**West End and Osney Mead Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Consultation**

Question 1a) What things do you like most about the West End and Osney Mead area at the moment?

Comparatively low traffic levels and consequent likely positive air pollution effects in parts of this area.

Question 1b) What should we try to retain (this could include the general character, particular buildings, facilities that you use, public open spaces and so on)?

Existing walking and cycle routes, with enhancement to networks of both to follow; partial pedestrianisation, with a need for extensions; limited green space with need for more; some housing with need for very low cost housing using existing buildings wherever possible to deliver passivhaus homes.

Question 2a) Are there any problems in the West End and Osney Mead area at the moment that you would like to highlight?

Excessive emphasis on commercial development in this area, with vacancies of all kinds reflecting a long term inadequacy of vision for this whole area. Bearing in mind traffic pollution and congestion, the need to cut all forms of air pollution, and the primary social need for very low cost housing, the main goal of development in this area should be the provision of council housing, with a secondary goal of keyworker part-buy, part-rent properties. Sections of this area should be car free by covenant. Walking and cycling networks should be exemplary to encourage movements to and from the city by these means, plus new bus routes.

Question 2b) What measures can be taken to ensure the area is an appealing and attractive place to visit?

Use of tree planting to combat the ‘urban heat island effect.’ Maximisation of new and well connected green space to serve residents and visitors alike. Good walking and cycling routes providing network extensions through the area, encouraging visits by these transport modes. Very carefully considered location of corner shop/café businesses and other retail SMEs.

Question 3a) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed content of the SPD?

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Question 3b) Is there anything else you think it should include (see section 4 of the supporting document below)?

There is a heavy emphasis on development in a City with exceptionally high home prices and rents. This area could be a very low cost housing zone with low traffic neighbourhoods built in. Oxford needs very low cost housing not commercial development. We are sceptical about the viability of new commercial development under Brexit conditions, post-Covid recovery conditions and with large numbers of people losing jobs and working hours at present. The need for new office space in a society with a new strong emphasis on working at home is highly questionable. The need for a new nucleus of population near to the City Centre in an area designed to facilitate walking and cycling into the City is an obvious step towards regenerating the City Centre. But such considerations are sidelined in the SPD by an ill-considered rush towards conventional views on economic development.

Question 4a) Is there anything you think should be added to the vision for the area (set out in section 5 of the supporting Vision and Scope document below)?

Constraints on commercial development, only to serve essential community needs. High ambition to increase the City’s council housing, social housing, housing cooperatives, green spaces and walking and cycling networks in this area.

Question 4b) Is there anything you do not agree with in the vision for the area?

Yes, this is an excessively developer-led vision for the area. The most important social need of people in Oxford is housing they can actually afford. There is nowhere near enough council housing and this whole area could accommodate many units, as well as keyworker housing to help stop the drift of nurses, teachers and others out of Oxford in search of cheaper places to live.

Secondly, new commercial development suggests increased movement of large vehicles in this area. This is unwanted inside the Oxford cordon.

## Question 5: Infrastructure and facilities

Top of Form

What facilities do you think it is most important to have in the West End and Osney Mead? Please rank the selection from 1 to 5, where 1 is the most important and 5 is the least important.

1.Improved public realm in existing streets to make them safer and more attractive routes for pedestrians and cyclists

2,,Bottom of Form

2. A bus station or bus hub near the railway station to provide a more organised interchange facility for buses

3.Better walking and cycling links

4. Access to enhanced green spaces and the river for recreation

5.New or improved leisure and community facilities

**Answer continued:**

Council housing/keyworker housing are missing from this list - despite their importance for people in Oxford.

## Question 6: Landscape and green space

Top of Form

What do you think should be the priorities for enhancing landscape, biodiversity and open space in the area? Please rank the selection from 1 to 5, where 1 is the most important and 5 is the least important.

5.Greening of streets with trees and other planting

3. Bottom of Form

Enhanced biodiversity in existing green areas such as along Castle Mill Stream and along the Thames

4. Green roofs and walls on new buildings

1. New habitat areas to support biodiversity

2. New public spaces and small parks in the area

Environmental assessment should determine where areas of degraded or pristine peat are in this area and make provisions for this critical means of carbon storage to be conserved or enhanced as part of the City Council's Climate policies. New road space or existing road space should be minimised in favour of walking and cycling networks in this entire area.

## Question 7: Movement and access

Top of Form

In the West End particularly (less so at Osney Mead) there are conflicts between those accessing and using the area and those moving through it, and between people traveling by different modes, for example cars and buses. Osney Mead has a different connectivity problem, in that the area is not very well linked to the wider movement network. Please rank the following to show what you think is more important for the movement access strategy in the area, from 1 to 6, where 1 is most important and 6 least important.

6. Ease of movement and parking for cars

5.Bottom of Form

Giving buses priority to prevent them being held up in traffic

4. Safe and attractive cycling routes

3. Direct, fast cycling routes

2. Safe and attractive routes for pedestrians

1. Better cycling and pedestrian connectivity from Osney Mead to the station and city centre

Access for larger vehicles other than Emergency services via lockable bollards should be restricted. Suggest a post office in the area located to serve as a major delivery and collection point for residents, to avoid the waste of space caused by excessive road space allocations.

## Question 8: Identity and character of new development

Top of Form

What should be the character of new developments in the area? Character should always be informed by the specific context of the site, but there are still particular ways that the SPD could guide the character of the area. For example it may identify distinct character zones within the West End or be similar across the West End, it may reflect the character of the immediate surroundings, or it may take inspiration from elsewhere in Oxford. To help inform the design guidance, please rank the following in terms of importance, where 1 is of most importance and 5 of least importance.

New development should reflect the best quality urban areas in the city (such as the city core)

Bottom of Form

New development should reflect the best quality in the surrounding area

New development should look new, modern and exciting

There should be a mix of characters

1. New developments in the West End and Osney Mead should share features to give it a recognisable style

This is too vague to be considered useful. We recommend two emphases: one) that the whole area has a very Green appearance in terms of levels of planting/trees/green spaces so much so that this is the dominant design feature; two) that existing buildings are put into use as homes where possible/practical and that the highest maximum height of buildings in the area favours apartments rather than houses, with shared facilities such as bin storage/recycling in the base of structures to guard against flooding problems.

## Question 9: Activities

Top of Form

What activities would you like to see in the area, what would you like to do there and how do you think the area should be used? Please rank the following in terms of importance, where 1 is of most importance and 6 of least importance.

To cater for tourists and visitors with facilities such as hotels and attractions

Bottom of Form

For evening economy and entertainment

2.For community and leisure facilities such as community centres

For research and development

To include a wide variety of workspaces such as start-up business units, workshops, offices, labs, etc.

1.To provide spaces to live

This should be a low emission, low traffic, high density housing area. Further extension of the over-bloated central shopping area is unwise and will contribute to air pollution and traffic problems.

## Question 10: Further comments

Top of Form

Is there anything further you would like to add?

Bottom of Form

Oxford needs low traffic, low impact council and keyworker housing - this area provides space to meet these needs.