

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

Stantec on behalf of Brasenose College and Catesby Estates

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 Stantec on behalf of Brasenose College and Catesby Estates, hereafter referred to as “the parties”. This SOCG documents those matters agreed with regard to the South and Vale Joint Local Plan 2041 and supporting documents, to assist the Inspectors during the examination of the local plan.
- 1.2. This SOCG particularly relates to the proposed allocation of Land at Northfield, Edge of Oxford within Policy AS4 for the development of approximately 1,800 homes, plus 60 units of housing with care for older people, between 6 and 10 pitches for gypsies and travellers, 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 for 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 website¹.
- 1.5. This SOCG sets out the background/context of the site, previous engagement between the parties and details of past and future planned consultation.

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https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=1670533479&CODE=372B0286AFC642818270EDCAD8FC3741

Section 3 then sets out the agreed matters in relation to the following key topics:

- Spatial Strategy and Evidence Base
- Site Specific Matters on which the Parties Agree
- Policy LS1 and AS4
- Infrastructure
- Landscape
- Range of Land Uses
- Housing Trajectory

1.6. Section 4 identifies outstanding matters between the parties.

2. Background / Context

2.1. The site is located to the south-east of Oxford and measures approximately 68 hectares. The site currently consists of agricultural land. It is bounded to the north-west by the Unipart factory and other key employment sites; to the west by the B480; and to the south and east by Northfield Brook and agricultural land.

2.2. There are no statutory landscape or wildlife designations on this site.

Local Plans

South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 (adopted 2020)

2.3. South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 allocated the site (and released it from the Green Belt) via Policy STRAT12 – Land at Northfield, to deliver approximately 1,800 homes and supporting services and facilities.

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Local Plan 2041 (submitted December 2024)

2.4. The site is proposed for allocation in the Joint Local Plan 2041 Policy AS4 for around 1,800 new homes, plus 60 units of housing with care for older people, between 6 and 10 pitches for gypsies and travellers, and supporting services and facilities.

2.5. The development of the site will be delivered in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan, taking into consideration the indicative concept plan at Figure 8.4, which 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 and relates closely to the existing settlement of Oxford.

- 2.6. The policy outlines that proposals for the development must demonstrate appropriate landscape measures to minimise the visual impact of the development on the openness of the Green Belt, providing a defensible Green Belt boundary and a strong countryside edge retaining a permanent substantial separation between Oxford and Garsington.

Land Control and Planning History

- 2.7. The land is in the control of only two landowners - Brasenose College and Oxfordshire County Council's Estates Assets and Investment Department. Catesby Estates act on behalf of Brasenose College to promote the allocation in a coordinated and master planned approach. The County Council as landowner own 15.55 hectares (22.9%), with the remaining balance of 52.26 hectares being in the control of Brasenose College (77.1%). Both landowners are working together to ensure the optimum outcome for the site that delivers development in accordance with the allocation. The parties are jointly progressing a single outline planning application to cover the site. The parties have signed a Planning Performance Agreement between L&Q Estates (now Catesby Estates) on behalf of Brasenose College, Oxfordshire County Council Estates, South Oxfordshire District Council, Oxfordshire County Council (in respect of all other County Council interests other than the Estates interests) and Oxford City Council in relation to the pre-application process, including working towards producing an agreed comprehensive masterplan.
- 2.8. Stantec (formerly Barton Willmore) prepared an EIA Scoping Request in August 2021, with South Oxfordshire District Council issuing a Scoping Opinion in September 2021 (reference [P21/S3647/SCO](#)). This Opinion is based on the technical work carried out on the site, which includes a landscape and visual appraisal, Green Belt Review, access and highways, ecology, ground conditions, drainage and flood investigation report, utilities report and noise survey.
- 2.9. Meetings have been held between the parties including Oxfordshire County Council Highways and Education, since 2016. This includes engagement in pre-application discussions with the Highways team at the County Council with regards to this site. Separate meetings have also been held with the County Council as landowner. The promoters have also held meetings with Unipart Group, Oxford Business First, Oxfordshire LEP, Oxford Preservation Trust, Network Rail and Chiltern Railways. The promoters are also engaging in quarterly stakeholder meetings with representatives from Garsington Parish Council, Horspath Parish Council, Blackbird Leys Parish Council, the local Councillors from Oxfordshire County Council and South Oxfordshire District Council, CPRE and the residents from Guyden's Hamlet (the dwellings encircled by the allocation). The promoters also undertook a public consultation

exercise in May 2024 (the website remains live at <https://my.engaged.space/northfield/>) and presented to and obtained feedback from the Design Review Panel (www.designreviewpanel.co.uk) in August 2024. It is the intention of Catesby Estates to submit an outline planning application for the site in autumn/winter 2025.

- 2.10. The parties are committed to further partnership working, including regular meetings, to ensure the optimum outcome for the site that delivers new homes, community and highways infrastructure, together with green infrastructure in a highly sustainable location.
- 2.11. Catesby Estates have a strong track record in delivery of large residential developments, acting as master developer and working with the relevant councils and local communities. Examples of this include Myton Green, Europa Way, Warwick, which included the promotion of 38.9 hectares of land to deliver a residential-led mixed use development of 735 homes, including affordable housing, public open space, ecological enhancements and land for a new educational facility.

3. Agreed Matters

- 3.1. The site is sustainable, suitable, available, and developable.
- 3.2. The site is not subject to any insurmountable environmental, legal, ownership, access or technical constraints that would otherwise impede development.
- 3.3. The parties agree that the site can be delivered in general accordance with the policies contained in the Joint Local Plan 2041.
- 3.4. The parties agree that the site will deliver a high-quality, sustainable development.
- 3.5. The parties are committed to partnership working, including regular meetings, to ensure the optimum outcome for the site allocation that delivers new residential development in a sustainable location.

Spatial Strategy and Evidence Base

- 3.6. This site is in accordance with the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy of the Joint Local Plan as set out in Policy SP1 – Spatial Strategy.
- 3.7. The parties agree that the site selection process relating to this site, as set out in the Site Selection Topic Paper ([examination library reference TOP07.1](#)), is robust and soundly based, supported by the councils' evidence base and demonstrates that this site is sustainable.

- 3.8. The parties agree that there is a clear need for deliverable sites in the short and long term to meet identified housing needs in a timely manner and to sustain a five-year housing land supply.

Site Specific Matters on which the Parties Agree

Policy LS1 and AS4

- 3.9. The parties agree that subject to the issues raised in the representations submitted to the Regulation 19 consultation as summarised on Section 4 of this statement, Policy AS4 – Land at Northfield, Edge of Oxford identifies an appropriate approach to ensuring development is delivered comprehensively.
- 3.10. The parties agree that the allocation of AS4 is robust and soundly based and is supported by the councils' evidence base.
- 3.11. The parties agree that the development should be delivered in accordance with an agreed comprehensive masterplan, taking into consideration the indicative concept plan as set out in Policy AS4 and the councils' Joint Design Guide to demonstrate a high-quality development that is fully integrated with its surroundings as required by part 2) a) of Policy AS4.
- 3.12. The parties agree the large-scale major development requirements identified in Policy LS1 and the site-specific requirements set out in Policy AS4 identify the key requirements for this site to deliver.
- 3.13. The parties agree that this site can be delivered in general accordance with the policies contained in the Joint Local Plan 2041. The parties agree that the site will deliver a high-quality sustainable development.
- 3.14. 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

- 3.15. The parties are working positively together to ensure the councils are adequately planning for infrastructure for this site, and that appropriate infrastructure will be delivered as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- 3.16. The parties are working positively with Oxfordshire County Council to ensure that infrastructure is planned to come forward in a timely manner for this site consistent with the site's development trajectory.

3.24. Stantec on behalf of Brasenose College and Catesby Estates contend that the site can come forward sooner. Their estimated development trajectory is as follows²:

Total 2021 to 2041	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2023/ 24	2024/ 25	2025/ 26	2026/ 27	2027/ 28	2028/ 29	2029/ 30	2030/ 31
1,230	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	60
	2031/ 32	2032/ 33	2033/ 34	2034/ 35	2035/ 36	2036/ 37	2037/ 38	2038/ 39	2039/ 40	2040/41
	90	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120

4. Outstanding Matters

- 4.1. Stantec’s Regulation 19 consultation response on behalf of Brasenose College and Catesby Estates details their concerns regarding the requirements of Part 1) of Policy AS4, insofar as it requires “between 6 and 10 pitches for gypsies and travellers”. Stantec are of the view that this need is unevidenced and not justified and, notwithstanding, that any need would be more appropriately met on standalone gypsy and traveller site allocations.
- 4.2. Stantec also raised concerns with some of the wording of Policy AS4 in their Regulation 19 response and identified potential amendments to the policy wording.
- 4.3. The parties agree that the concerns raised by Stantec are matters for the Joint Local Plan 2041 examination.

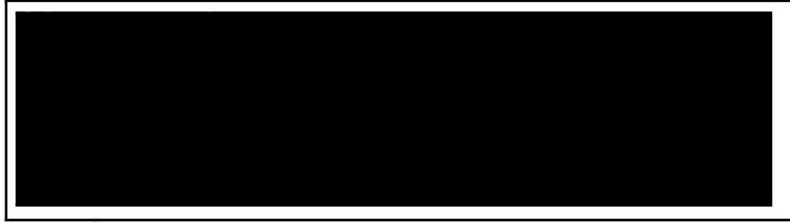
5. Conclusion

- 5.1. Stantec on behalf of Brasenose College and Catesby Estates, support the allocation of Land at Northfield, Edge of Oxford within Policy AS4, 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.

² This SOCG contains housing trajectories based on South Oxfordshire District Council’s 2025-based housing land supply position which is updated annually.

Signatures

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



Name: Tim Oruye

Job Title: Head of Policy and Programmes

Date: 27/03/2026

Signed on behalf of Brasenose College and Catesby Estates



Name: Michael Knott

Job Title: Regional Practice Lead, Stantec

Date: 26/03/2026