



Chadwick Town Planning

**Oxford Local Plan 2040
Examination**

Hearing Statement

**Matter 3 – Housing need and the housing
requirement**

Hearing Date: 12th June 2024

**Prepared by Chadwick Town Planning Ltd for Lincoln College
(Respondent ID No. 103)**



Lincoln College
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Final Version – 21st May 2024

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Hearing Statement has been prepared by Duncan Chadwick, Managing Director of Chadwick Town Planning Limited ('CTPL'), on behalf of the Rector and Fellows of Lincoln College ('Lincoln College'), who own the Sports Ground and land at Bartlemas Close, Oxford which is proposed to be allocated for residential development (including graduate accommodation) along with Jesus College's Sports Ground via Policy SPE17 of the *Oxford Local Plan 2040 ('the Plan')*.
- 1.2 Overall, Lincoln College considers that the Plan has been positively prepared, is justified, effective and consistent with national policy in relation to housing need and the housing requirement and therefore 'sound' in relation to Paragraph 35 of the *National Planning Policy Framework, 2023 ('NPPF')*.
- 1.3 This Statement responds to the Inspectors' Matters, Issues and Questions regarding Matter 3 – "Housing need and the housing requirement". This is in relation to student or graduate accommodation, the needs of the city and the important contribution the Colleges and the University of Oxford make towards meeting the city's housing needs and the housing requirement.
- 1.4 This Statement should be read and considered in conjunction with previous representations made on the Plan on behalf of Lincoln College.

2.0 MATTERS, ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

2.1 The questions posed by the Inspectors, that is question nos. 1-14 under Matter 3, particularly surrounding housing need and the capacity within Oxford City are inextricably linked and inter-related so this Statement does not differentiate between the respective questions. We hope that this contribution is not inconvenient but helpful to the Inspectors in their examination of the Plan.

National Policy Guidance

2.2 Within the overall Government objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes as set out in Paragraph 60 of the NPPF, the NPPF guidance indicates *inter alia* that it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed and that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed. These groups include students.

2.3 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)¹ states:

'Strategic policy-making authorities need to plan for sufficient student accommodation whether it consists of communal halls of residence or self-contained dwellings, and whether or not it is on campus. Encouraging more dedicated student accommodation may provide low cost housing that takes pressure off the private rented sector and increases the overall housing stock. Strategic policy-making authorities are encouraged to consider options which would support both the needs of the student population as well as local residents before imposing caps or restrictions on students living outside university-provided accommodation. Local Planning Authorities will also need to engage with universities and other higher educational establishments to ensure they understand their student accommodation requirements in their area.'

¹ Paragraph: 004 Reference ID: 67-004-20190722

Student Housing Situation in Oxford

- 2.4 According to the Council's latest *Annual Monitoring Report (2022-23)* ('AMR') published in December 2023, the University of Oxford stated that there were 26,497 students attending the University (and its Colleges) as of 1st December 2022. After taking into account agreed data exclusions² (i.e. those who are not full-time taught course students) there were 14,653 full-time University of Oxford students with accommodation requirements. As of 1st December 2022, there were 13,975 accommodation places provided across the collegiate University. This left a total of 678 students living outside of University-provided accommodation in Oxford (Figure 1), which is within the threshold of the current *Oxford Local Plan 2036* (Policy H9) of 1,500 students living outside of University-provided accommodation. This is a substantial difference from figures produced in 2021/22 which showed that the total was 1,491 students living outside of University-provided accommodation, which was only just inside the threshold. In previous years this total ranged from circa 2,000 to as high as 3,500 (in 2012/13), well above the threshold introduced by the *Oxford Local Plan 2036*.
- 2.5 There are numerous reasons for this improvement [i.e. the reduction in the numbers of students not in University-provided accommodation]. The first is that the University has seen an increase in the total number of accommodation places provided from 13,382 to 13,975 – an increase of 593 places or 4%. Secondly, there was a slight decrease in the total number of students attending the University. This could be linked to the over-recruitment of students in previous years. There could also be an impact from Covid-19 on universities and student numbers and the downturn in the Chinese economy, affecting student recruitment and numbers from overseas.
- 2.6 Student accommodation can be counted in housing land supply figures³. In the 2022/23 monitoring year 266 (net) units of student accommodation were completed in Oxford. Using the ratio of 2.5:1 (as set out in Paragraph 10 of the *Housing Delivery Test Measurement Rule Book*) this

² [authority-monitoring-report-2022-2023 \(oxford.gov.uk\)](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/authority-monitoring-report-2022-2023)

³ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-supply-and-delivery#calculating>

equated to 107 equivalent (Use Class C3) dwellings to Oxford’s housing market. See Figure 1.

<u>Monitoring Year</u>	<u>Number of student rooms completed</u>	<u>Ratio Applied</u>	<u>Number of equivalent ‘dwellings’</u>
2016/17	295	2.5:1	118
2017/18	452	2.5:1	180
2018/19	187	2.5:1	75
2019/20	1337	2.5:1	535
2020/21	628	2.5:1	251
2021/22	131	2.5:1	52
2022/23	266	2.5:1	107

Table 17: Student housing completions and equivalent ‘dwellings’ – 2016/17 – 2022/23

Figure 1 – Student Accommodation Provision (AMR, 2023)

2.7 In the 2022/23 AMR monitoring year, the equivalent student provision of 107 “dwellings” represented some 19% of total new dwellings or equivalent provided in the city (554) and 18.8% of the *Oxford Local Plan 2036* annual housing requirement for 2022/23 (567). This is a significant proportion and considerable contribution to housing supply at a time of acute demand and limited supply due to numerous constraints in the city (e.g. limited availability of greenfield sites; heritage and environmental designations; etc.).

Future Requirements

2.8 The University has predicted a growth in student numbers over the Plan period⁴, albeit that it is difficult to be certain over the longer term in respect of the future recruitment of students since there are factors that may be within the University’s or Colleges’ control (e.g. fees, facilities, courses offered) but others that are outside their influence (e.g. Government policy, macro-economic situation).

2.9 The *Oxford Student Needs Study*⁵, using information from the University of Oxford, predicts 17,709 students will require accommodation (meet the criteria of the policy, i.e. full time, taught course students not already living in Oxford or with other exclusions set out in the Appendix of the Submission Draft *Oxford Local Plan 2040*) in 2028, using the high growth

⁴ Paragraph 5.17 of Oxford Local Plan – Background Paper 5 – Specialist Housing Need

⁵ The Oxford Student Needs Study (Iceni, 2023)

scenario. The accommodation assumption [in the *Needs Study*] is that there will be the same amount as there is currently in 2028, so no assumption has been built into the threshold about the pipeline supply coming forward before 2028. The *AMR, 2023* indicates that there are 14,653 students needing accommodation in Oxford with 13,975 units of University-provided student accommodation.

- 2.10 The growth scenario in the *Needs Study* suggests an increase of over 3,000 students requiring accommodation. This highlights the significant need for additional student accommodation for students at the University (and Colleges) over the Local Plan period.

Impact of Students on Housing Supply

- 2.11 The demand for student accommodation places two main forms of pressure on the city's housing stock⁶:

- students accommodated directly in private rented housing; and
- from student accommodation being developed on sites that may equally be suitable for other types of housing.

- 2.12 This can lead to higher rents, worsening affordability - Oxford remains one of the least affordable UK cities for housing with average house prices over 15 times the average salary in 2022⁷ - more pressure on others (i.e. non-University/Collegiate) in the housing market and the perceived or actual harmful impacts of large numbers of students on the host community or neighbourhood. The provision of additional student accommodation on University/College-owned land to meet the needs of the University/College - as on Lincoln College's land at Bartlemas Close - is important in helping to address housing need in Oxford since it can:

1. Improve the position and objective of the Local Plan regarding the number of students in non-University provided accommodation;
2. Add to the housing stock overall;
3. Effectively utilise suitable sites;

⁶ Oxford Local Plan 2040 – Background Paper 5 – Specialist Housing Need

⁷ [Housing statistics | Oxford City Council](#)

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4. Ensure good quality student accommodation is provided on appropriate sites (e.g. providing all the desired amenities, locating them where it is desirable for students to live and which can be effectively managed) that avoids unacceptable changes in character or increases in activity/noise/disturbance along quieter residential streets);
 5. Release accommodation (e.g. family housing) into the market;
 6. Ensure mixed and balanced communities; and
 7. Deliver sustainable development.

Lincoln College

- 2.13 Lincoln College was founded in 1427, almost 600 years ago. During this time, the College has educated thousands of students, refurbished and developed its historic buildings and its property portfolio and established itself as a place of cutting-edge research.
- 2.14 The College's *Strategic Plan 2022-2027* sets out that one of Lincoln's strengths is its collegiate character and the positive contributions made by all parts of the College community: Fellows, students, staff, and alumni. In the period to 2027, its 600th anniversary, the College seeks to achieve many objectives not least to ensure that Fellows and students have adequate buildings and facilities by providing more teaching rooms for Fellows and more accommodation, especially for their postgraduates and married students. The housing at Bartlemas Close [proposed allocation via Policy SPE17 of the Plan] is intended to be made available primarily to graduate students in the second and third year of their PhD studies (i.e. the occupants will be more mature) and cater for students with families.
- 2.15 This will not only meet the College's aspirations for its Fellows, students, staff, and alumni but also help towards meeting housing need and the City's housing requirement, both generally and for more University-provided accommodation in Oxford. It will also help release housing accommodation into the market and assist housing supply generally in the city, which has an urgent and pressing need for more homes – both affordable and market – which it is unable to accommodate within the city's boundary.

3.0 CONCLUSION

- 3.1 Lincoln College’s overarching position on the *Oxford Local Plan 2040* is one of support. The College considers the Local Plan is soundly based as it has been positively prepared, is justified, effective and consistent with national policy on sustainable development, the provision of specialist housing, making the most effective use of land and other matters.
- 3.2 Housing for students, especially in a city like Oxford, which is ranked as the world’s top university for a record eighth year by the Times Higher Education World University Rankings⁸, and has one of the highest affordability ratios for housing, is an important component of housing need and the city’s housing requirement. An insufficient supply of student accommodation can lead to pressure on the supply of other types of housing affecting the rest of the city. The NPPF and PPG recognise the need for student accommodation as part of general housing need.
- 3.3 In Oxford, progress is being made such that the number of students living in non-University provided accommodation has reduced recently but there is still a significant need for additional student accommodation at the University (and Colleges) over the Local Plan period to provide suitable accommodation and cater for future growth in student numbers. This is part of Lincoln College’s *Strategic Plan 2022-2027* and should also contribute towards meeting the considerable housing need in Oxford, whilst recognising that this cannot realistically be delivered solely within Oxford, requiring assistance from other Oxfordshire districts, via the “duty-to-cooperate” to meet otherwise “unmet” needs.
- 3.4 The development of College-owned land, which is available and deliverable, including a direct and significant contribution towards its own accommodation requirements is a very positive statement by the College. By addressing this problem, it would assist many others in housing need in the city.

⁸ [Oxford University is the world’s top university for a record eighth year | University of Oxford](#)