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By email: planningpolicy@oxford.gov.uk

Dear Sirs

OXFORD CITY COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN REGULATION 19 PRE-SUBMISSION PUBLICATION CONSULTATION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Oxford Preservation Trust ("the Trust") is pleased to respond to Oxford City Council's ("the City Council") Regulation 19 Pre-submission Publication Local Plan ("the Local Plan") Consultation.
- 1.2 The Trust was established in 1927 as a charity and local amenity society with the principal aim of conserving and enhancing Oxford and its setting. It takes a forward thinking and positive approach to development, looking to influence change rather than stopping it, preserving the best of the old and encouraging the best of the new. It is committed to ensuring that Oxford can continue to flourish and prosper, whilst protecting its historic character and setting.
- 1.3 The Trust owns and looks after 1000 acres of land in and around Oxford making green space available for local people to benefit from and enjoy.
- 1.4 The Trust has detailed knowledge and expertise built up over a number of years so that it is legitimately recognised as a professional and experienced voice. It is able to speak with conviction on matters relating to landscape, views and the impact of development on the City of Oxford and its heritage, and on its green setting and surrounds.

2.0 GENERAL COMMENTS

- 2.1 The Trust has reviewed the Local Plan and its supporting documentation and evidence. The Trust congratulates the City Council for the amount of work that has been undertaken, however, the Trust's view is that the Plan as it currently stands has some fundamental flaws and must conclude that it is unsound. These flaws are capable of being remedied and the Trust has provided some suggestions for how this might be achieved.
- 2.2 There are elements of the evidence base and Plan that would benefit from redrafting (or completing) so as to ensure that the Plan conforms to national policy and so that the policies are justified and effective.



2.3 The intention to submit the Local Plan after 24 January 2019 – under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2018 – is noted and the comments set out hereunder reflect that intention.

2.4 Soundness is dealt with at paragraph 35 in the NPPF (2018). For completeness, that paragraph is reproduced below:

35. Local plans and spatial development strategies are examined to assess whether they have been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements, and whether they are sound. Plans are 'sound' if they are:
- a) **Positively prepared** – providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs¹⁹; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;
 - b) **Justified** – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;
 - c) **Effective** – deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and
 - d) **Consistent with national policy** – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in this Framework.

Approach to plan drafting and consultation

2.5 The Trust has some concerns about the general philosophy of policy drafting in the publication version of the Local Plan. There is a lack of clarity and precision in the policies, particularly those of the site allocations, which puts at risk the justification and effectiveness of the plan. These concerns will be detailed in the subsequent comments within this submission, but a potential reason for the lack of clarity and precision in the policy drafting is the decision taken by the City Council to move from an options consultation with reasonably vague alternatives, straight to a formal regulation 19 consultation releasing policies for the first time under the final consultation. This has meant that there has been little time for meaningful engagement with stakeholders over specific policy content and the proposed use of those policies.

2.6 A number of the policies appear to have been developed without proper consideration of how they will be used in decision making. A number of the policies are impractical to implement and/or enforce. It is the Trust's view that this will mean that there is too great a risk of inconsistent planning decisions which will leave the Local Plan vulnerable to challenge.

2.7 The Trust must express concern over the City Council's approach to consultation which has been inadequate. The Trust, and its members, have had great difficulty in working out how to cross reference between the seemingly endless lists of supporting documents. The Trust fully understands the need for this evidence, but this evidence should be explained and could easily be précised in the Local Plan. The

Trust has held a number of workshops to help members of the public to engage with the Local Plan in the absence of a comprehensive engagement strategy from the City Council.

- 2.8 A critical concern of the Trust is that the publication of some supporting evidence came after the consultation had begun (the High Buildings Study for example). Some evidence is also incomplete (i.e. the Conservation Area appraisals). During the consultation period it has become apparent that not all the evidence is available in the same place on the website. Generally, the process has been a considerable challenge. There is a very complex and wide range of issues, and there has been only a short period of time during the consultation to assess the evidence and policies being put forward by the City Council which are being seen here for the first time.

Context as set out in the plan

- 2.9 Oxford is an internationally city renowned for its excellence in academia and research; in science and innovation; and, in design and production. As acknowledged in the opening pages of the Local Plan, it also has a wealth of historic and architectural assets of national and international importance which contribute to the character of the whole city, and its setting. It is disappointing that the city's irreplaceable heritage and setting is not fully integrated into the shaping of all the vision, objectives and policies, though the Trust does recognise that there are policies attempting to conserve and enhance heritage assets and their setting,
- 2.10 The Trust is also concerned that the balance between the aspiration to grow the economy and provide for the identified housing need has not been effectively struck. There should be a greater consideration of opportunities for residential dwellings on some sites reserved for employment and also for more 'mixed' use development where employment and particularly retail in the city and district centres could be better planned side by side (or above) in a more sustainable way. Poorly sited employment opportunities and a lack of cohesive and sustainable community development will only be to the detriment of the health and well-being of people of the city and of its historic assets and setting.
- 2.11 The Trust has five key theme that is has tried to focus on in responding to the Local Plan, and considers that each could be elevated and given greater strength in the polices and should be a reoccurring theme woven through the entire plan. The themes are:

1. Local distinctiveness
2. Heritage
3. Heights and densification
4. Green setting
5. Tourism

Duty to Cooperate

- 2.12 The Trust acknowledges the work the Oxfordshire Growth Board has undertaken, particularly to engage with the challenge of housing needs across the county. However, the Trust wishes to express some frustration and disappointment that the component Local Authority's Local Plan timetables do not align and as a result, there is yet to be a very satisfactory conclusion for the reported unmet housing needs of the city. This will have a knock on effect for plans currently at examination (at the Vale of White Horse

and Cherwell) and another emerging Local Plan at South Oxfordshire. The Trust is very concerned that the lack of a holistic view and plan on these matters will create a piecemeal erosion of Oxford's character rather than a comprehensive management that could include well thought out and reasoned mitigation.

- 2.13 The Trust has a particular concern that there is a discrepancy between the number of homes identified in the Local Plan (including where provision has been accepted by neighbouring authorities) and the need identified in the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and the Local Plan makes no provision for this under allocation of homes to meet the identified needs:

Need: SHMA (mid-point):	28,000
Local Plan ('deliverable sites' & windfall):	8,620
Unmet need accepted by neighbours:	13,100
Potential increase at South Oxfordshire (in current draft plan)	1,200
Remainder:	5,080

- 2.14 The Trust is not convinced that the proposed 'Oxfordshire 2050: Joint Statutory Spatial Plan' (JSSP) will be able to engage with all the challenges created by the current misaligned Local Plans especially where the Green Belt should not be considered again in the short term (The JSSP is expected to be adopted by 2020) to ensure that it has some level of permanence, as explained in the NPPF at paragraph 136:

"...Strategic policies should establish the need for any changes to Green Belt boundaries, having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so they can endure beyond the plan period..."

- 2.15 The wider regional issues of how Oxford is part of the UK economy and the south east growth agenda, including the Oxford to Cambridge Arc, should be considered in both the City Local Plan and the JSSP and the Trust is looking forward to working constructively on these issues in due course.
- 2.16 On some more detailed matters the City Council has missed opportunities to work effectively with its neighbours on other cross border issues such as with the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Councils on conserving and enhance the important views of the city and its dreaming spires.

3.0 CHAPTER 1. SPATIAL STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Trust is pleased to see that ‘history’ and the ‘natural environment’ are seen as strengths of Oxford but is concerned that this is lost in the vision and not articulated as a common thread through the proposed policies. The Local Plan reads almost as though these key elements have been taken for granted and this risks an inertia that could mean the loss of some of the very reasons why people live in Oxford, and why so many businesses are attracted to, and invest in, the city. The vision articulates a sustainable way to live in the future but misses the intrinsic role that the city’s character and setting plays in this.
- 3.2 The Trust notes that tourism is identified as a key strength for Oxford. The Trust agrees with this. However, in the Trust’s view the Local Plan does not pay sufficient regard to managing the effects of tourism, or continuing to promote it in a sustainable way. This matter is expanded upon in the detailed comments submitted hereunder but, in short, the Trust considers that greater detail should be provided in the Local Plan to provide for tourism and to manage its effects, particularly on the built environment.
- 3.3 The Trust understands and supports the City Council’s approach to identifying a number of spatial ‘neighbourhood’ areas in the Local Plan. However, the Trust is not convinced by the articulation of the City Council’s strategies.
- 3.4 The Trust agrees with the observations and aspirations of paragraphs 1.4 to 1.6 for the city centre. An opportunity should be taken to plan in more detail for the city centre, and this the Trust provides more detail and ideas on in response to chapter nine.
- 3.5 The Trust is concerned about the inherent contradictions between the function of different areas and the Local Plan strategy. A particular case in point is paragraph 1.16 where the Blackbird Leys district centre and Cowley centre are shown as attractors, and yet the Local Plan still focuses on promoting travel to the city centre. There is an opportunity in the Plan to ‘spread the weight’ of destinations, to support traffic flow to enable more sustainable patterns of travel. An opportunity might be taken to promote more homes, and employment at, and within, the various district centres, so that not everyone is travelling to the same place to do their shopping and to go to work.
- 3.7 The Trust broadly supports the objectives of the Local Plan. In particular the Trust welcomes:
- A pleasant place to live, delivering housing with a mixed and balanced community
 - Protecting and enhancing Oxford’s green setting, open spaces and waterways
 - Enhancing Oxford’s unique built environment
- 3.8 The Trust would, however, welcome a more explicit recognition that the “unique” built environment is a result of its significant heritage value and the great care that has generally been taken over the years to plan appropriately to conserve and enhance this.

4.0 CHAPTER 2. BUILDING ON OXFORD’S ECONOMIC STRENGTHS AND ENSURING PROSPERITY AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

4.1 The Trust understands the City Council's aspirations for economic growth, as aligned with the other authorities in Oxfordshire and the Local Enterprise Partnership. However, the Trust is concerned that the Local Plan lacks ‘checks and balances’ for the scale of economic growth planned for. There is insufficient consideration of other constraints and needs in the city, and the Trust suggests that greater importance should be given to heritage matters, but also a better balance should be struck in planning for new homes on suitable sites. A particular example of a missed opportunity for new homes, in preference for economic growth, is the lack of homes planned in the city and neighbourhood centres. The Trust is of the view that this is necessary to create balanced communities across the city and to help to conserve and enhance its setting and its character.

POLICY E1: EMPLOYMENT SITES

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

4.2 The Trust is concerned that the Local Plan has too great a focus on employment land, and that the continued protection of so many sites is to the detriment of making available housing sites. The message that is regularly presented about the need for more homes in the city is that it is necessary to service the number of jobs. There is an opportunity for the City Council to work with its neighbours and spread out some of the employment need, in a similar way to how they are planning for housing, and thereby take back some of the housing need.

4.3 The Trust broadly accepts the approach to increase employment uses on existing sites where they are not feasible for other uses. However, the intensification of uses and the principle to increase densities through the proposed policy is not sufficiently balanced. There is insufficient regard paid to planning constraints, and the reasons why intensification might be inappropriate in the policy, and/or how this might be best mitigated. Specifically there needs to be defined criteria to ensure that the policy is fully effective and conforms to national policy, especially the provisions of sustainable development as described at paragraph 11 of the NPPF.

Suggested modification

4.4 To ensure that proposed policy E1 is fully effective and conforms with the premise of sustainable development it should be revised as follows (additions underlined):

Intensification of uses:

Planning permission will be granted for the intensification, modernisation and regeneration of any employment site if it can be demonstrated that the development:

i) allows for higher-density development (with more employment floorspace and jobs per hectare) that seeks to make the best and most efficient use of land; and

ii) protects areas or assets of particular importance including the natural environment and heritage assets and their setting and does not cause unacceptable environmental impacts and effects.

POLICY E2: TEACHING AND RESEARCH

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

- 4.5 The Trust is concerned that there is insufficient consideration of constraints in this policy. Whilst the desire to support teaching and research is understood, and supported by the Trust, the policy should include some balance to ensure that proposals consider planning constraints at the earliest opportunity.
- 4.6 A criterion should be included in policy E2 to ensure that the policy is fully effective and conforms to national policy, especially the provisions of sustainable development as described at paragraph 11 of the NPPF.

Suggested modification

- 4.7 To ensure that proposed policy E2 is fully effective and conforms to the premise of sustainable development the following paragraph should be included:

Planning permission will be granted for the redevelopment and intensification of the University and Hospital sites if it can be demonstrated that the development protects areas or assets of particular importance including the natural environment and heritage assets and their setting and does not cause unacceptable environmental impacts and effects.

5.0 CHAPTER 3. A PLEASANT PLACE TO LIVE, DELIVERING HOUSING WITH A MIXED AND BALANCED COMMUNITY

- 5.1 The Trust acknowledges that there is a significant need for new homes in Oxfordshire and particularly in the city. The Trust has some concerns about the assumptions and inputs into the Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the county. It accepts that this has been generally accepted as methodologically sound by other Local Plan inspectors and that a political decision has been made to sign up to the ‘Growth Deal’ to pursue these levels of growth.
- 5.2 The table at paragraph 3.11 demonstrates a particular concern of the Trust that the various Local Plan across Oxfordshire do not align. The timings of the Local Plans have been frustrating and lacked coordination. This has resulted in a potential under allocations of homes against the identified needs. This has the potential to perpetuate uncertainty about the location of development for the coming years, and put greater pressure on the historic and green setting of Oxford. With insufficient site allocations, ad-hoc development can continue to prevail and potentially happen in an uncoordinated and non-policy compliant way through planning appeals.
- 5.3 The Local Plan chapter three is critical for the whole of Oxfordshire. The Trust notes that much of the planning and more general political debate and argument over the last few years in Oxfordshire has focused on the capacity for housing development in Oxford and the potential amount of unmet housing need. As already detailed in these submissions, the Trust is concerned that the balance in the City Council’s strategy is tilted too far towards economic and employment growth at the cost of residential opportunities. Opportunities to create sustainable city centre mixed developments have been missed in the Local Plan and the Trust is not convinced that the City Council has done all it can to find all the suitable available and achievable development sites in the city. Those sites that have been identified and allocated for development – especially those within the Green Belt – have not gone through a sufficiently rigorous process and therefore the proposed policies appear unjustified. Moreover the lack of indicative development capacities associated with the site allocation policies renders these policies ineffective, and it is very difficult to tell whether the policies of chapter three can actually be delivered even if they were acceptable.

POLICY H1: THE SCALE OF NEW HOUSING PROVISION

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	No
Sound	No	Justified	No
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

- 5.4 There is a very acute need for new homes across Oxfordshire and particularly in the city. The Trust is keen to see the delivery of new homes which people can afford, to maintain a mixed and vibrant community of people in Oxford.
- 5.5 The Trust has little confidence in this policy. The site allocations in chapter nine fail to demonstrate if 8620 dwellings can be delivered. There are site allocations where any potential for development is severely restricted and there are others where higher densities might be acceptable. It is inappropriate to rely on the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) to demonstrate the potential

for development. This is partly due to it being a frustrating and very difficult exercise to have to continually cross-reference between so many documents in this consultation process in order to understand what might be being suggested. It is also the fact that the HELAA is meant as a tool as part of an iterative process which should have concluded in comprehensive policies that consider all the constraints and are tested against sustainability objectives.

5.6 The Trust is concerned that the Council’s capacity assessments have relied on a desire to maintain an unsustainably high level of employment land; have not taken sufficient account of constraints to development; and, have missed opportunities for appropriately higher densities and mixed development for homes above shops in the city and neighbourhood centres where it might be achievable.

Suggested modification

5.7 The Trust suggests that the HELAA evidence is reviewed to ensure that the capacity in the city for development is properly reflected in the policy. As the Trust cites regarding the Duty to Cooperate, the discrepancy between the unmet need and the number of homes planned should be explained – particularly to avoid uncertainty and an undue pressure on the green setting of Oxford. Finally the subsequent site allocation policies of the plan should identify an indicative capacity to demonstrate whether or not proposed policy H1 is actually deliverable.

POLICY H2: DELIVERING AFFORDABLE HOMES

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

5.8 The Trust strongly supports the need for genuinely affordable homes to be delivered in the city, however the complexity of this policy and its predecessor have led to limited number of actual affordable homes being built in the last three years (ONS, retrieved December 2018):

2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
166	20	60

Suggested modification

5.9 The Trust feels that the policy should be simplified and a more collaborative and coordinated approach taken working with developers to improve the delivery of Affordable Homes.

POLICY H12: HOMES FOR TRAVELLING COMMUNITIES

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	No
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

5.10 This policy, like others in the plan, lacks precision and identifies some potential constraints to development and not others. The constraints that are identified are common to most forms of development and it is noted that the supporting text states that proposals will be judged against the criteria of the policy “as well as all other relevant policies of the Plan.” However, the criteria have the potential to conflict, or not go as far as others policies in the plan, for example criterion d) omits the consideration of the setting of heritage assets:

“the development site is not a biodiversity site, scheduled monument, registered park and garden or public open space;”

5.11 The GTAA has identified that there is no need for Gypsy, Traveler and Travelling Showpeople accommodation, however, recent experience through the summer and autumn of 2018 has shown that there could be a need for a transit site. Travelling communities have been reduced to moving from one car park to the next with no formal location for them to use. There is a lack of positive planning in the Local Plan in engaging with this challenge of travelling communities moving through the city. A transit site should be allocated and managed, either within the city boundary or in partnership with the neighbouring authorities.

Suggested modification

5.12 The Trust believes that the City Council has two options to improve policy H12; a) to ensure that it is effective it must properly refer to other policies of the local plan, and b) to properly comply with national policy more detail should be added to the criteria.

5.13 An allocation should be made for a transit site.

POLICY H13: HOMES FOR BOAT DWELLERS

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	No
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

5.14 This policy suffers from the same drafting issues as policy H12, and it is not clear how it properly relates to other policies of the Local Plan. There is no reference to heritage assets or their setting in the policy or supporting text, and this selective approach to the consideration of constraints lacks precision and clarity.

5.15 The Trust is also concerned that this policy is focused on the ‘specialist need’ for boat dwellers. This approach undervalues the contribution that boats could provide for affordable accommodation. Appropriately sited and managed moorings could provide a real opportunity for people to live. The City Council should review the opportunities for a positive site allocation for the provision of moorings and facilities for boat dwellers.

Suggested modification

5.16 The Trust believes that the City Council has two options to improve policy H13; a) to ensure that it is effective it must properly refer to other policies of the local plan, and b) to properly comply with national policy more detail should be added to the criteria.

5.17 An allocation should be made for well-integrated, serviced and managed moorings

6.0 CHAPTER 4. MAKING WISE USE OF OUR RESOURCES AND SECURING A GOOD QUALITY LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

6.1 The Trust is keen to see that new development is designed and delivered in the most sustainable way possible. The Trust is of the view that collectively we should all be trying to plan for how future generations will use their homes and work places, and how they will move around. Local Plans play a key role in shaping that future and should strive to show real imagination and innovation.

POLICY RE1: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	Yes
		Compliant with national policy	No

6.2 The Trust is very supportive of the content of Policy RE1 and the direction it provides for future development. The Trust regrets that there is an omission regarding heritage assets and listed buildings and structures. This is of particular relevance as there is no ‘development management’ type policy for heritage assets and listed buildings elsewhere in the Local Plan. A particular example can be found at paragraph 4.5 of the Local Plan where shop fronts are considered, but there is no reference to the potential impact on Conservation Areas and their setting, for example, not to mention listed buildings and their shop fronts.

6.3 In accordance with paragraphs 193-196 of the NPPF, conserving and enhancing the significance of listed buildings should be an additional sustainable design and construction principle. This would ensure that both; appropriate protection is afforded to listed buildings; and, as part of the positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment required to be set out in plans by paragraph 185 of the NPPF.

Suggested modification

6.4 An additional criterion should be added to policy RE1, such as:

“Conserving and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, historic buildings and their setting.”

POLICY RE2: EFFICIENT USE OF LAND

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	Yes	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	Yes
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

6.5 The Trust supports the content of Policy RE2 and the focus on *appropriate* densities. Criterion b) that identifies the sensitivity of building heights and massing (a key element of understanding ‘setting’) must be remembered as a vital consideration in a balanced assessment of development proposals.

POLICY RE3: FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	No
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

6.6 The Trust is keenly aware of the risk of flooding and the potential this has to impact on peoples’ lives and on the built fabric and green infrastructure of Oxford. The majority of policy RE3 is appropriate and can be considered sound, however the reference to the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS) might require some review. The Trust does not consider the vague wording relating the OFAS scheme to be appropriate because they do not provide an appropriate level of clarity and certainty for applicants and decision takers. It should also be noted that the OFAS proposals are still under consideration through a protracted process that is not necessarily reaching an obvious conclusion, particularly over the deliverability of that scheme.

Suggested modification

6.7 To ensure policy RE3 is fully justified and effective it should be redrafted as follows (Underlined text is inserted and ~~struck through~~ is deleted):

Once the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS) has been implemented and the defended area is clearly identified ~~Where development proposals sites that are within the proposed defended area of the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS), which is intended to will provide protection up to the 1 in 100 year (1%) flood scenario, both~~ should assess the risk of flooding using the defended and undefended data. ~~may be taken into consideration.~~

POLICY RE7: MANAGING THE IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

6.8 The Trust is concerned that there is no reference to heritage or natural environmental assets in proposed policy RE7. The Trust considers that this is necessary to ensure the policy is effective but also so that the Local Plan is compliant with NPPF paragraph 193.

Suggested modification

6.9 To ensure that policy RE8 can be considered to be effective and consistent with national policy it should be amended as follows (additional words underlined):

Planning permission will only be granted for development that:

- a) ensures that the amenity of communities, occupiers and neighbours is protected; and*
- b) does not have unaddressed transport impacts affecting communities, occupiers, neighbours and the existing transport network; and*
- c) conserve or enhances biodiversity; and*
- d) conserves and enhances heritage assets and their setting; and*
- e) provides mitigation measures where necessary.*

POLICY RE8: NOISE AND VIBRATION

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

6.10 Noise and vibration have the potential to adversely impact heritage assets and their significance and setting. This is particularly the case when considering the impact that vibration might have on the fabric of heritage assets, but the appreciation of the setting of heritage assets, and their significance can be impacted by noise as much as it can be aesthetics.

6.11 The Trust is concerned that there is no reference to heritage assets in the proposed policy. The Trust considers that this is necessary to ensure the policy is effective but also so that the Local Plan is compliant with NPPF paragraph 193.

Suggested modification

6.12 To ensure that policy RE8 can be considered to be effective and consistent with national policy it should be amended as follows (additional words underlined):

Planning permission will only be granted for development proposals which manage noise and vibration to safeguard or improve amenity, the significance and setting of heritage assets as appropriate, health, and quality of life.

7.0 CHAPTER 5. PROTECTING AND ENHANCING OXFORD’S GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK

7.1 Chapter five of the Local Plan does not provide a strong and distinct local picture for green and blue infrastructure of Oxford. The policies and supporting text of this part of the Local Plan are generic and, in particular, do not pay sufficient regard to the green setting of Oxford, and its diverse species.

7.2 The Trust is not convinced that the policies are capable of being both scaled for smaller developments across the city and applied to larger major developments. It is difficult to see how genuine networks will be protected and enhanced, or how the wider landscape has been considered (including views).

POLICY G1: PROTECTION OF GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	No
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

7.3 The Trust strongly supports the protection of the existing green and blue infrastructure networks in the city and is pleased to see them recognised in the Local Plan. The green spaces of the city, and indeed those beyond its administrative boundaries, are a vital part of its setting, both in a heritage context, but also for the health and wellbeing of the City and its residents. However, the Trust has very serious concerns that policy G1 is not positively worded. Whilst the protection of assets is clear, there is no provision for green and blue infrastructure improvements and there is a lack of positive planning for identified needs. There is no strategy to improve or enhance areas of green space for biodiversity or recreation, and key amongst potential opportunities could be the beneficial use of the Green Belt. This is a missed opportunity in the Local Plan.

7.4 The “Green Infrastructure Study” and the “Opportunities to enhance the beneficial use of Green Belt land” in the evidence base are both noted, but the lack of a comprehensive green and blue infrastructure strategy to support the Local Plan is disappointing. Such a strategy would give the City Council the opportunity to maximise all opportunities presented by green spaces and the waterways; be that the value it could bring to leisure, tourism, environmental and biodiversity, public health and community engagement.

7.5 The Trust notes that there is a proposed policy - G9: New and enhanced green and blue infrastructure network, about which further comment is made later – it is assumed this was intended to articulate a positive strategy. Both proposed policies G1 and G9 fail to specifically identify opportunities for change and enhancement in the green and blue infrastructure networks of the city, instead both rely on a reactive and ‘development management’ style approach. Having criteria based management policies is important as part of a Local Plan but without overarching positive strategies they are ineffective.

7.6 The NPPF is clear at paragraph 20 that Local Plans should include policies to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment, and the latter need to ‘enhance’ is currently missing from the City Council’s Local Plan. The NPPF also promotes the *provision* of green infrastructure networks to promote healthy and safe communities (para. 91), to help to mitigate climate change (para. 150) and *enhancing* these networks (para. 171).

Suggested modification

- 7.7 A comprehensive strategy to protect and specifically *enhance* the Green and Blue Infrastructure Networks of the city should be developed by the City Council and committed to in policy G1.
- 7.8 To ensure that policy G1 can be considered to be positively worded, effective and consistent with national policy it should be amended as follows (additional words underlined and deleted ~~struck through~~):

Policy G1: ~~Protection of~~ The Green and Blue Infrastructure Network

Green and open spaces and waterways of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Network are protected for their social, environmental and economic functions and are defined on the Policies Map.

Opportunities should be taken, as part of development proposals, to contribute to and enhance the green and blue infrastructure networks as appropriate. Improving access to the networks to aid biodiversity and also people’s enjoyment is expected through development and the consideration of best practice guides is encouraged.

The City Council will work with partners including environmental trusts and landowners to develop and maintain a green and blue infrastructure strategy that will conserve and enhance these precious natural assets.

POLICY G2: PROTECTION OF BIODIVERSITY AND GEO-DIVERSITY

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	No
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

- 7.9 The Trust, as a land owner of significant areas of richly biodiverse land, is supportive of this policy and is committed to protecting biodiversity where it is able to do so. Policy G2 as drafted, however, is not positively worded, and it needs to be a more effective and active policy to promote biodiversity, and not just passively protecting what is already there.
- 7.10 The Trust identifies, in response to proposed policy G1, that the lack of a comprehensive strategy towards enhancing green infrastructure is a missed opportunity in the Local Plan, and does not entirely conform to national policy. The Trust makes the same observation about policy G2, in particular the NPPF at paragraph 72 sets out the scope for net environmental gains and specifically at para 118 it is stated that planning policies should:
 - a) *encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside*
- 7.11 The Trust supports the policy being related to biodiversity and species in general and not just designations. The Trust is the owner of important meadowland that has been managed in the same way

for hundreds of years and is classified as MG4a grassland (the *Dactylis* (Cocksfoot) subcommunity) under the National Vegetation Classification. With 25.6 species per square metre on average, this is the richest, most revered subcommunity of MG4. Such meadows have become increasingly rare and there are just 192 Hectares remaining nationally. Yet this meadowland is not covered by a biodiversity designation and could therefore be put at risk by a policy that sought only to protect already designated areas.

Suggested modification

7.12 A comprehensive strategy to protect and specifically *enhance* the biodiversity of the city should be developed by the City Council and committed to in policy G2.

POLICY G3: GREEN BELT

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	No
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

7.13 The Trust is not clear of the purpose of policy G3. The protection of the Green Belt, not least for its purpose in protecting the setting of Oxford, is consistent with national policy. Proposed policy G3 appears to be simply a repetition of that national policy. The exception to this is the reference to the Local Plan providing for development *in* the Green Belt. The Trust is not aware of any such provision for development in the Green Belt assuming that the reference is being made to those areas proposed for exclusion through the review of the Green Belt boundaries.

7.14 The findings of the evidence base study - *Identification of opportunities to enhance the beneficial use of Green Belt land* has not been put to good use in the Local Plan. Policy G3 is an opportunity to identify locations where the beneficial use of the Green Belt could be improved, particularly if areas of the Green Belt are to be reviewed, and lost, to development.

Suggested modification

7.15 The City Council should identify locations within the Green Belt that can be used for the public benefit. This detail can be included in the supporting text. Obligations sought as part of development on previous Green Belt land could be put towards projects that allow for better access or the preservation of biodiversity in the remaining Green Belt.

7.16 To ensure that policy G3 is a fully effective policy is should be revised as follows (additional words underlined and deleted ~~struck through~~):

Policy G3: Green Belt

This Local Plan provides for a review of Green Belt boundaries that will allow for a limited release of land for development.

~~*Save where otherwise provided for within this Local Plan, Proposals for development in the remaining Green Belt will be determined in accordance with national policy. Planning permission*~~

will not be granted for inappropriate development within the Green Belt, in accordance with national policy.

The City Council will work in partnership with stakeholders including landowners, to take opportunities to improve the beneficial uses of the Green Belt and will seek planning obligation from the proposed inset land to help to fund appropriate projects to offset the loss of that Green Belt land.

The Green Belt Boundary is defined on the Policies Map.

POLICY G8: PROTECTION OF EXISTING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE FEATURES

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

7.17 The Trust does not understand the role of policy G8 as it appears to have substantively the same function as policy G1. If policy G1 is amended as the Trust has suggested, then this policy has a clear function as the 'development management' style detailed policy.

7.18 The Trust considers that it is necessary in policy G8, as a detailed policy, to reference the importance of views and heritage significance and setting. Green Infrastructure plays a vital role in the setting of the whole of Oxford and a large number of its individual heritage assets. To ensure conformity with NPPF paragraphs 127, 134 and 189 this should be referred to in the proposed policy.

Suggested modification

7.19 As referred to in response to policy G1 a comprehensive strategy to protect and specifically *enhance* the Green and Blue Infrastructure Networks of the city should be developed by the City Council. Once this is set out in a strategic policy the detail of policies G8 and G9 can be better understood.

7.20 To ensure the setting of heritage assets is not overlooked in a Green Infrastructure context, the following addition (underlined) should be made to policy G8:

Planning permission will not be granted for development that results in the loss of green infrastructure features such as hedgerows, trees or woodland where this would have a significant adverse impact upon public amenity, the setting of heritage assets, or ecological interest. It must be demonstrated that their retention is not feasible and that their loss will be mitigated.

POLICY G9: NEW AND ENHANCED GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK FEATURES

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

7.21 The Trust has set out in response to policies G1 and G8 that the Local Plan lacks a positive and comprehensive strategy to enhance the green and blue infrastructure networks of the city. Policy G9 represents the final piece of the strategy, which is a justified policy, but lacks effectiveness because there is a lack of a parent, strategic, policy. If policy G1 is redrafted as the Trust has suggested and a comprehensive strategy is created that identifies places, and ways, proactively to improve the green and blue networks, then policy G9 provides a reactive tool to protect necessary assets as and when planning applications are submitted.

7.22 The proposed policy also lacks some precision and risks unintended consequences where it only refers to proposals that could affect existing green infrastructure features. Not all features may be known in advance and, indeed, there should be a desire to see new features created wherever practicable in new development.

Suggested modification

7.23 As referred to in response to policy G1 a comprehensive strategy to protect and specifically *enhance* the Green and Blue Infrastructure Networks of the city should be developed by the City Council. Once this is set out in a strategic policy the detail of policies G8 and G9 can be better understood.

7.24 To ensure the effectiveness of policy G9, the following addition (underlined) should be made to the policy:

The inclusion of new and appropriate green infrastructure will be encouraged with new development wherever practicable. Development proposals affecting existing Green Infrastructure features should demonstrate how these have been incorporated within the design of the new development where appropriate...*

**appropriate in this context means design, layout (including the setting of heritage assets) and species.*

8.0 CHAPTER 6. ENHANCING OXFORD'S HERITAGE AND CREATING HIGH QUALITY NEW DEVELOPMENT

- 8.1 The Trust has serious concerns about the structure and content of the Local Plan chapter six. The flaws in this chapter can only conclude as to render the plan unsound as due regard is not paid to a significant element of national policy. In responding to the Local Plan, the Trust has also been in discussion with Historic England.
- 8.2 There is no articulation, in this chapter, of a positive strategy for the historic environment, as required paragraph 185 of the NPPF, and there are no development management style policies, as might be expected to meet the requirements of NPPF para. 28, for:
- listed buildings;
 - conservation areas; and,
 - other heritage assets
- 8.3 Paragraph 31 of the NPPF requires the preparation and review of all policies to be underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence. With regard to 'Background Studies' that underpin this work on heritage and the historic environment, the Trust draws attention to its various requests for further work to be carried out in this regard in recent years. The Trust is disappointed to note that the only Background Study prepared for the plan is the High Buildings Study.
- 8.4 The Trust welcomes the High Buildings Study, however, it must be noted that it was published to coincide with this Plan's consultation and that no early drafts were made available prior to this. The Trust questions if it was available in time to inform Policy DH2. The Trust is concerned that it will not have been available when the allocation of development sites was being considered.
- 8.5 Oxford is one of the UKs most important historic cities as stated in the Foreword '*Oxford is a wonderful city with a beauty and a history that brings visitors here from all over the world.*' This Chapter on '*Enhancing Oxford's heritage and creating high quality new development*' tries to do the latter without an understanding of the intrinsic and positive part that the historic environment makes to this. This is clear in Paragraph 6.2 where there is no mention of the historic environment and historic setting. In essence, this is trying to achieve good quality design and placemaking disregarding Oxford's heritage and the historic environment. With the exception of high buildings and views, much of which is related to encouraging densification, it makes no attempt to articulate the positive role, or otherwise, that the historic environment has to make to Oxford, and its distinctiveness at an international, national and at a local level. The Trust therefore considers this chapter and policies relating to 'Enhancing Oxford's heritage,' as not sound.
- 8.6 The Trust notes that there is no reference made to the policies in the current Local Plan, to the National Heritage List for England, the Historic England Heritage at Risk Register, the local Historic Environment Record and the Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation, albeit the latter is now in need of updating. It makes scant mention of studies specific to Oxford such as the Oxford View Cones Study, the Heritage Plan, the Archaeological Action Plan, the "Character Assessment of Oxford in its Landscape Setting" and conservation area character appraisals.
- 8.7 The Trust is further concerned that there is a fundamental misunderstanding over the difference between townscape and historic setting, the latter which encompasses views.

POLICY DH1: HIGH QUALITY DESIGN AND PLACEMAKING

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

8.8 The Trust understands the need to promote high quality design and welcomes the inclusion of a policy that promotes it. However, the policy fails to clearly articulate and define what might be expected by applicants to demonstrate that their proposals are appropriately designed. The policy could be improved to give more precise guidance about how to provide ‘rationale’ for design, and the Trust draws particular attention to the omission of heritage setting.

8.9 NPPF paragraph 185 explains how a positive strategy for the historic environment (within a Local Plan) should take into account:

b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;

c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and

d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

8.10 The Trust is of the view that that link between design and heritage setting should be made explicit throughout the entire chapter, but also explicitly in proposed policy DH1.

Suggested modification

8.11 To ensure that proposed policy DH1 is effective and conforms to national policy it should be reviewed and revised to explain more clearly how applicants are expected to demonstrate how their proposals provide for high quality design. The Trust is not convinced that a ‘checklist’ is a sufficient tool to manage this process.

8.12 Specifically, the Trust consider it appropriate for the heritage policies to come first in this chapter, given the very special historical significance of the city of Oxford. Policy DH1 should also include a paragraph as follows:

The particular significance of the heritage value of the city of Oxford must be reflected in planning applications and their design. Applicants will be expected, as appropriate, to demonstrate how the materials, heights and massing of their proposals conserve and enhance heritage assets.

POLICY DH2: VIEWS AND BUILDING HEIGHTS

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	No
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

- 8.13 The Trust worked very closely with the city council, Historic England and other specialists to create the ‘Assessment of the Oxford View Cones report’ 2015. It is pleasing to see reference to the report within the Local Plan, but the Trust is concerned that the report is described as an ‘absolute’ and not an approach to assessment. The views of Oxford are experienced and enjoyed from a wide variety of places and not just the specific viewpoints highlighted from in the report. The report should be seen as a starting point, and all major development proposals should be cognisant of the potential impacts that might occur in any view. The report highlights some particularly important and sensitive views but should not be considered to be exhaustive. The Trust suggests that an update or addition to the View Cones study should be commissioned that includes the assessment of views from high points within the city and looking out from it. These elements of heritage setting should also be included in the proposed policy.
- 8.14 The Trust is concerned that the drafted wording for policy DH2 focuses on urban design and gives insufficient recognition to setting. The proposed criteria reference “design choice” and fail properly to consider the appreciation of setting and better revealing that significance. The Trust also suggests that the policy needs to be absolutely clear on the difference between ‘views’ and historic ‘setting.’
- 8.15 The City Council appears to be using the need to increase densities as a the main reason to review and amend its policy approach to high buildings and their role in preserving and enhancing the setting of the city centre’s heritage assets and their setting. The Trust is not convinced that the two are mutually exclusive and suggest that the City Council has not tested or promoted alternative approaches to increasing density. Put simply, increasing density does not necessarily mean building at height as there are other options, such as terracing, that should also be promoted.
- 8.16 The Trust is not convinced by the need to change the provisions of this policy from policy HE.9 (high building area) of the previous Local Plan (2001-2016). There does not appear to be any strong evidence for the need to change the policy, particularly regarding the Carfax Tower height restriction. Para 6.18 states that taller buildings *will* be possible, without sufficient evidence and assessment to support such a strong claim. The Trust considers that this statement should be revised to say it *may* be possible. Furthermore, the Trust consider it appropriate that development should only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where the need for it can be demonstrated to be in the public benefit.

Suggested modification

- 8.17 To ensure that proposed policy DH2 is fully justified and effective, the Trust suggest that the wording should be amended as follows (underlined text in addition and ~~struck through~~ deleted):

The City Council will seek to retain significant views ~~both~~ within Oxford, out from the city and into it from outside, in particular those that play a role in preserving and enhancing the significance and setting of ~~to and from~~ the historic skyline. Planning permission will not be granted for any building or structure that would harm the special significance of Oxford’s historic skyline.

Planning permission will be granted for developments that conserve and enhance the significance and setting of the special significance of Oxford's historic skyline, as appreciated within the city, outside it and looking outward from it. As part of this, proposals should demonstrate of appropriate height and of massing, ~~as demonstrated by~~ using the following criteria, all of which should be met...

The area within a 1,200 metre radius of Carfax tower (the Historic Core Area) contains all the buildings that comprise the historic skyline, so new developments that exceed 18.2 m (60 ft) in height or ordnance datum (height above sea level) 79.3 m (260 ft) (whichever is the lower) are likely to intrude into the skyline. Development above this height will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and should be limited in bulk and must be of the highest design quality. Applications for proposed development that exceeds that height should demonstrate a clear need for them and that there is a public benefit arising. proposals will also be required to provide extensive information so that the full impacts of any proposals can be understood and assessed, including...

POLICY DH3: DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	No
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

8.18 The Trust supports policy DH3 but feels that without complementary 'development management' policies for listed building and Conservation Areas it is unlikely to be fully effective, or compliant with the requirements of NPPF para. 28.

8.19 The Trust is also concerned that the role of 'setting' is under-represented in the policy and ought to be strengthened.

8.20 The proposed policy is also missing an element of national policy that explains how new development can help people's understanding of significance – development involving heritage assets and their setting can "better reveal their significance." This should also be positively reflected in the proposed policy.

Suggested modification

8.21 To ensure policy DH3 is complaint with national policy is should be accompanied by development management style policies – particularly for listed buildings and structures etc. and for Conservation Areas – and the plan should also include reference to Heritage at Risk, the Historic Environment Record and the Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation.

8.22 The Trust suggests that the wording of the policy should also be amended as follows (underlined text in addition and ~~struck through~~ deleted):

Planning permission will be granted for development that respects and draws inspiration from Oxford's unique historic environment (above and below ground), responding positively to the significance and setting of the character and distinctiveness of the heritage asset and locality. Proposals that better reveal the significance of heritage assets will be encouraged.

In all planning decisions affecting the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight will be given to the conservation of that asset (including its setting ~~where it contributes to significance~~).

POLICY DH4: ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

8.23 The Trust supports the need to plan appropriately to manage and preserve archaeological remains. However, there are some concerns about the drafting of the policy: First; the information requested should assess the significance of archaeological remains as well as the “character and extent” as required by paragraph 189 of the NPPF which directs local authorities to require an “...applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected...” and, second; the use of the word ‘generally’ in the opening paragraph is an unnecessary qualification a leads to a lack of precision and a level of ambiguity in the policy that is contrary to the NPPF at paragraph 16 that requires Local Plans to “...contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous...”

8.24 The Trust is of the view that there should be a clearer requirement to undertake the work outlined in the proposed policy, to ensure consistency with other policies in the Local Plan but also to ensure the policy is robust and effective.

Suggested modification

8.25 To ensure that proposed policy DH4 is fully effective and compliant with national policy it should be amended as follows (underlined text in addition and ~~struck through~~ deleted):

Within the City Centre Archaeological Area, on allocated sites where identified, or elsewhere where archaeological deposits and features are suspected to be present (including upstanding remains), applications should include sufficient information to define the significance, character and extent of such deposits so far as reasonably practical. This information should ~~generally~~ include...

POLICY DH5: LOCAL HERITAGE ASSETS

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	Yes	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	Yes
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

8.26 The Trust supports proposed policy DH5 and welcomes its inclusion in the Local Plan. Some commitment to continued monitoring and review of the Local List within the supporting text would help to make the policy robust and ensure that assets included in the list are conserved and enhanced as far as

possible. This will help to raise people’s awareness of assets on the list and how they can enjoy them as well as helping to preserve them.

POLICY DH6: SHOPFRONTS AND SIGNAGE

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

8.27 The Trust supports proposed policy DH6 but considers that, as drafted, it does not properly describe heritage assets and nor does it pay sufficient regard to heritage setting.

Suggested modification

8.28 To ensure that proposed policy DH4 is fully effective and compliant with national policy it should be amended as follows (underlined text in addition and ~~struck through~~ deleted):

Planning permission will only be granted for the display of an advertisement, shopfront, sign or canopy where the design, positioning, materials, colour, proportion and illumination are not detrimental to heritage assets, their significance and setting ~~assets with heritage significance~~ or visual or residential amenity, as demonstrated through the following criteria, all of which should be met:

a) the design responds to and positively contributes to the character and design of existing buildings and surroundings (including the significance and setting of heritage assets where appropriate); and...

9.0 CHAPTER 7. ENSURING EFFICIENT MOVEMENT INTO AND AROUND THE CITY

- 9.1 The Trust has considered this chapter in conjunction with the “Movement and Transportation” background paper, which contains much more detail. There is frequent reference to the role of the Highway Authority, Oxfordshire County Council, and its Oxford Transport Strategy (OTS) and Local Transport Plan (LTP4). These matters are understood, even though these other plans and strategies are not part of the statutory development plan for the city. The Trust also suggests that transport has a very real impact on land use and the built environment and therefore greater and more explicit engagement with the challenges identified would be welcomed in the Local Plan.
- 9.2 The City Council has invited the Trust to consider a joint study undertaken by the City and County Councils. This is a City Centre transport and public realm study undertaken by Phil Jones Associates. The Trust points out that this report has not been easily available on the City Council’s website, and is not obviously part of the evidence base for the Local Plan. The Trust also regrets that more has not been made of the recommendations within the Study, particularly regarding the public realm and increased permeability. The Trust would like to record that it does not support the suggestion that Holywell Street is used as a bus corridor.
- 9.3 The Trust welcomes and fully endorses the ‘principles’ set out in Plan paragraph 7.9 in their entirety. It is disappointing that some of the detail of the supporting text and principles have not found their way into policies. Indeed, a lot of the contents of this section are not specifically covered in the actual Policies M1 to M5.

PARAGRAPH 7.12: TOURIST COACHES

- 9.4 The Trust has some very great concerns about the lack of detail in the Plan regarding the management of tourist coaches. The Plan appears to be advocating continuation of the status quo, with dropping off places in the existing locations with coaches then required to go to an off-street location, currently provided for at Redbridge Park & Ride. Enforcement of the existing on-street stopping regulations is extremely difficult and not very effective. There are regularly large numbers of coaches stationary in locations such as St Giles with their engines and air-conditioning left running, resulting in obstruction of the carriageways and footways, unacceptable noise and emissions in the vicinity and a general degradation of the public realm.
- 9.5 The Trust sees this as a disappointing demonstration of the level of disregard for the historic environment shown in the Local Plan, and in ‘reality’ a lack of disregard for the city centre generally. It is unacceptable to have a coach park in St Giles and Beaumont Street and puts at risk the very attraction that the tourist from across the world comes to enjoy, not to mention the impact on all other users.
- 9.6 The Trust also notes that permission has recently been granted (18/01590/CT3) for a recycling operation at the Redbridge Park & Ride, which has already reduced the capacity for coaches to be parked at this location to 14 nominally available spaces.
- 9.7 It is acknowledged that transport matters are not within the remit of the City Council and are a County Council matter. Nevertheless the management of tourist coaches, particularly in Oxford where tourism is such an important influence, has very real land use implications. The Trust suggests that the City Council considers an ‘additional modification’ to the Local Plan that makes a commitment for them to work in collaboration with the County Council and other providers to manage better tourist coaches ‘drop off’ and parking. The Trust suggests that a reasonable alternative to consider could be the area in the area to the south of the city around Oxpens, or south of the Westgate shopping centre at Norfolk Street.

9.8 Whilst this is a matter of real concern and challenge for the city centre and the Trust is convinced that there is a better solution than the status quo, this is not considered to be a matter of soundness for the Local Plan. This should be an issue that the City Council considers taking forward as part of a city centre Area Action Plan that the Trust identifies as a positive and necessary opportunity in response to part of Chapter 9 below.

POLICY M1: PRIORITISING WALKING, CYCLING, AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

9.9 The Trust supports this policy and the aspiration to support and promote sustainable modes of transport. The Trust would like to suggest that improving pedestrian and cycle routes, in particular, will have an impact on the public realm and this will need to be carefully planned to ensure that the historic character of the Oxford is conserved and enhanced. The medieval street pattern of the city centre means that there is significant pressure on those streets from the number of pedestrians and cyclists and this needs to be sensitively managed with a well-designed and innovative public realm, suitable for all users.

9.10 Turning to public transport, the Trust understands that there is a necessity for the City Council to work in partnership with the County Council on transport matters, but considers that policy M1 as drafted is too passive and therefore not effective. There should be greater commitment from the City Council to work in partnership with the County to develop a strategy, especially to manage tourist coaches.

9.11 With particular reference to Park & Ride improvements, and new remote sites, the Trust is concerned that improvements to existing sites e.g. Redbridge, will be ignored. The County’s strategy for remote sites envisages probable closure of existing sites. There is a clear conflict with the City here, as the City owns some of the sites and may have other views. The Trust is not convinced that provision of new sites e.g. Lodge Hill, should automatically result in the closure of inner sites e.g. Redbridge, although their capacity could be reduced. The Trust would not however, at this time, suggest a change to the wording of the policy.

Suggested modification

9.12 To ensure that Policy M1 is a fully effective policy, under the sub-heading Public transport, it should be reworded as follows (underlined, is suggested as an addition to the policy and ~~struck through~~ to be deleted):

ii) supporting working in partnership with the County Council in their to develop a comprehensive new strategy for the management of both scheduled and tourist coaches entering and leaving the city;

POLICY M3: MOTOR VEHICLE PARKING

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

9.13 The Trust is supportive of the principle of car-free housing developments and they are certainly appropriate in much of the city centre. The Trust suggests that the restriction defined in the opening paragraph of M3 is too demanding for some locations in Oxford. Even if one lives less than 400 metres from a bus-stop or 800m from a shop, the Trust is concerned that many residents would still choose to own a car, both for journeys to work, school runs and other activities. This could lead to residents, and their visitors, trying to park within developments and on roads for which there is no, or inadequate, provision. The only thing worse in new developments than seeing a sea of cars in parking areas, is seeing cars parked on verges and open spaces and causing nuisance and obstruction. The same problems can arise with regard to the adequacy of parking standards applied where cars are to be permitted.

9.14 The Trust considers that the lack of any reference to public parking spaces, suggests that the draft policy is not effective. Previous City Council Local Plans have talked about there being no increase in the city centre. Para 7.32 covers this issue appropriately and the Trust considers that there should be a specific reference to it in Policy M3

9.15 The Trust notes the parking standards as proposed in Appendix 7.3, and considers these to be reasonable, but their impact, and how they are designed into a planning proposal, must be considered at the earliest possible opportunity if it is to be achieved sensitively.

9.16 The Trust notes that paragraph 7.31 appears to be the only place where the needs of people with disabilities, both in terms of their movement and for access and parking, is mentioned. The Trust would like to see a more explicit and positive approach to managing the needs of all parts of the community.

Suggested modification

9.17 To ensure that proposed policy M3 is effective the following paragraph should be included within it:

The numbers of off-street and on-street public parking spaces over the life of the Plan will be capped at 1942 and 255 respectively and that reductions will be achieved as other measures to reduce demand for the private car are implemented.

POLICY M4: PROVISION OF ELECTRIC CHARGING POINTS

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
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Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

9.18 The Trust supports the provisions of proposed policy M4 and the need to provide for a new generation of cars and advancing technologies. There is, however, a serious difficulty with this whole issue nationally, and collectively we need to achieve some standardisation of charging mechanisms quickly, otherwise many vehicle owners and buildings will end up with obsolete equipment very quickly. There is also a growing issue in relation to on-street charging points, where new appliances, with or without trailing cables, are obstructing footways and impacting on the historic character or areas and on the public realm.

9.19 The Trust is not aware of any difficulties with electric vehicle technologies, and specifically the impact on the public realm, in Oxford as yet, though it is aware of some concern over a pilot scheme which has yet to be agreed and implemented. The Trust considers it to be appropriate for the consequences of this policy to be fully considered and appropriately managed for it to be a fully effective policy.

Suggested modification

9.20 To ensure that proposed policy M4 is effective the following paragraph should be included within it:

The type of charging technology chosen should be carefully considered for its longevity and/or ability to be upgraded as necessary. This will be to ensure that the risk of unused or abandoned street furniture is avoided. The impact of charging points on the public realm; the ability of people to move around, and the impact on local character and heritage setting will need to be assessed and applicants should demonstrate that neither has been adversely affected nor undermined.

10.0 CHAPTER 8. PROVIDING COMMUNITIES WITH FACILITIES AND SERVICES AND ENSURING OXFORD IS A VIBRANT AND ENJOYABLE CITY TO LIVE IN AND VISIT

10.1 The Trust is concerned that there is a general lack of positive strategy in this chapter of the Local Plan. The challenges of maintaining and managing the city centre and challenges and opportunities presented by the large numbers of tourists that visit Oxford are all considered. However, the solution that the City Council proposes is a set of criteria based ‘development management’ style policies that react to proposed development rather than presenting a definite strategy that promotes vitality in the city centre and in tourism. Policies should be included in the Local Plan that identify a mix of proposed uses for spaces and building that make the best use of them, whilst conserving and enhance the very special and distinct character of Oxford.

POLICY V1: ENSURING THE VITALITY OF CENTRES

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	No
Sound	No	Justified	No
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

10.2 The Trust notes at paragraph 8.1 of the Local Plan that the City Council is committed to the “long term sustainability of the city centre.” This is a vision that is shared by the Trust and no doubt by most other residents, businesses and visitors to the city centre. The fact that the City Council consider that the city centre is performing strongly, as stated in paragraph 8.2, is also noted. It is important that this situation is nurtured and not taken for granted.

10.3 Policy V1 supports ‘town centre’ use developments including retail, leisure, entertainment, arts, culture and tourism in the city centre and this is supported and welcomed. The vitality of the city centre, and particularly the tourism economy, is inexorably linked to its historic fabric and its setting. It is understood that the proposed purpose of the policy is to safeguard retailing, but this should be balanced with the distinct local character of Oxford. Wording should be strengthened in the policy to reflect this matter and to make clear that the applicant is expected to demonstrate that their proposals are acceptable.

10.4 An additional matter that the Trust has been reflecting upon is the role that residents play in maintaining vibrancy and vitality in town and city centres. This too should be included in Policy V1. There is passing reference elsewhere in the plan to the sustainability of homes at the city, district and neighbourhood centres, but there is no positive and comprehensive strategy or support for them.

10.5 The Trust considers that the policy is unsound where it does not refer strongly enough to the distinct local character and heritage of the city centre and because it does not refer to the opportunity for residential development in the city, district and local centres. This is a matter identified in paragraph 118 of the NPPF:

*“Planning policies and decisions should:
d) promote and support the development... to meet identified needs for housing... [of] space above shops”*

Suggested modification

- 10.6 To ensure that Policy V1 is fully compliant with national policy and can be considered to effectively 'ensure the vitality of centres' it should also contain a reference to its distinct local character and also to the potential for residential development, particularly above the ground floor level, and/or away from the prime shopping frontages.
- 10.7 The following wording, underlined, is suggested as an addition to the policy and ~~struck through~~ to be deleted:

Planning permission will be granted for the development of town centre uses (retail, leisure, entertainment, office, arts, culture and tourism) and, where appropriate, (particularly above ground floor level and away from primary shopping frontages) residential development within the defined city, district and local centre boundaries. Proposals should demonstrate how development provided the use is appropriate to the scale and function of each centre and reflects its distinctive character. Particular attention should be paid by applicants to heritage assets and their setting in these centres.

- 10.8 The Trust also suggest that the City Council consider an 'additional modification' to the Local Plan, and adopt the full definition of "Main town centre uses" from the NPPF glossary. The City Council should consider this, or at least cross refer to it, to ensure full conformity with national policy.

POLICY V3: THE COVERED MARKET

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	Yes	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	Yes
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

- 10.9 The Trust is pleased to see a policy protecting the Covered Market. The Trust has worked hard in partnership with the City Council to help conserve and enhance the Covered Market for both its heritage value and its retail vitality. Such city centre facilities are vital in maintaining the range and diversity of businesses needed to maintain sustainable places and communities.

POLICY V5: SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	No
Sound	No	Justified	No
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

- 10.10 Turning specifically to the matter of tourism; the Trust has significant concerns that this has not been sufficiently engaged with in the Local Plan. Tourism is a vital part of the economy in Oxford. Data from Experience Oxfordshire tells us that each year, Oxford welcomes nearly 7 million visitors to the City of Oxford who spend over £830million in the economy and this supports over 10,500 jobs. This is

acknowledged in paragraph 8.12 of the Local Plan, but that acknowledgement appears to be as far as the City Council is willing to plan for its management.

- 10.11 Tourism has a number of facets that impact upon the built environment and the spaces around it, and as such is a legitimate matter for consideration in the Local Plan. Whilst there is little detail in the NPPF about how Local Plans should consider tourism as a topic or theme, it is clear that the economy, the historic environment as the very thing that tourists come to visit and experience, accommodation and transport are all planning matters that should be brought together in the Local Plan to create a coherent and positive strategy for tourism.
- 10.12 The medieval street pattern in the city’s historic core dictates that tourists, especially in large volume, create enormous pressure in these streets. This compromises the fabric of the streets, and the setting of a huge number of other, very significant, heritage assets. Better and more comprehensive management of tourists, how they arrive in and depart from the city, how they move about when they are here and where they go to, are vital to the preservation and enhancement of the heritage environment, and to maintaining and improving the economic benefits that these tourists bring.
- 10.13 Policy V5 is considered unsound, not because of its contents *per se* but, because it is not coupled with a positive strategy to manage and enhance tourism. Policy V5 is another example in the Local Plan of a ‘development management’ style, criteria-based policy that can be used to react to proposals but is ineffective as it is not balanced with proposals to allocate for tourist facilities and accommodation. The lack of policies or strategies to promote tourism makes this unjustified, because the City Council has identified the importance of the issue, but not planned appropriately to engage with it.

Suggested modification

- 10.14 The Trust recommends that the City Council includes a chapter in the Local Plan that provides a positive strategy to manage and enhance tourism in Oxford. This should include the identification of the needs for additional bed spaces and hotels and associated allocations. This could also identify a strategy for promoting and linking tourist destinations across the city to manage where tourist go, through public realm improvements, promoting regeneration where necessary together ensuring the future vitality of the tourist economy.
- 10.15 The Trust has also outlined in response to the Local Plan chapter 7 on transport, that there should also be a better plan to manage tourist coaches in the City. This is not just in terms of traffic impact, but also the impact that coaches have on the built and historic environment and how people move around the city, given that coaches are the arrival and departure points for many visitors to the city. This matter is also one that could be positively and effectively engaged with through a comprehensive tourism strategy.
- 10.16 A tourism strategy can be achieved by the City Council working in partnership with stakeholders such as Experience Oxfordshire, large and small hotelier groups, and significant retailers such as the Westgate Shopping Centre. This could be evolved into an Area Action Plan, certainly for the city centre, but this could also be considered for other relevant parts of the city.

POLICY V6: CULTURAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	No
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Sound	No	Justified	No
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

- 10.17 The Trust is encouraged to see that the City Council is attempting to engage with the challenge that is presented by the loss of pubs and other cultural places that add significantly to the vitality and sustainability of Oxford, its city and neighbourhood centres. However, the policy presented is a criteria based reaction to what others might propose, and there is little in the way of a positive strategy to encourage new proposals and where they might be most appropriate.
- 10.18 The Trust also notes that the Retail and Leisure Study that supports the Local Plan, and is the primary evidence for this chapter 8, predates the opening of the new Westgate Centre. The opening of so many new social venues will have had an effect on the city centre and these effects should be better understood and monitored to ensure that the plan remains justified and effective.
- 10.19 Without a clear and positive strategy, beyond merely permitting proposals that meet given criteria, policy V6 is ineffective in promoting a thriving and socially sustainable city. Also, in the face of the evidence that the cited facilities are under development pressure, a reactive policy is insufficient and not fully justified. The policy should be more positive about what can be achieved and where.

Suggested modification

- 10.20 As the Trust has proposed in response to policy V5 it is suggested that the City Council considers developing a strategy anchored in tourism, but that can encapsulate these “cultural and social activities” in order to maintain and enhance social and economic sustainability. This could be as part of a specific chapter in the Local Plan or as commitment to a further development plan document

11.0 CHAPTER 9. AREAS OF CHANGE AND SITE ALLOCATIONS

- 11.1 The Trust has fundamental concerns about the site allocation policies included in the Local Plan. In general they are not precise, provide little direction for what is expected and, as such, do not give confidence to the community, applicants or other stakeholders and respondents, over what can and will be delivered, or by when.
- 11.2 There are no indicative numbers or capacities quoted in the site allocation policies. This is particularly problematic when it comes to proposed insets from the Green Belt. As Inspector David Reed has explained in an interim letter to the Vale of White Horse District Council dated 30 October 2018, without a body of evidence to demonstrate that a certain quantum of development is achievable, proposed policies could be unjustified, and this would mean it is unlikely that exceptional circumstances can exist to change the Green Belt boundaries. The City Council should consider these words and revise its approach to the site allocation policies, and to the Green Belt boundary reviews. The principle to change the boundaries may well be reasonable but the process that the city has undertaken lacks robustness. The City Council's approach to reviewing the Green Belt boundaries is ineffective and the City Council should build a proper case and not rush the process if it is to ensure proper conformity with national policies.
- 11.3 The Trust also has particular concerns with the repeated phrase "Planning permission will not be granted for any other uses." This phrase is problematic because it restricts innovation and flexibility, particularly where there could be opportunities for more mixed uses on sites, and at a point where the approach to how people live their lives is rapidly changing. It is considered very unlikely that the City Council has considered every other conceivable alternative for development of each site and this clause cannot be justified. It is also suggested that this is generally what is implied by policy and as such is superfluous to requirement.

OXFORD CITY CENTRE

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	No
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

- 11.4 Paragraph 9.4 (context) creates some confusion for the City Council's vision for the city centre. There is overlap between the city centre and the "West End." It is also noted that the West End Area Action Plan covers areas of the city centre. A clearer vision of the city centre – separate from the West End – should be developed.
- 11.5 The Trust considers that the City Council should have specific policy for the City Centre, in the same way as for the other "areas of change." It could be that Policy V1 – as redrafted – is more appropriate in this chapter. It is also unusual and inappropriate that the City Council appears to be suggesting that a Conservation Area appraisal is a tool for creating a vision and managing change at paragraph 9.7:

"The Central Conservation Area Appraisal identifies opportunities to enhance the conservation in ways that would sustain the city's cultural, economic and social prosperity. Planning permission will only be granted for new development..."

11.6 The Trust suggests that a policy with a vision of the city centre that includes the potential for residential development, particularly above shops, is included in the Local Plan. The Trust also suggest that further work is done to identify opportunity sites in the city centre to ensure that its vibrancy and character is retained.

Suggested modification

11.7 To ensure that the Local Plan is compliant with national policy, and includes and positive strategy for the city centre, and for it to effectively engage with the opportunities and challenges described in the Oxford City Centre area of change paragraphs, the Trust suggests that the City Council adopts a policy that sets a framework for development in the city centre. The Trust suggests that a city centre Area Action Plan (AAP) would be appropriate. The City Council could commit to an AAP that covered matters such as tourism and coaches, the public realm and regeneration. There could be opportunities to allocate sites and buildings for refurbishment and redevelopment to help the mix of uses in the city centre to include residential opportunities.

11.8 Any policy, and subsequent AAP, for the city centre must be explicit that the significance and setting of heritage assets is vital to ensuring appropriate development of the historic city core. The setting of the dreaming spires, in particular, is appreciated in views in and out of the city, and across and from the within the city.

POLICY SP1: SITES IN THE WEST END

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

11.9 The defined area of this policy is not very clear. It would be beneficial to have a standalone map to make clear which sites are included in this policy and which are not. The City Council’s West End AAP gets scant mention in the supporting text to the policy, and the Trust considers a revision of this to be critical to support any development in the West End. The opening of the Westgate Shopping Centre, in particular, creates a need to review the AAP.

11.10 The Trust is also concerned that the Oxpens Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is now out-of-date. The SPD was adopted in 2013 and much has changed since then, and the publication of this Local Plan is, in itself, a material change in circumstance.

11.11 The Trust also notes that building heights are referenced in the supporting text to the policy at paragraph 9.12, but there is no reference to the same within the policy.

11.12 The management of buses and coaches in the West End is something of concern for the Trust. As referred to in the response to the City Centre it was suggested that tourist coaches could be better managed through an AAP, the same could be said of reviews to additional planning documents in the West End and specifically for the Railway Station. The Trust would wish to encourage the City Council to consider an ‘additional modification’ to policy SP1, with reference to the station that ‘...improves the interchange with local buses.’

Suggested modification

11.13 The Trust suggests that the policy commits the City Council to updating both the West End AAP and the Oxpens SPD. In addition for policy SP1 to be effective it should include the following text:

Planning permission will be granted for developments that demonstrate that they are capable of preserving and enhancing the significance and setting (including its green setting) of the special significance of Oxford's historic skyline, as appreciated within the city, outside it and looking outwards from it (in accordance with Policy DH2).

POLICY SP2: OSNEY MEAD

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

11.14 The Trust is particularly concerned about the potential impacts of development as a consequence of this policy. The site is in one of the main view cones looking from the western hills towards the city from Raleigh Park, Hinksey Hill and across to Boars Hill. The Trust accepts that there is currently built form on the site and as such there is already some impact on the views and the setting of Oxford. This opportunity should be taken improve this and to reveal better the significance of the relationship between Oxford and its green setting.

11.15 The Trust notes that building heights are referenced in the supporting text to the policy at paragraph 9.23, but there is no reference to the same within the policy. Indeed, there is the suggestion that "...negative impact on views into or out of the historic core must be avoided." The Trust is surprised that given the severity of the wording in the supporting text, the policy itself is much more equivocal.

11.16 It should also be noted that flood risk and mitigation on this site relies heavily on the implementation of the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS). The OFAS proposals are still under consideration through a protracted process that is not necessarily reaching an obvious conclusion, particularly over the deliverability of that scheme. Development of the site should be restricted or phased in a way that provides some time for OFAS to be implemented to ensure that there is no inappropriate development in the flood plain. The Trust is also concerned that the imperative to create a sustainable development at Osney Mead is potentially undermined by the choice of wording regarding the provision of a new cycle bridge. This, the Trust considers, is crucially important to making this site sustainable in transport terms.

Suggested modification

11.17 The Trust suggests that for policy SP2 to be effective:

- a) the text "*a new bridge should be created*" should be altered to "*a new bridge must be created*"; and,
- b) it should include the following text:

Once the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS) has been implemented and the defended area is clearly identified development proposals should assess the risk of flooding using the defended and undefended data. Until the implementation of the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme, no flood sensitive development shall be permitted on the site.

c) it should include the following text:

Planning permission will be granted for developments that demonstrate that they are capable of preserving and enhancing the significance and setting (including its green setting) of the special significance of Oxford's historic skyline, as appreciated within the city, outside it and looking outwards from it (in accordance with Policy DH2).

POLICY SP5: SUMMER FIELDS SCHOOL ATHLETICS TRACK

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

11.18 The Trust has some concerns that development on this site may have an adverse effect on the setting of Oxford and as such suggests that reference to building heights and heritage setting is of value. This site is visible in Oxford's green setting, Green Belt and the Cherwell Valley. What is built here will effect views across from the River Cherwell and Marston fields. This is an example of a location that might be overlooked for such an assessment because it is not within a 'view cone,' but that does not mean that views into or out of the city, and the green setting of the city, are necessarily unaffected.

Suggested modification

11.19 The Trust suggests that for policy SP5 to be effective it should include the following text:

Planning permission will be granted for developments that demonstrate that they are capable of preserving and enhancing the significance and setting (including its green setting) of the special significance of Oxford's historic skyline, as appreciated within the city, outside it and looking outwards from it (in accordance with Policy DH2).

POLICY SP6: DIAMOND PLACE AND EWERT HOUSE

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

11.20 The Trust has some concerns that development on this site may have an adverse effect on the views and as such suggests that reference to building heights and heritage/green setting is of value. This site is visible in Oxford's green setting, the 'green fingers' that penetrate the city's urban form, and the

Cherwell Valley. This is an example of a location that might be overlooked for such an assessment because it is not within a 'view cone,' but that does not mean that views into or out of the city, and the green setting of the city, are necessarily unaffected.

Suggested modification

11.21 The Trust suggests that for policy SP5 to be effective it should include the following text:

Planning permission will be granted for developments that demonstrate that they are capable of preserving and enhancing the significance and setting (including its green setting) of the special significance of Oxford's historic skyline, as appreciated within the city, outside it and from it looking outwards (in accordance with Policy DH2).

POLICY SP7: 276 BANBURY ROAD

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

11.20 The Trust has some concerns that development on this site may have an adverse effect on the views and as such suggests that reference to building heights and heritage/green setting is of value. This site is visible in Oxford's green setting, the 'green fingers' that penetrate the city's urban form, and the Cherwell Valley. This is an example of a location that might be overlooked for such an assessment because it is not within a 'view cone,' but that does not mean that views into or out of the city, and the green setting of the city, are necessarily unaffected.

Suggested modification

11.21 The Trust suggests that for policy SP7 to be effective it should include the following text:

Planning permission will be granted for developments that demonstrate that they are capable of preserving and enhancing the significance and setting (including its green setting) of the special significance of Oxford's historic skyline, as appreciated within the city, outside it and looking outwards from it (in accordance with Policy DH2).

POLICY SP15: KASSAM STADIUM SITES

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

11.22 The Trust is particularly concerned that this policy makes no reference to the Grade II listed Minchery Farmhouse that is on the site. This farmhouse is in a poor state of repair and should be included in the Heritage at Risk register. It should be included in the policy; applicants should be required to conserve and enhance the building and look to bring it back into a stable, if not viable, state.

11.23 The Trust notes that there is reference to improving public transport in the proposed policy. This is very difficult and very expensive on match days due to the peak demand created. Having a rail option would help disperse crowds. Stricter conditions specifying enhanced bus services that must be provided on match days should have been a condition when the stadium was first approved. Therefore the Trust suggests that something stronger along these lines should be expected with future development. It is not clear if the future of the sites has been fully assessed, for example the implication of Oxford United achieving footballing success at the top of the championship and seeking to expand capacity.

Suggested modification

11.24 The Trust suggests that for policy SP15 to be effective and compliant with national policy, it should include the following text:

a) To secure the preservation of the listed building on site:

Applicants will be expected to demonstrate how development will seek to conserve and enhance the Grade II listed Minchery Farmhouse. The register the City Council will work with applicants and other relevant stakeholders to consider some kind of enabling development that secures the sustainable future of the farmhouse.

b) To provide confidence that future public transport provision can be improved (underlined, is suggested as an addition to the policy and ~~struck through~~ to be deleted):

As a condition to development the applicant, City and County Councils and other relevant stakeholders will work together to ensure that access to the site by public transport and other sustainable modes of transport should will be improved where practicable. There should be no increase in parking.

POLICY SP17: GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS AND HARCOURT HOUSE

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

11.25 The Trust is pleased to see reference to the two Conservation Areas in the policy, however, the Trust has some concerns that proper reference is not made to ‘conserving and enhancing’ heritage assets and that development on this site may have an adverse effect on the views and as such suggests that reference to building heights and heritage setting is of value.

Suggested modification

11.26 The Trust suggests that for policy SP17 to be effective and compliant with national policy it should include the following text (additional text underlined and deleted ~~struck through~~):

Development should ~~not have an adverse impact upon~~ conserve and enhance the significance and setting of Headington Hill and the St Clement’s and Iffley Road Conservation Areas.

Planning permission will be granted for developments that demonstrate that they are capable of preserving and enhancing the significance and setting (including its green setting) of the special significance of Oxford's historic skyline, as appreciated within the city, outside it and looking outwards from it (in accordance with Policy DH2).

Development should include a footway along the site frontage and a pedestrian crossing to connect with the existing footway network on the western side of Marston Road...

POLICY SP18: HEADINGTON HILL HALL AND CLIVE BOOTH STUDENT VILLAGE

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

11.27 The Trust is pleased to see reference to the two Conservation Areas in the policy, however, the Trust has some concerns that proper reference is not made to ‘conserving and enhancing’ heritage assets and that development on this site may have an adverse effect on the views and as such suggests that reference to building heights and heritage setting is of value.

11.28 The Trust is also concerned that the current proposals for the site represent an over intensification of the site and as such would have significant adverse impacts on the Conservation Areas and the views into and out of the city. This is an example of a site policy where it would be of particular value to cite an indicative capacity because the scale of development is such a sensitive matter. Solutions to constraints can be identified at an earlier stage if all parties know what might be achievable on the site.

Suggested modification

11.29 The Trust suggests that for policy SP18 to be effective and compliant with national policy the City Council should consider providing an indicative capacity for the site and the policy should include the following text (additional text underlined and deleted ~~struck through~~):

Development should ~~not have an adverse impact upon~~ conserve and enhance the significance and setting of Headington Hill and the St Clement's and Iffley Road Conservation Areas.

Planning permission will be granted for developments that demonstrate that they are capable of preserving and enhancing the significance and setting (including its green setting) of the special significance of Oxford's historic skyline, as appreciated within the city, outside it and looking outwards from it (in accordance with Policy DH2).

SITES RELEASED FROM GREEN BELT

11.30 The following paragraphs relate to each of the proposed allocations SP24 to SP31. The Trust is aware that the Oxfordshire authorities are committed to providing as significant number of new homes over the coming years. The identified needs that have been accepted through other authorities Local Plan examinations have put enormous pressure on the Green Belt, and on the City Council to demonstrate

that it has left “no stone unturned” in the search for suitable housing development sites. The Trust also acknowledges that through the production of a Local Plan the boundaries of the Green Belt can be reviewed in exceptional circumstances. The Trust is not against the principle of reviewing Green Belt boundaries where it can be properly demonstrated that those exceptional circumstances exist, and the suggested changes are appropriate, including that the changes have clearly defensible boundaries and changes can endure, providing permanence beyond the plan period.

11.31 The Trust has highlighted, in response to the Duty to Cooperate, concerns about the misaligned Local Plan timetables in Oxfordshire, and the effect this is having on both the unmet need and the piecemeal approach to planning for change in the Green Belt. This is an unsatisfactory situation, but it is unclear how this can be remedied in the current system of separate Local Plans. It is hoped that the joint Oxfordshire Plan might provide some hope of a more coordinated development planning.

11.32 Turning specifically to the exceptional circumstances for the Green Belt review in the Oxford Local Plan; the Trust is not convinced of the robustness of the case presented. The local plan does not include the exceptional circumstances, however these are explained in the Green Belt background paper. One of the exceptional arguments given is for “*sustainable patterns of growth*.” There are two issues with this as an exceptional circumstance; firstly as also explained in the background paper, exceptional circumstances must be just that, exceptional, and as defined in case law they should be more than just good planning principles; and secondly the NPPF at paragraph 11 defines the Green Belt as an unsustainable location for development. This tension is not engaged with in the background paper or the Local Plan.

11.33 The Trust is not convinced that geographical proximity can be considered as a proxy for sustainability. The location of development requires a coordinated approach including improved public transport and pedestrian and cycle routes. This should be reflected in the site policies and include reference to other developments being planned just across the border in neighbouring authorities.

11.34 Finally, the Trust considers that the lack of indicative capacities in the site allocation policies, specifically on those sites proposed to be inset from the Green Belt, but also elsewhere, creates a lack of certainty. The Trust questions whether there can there be sufficient confidence that that the land is ‘worth’ removing from the Green Belt. The Trust also considers that without indicative capacities across the site allocation policies, there will be increased pressure put upon the Green Belt for allocated development to be delivered at inappropriate densities, or from ad-hoc applications, or through neighbouring authorities adoptions and potential allocations, all unknown and contrary to a plan led planning system.

11.35 The Trust also has some site specific concerns that are dealt with hereunder.

POLICY SP24: MARSTON PADDOCK

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	No
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

11.36 The Trust has concerns about the City Council’s approach to identifying this site, and the drafting of the policy.

Suggested modification

11.37 The exceptional circumstances should be better defined and an indicative capacity should be included within policy SP24 as explained through the Trust's submission, paragraphs 11.30 – 11.34.

POLICY SP25: ST FRIDESWIDE FARM

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	No
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

11.38 The Trust has concerns about the City Council's approach to identifying this site, and the drafting of the policy. The Trust welcomes the recognition that the site is part of a wider development opportunity being pursued through the Cherwell Local Plan. If this site is to be considered the Trust suggests that the recognition of the adjoining development should be strengthened to commit to some form of jointly prepared masterplan to ensure that the cumulative effect of development is understood, the desired connectivity is considered and any necessary proportion of compensatory improvements is balanced to the loss of Green Belt land.

11.39 The Trust also suggests that, in the event that sites are not developed in Cherwell District the suitability of this site for consideration for development is reviewed.

Suggested modification

11.40 The exceptional circumstances should be better defined and an indicative capacity should be included within policy SP25 as explained through the Trust's submission, paragraphs 11.30 – 11.34. The policy should also include the commitment to a joint masterplan with adjoining development sites in Cherwell District, and a review mechanism in the event that those adjacent sites do not come forward for development.

POLICY SP26: HILL VIEW FARM

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	No
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

11.41 The Trust has significant concerns about the City Council's approach to identifying this site. Setting aside the Trust's broad concerns about the poorly defined exceptional circumstances, there do not appear to be defensible and clearly identifiable boundaries for this site and also the adjacent site land west of Mill Lane.

Suggested modification

11.42 The exceptional circumstances should be better defined and an indicative capacity should be included within policy SP26 as explained through the Trust's submission, paragraphs 11.30 – 11.34. Proper identifiable and defensible boundaries should be selected for the site, if these cannot be found, the site should not be allocated for development.

POLICY SP27: LAND WEST OF MILL LANE

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	No
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

11.43 The Trust has significant concerns about the City Council's approach to identifying this site. Setting aside the Trust's broad concerns about the poorly defined exceptional circumstances, there do not appear to be defensible and clearly identifiable boundaries for this site and also the adjacent site Hill View Farm.

Suggested modification

11.44 Within policy SP27 as explained through the Trust's submission, paragraphs 11.30 – 11.34. Proper identifiable and defensible boundaries should be selected for the site, if these cannot be found, the site should not be allocated for development.

POLICY SP28: PARK FARM

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	No
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

11.45 The Trust has some concerns about the City Council's approach to identifying this site, and the drafting of the policy.

Suggested modification

11.46 The exceptional circumstances should be better defined and an indicative capacity should be included within policy SP28 as explained through the Trust's submission, paragraphs 11.30 – 11.34.

POLICY SP29: PEAR TREE FARM

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	No

Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

11.47 The Trust has concerns about the City Council's approach to identifying this site, and the drafting of the policy. The Trust welcomes the recognition that the site is part of a wider development opportunity being pursued through the Cherwell Local Plan. The Trust suggests that the recognition of the adjoining development should be strengthened to commit to some form of jointly prepared masterplan to ensure that the cumulative effect of development is understood, the desired connectivity is achieved and the necessary proportion of compensatory improvements is balanced to the loss of Green Belt land.

11.48 The Trust also suggests that, in the event that sites are not developed in Cherwell District the suitability of this site for development is reviewed.

Suggested modification

11.49 The exceptional circumstances should be better defined and an indicative capacity should be included within policy SP29 as explained through the Trust's submission, paragraphs 11.30 – 11.34. The policy should also include the commitment to a joint masterplan with adjoining development sites in Cherwell District, and a review mechanism in the event that those adjacent sites do not come forward for development.

POLICY SP30: LAND EAST OF REDBRIDGE PARK & RIDE

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	No
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

11.50 The Trust has concerns about the City Council's approach to identifying this site, and the drafting of the policy.

Suggested modification

11.51 The exceptional circumstances should be better defined and an indicative capacity should be included within policy SP30 as explained through the Trust's submission, paragraphs 11.30 – 11.34.

POLICY SP33: BERTIE PLACE RECREATION GROUND AND LAND BEHIND WYTHAM STREET

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

11.52 The Trust is concerned about the transport impacts of this proposed allocation. Not only does it impact on the National Cycle Network, the junction of Bertie Place with the Old Abingdon Road is very

awkward. Because of its proximity to the junction with the Abingdon Road, traffic is frequently queued across it and the Trust is concerned that it will have a poor safety record as the layout, which includes a bus lane, can be very confusing.

Suggested modification

11.53 The Trust suggests that for policy SP33 to be effective it should include the following text to provide confidence that future transport management can be improved (underlined, is suggested as an addition to the policy):

Planning permission will be granted for residential development (Plot A). A comprehensive transport management plan, including a vehicular turning and dropping off area, should be agreed, in advance of planning consent, with the City and County Councils and the outputs provided within the site.

POLICY SP34: CANALSIDE LAND

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

11.54 The Trust is pleased to see reference to the Conservation Area and St Barnabas Church in the policy, however, the Trust considers that there is not the appropriate reference to conserving and enhancing heritage assets. The Trust further notes that the site is within the historic core, and has some concerns that development on this site may have an adverse effect on the views and as such suggests that reference to building heights and heritage setting is of value.

Suggested modification

11.55 The Trust suggests that for policy SP34 to be effective, and compliant with national policy it should include the following text (additional text underlined and deleted ~~struck through~~):

~~Careful design must ensure that~~ Development proposals must demonstrate how they will conserve and enhance the significance and setting contribute towards the character of the Central Conservation Area and enhance St Barnabas Church and its setting. This will include an assessment of heritage impact and a quality, carefully designed, development proposal.

Planning permission will be granted for developments that demonstrate that they are capable of preserving and enhancing the significance and setting (including its green setting) of the special significance of Oxford's historic skyline, as appreciated within the city, outside it and looking outwards from it (in accordance with Policy DH2).

A planning application must be accompanied by a site-specific assessment for flood risks...

POLICY SP35: COURT PLACE GARDENS

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

11.56 The Trust is pleased to see reference to the listed structure of Court Place in the policy, however, the Trust notes that the site is surrounded by a number of other listed buildings and structures including the Grade 1 listed Norman Church and is adjacent to the Iffley Road Conservation Area. These other heritage assets should be referenced in the policy to ensure its effectiveness.

Suggested modification

11.57 The Trust suggests that for policy SP35 to be effective it should include the following text to provide confidence that heritage constraints and opportunities can be appropriately engaged with (underlined, is suggested as an addition to the policy):

Through the redevelopment of the site it must be demonstrated that the new design will have a positive effect on the setting of the Grade II listed Court Place building compared to the existing development. Proposals for the site should also demonstrate, as appropriate, conservation and enhancement of the significance and setting of other nearby listed buildings including the Grade I listed church and the adjacent Iffley Road Conservation Area.

POLICY SP37: FACULTY OF MUSIC, ST ALDATES

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

11.58 The Trust is pleased to see reference to the Conservation Area and Christ Church in the supporting text and to some extent in the policy. The Trust, however, is concerned that the proper reference to conservation and preservation is not made to ensure compliance with national policy. Furthermore the Trust notes that the site is within the historic core and will sit in front of the cathedral in views from the west. It has some concerns that development on this site may have an adverse effect on this setting and views and suggests that reference to building heights and heritage setting is of value.

Suggested modification

11.59 The Trust suggests that for policy SP37 to be effective, and compliant with national policy it should include the following text (additional text underlined and deleted ~~struck through~~):

~~Careful design must ensure that Development proposals~~ must demonstrate how they will conserve and enhance the significance and setting contribute towards the character of the Central Conservation Area and enhance nearby listed buildings (in particular Christ Church) and its setting. This will include an assessment of heritage impact and a quality, carefully designed, development proposal.

Planning permission will be granted for developments that demonstrate that they are capable of preserving and enhancing the significance and setting (including its green setting) of the special significance of Oxford's historic skyline, as appreciated within the city, outside it and looking outwards from it (in accordance with Policy DH2).

POLICY SP39: FORMER IFFLEY MEAD PLAYING FIELDS

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

11.60 The site is adjacent to the Iffley Road Conservation Area and the Trust suggests that this should be referenced in Policy SP39

Suggested modification

11.61 The Trust suggests that for policy SP39 to be effective it should include the following text:

Proposals for the site should demonstrate, as appropriate, conservation and enhancement of the significance and setting of the adjacent Iffley Road Conservation Area.

POLICY SP41: JESUS COLLEGE SPORTS GROUND

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

11.62 The Trust is pleased to see reference to the Bartlemas Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings in the policy, however, the references to these heritage assets are too closely related to design. This fails to recognise that development that has the potential to effect a heritage assets is about more than urban design. The Trust consider that is not compliant with the NPPF approach to conserving and enhancing heritage assets. The Trust, also, has some concerns that development on this site may have an adverse effect on the views and as such suggests that reference to building heights and heritage setting is of value.

Suggested modification

11.63 The Trust suggests that for policy SP41 to be effective, and compliant with national policy it should include the following text (additional text underlined and deleted ~~struck through~~):

~~Careful design must ensure that Development proposals~~ must demonstrate how they will conserve and enhance the significance and setting ~~contribute towards the character of the Bartlemas Conservation Area and preserve and enhance nearby listed buildings and their setting.~~ This will include an assessment of heritage impact and a quality, carefully designed, development proposal.

Planning permission will be granted for developments that demonstrate that they are capable of preserving and enhancing the significance and setting of the special significance of Oxford's historic skyline, as appreciated within the city, outside it and looking outwards from it (in accordance with Policy DH2).

Development proposals should encourage active frontages onto Barracks Lane and the new public open space. Development should be designed to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the Lye Valley SSSI.

POLICY SP43: LAND AT MEADOW LANE

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

11.64 The Trust has some concerns that development on this site may have an adverse effect on the views and as such suggests that reference to building heights and heritage/green setting is of value. This site is visible in Oxford's green setting, the 'green fingers' that penetrate the city's urban form, and the Cherwell Valley. This is an example of a location that might be overlooked for such an assessment because it is not within a 'view cone,' but that does not mean that views into or out of the city, and the green setting of the city, are necessarily unaffected.

Suggested modification

11.65 The Trust suggests that for policy SP43 to be effective it should include the following text:

Planning permission will be granted for developments that demonstrate that they are capable of preserving and enhancing the significance and setting (including its green setting) of the special significance of Oxford's historic skyline, as appreciated within the city, outside it and from it looking outwards (in accordance with Policy DH2).

POLICY SP44: LINCOLN COLLEGE SPORTS GROUND

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
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Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

11.66 The Trust is pleased to see reference to the Bartlemas Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings in the policy, however, the references to these heritage assets are too closely related to design. This fails to recognise that development that has the potential to effect a heritage assets is about more than urban design. The Trust consider that is not compliant with the NPPF approach to conserving and enhancing heritage assets. The Trust, also, has some concerns that development on this site may have an adverse effect on the views and as such suggests that reference to building heights and heritage setting is of value.

Suggested modification

11.67 The Trust suggests that for policy SP44 to be effective, and compliant with national policy it should include the following text (additional text underlined and deleted ~~struck through~~):

Careful design must ensure that Development proposals must demonstrate how they will conserve and enhance the significance and setting contribute towards the character of the Bartlemas Conservation Area and preserve and enhance nearby listed buildings and their setting. This will include an assessment of heritage impact and a quality, carefully designed, development proposal.

Planning permission will be granted for developments that demonstrate that they are capable of preserving and enhancing the significance and setting of the special significance of Oxford's historic skyline, as appreciated within the city, outside it and looking outwards from it (in accordance with Policy DH2).

Development proposals should encourage active frontages onto Barracks Lane and the new public open space. Development should be designed to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the Lye Valley SSSI.

POLICY SP46: MANOR PLACE

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

11.68 The Trust is pleased to see reference to the Conservation Area (although suggests that it should be fully titled as the *Central* Conservation Area) and nearby listed buildings in the policy, however, the references to these heritage assets are too closely related to design. This fails to recognise that development that has the potential to effect a heritage assets is about more than urban design. The Trust consider that is not compliant with the NPPF approach to conserving and enhancing heritage assets. Trust notes that the site is within the historic core, and has some concerns that development on this site may have an adverse effect on the views and as such suggests that reference to building heights and heritage setting is of value.

Suggested modification

11.69 The Trust suggests that for policy SP46 to be effective, and compliant with national policy it should include the following text (additional text underlined and deleted ~~struck through~~):

Careful design must ensure that Development proposals must demonstrate how they will conserve and enhance the significance and setting contribute towards the character of the Central Conservation Area and preserve and enhance nearby listed buildings and their setting. This will include an assessment of heritage impact and a quality, carefully designed, development proposal.

Planning permission will be granted for developments that demonstrate that they are capable of preserving and enhancing the significance and setting of the special significance of Oxford's historic skyline, as appreciated within the city, outside it and looking outwards from it (in accordance with Policy DH2).

POLICY SP49: OLD POWER STATION

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

11.70 The Trust has some concerns that development on this site may have an adverse effect a range of heritage assets and on the views and as such suggests that reference to building heights and heritage setting is of value.

11.71 The Trust is also concerned that the current proposals for the site represent an over intensification of the site and as such would have significant adverse impacts on the Conservation Areas and the views into and out of the city. This is an example of a site policy where it would be of particular value to cite an indicative capacity because the scale of development is such a sensitive matter and solutions to constraints can be identified at an earlier stage if all parties know what might be achievable on the site.

Suggested modification

11.72 The Trust suggests that for policy SP49 to be effective, and compliant with national policy, the City Council should consider providing an indicative capacity for the site and the policy should include the following text (additions to the policy are underlined and deletions are ~~struck through~~):

Careful design must ensure that Development proposals must demonstrate how they will preserve and enhance the significance and setting of the Osney Island and Central Conservation Areas and reflect the heritage significance of the buildings and their setting. This will include an assessment of heritage impact and a quality, carefully designed, development proposal.

Planning permission will be granted for developments that demonstrate that they are capable of preserving and enhancing the significance and setting (including its green setting) of the

special significance of Oxford's historic skyline, as appreciated within the city, outside it and looking outwards from it (in accordance with Policy DH2).

POLICY SP50: ORIEL COLLEGE LAND AT KING EDWARD STREET AND HIGH STREET

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

11.73 The Trust is pleased to see reference to the Conservation Area (although suggests that it should be fully titled as the Central Conservation Area) and nearby listed buildings in the policy, however, the Trust is concerned that the proper reference to conserving and enhancing those assets is not made in the policy. Furthermore, the Trust notes that the site is within the historic core, and has some concerns that development on this site may have an adverse effect on the views and as such suggests that reference to building heights and heritage setting is of value.

Suggested modification

11.74 The Trust suggests that for policy SP50 to be effective and compliant with national policy it should include the following text (additions to the policy are underlined and deletions are ~~struck through~~):

~~Careful design must ensure that Development proposals must demonstrate how they will preserve and enhance the significance and setting of the Central Conservation Area and enhance the listed buildings and its setting. This will include an assessment of heritage impact and a quality, carefully designed, development proposal.~~

Planning permission will be granted for developments that demonstrate that they are capable of preserving and enhancing the significance and setting (including its green setting) of the special significance of Oxford's historic skyline, as appreciated within the city, outside it and looking outwards from it (in accordance with Policy DH2).

POLICY SP51: OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY MARSTON ROAD CAMPUS

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	Yes

11.75 The site is adjacent to the Headington Hill Conservation Area and the Trust suggests that this should be referenced in Policy SP51. The Trust also has some concerns that development on this site may have an adverse effect on the views and as such suggests that reference to building heights and heritage setting is of value.

Suggested modification

11.76 The Trust suggests that for policy SP51 to be effective it should include the following text:

Proposals for the site should demonstrate, as appropriate, conservation and enhancement of the significance and setting of the adjacent Headington Hill Conservation Area.

Planning permission will be granted for developments that demonstrate that they are capable of preserving and enhancing the significance and setting (including its green setting) of the special significance of Oxford's historic skyline, as appreciated within the city, outside it and looking outwards from it (in accordance with Policy DH2).

POLICY SP55: RADCLIFFE OBSERVATORY QUARTER

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

11.77 The Trust is pleased to see reference to the Conservation Area, although suggests that it should be fully titled as the Central Conservation Area, and nearby listed buildings in the policy. However, the Trust is concerned that the proper reference to conserving and enhancing those assets is not made in the policy. Furthermore, the Trust notes that the site has been specifically excluded from the Central Conservation Area and has suggested that the boundaries be changed to include this area, though we understand this is outside the scope of this Local Plan. Nevertheless, the site is within the historic core and the Trust has some concerns that development on this site may have an adverse effect on the views and as such suggests that reference to building heights and heritage setting is of value.

Suggested modification

11.78 The Trust suggests that for policy SP55 to be effective and compliant with national policy it should include the following text (additions to the policy are underlined and deletions are ~~struck through~~):

~~Careful design must ensure that Development proposals~~ must demonstrate how they will preserve and enhance the significance and setting of the Central Conservation Area and enhance the listed buildings and its setting. This will include an assessment of heritage impact and a quality, carefully designed, development proposal.

Planning permission will be granted for developments that demonstrate that they are capable of preserving and enhancing the significance and setting (including its green setting) of the special significance of Oxford's historic skyline, as appreciated within the city, outside it and looking outwards from it (in accordance with Policy DH2).

POLICY SP56: RUSKIN COLLEGE CAMPUS

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

11.79 The Trust is pleased to see reference to the Conservation Area, although suggests that it should be fully titled as the *Old Headington Conservation Area*, and nearby listed buildings in the policy. However, the Trust is concerned that the proper reference to conserving and enhancing those assets is not made in the policy. Furthermore, the Trust has some concerns that development on this site may have an adverse effect on the views and as such suggests that reference to building heights and heritage setting is of value.

11.80 The Trust also consider it important that the impact of the development of this site should be considered in combination with the adjacent site (SP57: Ruskin Field) to ensure that the cumulative effects of the two sites can be fully understood and mitigated a necessary.

Suggested modification

11.81 The Trust suggests that for policy SP56 to be effective and compliant with national policy it should include the following text (additions to the policy are underlined and deletions are ~~struck through~~):

~~Development must retain and enhance the setting of the listed building and wall. Careful design must ensure that Development proposals~~ must demonstrate how they will preserve and enhance the significance and setting contribute towards the character of the Old Headington Conservation Area and enhance the listed buildings and structures (in particular the listed Rookery and wall) and its setting. This will include an assessment of heritage impact and a quality, carefully designed, development proposal.

Planning permission will be granted for developments that demonstrate that they are capable of preserving and enhancing the significance and setting (including its green setting) of the special significance of Oxford's historic skyline, as appreciated within the city, outside it and looking outwards from it (in accordance with Policy DH2).

POLICY SP57: RUSKIN FIELD

Legally compliant	Yes	Positively prepared	Yes
Sound	No	Justified	Yes
Compliant with the duty to cooperate	Yes	Effective	No
		Compliant with national policy	No

11.82 The Trust has concerns about the City Council's approach to identifying this site, and the drafting of the policy. It is not clear what, if any, development is actually suitable or achievable on this site especially given the heritage constraints and the constraints of the views of Oxford and its green setting. The City

Council has not made it clear what development is expected on the site and therefore it is very difficult to make a meaningful response to the proposed policy.

11.84 Notwithstanding this, the Trust is pleased to see reference to the Conservation Area, although suggests that it should be fully titled as the *Old Headington Conservation Area*, and nearby listed buildings in the policy. However, the Trust is concerned that the proper reference to conserving and enhancing those assets is not made in the policy. Furthermore, the Trust has some concerns that development on this site may have an adverse effect on the views and as such suggests that reference to building heights and heritage setting is of value.

11.84 The Trust also consider it important that the impact of the development of this site should be considered in combination with the adjacent site (SP57: Ruskin Field) to ensure that the cumulative effects of the two sites can be fully understood and mitigated a necessary.

Suggested modification

11.85 The Trust suggests that the City Council should better define what they consider to be suitable development on this site, and an indicative capacity should be included within policy SP57. A heritage appraisal should be undertaken by the City Council to demonstrate that development is actually achievable on the selected for the site, if this shows that there will be any adverse impact, the site should not be allocated for development.

11.86 Notwithstanding the Trust's concerns about the principle of allocating this site, for policy SP57 to be effective and compliant with national policy it should include the following text (additions to the policy are underlined and deletions are ~~struck through~~):

~~*New development should be informed by the landscape character and potential impact on views from the north in terms of choice of siting, height, form and appearance. Careful design must ensure that development proposals contribute towards the character of the conservation area and preserve and enhance nearby listed buildings and their setting.*~~

Development proposals must demonstrate how they will preserve and enhance the significance and setting of the Old Headington Conservation Area and listed buildings. This will include an assessment of heritage impact and a quality, carefully designed, development proposal.

Planning permission will be granted for developments that demonstrate that they are capable of preserving and enhancing the significance and setting (including its green setting) of the special significance of Oxford's historic skyline, as appreciated within the city, outside it and looking outwards from it (in accordance with Policy DH2).

12.0 CONCLUSION

- 12.1 Oxford Preservation Trust considers that the Local Plan is unsound. This is explained through the detailed submissions and suggestions have been made as to how the Plan should be modified.
- 12.2 These modification include the need to update some of the evidence but also to redraft policies within the Local Plan to ensure that:
- a) the plan has been positively prepared,
 - b) the policies are justified,
 - c) the policies are effective and,
 - d) the Plan conforms to national policy.

This will ensure that the objectives of the Plan can be delivered in a comprehensive and effective way.

13.0 PARTICIPATION AT THE ORAL PART OF THE EXAMINATION

- 13.1 Oxford Preservation Trust confirms that it does wish to take part in the oral part of the Local Plan examination. This is to be able to impart to the Inspector specific and relevant knowledge about Oxford city and its heritage significance, and also to answer questions that the Inspector might have.

I trust that the comments are useful to the City Council, and I confirm that I am happy for my name, organisation, address and postcode to be published alongside my comments at the appropriate time in accordance with GDPR regulations.

Please also keep me informed of the progress of the plan up to and including adoption, but prior to that the preparations for the examination.

Yours Faithfully,



Debbie Dance

Director