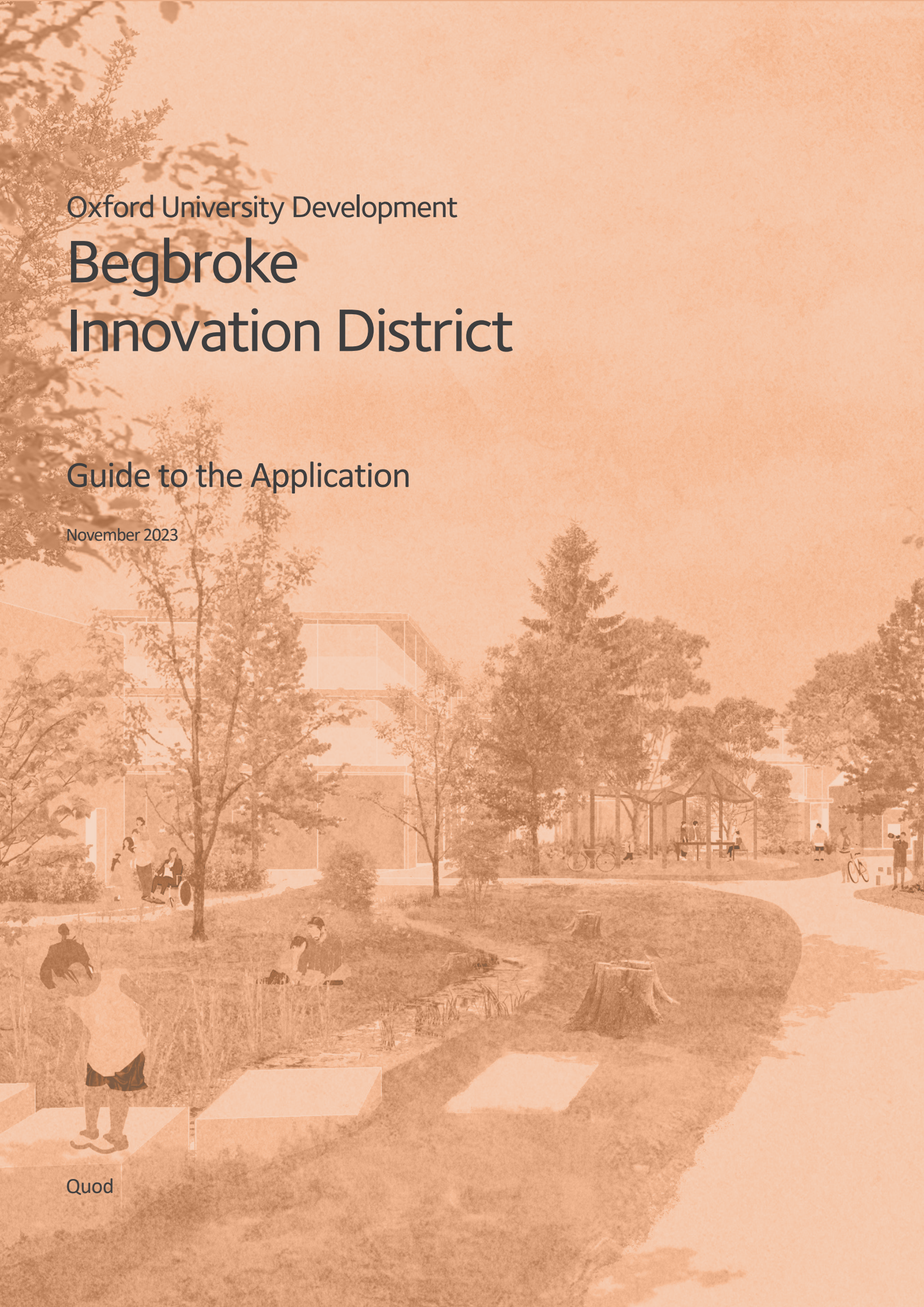


Oxford University Development

Begbroke Innovation District

Guide to the Application

November 2023



Quod

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1 Introduction

In July 2023, Oxford University Development ('OUD') submitted an application for outline planning permission for the Begbroke Innovation District (planning application reference no. 23/02098/OUT) to Cherwell District Council ('CDC').

- 1.1 Following submission of the outline planning application ('OPA') a number of consultation comments have been received from statutory consultees and the public. One of the consistent points of feedback we have received from the public is that the application contains a lot of plans and reports and that it can be difficult to navigate.
- 1.2 The size of the OPA is necessary to provide CDC with the information it needs to properly consider the proposals, but it also reflects the scale of OUD's ambition and desire to be as robust as possible. This document provides a succinct guide to the OPA to make clear what OUD is applying for and what it would deliver.
- 1.3 OUD have a strong, clear vision for delivering Begbroke Innovation District that has underpinned the preparation of the OPA. This Guide to the Application briefly sets out that vision to help provide further context. It also sets out what changes have been made to the OPA in response to comments received from consultees since submission to CDC in summer 2023.

Aerial view of the Site



2 Begbroke Innovation District: The Vision

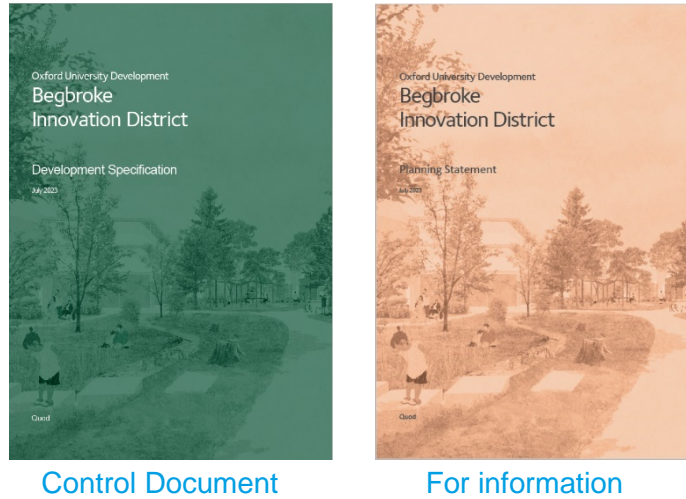
- 2.1 The allocation of the Site in the Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 Partial Review: Meeting Oxford's Unmet Housing Needs provides at least 3 significant opportunities:
 - To expand Begbroke Science Park, the only science park wholly-owned by Oxford University;
 - To deliver housing to help meet Oxford's unmet need; and
 - Deliver new open spaces and high quality green infrastructure.
- 2.2 The risk, however, is that without a clear vision these opportunities could be missed: a new science park that is cut off and inward looking; bland new houses that deliver little place-making; and open spaces that don't allow people and nature to thrive.
- 2.3 OUD's Vision is to deliver an exemplary, sustainable development that realises the full potential of the Site and the planning allocation.
- 2.4 The Science Park will grow to be an intrinsic and complementary component of the new neighbourhood. The lines between commercial and domestic buildings will be deliberately blurred to create a place with innovation at its heart and where activity and footfall will create a vibrant local centre for the benefit of all.
- 2.5 Housing will be provided to help tackle the root causes of the unaffordability crisis in Oxford and surrounding areas, whilst also delivering happy and healthy communities that foster neighbourliness. New homes will be provided with the social and physical infrastructure to build a thriving, cohesive community, including new schools, spaces for sport, leisure and play, retail opportunities, and community spaces.
- 2.6 Sustainability is at the heart of OUD's Vision. All new buildings will be operationally net zero and make use of modern technology to cut carbon and significantly lower emissions. A movement network will be delivered within the Site that provides high quality options for walking, cycling and using public transport. Contributions will be made to improve transport infrastructure outside of the Site, helping ease congestion in the area.
- 2.7 For open spaces, OUD intend to deliver a mosaic of spaces and habitats that will provide opportunities for recreation and enjoyment as well as for nature to recover and thrive.

3 Application Summary

Format of the Application

- 3.1 OUD has submitted an Outline Planning Application. This is a standard approach for large developments that will be built out over a number of years, such as the Begbroke Innovation District ('BID'). This is because a degree of flexibility is needed to ensure that as the development is built-out over a number of years, it can respond to changing social, economic and market circumstances. Providing flexibility now ensures that future decisions can reflect the most up-to-date evidence, technologies, and best practices.
- 3.2 OUD's approach to the OPA is to establish a framework that will guide the future development of the Site. The framework put forward by the OPA comprises the following plans and documents:
- **Development Specification;**
 - The following **Parameter Plans**:
 - **Parameter Plan 1 – Development Areas;**
 - **Parameter Plan 2 – Maximum Building Heights;**
 - **Parameter Plan 3 – Green Infrastructure;**
 - **Parameter Plan 4 – Access and Movement;**
 - **Strategic Design Guide;**
 - **Framework Site Wide Travel Plan;**
 - **Framework Construction Traffic Management Plan;**
 - **Framework Delivery and Servicing Management Plan;**
 - **Framework Energy and Sustainability Strategy;**
 - **Framework Lighting Strategy;**
 - **Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan;**
 - **Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan;**
 - **Operational Waste Management Plan;**
 - **Site Waste Management Plan; and**
 - **Outline Drainage Strategy.**
- 3.3 Collectively, these documents and plans ensure that essential commitments and mitigation are in place – such as a 20% net gain in biodiversity, and delivering operationally net zero carbon buildings - whilst allowing the masterplan to evolve over time and respond to continued community engagement. They are known as the **Control Documents**.

3.4 The other documents submitted with the OPA are for illustrative purposes (such as the Illustrative Masterplan) and/or to assess the proposals (such as the Environmental Statement). The application documents have different coloured cover pages to help make clear what is a Control Document and what is for illustration or information only.



A tiered approach

3.5 A ‘standard’ approach is for an outline planning permission (‘OPP’) to be followed by detailed planning applications – also known as ‘reserved matters’ applications. For BID, however, an additional step is proposed. Rather than proceeding to submit reserved matters applications directly after the determination of the outline application, the application will now follow a three-tiered approach as illustrated by the diagram below:

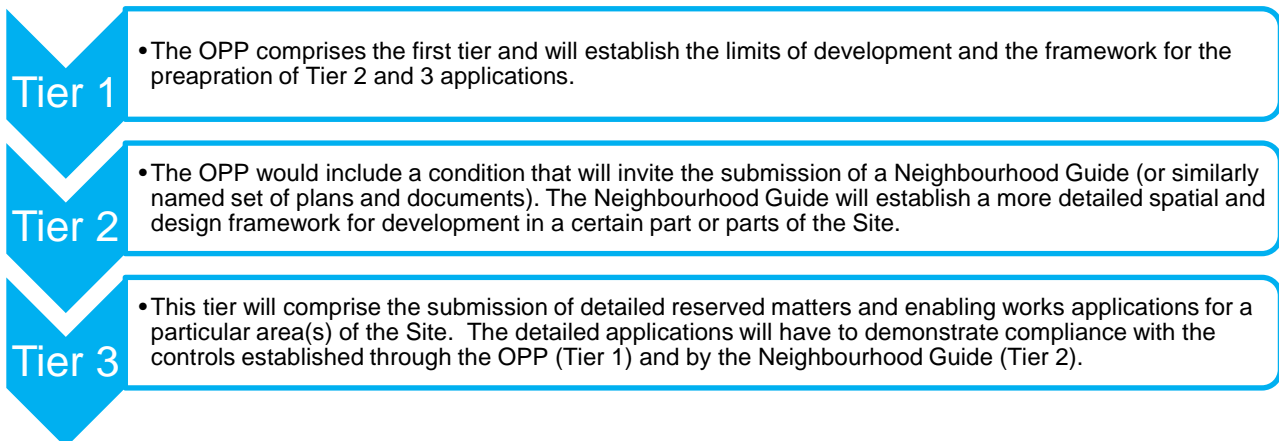


Figure 1 - Summary of tiered approach

3.6 This approach allows the plans for the development to evolve over time to best suit the needs of the local population, whilst maintaining a consistent commitment to quality. Flexibility is important for a project in this size, especially in the context of the delivery of new homes on other ‘PR’ sites. This allows decisions to be made based on contemporary information, rather than being held to rigid plans that could quickly date. The covid-19 pandemic is a good example of an event that has shifted behavioural patterns, and it is right that development plans should be able to respond accordingly. For the OPA this means points of detail that might otherwise be expected in an outline planning application, are ‘reserved’ and will be provided in Tiers 2 or 3.

4 Outline Application Proposals

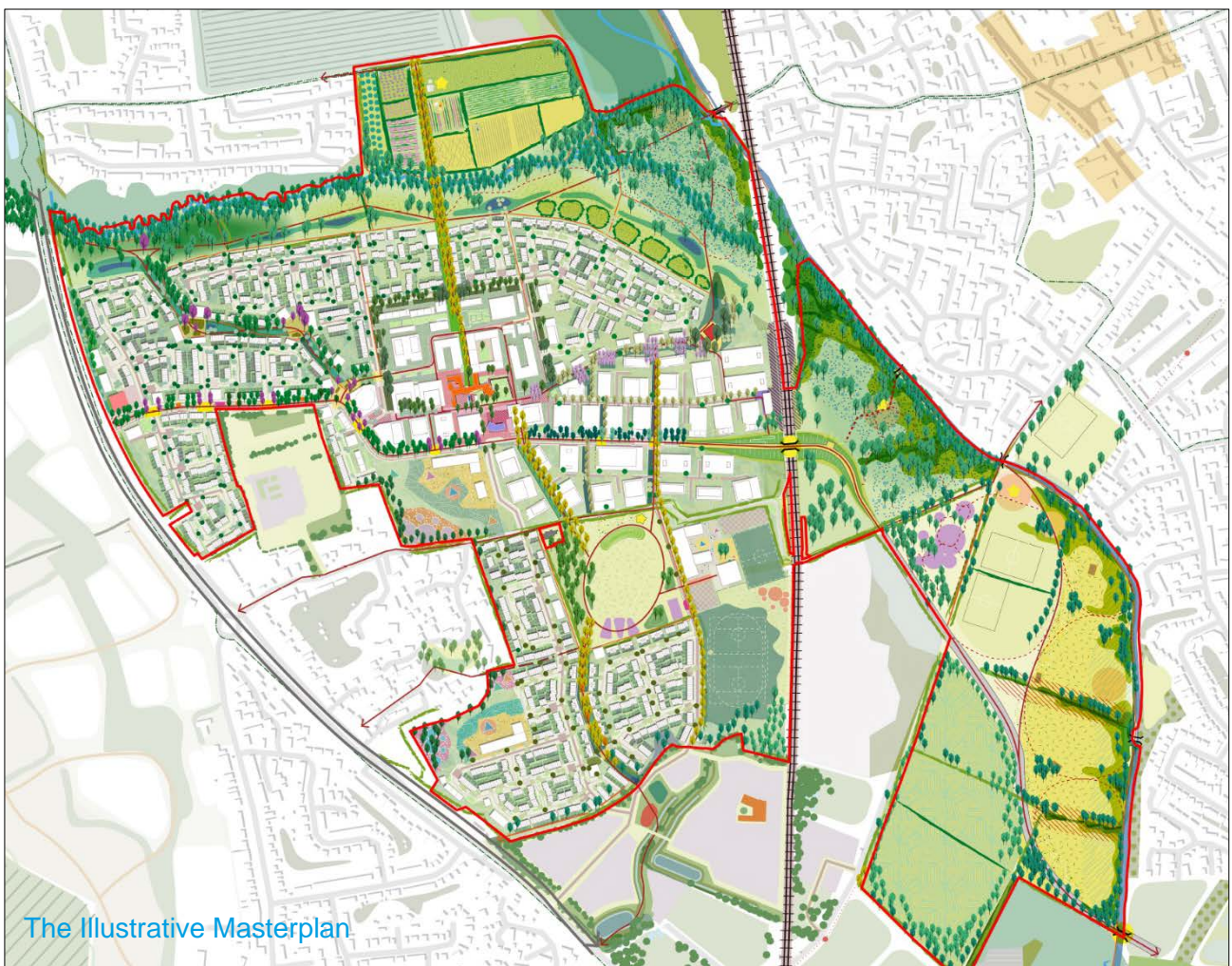
Context

- 4.1 The Site comprises the majority of land allocated in the Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 Partial Review: Meeting Oxford's Unmet Housing Need ('LPP1PR') under Policy PR8. Policy PR3 of that Plan had the effect of removing 111.8 hectares of land within the policy area from the green belt. No further land would be removed from the green belt, nor would there be any inappropriate development on the green belt as a result of the OPA.
- 4.2 The LPP1PR is based on an understanding that whilst they remain separate, distinctive communities, there are many inter-dependencies between Cherwell and Oxford. Oxford is a globally renowned university city that plays a major role in the local, regional and national economy. There is high demand from people and businesses to be in Oxford and surrounding areas, including Kidlington and Yarnton.
- 4.3 The price of this, however, is that Oxford and surrounding communities are some of the most expensive places to live in the country. This phenomenon is aggravated by Oxford's inability to deliver the scale of housing required to meet its needs. The consequence is a severely pressured housing market that provides a poor choice for people who want to live there, or worse still prevents them from living close to their place of work or social connections entirely.
- 4.4 The Site is also home to Begbroke Science Park, which hosts a unique mixture of Oxford University teaching space and commercial research and development premises. This unique mix has led to some of the most exciting developments in science and technology there have been in recent years. Oxford Nanopore started life at Begbroke Science Park produces genome sequencing technologies and listed as one of the largest Initial Public Offerings that the London Stock Exchange has ever seen.

The Proposed Development

- 4.5 A full description of the Proposed Development is set out in the **Development Specification**. The **Design and Access Statement** is also helpful in setting out the approach to designing the **Illustrative Masterplan** and the underlying vision that supports it.
- 4.6 Below is a summary of the key components of BID:
 - **Expanding the Begbroke Science Park** to deliver world-class new premises where private research and development enterprises coexist with Oxford University faculty space and foster the growth of the local, regional and UK economy;

- **New housing including 50% affordable housing** to help address the chronic unaffordability of living in or near Oxford. The housing will include a mix of homes for social and intermediate rent, as well as open market sale. Whilst some housing will be for staff of the University, there will be no student housing;
- **A new local centre that is open to all** and which will offer opportunities for shopping, eating and drinking out, and other cultural activities;
- **New transport links** that prioritise and create space for people and planting.
- **Open space and play facilities.** Approximately half of the Site will be delivered as open space. New trails, woodland, meadows and marshes would be delivered. The historic landfill will be remediated and delivered as a new civic park. Access will be open to all, save for where it is restricted to benefit nature recovery.
- **A 20% net gain in biodiversity.** This will be delivered entirely on-Site and will contribute to strengthening the green infrastructure network and improving the resilience of nearby ecological assets.



5 Updates to the Outline Planning Application

5.1 Following the submission of the OPA in July 2023, valuable feedback has been provided by the public, stakeholders, and statutory and non-statutory consultees. This has allowed us to reflect on and refine the OPA to ensure that it is as good as it can be. Several of the OPA documents and plans have been updated in response to feedback provided, and some further information is provided in response to requests from consultees. A summary of the documents and plans that have been updated is provided in **Table 1** below.

Table 1 - Updated Plans and Documents

Updated Document or Plan	Reason for update
Parameter Plan 1: Development Zones (Rev P2)	Following comments made by Oxfordshire County Council ('OCC') Schools Property School Sites team (set out in OCC's consolidated response dated 02 October 2023), the boundary of the 2FE primary school has been altered slightly. The effect is to move the western boundary of the primary school further away from the A44, which helps to improve the noise and air quality of the site. Parameter Plan 1 shows the boundaries of the school sites, and so has been updated accordingly.
Parameter Plan 3: Green Infrastructure (Rev P2)	As above.
Parameter Plan 4: Access and Movement (Rev P2)	Following comments from the OCC Public Health team, an additional indicative pedestrian and cyclist access point has been added to the south of the Site. Whilst the access points shown on this parameter plan are indicative and not intended to limit the points of non-vehicular access to the Site, this update makes clear that such a connection can be made in this location.
Strategic Design Guide (November 2023)	The Strategic Design Guide has been updated in response to comments made by the Thames Valley Police Secure by Design Officer (dated 04 September 2023). Principles 3.4.5, 3.6.12, 3.8.3, and 4.6 RD3 have been updated and new design principles are added into section 3.11 and 4.1.
Development Specification (November 2023)	In response to comments made by Natural England (dated 27 September 2023) and by the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust ('BBOWT') (dated 18 August 2023), an update has been made to Development Principle 14.3 to provide greater certainty that the Local Nature Reserve will buffer the Rushy Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest ('SSSI'). Minor clarifications have also been made to Development Principles 14.2 and 14.3 to make clearer that the delivery of the Local Nature Reserve

	would be wholly in addition to the delivery of the Nature Conservation Area.
Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan ('LEMP') (November 2023)	In response to comments made by Natural England (dated 27 September 2023) and by the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust ('BBOWT') (dated 18 August 2023), an update has been made to paragraphs 39 and 49 to increase the requirement to provide a vegetation buffer adjacent to the Rushy Meadows SSSI from 15m to 20m.
Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan ('CEMP') (November 2023)	Section 9 of the Outline CEMP has been updated to reflect recommendations made by the Oxfordshire Badger Group.
Framework Lighting Strategy (November 2023)	In response to a comment made by a member of the public, the maximum permissible lighting colour temperature has been lowered from 3000K to 2700K. This is reflected in section 6 of the Strategy.
Health Impact Assessment (November 2023)	In response to comments from the OCC Public Health team, the Health Impact Assessment has been updated. The updates include greater detail on how walking and cycling transport options will be incorporated, to more clearly account for users of the canal towpath, and to more clearly assess the health impacts (positive and negative) of the development on vulnerable population groups.
Environmental Statement Addendum (November 2023)	<p>An Environmental Statement ('ES') Addendum (November 2023) has been prepared. This is to cover three things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of additional baseline archaeological trial trenching information following the completion of such works at land to the east of the railway. A new ES Appendix 8.4(B): Trial Trenching Report has also been provided. <p>Review the validity of technical assessments provided in the ES in the context of the minimal design updates described above. It considers whether changes to national legislation and policy are material to the OPA</p> <p>Minor updates have been made to the Non-Technical Summary to reflect the additional information provided.</p>

5.2 In addition to the above updates, new information has been prepared or responses provided to consultees. These include:

- In response to OCC Highways:

- A **Highways Technical Note**: OCC Highways requested that further transport modelling is carried out in two respects: firstly, to further test the implementation of bus priority measures along the A44 between Begbroke roundabout and Cassington roundabout; and secondly to carry out scenario testing that considers a delayed closure of the Sandy Lane level crossing by Network Rail.
- A **Rail Station Design** plan that demonstrates that a rail station/rail halt can be feasibly delivered on land to the north of Sandy Lane; and
- An **Innovation Plan** that sets out how the OPA has incorporated and allowed for innovation.
- In response to Active Travel England:
 - An **Active Travel England Toolkit** has been prepared. This signposts to the ways in which the OPA will support the delivery of active travel infrastructure.
 - A **written response to Active Travel England** has also been prepared to respond to numerous queries raised by them.
- In response to OCC acting as the Lead Local Flood Authority ('LLFA'):
 - A **written to response to the LLFA** was provided on 31 October 2023.

5.3 In addition to the above, OUD has been working with National Highways ('NH') to address comments raised in their consultation response (dated 05 September 2023). NH's comments amount to a request to reference Department for Transport Circular 01/2022 and for additional assessment of residual transport impacts on the Strategic Road Network ('SRN'). Paragraph 45 of that Circular states:

"Where development proposals are fully in accordance with an up-to-date development plan, considerations at planning application stage in respect of impacts on the SRN will normally be limited to agreeing the final form and phasing of any supporting infrastructure (where required), measures to reduce the need to travel by private car and any relevant environmental impacts."

5.4 As stated above, the OPA is made pursuant to an allocation in the LPP1PR. The LPP1PR was supported by a Strategic Transport Assessment (July 2017) that considered the potential impacts from all the planned growth allocated by the LPP1PR. The OPA is well within the parameters tested through that Strategic Transport Assessment. OUD will of course continue to engage with National Highways to address their comments and resolve any outstanding issues, but the requirement for additional SRN modelling is not considered to be fully justified at this point.

Responses from key stakeholders

5.5 Responses to the OPA have been received from Yarnton Parish Council, Begbroke Parish Council and Kidlington Parish Council as well as from neighbours of the scheme and other nearby residents. Many of the comments raised similar issues, which have been grouped thematically below and responded to.

Housing

- 5.6 There is some concern that the type of housing proposed will not address Oxford’s unmet housing needs. The **Housing Strategy** describes how the housing proposals have been shaped to deliver a mix of tenures and types of homes that prioritise Oxford’s unmet housing. The scale of the challenge is substantial; made more difficult by the multitudinous sources of market pressure that make Oxford one of the most constrained and unaffordable places to live in the country. There is however a significant opportunity to meaningfully address this challenge through the development of BID. The housing proposals have been shaped to grasp this opportunity and deliver a range of housing that can effectively deliver a vibrant, integrated and inclusive community that relieves sources of pressure on Oxford’s housing market.
- 5.7 The housing offer is summarised below in **Figure 2**. Half of all homes would be for-sale homes on the open market. The remaining c. 900 affordable homes would fall within the definition set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. Whilst there are plans to deliver housing for those employed by the University and other key workers, there are no proposals for student accommodation within BID, and the development itself, including its many amenities and open spaces, would be available to all.

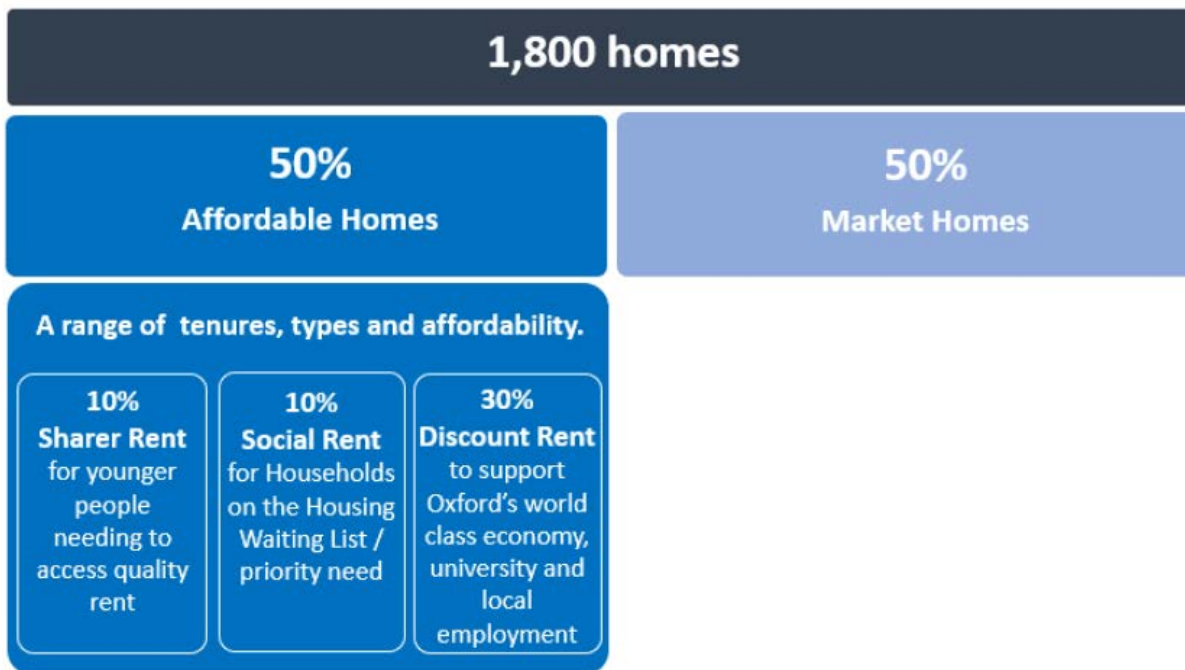


Figure 2 - Housing proposal summary

- 5.8 A range of unit sizes is put forward in the **Development Specification** and recreated below.

Table 2 - Site wide unit mix ranges

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

- 5.9 The housing strategy is based on up to date evidence prepared both by CDC and Oxford City Council as set out in the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment 2022 and on evidence that has been prepared by Oxford University. This constitutes an improvement on the LPP1PR, which is based on the 2014 Strategic Housing Market Assessment ('SHMA'). Whilst the conclusions of the SHMA remain valuable, it is right that planning applications should seek to utilise the most up to date sources of evidence available, as the OPA does.

Flooding and drainage

- 5.10 OUD understands that one of the main concerns of the local community is the flooding and drainage issues. OUD has engaged with the Yarnton Flood Group and the Lead Local Flood Authority on the issue and worked to put forward a strategy that will strive to not only maintain existing drainage levels, but provide an improvement on the current situation.
- 5.11 The approach to surface water management is set out in the **Outline Drainage Strategy**. It puts forward an approach that utilises sustainable drainage systems ('SuDS') to store, infiltrate and attenuate water flows before discharging them to a watercourse or sewer. Detailed and area-specific strategies will be put forward through Tier 2 and 3 submissions. The Outline Drainage Strategy will require those detailed strategies to ensure that discharge rates do not exceed the existing greenfield runoff rates.
- 5.12 Using attenuation features such as swales, ditches and geocellular storage will provide the opportunity to better manage and regulate the flow of surface water, providing a greater element of control when the risk of flood events is increased. This presents an improvement on the existing situation, where the flow of surface water is unregulated and uncontrolled.

Sandy Lane

- 5.13 Network Rail are seeking to close the level crossing to allow improvements to the Oxford-Banbury rail line to occur (they are seeking to close several other nearby level crossings for the same reason). Through public consultation prior to submission of the OPA and from the responses made to it, OUD is keenly aware of the importance that Sandy Lane plays in connecting communities. For this reason, OUD has been seeking to work with Network Rail to identify a solution that will maintain a degree of east-west vehicular connectivity. At the point of submitting the OPA these discussions were ongoing, and they still are. OUD is committed to finding a solution and has safeguarded land within the masterplan for a bridge over the railway. The delivery of that bridge is, however, dependent on further joint working with the District and County Councils, and Network Rail.

Highways

- 5.14 The potential impact of BID on the local highway network has been robustly assessed, the findings of which are set out in the **Transport Assessment**. Underpinning this work has been leading on a joint transport modelling exercise with the County Council and other 'PR' site applicants. This has allowed a fine-grained understanding of the local

transport network and potential impacts to it, both as a result of the Proposed Development on its own, and cumulatively with other committed developments in the area.

- 5.15 The approach to transport has been to firstly mitigate potential highways impacts by reducing the number of people travelling by car to and from BID. This is achieved by delivering and contributing to high quality active and public transport infrastructure, and prioritising the movement of people rather than vehicles. Combining homes with places of work, schools, amenities, culture and leisure help reduce the need for people to travel longer distances to offsite locations, which are more likely to be made by car.
- 5.16 The result of this approach is that through the robust assessment outlined above, it has been concluded that traffic convenience will remain broadly similar when comparing the forecast situation 'with development' to the future baseline situation without it.

Ecology and biodiversity

- 5.17 Delivering exceptional open spaces and strengthening the green infrastructure network is a key component of the OPA. OUD have committed to delivering at least a 20% net gain in biodiversity within the Site, representing a significant benefit of the scheme. The ongoing management of the landscape and ecological features will be key to its long-term success. OUD has prepared an **Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan** ('LEMP') that sets out a framework of measures and commitments that will be carried through to detailed, area-specific LEMPs submitted through Tiers 2 and 3.
- 5.18 OUD acknowledges that one of the requirements of Part 20 of Policy PR8 is the preparation of a 'Biodiversity Improvement and Management Plan' ('BIMP'). The Outline LEMP plays the role of the BIMP (albeit by a different name) and meets many of the policy requirements, doing so in a way commensurate with the level of detail provided in the OPA. Like other Control Documents, the Outline LEMP sets out a framework of measures that will ensure high quality stewardship of ecological assets, whilst providing the necessary flexibility to accommodate future detailed proposals. Where details expected of the BIMP are not provided in the Outline LEMP, this is because it will be contained in Detailed LEMPs, submitted at Tiers 2 and 3. Details submitted through Tiers 2 and 3 will be the subject of further consultation and community engagement.

Community uses

- 5.19 The OPA proposes up to 5,600sqm of non-residential and leisure institutes (such as medical or health services, indoor sport or fitness facilities, and creches and/or nurseries); up to 1,200sqm GEA of halls and meeting places; as well as significant sports and play facilities. There have been some queries from the Parish Councils and local residents as to whether these community uses and amenities will be open and available to them, to which the answer is yes.

Construction

- 5.20 There is some understandable concern about the impacts of construction amongst local residents, particularly around traffic, noise and dust. A degree of disturbance is unfortunately inevitable. However, an **Outline Construction Environment Management Plan ('CEMP')** and an **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan ('CTMP')** have been prepared that set out best practice measures that will avoid the worst of the potential effects and mitigate them to an acceptable level.
- 5.21 It is anticipated that any outline planning permission issued for BID would include a condition requiring the submission to and approval of a detailed CEMP and CTMP by Cherwell District Council before any construction works commence. This will provide more precise details on the number of expected HGV movements, as well as measures to suppress noise and dust, and to avoid adverse impacts to items such as public rights of way and ecological features.



6 Next steps

Consultation

6.1 The OPA has been prepared following extensive consultation activities. You may have already expressed your views. Those views will still be taken into account by the Local Planning Authority in the determination of the OPA. Following the submission of the updated documents (set out above), Cherwell District Council will now ask for any further comments to be submitted.

Determination

6.2 The local planning authority are charged with making the formal decision as to whether to grant planning permission. If they do, they will impose conditions and secure a range of legal obligations with the applicant which will create the framework for the delivery of the Begbroke Innovation District.

Further consents

6.3 To ensure flexibility and deliverability of the development over a number of years, a three tiered approach is proposed to be taken forward for BID (see Figure 1). Following the grant of outline planning permission, the next stage will be to design more detailed enabling infrastructure and spatial plans for particular parts of the Site. This will be submitted for approval in due course, following further consultation. Tier 3 reserved matters submissions will then follow Tier 2.



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