Oxford High Buildings

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OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

Technical Advice Note

October 2018

LDĀDESIGN

HEADLAND ARCHAEOLOGY

All Souls College

Foreword

Oxford is an international city. It has a buoyant and strong economy, world class educational institutions, vibrant cultural sector, rich historic heritage and is blessed with outstanding countryside that surrounds and permeates the city.

Oxford is a special place…to live, to work, to spend time.

However, Oxford, like many other cities within the United Kingdom, is under pressure. There is increasing demand for housing, infrastructure, education and resources to meet the needs of today and also in future. To remain an international city at the forefront on the world stage Oxford must adapt and continue to grow sustainably. It is a formidable challenge and one that Oxford must rise to.

High buildings and densification within the city is an important part of the solution to these complex challenges. By making better and more efficient use of land, a more compact and sustainable city can be developed. This need not be high rise tower blocks or skyscrapers but more likely sensitive densification of existing higher areas.

By thinking innovatively and creatively, new successful places can be created and existing ones enhanced to the benefit of all. The Oxford Vision 2050 sets out this new visionary thinking and the Oxford High Buildings Guidance is a key part of this strategy, helping to protect that which is important and shape positively that which is new.

By thinking long term, being ambitious in our aspirations for the city and adopting a visionary and creative approach, Oxford will continue to a be a successful, world class international city now and in the years to come.

St Mary's Church

Contents

1 Introduction

"And that sweet city with her dreaming spires.
She needs not June for beauty's heightening."

Matthew Arnold Thyrsis

View northwest from St Mary's Church

Introduction

1.1. The Oxford High Buildings Technical Advice Note (TAN) seeks to inform decisions regarding the growth and intensification of Oxford in a positive and structured way. It seeks to identify and protect what is important and provide opportunity for positive change and growth. The TAN takes a flexible approach to allow for the changing policy and development context. The TAN cannot expect, and does not seek, to cover every development scenario but instead provide an advisory framework and common base for understanding in which officers, developers, decision makers and stakeholders can make judgements and decisions with greater confidence.

1.2. The TAN encourages a positive and creative approach to be taken to the planning and design of high buildings, supporting innovative and imaginative design that enhances the city's environment and built fabric.

What is a High Building?

It is neither necessary nor helpful to precisely define what a high building is. The height at which a building is considered to be high will be dependent on its surrounding context and is likely to vary across the city. Even an increase in height of a single storey may constitute a high building that could include consideration of some of this guidance. An understanding of context is critical.

For the purposes of the TAN, the term 'high building' is used to mean both high buildings and densification of built form acknowledging the two are separate and very different in nature.


The Shard, London

1.3. The TAN has been developed in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders including Historic England, Oxford Preservation Trust, Oxford Civic Society and other heritage groups, the Universities, Oxford Colleges and Officers from Oxford City and County Council. It has also taken into consideration economic and planning drivers that will exert a strong influence on the future growth of Oxford.

1.4. The 'Carfax Datum' and protected View Cones enshrined in Local Plan policy has historically sought to protect the city's significant skyline and the settings of internationally important architecture. Whilst these policies have been successful in part, they have resulted in unintended consequences that have been less positive, including the homogenisation of roofscapes and lack of variety of built form.

1.5. The need for the TAN is recognised by Oxford City Council for the following reasons:

- The need to establish a new benchmark for development and deploy a more nuanced and granular approach to the consideration of design and how it may be guided, particularly in relation to heritage and high buildings.
- The future of the city depends on continued economic prosperity which should be supported by proportionate guidance and well controlled development.
- A mindset that change can and should be good and positive if properly considered.
- To inform the next Local Plan period, the 2050 Vision for the city and secure a state of readiness for the ongoing planning of the county resulting from the Oxford - Cambridge Growth Arc.
- To establish a structured and comprehensive understanding of the city's urban fabric, heritage and high buildings to support developers in the promotion of good development.

1.6. The Oxford High Buildings TAN is supported by The Oxford High Buildings Evidence Base Report (EBR) which provides further detail and analysis underpinning the TAN. Both the Oxford High Buildings TAN and EBR should be read together and in conjunction with other guidance documents such as the Assessment of the Oxford View Cones 2015 report and the Historic England's Advice Note 4: Tall Buildings Guidance.

Purpose

1.7. The purpose of the TAN, in combination with Local Plan policies and other guidance documents, is to set out a framework to assess a site's or area's potential for change and its ability to accommodate high buildings.

1.8. The TAN seeks to:

- Allow the city to grow whilst protecting its key character and heritage, including listed heritage assets and conservation areas.
- Secure opportunity for positive change including the establishment of development parameters to enable new placemaking policies.
- Understand and define how the city as a historic asset is appreciated, including its wider landscape setting.
- Support exploration of the development capacity of the city to inform growth scenarios, including those in development as part of the Local Plan.

1.9. The TAN is directed at Oxford City Council officers and councillors, developers, architects, planners, urban designers and landscape architects and those involved in the shaping of the built environment within the city to assist in the understanding of the context in which they are operating.

1.10. Oxford is a complex city and there are complex multi-discipline interactions that need to be recognised when considering high buildings. The Oxford High Buildings TAN supports a thorough understanding of the city context and likely issues of importance that should inform any high building proposal. It is neither practical nor possible for the TAN to address every scenario and a tailored, informed and proportionate response is required in each instance informed by this guidance. The TAN provides advisory guidance in relation to the consideration of high buildings supporting policies within the Local Plan.

What is 'Good' Design?

CABE's (now Design Council) essay Good Design: The Fundamentals defines 'good' design as:

"There are three important principles that make it possible to recognise good design when we see it, regardless of style. They are variously described as robustness, or durability; usefulness, or efficiency; and beauty, or the ability to delight people.

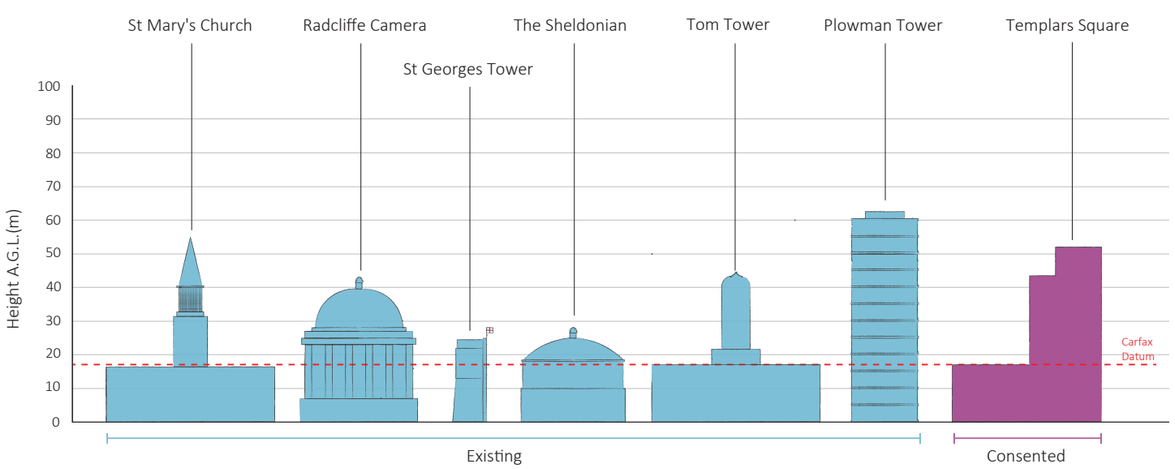
Applying the three principles, we will know that buildings and public spaces are well designed if:

- They are useful, built to last and easy to care for.
- You can find your way and move around easily, regardless of whether or not you are disabled, in a place in which you feel safe.
- They relate well to the place where they are built; this might mean fitting in quietly or creating new context and new landmarks, depending on circumstances.
- They are flexible and their use can change over time.
- They are environmentally efficient and will help us all to live and work sustainably.
- The people who use them tell you that they help them to work more effectively and deliver services more efficiently.
- The people who live there tell you that their quality of life has improved, and they continue to say this over time.
- People tell you that they are proud of where they live because their building or place has real identity, character and beauty."

1.11. The TAN is structure as follows:

- The Importance of Process: Setting out guidelines for the process that should be followed for high building planning applications.
- Understanding Oxford: Summarising the findings of The EBR report and highlighting the key characteristics of Oxford.
- Managing Change: Identifying 'Areas of Opportunity' and 'Dynamic Areas' within Oxford where there is greater potential for high buildings.
- Overarching Guidelines: Setting out a list of criteria for the consideration of high buildings and how high buildings should respond to these.

Carfax Tower



High Buildings in Oxford

View from South Park

High Buildings in Oxford

1.12. Much of the city comprises two storey residential suburbs and even in the city centre, where building heights are generally higher including Carfax and St George's tower, the maximum heights of buildings are relatively low in comparison to cities of similar size. Areas of taller buildings exist at district centres including Summertown, Headington and Temple Cowley. To the east the John Radcliffe Hospital represents one of the most prominent buildings in the city. Cowley Motor Works in the southeast and Oxford Science Park in the south also represent areas of higher buildings within the city associated with commercial land uses.

An Innovative Approach

1.13. The Oxford High Buildings TAN seeks to dovetail and complement the established and trusted Oxford View Cones and Carfax datum policies and also support new policies within the Local Plan. The TAN also seeks to take a more nuanced and responsive approach to the consideration of the impact of high buildings, encouraging innovative and imaginative design that enhances the city's environment and built fabric and promotes and delivers positive benefits beyond the immediate brief, particularly where improvements or enhancements can be made.

1.14. The TAN has been shaped in consultation with key stakeholders including Historic England, Oxford Preservation Trust, Oxford Civic Society, University Colleges and officers and councillors from Oxford City and County Council, further information of which is provided in Appendix 3 of the EBR. The TAN has been informed by a strong heritage underpinning and has also taken into consideration economic and planning drivers that will exert influence on the future growth of Oxford.

1.15. Analysis has been undertaken, allowing for the first time, an appreciation of the city and its context including the mapping of existing building heights across the whole of the city. This data has also been used to create 3D models of the city and test building heights in parts of the city that have greater potential to accommodate high buildings and where emerging Local Plan policy envisages change.

Tom Tower, Christ Church College

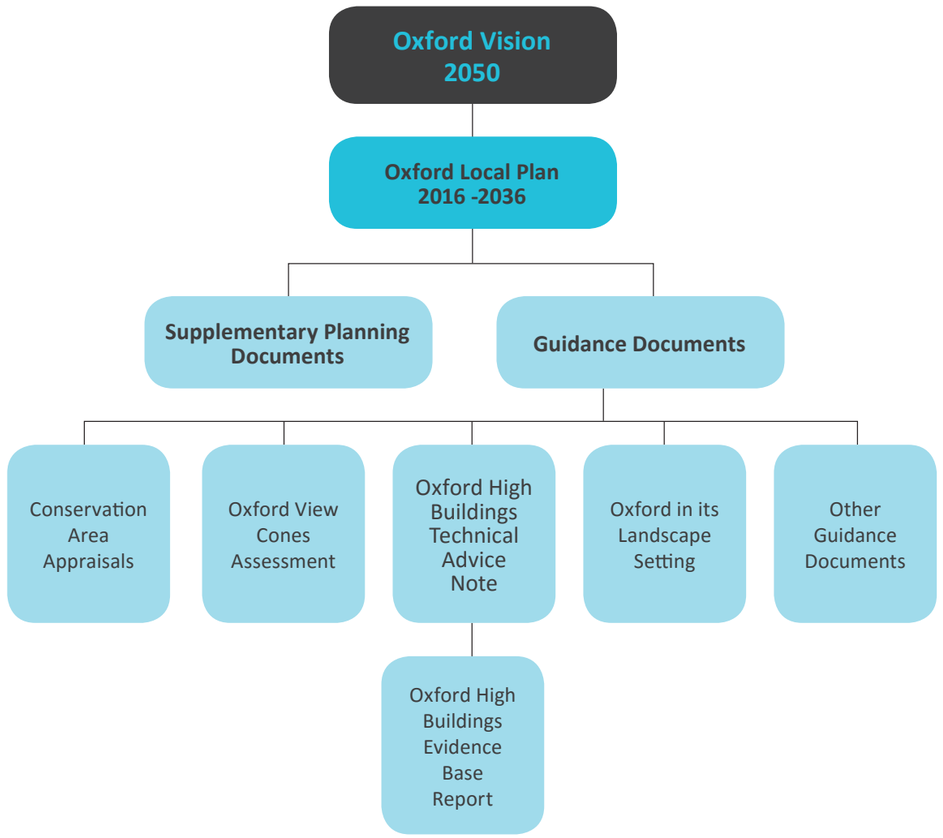
Local Plan Policy

1.16. The TAN document supports and provides further information and guidance in relation to high buildings and supports place shaping policies within the Local Plan, in particular those within Chapter 6 and notably Policy DH2: Views and Building Heights and Policy DH3: Designated Heritage Assets. High buildings will be considered against these policies and a thorough understanding of them and their inter-relationships is critical for any high building proposal.

Other Policy and Guidance

1.17. The TAN forms part of a suite of documents that provide guidance in support of Local Plan policies. The diagram below illustrates the policy and guidance framework in which the High Buildings Guidance sits.

Policy and Guidance Hierarchy



2 Process

“Beautiful city! . . . spreading her gardens to the moonlight, and whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the Middle Age . . . her ineffable charm. . . . Adorable dreamer, whose heart has been so romantic!”

Matthew Arnold, Preface to Essays in Criticism

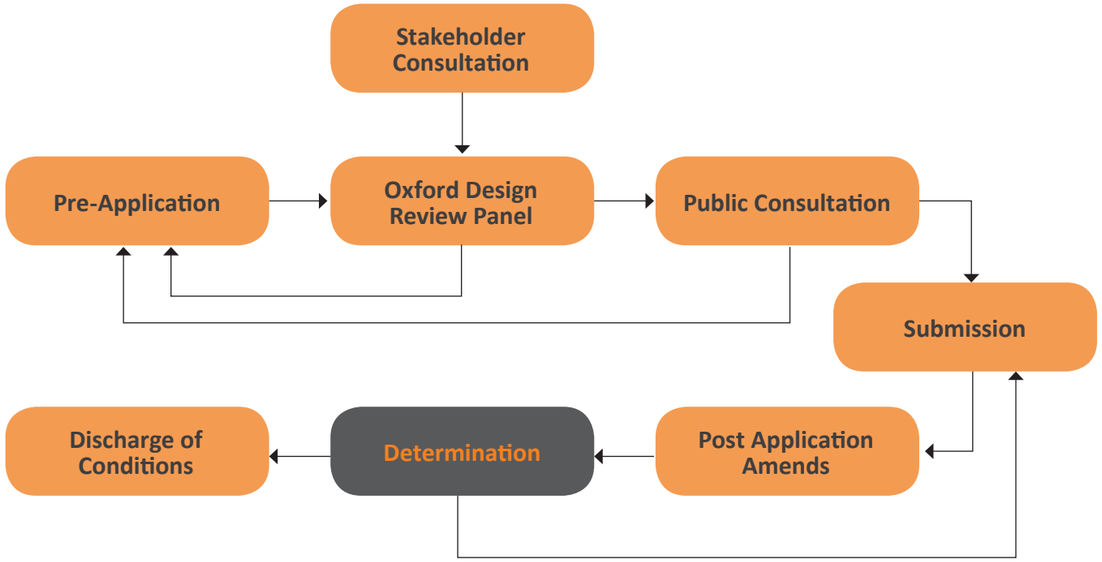
Process

2.1. Oxford City Council places great importance on the planning application process for all development proposals within the city. A robust pre-application process is fundamental in limiting planning risk for applicants and ensuring appropriate, well designed and considered proposals are brought forward. This is particularly the case for applications for high buildings given the potential they have to cause significant harm to heritage assets, impact views and the character of Oxford; as well as the potential they have to contribute to securing positive outcomes, for example establishing vibrant district centres, supporting the ongoing economic success of the city in meeting housing need and securing opportunities for positive architectural legacy.

2.2. Oxford City Council support the use of a Planning Performance Agreement (PAA) by parties especially where development proposals are of a size or complexity that would benefit from a planned pre-application process or where Oxford City Council recommend it.

2.3. The use of ‘working’ material such as initial massing studies and visualisations is encouraged in early consultation with additional design information provided throughout the application process. This layering of information provision allows a clear demonstration of the design evolution allowing Councillors and Officers to appreciate how the design has responded to issues as they have arisen.

Illustrative Application Process



Pre-Application

2.4. Applicants for high buildings are encouraged to enter into pre-application discussions with Oxford City Council at the earliest opportunity and a collaborative approach between parties is encouraged.

2.5. Before entering into the pre-application process, it is strongly recommended applicants for any development proposal are familiar with policy and guidance and understand its relevance. Applicants should also be cognisant of any other relevant contextual information, such as designations and documented appraisals, that may influence their proposal.

2.6. The exact number and timing of pre-application meetings will depend on the nature and complexity of the proposal. It is likely that several meetings will be required before submission of a planning application to support an iterative design process and interactive engagement from principle of development through to planning application. The use of 3D modelling and appraisal tools, such as landscape and visual appraisal, is promoted so that key matters can be identified early and addressed as part of iterative design process.

2.7. Engagement with Councillors through Oxford City Council Officers is encouraged to allow Councillors the proper opportunity to understand the proposals in more detail and in advance of planning committee decision making.

Design opinion and the role of the Oxford Design Review Panel

2.8. Oxford City Council Planning Officers have been engaged in the process of developing the TAN in conjunction with attendance at consultation workshops including the Design Council, Historic England and local heritage groups which has contributed to the development of this guidance. Officers will deploy this guidance in supporting pre-application discussions for proposals for high buildings.

2.9. The Oxford Design Review Panel (ODRP) has an important role in supporting the pre-application process, raising the standards of design within the city and providing independent design advice. It is likely that applications for high buildings will require at least one review by the ODRP and applicants should view this as a positive opportunity to improve both the design and robustness of the proposal. The advice and comment provided by ODRP is considered by Oxford City Council as part of the decision-making process.

Stakeholder Engagement

2.10. A well planned strategy for stakeholder engagement with statutory and non-statutory consultees is expected and encouraged, particularly where specific historic assets or groups of assets may be affected. Engaging with these groups allows specific issues to be identified and explored that may not have been previously identified. Specialist heritage groups such as the Historic England, Oxford Preservation Trust, Oxford Civic Society and Oxford Architectural and Historic Society should be consulted.

Public Consultation

2.11. A well planned strategy for public consultation should be developed and undertaken as part of any proposal for high buildings. The level of public consultation should be proportionate to the nature of proposal. For larger, more complex proposals a greater level of public consultation is likely to be needed, particularly where a number of communities and groups may be affected.

2.12. The opportunity to deliver benefits and enhancements to local communities through development is encouraged. These opportunities should be informed by the communities affected and seek to respond to local needs as well as wider city wide strategies.

Submission

2.13. The nature of submission documentation accompanying a planning application will vary depending on the development proposed. The information submitted should be proportionate to nature and complexity of the proposal and should provide sufficient information to allow Councillors and Officers at Oxford City Council to make an informed decision. The nature and extent of application information should be discussed and agreed with the Officers prior to submission and be proportionate to the nature of the proposed development. A checklist of potential documentation required for a planning submission for a high building is set out in Appendix 1.

2.14. Information submitted should demonstrate how consultation has informed the design and reflect the design evolution through the pre-application process.

2.15. The Design and Access Statement (DAS) is an important supporting document for an application. The DAS should illustrate sufficient analysis and understanding of the site and its context and the design concept and its evolution. Design information is expected to address the topics set out in Section 6 of the TAN.

2.16. Accurate visualisations of development proposals are considered helpful and necessary to inform an understanding of the final design proposal and 3D modelling of high buildings is required under Local Plan policy. The location and level of detail of such visualisations should be agreed during pre-application discussions and it may be a number of visualisations at different times and seasons may be required.

2.17. Visualisations should be produced to recommended standards set out within relevant guidance produced by the Landscape Institute (LI), including Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, LI Advice Note 1/11 Photography and Photomontage and LI Guidance Note 02-17 Visual Representation. Other images, visualisations and drawings are also useful in conveying the concept of a design. The purpose and limitations of visualisations should be set out clearly with the accompanying image and a comprehensive methodology provided.

Post Application

2.18. By undertaking a sound pre-application process the need for post application amendments should be reduced. The post application period allows for minor amendments to the scheme should they be needed before determination. Post application amendments may be recommended to address matters that require further attention or clarification. Oxford City Council may also ask for further information to be submitted to allow an informed decision to made.

Determination

2.19. Given the nature of high buildings and the nature of affects that may arise, it is likely that most applications will be determined by planning committee. However, it may be appropriate in some circumstances for smaller, less complex schemes to be determined under delegated authority. It is for Oxford City Council to decide the most appropriate and suitable decision-making mechanism.

Post Determination

2.20. It is possible planning conditions and post determination design development will be necessary to ensure that good design is delivered. Applicants for high buildings should continue working collaboratively with Oxford City Council to ensure that post determination detailed matters are properly considered.

3 Understanding Oxford

"I wonder anybody does anything at Oxford but dream and remember, the place is so beautiful. One almost expects the people to sing instead of speaking. It is all like an opera."

William Butler Yeats in a letter to Letter to Katharine Tynan

Oxford from Boars Hill

Understanding Oxford

3.1. Oxford's location, character and rich architectural legacy have been shaped by centuries of habitation and development related to defence, the growth of academic institutions, industry and commerce. Any application for development of high buildings should demonstrate a proportionate appreciation and understanding of Oxford and how this has influenced the development proposal.

3.2. The EBR which accompanies this TAN provides details describing Oxford under the following themes:

- **Place** - Illustrating how Oxford has grown, its character through the identification of townscape character areas; how the city is structured, identifying the location of the city centre, district centres and the main transport routes as well as through the current nature of building heights across the city.
- **Heritage** - The geographical distribution of heritage assets within the city; the character of views from the surrounding landscape to heritage assets within the historic city centre and views out from the historic city centre to the surrounding landscape; and the inter-relationship between heritage assets and their potential to be affected by high buildings.
- **Growth** - Identifying where future growth within the city is planned or may be anticipated as part of the emerging Local Plan; areas within and beyond the city boundary in neighbouring districts where development may come forward; and areas that may be reasonably expected to come under pressure for high buildings in future.

3.3. The following characteristics of Oxford are highlighted for consideration in development proposals under these three themes.

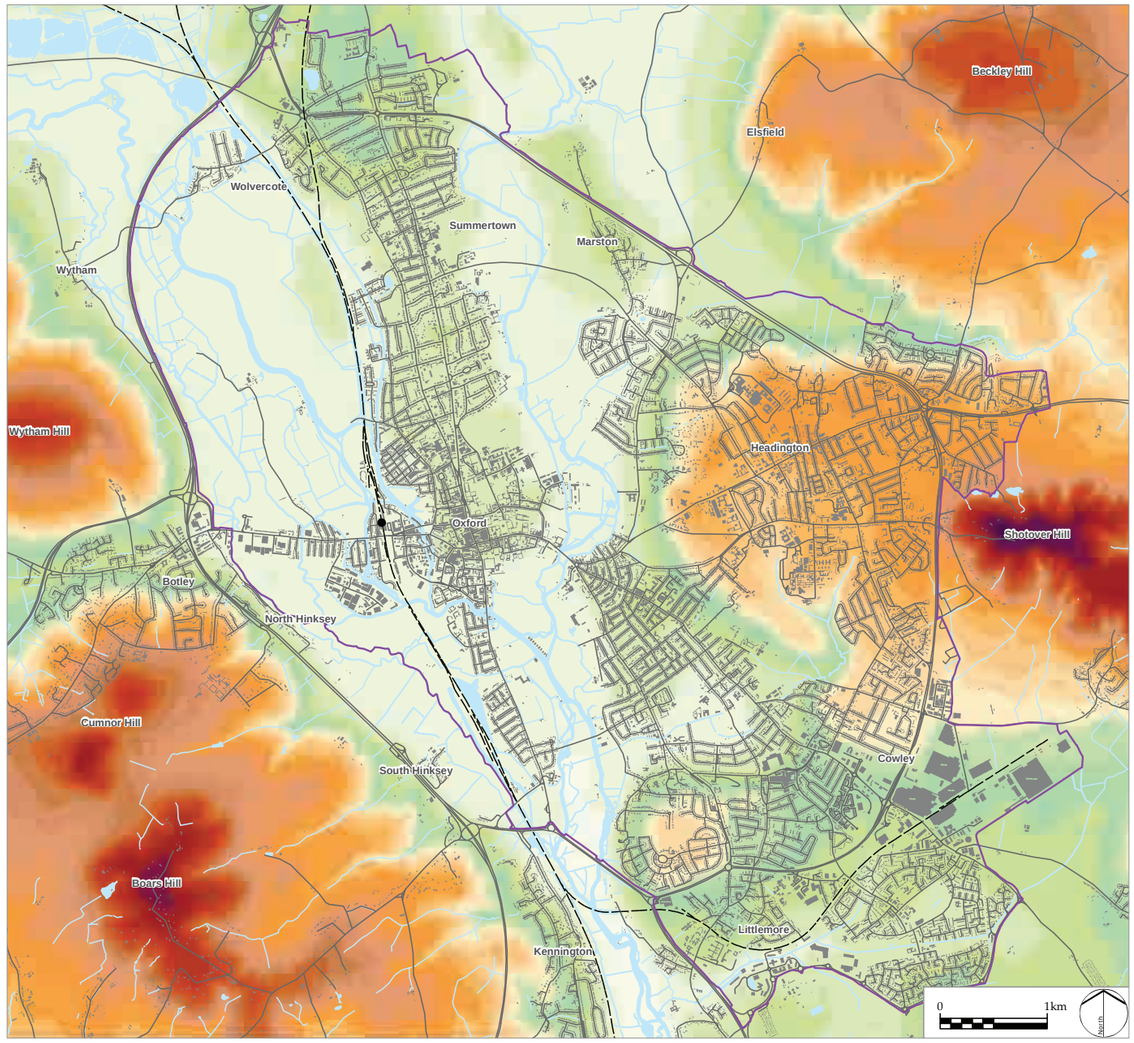


Figure 1: Topography

Oxford City Boundary

Elevation (m AOD)

> 170	145 - 150	120 - 125	95 - 100	75 - 80	55 - 60
165 - 170	140 - 145	115 - 120	90 - 95	70 - 75	< 55
160 - 165	135 - 140	110 - 115	85 - 90	65 - 70	
155 - 160	130 - 135	105 - 110	80 - 85	60 - 65	
150 - 155	125 - 130	100 - 105			


Port Meadow


Cornmarket Street

Place

3.4. Key to Oxford's character is the relationship of the city to surrounding landscape. The river floodplain and valley sides provide an important backdrop to Oxford's cityscape. Oxfords' setting is defined by agricultural vales to the north and south, wooded hills to the east and the west and rivers valley floodplains extending through the urban core of the city.


Oxford Canal

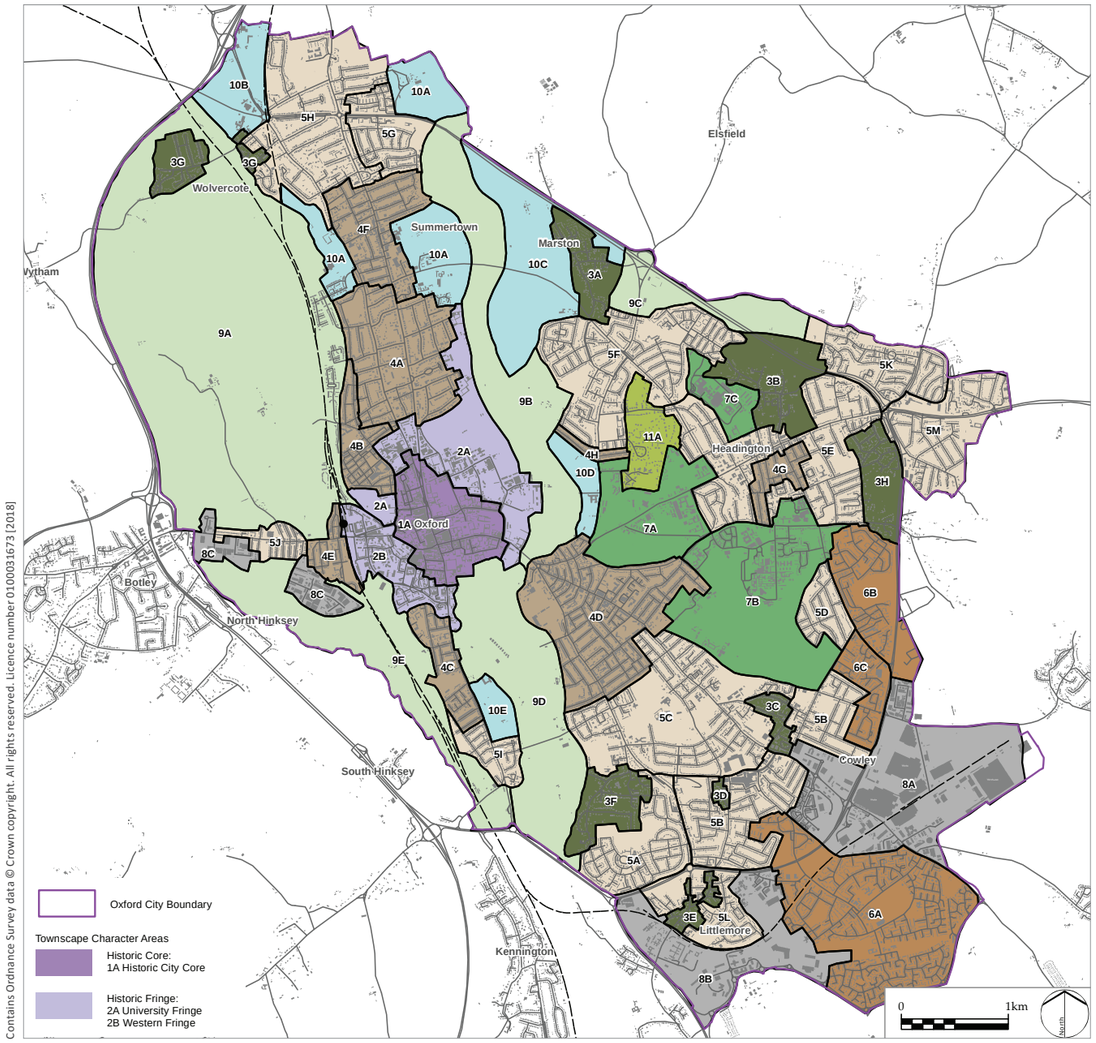


Figure 2: Townscape Character

Historic Village Cores:
3A Old Marston Core
3B Old Headington Core
3C Temple Cowley
3D Church Cowley Core
3E Littlemore Village
3F Iffley Village
3G Wolvercote
3H Headington Quarry

Victorian Suburbs and Villages:
4A North Oxford
4B Jericho
4C Grandpont
4D East Oxford
4E New Osney
4F Summertown
4G New Headington
4H New Marston Village

Inter-war / Post-war Suburbs:
5A Rose Hill
5B Cowley Residential Suburb
5C Florence Park and Cowley Marsh
5D The Slade
5E New Headington
5F New Marston
5G Cutteslowe / Sunnymead
5H North Oxford Fringes
5I New Hinksey
5J Botley Road
5K Barton
5L Littlemore
5M Sandhills and Risinghurst

Post 1960s Suburbs:
6A Blackbird Leys
6B Wood Farm
6C Horspath Road Area

Post 1960s Suburbs:
6A Blackbird Leys
6B Wood Farm
6C Horspath Road Area

Open Hills (with Institutions):
7A Headington Hill
7B Southfield Park and Hospitals Complex
7C John Radcliffe Hospital

20th Century Fringe Business, Industry and Retail:
8A Cowley Motor Works
8B Littlemore Business and Science Parks
8C Botley Industrial and Retail Parks

Pastoral Floodplains:
9A Thames (Isis) north
9B Cherwell Valley
9C Bayswater Brook
9D Thames (Isis) south
9E Hinksey / Bulstake Streams

Open River Terraces:
10A North Oxford Open River Terrace
10B Peartree Open River Terrace
10C Marston Open River Terrace
10D St Clements Open River Terrace
10E New Hinksey Open River Terrace

Garden Suburbs:
11A Headington Hill

Westgate Shopping Centre


Residential Suburbs

3.5. Oxford's character is also defined by its unique built environment with a large number of attractive suburbs and urban areas designated as Conservation Areas. The iconic skyline and architecture characterised by the limestone college buildings and towering spires create a rich urban environment with buildings spanning every major period of British architectural history from the 11th century to the present day. The city contains 9 scheduled monuments and 15 Historic Parks and Gardens. There are 17 Conservation Areas within Oxford and approximately 1,500 Listed Buildings, with the proportion of Grade I and II* more than twice the national average for any city in the UK.

3.6. Fifty two detailed Townscape Character Areas (TCAs) have been identified for the whole of Oxford as part of the Oxford and its Landscape Setting Report (2002) produced by Land Use Consultants allowing an appreciation of character across the city at a detailed level. The TCAs are used as a framework for the Oxford High Buildings Guidance and are summarised in Appendix 1 of the EBR. An understanding of context, informed by the TCAs is a key theme underpinning the Oxford High Buildings Guidance and developers are encouraged to use this information to inform their proposals. The LI's Townscape Character Assessment Technical Advice Note (TIN 05/2017) and Natural Engalnd's An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (2014) also provides helpful guidance in terms of assessing character.


Sheldonian Theatre

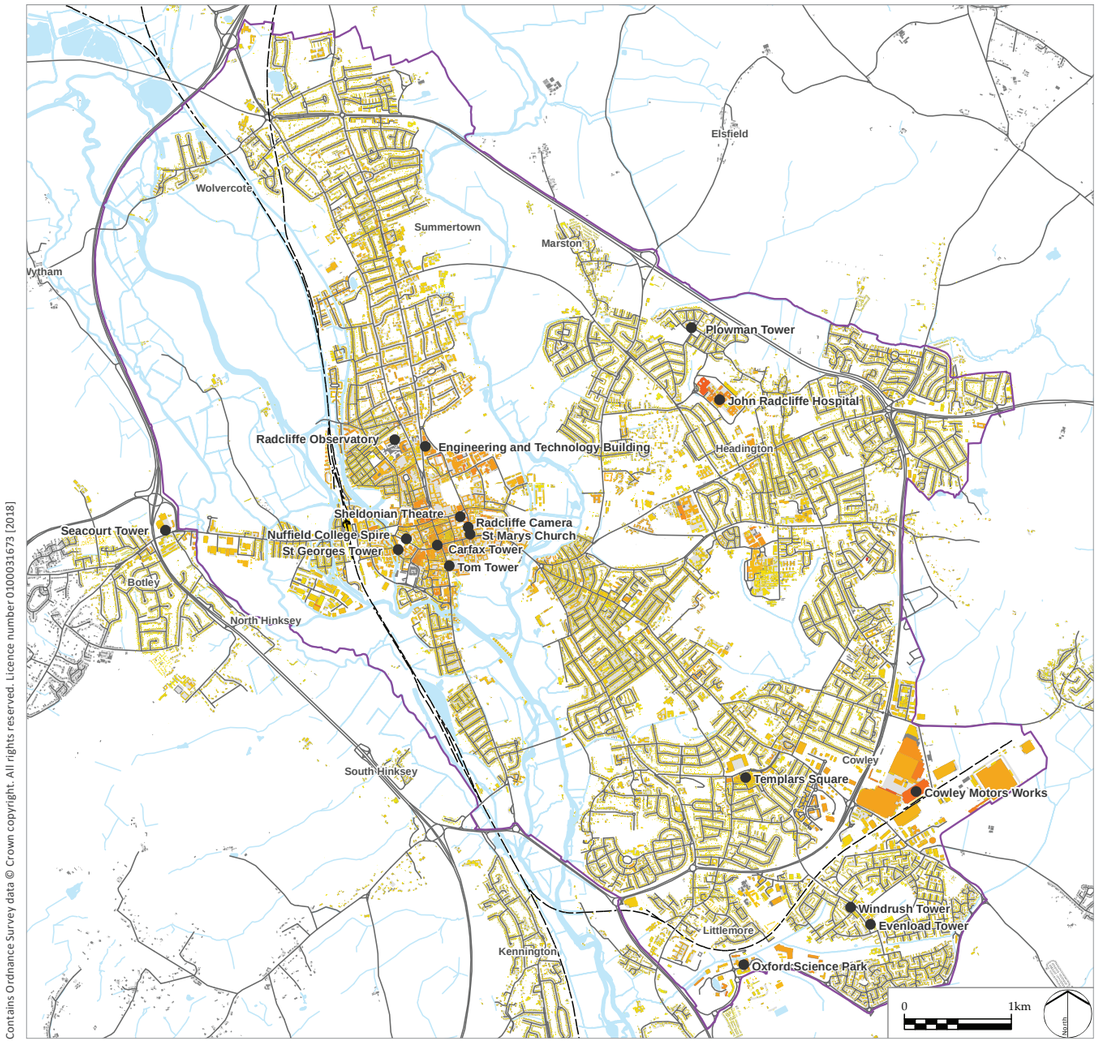


Figure 3: Existing Building Heights

3.7. The general height of buildings across the city is between 2 - 4 storeys. Where higher buildings occur, they are rarely above 6 storeys. However, there is a clustering of higher buildings in the city centre, including St Mary's Church and Tom Tower; at district centres; and at the edge of the city associated with commercial and industrial land uses, including the offices of the Cowley Motor Works and the John Radcliffe Hospital. There are also isolated locations in the suburbs of the city where residential high buildings are located, including Plowman Tower in New Marston and Evenlode Tower in Blackbird Leys.

3.8. The table below details the heights of notable buildings within the city and Appendix 1 of the EBR sets out the existing built form heights for each of the TCAs. These existing building heights in the city form an important reference point when exploring the potential for high buildings.

St Marys Church, High Street	54.86m
Radcliffe Camera,	42.7m
Carfax Tower, Queen Street	23m
Tom Tower, Christchurch College	45.75m
The Sheldonian Theatre, Broad Street	28.16m
St George's Tower, Oxford Castle	24.4m
Nuffield College Spire, New Road	45.75m
Ploughman Tower, New Marston	62.6m
John Radcliff Hospital, Headington	39.1m
Templars Square, Temple Cowley	52m


Radcliffe Camera


Engineering and Technology Building

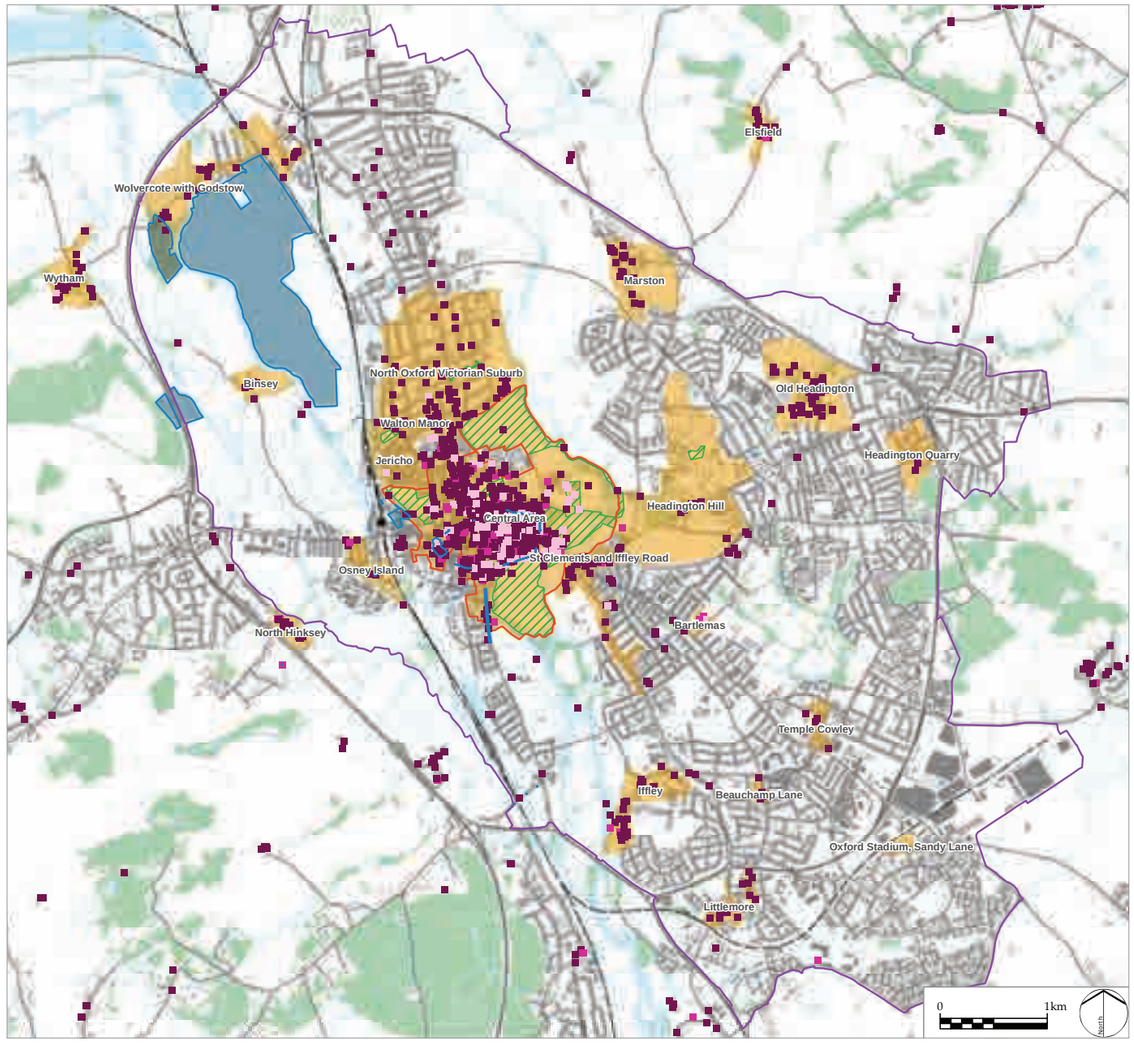


Figure 4: Designated Heritage Assets

Oxford City Boundary

Listed Building - Grade:

I

II*

II

Scheduled Monument

Conservation Area

Central Conservation Area

Registered Park and Garden


Binsey


Oxford Castle Motte

Heritage

3.9. Oxford has a rich cultural heritage and it is this richness that underpins its quality and distinct character. Historically, conservation of the city's heritage in relation to high buildings has been addressed through the recognition of the Oxford View Cones and the Carfax datum in planning policies. In this well-established approach to conservation, the historic centre of Oxford has been treated as a single complex heritage asset, experienced from vantage points around the city.

3.10. Research undertaken during the preparation of the TAN and presented in the High Buildings EBR has re-examined this approach to high buildings in the context of our current understanding of the setting of heritage assets. It has analysed how heritage assets relate to their settings in Oxford, the contribution that settings make to heritage significance and the potential for high buildings to affect that contribution. This understanding provides a more proactive policy context for high buildings supported by this TAN.

3.11. Five circumstances can be described where the addition of a high building to the setting of a heritage asset in Oxford could, in principle, diminish the positive contribution that setting makes to the heritage significance of that asset and these should be borne in mind by any developer seeking to promote a high building:

1. A new high building adjacent to a heritage asset (including individual buildings and areas) diminishes the historic, architectural or artistic interest of the asset due (at least in part) to its height relative to existing buildings. This harm could occur for various reasons including obstruction of valued views to or from the asset, visual competition and incongruous design.

2. A new high building at some distance from an asset obstructs valued views towards that asset (due to its height) such that the obstruction diminishes the artistic or historic interest of the asset.

3. A new high building at some distance from an asset changes informative views towards that asset, introducing visual competition in either the foreground or background such that it diminishes the historic or artistic interest of the asset.

4. A new high building at some distance from an asset changes the historic character of informative views from that asset such that it diminishes the historic or artistic interest of the asset.

5. A new high building within a Conservation Area or other area valued for its historic character and appearance is out of character due (at least in part) to its height relative to existing buildings. This diminishes the historic, architectural or artistic interest of the asset.

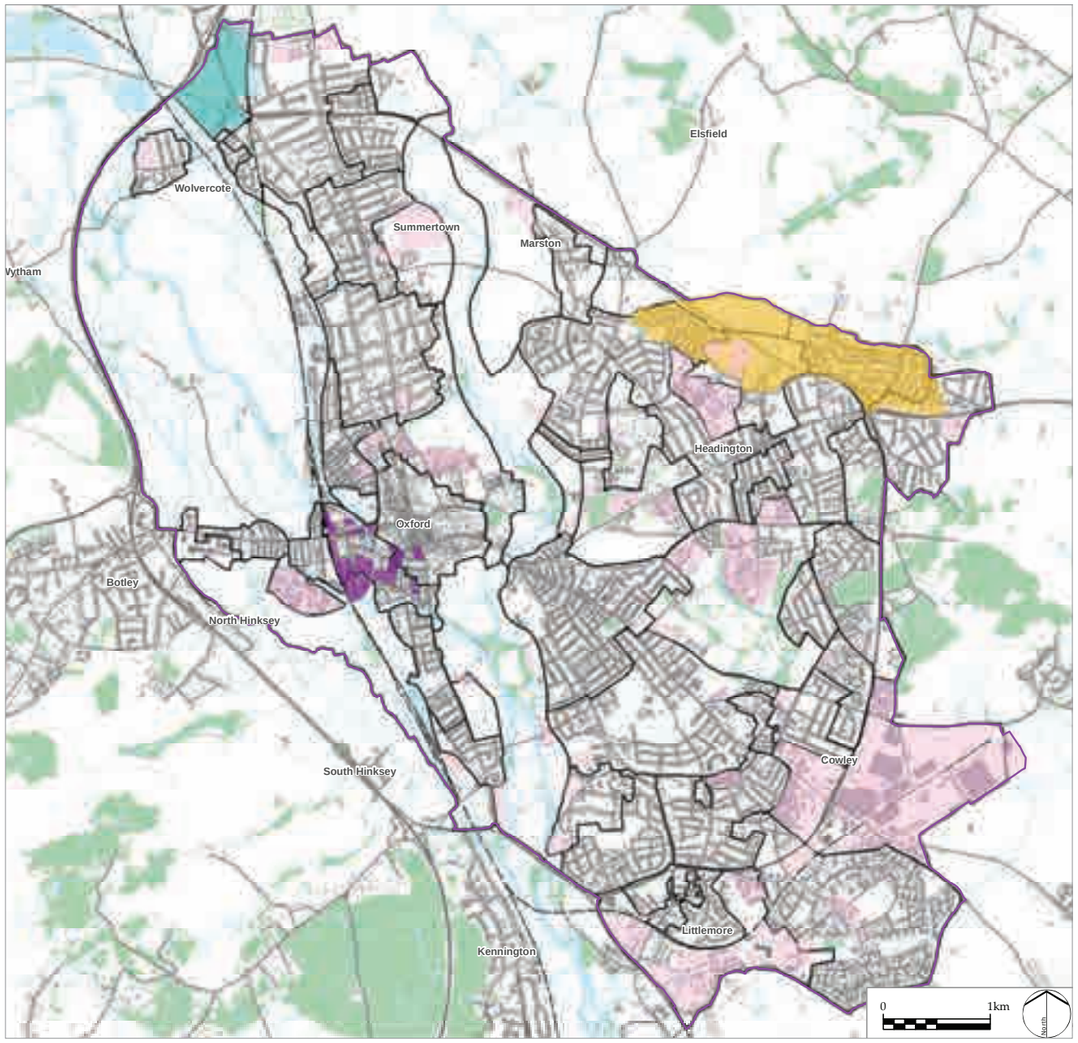


Figure 5: Site Allocations and Emerging Sites

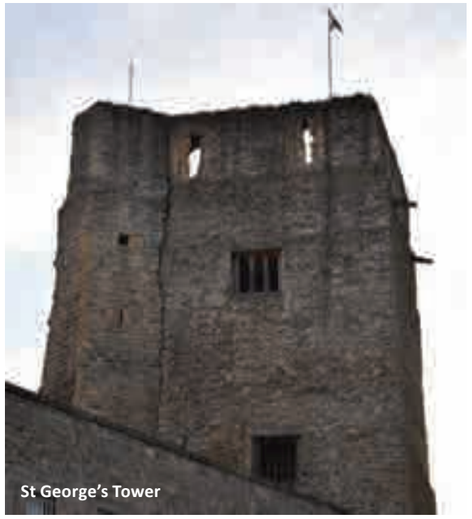
- Oxford City Boundary
- Townscape Character Areas
- West End AAP
- Barton AAP
- Northern Gateway AAP
- Other Potentially Emerging Sites

3.12. The Oxford High Buildings EBR offers continued support for the treatment of central Oxford as a unified heritage asset but shows that the Oxford View Cones are only one part of a more complex relationship between the historic city centre and its setting.

3.13. The relationship between the historic city centre and its setting, and its contribution to heritage significance, can be appreciated in three main ways:

- Views towards the city from the surrounding landscape with a distinctive cluster of historic buildings signalling the location of the historic core of the city in its landscape setting (including those identified within the Oxford View Cones).
- Views out from elevated viewpoints within the historic city centre revealing the topographic position of Oxford in its landscape setting.
- Views between the edge of the historic city centre and the floodplains of the Thames and Cherwell to the south and east of the city, illustrating the original siting of the city on dry ground adjacent to an early river crossing point.


Nuffield College


St George's Tower

3.14. These different aspects of the setting of the historic city centre are described in greater detail in Section 2 of the EBR. Whilst the heritage significance of the historic city centre remains a key issue in relation to the design and siting of high buildings in Oxford, it is important to note that there is potential for high buildings to affect the heritage significance of many other heritage assets. The significance of all heritage assets is derived to some degree from their settings but in most cases the sensitive area will be relatively small and therefore only affected by high buildings in close proximity.

3.15. Some heritage assets derive significance from a wider area and are therefore much more likely to be affected by high buildings. These include all 18 of Oxford's Conservation Areas along with two Conservation Areas in the adjoining Vale of White Horse District (Wytham and North Hinksey). More information on these and other sensitive designated heritage assets is provided in Appendix 1 and 2 of the EBR which provides information on the location and links to the entire suit of Conservation Area Appraisals.

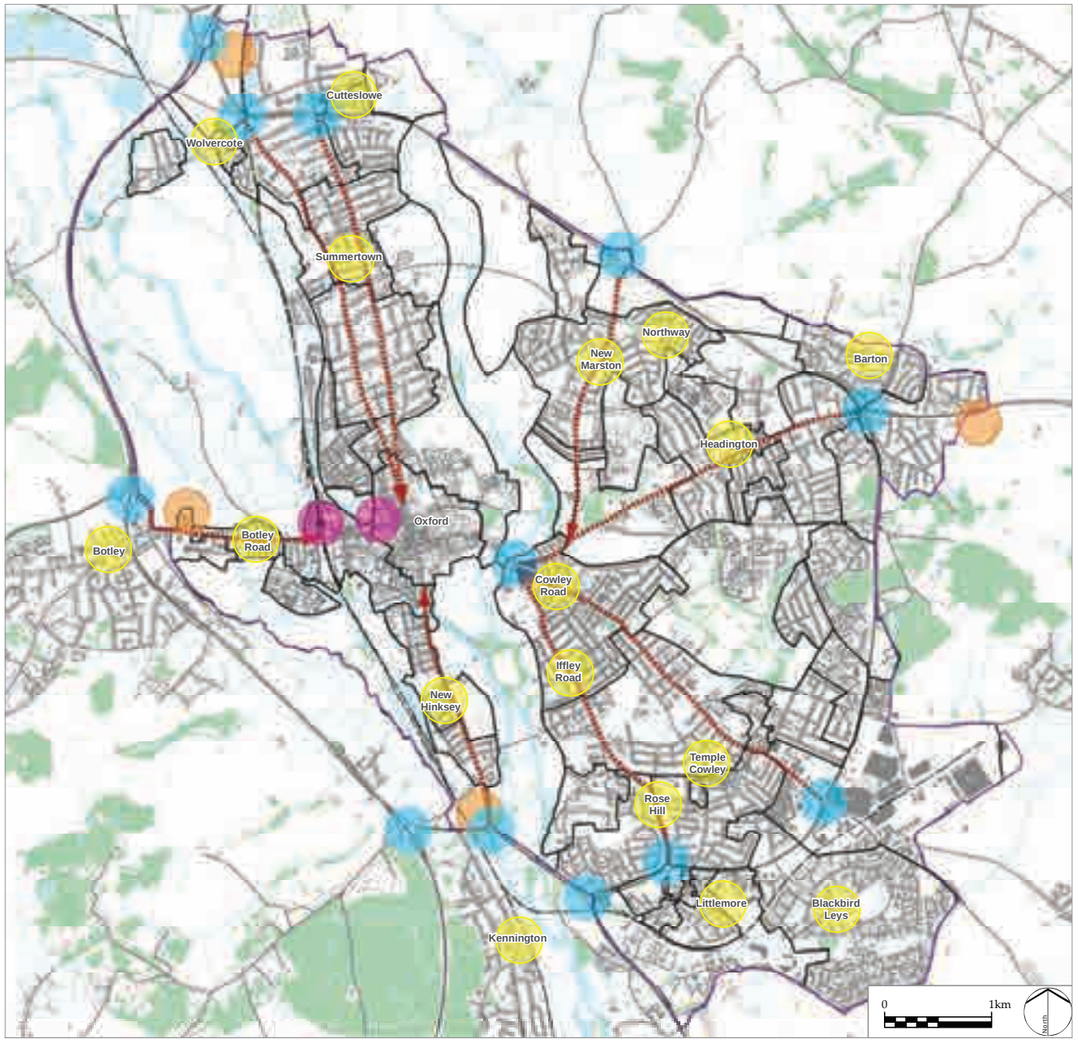


Figure 6: District Centres and Transport Infrastructure

Oxford City Boundary
Townscape Character Areas
Arterial Routes
District centres
Major road junctions
Park & Rides
Railway Station and Bus Station

3.16. The EBR identifies a complex pattern across the city of overlapping settings and views where change resulting from the construction of high buildings could affect heritage significance of multiple heritage assets. This complex asset-focussed information has been organised into a series of area-based summaries identifying 'key' heritage considerations, for each of the 52 TCAs (Appendix 1 of EBR). A 'key heritage consideration' is defined here as an issue affecting the significance of heritage assets that is likely to be relevant to the siting and design of a high building in Oxford and could be an important consideration in the determination of any subsequent planning application.

3.17. The resulting list of considerations for each TCA should not be treated as an exhaustive statement of all heritage matters that will be relevant in that area but does form a guide for developers to secure an appreciation of the main cultural heritage issues within an area of the city. It must be recognised that not all of the key considerations will apply to every development in a given area and other heritage issues may be raised by a specific development proposal in that area.

Growth

3.18. Oxford has grown over time and will continue to grow if it is to remain a prosperous and successful international city. Well designed new development and carefully considered regeneration present the greatest opportunities for growth and for the sensitive integration of high buildings within the city. Adopted Area Action Plans (AAPs) identify the largest and most certain locations for change within the City (Figure 5). They may, however, also be sensitive to high buildings.

3.19. District centres and transport interchanges (Figure 6) are also areas that are likely to be able to accommodate high buildings given their sustainable transport links. The TAN considers areas of potential growth within the city in more detail in Section 4.

4 Identifying Opportunity

"In Oxford you may see it all - century by century, or face by face. She is an England in miniature; an essence of England, drawing from the wood. It is the variety of the shapes which makes the skyline. And as for "dreaming"? Stupor say the enemies, inertia say even some of the friends,"

Nickolaus Pevsner Buildings of England

All Souls College

Identifying Opportunity

Areas of Greater Potential

4.1. The EBR analysis has identified three 'Areas of Greater Potential' where proposals for new high buildings are more likely to be appropriate. These areas are less constrained by heritage considerations and also represent areas where there is more potential for them to contribute to regeneration opportunities, are areas with significant connectivity and are existing district centres. Areas of Greater Potential identified are:

- The Northern Suburbs
- The Eastern Suburbs
- The South-Eastern Suburbs

Dynamic Areas

4.2. In addition to the 'Areas of Greater Potential' Oxford City Council has identified 'Dynamic Areas' where growth and regeneration is envisaged as part of the Local Plan. Dynamic areas are the areas of the city where significant change is expected or best directed. These areas include the district centres and also areas where there are significant clusters of potential development sites. The impact of development of sites in these areas needs to be considered in terms of the wider context of the area and other potential developments. Many Dynamic Areas are within the Areas of Greater Potential. Both Areas of Greater Potential and Dynamic Areas have been tested individually as part of the TAN.

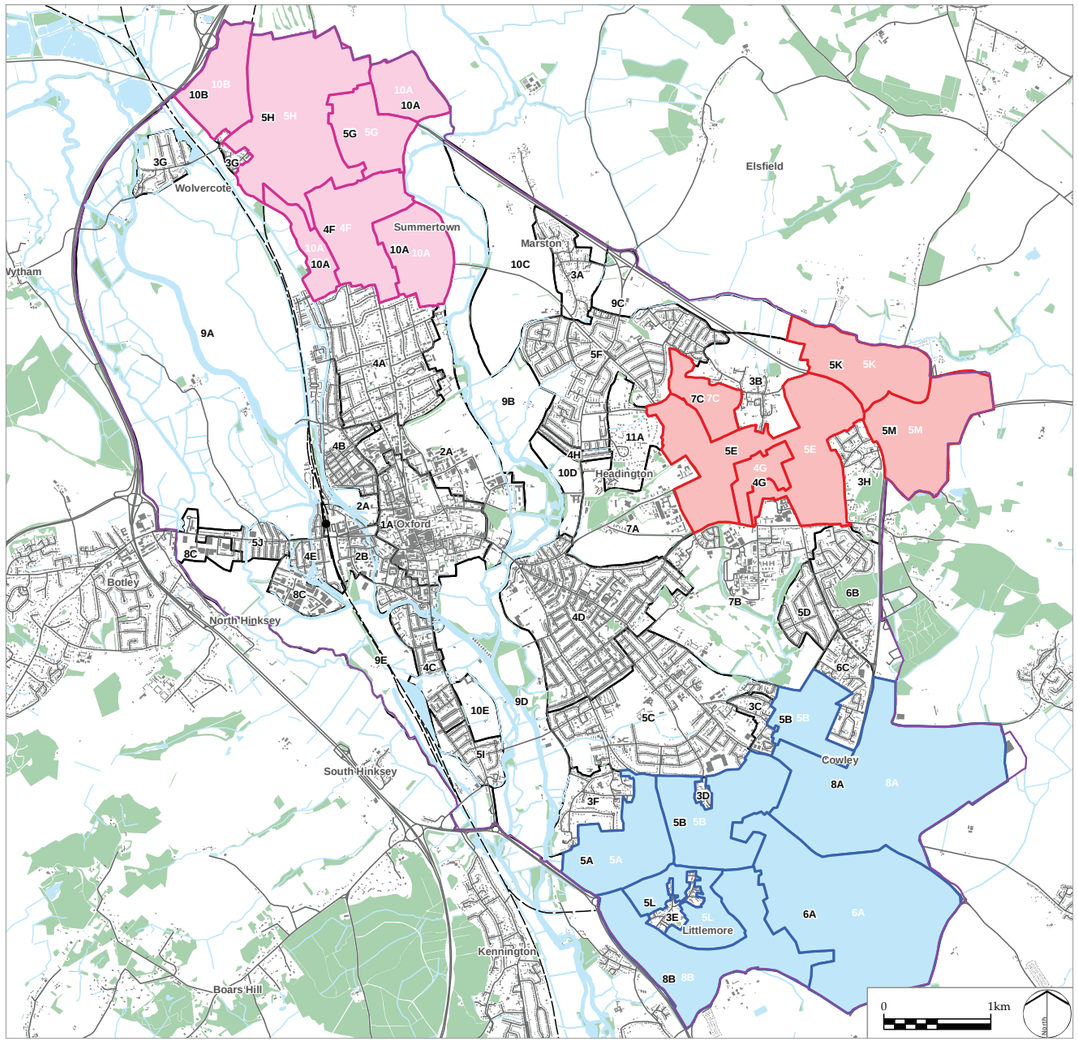


Figure 7: Areas of Greater Potential

- Oxford City Boundary
- Northern Suburbs
- Eastern Suburbs
- South-Eastern Suburbs

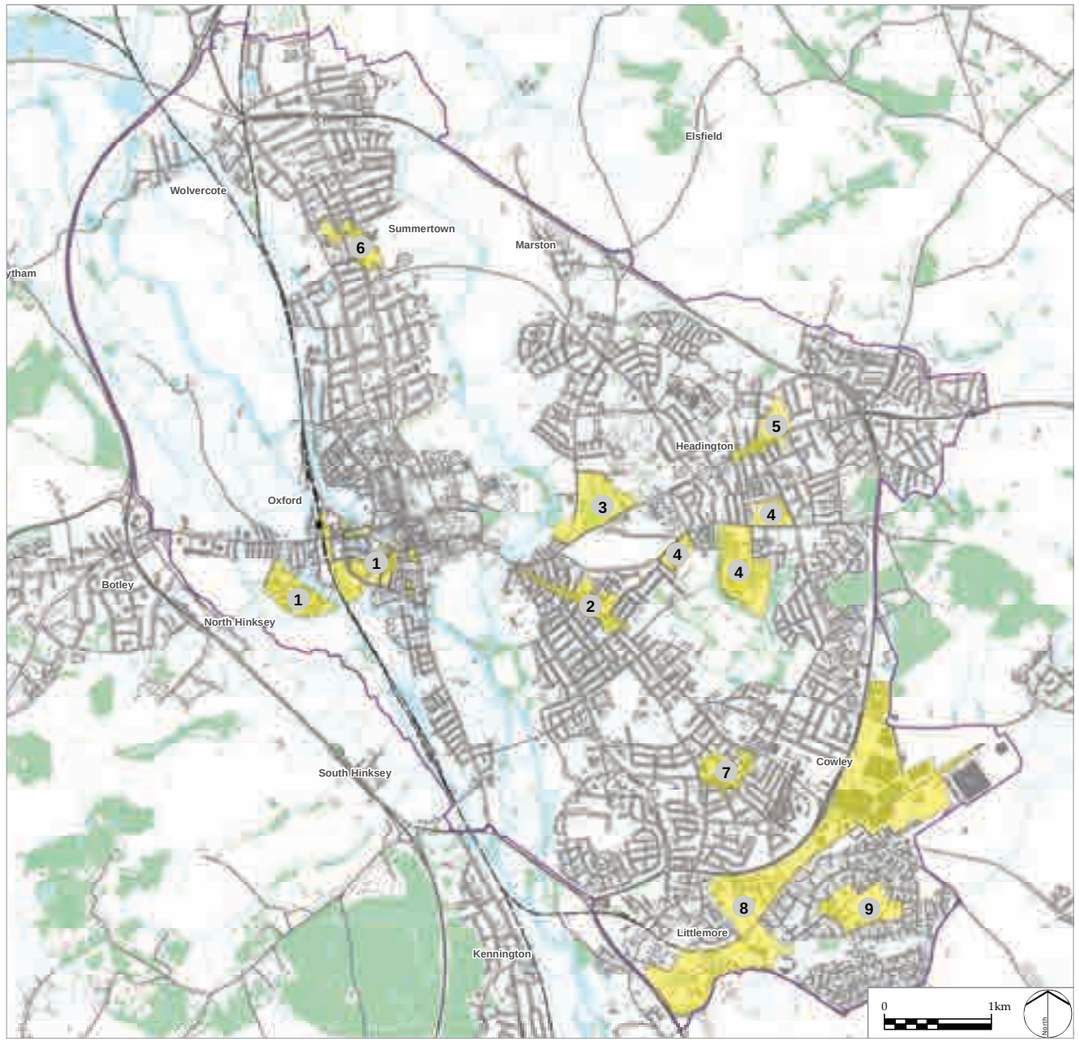


Figure 8: Dynamic Areas

- Oxford City Boundary

Dynamic Areas

- Dynamic Area

1. West End and Osney Mead
2. Cowley Road Centre
3. Marston Road
4. Old Road Area
5. Headington Centre
6. Summertown
7. Temple Cowley Centre
8. Cowley Branchline
9. Blackbird Leys

St Mary's existing view to Dynamic Area 2

Example of St Mary's 3D model existing view to Dynamic Area 2

Example of St Mary's 3D model view to Dynamic Area 2 with 18m building heights

Identifying Thresholds

4.3. Appendix 2 provides a summary table of individual height thresholds for Areas of Opportunity and for Dynamic Areas based on 3D modelling, identifying at what height new built form is likely to become visible from some of the city's View Cone locations and also from the city centre. The threshold schedule provides an indication of heights at which high building proposals are likely to start to change the character and composition of views looking towards the Areas of Opportunity and Dynamic Areas. These heights should be used as an initial reference point for consideration of high building proposals located within these areas. The heights identified do not represent areas with agreed development height parameters that will be automatically considered acceptable by Oxford City Council.

4.4. Oxford City Council will assess every planning application case on its individual merits and encourages developers to follow design guidance and pre-application practice set out in this TAN.

Example image illustrating 3D modelling

5 Managing Change

"The world surely has not another place like Oxford; it is a despair to see such a place and ever to leave it, for it would take a lifetime and more than one to comprehend and enjoy it satisfactorily."

Nathaniel Hawthorne

Nathaniel Hawthorne

View north from St George's Tower

Potential Visual Effects

The Visual Characteristics of Oxford

5.1. The composition of views within, out from and across Oxford vary greatly in their content and character and can change within a matter of metres from one location to another. Views within the city centre are generally enclosed and short distance. Views from more open areas on the floodplains or surrounding hills allow wide panoramic views of the city in its landscape setting to be appreciated.

5.2. The diversity of views and the visual experience is a positive feature of the city and the opportunity for creating new views and vantage points to appreciate the city and its landscape setting should be promoted where these do not cause unacceptable change. The visual characteristics within Oxford are diverse and depend not only on location but also viewing direction. The illustrative sections below show the general characteristics west to east and north to south across the city.

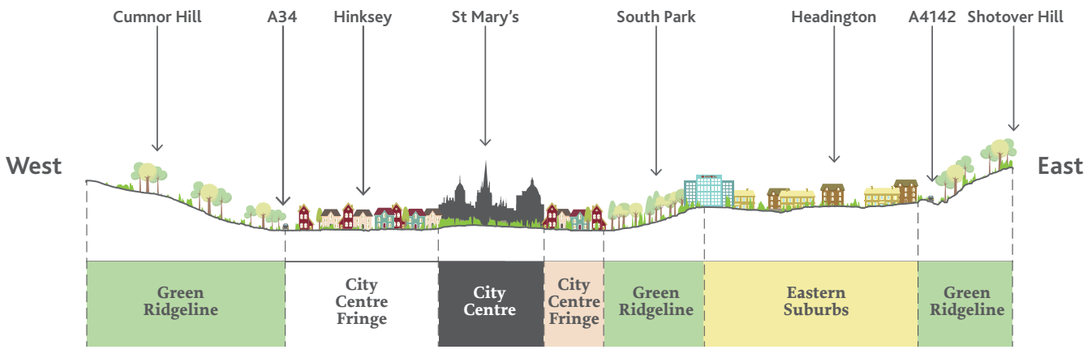
5.3. In views east to west (and west to east) across the River Thames and River Cherwell valleys, the city appears to be contained by the largely undeveloped valley sides. The rising land establishes a sense of natural containment to the city and a green backdrop to views out from it. This is sense of containment is an important characteristic of views out and across the city and contributes to the appreciation of Oxford in its landscape setting.

5.4. Views north and south (and south to north) are longer distance in nature being unconstrained due to the relative flat topography of the valley floor. The horizon to these views is formed by distant hills to the north around Begbrook and south around Garsington and beyond. From elevated locations looking towards the city, built from is characteristic within the valley floor, softened and punctuated in areas by vegetation within the city's built up area and by the largely undeveloped river floodplains.

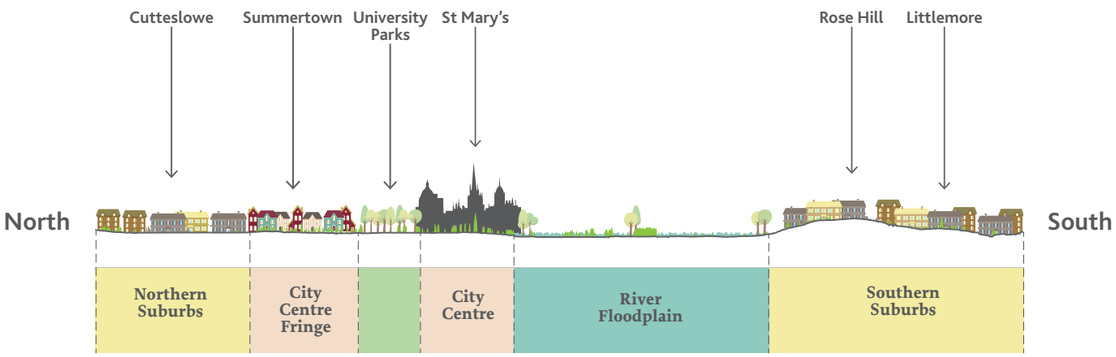
5.5. The TAN identifies four principal visual characteristics of the city:

- The iconic spires and silhouette of the historic city centre.
- The open and natural character of the river floodplains.
- The green (wooded or agricultural) backdrop to the city formed by the surrounding hills.
- The enclosed and often intimate views within the city centre.

5.6. These visual characteristics contribute to the city's distinct character and sense of place. The erosion or harm to these characteristics has the potential to affect the visual amenity and character of Oxford and also the setting and, consequently, heritage significance of heritage assets within it. Any effects to these characteristics should be understood in relation to proposals for high buildings by using the four visual tests detailed.



Illustrative City Section West to East



Illustrative City Section North to South

The Four Visual Tests

5.7. High buildings within Oxford have the potential to affect the visual amenity and character of the city, as well as the significance of its many heritage assets. This is primarily through visual change affecting important visual features such as built and / or natural landmarks, the setting of heritage assets or change to the built and natural fabric visible in views to, out from and across the city. The effect may be positive, negative or neutral depending on the existing context and the nature of the visual change.

5.8. For a heritage asset, the effect of any visual change in its setting on heritage significance will depend on the ways in which that setting contributes to significance. The analysis of the effects of visual change must therefore be based on an understanding of how setting contributes to heritage significance of an individual asset.

5.9. Four principal visual effects have been identified that may result from the introduction of a high building. Applicants for high buildings should use the four tests as part of the design iteration process and for the final submission proposal to demonstrate the potential effects a high building may have to the character, visual and heritage resource (refer to EBR).

Visual Obstruction

5.10. Visual obstruction is the physical obstruction of a feature or component in the view caused by a high building. This may result in full or partial blocking of the feature or component and may affect the interpretation of the feature and / or the legibility or character of the townscape. If the affected view makes a positive contribution to the significance of a heritage asset, obstruction may harm that significance.

5.11. Visual obstruction may be beneficial in obscuring views of perceived detracting features within the townscape, however this may lead to other unintended effects and the enhancement of the detractor itself is likely to be a more effective of means of improvement.

Visual Competition / Complement

5.12. Visual competition / complement is the siting of a high building within the same view as the feature such that the two are viewed together. The high building may be perceived to compete with the feature either in the foreground, middle ground or background of the view affecting the ability to discern or interpret the feature. If a heritage asset is currently appreciated as a prominent feature in views, the introduction of a high building that distracts the attention of a viewer, could harm the heritage significance of the asset.

5.13. Visual competition / complement resulting from high buildings may also occur as part of sequential views along routes that allows appreciation of the townscape. This may be along a historic approach road, revealing a sense of arrival to the city from its hinterland, or an important route, for example a route between two locations that has cultural meaning. Sequential views are spatially dynamic and their consideration and how they may be affected by high buildings, requires careful and comprehensive consideration.

Skylining

5.14. Skylining is when high buildings break the skyline, horizon or silhouette, which may be formed by built form or vegetation. Topography is often a critical factor with skylining and is most likely to occur around ridgelines of the surrounding hills although it can also occur beyond these areas where building heights interrupt the existing silhouette of built areas or vegetation. Skylining represents the breaching of an existing perceived 'threshold' and can often result in the high building acting as eye-catching feature within views drawing the viewer's attention and increasing visual competition. The potential for harm to heritage assets created through increased visual competition and distraction must always be considered.

5.15. Skylining can add diversity and accent to views. The careful consideration of the existing modulation of buildings in a view or sequence of views and the potential of a new building to positively enhance silhouette should be encouraged.

View northeast from St Mary's Church

Change of Character

5.16. Change of character occurs when the composition of a view is altered to the extent the character of the view is discernibly different to that of the existing. This may be a result of an individual high building strongly influencing the composition or cumulative small incremental changes within the view leading to a notable change. Change of character may include a combination of obstruction, competition / complement and skylining. If the existing character of an area of townscape makes a positive contribution to the significance of a heritage asset, any change has the potential to harm that significance.

5.17. The improvement of the character of a view, for example by the removal of detracting features, or possibly enhancement through the introduction of high buildings should be carefully considered and encouraged where enhancement can be demonstrated. Appendix 2 provides an indication of building heights in Areas of Opportunity and Dynamic Areas at which change of character has the potential to occur.

6 Overarching Guidelines

“Oxford still remains the most beautiful thing in England, and nowhere else are life and art so exquisitely blended, so perfectly made one.”

Oscar Wilde

View southwest from St Mary’s Church

Overarching Guidelines

6.1. This section provides a set of overarching criteria against which high buildings should be considered. Applicants for high building should ensure a strong rationale and justification for their proposals and deploy these criteria to structure their design response during pre-application consultation and as part of the final planning application submission. A glossary of the terms used is provided in Appendix 3.

Understanding Context

6.2. High buildings have the potential to significantly change the environment in which they are located. Understanding the context of a high building proposal is critical to understanding potential change and ensuring high buildings respond positively to their surroundings.
It is important that an appreciation and demonstration of an understanding of the context and potential effects is provided as part of any high building proposal so informed decisions can be made.

6.3. Heritage is an important component of understanding context and the receiving environment, particularly in relation to the setting of heritage assets. Further heritage analysis is contained in the EBR with Appendix 1 providing summary details of heritage considerations for all 52 TCAs of the city.

6.4. The opportunity for improvements to the area subject to a high building proposal should be considered. Opportunities should be identified and informed by local needs and an appreciation of any wider city-wide aspirations. Improvements as part of a proposal may include new or improved public realm and public open space, contribution to the improvement of the quality of built form in an area, enhancement of existing positive features, enhancing connectivity, or delivering new or enhanced community facilities.


Blavatnik School of Government

Architectural Quality and Design

6.5. High buildings in Oxford are expected to be of high architectural quality in terms of their design and materials. They should also function effectively for their intended use, allowing for flexibility and adaptability over time. Functionality considerations such as car parking and internal amenity are important aspects of the design of high buildings.

6.6. It is accepted that architectural 'styles' will change over time and that different design approaches in the same area may be justifiable. All high buildings should demonstrate quality and deliver a positive addition to the city. Innovation and diversity of architectural expression is encouraged where it is considered appropriate and provided it is underpinned by a strong understanding and appreciation of the context in which it is being proposed. The role of the city's Design Review Panel is considered key to permit judgements on design merit to be assessed and support provision of direction to applicants during the pre-application process (refer to Section 2).

Profile / Silhouette

6.7. Oxford's skyline is internationally renowned and proposed high buildings have the potential to affect the silhouette of Oxford. The four visual tests set out within this TAN should be used to support design development including building sitting and pre-application discussions.

6.8. The effect of high buildings on protected View Cones identified within the Local Plan, and any other relevant important viewing location(s) identified by Oxford City Council should be considered as part of any high building proposal. New high buildings should not detract from existing landmark buildings visible on the Oxford skyline. Judgements on this should be informed by comprehensive modelling and in agreement with Oxford City Council.

6.9. The articulation of built form should clearly respond and contribute positively to Oxford's skyline. The scope for diversity of profile / silhouette will depend on demonstrating a clear understanding of the context and positive contribution to the modulation of the city's skyline.

6.10. The former high building datum policy has resulted in the design of a number of buildings with unattractive roof environment and profiles. High building designs should provide well organised and designed roof environments and contribute to the modulation of the city's skyline.


Hamburg

Image © Rienhad Kraasch (wikimedia Creative Commons)

6.11. Opportunities for enhancement of Oxford's skyline through innovative and interesting profiles and shapes should be considered provided they do not detract from the historic skyline or an existing feature of merit.

6.12. The consideration of the profile of a building not only relates to its relative height and general form but also the nature and articulation of its façade design, approach to framing and the inclusion of balconies / set backs etc. These elements can influence the extent and nature of shadow generated on an elevation and can support the integration of a building and express or reduce its scale.

Height / Scale / Massing

6.13. The height, scale and massing of high buildings are separate but interconnected issues. High buildings should be of a height, scale and mass that responds positively to their surroundings. A degree of variation in height, scale and mass of any single proposal or its relationship to adjoining development is encouraged to promote an interesting and diverse townscape, provided it does not conflict with the surrounding context, appears incoherent, or leads to the fragmentation of townscape resulting in poor legibility.

6.14. Where greater than existing variations of height, scale and mass are proposed, for example in creating new centres or visually prominent buildings that would act as focal points in views, evidence should be presented on how the design has developed and responded to its surroundings.

6.15. Simple block 3D images along with sections and elevations and verified photomontages are often helpful in understanding the height, scale and massing of high buildings relative to their surroundings.


20 Fenchurch Street, London

Green Infrastructure

6.16. Proposals for high buildings should contribute positively to the Green Infrastructure of the city. This could include provision of green walls, green or biodiverse roofs (accessible or not), sustainable drainage systems or other environmental benefits that support natural and ecological processes.

6.17. Green infrastructure associated with high buildings should contribute positively to wider Green Infrastructure networks across the city.

Streetscene / Streetscape

6.18. The interaction of high buildings and the street / public realm is an important design consideration that should be given early consideration. Issues such as the location and nature of entrances, servicing, utilities, vehicle and cycle parking, organisation of mixed tenure access, animation of ground floor areas and relationship to open space and public /private realm should be properly considered. High buildings have the potential to affect the legibility, movement, character and visual amenity of adjacent streets.

6.19. Opportunities for high buildings to enhance the streetscene improving legibility, connectivity, activation of public realm and improvement to visual amenity should be secured.


Sky Garden, London

Public Realm / Open Space

6.20. High buildings have the potential to affect the character, visual and recreational amenity of the public realm and open space by virtue of their scale, proximity, ground floor uses and the contribution they make to place making. High buildings including, or near to, existing public realm and open space should consider how these spaces are addressed appropriately by the design.

6.21. Good design of private and public space is key to the success of any development and provision of both types of space are considered likely for any high building proposal. The scale, character and content of spaces should be explored as part of the design process. The design should demonstrate a clear relationship to proposed uses and residential mixes where appropriate.

6.22. Proposals that harm the amenity of the public realm and / or open spaces should be resisted. An assessment on the potential effects on existing public realm / open space should be undertaken as part of any high building proposal.

6.23. The creation of public space as part of high building proposals is encouraged particularly where it can demonstrate additional contributions to existing local need.

Urban Grain

6.24. An understanding of the urban grain and how it may be affected by a high building proposal should be considered as part of the design process. High buildings should consider the existing urban grain structure and secure enhancements to it by improving connectivity, legibility and interfaces between spaces where appropriate.

Microclimate

6.25. High buildings have the potential to modify microclimate creating unpleasant and inhospitable environments. Effects may include the tunnelling of wind, partial or permanent shading of adjacent areas and / or intensification of solar irradiation.

6.26. Proposals for high buildings should demonstrate effects on shading of adjoining areas using modelling and appropriate public realm design. Other potential microclimate effects should be identified during consultation and supporting technical information should be provided in support of the design where requested.

Materials

6.27. The selection of materials and their potential effects should be given careful consideration early in the design process. The colour, variation, reflectivity, texture of materials and the extent and character of glazing will all influence the appreciation of a building. Certain colours and materials lend themselves to being more visually prominent than others. Muted colours that respect the existing character of Oxford are considered appropriate. Substantially glazed elevations should demonstrate sensitive appreciation of orientation and reflectance.

6.28. New and innovative materials should be explored, particularly where they are low carbon technologies or have energy efficient properties.

6.29. A clear understanding of the context and design rationale needs to be made when considering materials.

6.30. The way materials are seen and appreciated may alter under different atmospheric conditions, for example in bright sunshine and at different times of the day and night. The consideration of materials under different weather conditions should be tested through the provision of visualisations agreed during pre-application consultation.

6.31. Consideration of how materials will change over time, the performance life of materials and their maintenance requirements should also inform the design and material palette chosen. The maintenance and upgrading of existing high buildings, such as the recladding of external facades, should have due regard to the selection of materials for similar reasons. Materials should meet the required safety standards.


Islip House, Banbury Road


Westgate Roof Terrace

Lighting

6.32. Lighting plays an important role in creating safe places within and around high buildings and the creation of safe environments at all times of the day is fundamental to any design proposal. Internal and external lighting should not be overly intrusive nor result in spill or glare into adjacent areas. Energy efficient and smart lighting should be encouraged.

6.33. The lighting of high buildings should be considered during the pre-application stage and should consider ecology, light intrusion on neighbouring environments and avoiding drawing unnecessary or inappropriate attention to a single structure especially in the city centre where this may challenge the character of the night time environment and experience of the city. A clear design rationale for the lighting design of high buildings should be made.

6.34. A lighting strategy, which may include night-time visualisations, should be developed to understand the ambient lighting levels and the potential lighting effects of a high building proposal.

Roofscape

6.35. Roofscape contributes to the appreciation of the profile and silhouette of Oxford. High buildings that help articulate the silhouette of the city and add interest and diversity are encouraged provided they do not conflict with the surrounding context or appear incoherent. The integration of services into the roofscape is an important consideration of high buildings to ensure they are not overly obtrusive.

Services and Utilities

6.36. The location and design of services and utilities such as air conditioning units, lift overruns, electrical substations, telecommunications and bin and bike stores can have a significant effect on the quality of a high building and its environment. These issues should be considered as part of the design process to ensure they are fully integrated with the proposal.

Cumulative and Incremental Effects

6.37. The cumulative effects of new high buildings on the city's existing skyline or on the character of any townscape character area of the city should be considered as part of the pre-application process and assessed within the planning application.

6.38. Small changes in the height of proposed buildings relative to existing adjacent buildings or within the wider townscape character area may be considered inappropriate.

6.39. The use of computer modelling including the use of verified wireline photomontages and as the design progresses, fully render photorealistic photomontages, may be requested by the council where appropriate. Modelling information should include the modelling of any extant approvals that have not yet been constructed to allow for proper cumulative effects to be understood.

6.40. Enhancement to the city's townscape through positive cumulative and incremental changes such as creating a more varied and interesting roofscape or clustering of high buildings to aid legibility should be encouraged, particularly where they contribute to the policy aspirations for that area.


Oxford Roofscape

Appendices

Appendix 1:
Recommended Planning Application Checklist

Like to a queen in pride of place, she wears
The splendour of a crown in Radcliffe's dome.
Well fare she, well! As perfect beauty fares;
And those high places, that are beauty's home."

Lionel Johnson, Oxford

Recommended Planning Application Checklist

The list below provides and indication of documents that may be required for a high building planning application. Additional documents may also be required subject to specific proposals.

- Completed Application Form
- Location Plan at 1:1250 or 1:200 scale
- Block Plan at 1:100 or 1:200 scale
- Certificates of Ownership and / or Notices
- Planning Fee
- Planning Statement
- Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)
- Design and Access Statement (DAS)
- Sections
- Elevations
- Floor and Roof plan
- Landscaping details
- Illustrative drawings and vignettes
- Material samples
- Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (TVIA)
- Verified photomontages (wireframe and rendered)
- Heritage and Archaeology Statement
- Transport Assessment and Travel Plan
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Economic Statement
- Biodiversity and Geodiversity Assessment
- Microclimate Assessment
- Daylight / Sunlight Assessment
- Lighting Assessment
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Air Quality Statement
- Water and Sewerage Infrastructure
- Utilities Assessment
- Contaminated Land Assessment
- Arboricultural Implications Assessment and Method Statement
- SuDs design Strategy
- Landscape / Public Realm Strategy Document
- Natural Resources Impact Analysis (NRIA)
- Energy / Sustainability Statement
- Parking Information
- Waste Management Details
- Construction Management Plan including Code of Construction Practice
- Viability Report
- Affordable Housing Statement
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
- Planning Obligations – Draft Heads of Terms

Appendices

Appendix 2:
Indicative Building Height Thresholds

Height Threshold Analysis

Based on 3D modelling and calibration with field study and photography, the tables below identify thresholds to understand at what point change is likely to occur as a result of high buildings and the nature of that change to views out, in and across the city based on the four visual tests:

- Skylining: The potential breaking of the skyline / horizon / ridgeline at this location in the view by built form at the height indicated.
- Competition / Obstruction: The potential obstruction / competition with existing built form visible at this location at the height indicated.
- Change of character: The potential change of character of the view at this location at the height indicated.
- Not visible: Development would not be visible from this location.

The table indicates the most likely potential effect to occur. This does not imply that other effects are absent or not of importance. The table in no way suggests heights (or below) that indicated are acceptable. Equally nor does it seek to preclude automatically building heights above those indicated. Oxford City Council will assess every case on its individual merits, which should be underpinned by a sound understanding of context, convincing design rationale, and robust consideration of likely effects.

To assist in appreciation of the potential number of storeys, an indicative table of number of storeys to building height is provided below.

No of Storeys	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	20	25	30
Indicative Height (AGL)	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30	33	36	39	42	45	48	63	78	93

A 3D model of built form within Oxford has been generated, using the Bluesky Heighted Building data. This is a commercially available nationwide dataset that provides the heights of structures and built form derived from LiDAR data using Ordnance Survey's mastermap. The 3D model also includes data from the National Tree Map allowing the screening effects of vegetation to be incorporated.

Heights for each TCA within Areas of Opportunity and indivisual Dynamic Areas were then tested by increasing building heights incrementally to establish at what height built form results in change to views using the four visual tests as set out in Section 5. Three views were used as locations for the modelling of views, these were:

- St Mary's Church: representing an elevated view from within the historic city centre and from where an appreciation of Oxford in its landscape setting is possible.
- Boards Hill: representing views east to west across the city and river valley outside of the historic city centre. This view is identified within the Oxford View Cones Study and protected under Local Plan policy.
- Elmsfields: representing views north to south across the city along the river valley outside of the historic city centre. This view is identified within the Oxford View Cones Study and protected under Local Plan policy.

The analysis was calibrated using analysis from the 3D model and existing photography from each of the viewpoints.

Areas of Greater Potential

		View Location		
		Views out	Views in / across	
	Townscape Character Area	St Mary's	Boars Hill	Elsfield
Northern Suburbs	4F - Summertown	Skylining at 24m	Competition at 18m	Competition at 18m
	5G – Cuttleslow/Sunnymead	Skylining at 24m	Competition at 18m	Competition at 15m
	5H – North Oxford Fringes	Skylining at 24m	Competition at 15m	Competition at 15m
	10A – North Oxford Open River Terrace	Skylining at 24m	Change of character at 15m	Competition at 15m
	10B – Peartree Open River Terrace	Skylining at 24m	Competition at 15m	Change of character at 18m
Eastern Suburbs	4G – New Headington	Skylining at 39m	Skylining at 18m	Skylining at 24m
	5E – New Headington	Skylining at 24m	Skylining at 18m	Skylining at 15m
	5K – Barton	Skylining at 54m	Skylining at 18m	Competition at 12m
	5M – Sandhills and Risinghurst	Skylining at 45m	Skylining at 18m	Change of character at 12m
	7C – John Radcliffe Hospital	Skylining at 21m	Change of character at 18m	Competition at 18m
South Eastern Suburbs	5A – Rose Hill	Skylining at 12m	Not visible	Skylining at 87m
	5B – Cowley Residential Suburb	Skylining at 15m	Not visible	Skylining at 54m
	5L – Littlemore	Skylining at 21m	Not visible	Skylining at 102m
	6A – Blackbird Leys	Skylining at 15m	Not visible	Skylining at 75m
	8A – Cowley Motor Works	Skylining at 15m	Not visible	Skylining at 45m
	8B – Littlemore Business and Science Parks	Skylining at 21m	Not visible	Skylining at 96m

Dynamic Areas

		View Location		
		Views out	Views in / across	
	Name	St Mary's	Boars Hill	Elsfield
Dynamic Areas	1 – West End and Osney Mead	Competition at 15m	Competition at 18m	Competition at 21m
	2 – Cowley Road Centre	Competition at 15m	Not visible	Change of character at 30m
	3 – Marston Road	Competition at 15m	Change of character at 15m	Skylining at 24m
	4 – Old Road Area	Skylining at 24m	Not visible	Skylining at 30m
	5 – Headington Centre	Skylining at 39m	Skylining at 18m	Skylining at 15m
	6 – Summertown	Skylining at 24m	Competition at 18m	Competition at 18m
	7 – Temple Cowley Centre	Skylining at 12m	Not visible	Skylining at 81m
	8 – Cowley Branchline	Skylining at 21m	Not visible	Skylining at 96m
	9 – Blackbird Leys	Skylining at 15m	Not visible	Skylining at 75m

Appendices

Appendix 3:
Glossary of Terms

Glossary of Terms

Architectural Quality
The quality of the design and physical built form.

Architectural Style
The style in which a building is designed and constructed, especially with regard to a specific period, place or culture. (OED)

Building line
The line along street frontages formed by the layout of buildings.

Built form
Buildings and structures.

Condition
The state of the townscape with regard to its appearance, quality or working order (OED).

For example the presence / absence of derelict or vacant land and / or buildings. Often closely linked to perceptual qualities, such as level of maintenance, safety and how a place is experienced.

Conservation Area
Conservation Areas are statutory designated, protected areas on account of their special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Conservation Area designation introduces protection for all aspects of character or appearance, including landscape and public spaces, that define an area's special interest.

Cultural Expression
The inhabitants of the locality and how different cultural backgrounds shape the built environment reflective of their culture.

Cumulative Effects
Effects caused in combination with other development proposals.

Edge
The boundary between two areas or features, these can be natural topographical features or man-made features.

Enclosure
The use of buildings, structures and / or townscape to create a sense of containment.

Gateway
The design of a building, site or landscape to symbolise an entrance or arrival to a specific location.

Green Infrastructure
The network of green spaces and other natural features within the built form such as parks, sports pitches, golf courses, allotments, cemeteries, rivers, canals, village greens, trees , green walls and roofs or vacant and re-vegetated ground. It may have public or private access.

Heritage Asset
A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset include designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

Historic Environment Record
Information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use.

Incremental Effects
Effects caused as a result of repeated small changes.

Land Cover
The surface cover of the land, usually expressed in terms of vegetation cover or lack of it but may be buildings or surfaces. Related to but not the same as land use.

Land Use
What land is used for, based on broad categories of functional land cover, such as industrial, residential or commercial.

Legibility
The ability to navigate through or 'read' the urban environment. Can be increased through a number of means such as good connectivity, landmarks and wayfaring signage. Within townscape low legibility and the ability to become 'lost' can be a positive feature in the right circumstances.

Listed Building
A listed building is one that has been placed on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. There are three categories of listed buildings in the United Kingdom:

- Grade I buildings, which are of exceptional interest and make up 2.5% of all listed buildings in the United Kingdom.
- Grade II* buildings, which are particularly important buildings of more than special interest and make up 5.5% of all listed buildings in the United Kingdom.
- Grade II buildings, which are of special interest and make up 92% of all listed buildings in the United Kingdom.

Massing
The arrangement and shape of individual or combined built form.

Materials
The matter used to create the built form, likely to include brick, glass, concrete, stone, timber and metal.

Microclimate
The climate of a very small or restricted area within the built form (OED). Can often be altered or modified by built form often intensifying conditions (such as urban wind canyons) but can also moderate conditions too.

Movement
The sense of travel and activity through and within a place, often strongly influenced by the flows of people and traffic, greater levels of which potentially creating a 'busy' and bustling feel.

Open Space
Space where an absence or limited amounts of built form is characteristic. Open space does not always indicate public accessibility.

Photomontages
A visualisation which superimposes line work or an image(s) representing a proposed development upon a photograph or series of photographs (GLVIA 3). May be wireline or rendered.

Photomontages produced using set technical methods ensuring the accuracy of the image and development shown within it can also be referred to as Accurate Visual Representations (AVRS).

Public Realm
Areas accessible to the general public. Public realm can take a variety of characters and form a number of functions.

Registered Parks and Gardens
Are non-statutory protected 'designed' landscapes including gardens, grounds and other planned open spaces, such as town squares. Being designated a Registered Parks and Gardens does not convey public access.

Roofscape
The arrangement and appreciation of roofs, towers, spires, etc.

Rural
Relating to, or characteristic of the countryside rather than the town (OED).

Scale
The relative size or extent of built form (OED).

Setting (landscape)
The context or environment in which a feature sits and contributes to its appreciation.

Setting of a Heritage Asset
The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

Scheduled Monument
Scheduled monuments represent statutory protected nationally important archaeological sites. Only deliberately created structures, features and remains can be scheduled and they may not always be ancient or visible above ground.

Significance (for heritage policy)
The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Skyline / Profile
The outline of built form and land defined against the sky (OED). Sometimes referred to as silhouette.

Streetscene/Streetscape
The view or scene of streets (OED). It can be shaped by a number of factors such as buildings, open spaces, trees / vegetation, street furniture, signage, lighting, materials used for paving and may vary during different times of the day or night.

Suburban/Peri-urban
An edge, outlying or peripheral district of a city, especially a residential one (OED).

Sustainability
The design and construction of development that seeks to have minimal impact on the environment. Applicable to the full lifecycle of the development.

Topography
The arrangement of the natural and artificial physical features (OED). Likely to strongly influence the location and characteristics of built form, drainage, movement and routes, and Green Infrastructure.

Townscape
The character and composition of the built environment including the buildings and the relationships between them, different types of urban open space, including green spaces, and the relationship between buildings and open space (GLVIA 3).

Townscape Character
A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the built environment that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse (GLVIA 3).

Townscape Character Areas (TCAs)
Townscape Character Areas (TCAs) are unique areas which are the discrete geographical areas of a particular townscape type (GLVIA 3).

Townscape Character Types (TCTs)
Distinct townscape types that are relatively homogeneous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different areas in different parts of the country, but wherever they occur they share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation and historical land use and settlement pattern, and perceptual and aesthetic attributes (GLVIA 3).

Tranquillity
A state of calm and quietude associated with peace, likely to be highly valued in urban environments (GLVIA 3).

Tree Preservation Order (TPO)
A Tree Preservation Order is an order made by a local planning authority in England to protect specific trees, groups of trees or woodland in the interests of amenity.

Urban Grain
The arrangement or pattern of the buildings and streets within the built form. It may be fine or course, formal or informal, linear, blocky, planned, structured or unstructured.

Utilities
The presence and prominence of service infrastructure such as pylons, power lines, telecommunications, water and waste infrastructure.

Vernacular
The way in which buildings are built in a particular place, making use of local styles, techniques and materials and responding to local economic and social conditions.

Views
A sight or prospect that can be taken in by the eye from a particular place (OED).

Visual Amenity
The overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provide an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area (GLVIA 3).

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