

## South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Local Plan 2041

### Statement of Common Ground

#### Between

**South Oxfordshire District Council,**

**Vale of White Horse District Council and**

**South Oxford Science Village (SOSV),**

**comprising Magdalen College (represented by Savills) and Thames Water**

**March 2026**

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) has been prepared by South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils ("the councils") and the South Oxford Science Village (SOSV), comprising Magdalen College and Thames Water, hereafter referred to as "the parties". This SOCG documents those matters agreed with regard to the South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Local Plan 2041 and supporting documents, to assist the Inspectors during the examination of the local plan.
- 1.2. This SOCG relates to the proposed allocation of Land South of Grenoble Road, Edge of Oxford within Policy AS3 for the development of around 3,000 homes, 60 units of housing with care for older people, between 6 and 10 pitches for gypsies and travellers, 10 hectares of additional employment land, incorporating an extension to Oxford Science Park, a mobility hub serving the A4074 corridor, and supporting services and facilities. The agreed matters have been structured to assist the Inspectors through the examination process.
- 1.3. The councils propose the site allocation for housing development in the Joint Local Plan, having considered reasonable alternatives, including assessing the relevant evidence, and following consultation with stakeholders and the public.
- 1.4. A previous SOCG was prepared for this site as part of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 process, which is available to view on the council's website<sup>1</sup>.

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[https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/supporUdynamic\\_serve.jsp?ID=1670533477&CODE=372B0286AF C64281BAD8A4EE80C70A8B](https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/supporUdynamic_serve.jsp?ID=1670533477&CODE=372B0286AF C64281BAD8A4EE80C70A8B)

1.5. This SOCG sets out the background/context of the site and previous engagement between the parties and details of the past and future planned public consultation events. Section 3 then sets out the agreed matters in relation to the following key topics:

- Retention of Land for Future Upgrades at Oxford Sewage Treatment Works
- Spatial Strategy and Evidence Base
- Site Specific Matters on which the Parties Agree
- Infrastructure
- Range of Land Uses
- Delivery Trajectory

1.6. Section 4 identifies outstanding matters between the parties.

## **2. Background / Context**

2.1. The site is located to the south of Oxford within the administrative area of South Oxfordshire District Council. The site consists of predominantly greenfield land and comprises several fields. Tree lines and hedgerows contribute to the boundaries. The A4074 is located to the west of the site, with Grenoble Road on its northern edge, and an electricity substation on its eastern edge. It is bordered on its northern edge by the Oxford Science Park, a caravan park, the Oxford Sewage Treatment Works, the Kassam Stadium, an entertainment area, and The Leys neighbourhoods. There are a group of farm buildings with associated hardstanding in the centre of the site.

2.2. North of the site is the Grade II\* listed building Minchery Farm and within the surrounding area of the allocation, there are four Grade II\* listed buildings, seven Grade II listed buildings and the conservation areas of Toot Baldon and Garsington.

*South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 (adopted 2020)*

2.3. The South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 allocated the site (and released it from the Green Belt) via Policy STRAT11. The site was allocated for approximately 3,000 homes, at least 10 hectares of employment land incorporating an extension to the Oxford Science Park, a Park and Ride site adjacent to the A4074 and supporting services and facilities.

### *South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Local Plan 2041*

- 2.4. Joint Local Plan 2041 Policy AS3 proposes allocation of the site for approximately 3,000 new homes, 60 units of housing with care for older people, between 6 and 10 pitches for gypsies and travellers, 10 hectares of additional employment land, incorporating an extension to Oxford Science Park, a mobility hub serving the A4074 corridor, and supporting services and facilities.
- 2.5. The site will be delivered in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan, taking into consideration the indicative concept plan contained in the **JLP**. The masterplan must be prepared in collaboration with South Oxfordshire District Council, in consultation with Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford City Council. The site is expected to deliver a high-quality sustainable development that integrates with and relates closely to The Leys neighbourhoods in Oxford.

### *Land Control and Planning Consultation*

- 2.6. In the lead-up period to the adoption of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035, a suite of technical work was undertaken, including, but not limited to, a Ground Investigation Report, Baseline Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Archaeological and Heritage Assessment. These studies confirmed there are no known ground contamination issues or other constraints that would materially constrain the delivery of this site. In addition, the work for the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 was informed by feedback from the Design Council CABE and comments from residents who participated in SOSV led public consultation events, including 3 events in the local community undertaken during 2016.
- 2.7. Since the adoption of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035, update surveys in relation to ecology were undertaken, with a suite of surveys during 2023, 2024 and 2025. These surveys are ongoing to inform the proposed masterplan. Historic information prepared in relation to the site remains relevant, however, updates to this information will be prepared to inform a proposed planning application. Early discussions regarding the scoping of transport works and the nature of the park and ride and mobility hub have been progressed.
- 2.8. Since the adoption of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035, Magdalen College has purchased the land previously owned by Oxford City Council, meaning the two remaining SOSV Partners are Magdalen College and Thames Water. The Partners are the site promoters for the land and own the freehold of the whole site.
- 2.9. Alongside this, Magdalen College have entered into a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with South Oxfordshire District Council, Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council. The PPA sets a framework for pre-application discussions to enable the progression of an outline planning application submission which commenced in November 2025. Magdalen College has appointed GummerLeathes as master developer.

2.10. The parties are committed to further partnership working, including regular meetings, to ensure the optimum outcome for the site and to deliver the objectives of the proposed Joint Local Plan.

### **3. Agreed Matters**

#### *Retention of Land for Future Upgrades at Oxford Sewage Treatment Works*

- 3.1. During the Regulation 19 Publicity Period of the proposed Joint Local Plan, the SOSV Partners (which then included Oxford City Council) made representations that recognised that delivery of upgrades to the Sewage Treatment Works (STW) were important to economic growth in Oxfordshire.
- 3.2. Separately, as statutory undertaker for the area (rather than landowner within SOSV Partners), Thames Water submitted a representation seeking to remove a parcel of land to the south and east of the Oxford STW from the site allocation and retain the land for upgrades to the STW, thereby safeguarding its future expansion.
- 3.3. Both parties agree that Policy AS3 and the accompanying Concept Plan will need to be updated via a modification to reflect Thames Water's retention of land for potential future expansion of the Oxford STW. Both parties agree that the councils weren't aware of the retention of land at the launch of the publication period in October 2024, as Thames Water hadn't internally agreed this at that point in time. The councils will propose a modification to the plan to reflect this amended site area.
- 3.4. Following further capacity testing it is agreed that after allowing for the land required for the future STW expansion, the land uses and quantum of development proposed in Policy AS3 can still be accommodated within the remaining land area, subject to the detailed design work that will follow at the outline application stage. No change to the wording of the policy is proposed in this regard. However, it is agreed that the indicative concept plan and policies map should be proposed to be modified to take account of Thames Water's removal of part of its land from the allocation to retain for future Oxford STW upgrades.

#### *Spatial Strategy and Evidence Base*

- 3.5. The parties have had proportionate, ongoing and effective engagement in the preparation of the Joint Local Plan.
- 3.6. The parties agree that this site is in accordance with the Spatial Strategy of the Joint Local Plan, as set out in Policy SP1 (Spatial Strategy).
- 3.7. The parties agree that the site selection process as set out in the Site Selection Topic Paper ([examination library reference TOP7.1](#)), is robust and soundly based, and supported by the councils' evidence base.

### *Site Specific Matters on which the Parties Agree*

- 3.8. The site is sustainable, suitable, available and developable. The site is not subject to any insurmountable environmental, legal, ownership or technical constraints that would otherwise impede development.
- 3.9. The parties agree that this site can be delivered in general accordance with the policies contained in the Joint Local Plan 2041, subject to the proposed modification to account for the land to be retained for future Sewage Treatment Works expansion that is required by Thames Water. The parties agree that the site will deliver a high-quality sustainable development.
- 3.10. The parties agree the general site requirements identified in Policy LS1 and the site-specific requirements set out in Policy AS3 identify the key requirements for this site to deliver.
- 3.11. Where any development is proposed within the site allocation on land that falls within Flood Zones 2 or 3, or where there are significant surface water flow paths, the parties agree that detailed modelling would be required at the planning application stage, within a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA). The councils' Flood Risk Engineers would also provide further advice. The parties agree with the flood risk requirements set out in Policy CE6 (Flood Risk).

### *Infrastructure*

- 3.12. The parties are working positively together to ensure the councils are adequately planning for infrastructure on this site, and that appropriate infrastructure will be delivered as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- 3.13. The parties are working positively with Oxfordshire County Council to ensure that transport and education infrastructure is planned to come forward in a timely manner for this site.

### *Range of Land Uses*

- 3.14. The parties agree that the site should continue to be allocated for a mix of uses including approximately 3,000 homes, 10 hectares of additional employment land, incorporating an extension to Oxford Science Park, a mobility hub serving the A4074 corridor, and supporting services and facilities. The parties agree it is also appropriate for the allocation to contain an additional 60 units of housing with care for older people. The parties agree that the site can deliver these land uses through a high-quality sustainable development.
- 3.15. There is an outstanding matter regarding the new requirement for between 6 and 10 pitches for gypsies and travellers, as is outlined in paragraph 4.1.

## *Delivery Trajectory*

- 3.16. The parties commit to collaborative working to facilitate the timely delivery of this important site and Magdalen College are actively progressing with preparing an outline planning application.

The parties agree that the site has capacity for approximately 3,000 homes.. The parties will continue to explore opportunities for maximising the delivery of housing on the site within the plan period. The councils expect the first dwellings to be delivered from 2033/34, and the councils' estimated development trajectory is as follows:

Total 2021 to 2041	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
1,125	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36	2036/37	2037/38	2038/39	2039/40	2040/41
	0	0	75	150	150	150	150	150	150	150

- 3.17. Savills on behalf of SOSV Partners contend that the site can come forward a year sooner. Savills' estimated development trajectory is as follows:

Total 2021 to 2041	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
2,325	0	€	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36	2036/37	2037/38	2038/39	2039/40	2040/41
	0	75	150	300	300	300	300	300	300	300

## **4. Outstanding Matters**

- 4.1. The parties disagree regarding the requirements of Part 1 of Policy AS3 insofar as it requires 'between 6 and 10 pitches for gypsies and travellers'. The SOSV Partners are of the view that this requirement has not been justified by up-to-date evidence which could be reviewed as part of the Regulation 19 Publicity Period.
- 4.2. The SOSV Partners have not raised further soundness issues but have identified potential amendments to policy wording to enhance the effectiveness

of Policy AS3 in their representations to the Regulation 19 Publicity Period. These are matters that can be considered through the examination of the plan.

## **5. Conclusion**

- 5.1. The SOSV Partners support the allocation of Land South of Grenoble Road, Edge of Oxford within Policy AS3 with a proposed modification to remove land as set out in paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4, and the parties agree that the site is suitable, available and developable for sustainable housing development.
- 5.2. The parties are working jointly to enable delivery of the planned residential development. The parties will continue to work cooperatively on all matters of mutual interest.

## **Signatures**

Signed on behalf of South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council



Tim Oruye

Head of Policy and Programmes

26 March 2026

Signed by Thames Water

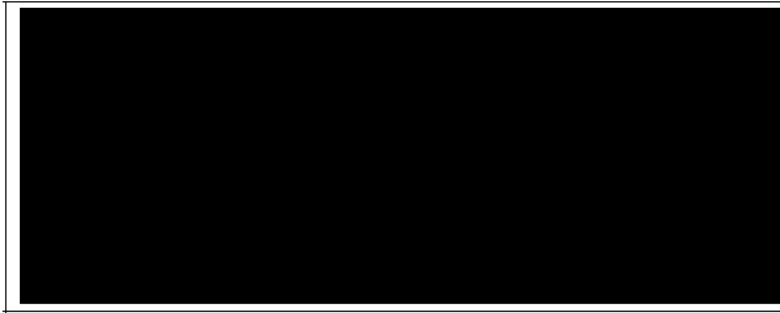


Andrew Thexton-Pee

Director of Property

25<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Signed by Savills on behalf of Magdalen College



Robert Linnell

Director

26th March 2026