrastructure.** Led by landowners.
- + **Deliver further Rail Station enhancements** including the redevelopment of the eastern side of the Station (phase 3) by 2028.

SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS

MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS

LONG TERM 5+ YEARS

3.1 Oxford West End

Strategy development

Implementation



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## GETTING THE MIX RIGHT

### 3.2 CITY CENTRE MAJOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS NS

#### WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

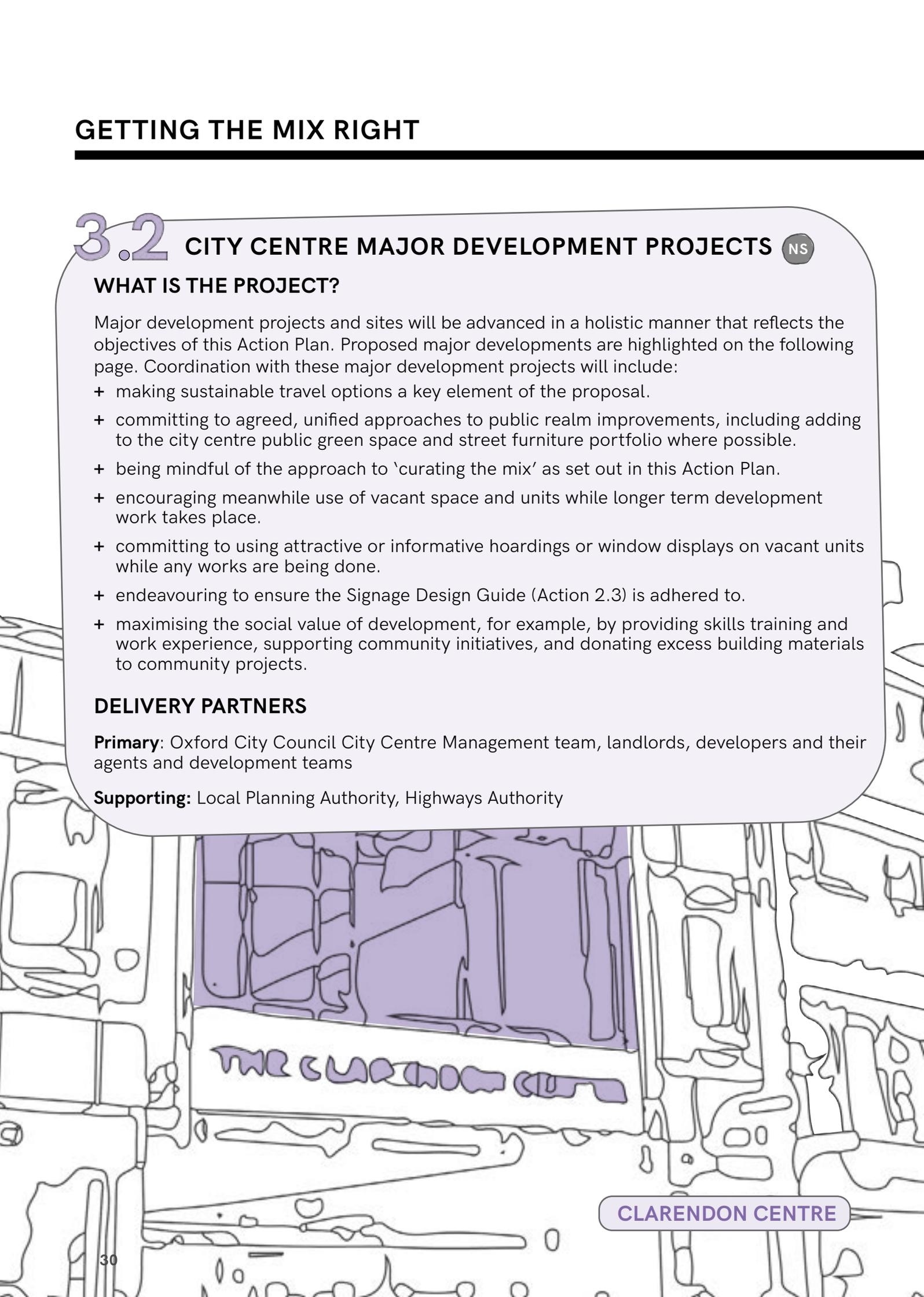
Major development projects and sites will be advanced in a holistic manner that reflects the objectives of this Action Plan. Proposed major developments are highlighted on the following page. Coordination with these major development projects will include:

- + making sustainable travel options a key element of the proposal.
- + committing to agreed, unified approaches to public realm improvements, including adding to the city centre public green space and street furniture portfolio where possible.
- + being mindful of the approach to 'curating the mix' as set out in this Action Plan.
- + encouraging meanwhile use of vacant space and units while longer term development work takes place.
- + committing to using attractive or informative hoardings or window displays on vacant units while any works are being done.
- + endeavouring to ensure the Signage Design Guide (Action 2.3) is adhered to.
- + maximising the social value of development, for example, by providing skills training and work experience, supporting community initiatives, and donating excess building materials to community projects.

#### DELIVERY PARTNERS

**Primary:** Oxford City Council City Centre Management team, landlords, developers and their agents and development teams

**Supporting:** Local Planning Authority, Highways Authority



THE CLARENDON CENTRE

CLARENDON CENTRE



### WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

- + To ensure that current and upcoming major developments are part of a collective approach to improving a city centre where all stakeholders are working together to achieve the best, most sustainable outcomes.
- + To minimise the impact of construction activity on businesses, residents and visitors for both day-to-day operations and enjoyment of the city. This could involve restricting permissions for construction traffic or scaffolding, where possible, to avoid conflict with major dates and events in the city centre, or agreeing the installation of attractive and informative hoardings around works.



### PROGRESS AND ACTIONS

- + **Continue to build working relationships** with landlords and development teams for all major city centre projects. Led by the City.
- + **Develop and share a working protocol** to cover approaches to key issues. Led by the City.
- + **Seek for the City Centre Management team to be embedded as a stakeholder** in the planning process. Led by the City.

Continued on next page.

SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS    MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS    LONG TERM 5+ YEARS

3.2 City Centre Major Development Projects

## 3.2

### CITY CENTRE MAJOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS - CONTINUED

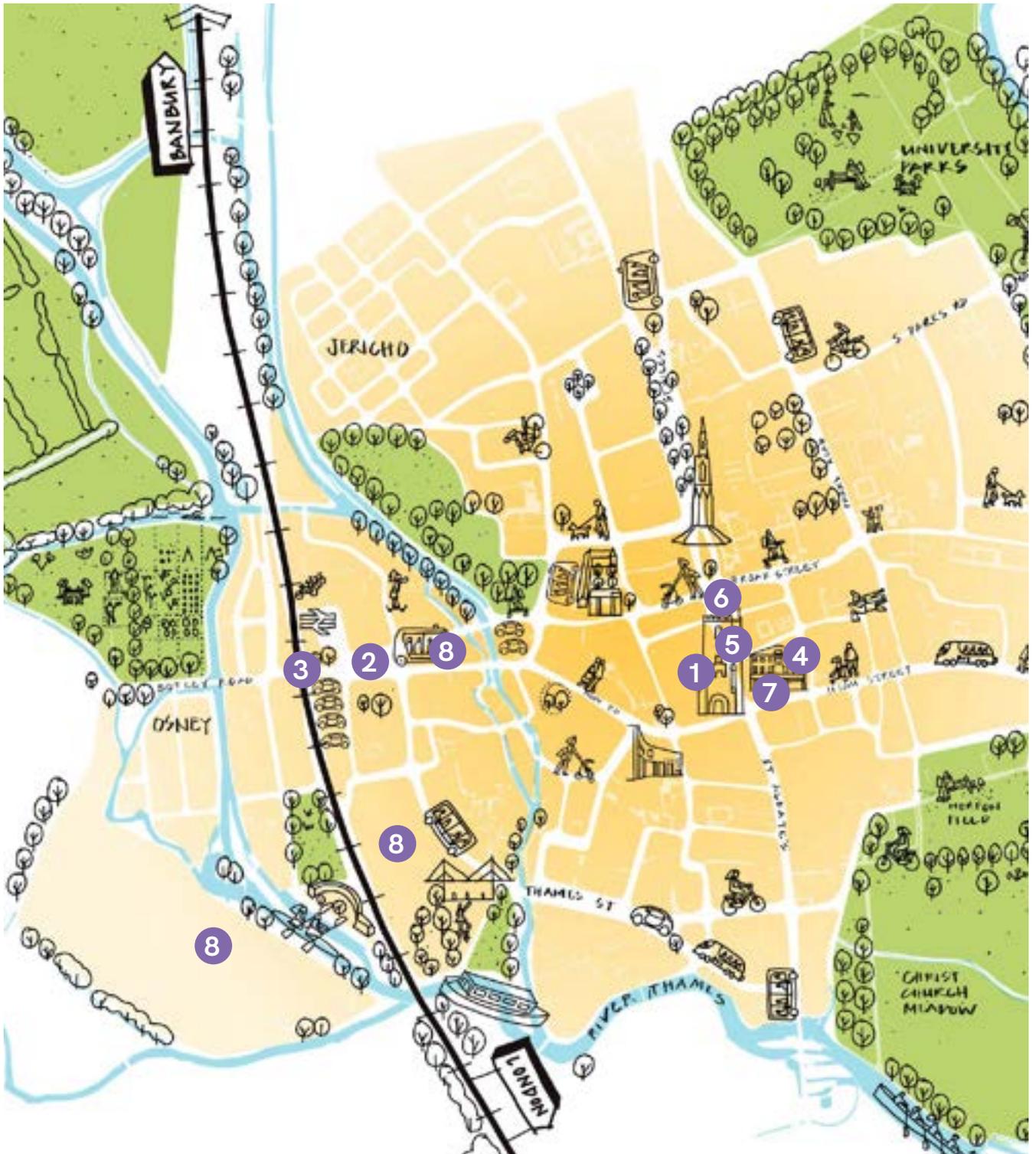


FIGURE 1 Oxford city centre key development sites

- 
- 1 **Clarendon Shopping Centre** - proposed as a mixed-use redevelopment including new open air public space and pedestrian routes.
  - 2 **Frideswide Square** - Action 3.1
  - 3 **Oxford Railway Station and Beckett Street Car Park** - Action 1.3
  - 4 **The Covered Market** - Action 3.4
  - 5 **Northgate development in Cornmarket** - completing in 2022.
  - 6 **Boswells redevelopment on Cornmarket / Broad Street** - to create a new boutique hotel.
  - 7 **College plans for 9-15 High Street** - to be announced.
  - 8 **West End developments** (Action 3.1)

## GETTING THE MIX RIGHT

### 3.3 TARGET & REDUCE VACANT UNITS INCLUDING 'MEANWHILE IN OXFORDSHIRE...' PROJECT

#### WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

Work with landlords and agents to reduce the number of vacant city centre units to 'churn' (under 5%) level, including the reduction of underutilised upper floor space. In addition to seeking long-term occupancy, this will target the temporary use of vacant buildings to stimulate the economy, partly via the 'Meanwhile in Oxfordshire...' project, which began in early 2021. Agree and deliver on a city centre-wide approach to securing a vibrant and sustainable mix of uses across retail, hospitality, services, commerce, leisure, residential and community / social enterprise uses that is inclusive, vibrant, sustainable, and increases resilience to withstand future economic shocks, where price is not necessarily the deciding factor in letting decisions and consideration is given to the balance of sectors represented, with the flexibility to accommodate changing customer demand. A specific opportunity might be a 'curation' strategy to help tackle the cluster of vacant units on High Street, and inform future letting decisions there.

#### DELIVERY PARTNERS

**Primary:** Oxford City Council City Centre Management team leads on the audit, drawing information from agents and landlords (including the City's property team as the Council is a major city centre landlord). 'Meanwhile in Oxfordshire...' lead is the Makespace Consortium (appointed operator) funded by the Government's Getting Building Fund (£1.875m for the countywide scheme), facilitated by OxLEP.

**Supporting:** Meanwhile in Oxfordshire...' works with Oxfordshire district councils, Landlords, Agents





## WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

- + Vacant units are a key indicator of a city centre's economic health. They represent a loss of income to landlords and the public purse, and often diminish the environment for nearby businesses. Filling them will improve appearance, attracting more visitors and businesses; increasing footfall, prosperity and experience.
- + Un- or under-used space on upper floors is also a lost opportunity for business, office or residential uses.
- + Vacant units can provide an opportunity for pop-up uses or flexible community gathering / hub spaces.
- + National trends in high street retail indicate a shift towards an experience-based economy, meaning Oxford city centre needs more opportunities for small businesses and start-ups in sectors that will improve its mix.



## PROGRESS AND ACTIONS

- + **Maintain an audit of vacant ground floor city centre units.** This could be hosted digitally and integrated with leasing services. Led by the City.
- + **Conduct a city centre-wide audit of upper space,** including opportunities to promote city living opportunities, and develop a joint strategy to reduce the amount of un- or under-used space. Led by the City, working with landlords and agents.
- + **Continue to deliver the county-wide 'Meanwhile in Oxfordshire...' project.** This will encourage meanwhile use where longer term lettings take time to deliver and focuses on vacant units where capital investment to re-purpose units would overcome barriers to letting. Led by the City, facilitated by OxLEP.
- + **Encourage all vacant unit hoarding or windows to be attractive and/or informative.** This includes developing protocols with the Council's planning and business rates teams to make this a commonly agreed principle and as easy to deliver as is possible within national regulations. Led by the City.
- + **Continue to develop a database of city centre ownership.** This will enable a collective approach to curating city centre units. Led by the City.
- + **Encourage all vacant city centre units to be actively and realistically marketed.** Led by landlords and agents, supported by the City.
- + **Work with landlords to curate an appropriate mix of uses** on each street based on the ambition and opportunities identified in the Projects & Places Appendix.
- + **Work with business support organisations** to ensure businesses are supported to start and grow.

SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS    MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS    LONG TERM 5+ YEARS

3.3 Target & Reduce Vacant Units Including  
'Meanwhile in Oxfordshire...' Project

## GETTING THE MIX RIGHT

### 3.4 COVERED MARKET EVOLUTION

#### WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

There are a number of strategies being developed to support the successful long-term viability of the Covered Market and its businesses.

This includes a leasing and operating strategy that will set the Council's ambitions in terms of tenant mix, leasing terms and supporting independent businesses in light of trends in retail and the impact of COVID-19.

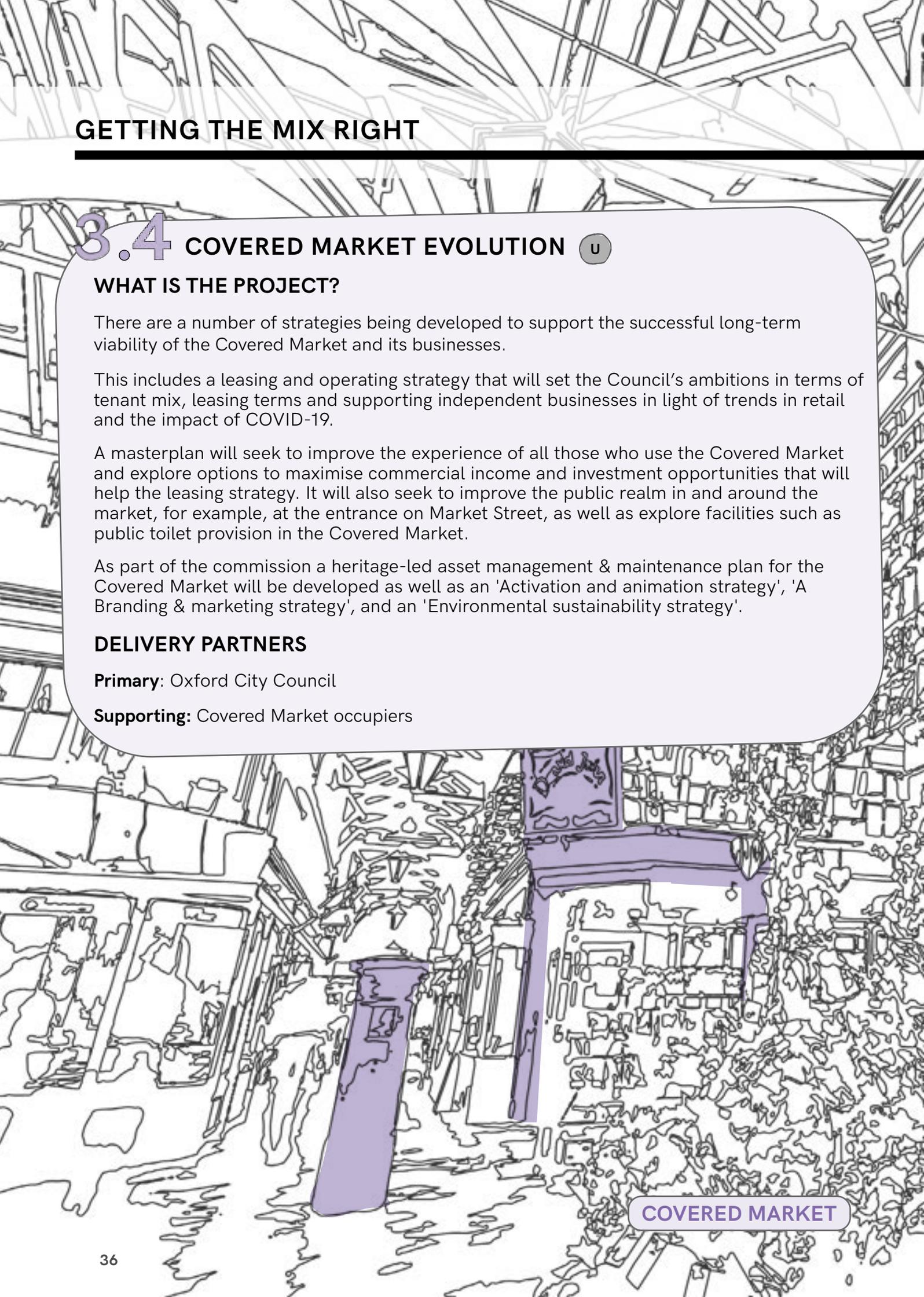
A masterplan will seek to improve the experience of all those who use the Covered Market and explore options to maximise commercial income and investment opportunities that will help the leasing strategy. It will also seek to improve the public realm in and around the market, for example, at the entrance on Market Street, as well as explore facilities such as public toilet provision in the Covered Market.

As part of the commission a heritage-led asset management & maintenance plan for the Covered Market will be developed as well as an 'Activation and animation strategy', 'A Branding & marketing strategy', and an 'Environmental sustainability strategy'.

#### DELIVERY PARTNERS

**Primary:** Oxford City Council

**Supporting:** Covered Market occupiers



COVERED MARKET



## WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

- + The Covered Market is the Grade 2-listed “jewel in the crown” of City Council assets. Its unique social, historical and economic significance in Oxford means its success is critical to that of the city centre. If the leasing and operating strategy and the masterplan are successful, they will drive more footfall to the Covered Market and the city centre more widely.



## PROGRESS AND ACTIONS

- + **The City is leading on the production of all strategies.** They have appointed a multidisciplinary team, including the Retail Group, Gort Scott Architects, Inner Circle Consultants, Transition by Design, to develop the Covered Market design concept and outline business case. A further £1.5m is anticipated in ongoing capital investment in the Covered Market.
- + **The leasing and operating strategy**, including stakeholder engagement, was approved by Oxford City Council's Cabinet in June 2021. Led by the City.
- + **Engage with stakeholders and the public** on the masterplan until October 2021. Led by the City.
- + **Undertake design and financial feasibility work** throughout 2021/22, targeting an approved masterplan and outline business case by 2022. Led by the City, in collaboration with its multidisciplinary consultants.
- + **Current and imminent workstreams include:** introducing late evening opening with an associated events programme; bringing a new bar operator to the market to help attract a wider and more diverse audience; improved daytime events and promotional activities to strengthen the customer experience, supported by a new and improved website, and an audio tour, "The Un-Covered Market".

SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS

MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS

LONG TERM 5+ YEARS

3.4 Covered Market Evolution

Strategy development

Implementation

## GETTING THE MIX RIGHT

### 3.5 WORKSPACE U

#### WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

In order to deliver on the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy vision which positions Oxford as one of the world's top three innovation ecosystems, the city needs to provide much needed space for high-value priority sectors to grow and expand while also providing more affordable space for small businesses, social enterprise, and the third sector, including Oxford's growing co-operatives movement.

#### DELIVERY PARTNERS

**Primary:** Oxford City Council

**Supporting:** OxLEP, workspace operators, and education sector partners





## WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

- + Oxford's Economic Strategy has identified the need for a greater quantity and quality of flexible and affordable entrepreneurial workspace as part of its Workspace Strategy. This is a priority to support a more productive, sustainable and inclusive economy.
- + Creating and refurbishing workspace in the city centre will deliver a range of economic and place-based benefits, including a more diverse mix of city centre uses, sustainable regeneration and re-use, development of a community of new and growing businesses, improved workspace affordability, and new employment and training opportunities.
- + A number of workspace projects are being explored, including as part of the 'Meanwhile in Oxfordshire...' project. The refurbishment of 1-3 George Street is the first city centre project to deliver on the Oxford Economic Strategy in 2022 and will provide approx. 7,286 sqft. (677 sqm) of workspace.



## PROGRESS AND ACTIONS

- + **1-3 George Street is undergoing a £1.921m refurbishment.** £800,000 of grant funding has been secured from OxLEP Local Growth Funds and the council investing the remainder. Led by the City.
- + **Appointing an operator to manage 1-3 George St** and deliver against a range of economic, social, and environmental objectives, and KPIs that support entrepreneurship and jobs. Led by the City.
- + **Explore further workspace opportunities** including re-purposing of under-used upper floors. Led by the City.
- + **Examine whether any of the buildings in the city centre vacant unit clusters can be re-purposed** for workspace uses, without negatively impacting on stock levels required for sustainable retail and hospitality sectors.

SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS

MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS

LONG TERM 5+ YEARS

3.5 Workspace

1-3 George Street

Other Actions

## GETTING THE MIX RIGHT

### 3.6 STIMULATE THE NIGHT-TIME ECONOMY NS

#### WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

Work with business owners and managers to develop a programme of recovery and rebuild measures for the night-time economy, including exploring the potential for new and / or diversified uses in buildings alongside their primary uses. Protect existing music and arts venues, and explore opportunities to expand this offer.

#### DELIVERY PARTNERS

**Primary:** Oxford City Council Safer Oxford, City Centre Management and Licensing teams, businesses, Pubwatch

**Supporting:** Landlords / agents, theatre and cinema management



TAP SOCIAL



## WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

- + The city centre night-time economy is among those hardest hit by COVID-19, with a number of its businesses remaining closed or only able to re-open using an adjusted business model.
- + Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, night-time industries were a growing part of the UK economy, and a strong offer will continue to play an important role in increasing the number of overnight stay visitors, which will help to boost the overall spend of visitors to Oxford.
- + An enhanced night-time economy will increase the range of leisure and cultural activities available in the city centre as well as enhance prosperity and opportunity for new business and operators.
- + There is no major live music venue in the city centre, a deficiency cited by many consultation respondents.



## PROGRESS AND ACTIONS

- + **Undertake a comprehensive audit of the sector** in Oxford city centre to assess current provision, status, challenges and opportunities, and to identify measures that could support our night-time economy. Led by the City.
- + **Identify and support opportunities to retain, enhance and extend the night time economy offer** including provision for live music and performances in the city centre. Led by the City, working with local landlords and planning teams.
- + **Ensure collaborative, joint-working** amongst all those in the sector is embedded within all initiatives that emerge from this project. Led by the City.
- + **Develop and deliver, a "getting home safely" strategy** to add confidence in the safety and security perceptions of Oxford city centre in the evenings and at night. Oxford has been granted up to £426,000 to introduce measures which aim to prevent violence against women and girls travelling in and out of Oxford at night. The funding aims to introduce new measures, including nightclub 'Safe Zones', Safe Walk routes, outdoor phone charging stations, upgrades to CCTV and more. Led by the City with night-time economy businesses, the police, bus companies and taxi operators.

SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS

MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS

LONG TERM 5+ YEARS

3.6 Stimulate the Night-Time Economy

## GETTING THE MIX RIGHT

### 3.7 CULTURE AND CREATIVE BUSINESSES NS

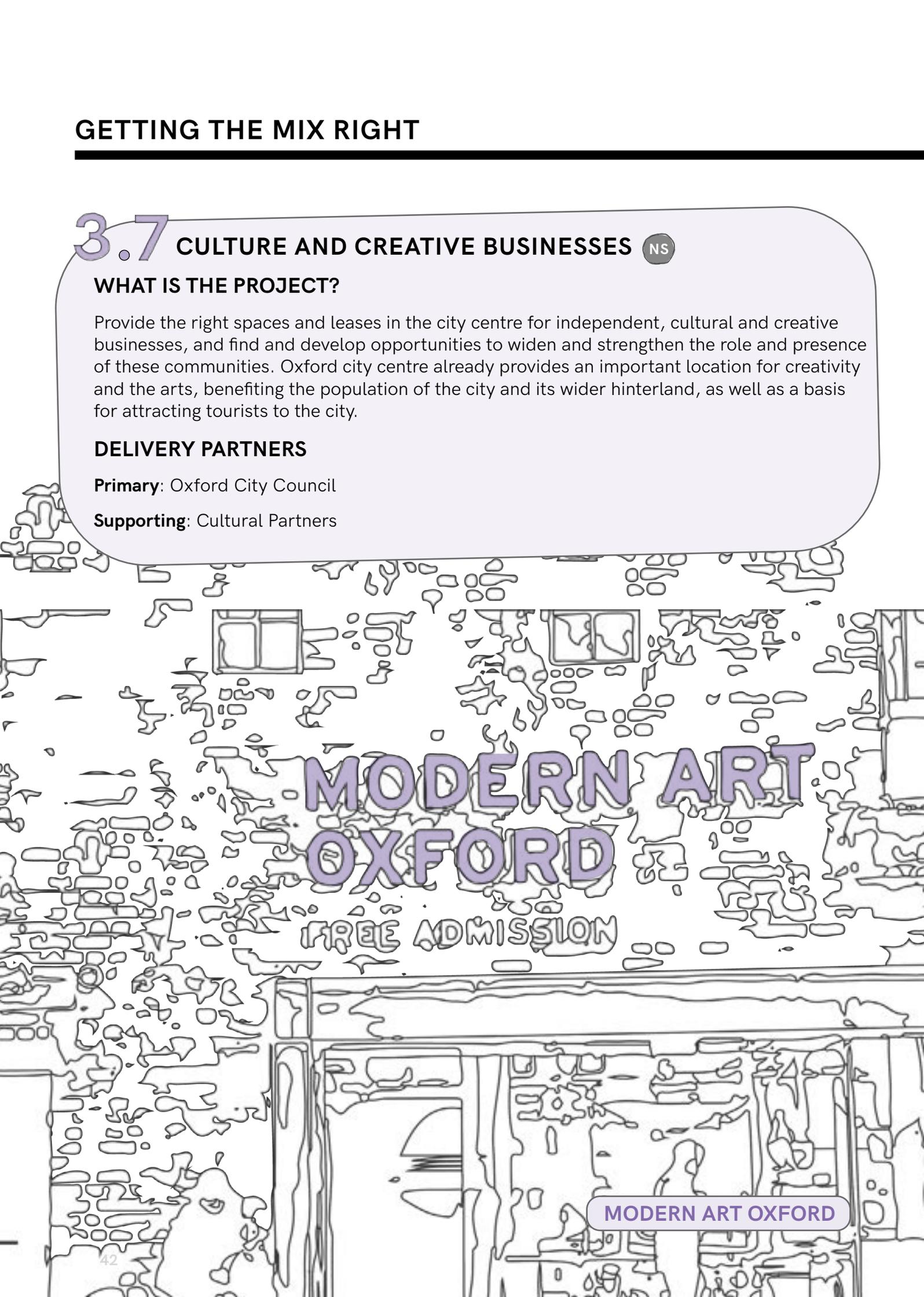
#### WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

Provide the right spaces and leases in the city centre for independent, cultural and creative businesses, and find and develop opportunities to widen and strengthen the role and presence of these communities. Oxford city centre already provides an important location for creativity and the arts, benefiting the population of the city and its wider hinterland, as well as a basis for attracting tourists to the city.

#### DELIVERY PARTNERS

**Primary:** Oxford City Council

**Supporting:** Cultural Partners



MODERN ART  
OXFORD  
FREE ADMISSION

MODERN ART OXFORD



## WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

- + There is a comparative under-representation of creative and innovative business activity within the city centre. The Creative sector makes up a relatively small proportion of total employment in the city centre (10%), and has declined over the last five years in terms of total employment (-40%).
- + There is a lack of suitable workspace to meet the needs of creative businesses in order for it to regrow.
- + While Oxford is already a global tourist destination more needs to be done to capture longer stays and offer greater diversity to aid recovery and long-term visitor growth. Boosting the level of creative and cultural industries has significant potential to both increase local job opportunities and diversify the visitor offer.
- + Oxford City Council delivers and supports a range of arts and cultural activities including dance, music, theatre, literature, film, digital art, the Museum of Oxford and the city's archives, and these organisations would like to, and can, play a bigger day-to-day role in the city centre.



## PROGRESS AND ACTIONS

- + **Promote independent entrepreneurs in the leisure and culture sectors** by encouraging landlords and agents to recognise the wider benefits of these business types as an addition to the city centre mix, especially for under-used upper floors and long-time vacant units. Led by the City.
- + **Identify opportunities to host and/or fund new internationally significant creative and culture events.** Led by the City.
- + **Explore funding opportunities to support creation of a new cultural quarter** as part of the public realm and movement strategy along with opportunities to make culture and creativity a part of the new offer in emerging city centre development.

SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS

MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS

LONG TERM 5+ YEARS

3.7 Culture and Creative Businesses

## 4.1 HOMELESSNESS & ROUGH SLEEPING

### WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

Everybody deserves a home and Oxford City Council and its partners are committed to ending rough sleeping and homelessness. Delivering on this commitment will involve working with people who present as homeless or are sleeping rough on the streets of Oxford, and with a range of partner organisations in the public sector, community, charity and social enterprise sectors to reduce instances of homelessness and rough sleeping.

### DELIVERY PARTNERS

**Primary:** Oxford City Council, with ongoing national Government funding and officer time, working in collaboration with a range of public and voluntary sector partners

**Supporting:** City centre businesses





### WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

- + Oxford City Council believes that nobody should have to sleep rough in Oxford, but homelessness is a multi-dimensional problem which requires close partnership working to prevent it.



### PROGRESS AND ACTIONS

- + The COVID-19 pandemic has had an enormous impact on people who are homeless as well as the sector itself. The call to arms of “Everyone In” at the start of Lockdown 1 saw the City provide accommodation for all the people who were at that point rough sleeping. This saw a shift in relationships and partnerships, with hotels, local businesses and Brookes University providing much of the accommodation and food. In December 2020, this work was ongoing with more than a 100 people still housed in interim accommodation which is now the cornerstone of a county-wide transformation programme towards a housing-led approach.
- + Strengthen existing partnerships and initiatives, and explore and introduce innovative new solutions where they present to help establish Oxford as a national leader in tackling this issue.
- + Oxfordshire County Council, the City and District Councils are working together to commission new services for single homeless people and those experiencing rough sleeping. The new services will focus on early prevention of homelessness and the provision of a rapid re-housing response that seek to provide long-term independent accommodation with support where needed. New services will start to deliver in 2022.

**SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS**

**MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS**

**LONG TERM 5+ YEARS**

4.1 Homelessness & Rough Sleeping

# GETTING THE BASICS RIGHT

## 4.2 STREET SCENE MANAGEMENT

### WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

Continue to work with Oxford Direct Services and other stakeholders to audit and develop the most effective and responsive street scene management, cleaning and waste services. Encourage businesses and city centre customers and visitors to play their part.

### DELIVERY PARTNERS

**Primary:** Oxford City Council, ODS Ltd, City Centre Ambassadors, City Centre Management team, **Oxfordshire County Council**, and Destination Management Organisations

**Supporting:** City centre businesses, waste services suppliers



HIGH STREET



## WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

- + Oxford is world-renowned for its heritage architecture and picturesque streets. The perception should be matched by the lived and user experience so as to maintain positive visitor feedback and word-of-mouth / social media reflections on their time in Oxford city centre, and promote return visits.
- + To overcome barriers of fragmented responsibility, with multiple stakeholders responsible for management of different elements of the street scene.
- + Maintaining adequate public toilet provision helps to ensure that the city centre remains inclusive for all those who use it.
- + How streets are managed in terms of materials and maintenance can have a positive impact on how they are used, particularly to pedestrians and cyclists who benefit from high quality, well maintained surfaces and spaces.



## PROGRESS AND ACTIONS

- + **Develop a community toilet scheme**, exploring existing obstacles and drawing on best practice from other cities. Led by the City in consultation with ODS.
- + **Develop and deliver a new waste collection protocol**. This will focus on reducing vehicle congestion, street clutter, new street furniture, and works with businesses to encourage recycling and better street scene management. Led by the City in partnership with waste service suppliers.
- + **Review delivery and service management arrangements**. This will aim to minimise impact on scenic (and often narrow) city centre streets, align with Zero Emission and Last Mile Delivery actions, and encourage the use of electric vehicles where practical and affordable. Led by ODS and the City.
- + **Review the street furniture estate**. Ensure we are providing the right furniture for the right places and uses, phase out and replace items - as budget allows - beyond their practical and visual lifespan, reduce clutter, and introduce street art where practical and affordable. Led by the City and the CCMT.
- + **Review the signage and wayfinding estate** and explore funding opportunities to develop a new approach. This will take into account layout changes, key attractions, and preferred means of communicating for different nationalities, ages and abilities, as part of an integrated physical-digital visitor experience. Led by the City, in liaison with the CCMT and DMO.
- + **Review and update protocols on peddling, busking and A-Boards**. Led by the City and CCMT in consultation with stakeholders.
- + **Minimise the impact of highways works on city centre operations**, including agreeing a new approach to works signage, and adjusting the 'no works beyond essential at Christmas' protocol from Dec. 5 to Nov. 5 Led by OCC.
- + **Manage on-street cycle parking**, for example in clearing racks of dead bikes.

SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS

MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS

LONG TERM 5+ YEARS

### 4.2 Street Scene Management

## GETTING THE BASICS RIGHT

### 4.3 TOURISM & VISITOR MANAGEMENT NS

#### WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

Tourism and visitor management is critical to providing a quality and memorable experience for our visitors, driving footfall into the city centre and balancing the impact on businesses and residents. We will, therefore, work with the destination management organisation and individual attractions and businesses to achieve more overnight stays, manage the influx of visitors, and create a memorable experience such that visitors encourage others to come and make return visits themselves.

#### DELIVERY PARTNERS

**Primary:** Oxford City Council City Centre Management Team; Destination Management Organisation

**Supporting:** Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford University and its Colleges, Hotels, visitor attractions

Pitt Rivers M

Sheldonian T

Bodleian U

RADCLIFFE CAMERA



## WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

- + Before COVID-19, about 17,000 jobs in Oxford were related to tourism – 14% of all jobs in the city. Tourism generated about £988m for the city's economy in 2019. The visitor economy has a huge impact on jobs and spend for many city centre businesses.
- + Visitors bring many benefits to the city centre and its businesses but high numbers at peak times can result in congestion that diminishes their experience and can result in conflicts with residents and businesses.



## PROGRESS AND ACTIONS

- + **Explore options for a new model of visitor information centre**, including options for an improved digital welcome. This could include enhanced digital apps and other visitor services, so as to streamline and integrate the visitor experience across all activities such as accommodation, leisure, attractions, travel, and information. Led by the City.
- + **Seek funding** to continue the development and promotional work to switch focus from day and part-day visits to overnight stays. Led by City, DMO and hotels.
- + **Conduct a survey of coach drivers and passengers** on arrival in the city centre - when visitor numbers return to more typical levels - to provide data to guide future policy. Led by OCC with the City.
- + **Work with local partners to create and embed a guide protocol into language school operations.** Led by the City in partnership with DMO and language schools.
- + **Explore funding to allow a review of existing city centre signage and recommend a cohesive, updated approach** in keeping with the city's heritage, and taking into account favoured means of absorbing information of different age groups and nationalities, including people with disabilities and accessibility issues, taking app-based and other options into account, including the lessons learned in developing and operating the Oxford City Accessibility Guide. Led by the City.
- + **Explore funding opportunities to enhance destination management and promote the Oxford offer.** This could include coordinated apps and services for tourism-related businesses. Led by the City, DMO, and local businesses.

SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS

MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS

LONG TERM 5+ YEARS

4.3 Tourism and Visitor Management

## GETTING THE BASICS RIGHT

### 4.4 REDUCING CRIME AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOR

#### DESCRIPTION

Collaborative joint working on a combined, strategic, responsive approach to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour in Oxford city centre.

#### DELIVERY PARTNERS

**Primary:** Thames Valley Police officers supported by Oxford City Council's Community Safety Team, and Oxford City Crime Partnership

**Supporting:** City Centre Management Team, Oxfordshire County Council Highways, city businesses, the universities



BROAD STREET CYCLE PARKING



## WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

- + To create a safe city, and one that is perceived to be safe to all those who live, work, shop, eat & drink or are customers of the entertainment and leisure economy here, study, and visit, in every part of the city centre, and at all times of the day and night, and through the year, is fundamental to its economic success.



## PROGRESS AND ACTIONS

**Maintain collaborative action against crime and anti-social behaviour** in the city centre, and specifically:

- + **Progress the ongoing joint county-city work** on developing new interventions on Hostile Vehicle Mitigation.
- + **Develop a strategy to tackle bike theft** with an emphasis on supporting bike owners to employ suitable safety equipment and park their bike securely, for example, by providing additional, secure, cycle parking and hosting safety workshops. Led by the City and TVP.
- + **Provide suitable information sharing facilities** e.g. noticeboards to provide alternatives to flyposting and graffiti, but otherwise take action against instances that appear. Led by the City.
- + **Develop the concept of 'responsible guardianship'** to encourage city centre businesses to take all actions within their powers to reduce instances of shoplifting, but provide ongoing support in terms of training and advice sharing in keeping with a partnership approach. Led by TVP.
- + **Source funding for and commission an update of the city centre's CCTV** camera facilities and strengthen joint working between The Westgate, the university and the TVP-City Council facility operations. Led by the TVP and City.
- + **Engage local partners in developing and delivering actions against anti-social behaviour** in sectors of the city where it is currently or becomes a significant issue. Led by the City.
- + **Develop and run regular anti-litter campaigns** with enforcement as required. Led by the City, working with street scene teams and communications and community interest group colleagues.

SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS

MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS

LONG TERM 5+ YEARS

4.4 Reducing Crime and Antisocial Behaviour

## GETTING THE BASICS RIGHT

### 4.5 MARKETING AND PROMOTION NS

#### WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

Work with city centre businesses and partners to achieve a strong collective approach to marketing and promoting the city centre's brand and messaging, and establish it at the heart of all communications activity as far as resources allow. This will celebrate its unique place qualities including its history, world-class architectural heritage and university institutions; as well as its strengths in retail, hospitality and leisure, and in culture, community and social enterprise.

#### DELIVERY PARTNERS

**Primary:** Oxford City Council, City Centre Taskforce Marketing sub-group

**Supporting:** Destination Management Organisation, Independent Oxford, Oxford Mail & Times

ALL SOULS COLLEGE, OXFORD UNIVERSITY



### WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

- + Promoting Oxford's commercial offer collectively will deliver a result far greater (in terms of ideas, resourcing and impact) than the current model in which individual sectors and organisations largely promote themselves.



### PROGRESS AND ACTIONS

- + **Continue to strengthen the range of membership, partnership working and role of the City Centre Taskforce Marketing Group.**
- + **Explore funding opportunities to develop new brands and marketing / promotions campaigns.**
- + **Explore funding opportunities to develop collaborative marketing / promotion apps**, where they are supported by businesses and add to this project.
- + **Strengthen the city centre's presence on social media** by encouraging (with training opportunities where needed) more businesses to engage in social media, and work together to boost their output and impact there.

SHORT TERM 1-2 YEARS

MEDIUM TERM 3-5 YEARS

LONG TERM 5+ YEARS

4.5 Marketing and Promotion



# STREET-BY- STREET

This section explores some potential location-specific opportunities and considerations for an improved public realm across Oxford city centre, to help define the scope for a public realm strategy.

# OVERVIEW

This section divides the 'outdoor' city centre into 10 locations and describes a series of opportunities for each street or cluster of streets, with the challenges that delivering them might involve.

Oxford city centre has a high concentration of heritage assets and historic environments, and this context will be a primary consideration for any proposals. Suggested interventions here (developed via formal and informal engagement with city centre businesses and organisations) as well as any added in the consultation, will need to acknowledge the wider planning policy context in the form of the [Local Plan](#), [Conservation Area Assessment](#), [Local Transport Plan](#) and other key policy documents.

The role of a number of streets also needs to be considered as part of the wider City Centre Public Realm & Movement Strategy to ensure long-term solutions balance competing needs.

Opportunities listed throughout this section have been identified to progress the objectives of the four Action Plan workstreams:

- Workstream 1: Connectivity and Access
- Workstream 2: Public Realm and Animation
- Workstream 3: Getting the Mix Right
- Workstream 4: Getting the Basics Right

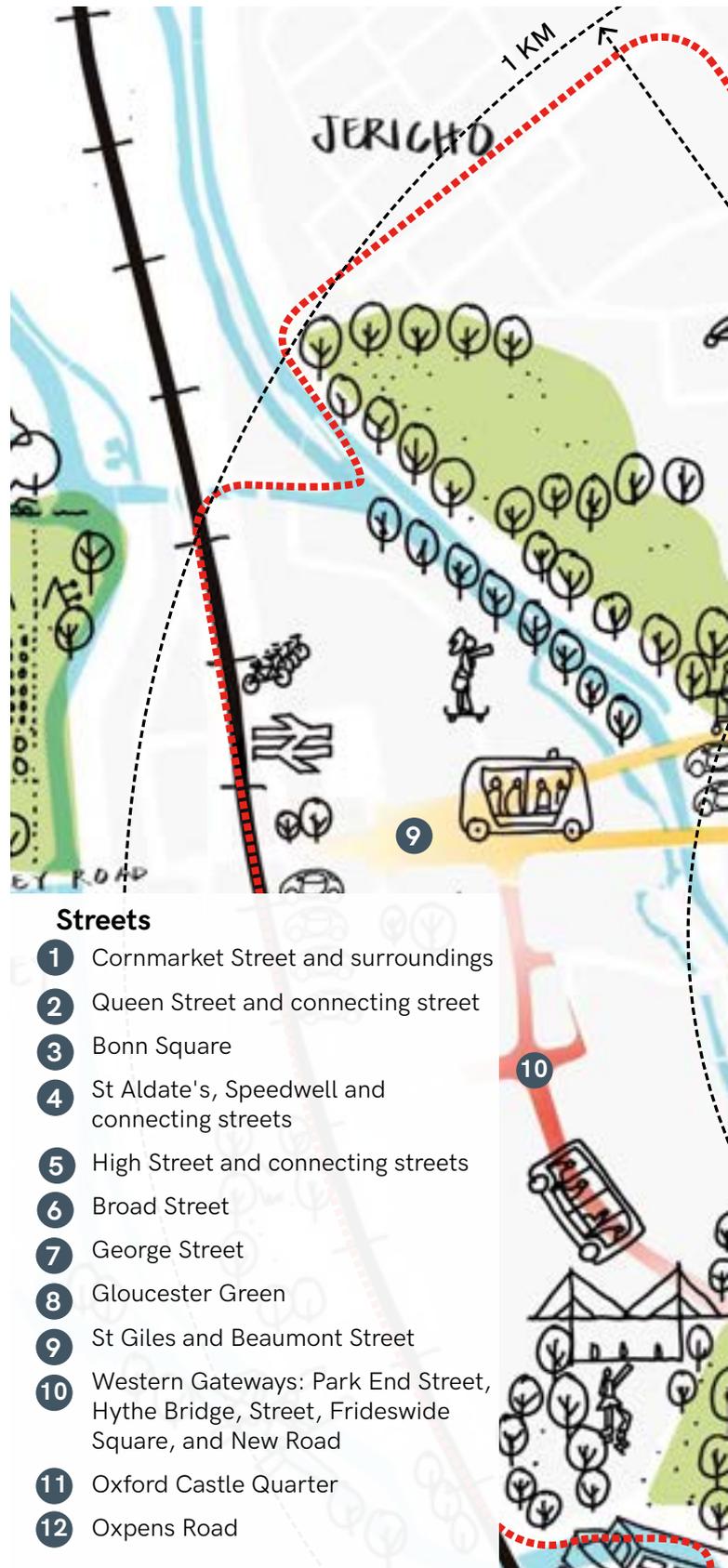


FIGURE 2 City Centre streets



# CORNMARKET STREET AND SURROUNDINGS

## POTENTIAL

Cornmarket Street's role as a key destination, as described in the Local Plan, can be elevated with an increased diversity and intensity of uses to animate the area in varying locations and at different times of day. An enhanced public realm will encourage and enable that activity. Build on the success of St Michael's Street as an attractive pedestrianised hospitality destination, and on plans for an attractive public space in Market Street as part of the Northgate development and the Covered Market masterplan

## CONTEXT

- + The current configuration of bus stops and coach drop offs to the north means Cornmarket is, at certain times, a busy footfall thoroughfare, though much of that is passing through rather than stopping.
- + The quality of street materials in this area are poor and inconsistent with lots of patching up with inappropriate and inferior materials. Street furniture design, including benches and bins, is inconsistent.
- + There is a lack of green.
- + Neither Market Street nor Golden Cross maximise their role as a connection between Cornmarket Street and The Covered Market.
- + Magdalen Street is one of the locations where competition for space between bus operations and the business / pedestrian / cyclists environment is an issue.
- + The quality and appearance of shopfronts and signage on Cornmarket is mixed.
- + The successful COVID-19 additions of outside seating for hospitality businesses has made a significant difference to their viability but requires ongoing balancing to accommodate other uses.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- A revitalised public realm, consistent along Cornmarket and its side streets, including level surface paving, seating options and planting, would reinforce the idea of a pedestrian, connected retail and hospitality destination.
- The Northgate development, and Clarendon Centre and Boswells repurposing will make a significant difference to the look, layout and variety of uses on this street.
- Improve street lighting and usability of these pedestrian environments after dark.
- Continue to introduce outside seating zones (where there is space and mindful of the impact on pedestrians and people with disabilities).
- Ensure hostile vehicle mitigation and efficient bollard-controlled vehicle access to Cornmarket is in place.
- Work with the county council and businesses here to better manage delivery, servicing, and waste collection services, and to remove or consolidate excess signage.
- Strengthen partnership working to tackle ASB issues here.

## CHALLENGES TO DELIVERY

- + Various development proposals need to be taken into account when considering this area.
- + Servicing and cycle movement along Cornmarket are permitted from 6pm to 10am, limiting the street's pedestrian friendliness in the morning and evenings.
- + Cornmarket is a significant attraction to the peddling and busking community which can add to congestion at the busiest times.



FIGURE 3 Cornmarket Street

- + Public realm planning for Market Street needs co-ordinating with development plans for the frontage of The Covered Market.
- + Improvements in lighting to support hospitality businesses needs to be done in a way that is sensitive to the historic buildings and their setting.
- + Any impact on views from Magdalen Street up to St Aldate's / Christ Church, and of the Saxon Tower of St Michael at the North Gate must be a consideration.



FIGURE 5 A modern public realm in a historic setting provides seating, retail, planting and pedestrian priority. Copenhagen, Denmark.



FIGURE 4 St Michael's Street



FIGURE 6 Golden Cross

## QUEEN STREET & CONNECTING STREETS

### POTENTIAL

To build on the public realm improvements made as part of the Westgate development in order to improve the pedestrian and business environment along the whole length of Queen Street, and increase daytime activity on St Ebbes and New Inn Hall Street.

### CONTEXT

- + Significant public realm improvements have been made as part of the Westgate development at western Queen Street, but the remainder needs priority action.
- + COVID-19 impacts and the ongoing challenges facing national brand retail meant a number of new vacant units appeared on these streets in 2020/21.
- + Cyclists have to dismount on Queen Street during daytime hours at present, reducing its attractiveness to sustainable transport modes across the city centre.
- + St Ebbes (south) and New Inn Hall Street (north) adjoin Queen Street with a mix of retail and hospitality businesses, and college frontages. These streets also have a national cycle route and significant disabled parking and cycle rack presence.
- + Proposals for the future of The Clarendon Centre will change its Queen Street and Shoe Lane, New Inn Hall Street frontages.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Significant investment in Queen Street's public realm as well as in New Inn Hall Street South will have a transformative effect on a key shopping street.
- There is also opportunity to redesign connective streets, such as St Ebbes and New Inn Hall Street South to improve the pedestrian experience in and around Queen Street and Bonn Square.
- Strengthen the involvement of the Westgate management team in the area around its main entrance, and especially on projects to enhance the use of Bonn Square.
- Explore options for cycle pathways and review the daytime cycling restrictions on Queen Street-and / or explore use of camera technology to trigger 'No Cycling' signs when pedestrian counts are high.
- Create a collective grouping of businesses in this sector of the city to help drive and resource initiatives to enhance its appeal.

## CHALLENGES TO DELIVERY

- + Disparate ownership making a collective plan for this location harder to achieve.
- + The national cycle route running along New Inn Hall Street and St Ebbes limits re-purposing options.
- + Development plans for Clarendon Shopping centre need to be taken into consideration on any re-thinking of New Inn Hall Street.



**FIGURE 7** Conflicts between buses, pedestrians and cyclists on Queen Street



**FIGURE 9** Seamless and flexible public realm outside a shopping centre. Southgate Centre, Bath.



**FIGURE 8** New Inn Hall Street



**FIGURE 10** A greened and pedestrianised through street, with places to walk, sit and play. Van Gogh Walk, London.

# BONN SQUARE

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## POTENTIAL

To enhance the use of Bonn Square. An historic city square and a core part of the city centre's public realm network, Bonn Square is considered underused. Centrally and strategically located in the city centre's commercial core, the square has the potential to become a highly activated, civic space.

## CONTEXT

- + Significant public realm improvements were made to Bonn Square were completed in 2008. This greatly enhanced the quality of the square.
- + However, centrally and strategically located, and as one of the city centre's few public spaces, Bonn Square is underutilised in terms of its potential as an active space for events and performances.
- + The square provides some limited opportunities for sitting but it is not of high quality and has the appearance of a somewhat 'left over' space.
- + The square has a history of requiring interventions against anti-social behaviour.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Develop an events strategy for Bonn Square that creates a cultural offering, especially if tied to a similar strategy for George Street / Gloucester Green.
- Explore the potential for flexible events and performance infrastructure embedded within the square, such as flexible seating, electricity connections, or stages.
- Strengthen the involvement of the Westgate management team in the area around its main entrance, and especially on projects to enhance the use of Bonn Square.
- Enhance the role of the space as spill-out from Westgate, to alleviate pedestrian pressure outside the shopping centre's entrance.

## CHALLENGES TO DELIVERY

- + The tendency for Bonn Square to attract anti-social behaviour is a consideration in any plans for that area, as is the need to manage impacts on neighbour businesses of events and performance there.
- + An increase in events and programming in the space will bring with it additional pressures on management, maintenance and safety.



FIGURE 11 Bonn Square and Queen Street



FIGURE 13 A mix of formal and informal performance infrastructure at Wembley, London



FIGURE 12 Bonn Square looking east



FIGURE 14 Leveraging levels to create interest and seating in Banyoles pedestrianised central square

## ST ALDATE'S, SPEEDWELL STREET & CONNECTING STREETS

### POTENTIAL

St Aldate's is a major entrance into the city centre. Reviewing the scale of its use by buses as part of the city centre-wide strategy, better strategic use of its connective streets, and by better separating vehicular and cycle traffic to make the street safer and more environmentally friendly would be a significant plus. Speedwell Street could be a valuable bus and coach hub with provision of suitable facilities subject to a review of its layout and the uses of its buildings.

### CONTEXT

- + Featuring Folly Bridge and Christ Church at one end and the Town Hall and the Museum of Oxford at the other, this sector is a popular tourist / visitor destination. It is also a significant bus drop off and pickup point, for tourist coaches at the southern end, and for city and county bus services at the north.
- + St. Aldate's experiences heavy footfall (especially from Christ Church tourists) yet its pavement spaces are narrow in places, traffic count is high and crossing points are limited. In addition, it is used heavily by cyclists but there are no cycle lanes, creating conflict with vehicles.
- + There is opportunity to reconsider important connective streets, such as Blue Boar Street and Pembroke Street, which would help to better connect St. Aldate's from east to west across the city centre.
- + Speedwell Street is already a bus hub and there are aspirations to increase its use by visitor coaches to alleviate pressure elsewhere.
- + Folly Bridge is under-utilised.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Explore options to reprioritise use by pedestrians and cyclists.
- Consider redesign at the Blue Boar Street and Pembroke Street junctions, focusing on how the pedestrian and cyclist experience can be improved for those going across the city centre – including better pedestrian signposting and legibility.
- Explore the creation of a new bus and coach hub on Speedwell Street with matching improvements in stopping, toilet and welcome facilities.
- Conduct a strategic review and develop a project plan for re-purposing of the unused / under-used buildings along Speedwell Street.

## CHALLENGES TO DELIVERY

- + Impact on bus users, especially those with limited mobility of any re-allocation of bus stops away from this central and popular location.
- + The potential for capacity issues if local and visitor bus services both use Speedwell Street.
- + Potential impact of anti-social behaviour on other uses, especially the visitor welcome.
- + Long term leases on the Speedwell Street buildings hamper re-purposing efforts.
- + Work is required on the look and the facilities to create a fitting 'Welcome to Oxford' at this location.



FIGURE 15 Speedwell Street



FIGURE 17 Mobility hub providing a modal interchange and an improved public realm. Lambeth, London



FIGURE 16 St Aldate's



FIGURE 18 Safe segregation and priority for pedestrians, cyclists and buses. Seattle, USA.

# HIGH STREET & CONNECTING STREETS

## POTENTIAL

This is one of our most significant streets in terms of heritage. A revitalised High Street would retain all of the famous character and history of the street while aiming to improve pedestrian experience, reconcile traffic conflict and enhance the offer of the street, and those adjoining it, through the extension of new uses such as outdoor cafés and pedestrian seating, and collective promotion of the businesses it has now and in the future.

## CONTEXT

- + The High Street currently offers a relatively poor pedestrian experience, where a wide road and in some places narrow pavements prioritise vehicles, including for loading, bus waiting etc. over pedestrian space.
- + There is a lack of green.
- + There is significant competition for space between cyclists and vehicle traffic, and the very limited number of cycle parking facilities, especially in the stretch east of King Edward Street which discourages cyclists from supporting its businesses.
- + Vehicular congestion (particularly buses) visually obstruct the beauty and impact of the street's architecture, detracting from its character and attractiveness.
- + Although High Street and its connecting streets have a strong mix of businesses there is no collective brand or promotion so this part of the city centre is less well promoted than others.
- + This is one of the areas of the city centre that has a cluster of vacant units, a number of them long-time empty.
- + Street lighting is limited on the south side of High Street (from Turl Street to Carfax), and on side streets, impacting the perception of safety for those using the area, especially in winter months.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Assess existing traffic uses and consider full redesign of High Street and its connecting streets.
- Audit High Street cycle parking and explore ways to increase capacity.
- Accepting that traffic issues are complex, explore a range of short-term enhancements including reducing traffic flow on side streets to increase the quality of the pedestrian experience, allow more landscaping of, and signposting on, side streets and to The Covered Market.
- Work with landlords, agents and businesses on a 'curation' strategy (as described in Project 3.3) to tackle the cluster of vacant units here, and inform future letting decisions.
- Strengthen connections with The Covered Market as an independent led 'market quarter' including the possibility that businesses could start up and grow in the Market and ultimately expand into neighbouring streets.
- Work with landlords and tenants to develop a brand and marketing strategy for this part of the city centre.
- Consult on and develop a lighting / street furniture / greening review and strategy in keeping with both the areas historic setting and its current business uses.

## CHALLENGES TO DELIVERY

- + High Street is a major public transport connector for the residential communities in East Oxford, so limiting space for buses would significantly impact on service provision.
- + The need to strike a balance between conservation of the historic setting and measures to support the business community, for example, on installation of additional lighting on High Street and King Edward Street.

- + Loss of income to Oxfordshire County Council and loss of facility for drivers in reducing / removing on-street parking at King Edward Street.
- + Mixed ownership of property in this area creating the potential for difficulties in agreeing a joined-up approach.



FIGURE 19 High Street



FIGURE 21 Safe segregation and priority for pedestrians, cyclists and buses. Berlin, Germany.



FIGURE 20 Turl Street



FIGURE 22 King Edward Street

# BROAD STREET

## POTENTIAL

With its history and concentration of attractive heritage buildings, Broad Street could be reconfigured to become a people-friendly civic space of international stature, and a destination for important city events.

## CONTEXT

- + This is an area of heritage significance with a number of key assets, but these strengths are not wholly maximised, and car and motor cycle parking intrudes on the setting of a number of its historic buildings.
- + The lack of authorised through traffic means that, prior to the 2021 temporary trial project, Broad Street largely functioned as an informal public space but the wide areas of carriageway, occupied by on-street parking / loading severely limits its potential.
- + Servicing, delivery and access needs compete with the potential to reduce traffic and vehicular movements.
- + Broad Street hosts a number of major events, including the Christmas Market, and there is a protocol in place to take consideration of their impact on residents, students and businesses.
- + It is a major east-west cycle route, with significant loading and disabled, motorcycle and cycle parking allocations, and also a sightseeing and campus-serving bus route.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Build on the lessons of the 2021, with a new experimental scheme in 2022, temporary trial part-pedestrianisation to create a more regular or permanent civic space at the western end of Broad Street, and extend the concept to the eastern end.
- Add, where possible, more street seating, canopies, greening, etc., and increase diversity in daytime use, including creating new performance and / or busking sites at times that don't conflict with the resident community.
- Add new, quality, weekday street trading pitches to tie in with the outside seating, while mindful of potential impact on the city's established markets, street trading offer and existing Broad Street businesses.
- Minimise street clutter, such as, redundant street furniture, disused phone boxes, signage and over-sized or misplaced A-boards.

## CHALLENGES TO DELIVERY

- + Protecting the Street's heritage assets and their setting must be a priority.
- + Removing on-street car parking will mean revenue loss for Oxfordshire County Council and loss of facility for drivers.
- + Residential accommodation / study rooms on both sides of the street are a consideration when planning uses, particularly, but not only, into the evening.

- + Access to Turl and Market Streets is key to retain, or establish alternative route(s).
- + Loading bays, disabled, motorcycle and cycle parking, and bus routes will need consideration in any re-purposing.
- + Programming of events here will need resourcing, and the implications of pedestrianisation on existing event income streams will need be factored in.



FIGURE 23 Broad Street as Broad Meadow, summer 2021



FIGURE 25 Broad Street: Artist's Impression



FIGURE 24 Broad Street



FIGURE 26 Regeneration of a historic square, preserving transit priority. Bigg Market, Newcastle.

# GEORGE STREET

## POTENTIAL

George Street has the mix of business types to be a key hospitality hub and, with Gloucester Green, part of a vibrant creative and cultural quarter for the city centre, linking via a re-thought New Inn Hall Street to Bonn Square. This could include encouraging food & beverage uses, night-time economy, leisure, festivals, performance and events, and markets. It is also possible that part of the street, especially the western end, could be re-purposed with a different use-cluster considered.

## CONTEXT

- + Hospitality and leisure businesses are the dominant types on George Street, but in recent years it has had a number of vacant units, and by Summer 2020 this reached concerning numbers, especially at the western end.
- + As a major bus and taxi route, with particularly narrow pavements in places, George Street is one of the city centre places with significant competition for space between its pedestrians, business and transport uses.
- + Sections of narrow pavements also limit scope for activation without re-purposing highway space.
- + The demise of Debenhams and landlord plans for that building's future need be factored in.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Support development of a creative and cultural quarter along with Gloucester Green and Bonn Square.
- Consider shared space surfacing on George Street to widen the effective pavement space.
- Explore, with bus companies and the highways authority, part-pedestrianisation options for George Street, to allow creation of further outside seating for businesses initiatives here.
- Explore options for a cycle pathway along George Street as part of a cross-city network.
- Find appropriate solutions for servicing and deliveries in keeping with proposals for creative, cultural and hospitality uses.
- Work with landlords to consider longer term re-imagining of uses for the vacant units cluster at George Street's western end, including re-purposing under used upper floors and encouraging meanwhile use while longer term plans come to fruition.

## CHALLENGES TO DELIVERY

- + Long term development proposals for some of the street's key buildings need be taken into consideration when considering proposed improvement initiatives.
  - + The role of George Street needs to be considered as part of the wider City Centre Public Realm & Movement Strategy to ensure a long term solution balances competing needs.
- + Re-routing buses and taxis to allow for outside seating for businesses impacts on service timings for buses, proximity to shopping streets for bus users, and journey times for taxis.
  - + The highways intervention to prevent right turns out of George Street heading north / west, and the drop bollard in Gloucester Green on the route north both limit alternative travel options for buses and taxis when George Street is closed.



FIGURE 27 George Street



FIGURE 29 Visitor and night time offer on a shared pedestrian and cyclist priority street. New Road, Brighton.



FIGURE 28 George Street part-pedestrianised, summer 2020



FIGURE 30 Temporary parklets seasonally animate the street. Waltham Forest, London.

# GLOUCESTER GREEN

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## POTENTIAL

Gloucester Green has the potential to be at the heart of an attractive and vibrant creative and cultural quarter for the city centre.

## CONTEXT

- + The presence in this sector of three theatres and a cinema plus its proximity to the other main public space, Bonn Square, has created momentum behind the idea of it being developed as a creative or cultural quarter.
- + Gloucester Green is one of the city centre's biggest public spaces and hosts Oxford's outdoor market as well as range of retail and hospitality businesses plus a sizeable and active resident community.
- + The market and the businesses that have premises around the square could work in a more co-ordinated way to the benefit of both.
- + This continues to be an area of city centre public realm that is underutilised.
- + The increase in delivery moped numbers in this area creating access and noise issues and impacting on other businesses and residents.
- + Waste storage from businesses and residential properties remains an issue that needs resolving in the interests of both the area's look and its environment.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Support development of a creative and cultural quarter with a unified 'brand' that would enhance the identity of Gloucester Green and support efforts to promote its businesses and activation projects.
- Work with landlords to develop a letting / leasing strategy for the Gloucester Green commercial units that connects and complements neighbouring George Street, the outdoor market and cultural quarter ethos.
- Develop a co-ordinated activation programme outside market times, tying in with a similar initiative for Bonn Square.
- Better engage the market with the local theatres group to enhance its offer with more arts & culture-based activity.
- Rationalise the bins and other street furniture to create a consistent look.
- Explore options for additional street seating, canopies and planting, and increase diversity in daytime use in and around Gloucester Green and the area adjacent to the bus and coach station.
- Connect the Gloucester Green market with the sustainability initiatives being led by The Covered Market to share the benefits of the funding and learning there.
- Work with partners to improve the Gloucester Green underground car park, and develop a strategic approach to making best use of this space.

## CHALLENGES TO DELIVERY

- + The prospect of long-term development proposals for some key buildings here have acted as a barrier to proposed improvement initiatives.
- + The presence of a busy taxi rank and the importance of Gloucester Street as a north-south cycle route are considerations for any initiatives here.

- + A balance needs to be struck between activation and the impact on the resident population here, especially when it comes to evenings.
- + This is an area where anti-social behaviour is an issue outside of the busiest times.



FIGURE 31 Gloucester Green



FIGURE 33 Gloucester Green: Artist's Impression



FIGURE 32 Gloucester Green market



FIGURE 34 Formal and flexible market spaces create a lasting and dynamic square. Torvehallerne, Copenhagen.

## ST GILES' & BEAUMONT STREET

### POTENTIAL

A reimagined and redesigned St Giles' as a world class public space while protecting its heritage assets and their setting, and retaining its important role as an access point to the city centre and the home of major events, but with reduced parking and drop off / pick up use and improved pedestrian and cyclists experience.

### CONTEXT

- + Both St Giles' and Beaumont Street are home to some of the city's most famous and important heritage buildings, and are a popular destination for museum, theatre, hotel and college visitors.
- + Large amounts of space are currently allocated to highway and on-street parking which is widely felt to be an unattractive and inefficient use of one of the city's most notable streetscapes.
- + The lower end of St. Giles' and Beaumont Street have congestion issues with visitor coaches, particularly in the summer months, and there is a significant conflict between pedestrians / cycles and large vehicles.
- + As a much-used route to the west of the city for those coming in from the north, the Beaumont Street junction and the street itself often experience traffic congestion.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Consider a full redesign that improves pedestrian and cyclist experience and creates new public space, e.g. by significantly reducing carriageway width and reallocating that space.
- Reduce on-street parking capacity in St Giles'.
- Continue the work being done to reduce the demands on St Giles' as a coach drop off / pick up location, initially by adding capacity elsewhere and longer term phasing out the facility here.
- Explore options for clear cycle pathways.
- Better connect the businesses along the western side of St Giles' to the city centre business community and / or with the cluster in Little Clarendon Street.
- Explore options for Beaumont Street to be part of the solution to bus / pedestrian conflict in other streets, especially George Street and Magdalen Street as part of the city centre movement and public realm framework.
- The city centre's only Shopmobility service is currently at the Westgate, severely limiting use of its facilities in the eastern part of the city centre. The space in the St Giles' / Beaumont Street area offers the potential to create an additional facility here.

## CHALLENGES TO DELIVERY

- + Delivering the vision for St Giles' would require a major consultation initiative with likely varying views on the best outcome and significant costs if a major re-purposing is required.
  - + Any changes need to take into consideration the requirement to host St Giles' Fair there every year.
  - + Removing on-street parking has an impact on county council budgets and on facility for car users.
- + There are a number of disabled parking spaces in St Giles' and Beaumont Street that need to be retained.
  - + Closing the St Giles' coach drop off zone has the potential to generate fly-use of Beaumont Street and resident streets and cause significant loss of amenity for the businesses there and for residents – this needs to be considered as part of Visitor Coach Strategy.



FIGURE 35 St Giles'



FIGURE 37 A world-class new public space. Place de la République, Paris.



FIGURE 36 The Ashmolean Museum, Beaumont Street



FIGURE 38 A wide boulevard with designated spaces for pedestrians, seating and planting, transit and cars. Passieg Sant Joan, Barcelona.

## WESTERN GATEWAYS: PARK END STREET / HYTHE BRIDGE STREET / FRIDESWIDE SQUARE / NEW ROAD

### POTENTIAL

Frideswide Square, Park End Street and Hythe Bridge Street to work efficiently as an attractive arrival point and gateway into the city centre, with new uses attracted to the vacant buildings that fit with that aspiration and complement those there currently. This sector needs to be integrated into the West End regeneration work, and become a place where the pedestrian and cyclist experience is enhanced and the waterway is better utilised.

### CONTEXT

- + This area is a major arrival point by rail, bus, car, bike and walking. It has had significant investment in the highway and public realm at Frideswide Square but that has not yet been carried on along routes beyond it into the city centre.
- + Frideswide Square, Park End Street and Hythe Bridge Street experience significant daily footfall and cycle traffic to and from the rail station.
- + It currently has a significant number of vacant units, the majority of which present in a less than positive way.
- + The area is home to many of the city centre's night-time venues, the majority of which have been under pressure due to COVID-19 restrictions. It is also home to a sizeable office worker community.
- + A number of university and college buildings are located here, and there are ongoing conversations about making further use of both the vacant units and under-used space to add to that holding.
- + The waterway access is under-utilised.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Redesign Park End Street and Hythe Bridge Street, building on pedestrian / cyclist improvements already achieved at Frideswide Square potentially including reducing the space allocated to vehicle traffic, and creating new cycle pathways linking up to George Street and New Road, as part of a key route from Oxford rail station.
- Improve waterway access.
- Further explore options to increase street level activation in Frideswide Square and along Park End Street and Hythe Bridge Street, increase activity in daytime uses, including new busking spots, better managed planting on the south side, and minimising street clutter, and improve visitor information and signage.
- Work with night-time venues as part of a wider strategy to enhance their role.
- Build on the masterplanning work for the area to tackle its vacant units cluster, as part of the 'Meanwhile in Oxfordshire...' project initially.

## CHALLENGES TO DELIVERY

- + The West End, Rail Station, Oxpens / Osney Mead and Nuffield plans all impact here. Co-ordinating the various major projects via a number of stakeholders with differing objectives is a key focus for this location.
- + The long timelines of developments here are delaying focus on getting the vacant

units back into use or at least improving how they look to the very significant numbers of people, many of them visitors to the city, who pass by every day.

- + The area is still subject to frequent traffic congestion with negative impacts on air quality, journey times and use by cyclists and pedestrians.



FIGURE 39 Frideswide Square



FIGURE 41 Generous space for pedestrians and spill outs meet a shared road surface for cars, buses and cyclists. Slovenska Boulevard, Ljubljana.



FIGURE 40 New Road



FIGURE 42 One-way public transport street, Preston, UK

# OXFORD CASTLE QUARTER

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## POTENTIAL

The Castle Quarter is an attractive, heritage rich location within some of Oxford's oldest buildings. It is an important visitor and leisure destination for the city, but, somewhat secluded on the edge of the city centre, there is a physical and perception barrier to drawing footfall to the area from the centre. Improved wayfinding and continued activation of the space will highlight its importance and uniqueness as a space.

## CONTEXT

- + The historic buildings of the Castle Quarter have been restored and architectural additions have been made. A new urban district has been created, offering hotels, restaurants and bars with spill out zones onto its semi-pedestrianised street.
- + Views of Oxford Castle Quarter are limited from the heart of the city centre by the county council building, which acts as a physical and perception barrier to footfall from that direction.
- + The Castle Quarter has, for some time, suffered from vacancies in many of its buildings.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- For Oxford Castle Quarter, the landlord strategy is to provide a broader mixed use site. The aim is to bring in competitive socialising concepts, tourist attractions and (in those spaces more suited to it) office space solutions alongside the existing hotel, bar and restaurant offer.
- Enhance the overall signage and wayfinding strategy for the city centre, providing a holistic view of Oxford's key visitor and leisure destinations - including the Castle Quarter - to enhance the area's visibility and legibility from within the city centre.
- Work with landowners and businesses to continue to create opportunities for activation and performance in the area, leveraging the area's historic setting to provide unique cultural experiences for locals and visitors alike.

## CHALLENGES TO DELIVERY

- + The heritage status, associated conservation issues and planning use allocations for Oxford Castle may impact on re-purposing of some of its building to alternative uses.
- + Limited parking and delivery options for local businesses and hotel visitors could create limitations on the ability to reconfigure streets and spaces.



FIGURE 43 Oxford Shakespeare Festival 2022 in the Castle Quarter



FIGURE 45 Installations and animations create a pull to the area, driving footfall and animation, London UK



FIGURE 44 New Road



FIGURE 46 Formal zones for spill out, planting, and movement zones in the historic Marais district. Rue du Tresor, Paris.

## OXPENS ROAD

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### POTENTIAL

This is a key street within the West End that will be delivering 12,400 new jobs by 2040 and around 1,000 homes to form a world-class mixed-use urban innovation district. Two key development sites (Oxpens and Osney Mead) will need to cross Oxpens Road to access the city centre. Developments here will need to be well connected by foot and bike. Investment in a street redesign and public realm improvements has the potential to help attract investment and enable successful integration with the city centre.

### CONTEXT

- + Currently a wide vehicle dominated internal distributor road with minimal crossing points, poor public realm for pedestrians and cyclists and lack of active frontage.
- + It is a major bus, car and taxi route currently but increased pedestrian numbers over time will require better access to the city centre.
- + The area is home to Oxford's popular but ageing ice rink and a major city centre car park. The ice rink requires considerable investment to continue to be fit for purpose.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Work with landowners, the county council and key stakeholders to develop a proposal as part of the public realm strategy within the West End Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that seeks to address these issues and allow better integration with the city centre.

## CHALLENGES TO DELIVERY

- + Long term development proposals for some of the area's key buildings and city movement projects e.g. Connecting Oxford need be taken into consideration when considering proposed improvement initiatives.
  - + The sheer number of vehicles, especially at key times, and access requirements make this challenging to solve.
- + At a time of budget challenges for both public and private sectors, aspirations for this area may be harder to achieve, especially with reference to the future of the ice rink.



FIGURE 47 Oxpens Road



FIGURE 49 Transport, cars, cyclists and pedestrians and ecology share space. Grey to Green Street, Sheffield.



FIGURE 48 Oxpens Road



FIGURE 50 Designated planting and cycle spaces green a wide boulevard. Malop Street, Australia.

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