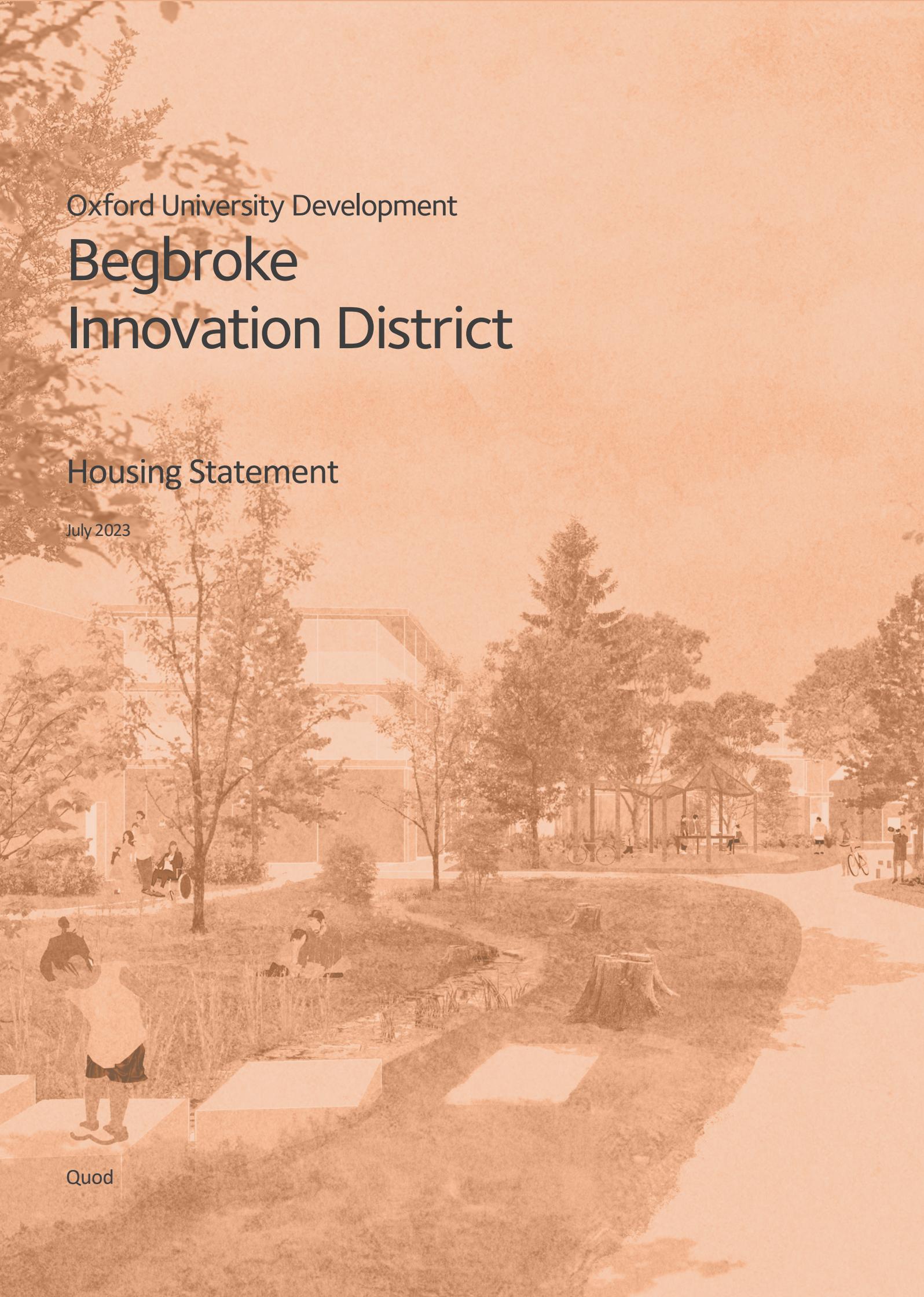


Oxford University Development

Begbroke Innovation District

Housing Statement

July 2023



Quod

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1 Executive Summary

Purpose of this document

- 1.1 This **Housing Statement** is submitted in support of an outline planning application ('the Application') for Begbroke Innovation District ('BID') at land to the east of the A44 between Yarnton, Begbroke and Kidlington ('the Site'). The Site is located in the southwest of Cherwell District, between the villages of Begbroke, Kidlington and Yarnton. Cherwell District Council ('CDC') are the local planning authority ('LPA').
- 1.2 BID benefits from site-specific policy set out in Policy PR8 of the Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 Partial Review: Meeting Oxford's Unmet Housing Needs ('LPP1PR'). The Site is one of a number of sites that were partially or wholly released from the green belt to provide housing to meet Oxford's unmet needs.
- 1.3 This Housing Statement will describe how the housing proposals have been shaped to deliver a mix of tenures and types of homes that prioritise Oxford's unmet housing. It is structured as follows:
 - [Section 1](#) – Executive Summary;
 - [Section 2](#) – Introduction;
 - [Section 3](#) – Site Overview;
 - [Section 4](#) – Planning Policy Context;
 - [Section 5](#) – Oxford's Unmet Housing Needs;
 - [Section 6](#) – Housing Proposals; and
 - [Section 7](#) – Conclusions.
- 1.1 It should be read in conjunction with the wider application documents - specifically the **Planning Statement, Development Specification, Design and Access Statement**, and the **Innovation, Research and Employment Strategy**.

The Applicant

- 1.2 The Application and this Housing Statement is submitted on behalf of Oxford University Development ('OUD' or 'the Applicant'); a joint venture partnership bringing together the land, vision and opportunities of Oxford University with the investment and development management skills of Legal & General ('L&G').

The Housing Challenge

- 1.3 The City of Oxford has an acute housing need. It is one of the most unaffordable places to live in the south of England, and therefore in the entire UK. Oxford's economy is a significant contributor to the national economy, and significant investment in Oxford and Oxfordshire is a key part of the national Industrial Strategy. However, the constrained housing market imperils this success and makes it more and more difficult to attract talent to the City.

- 1.4 Employers across the City, who are wanting to be part of Oxford’s sustained success and international status as a centre of research and innovation excellence recognise the significant challenges in recruiting and retaining staff represented by the availability and affordability of housing. For Oxford University, responsible for c. 21,000 employees out of a city population, excluding students, of less than 127,000. The depth and breadth of the City’s housing challenges is a critical concern. The impacts of housing constraints are far reaching, affecting key life decisions such as moving in with a partner, having a family, forcing households to have to commute or live in shared accommodation too small for their needs. In Oxford the limited housing choice means the existing housing stock is often not utilised most efficiently and effectively. The delivery of the right tenures and types of homes in the right places offers the potential to help to address these long-standing challenges.

The Opportunity

- 1.5 Through the development of BID there is an opportunity to make a meaningful difference to the housing choices available for those in housing need in Oxford, to help the existing stock be utilised more efficiently and effectively and, through the tenures and types of homes developed, provide the foundations for a community of the future. The scale of opportunity, the relationship to the existing science park, and the direct involvement of Oxford University means that what it can achieve in response to Oxford’s needs is different from the other sites allocated in Cherwell.
- 1.6 OUD was established to ensure that Oxford continues to be a global leader in research and innovation as well as to support the City and its population by providing a genuine choice of housing. OUD is committed to helping retain talent in the City, whilst providing the facilities for world-leading research and innovation, and tackling sources of unaffordability in the housing market. OUD’s housing proposals will ensure the homes provided within the BID address directly the diverse unmet housing needs of Oxford City, ensuring this once in a generation opportunity combines world class places of work and learning with an exceptional and unique residential neighbourhood.

The Housing Proposals

- 1.7 This Housing Statement will describe how the housing proposals have been shaped to deliver a mix of tenures and types of homes that prioritise Oxford’s unmet housing ensuring:
- The diverse existing and future needs of Oxford are met;
 - Oxford’s world class economy, university and local employment base is supported;
 - Ongoing economic growth is supported;
 - Connections between the University’s Science Park and the City are reinforced;
 - A range of household incomes are provided for;
 - A new mixed, balanced and cohesive community is created; and
 - The best use of the existing housing within Oxford City is enabled.

1.8 The housing proposals can be summarised as:

- Up to 215,000 m2 residential GEA to provide for c. 1800 new homes;
- 50% - will be affordable to a range of incomes, including social rent, sharer and discount market rent tenures;
- A range of unit sizes delivered in accordance with the stated unit mix ranges which allow for 20-50% family homes;
- Lettings and nominations provisions to ensure affordable homes are prioritised for existing residents in the City either through the Council's transfer waiting list or through employment connections led by Oxford University, helping to enable more efficient and effective use of the City's housing;
- A commitment to the delivery of affordable high quality, professionally managed, energy efficient rental homes; and
- The foundations for a vibrant, integrated and inclusive community.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 This Housing Statement has been prepared by Quod on behalf of the Applicant in support of an outline planning application ('the Application') for Begbroke Innovation District ('BID') at land to the east of the A44 between Yarnton, Begbroke and Kidlington ('the Site'). Cherwell District Council ('CDC') are the local planning authority ('LPA').
- 2.2 The Housing Statement is submitted on behalf of Oxford University Development ('OUD' or 'the Applicant'). This is a joint venture partnership bringing together the land, vision and opportunities of Oxford University with the investment and development management skills of Legal & General forming a unique private-public sector. OUD was established to ensure that Oxford continues to be a global leader in research and innovation as well as to support its population by providing a genuine choice of housing. OUD's developments help retain essential staff and talent in the City, whilst providing the facilities for world-leading research and innovation and tackling sources of unaffordability in the housing market.
- 2.3 BID will bring a wide range of benefits that will exceed those that would be delivered on the basis of a stringent application of policy, which can be evidenced to be out of date and poorly related to the vision, the strategic objectives and the requirements of the optimum development of the Site. The proposals for BID create the opportunity to make a meaningful difference that directly responds to an up to date understanding of genuine housing needs.
- 2.4 This Housing Statement describes the housing component of the Proposed Development and how this meets Oxford's unmet housing needs informed by the evidence today. To achieve this the housing proposals have been shaped to ensure the homes provided within the BID:
- Meet Oxford's diverse existing and future needs;
 - Support Oxford's world class economy, university and local employment base;
 - Facilitate Oxford's ongoing economic growth;
 - Reinforce connections between the key asset of the University Business Park and the City;
 - Provide for a range of household incomes;
 - Create a new balanced and cohesive community; and
 - Enable the best use of the existing housing within Oxford City.
- 2.5 The Housing Statement does not duplicate the detailed descriptions of policy, pre-application engagement and technical assessments against policy and guidance set out in the **Planning Statement**. This document should be read in conjunction with the wider application documents which include the **Planning Statement**, the **Development Specification**, the **Design and Access Statement** and the **Innovation, Research and Employment Strategy**.
- 2.6 The Statement is structured:

- [Section 1](#) – Executive Summary;
- [Section 2](#) – Introduction;
- [Section 3](#) – Site Overview;
- [Section 4](#) – Planning Policy Context;
- [Section 5](#) – Oxfords Unmet Housing Needs;
- [Section 6](#) – Housing Proposals; and
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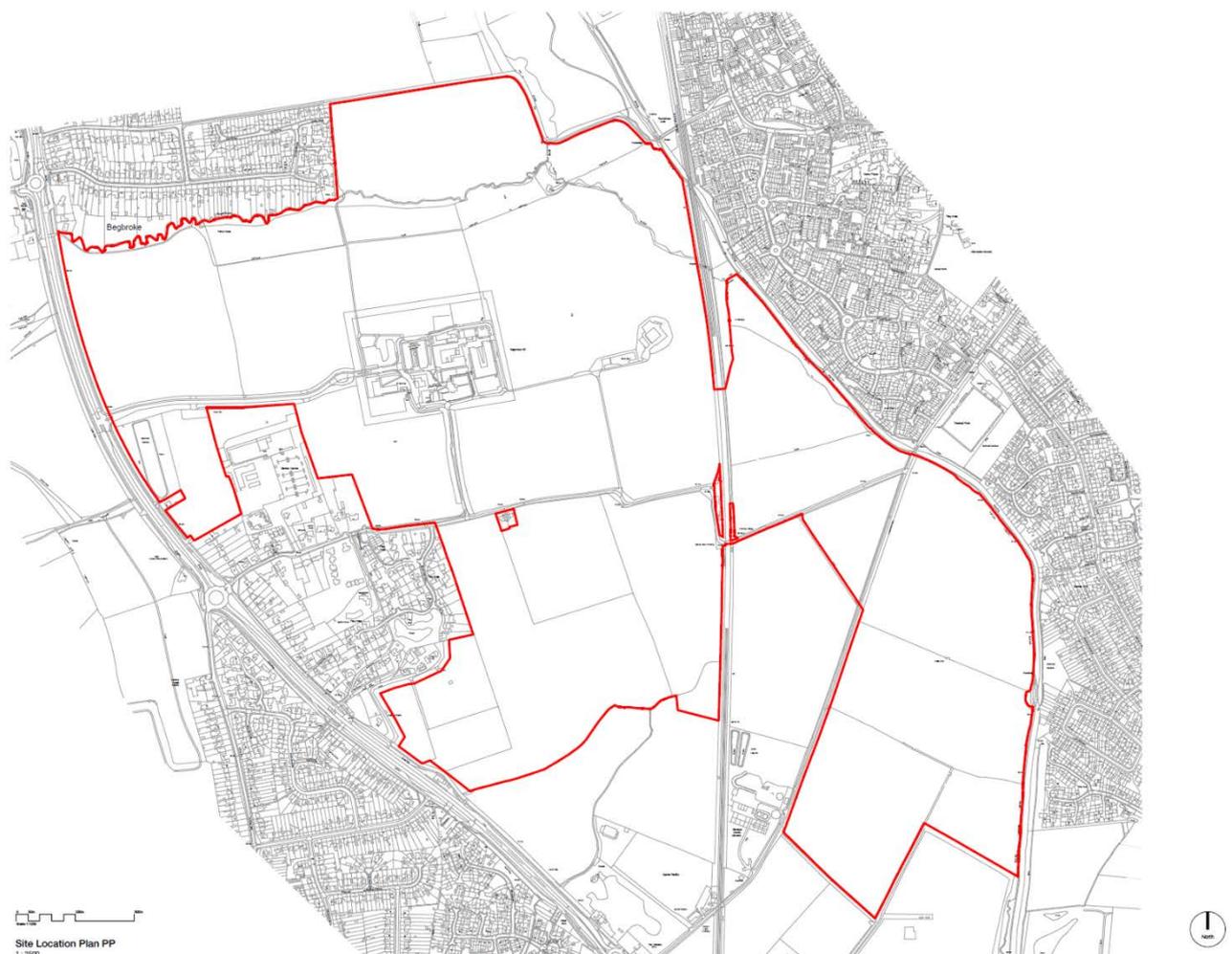
3 Application Overview

3.1 This section of the Statement provides an overview of the planning application site and the development proposals from a housing perspective.

The Application Site

3.2 The Site is approximately 170.4 hectares (ha) in size, located entirely within Cherwell District. The Site is located approximately 6.7km northwest of Oxford City centre, approximately 625m west of Kidlington village centre and close to the villages of Yarnton and Begbroke.

Figure 1 Site Location Plan



3.3 Begbroke Science Park ('BSP' or 'the Science Park'), owned entirely by Oxford University, is situated within the central northern portion of the Site with the majority of the remaining Site currently in agricultural use.

3.4 The Site falls within land that is allocated by Policy PR8: Land East of the A44 within the Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 Partial Review: Oxford's Unmet Housing Need. Distinction is

therefore made between ‘the Site’ – this being land that falls within the redline boundary and to which this application relates – and ‘the PR8 site’, which is intended to refer to all land allocated by Policy PR8. The Site constitutes the significant majority of this allocation, with the remaining land parcels being promoted by two separate applicants:

- Land immediately south of the Site which forms part of the PR8 site allocation is proposed to comprise up to 300 new homes and is being brought forward by Hallam Land Management Ltd. (‘HLM’).
- Land adjacent to the western part of the Site and falling within the PR8 Site known as Yarnton Home & Garden is owned by Newcore and is expected to be subject to an outline planning application to retain and enhance the existing garden centre alongside the delivery of housing, retirement living and a children’s nursery.

3.5 Additional details on the existing site, its context its planning history and wider PR8 proposals are set out in the Design and Access Statement and the Planning Statement.

Proposed Development

3.6 The **Development Specification** document sets out the description of development for which outline planning permission is sought and provides a schedule of land uses. This is not duplicated here.

3.7 The outline nature of the planning application means that the residential proposals can be summarised as:

- Up to 215,000 square metres (‘sqm’) gross external area (‘GEA’) of residential floorspace within use classes C3, C4 and Sui Generis (the inclusion of use classes C4 and Sui Generis allows for the provision of houses in multiple occupation (‘HMOs’) that enable delivery to meet specific identified needs within the City and would be delivered as university-linked accommodation).
- Delivery of the residential floorspace in accordance with the indicative site-wide unit mix ranges set out in **Table 1** below.

Table 1 – Indicative Unit mix ranges

Unit type	Studio/1 bedroom	2 bedroom	3 bedroom	4+ bedroom
Range	20-40%	30-40%	15-30%	5-20%

3.8 The precise number of residential units delivered within the Site will be determined through the preparation of Development Area Briefs and Reserved Matters Applications. For now, it is anticipated that the residential floorspace and unit mix range would deliver circa 1,800 residential units. This number could increase or decrease depending on the exact unit size split, for instance, if a greater number of flats and smaller properties were delivered. Further details of the proposed housing are set out in **Section 6** of this Housing Statement.

3.9 In addition to residential development, permission is sought for supporting social infrastructure, retail, leisure and community uses, up to 155,000sqm GEA of flexible employment uses in association with the expansion of the Begbroke Science Park and associated highways, landscaping, and infrastructure. Section 5 of the **Planning Statement** provides an overview of the Proposed Development. An **Illustrative Masterplan** has been prepared which indicatively demonstrates just one way in which the Proposed Development could be realised as an exemplary new innovation district.

Consultation and Engagement

3.10 Details on the extensive pre-application consultation and engagement with local and statutory stakeholders are outlined in Section 4 of the **Planning Statement** and detailed in the **Statement of Community Involvement**. The Applicant met with housing officers from Oxford City Council on 23rd May 2023, and that engagement has informed the proposals set out in this Statement.

4 Planning Policy Context

- 4.1 The **Planning Statement** (Section 7) details the relevant Development Plan, relevant national policy and guidance, and other material considerations for the Proposed Development including the housing. An assessment of the Proposed Development against those policies and guidance is set out in Section 8 of the **Planning Statement**.
- 4.2 The policies and assessment are not duplicated in full within the **Housing Statement**, however the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) Partial Review, entitled 'Oxford's Unmet Housing Needs' ('LPP1PR'), has provided context, vision, priorities and policies that have been important in shaping the housing proposed as part of the BID and are therefore the starting point for the Application's housing proposals.

Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) Partial Review: Oxford's Unmet Housing Needs

- 4.3 The sharing of Oxford's housing needs through allocations across neighbouring authorities was driven by the realisation that the scale of the housing challenge and the increasing unaffordability of housing to rent or buy is one of the biggest issues in Oxford City. The housing concerns of major employers in Oxford, including Oxford University, are recognised in the Oxford City Plan, which acknowledges the critical links between housing and recruitment and retention of workers. The Plan acknowledges that Oxford's housing needs are not straightforward stating "*we need enough housing, of the right type, in the right locations, that is affordable and suitable for different sectors of the community and meets varied needs.*" Oxford's unmet housing needs are complex and it is recognised that, to be effective, the tenures and types of homes need to respond to the depth and breadth of Oxford's unmet housing needs.
- 4.4 Against this background the LPP1PR is a Plan to provide Cherwell's share of the unmet housing needs of Oxford to 2031 in recognition that there is not sufficient capacity within Oxford City to meet the assessed need of 28,000 homes between 2011-2031. Cherwell's share of Oxford's unmet housing needs comprises 4,400 homes for which the LPP1PR identifies 7 strategic sites that together will enable delivery of homes specifically to meet Oxford's unmet housing needs.
- 4.5 Critically the LPP1PR allocations are in addition to the existing Local Plan commitment of 22,840 homes already planned for within Cherwell. The Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 allocations will meet Cherwell's own housing needs with planned growth at Bicester, Banbury and Former RAF Upper Heyford. The sites allocated in the LPP1PR, which includes the allocation which the BID forms part of, are required to meet the unmet needs of Oxford City.
- 4.6 To ensure the homes that come forward on the LPP1PR allocations meet the unmet housing needs of Oxford City a vision is set out in **Section 4** of this document requiring the proposals to:
- Support Oxford's world class economy, its universities and employment base;

- Ensure convenient, affordable and sustainable travel opportunities to the City;
 - Deliver development that is well connected to Oxford; and
 - Provide for a range of household types and incomes reflecting Oxford's diverse needs.
- 4.7 To support this vision the LPP1PR introduces four specific strategic objectives to supplement those in the existing Local Plan (2015) of which two relate specifically to housing:
- Providing development so it supports the projected economic growth which underpins the housing needs and local Oxford and Cherwell economies (objective SO17); and
 - Substantively providing affordable access to new homes for those requiring affordable housing, new entrants to the housing market, key workers and those requiring access to Oxford's key employment areas; and providing well-designed development that responds to the local context (objective SO18).
- 4.8 The strategic objectives place emphasis on supporting Oxford in addressing a key issue of its unmet housing needs (linked to the needs of its economy), which in turn requires delivery of a range of tenures and types of homes.
- 4.9 The focus of the location of the allocations for Oxford's housing needs in Cherwell is sites within the geographic area extending north from Oxford to south Kidlington, and along the A44 corridor to Yarnton and Begbroke. These are areas of the district that most directly relate and have the best connections with Oxford City. These connections are not just physical (i.e., transport), but also social. For example, they offer the greatest opportunity to engage with the communities within Oxford City and to recognise and supplement their role in serving key employment sectors that are central to the City's economy, such as Begbroke Science Park.
- 4.10 Housing is so scarce in Oxford that the new proposals should offer tenures and types of homes which best relate to the Plan's vision and to genuine housing need. In shaping the nature of the proposed housing, linkages to maintaining and growing the Oxford economy are an important consideration. So is supporting the University and adding diversity and choice to the housing offer as a positive response to residents and workers in the City who will otherwise be forced to leave, and finally recognising the links between homes and recruitment of new employees and the associated inward investment.
- 4.11 Policy PR8 of the LPP1PR allocates the Site (and land adjoining its southern and western borders) as a Strategic Development Site. PR8 is the largest of the six allocations, anticipating 1,950 homes of the total of the 4,400 homes allocated to meet Oxford City housing needs (nearly 45%). The policy states that 50% of the new homes should be affordable.
- 4.12 Policy PR2 of the LPP1PR sets out requirements that allocated sites are expected to meet on the basis that these will help meet Oxford's housing needs within this:
- 4.12.1 Part 2 requires 80% of homes are identified as being affordable rent/social rent and 20% are identified as other forms of intermediate affordable homes.
 - 4.12.2 Part 3 provides an indicative unit size split for the affordable homes of 25-30% 1 beds, 30-35% 2 beds, 30-35% as 3 beds and 5-10% as 4 beds but recognised that this may be otherwise agreed.

4.12.3 Part 4 requires a mix of market housing sizes.

4.12.4 Part 5 supports homes for key workers with flexibility on the definition of this to be agreed with the Council.

4.13 The requirements of Policy PR2, specifically part 2 on tenure and part 3 on mix, were informed by the 2014 Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment ('SHMA'). This has since been supplemented by the 2018 SHMA and the 2023 Housing and Economic Needs Assessment – the implications of which are addressed in Section 5 of this **Housing Statement**.

Material considerations

4.14 In addition to the Development Plan, the following documents are material considerations to the Proposed Development.

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

4.15 The revised National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF' or 'the Framework'), published in July 2021, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It replaces the previous version of the NPPF published in 2019 and is a material consideration in planning decisions.

4.16 The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) provides the Government's housing policy objectives for England. The NPPF establishes that plans and decision taking should ensure delivery of a wide choice of high-quality homes for a range of needs for today and in the future (paragraph 8(b)).

4.17 In Section 5, delivering a sufficient supply of homes, the NPPF sets out that planning policies should reflect the needs of different groups in the community, considering factors including size, type and tenure. The NPPF identifies a wide range of groups for whom provision should be made, including those who require affordable housing, families with children, students, people who rent their homes etc.

4.18 Section 6, building a strong competitive economy, notes that planning policies should seek to address potential barriers to investment, such as inadequate housing. It also notes the importance of planning policies being flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, such as live-work accommodation for new and flexible working practices.

Oxford Local Plan 2036

4.19 Given that the Site is allocated to meet Oxford's unmet housing need, the Oxford Local Plan is a relevant material consideration. It is not, however, part of the Development Plan for the Site.

4.20 The City Local Plan is clear about the scale of housing need in the City and the risks it poses to the wellbeing of its citizens:

"The constrained housing supply and increasing unaffordability of homes in Oxford have significant sustainability impacts for those living and working in the City. Housing provision is a key determinant in attracting and retaining people to support the economy of the city, and

the wider region. The current shortage of housing in Oxford also has environmental and social impacts, such as the congestion on roads around the city caused by employees travelling into the city to work, and the disconnection of networks of family and friends as people move to more affordable areas to live.” (paragraph 3.5)

4.21 It is also clear, however, that:

“The need for new homes for Oxford over the plan period to meet affordable housing need and the commitments of the growth deal is much higher than the city can realistically accommodate within its administrative boundaries. There are very significant constraints on the capacity of the city – physically with the city’s tight administrative boundary and Green Belt, and environmentally with large areas of national or international biodiversity interest and areas within flood zone 3b functional flood plain, as well as heritage and townscape considerations.” (paragraph 3.8)

4.22 It is for these reasons that Oxford has had to work with its neighbouring authorities to help deliver its unmet need, resulting in the case of Cherwell in the LPP1PR.

4.23 The City Plan recognises the needs for private rental homes and, at the heart of its vision, it seeks to create mixed and balanced communities - recognising that the scale of developments and the context is very different – smaller sites within existing established communities often with very low levels of affordable housing mean that the rebalancing is needed, whilst there will be households on Housing Waiting List with very clear needs and connections locally which will benefit from social rent housing.

4.24 Policy H3 relates to employer linked affordable housing, recognising the significant challenges in recruiting and retaining staff faced by employers as a result of the lack of availability and affordability of housing.

4.25 The preferred mix of unit sizes is set out in Policy H4 with 20-30% 1 beds, 30-40% 2 beds, 20-40% 3 beds and 8-15% 4 beds.

4.26 Sharer accommodation is identified as a specific area of concern with c. 20% of the population of Oxford living in a House in Multiple Occupation ('HMO'). It is recognised that this for many is the only available housing solution and that these properties play an important role in meeting housing needs in Oxford. The Council has policy, however, (Policy H6) to try and constrain further expansion of HMOs as unregulated HMOs are said to be having a wider impact on many areas of the City. Such a policy will suppress supply, whilst no alternatives are proposed.

5 Oxford's Unmet Housing Needs

- 5.1 The housing proposals have been informed by the site-specific planning policy and its objectives, evidence available on the types of homes that will best meet the vision for the BID and updated evidence from the 2018 SHMA, which post-dates the formulation of the policy.
- 5.2 It is important that the housing proposals at BID are shaped to respond to current needs rather than informed by out-of-date evidence. The LPP1PR vision places a focus on supporting Oxford's world class economy, providing for a range of household types and incomes with strategic objectives that commit to development that supports economic growth and provides a variety of homes. It is essential that the homes delivered focus on that need.

Strategic Housing Market Assessments

- 5.3 The adopted Oxford City Local Plan 20136 and the LPP1PR, which sets out how Oxford's unmet housing need can be met through the identified allocations, were both initially evidenced by the 2014 Oxfordshire SHMA. This provided an overview of housing needs at that time, such that Policy H2 of the LPP1PR set out a requirement for 80% social/affordable rent and 20% other intermediate tenures.
- 5.4 In 2018 an update to the SHMA was published providing a more up to date evidence base and consideration of need. The 2018 SHMA indicates that overall affordable need had reduced by c. 35% whilst overall affordability continuing to worsen, indicating underlying changes in the breadth and depth of the need and a polarised housing offer.
- 5.5 In both of the SHMAs there are reasons why the scale and type of affordable housing best suited to meet the needs of Oxford may have failed to be better reflected in the conclusions. The SHMAs give a heavy weighting to traditional social rented tenures which prioritise those in the highest need, as assessed by the Council's categories (which rarely recognise young working households). For example:
 - 5.5.1 Population growth figures were not adjusted to reflect the major growth in younger groups.
 - 5.5.2 Links between population growth, the growth of the Universities and university-linked jobs and growth sectors such as Bio Sciences are acknowledged but the housing requirements of these workers, including how this affects the recruitment and retention of workers to enable growth was not explored.
 - 5.5.3 There is limited analysis of the priority needs for social housing in terms of location, type and need. This reduces the confidence that different types of housing across a range of locations can contribute to meeting needs or if those being categorised from an affordability perspective as part of the social/affordable rent need would qualify/be a priority irrespective of the location of the homes.
- 5.6 The SHMAs provide data but provide no analysis of what this means, for example:

- 5.6.1 There is a presumption in favour of social/affordable rent as a tenure without considering whether, given the very unique circumstance of Oxford, this tenure is the most appropriate for those with incomes of £20-25,000 to £40-45,000 and without considering whether there are other discounted rental solutions that may better fit these housing requirements.
- 5.6.2 In the context of relying on this data in the circumstance where one authority's needs are being met by another authority, it is appropriate to consider whether needs can be equally as well met irrespective of location. For example, households in high priority on the Housing Waiting List may have existing family, education, employment, social services support, health and other ties to the location where their need is registered and it may not be appropriate to require these households to move away from their known environment and their support networks, or their place of work.
- 5.6.3 For a strategic allocation of the scale of PR8, it is appropriate to consider the implications of applying a one-size-fits-all tenure policy, which may better suit smaller sites which form part of existing communities.
- 5.6.4 Against this background, and given the nature of employment proposed and supported at BID, it may not be the most sensible or sustainable outcome to prioritise 80% of the affordable housing on households that are settled in the City, who have different needs and priorities, and no connection with the Cherwell area.

Housing and Economic Needs Assessment

- 5.7 Whilst the SHMAs provided a source of data, the use and application of this needs very careful consideration in the context of the PR8 allocation. The 2014 and 2018 SHMAs are now nine and five years old respectively and have been replaced by the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment dated December 2022 ('HENA'), which provides more up to date evidence of need. It also, in line with national guidance, provides analysis on the linkages between housing need and the delivery of economic investment and development.
- 5.8 The HENA highlights the complexity of the housing challenges facing Oxford, made even more nuanced as a consequence of covid, inflation, rising interest rates and reducing mortgage availability; with many of these impacts worsening since the report was prepared and published. Of particular note:
- The affordability of housing continues to worsen.
 - First time buyers are increasingly finding it challenging to afford housing.
 - Private rents are increasing.
 - Rental supply is reducing with homes reverting to private sale.
 - Individual private landlords are reducing due to national changes to available reliefs, likely tenant protection and rising landlord costs.
 - Tenants are seeking homes with lower running costs and that are more energy efficient.

- 5.9 Housing is becoming increasingly polarised with significant gaps in the housing available for households who do not qualify for or are not prioritised for social rented housing and who cannot afford homes on the open market. There is a chronic shortage of rental properties across the entirety of Oxfordshire, with the HENA warning that there will be a reversion to the affordable waiting list with increasing challenges for entry level households into the housing market. The HENA encourages Councils to have regard to national guidance on Build to Rent development which sees a 20% requirement for affordable housing and housing with 20% discount to market rents as part of this (para 10.12.33).
- 5.10 Against a background of worsening affordability and a chronic shortage of rental properties the HENA also explores the linkages between economic growth and the provision of housing, reinforcing the impact on recruitment and retention of staff if housing options suitable to their needs are not available. For many workers living outside of Oxford, commuting in has become necessary in the absence of affordable housing options which relate positively to their work. The most successful housing solutions for Oxford will include those which take account of worker residential location and place of work. Meeting those needs would also complement the wider priorities to improve air quality, reduce congestion and to encourage non-car modes of transport. To achieve these objectives requires a more considered approach to the tenures and types of homes provided as part of new developments, particularly one of the scale of BID.
- 5.11 The HENA also considers affordable housing need and its relationship to the market sector. 56% of total gross need in Oxford is from newly forming households and a further 17% is from existing households falling into need – many of these are the households who need housing at a cost below that of the market but who would not be a priority for social/affordable rent. Their needs are further compounded by worsening affordability, the shortage of rental supply, and wider affordability challenges facing households.
- 5.12 The evidence in the HENA demonstrates a shift away from a simplistic approach, which has historically been relied on to support a predominance of social rent homes (80% of the proposed affordable housing) to a position where there is a recognised need for a range of discounts to rents of which c. 45% are social rents and the remainder are at a discount to market but at rents above social rent. The range of needs can be categorised as follows:
- 45% at social rent levels with rents at the lowest levels and a substantial proportion likely to need benefit support; and
 - 55% above social rent levels to comprise discounted rents, at a range of discounts, and discounted ownership tenures.
- 5.13 The HENA highlights the diverse rental needs and whilst this in itself should not be translated directly into policy for application to all sites it provides an important signal when shaping the housing proposals at BID, particularly when considered alongside the housing waiting list and choice-based lettings data.
- 5.14 The HENA concludes that need for new housing remains high and that supply constraints continue in Oxford both in the existing and new provision. The evidence has evolved from the 2014 and 2018 SHMA with conclusions that there is potentially a greater role for both intermediate and affordable rented products as a share of the overall affordable package.

- 5.15 The changes since the 2014 SHMA are important in considering the weight to be applied to Policy H2 part 2. Its requirement for 80% social/affordable rent would benefit from focusing less on social rent and more on a range of discounts to rent.
- 5.16 The current economic situation will further exacerbate the delta between supply and demand for private rental homes as the tightening of household income through sustained inflation coupled with interest rate rises have slowed the sales market. This is reducing churn within the private rented stock as households delay their decision to purchase. This supply restriction is being accentuated further as landlords opt to release their private rented sector ('PRS') properties to sale as they seek to manage their exposure to interest costs and a tightening regulatory framework.

Housing Waiting List

- 5.17 The City Council's Housing Waiting List provides a snapshot of need at a point in time. Currently the Housing Waiting list comprises c. 2,837 eligible applicants split between general registrations and transfer registrations.
- 5.18 To better understand level of need of eligible applicants there are 1,587 general registrations of which 35% are categorised as Band 1-3 which encompasses exceptional, urgent and significant need, 9% Band 4 which is moderate need and 55% Band 5 which is categorised as low or now housing need. There are a further 1,250 households who are on the Council's transfer list i.e., they are currently living in existing social rent homes and are waiting to move within this tenure, meaning these moves have a neutral impact.
- 5.19 The Council's website identifies that there are only 490 homes becoming vacant each year and states '*applicants with low need or who require one bed or family sized property can expect to wait around 10-20 years*'. The Council's advice on its website is '*it is unlikely you will be allocated any type of council housing within the short to medium term and you may be better off renting privately*'. This highlights the critical role that the private rental sector has in meeting Oxford's unmet housing needs.
- 5.20 Engagement with housing officers at Oxford City Council confirmed that a good practice approach for nominations to a new community, such as the new community proposed at BID, would require a mix of nominations from both the general and transfer lists. This would seek to ensure that the Proposed Development creates a new mixed and balanced community, and which has the supporting services and amenities needed for the new residents. In addition, it was confirmed that households who are on the transfer waiting list generally have a preference to remain within their existing communities and generally do not move far from the home they are moving from.
- 5.21 Of those registered on Oxford's housing waiting list there are 41 general applicants and transfer registrants who have a link to postcode OX5 i.e., south Cherwell / the Site – this is c. 1% of the total waiting list. Informed by discussions with officers it would be reasonable to consider these are the registrants most likely to be interested in housing at Cherwell. Of these, 1 applicant is Band 1, and 11 applicants are Bands 2, 3 and 4 combined. The remaining 29 registrants (more than 70%) are Band 5 i.e., categorised as low or no housing need. In view of the Choice Based Lettings approach for social/affordable rent homes the up-to-date Housing Waiting List data does not support the need for a very large supply of social/affordable rent

tenure homes as part of the BID and it does not indicate that Oxford's unmet housing needs would be best met by providing this tenure in this location.

5.22 Whilst Oxford has needs for social/affordable rent, to provide this in a location in which these households would not have any connection would risk isolation and lead to a mix of tenures that would not contribute towards the mixed and balanced community. The Housing Waiting List data evidences there are very low levels of need for social/affordable needs in this location. Furthermore, it highlights that households who are registered on the waiting list but who will never be a priority are being directed to the private sector to rent where there is already a chronic shortage of homes. There is a very significant gap in Oxford's housing market which needs to be addressed by the provision of high quality, professionally managed rental homes at a range of discounts to market rents.

Choice Based Letting analysis

5.23 The HENA and the Housing Waiting List provides data but does not provide an insight into the patterns of demand within the existing stock which would have implications on the location and tenure of new provision. An illustration of this type of pattern would be the behaviour of households on the waiting list and how their demand for affordable housing is expressed within the choice based letting system. Analysis allows a picture which illustrates the most popular affordable housing locations within and around the City. Caution is required as this is a snapshot affected by the types of homes that became available. Nevertheless it is helpful in understanding behaviours.

5.24 The following graphics **Figure 2** and **Figure 3** below identify as a series of heat maps by property type. Darker areas denote higher bid numbers where individual properties become available for let. This acts as a proxy for demand by location within the affordable sector. These properties will be let from within the existing pool of social/affordable rented properties either owned by the Council or registered providers.

Figure 2 – Heat Map of Bid Numbers for Choice Based Letting Houses

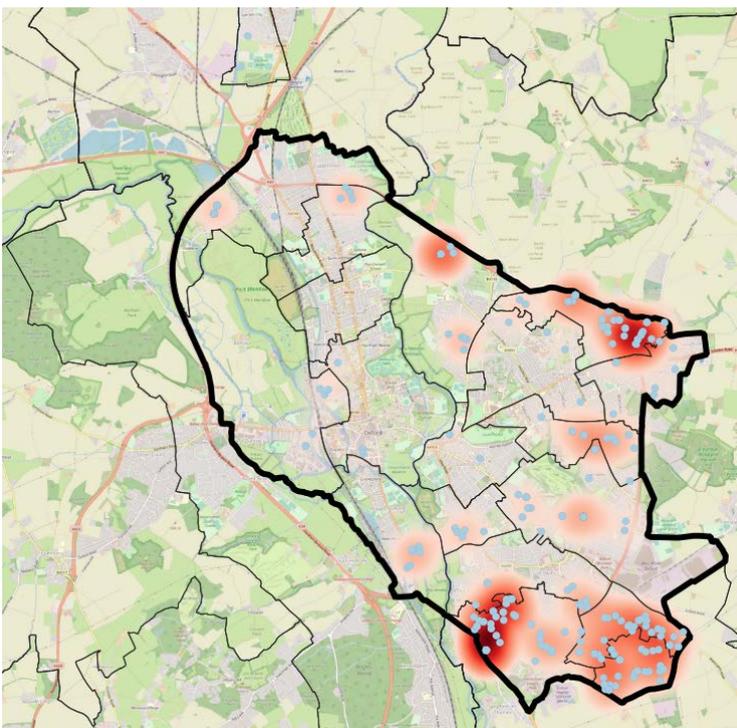
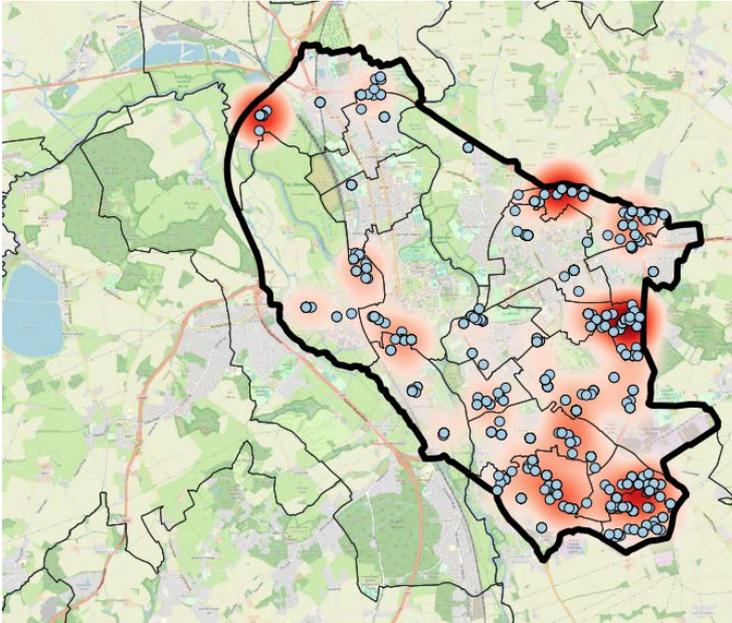


Figure 3 - Heat Map of Bid Numbers for Choice Based Letting Flats



- 5.25 These heat maps illustrate the pattern that lettings are most attractive in the southern part of the City, particularly for flats and houses. It is relevant to note that the more outlying areas of the City tend to attract lower bid numbers from prospective tenants. Further these lower bid number locations tend to attract (and be let to) households with lower priority within the waiting list bandings.
- 5.26 This pattern illustrates a point which is not identified within the HENA dataset but which is acknowledged by City housing officers, namely that the preferred location of affordable housing, in this case social and affordable rented, is affected by demand as much as provision in the for-sale sector. Market sale sector buyers routinely trade location with price with higher values associated with the most sought-after locations. Within the social sector, prospective tenants are choosing locations based on other factors, as rents are generally consistent across the City. These demand choices are likely to be based around the individuals' support networks and family connections as well as the relationship to their place(s) of work. These factors can be powerful with tenants turning down properties which would require them to compromise on these aspects. In view of the importance of equality and inclusivity it is appropriate that those in need of affordable housing are not forced from the City.
- 5.27 In addition, and as seen from the Choice Based Letting ('CBL') dataset, provision of rented affordable housing must consider carefully the locational aspects of demand in order that it can effectively meet the highest priority need. Provision in 'lower demand' locations will tend to see those properties churn more quickly and be let within lower need banding within the waiting list. This is of further relevance given (as is typical) that around 40% of all lets are

transfers¹ from within the existing stock so these households may be more reluctant to relocate to a lower demand affordable housing location unless there is a very specific reason which encourages this move (i.e., it is closer to work locations).

- 5.28 It is a practical consideration that delivery of large numbers of these tenures in single locations can prove challenging to let, particularly where rented demand is more fragile. This would not be the case where, for instance, family housing was delivered into areas of southern Oxford as demand would be sustainable.
- 5.29 The CBL data analysed suggests that bid numbers for properties becoming available outside of the City where previous provision has been delivered see significantly lower bid numbers (or demand) via the CBL system. This is a consideration for the Proposed Development's affordable housing package and importantly for the wider sites coming forward outside of the City boundaries. This pattern of demand also emphasises how important it is to encourage efficient use of the existing stock within the City. This may be by delivering smaller infill developments and reprovision of existing sub-standard schemes to broaden the local stock profile, promoting those currently under occupying to move to more suitable properties and generally achieving churn within the existing offer and optimising their role in meeting needs. This is the model that underpins much of the work being promoted by OxPlace, the Council's development company.

Wider Affordable Supply to Meet Oxford's Needs in Cherwell

- 5.30 The total housing allocation to meet Oxford's needs is c.25,200 homes of which c.10,900 (43%) is met within Oxford City and 14,300 (57%) is met through the allocation of sites in the surrounding authorities. Cherwell allocated six sites for Oxford's housing needs, totalling 4,400 homes – this includes the allocation of PR8 of which this Application forms the majority. The six sites all are concentrated in the southwest of Cherwell.
- 5.31 Delivery of 50% AH across all the sites allocated within the LPP1PR will enable delivery of c. 2,200 affordable homes of which c. 1,760 units would comprise social/affordable rent. The south of Cherwell is characterised with c. 69-71% owner occupation, 8-11% social rent and 18-19% private rent. All except one of the allocations are in super output area 19 which supports allocated site whose AH provision comprises c. 2,001 homes delivery. 80% social rent would see social rent tenure increasing by 8 times that of its current level (having doubled between 2011-2021) with the proportion of social rent increasing from 8% to 27%. This would be the second highest concentration of social rent in Cherwell after Banbury.
- 5.32 The PR sites excluding PR8 will offer the potential to deliver 980 social/affordable rent homes across five sites. This is nearly 24 times the number of households currently registered on the general and transfer waiting lists in OX5. The PR8 site has the benefit of co-location with the Begbroke Science Park, a critical asset in the context of linkages to the City and potential for growth of the Oxford economy. In the context of the vision and the strategic objectives of the LPP1PR, alongside the potential supply from other sites and the wider evidence of the diverse

¹ HENA Table 9.10 page 116

housing needs plus the chronic shortage of private rent in Oxford City, the unique opportunity presented by housing at PR8 needs to be recognised.

The Perspective of Oxford's Workers

5.33 Oxford University is a major employer in the City, with its employees undertaking a wide range of roles, from kitchen staff, maintenance personnel and secretarial staff to, for instance, 5,000 junior researchers on fixed term contracts. Many of its employees are resident in the City and view it as their home. The University has been engaging with employees to understand their experience of housing in the City:

- More than half of employees rent their homes and c. 50 % of these are reporting paying housing costs that are stretching their household finances, most affecting those earning up to c. £40,000.
- 80% of respondents who are currently renting expressed interest in housing to rent at Begbroke with the majority of these currently living in the City Centre.
- Of those interested in renting at Begbroke, a significant majority earn less than £45,000 and (using standard affordability tests) could not afford to rent or buy on the open market but are not currently living in affordable housing.
- There is concern at the cost of housing and it is proving challenging financially for many – the greatest dissatisfaction of staff who rent are sharers and single households.
- Renters are four times more likely to report dissatisfaction than owner occupiers with two thirds of families reporting being at least moderately stretched on housing costs.
- Many respondents who could be on the Housing Waiting List have not registered yet – but as recognised in the HENA as the private rental stock continues to reduce and become less affordable there will be a reversion unless alternatives are provided
- Many others are likely to have been assessed as being in need of social/affordable rent housing for the purposes of the HENA.
- There are households who are commuting into the City who may consider living in Begbroke, enabling this group to make more sustainable transport choices – ensuring the right homes are provided for these groups is important.
- A large proportion of households have a positive view of renting at Begbroke, at a discounted rent.

5.34 The survey supports the HENA and the Waiting List data, reinforcing the lack of available and affordable housing within the City. Many individuals are living in unsuitable housing situations which could be addressed through the provision of a high quality, professionally managed discounted market rental product. The potential to deliver at a meaningful scale in the City is limited but the potential on the BID site is real and meaningful. The Applicant is able to deliver on this. The engagement with employees who would qualify for affordable rental homes

indicates they would make the choice to move from the City to BID to meet their needs and the University is committed to supporting this.

- 5.35 Lettings protocols at BID could enable linkages between lettings at Begbroke with release of housing in the City. In turn this would release housing in the City centre for those whose need is focused there. Failure to pre-empt and proactively address these needs risks reversion to the Housing Waiting List, as the HENA warned.

Conclusion

- 5.36 The transition from the SHMA to the HENA evidence shows how the patterns of affordable need within Oxford are evolving with affordability challenges and supply constraint. The HENA is a recent document but ongoing market factors such as persistent inflation, house price changes, mortgage availability and changes to the PRS will be further impacting housing need in the City.
- 5.37 These market changes are increasing the emphasis on the intermediate market as households who would previously rely on the PRS as a stop gap before purchasing are experiencing pressures on their ability to rent and then transition to the market sale sector. This pressure in the up to £45,000 income range is supported by the detailed worker survey conducted by the applicant as well as being a factor expressed by the HENA.
- 5.38 A site the size of BID must consider the range of needs which are within the existing local market, consider those which will be created by the development and make a significant contribution to meeting the evidenced Oxford City housing need.
- 5.39 A key challenge relates to the provision of social rented and affordable rented tenures. Whilst there is need in Oxford City, evidence from the waiting list and CBL systems suggests this is very locationally sensitive with the number of waiting list applicants seeking outlying locations low, whilst choice based bid numbers are very modest for properties outside of the city. This may be related to households in this need being unwilling to relocate away from their established social and work networks.
- 5.40 The worker survey suggests greater mobility of households in the intermediate and above need categories, with a majority willing to relocate to affordable rented or sale products in the BID site location.
- 5.41 The package of new housing coming forward within the BID scheme must consider these patterns and ensure that the mix of affordable tenures meets needs, whilst providing a platform that maintains demand for these homes into the long term.

6 Housing Proposals

6.1 This Section of the **Housing Statement** provides an overview of the housing proposals at the Site. They seek to ensure the homes provided within the BID directly address the diverse unmet housing needs of Oxford City, ensuring this once in a generation opportunity delivers world class places of work and learning with an exceptional and unique residential neighbourhood.

Responding to the Vision

6.2 BID will bring a wide range of benefits that will exceed those that would be delivered on the basis of a stringent application of a policy that is evidenced to be out of date and now poorly related to the vision and strategic objectives for the Site or the actual requirements of those in housing need.

6.3 The Proposed Development provides an opportunity to make a meaningful difference to the housing choices available for those in housing need in Oxford, to help the existing stock be used more efficiently and effectively and, through the tenures and types of homes offered, provide the foundations for a sustainable community. The scale of opportunity, the relationship to the existing Science Park and the direct involvement of Oxford University means that the opportunity at BID can offer something different and more appropriate, compared with the other sites allocated in Cherwell.

6.4 Against this background, the housing proposals for BID have been shaped to deliver a mix of tenures and types of homes that prioritise Oxford's unmet housing ensuring:

- The diverse existing and future needs of Oxford are met;
- Oxford's world class economy, university and local employment base is supported;
- Ongoing economic growth is supported;
- Connections between the University Business Park and the City are reinforced;
- A range of household incomes are provided for;
- A new mixed, balanced and cohesive community is created; and
- The best use of the existing housing within Oxford City is enabled.

6.5 Section 5 of this **Housing Statement** has introduced the recent HENA along with evidence from the housing market, the Housing Waiting List, the Choice Based Lettings and from engagement with workers in the City of Oxford to understand their experience of housing. Together this reinforces that for the BID site the housing proposals can go further and offer a housing solution that is more meaningful to those with unmet needs in Oxford - the reason the PR8 site was allocated.

Housing Proposals

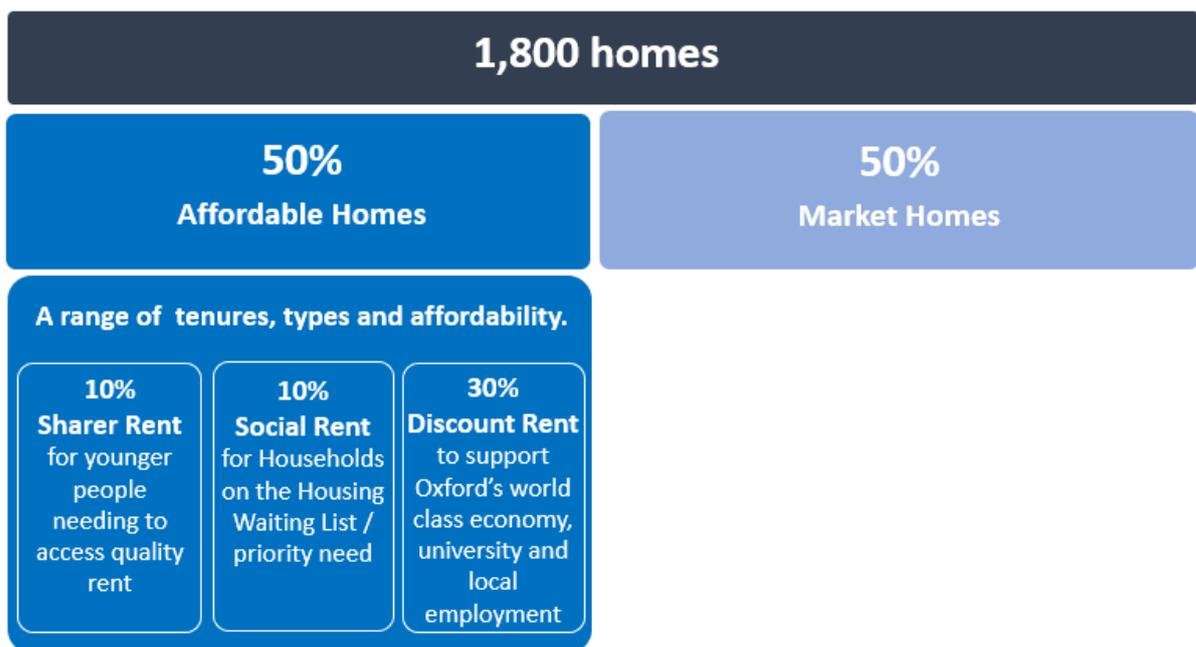
Overall Quantum of Residential Development

- 6.1 The Proposed Development would play a significant role in helping ease sources of pressure on the Oxford housing market. The Application proposes up to 215,000sqm GEA of residential floorspace, which is anticipated to deliver circa 1,800 new dwellings, though the precise number of homes coming forward in the Site will be the subject of future Development Area Briefs and Reserved Matters Applications.
- 6.2 The **Planning Statement** concludes that, along with the Hallam Land Scheme, the number of homes will exceed the minimum anticipated and the proposals will make the best use of the land in accordance with Policy PR8 and Policy BSC2.

Affordable Housing

- 6.3 The Applicant can commit to 50% Affordable Housing on the basis of a specific range of tenures and types of homes across a range of affordability.

Figure 4 – Overview of Housing Proposals



- 6.4 Additional details on the composition of these homes are set out below.

Social Rent

- 6.5 Of the homes to be provided, 10% are proposed to be social rent tenure provided by a Registered Provider and distributed throughout the scheme. Rental levels will be set in accordance with Central Government guidance.
- 6.6 These homes will comprise the most affordable homes available to households on the City Council's Housing Waiting List. On the basis of 1,800 new homes this would see delivery of 180 new social rent homes as part of the development. This quantum of delivery needs to be

viewed in the context of the current quantum of social rent housing locally, how this will change as the other PR sites are brought forward each with 40% social rent i.e. c. 980 additional social rent homes and in the context of there currently being c. 1% of the current waiting list with a link to postcode OX5 i.e. just 41 registrants.

- 6.7 The proposed quantum of social rent, at 10% of total homes, maintains the tenure split across the south of Cherwell, provides the foundations for a vibrant, inclusive, mixed community whilst also ensuring that the pace of delivery can be maintained.

Sharer Rent

- 6.8 Up to 10% of all the homes are to be provided as sharer accommodation. These are homes that recognise the very specific housing requirements linked to the University and other key employers, which can provide a critical 'landing pad' on shorter tenancy terms for individuals who may be more transient or between tenures, helping to avoid disruption of the housing market. Rents will be set to ensure affordability to lower income households, i.e., those earning £20,000 to 40,000 and lettings/nominations policies will be agreed.
- 6.9 This provides a positive response to the specific housing needs and the challenges present in the City. The concentration of sharer accommodation in the City at c. 20% is a concern due to the wider impacts this is having on the existing communities and the housing offer, however, it is similarly recognised that for many this is the only available housing solution and that suppressing supply with no alternative is failing to address the City's housing needs.

Discount Rent

- 6.10 30% of homes are to be provided as discount rent on the basis of a range of discounts between 50-80% of market rent. The rental offer will include a range of unit sizes from studios up to family homes, responding to identified needs.
- 6.11 The homes will be of a high quality, professionally managed, providing reassurances on costs to tenants and ensuring energy efficiency – all real concerns for many households in housing need in the City who are not moving to meet their needs because of both the lack of availability and lack of affordability of rental homes.
- 6.12 The chronic shortage of rental homes is a growing problem and one that if not addressed positively, professionally and proactively the HENA warns will see reversion of these needs to the housing waiting lists, further compounding the housing challenges faced by the City.
- 6.13 Additional details can be provided on the pricing, terms and tenures of these homes but the focus would be to target households who are unable to afford to rent or buy on the open market in the City and who are employed in the City. Like many major employers in the City, Oxford University, which is responsible for c.21,000 employees for many of whom the City is their home, the depth and breadth of the City's housing challenges is a critical concern and the University is committed to achieving meaningful change.
- 6.14 The Planning Statement concludes the delivery of 50% of housing on the Site as affordable housing would accord with Policy PR8 and the make-up of this provision to include social rent, discount market rent and key worker housing is in line with the expectations of Policy PR2.

Unit Size Mix

- 6.15 A range of unit sizes will be delivered in accordance with the stated unit mix ranges which include for 20-50% family homes as summarised in **Table 2** below:

Table 2 - Unit mix ranges

Unit type	Studio/1 bedroom	2 bedroom	3 bedroom	4+ bedroom
Range	20-40%	30-40%	15-30%	5-20%

- 6.16 The **Planning Statement** concludes that this unit mix range ensures a mixed and balanced community is delivered, whilst also meeting the specific needs of both the affordable and market tenures consistent with policy.

Lettings and Nominations

- 6.17 Social Rent homes will be delivered by a Registered Provider and will be subject to nominations from the City Council's Housing Waiting List with priority for existing residents in the City or postcode OX5 on the transfer list.
- 6.18 Sharer Rent and Discount Rent homes will be subject to a lettings protocol to be agreed with the Council targeting qualifying University workers ensuring a positive response to the specific pressures within the City of Oxford.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 This Housing Statement has been prepared in support of the Proposed Development. It explains the policy context in which the Site is coming forward for development and the very specific requirement to meet Oxford's unmet housing needs.
- 7.2 The Applicant, OUD, is a joint venture partnership bringing together the land, vision and opportunities of Oxford University with the investment and development management skills of Legal & General ('L&G') to form a unique partnership. That partnership was established to ensure that Oxford continues to be a global leader in innovation and a City that supports its population by providing a genuine choice of housing. The resulting housing proposals will ensure the homes provided within the BID address directly the diverse unmet housing needs of Oxford City, ensuring this once in a generation opportunity combines world class places of work and learning with an exceptional and unique residential neighbourhood.
- 7.3 The impact of current housing constraints are far reaching, affecting key life decisions such as moving in with a partner, having a family, forcing households to have to commute or live in shared accommodation too small for their needs. In Oxford the limited housing choice means the existing housing stock is often not utilised most efficiently and effectively – the delivery of the right tenures and types of homes in the right places offers the potential to help to address these long-standing challenges.
- 7.4 Through the development of BID there is an opportunity to make a meaningful difference to the housing choices available for those in housing need in Oxford, to help the existing stock be used more efficiently and effectively and through the tenures and types of homes provides the foundations for a community of the future. The scale of opportunity, the relationship to the existing Science Park and the direct involvement of Oxford University means what it can do in response to Oxford's needs is different to the other sites allocated in Cherwell.
- 7.5 This **Housing Statement** has described how the housing proposals have been shaped to deliver a mix of tenures and types of homes that prioritise Oxford's unmet housing ensuring:
- The diverse existing and future needs of Oxford are met;
 - Oxford's world class economy, university and local employment base is supported;
 - Ongoing economic growth is supported;
 - Connections between the University Business Park and the City are reinforced;
 - A range of household incomes are provided for;
 - A new mixed, balanced and cohesive community is created; and
 - The best use of the existing housing within Oxford City is enabled.
- 7.6 The proposed housing can be summarised as:

- Up to 215,000 m2 residential GEA to provide for c. 1800 new homes;
- 50% Affordable Housing - affordable to a range of incomes to include social rent, sharer and discount market rent tenures;
- A range of unit sizes delivered in accordance with the stated unit mix ranges which include for 20-50% family homes;
- Lettings and nominations provisions to ensure affordable homes are prioritised for existing residents in the City either through the Council's transfer waiting list or through employment connections led by Oxford University helping to enable more efficient and effective use of City's housing;
- A commitment to the delivery of affordable high quality, professionally managed, energy efficient rental homes; and
- The foundations for a vibrant, integrated and inclusive community.

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