
Representations on the Oxford Local Plan 2040 – Submission Draft

Regulation 19 Consultation – Nov 2023

On Behalf of

Christ Church

January 2024

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Executive Summary

Background

- i. These representations have been prepared on behalf of Christ Church (ChCh) in response to the Oxford City Local Plan 2040 Submission Draft Regulation 19 consultation.
- ii. ChCh is one of the largest Colleges in the University of Oxford as well as a major landowner in and around the City. Its property portfolio includes a full spectrum of buildings ranging from high quality listed buildings through to modern buildings. It also has retail, residential and commercial interests in the City as well as being an important tourist destination. It looks after the Christ Church Meadows, registered Park and Garden of Historic Interest, which are also important to biodiversity and the setting of Oxford. ChCh also runs an independent day school for pupils aged 3-13 – the Christ Church Cathedral School.
- iii. Its interests are therefore wide ranging covering the College, Cathedral and Cathedral School.
- iv. Overall ChCh generally supports the policies in the emerging Local Plan but has comments on the following matters which it considers need amending to ensure the plan is Sound:
 - a. The Vision
 - b. Spatial Strategy
 - c. Employment Strategy
 - d. Environmental Policies in Chapters 4 and 5
 - e. Chapter 6 on Heritage
- v. Suggestions are made to make the above policies sound and these will require modifications.
- vi. There are a number of policies that are supported but suggestions for minor modifications are proposed.
- vii. Lastly ChCh seeks the re-instatement of the site allocation policy for the Music Faculty campus, adjacent to Christ Church, St Aldates. This is included in the extant Local Plan but was deleted in the Submission Draft Plan, according to the HELAA, as the site was unlikely to come forward in the plan period. This is not the case and ChCh is looking to bring it forward for a Graduate Centre including student housing and academic facilities. The site can play a vital role in addressing part of the housing need in the City which is already below its identified need figure.

1. Introduction to Representations

1.1. Introduction

- 1.1.1. These representations have been prepared on behalf of Christ Church (ChCh) in response to the Oxford City Local Plan 2040 Submission Draft Regulation 19 (the LP40) consultation.
- 1.1.2. ChCh is one of the largest Colleges in the University of Oxford as well as a major landowner in and around the City. Its property portfolio includes a full spectrum of buildings ranging from high quality listed buildings (Grade 1 Cathedral) through to modern buildings. It also has retail, residential and commercial interests in the City as well as being an important tourist destination and the Cathedral has regular religious services for the wider Oxford community and Diocese. It also owns and looks after Christ Church Meadows, which are a registered Park and Garden of Historic Interest which are important to biodiversity and the setting of Oxford. ChCh also runs an independent day school for pupils aged 3-13 – the Christ Church Cathedral School.
- 1.1.3. ChCh has a number of wider investment and development interests across the City and outside of but on the edges of the City. These include retail, commercial and agricultural land as well as joint interests in current planning applications for residential led development to the north and west of the City. Its interests are therefore wide ranging and it is important to the future of Oxford.
- 1.1.4. Overall ChCh generally supports the emerging planning policies in the LP40 but has comments on the following matters which it considers need amending to ensure the plan is Sound. These include the Spatial Strategy which it considers does not go far enough to deal with the unmet housing need in Oxford. In addition, whilst the environmental policies are supported given the low level of development proposed in the plan the overall effect of these on Oxford as a whole will be minimal.

1.2. Previous Development Plan promotion

- 1.2.1. ChCh has submitted representations on the earlier stages of the emerging LP40, including the Preferred Options Consultation in September 2022 and the Issues Consultation in August 2021.
- 1.2.2. The responses provided previously cover the following matters:
- The benefits of the tourist market need to be highlighted.
 - Need to define how the aspirations to achieve net zero can be achieved.
 - The Plan period needs to be clearly defined.
 - There is a need to look beyond the Oxford City boundary and focus on the wider Oxfordshire area especially in relation to infrastructure and housing.
 - Seek a need for a joined up approach with other Oxfordshire districts is important.
 - Encouragement for policies that improve the Historic environment in terms of sustainability.
 - Seek a more flexible approach to the location of student accommodation.
 - Support for the allocation of sites within the West End area owned by ChCh.

1.3. Report Structure and Updates to National Policy

1.3.1. This report will consider the legal compliance of the plan and the duty to cooperate and then each element of the Submission Draft Plan in turn. Where issues are raised the representation will indicate which of the tests of soundness don't apply and also suggest how the policy should be amended to address the issues identified.

National Policy

1.3.1. We are aware that an update to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was issued on 19th December 2023. The LP40 document does not take account of the changes. We would expect the Council to review the revision and issue any changes needed. We therefore, reserve the right to amend our representations to reflect the new guidance and any changes the Council makes to the LP40 prior to submission for examination or subsequently.

1.3.2. It is noted that paragraph 1 of the updated NPPF reinforces the need for up-to-date plans which are seen as a "priority". Paragraph 15 refers to Plan-making and refers to the need to provide a positive vision for the future of an areas and a framework for meeting housing needs and addressing other economic, social and environmental priorities.

2. Legal Compliance and Duty to Cooperate

2.1 Legal Compliance

2.1.1 ChCh raises no issues with the legal compliance of the Plan.

2.2 Duty to Cooperate

2.2.1 Local planning authorities are bound by the statutory duty to co-operate within the Localism Act 2011 and also the national guidance set out in the NPPF December 2023. Plan making bodies are expected to co-operate with each other when preparing or supporting the preparation of policies which address strategic matters including those policies of Local Plans. The NPPF states that these authorities should produce, maintain and update one or more statements(s) of common ground throughout the plan-making process. The Statement of Common Ground will form part of the evidence required to demonstrate compliance with the duty to co-operate.

2.2.2 Paragraph 26 of the NPPF refers to such cooperation as being “*effective and on-going joint working*” as being integral to the production of a positively prepared and justified strategy.

2.2.3 Whilst the evidence demonstrates that the City Council is liaising with its neighbouring authorities and other organisations on a regular basis there appears to be no agreed solution to addressing key strategic matters, importantly, the unmet housing need identified in the LP40. This is identified as a key issue in the LP40 and to have no long term solution to it will undermine the objectives and aspirations for an inclusive and prosperous City. The solution identified in the 2036 Local Plan has been successful and sites are now coming forward. The LP40 covers part of the same plan period as the extant Local Plan, but there is no reference to this joint cooperation in the LP40.

2.2.4 Each successive local plan will be able to provide less and less housing as sites are used up and therefore needs to be addressed to ensure the City does not stagnate over this and subsequent plan periods.

2.2.5 The LP40 is proposing a number of measures to seek to maximise the ability to deliver housing in the City whilst balancing this against the need to bolster the economic success of the City and protect the local environment. A longer term solution to the unmet need is required and this appears to only be possible through cooperation with neighbouring authorities, unless the Oxford City boundary is amended or criteria over density and/or height of development are increased or if existing sites in other uses are redeveloped. ChCh will raise soundness issues with the Spatial Strategy on this theme as set out below.



3. Vision

Policy or Paragraph Reference	Legally Compliant?	Sound?	If Unsound it is because it is <u>not</u> :	
Vision, Objectives and Overarching Threads	Yes	No	Positively Prepared	X
			Justified	X
			Effective	
			Consistent with National Policy	

3.1 ChCh generally supports the Vision for Oxford but it does not address two key aspects, namely:

- i. The important role that the two Universities play in Oxford; and;
- ii. The acute housing need in the City.

3.2 On the first point, the Universities and Colleges play a fundamental role in the social, educational, tourism, and local economy of Oxford and indeed wider Oxfordshire as is noted in paragraph 3.4 of LP40. In addition the Universities and Colleges require a functioning ecosystem. Good schools are part of this and access to schools for visiting academics is important. The LP40 must encourage and support schools expand and enhance facilities as needed. These points should be recognised in the Vision.

3.3 On the second point the “chronic undersupply of housing” (paragraph 1.2 of the LP40) is acknowledged. However the Vision does not acknowledge this or set out any meaningful approach to addressing it. This is a fundamental element of the LP40 and the failure to address goes to the soundness of the plan. It is not positively prepared or justified.

3.4 The plan period covers the period 2020 - 2040. The extant Local Plan covers the period up to 2036 and therefore the LP40 only seeks a 4 year change to housing and employment numbers. Paragraph 22 of the NPPF states that Strategic Policies should “look ahead over a minimum 15 year period from adoption to anticipate and respond to long-term requirements and opportunities.” The LP40 meets this requirement based on the current LDS timetable for adoption by June 2025. However, if there is any slippage or delay in the timetable then the plan period may need to be extended to 2041 and the housing need increased accordingly.

3.5 In addition, ChCh notes that paragraph 22 of the NPPF also refers to a Vision looking over a longer term (30 year) horizon (the NPPF states this is where larger scale development is proposed to take account of likely timescales for delivery). Whilst this is not a requirement for the LP40 given the lack of large scale development proposals, it is considered important in setting out how the City envisages Oxford’s housing and employment needs being delivered over the longer term given its inability to meet its identified housing need.



3.6 This longer term, joined up, approach was being taken in the, now abandoned, Oxfordshire 2050 Spatial Strategy and one that ChCh encourages the City to take in its LP40 document.

3.7 ChCh supports the objectives for the Plan, in particular the recognition of the vital role Oxford City Centre plays for tourism and the contribution this makes to the local economy.

3.8 ChCh supports the Overarching Thread to reduce inequalities across the City. However, the two elements that the Plan does not address in full are housing, as discussed above, and infrastructure/transport (partly because this is for the County Council). For example, the measures introduced by the City and County Councils (Zero Emissions Zone and the proposed bus gates) severely restrict access to the City Centre but favour those that can afford electric vehicles. These can often be out of reach, financially, for many people living and working in Oxford. In addition, reduced car parking standards, particularly zero parking will discriminate against those people that rely on a car for work purposes, ie those that need to carry tools or supplies or those that work “anti-social” hours (for example support/facilities/security and domestic staff). The policies need to include flexibility to provide an inclusive society. This theme will be picked up in the polices later in this submission.

Suggested Amendment(s)
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. In order to address the Soundness issues the following changes are:2. Include reference to University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University in the Vision as below: “...to innovate, learn and enable businesses, the University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University to prosper...”3. Amend the Vision to refer to “addressing the housing needs in Oxford by making efficient use of land in the City and working collaboratively with neighbouring authorities to address any shortfalls in housing delivery and supporting infrastructure.”4. Extend the Vision to consider Oxford beyond the plan period, for example up to 2050 to provide a longer term vision for dealing with housing, economic, infrastructure and environmental issues. Cross border joined up thinking/cooperation is required.



4. Spatial Strategy

Policy or Paragraph Reference	Legally Compliant?	Sound?	If Unsound it is because it is <u>not</u> :	
Spatial Strategy Policy S1	Yes	No	Positively Prepared	X
			Justified	X
			Effective	X
			Consistent with National Policy	

- 4.1 The LP40 acknowledges that there is an undersupply of housing in the City. The text at paragraph 1.2 of the LP40 states "...The role of this new Local Plan is to build upon the positive aspects that make the city so special, whilst also addressing the challenges we face through positive planning policies...."
- 4.2 The Spatial Strategy policy S1 does not set out a spatial strategy especially in how it will deal with housing and the unmet housing need identified.
- 4.3 The policy should be split in to two separate policies – one dealing with the Spatial Strategy and one dealing with the Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development. Having one combined policy is not appropriate. The extant Local Plan follows this approach.
- 4.4 A spatial strategy should set out how the proposed development is to be delivered over the plan period and beyond. The Spatial Strategy in the adopted Local Plan 2036 refers to "addressing the housing issue is a key priority..." but does not set out a strategy for its delivery. There are references at the beginning of Chapter 8 of LP40 that are more akin to a spatial strategy but this is not referenced in policy S1.
- 4.5 The LP40 is relatively quiet on the unmet housing need. The plan period covers the period 2020-2040. The currently adopted Local Plan covers the period up to 2036 and therefore the LP40 only seeks a 4 year change to housing and employment numbers. The Council notes the surrounding Districts have already agreed to accommodate 14,300 homes or 715 per year up to 2036. These are included within adopted local plans and there are various planning applications under consideration to meet this need, some of which do seek consent for more housing than identified in the adopted local plan allocations. However, such increases are not currently ring fenced to count against the increasing Oxford City shortfall.
- 4.6 However, based on the housing need for Oxford of 16,828 homes up to 2040 (814 homes per year) and the lack of any greater level of agreement there is a shortfall of 2,528 dwellings over the plan period. This equates to circa 126 homes per year increase over the plan period. This may well increase due to the slow rate of delivery of the already identified housing allocations, (of those identified in various plans only two small sites in Cherwell District have only recently been granted resolutions to approve. Others are going through the planning system with at least one site currently at appeal.

- 4.7 It is acknowledged that Oxford is highly constrained and the LP40 has sought to maximise delivery over the plan period whilst taking account of the environmental, heritage and social constraints of the City. Without expanding its geographical area the LP40 cannot therefore provide for more housing. However, the concern is that there is no agreement in place with surrounding Authorities to address the identified unmet need and this will amplify the acute housing crisis facing the City to the detriment of the local economy and communities. As such the vision and objectives of the LP40 will not be achieved. This issue will become ever more acute over subsequent plan periods and a long term strategy should be set out now to ensure that Oxford can meet its full potential and meet the aims and objectives set out in the LP40 and beyond.
- 4.8 The Spatial Strategy should follow the approach in the extant Local Plan, ie maximising growth in the City and then adopt a hub and spokes approach – with the City being the focus for education, tourism and employment but having good infrastructure links into the surrounding Districts where housing is more readily deliverable. Paragraph 3.6 of the LP40 notes that “Oxford is the most sustainable location for employment in the county. It is easier to strengthen and develop the public and active transport systems to take people to jobs in the City rather than scatter employment to less sustainable locations.”
- 4.9 Significant investment has already been made to improve key transport corridors in anticipation of significant housing delivery on the edge of the City, for example the A44 corridor and A40/Park & Ride corridor improvements. The investment in such transport corridors should be capitalised in setting an overall spatial strategy for Oxford and Oxfordshire.
- 4.10 To achieve this there should be agreement(s) in place to accommodate the unmet housing need between the Oxfordshire authorities and for the surrounding Councils to agree to accommodate this modest level of additional housing need either by increasing density in the existing allocations, extensions to them or further allocation of new sites. The collapse of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Spatial Strategy needs to be replaced by joined up thinking on housing, employment and key infrastructure. To brush this issue under the carpet will be to the detriment of not only Oxford but also Oxfordshire as a whole as they are mutually dependant on each other.
- 4.11 Conversely, the LP40 must not impact on the attractiveness of the City for employment uses/investment in order to maximise its housing need. Such an approach will have a long term impact on the economic success of Oxford and the wider Oxfordshire area which depends to a significant extent on Oxford for employment, retail and leisure uses.
- 4.12 Without a clear spatial strategy the LP40 is unsound as it is not positively prepared, effective or justified.

Suggested Amendment

The following changes to the plan are proposed:

1. Policy S1 should be split into two separate policies, one dealing with Spatial Strategy and a separate one dealing with the Presumption in favour of sustainable development.

2. Policy S1 should set out a Spatial Strategy for meeting the vision and objectives of the Plan referring to the need to maximise housing delivery in Oxford but also the already agreed hub and spokes approach and acknowledging the interdependence between Oxford and the wider Oxfordshire Authorities.



5. Housing Requirement

Policy or Paragraph Reference	Legally Compliant?	Sound?	If Unsound it is because it is <u>not</u> :	
Housing Requirement Policy H1 –	Yes	Yes	Positively Prepared	●
			Justified	●
			Effective	●
			Consistent with National Policy	●

5.1 Whilst ChCh has questioned the soundness of the Spatial Strategy Policy S1, it considers the housing requirement to be sound. The LP40 has set out a number of measures to maximise housing delivery. ChCh does question the merits of losing employment uses to housing given the role Oxford plays in the wider Oxfordshire economy. Through re-development lower order employment sites can be enhanced and play a vital role in supporting the wider economy.

5.2 Notwithstanding the above, ChCh has submitted representations (see below) that the Music Faculty site, adjacent to Christ Church has been deleted from the Site Allocations in the LP40. This site is being taken forward by ChCh and expected to come forward in the Plan period for a Graduate Centre providing student accommodation and other uses. Given the need to maximise housing delivery in the City the site should be re-instated and if so the figures in Policy H1 updated accordingly.



6. Employment Strategy

Policy or Paragraph Reference	Legally Compliant?	Sound?	If Unsound it is because it is <u>not</u> :	
Employment Strategy Policy E1	Yes	No	Positively Prepared	<input type="checkbox"/>
			Justified	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			Effective	<input type="checkbox"/>
			Consistent with National Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>

6.1 Policy E1 refers to the categorisation of employment sites in the City. It is unclear how the Council has gone about categorising employment sites and what account has been taken for the potential to change category through intensification and/or modernisation?

6.2 A change in occupier on a category 3 employment site could, for example, elevate it to a category 2 site. However, there appears no mechanism in the LP40 to change category outside of a review of the Local Plan.

Suggested Amendment
Provide a mechanism to review the categorisation of employment sites on an annual basis and update the list within Appendix 3 of LP40.



7. Chapter 4 – A Green Biodiverse City

7.1 ChCh welcomes the general approach to the policies set out in Chapter 4 of the LP40. However, there appear to be overlaps between the policies set out in Chapter 4 and also conflicts with the wider aspirations of the LP40. ChCh suggests the need to protect all green space unless it is demonstrated that there are benefits in its loss and that all efforts have been made to mitigate the loss, either on site or off-site. These will be picked up below.

Policy or Paragraph Reference	Legally Compliant?	Sound?	If Unsound it is because it is <u>not</u> :	
Policy G1	Yes	No	Positively Prepared	<input type="checkbox"/>
			Justified	<input type="checkbox"/>
			Effective	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			Consistent with National Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>

7.2 Policy G1 refers to protection of green infrastructure (GI). The LP40 defines core and supporting GI. This is difficult to differentiate on the interactive policies map and will result in difficulties in interpretation given the scale of mapping involved. In addition, it is questioned how the land has been identified and defined, for example, areas within Christ Church that are shown as “core” GI are actually paths and compost bins.

7.3 In addition, the policy is very strict and does not allow any loss of or harm to any Core GI. This is too restrictive. In relation to Supporting GI the policy requires re-provision ideally on site. It is hard to see how this can be achieved without demolition of buildings? The policy should be amended to provide some flexibility, especially given the inaccuracy in the mapping and assessment criteria and clarity provided around how the Council considers mitigation on site could be achieved.

7.4 In relation to loss of trees on a site, it is not always possible to re-plant on the site and make efficient use of the land. As such some cascade to planting trees nearby should be considered.

7.5 As drafted the policy is not effective and will impact on the wider development policies in the plan seeking to make efficient use of land. It would make sense to combine the criteria in this policy with those in policy G6.

Suggested Amendment
1. Provide more detailed mapping to accurately define the location of the GI features and change the colour coding to better differentiate between the categories.
2. Provide more flexibility in the policy to ensure it takes a positive approach to development.
3. Consider combining the policy with Policy G6.



Policy or Paragraph Reference	Legally Compliant?	Sound?	If Unsound it is because it is <u>not</u> :	
Policy G3	Yes	No	Positively Prepared	●
			Justified	●
			Effective	X
			Consistent with National Policy	●

7.6 Policy G3 introduces the Urban Greening Factor which sets out that the development of sites should achieve a minimum score or no reduction in the green factor, calculated from the types of green infrastructure found on site using a formula set out in the appendices of the draft plan. It is recognised that the provision of new green spaces as part of development proposals is constrained however, this requirement puts significant pressure on applicants who have limited site areas and who have certain functions that also need to be achieved in those spaces. The use of the policy to prevent the loss of space would essentially sterilise the potential for development which, if allowed, could achieve wider benefits such as the release of general housing back into the market.

7.7 It is noted that the Urban Greening Factor works alongside biodiversity net gain but provides a 'simpler' output. It is questioned why this additional layer of calculation is required as where it has been introduced elsewhere (mainly in London) this tends to have been prior to the introduction of the minimum biodiversity net gain requirements in Local Plans.

7.8 This policy is not effective and seems to repeat the requirements of policy G1 and G4 but without the flexibility in Policy G4 to provide off-site mitigation.

Suggested Amendment
Delete Policy G3 as it is covered by policy G1.



8. Chapter 5 – Use of Resources

8.1 ChCh is generally supportive of the policies in Chapter 5 of the LP40 and recognises the significantly higher ambition when compared to the previous policy. ChCh has its own Responsible Ownership Policy for Property that seeks to minimise energy use through its entire property portfolio, including development of its land by third parties. This internal policy overlaps with much that the LP40 is seeking to achieve. Moreover, the Government is looking to control much of this via Building Regulations. The LP40 should not seek to duplicate controls or go further than is currently practical.

8.2 In addition, there are some elements of the policies that are overly restrictive and should be more flexible. It should be noted that the level of development proposed in the LP40 is small compared to the existing stock of buildings in the City. As such, whilst this is a good step towards zero carbon, it will not on its own get the City there by 2040. The LP40 alone cannot do more to achieve this. In addition, access to electricity needs to be factored in to ensure that developments can come forward in a timely manner.

Policy or Paragraph Reference	Legally Compliant?	Sound?	If Unsound it is because it is not:	
Policy R1	Yes	No	Positively Prepared	
			Justified	
			Effective	X
			Consistent with National Policy	

8.2 Policy R1 is a significant step up in terms of ambition compared to the current Local Plan policy. The policy will require further surveys and reports to be prepared to accompany planning applications. It will in turn require specialist officers at the Council to review and interpret the reports. The Council must be appropriately resourced to be able to deal with this increased workload and still meet its statutory decision making timescales. The removal of BREEAM is disappointing as many projects are working towards this already. Consideration should be given to a phasing in process for this given the significant design changes that would be needed.

8.3 The targets set out in Criteria 2 of the Policy are completely unachievable for life science buildings. The City cannot put limits on innovation or safety which require energy intensive equipment, high fresh air rates and significant cooling requirements. Typically values in the range of 200 -300 kWh/m²/year are seen, including PV generation. The targets should be evidence based and it is unclear how the current targets have been set.

8.4 The difficulty is with how a building is used and how that might change over time and this is a concern with post occupancy monitoring. If data is collected how will the City Council use this to better inform other projects?



8.5 A range would be one way to set targets or to simply seek developments to minimise total energy use for the particular building in question. If buildings are using a high proportion of renewable energy then it is questioned if this figure has much relevance?

8.6 We are not aware of any precedent for offset payments based on operational energy models (these are typically Part L). The level of off-setting payment needs to be known to fully understand the implications on the viability of projects and more details on where the funds would be spent should be set out.

8.7 The policy must be more flexible to account for the range of uses that could come forward in the City.

Suggested Amendment	
1.	Either delete the Energy Use Intensity targets or set a range.
2.	Provide more flexibility in the policy to allow for varying occupier demands.
3.	Set out values for carbon offsetting payments and how these will be used.
4.	Ensure that the Council has sufficient resources in place to assess and comment on the required reports.
4.	Remove the need for post occupancy monitoring as this is totally dependent on how each building is used.

Policy or Paragraph Reference	Legally Compliant?	Sound?	If Unsound it is because it is <u>not</u> :	
Policy R2	Yes	Yes	Positively Prepared	●
			Justified	●
			Effective	●
			Consistent with National Policy	●

8.8 ChCh has no issue with this policy. The flexibility of not having any targets is welcomed albeit it is questioned how the City Council will assess the feasibility of re-use vs demolition and therefore if the policy will be effective.

Policy or Paragraph Reference	Legally Compliant?	Sound?	If Unsound it is because it is <u>not</u> :	
Policy R3	Yes	Yes	Positively Prepared	●
			Justified	●
			Effective	●
			Consistent with National Policy	●

8.8 ChCh has a significant number of buildings under its ownership, many of which are historic in nature. It welcomes the positive approach set out in Policy R3 in terms of retrofitting.



9. Chapter 6 – Heritage

Policy or Paragraph Reference	Legally Compliant?	Sound?	If Unsound it is because it is <u>not</u> :	
Policy HD6	Yes	No	Positively Prepared	<input type="checkbox"/>
			Justified	<input type="checkbox"/>
			Effective	<input type="checkbox"/>
			Consistent with National Policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

9.1 Policy HD6 is not consistent with National Policy in the form of the NPPF paragraph 209. The policy currently refers to balancing the scale of any harm against the public benefits that may result from the development. The NPPF only refers to balancing public benefits against harm for designated heritage assets and not non-designated heritage assets. The policy should be amended as below to ensure it is consistent with National Policy.

Suggested Amendment

Amend policy HD6 to read:

“In determining whether planning permission should be granted for a development proposal that affects a **non-designated** local-heritage asset a **balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss.** ~~and the significance of the heritage asset.~~ consideration will be given to the ~~significance of the asset the extent of impact on its significance,~~ as well as the scale of any harm or loss ~~to the asset as balanced against the public benefits that may result from the development proposals.~~”



10. Policies that are supported

10.1 ChCh generally supports the following policies, albeit some minor modifications are suggested to clarify elements of the policies and to aid usability:

Policy or Paragraph Reference	Legally Compliant?	Sound?	Comments/minor amendments sought
S2 – Design Code	Yes	Yes	<p>The Design Checklist at Appendix 1.1 of the LP40 sets out criteria from the relevant policies. As such if any policies change during examination then the Design Checklist will need to be updated accordingly.</p> <p>The reference in the Policy to the Design Code document should be clarified. It is presumed this is the National Model Design Code?</p>
S3 – Infrastructure Delivery	Yes	Yes	<p>ChCh supports necessary infrastructure to address the impacts of any development but delivered on an appropriately phased timescale which will be development specific.</p>
E4 – Community Employment Plans	Yes	Yes	<p>ChCh supports the approach to CEP's.</p>
E5 – Tourism and short stay accommodation	Yes	Yes	<p>Tourism is important to the economy of Oxford, in particular the City Centre. ChCh is a major tourist destination and as such it is important that tourist and short stay accommodation is provided to support this and maximise the length of time visitors stay in Oxford. As such ChCh supports this policy.</p> <p>The policy should include reference to change of use in the first sentence. Currently it only covers new development but change of use of existing buildings is also key, for example the former Boswells store.</p>
HD7 – High quality Design	Yes	Yes	<p>ChCh supports high quality design in the City. This should be proportionate to the location and setting of the proposed development.</p>
HD8 – Appropriate Density	Yes	Yes	<p>Building at appropriate densities is an important component of sustainable development. Making efficient use of any land in the City is a priority. This policy must be read in relation to the HD9 on building heights.</p>



HD9	Yes	Yes	The Policy refers to specific software (VuCity). It is not appropriate for a Local Plan to push a particular brand of software. This reference should be deleted and the policy simply refer to the use of an appropriate 3D model.
C5 – Cultural Venues and Visitor Attractions	Yes	Yes	As with policy E5 ChCh supports proposals for enhanced and new visitor and cultural attractions.
CBLLAOF – Cowley Branch Line and Littlemore Area of Focus	Yes	Yes	The approach set out in the policy is supported. It would be useful to have wording to recognise that financial contributions should be “proportionate” to the scale of development proposed. In addition, safeguarding land for routes to the CBL stations should be noted to be “where feasible”.
WEAOF – West End and Botley Area of Focus	Yes	Yes	The criteria are generally supported.

11. Omission Site: Faculty of Music, St Aldates

- 11.1. ChCh suggests that the Faculty of Music, St Aldates should (continue to) be allocated for development; it is available and suitable for development, and that development is achievable within the plan period. It is acknowledged that the site is currently owned by the University of Oxford, but ChCh has agreed terms for its purchase. We would also like to highlight that this representation to the consultation has been shared with the University in advance of its submission and has been agreed between the University and ChCh.
- 11.2. The City Council is aware that ChCh has an aspiration to establish a Graduate Centre on the site, to meet its growth targets in an effective and manageable way. The Faculty of Music is a site that is adjacent to Christ Church and its core activities, and as such is considered to be part of the Christ Church campus.
- 11.3. The vision for the Faculty of Music is for modern and flexible student living, social and study spaces. This would be achieved through either the extension of existing buildings or reconfiguration, or more comprehensive redevelopment, or possibly a combination of the options.
- 11.4. ChCh acknowledges that the site is located in the Central Conservation Area, is adjacent to the Listed Park & Garden of Christ Church meadow, and in the setting of other listed buildings. It is also acknowledged that the site is in the City Centre Archaeological Area. ChCh is committed to bringing forward a high-quality scheme of new student accommodation and associated facilities wholly consistent with the 'desirability' of conserving and enhancing the significance of heritage assets as required by NPPF, paragraph 203.
- 11.5. ChCh is also aware that there are trees on the site, and that biodiversity will need to be carefully considered in any development proposals.
- 11.6. ChCh has used the wording and structure of other site allocation policies in the draft Plan as a guide for suggesting a reasonable policy and supporting text. However, it is suggested that elements of the policy could be improved, with reference to other comments made in these submissions, we suggest that:
- a) The policy should provide an indication of the site's capacity, and not set a minimum. The site-specific minimum numbers continue to be a hostage to fortune, and do not have a robust evidential basis. The word 'approximate' should be used as this allows for the development management process to more accurately identify the capacity of a development site.
 - b) The site is expected to deliver graduate student accommodation, and as such it would be best framed in this context. It would be clear, and provide confidence to the local community, if the site was allocated for 'student rooms' rather than homes.
 - c) Notwithstanding our concerns about the Urban Greening Factor, and its potential overlap with other policy requirements in the draft Local Plan, we have included a form of words which promote opportunities to manage green infrastructure, where practicable, on a site which is already developed.
- 11.7. Therefore, our suggested policy wording for the Faculty of Music, St Aldates, is as follows:

Faculty of Music, St Aldates

- Site area: 0.32 hectares/0.79 acres
- Ward: Holywell
- Landowner: University of Oxford
- Current use: Academic institutional
- Flood Zone: FZ1

The site is currently occupied by the University of Oxford's Faculty of Music which is due to be relocated to the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter site.

The site backs onto the listed Christ Church meadow, is in the Central Conservation Area and is close to the listed buildings of Christ Church. The site is also in the City Centre Archaeological Area.

Careful design will be needed to conserve and enhance the setting of heritage assets, and proposals would be required to demonstrate compliance with Policies DH1 and DH2.

Continuing the academic use of the site, as part of the Christ Church campus would be appropriate with the incorporation of some student accommodation in this city centre site would be suitable.

Policy SPCW9: Faculty of Music, St Aldates

Planning permission will be granted on this campus site for academic, institutional, student accommodation and residential development including employer linked housing in accordance with Policy H5.

The approximate number of student rooms to be delivered is 40 (or, if delivered as homes the approximate number will be 16).

Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.

Open space, nature, and flood risk

A very small part of the site is in Flood Zone 2/3 and any development must demonstrate that any risk from flooding can be managed and mitigated as necessary.

Development proposals should include urban greening on the site, preserving tree cover where practicable and seeking opportunities to introduce more green 'surfaces' where possible (e.g. Green roofs and walls).

Urban design and heritage

Development proposals must be designed with consideration of their impact on the setting of the Central Conservation Area and adjacent listed park & garden, and listed buildings demonstrating compliance with Policy HD1 and HD2. The site is in the City Centre Archaeological Area and proposals should demonstrate compliance with Policy HD5.

Movement and access



Access should continue to be from St Aldates. There is also the potential to create pedestrian and cycle connection between the site, and Christ Church to the north, applicant should consider opportunities to create appropriate and safe connection in this regard. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate how the development enables access by alternative means of transport including improving connectivity to support active travel such as walking and cycling.

Robert Linnell MRTPI
Director

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