



Oxford University Development

# Begbroke Innovation District

## Statement of Community Involvement

July 2023

Kevin Murray Associates



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**APPENDIX A: Stage One Engagement Report**

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**APPENDIX D: Note of Pre-Application Masterplan Preview Exhibition**

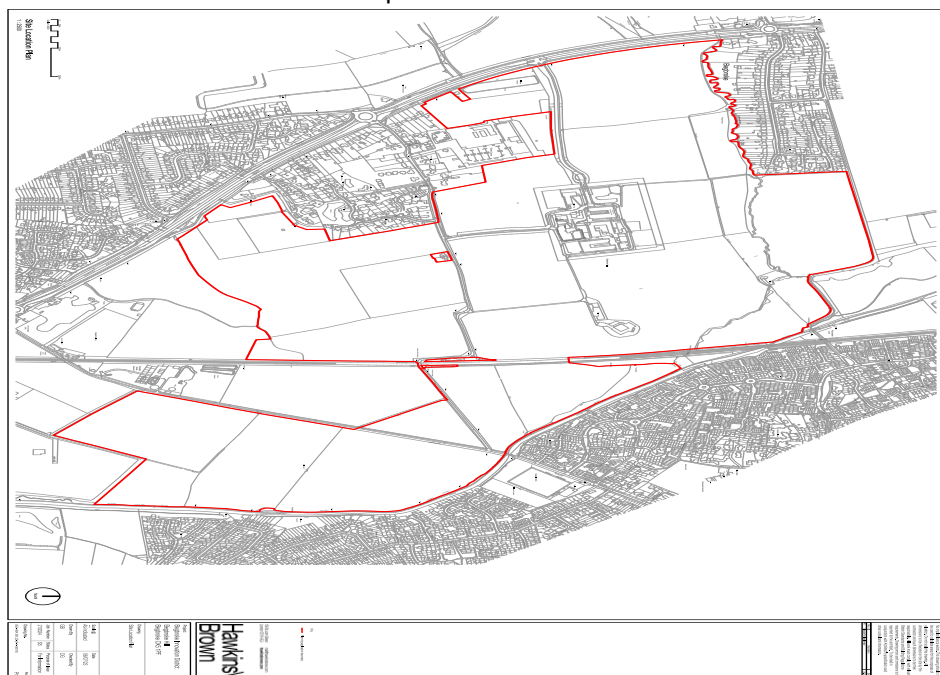
# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been prepared in support of the planning application made by Oxford University Developments (OUD) for a mixed-use development on allocated land including and surrounding the Begbroke Science Park, and between the existing settlements of Begbroke, Kidlington and Yarnton.
- 1.2 OUD's land ('the Site') forms part of the land allocated by Policy PR8 of the Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 Partial Review, identified as 'land to the east of the A44'.
- 1.3 OUD is preparing an outline planning application for the proposed development. Once submitted the planning applications will be subject to public and statutory consultation before any decision is made by the Planning Committee of Cherwell District Council (CDC).
- 1.4 The process of community involvement has been undertaken in accordance with Cherwell District Council's Statement of Community Involvement October 2021 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021).
- 1.5 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is structured as follows:
  - Section 2 provides a background to the Site and a summary of the proposed development for the Site;
  - Section 3 reviews the importance of consultation as set out within national and local policy;
  - Section 4 sets out the methods of consultation undertaken in advance of this outline planning application;
  - Section 5 summarises the feedback received and details how the findings have informed the development of the design and detail, the subject of this outline planning application; and
  - Section 6 provides an overall summary and conclusions to the consultation process.
- 1.6 This report is supplemented by the consultation analysis and findings prepared by Kevin Murray Associates.

## 2. Site Background and Proposal

### Background to the Application Site

2.1 The Site is shown on the redline plan below.



*Application Site location, with boundary marked in red*

- 2.2 The Site is located approximately 6.7km north west of Oxford City centre, approximately 625m west of Kidlington village centre and close to the villages of Yarnton and Begbroke.
- 2.3 Begbroke Science Park is located within the central northern portion of the Site. It comprises of a number of one and two storey buildings which accommodate laboratories, engineering facilities and administrative buildings.
- 2.4 The majority of the remainder of the Site is in agricultural use for arable farming.
- 2.5 Sandy Lane crosses the Site on an appropriate west-east alignment, joining the A44 to the west of the Site and Yarnton Road to the east of the Site. The Cherwell Valley railway line passes through the Site on an approximate north-south alignment.
- 2.6 An historic landfill site, known as Sandy Lane East, is located in the centre of the Site and is approximately 5.2ha in area.
- 2.7 The site forms part of the land allocated by Policy PR8 of the Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 Partial Review, identified as 'land to the east of the A44'. In summary, this policy allocates the land to deliver the following uses:
- 1950 homes (66ha land, 50% affordable)
  - Secondary School (8.2ha including sports hall)
  - Primary School (3.2ha land)
  - Primary School (2.2ha land)
  - Local Centre (A1 500sqm, ancillary business development B1a/A2; café/restaurant A3; community building)

- Sports play area
- Local Nature Reserve (29.2ha)
- Nature Conservation Area (12.2ha)
- Canalside Park (23.4ha)
- Land for Agricultural Use (12ha)
- Railway Halt (0.5ha)
- New public bridleways suitable for cyclists and wheelchair users
- New pedestrian/cycle/wheelchair bridge over the Oxford Canal
- Reservation of 14.7ha of land for the expansion of the Begbroke Science Park
- Stopping up of Sandy Lane level crossing and provision of an alternative pedestrian/Wheelchair access/cycle bridge
- At least 2 points of access onto the A44

2.8 The development of the proposals for the Site have been the subject of comprehensive pre-application discussions with planning and other technical officers from Cherwell District Council, Oxfordshire County Council as Highways Authority, civic bodies, local community, and stakeholders. The proposals have considered the relevant advice from officers, stakeholders and communities and sought to address issues raised where appropriate.

2.9 The comments raised and feedback given during the stages of community consultation undertaken in July and November 2022 and March 2023 have also been taken into consideration during the development and finalisation of the illustrative masterplan and Parameter Plans that form the basis of the outline application. These proposals were presented to the public in July 2023.

### ***Proposed Development***

2.10 The Description of Development for the Begbroke Innovation District (BID) is as follows:

Outline application, with all matters reserved, for a comprehensive residential-led mixed use development comprising:

- Up to 215,000 square metres gross external area of residential floorspace within Use Class C3/C4 and large houses of multiple occupation (Sui Generis); • Supporting social infrastructure including secondary school/primary school(s) (Use Class F1); health, indoor sport and recreation, emergency and nursery facilities (Class E(d)-(f))
- Supporting retail, leisure and community uses, including retail (Class E(a)), cafes and restaurants (Class E(b)), commercial and professional services (Class E(c)), local community uses (Class F2), and other local centre uses within a Sui Generis use including public houses, bars and drinking establishments (including with expanded food provision), hot food takeaways, venues for live music performance, theatre, and cinema.
- Up to 155,000 square metres gross external area of flexible employment uses including research and development, office and workspace and associated uses (Use E(g)), industrial (Use Class B2) and storage (Use Class B8) in connection with the expansion of Begbroke Science Park;
- Highway works, including new vehicular, cyclist and pedestrian roads and paths, improvements to the existing Sandy Lane and Begbroke Hill road, a bridge over the Oxford Canal, safeguarded land for a rail halt, and car and cycle parking with associated electric vehicle charging infrastructure;
- Landscape and public realm, including areas for sustainable urban drainage systems, allotments, biodiversity areas, outdoor play and sports facilities (Use Class F2(c));
- Utility, energy, water, and waste water facilities and infrastructure;
- Together with enabling and associated works, including temporary meanwhile uses.

### 3. Consultation Context

- 3.1 For all development, early consultation is critical to the planning process, and especially so when the development proposed is at a large scale. Consultation allows for proposals to be explained to relevant and interested parties, stakeholders and local residents. It is also an opportunity to learn as well as to explore and seek solutions to various issues at an early stage, with the intention of gathering and testing ideas, reducing conflict, raising and resolving problems ahead of the formal determination process.

#### **The National Policy Context**

- 3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) and related documents encourage individuals and developers who are considering submitting development proposals to engage with local communities from an early stage. Paragraph 39 states that:

*“Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.”*

- 3.3 Policy and advice supports ‘front loading’ public engagement as proposals are developed, and before official submission of planning applications to the relevant local authority. This recognises that all parties benefit from this early communication, ensuring all those with an interest are fully informed of proposals and have the ability to influence them. The updated NPPF (February 2019) states at paragraphs 41 and 42:

*“The more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, including the need to deliver improvements in infrastructure and affordable housing, the greater the benefits. For their role in the planning system to be effective and positive, statutory planning consultees will need to take the same early, pro-active approach, and provide advice in a timely manner throughout the development process. This assists local planning authorities in issuing timely decisions, helping to ensure that applicants do not experience unnecessary delays and costs.*

*The participation of other consenting bodies in pre-application discussions should enable early consideration of all the fundamental issues relating to whether a particular development will be acceptable in principle, even where other consents relating to how a development is built or operated are needed at a later stage. Wherever possible, parallel processing of other consents should be encouraged to help speed up the process and resolve any issues as early as possible.”*

- 3.6 The need for consultation in planning has been reiterated through the Planning Act 2008, the Killian Pretty Review, the April 2009 ‘Duty to Involve’, the Localism Act 2011 and current best practice guidance. The Local Government Association’s Probity in Planning (2009) also encourages and highlight the benefits of pre-application discussions between the applicant and the local planning authority and the NPPF has supported this approach since 2012.

#### **Local engagement context**

- 3.7 Cherwell District Council published a Statement of Community involvement in October 2021. It takes account of legislation from the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 and anticipated further government-led reform of planning.

- 3.8 For planning application submissions, the SCI document encourages application promoters to undertake consultation with the community through pre-application engagement. The consultation should be effective in bringing draft proposals to the attention of the public and provide the opportunity for discussion and input at a formative stage. The engagement element of the consultation should provide opportunities for comments to be made, and in turn demonstrate how these comments have been considered. This is set out in section 5.2 of the SCI.

*“Government guidance encourages pre-application engagement with the community where it will add value to the process and the outcome. We will therefore encourage developers and promoters for large scale development to undertake their own consultation and engagement process with local people...”*

*In any submission which has included pre-application consultation, the Applicant should set out: what consultation was undertaken; and how any and all comments received have been addressed in the evolution of their design and the detail of their proposals.”*

### **Communications, consultation, and engagement strategy**

- 3.10 Kevin Murray Associates (KMA) were appointed as independent facilitators by OUD to devise, facilitate and record the community engagement process. Separated from the planning and design processes, KMA’s role is to advise on the overall strategy for consultation and engagement around the proposals. KMA planned and facilitated and reported on these as an independent party.
- 3.11 The overall strategy was aimed at reaching as wide a demographic as possible within the neighbouring communities, and with a wider Oxford University staff audience (as users of the current Begbroke Science Park and future development). This was primarily delivered through local in-person events that had been publicised through flyer distribution and digitally. This was supplemented with information on the OUD website and some invited webinars.



## 4. Consultation Process

4.1 The community and stakeholder consultation and engagement process was carried out in 4 distinct stages across July 2022, October - November 2022, March 2023 and July 2023. The time between each stage was used for further development of the proposals in response to the public engagement, as well as other site survey work and specialist research. There was also ongoing discussions and negotiations with the District, City and Council Council officers and councillors and specialist groups such as Network Rail, The Environment Agency and Thames Water.

4.2 The stages of engagement were as follows:



- Whilst there were 4 distinct stages of engagement, the first stage (Stage 0 as shown in the diagram above) was an early, introductory stage, meeting groups and individuals separately, to both introduce OUD to but also to begin to understand any concerns of these groups and individuals as well as possible ideas for the development.
- Stage 1 took place in July 2022 and included the opportunity for participants to attend a stakeholder workshop (by invitation only). For the wider community there was the opportunity to attend the drop-in exhibitions held at several locations. The purpose of this first stage was to introduce the project team and approach, and to seek initial views, issues, and ideas from participants on the proposed development. This helped to inform the process of taking the project forward.
- In addition to the in-person events and activities, there was also the opportunity to view the material from the drop-in exhibitions online, on the OUD website [www.oud.co.uk](http://www.oud.co.uk). An online survey, identical to the hard copy version made available to those attending in person, was available on the website.
- Stage 2 took place in October and November 2022 and presented the first iteration of the proposals, which took on board feedback received from the community and stakeholder engagement of Stage 1. It sought responses to the emerging plan and further detail on areas of concern that had been raised in previous sessions. The events included a guided site walkabout, a stakeholder workshop and drop-in exhibitions in venues in the 3 neighbouring villages. In November there was also an online briefing session for representatives of Oxford University and an opportunity to provide feedback.

- Once again, all the exhibition material and feedback form were provided online on the OUD website.
- Stage 3 engagement took place in March 2023. It provided more detail on the emerging plan which showed progression as a result of further technical work and feedback from the community and other stakeholders. Further feedback was sought at this stage in order to finesse and prepare the proposals for the planning submission.
- As previously, the exhibition material and feedback form were made accessible online on the OUD website.
- This stage of engagement also included an OU all staff briefing session, held online.
- Stage 4, the Pre-Application Exhibition, was held in July 2023. This provided an opportunity for attendees to see the proposals in advance of submission, and to discuss both the application and other elements with representatives from OUD and its design team. In addition, the timeline going forward was outlined, including the opportunity for responding to the formal statutory consultation. The exhibition included explanatory panels relating to the stages of engagement, the content of the outline application and the key themes of the proposals. All the material from the exhibitions was also made available online on the OUD website.

4.3 Overall, approximately 1,200 people participated in person the BID Masterplan engagement events. Some of these attended several events. The table below shows the venues, format of the events, dates, and numbers of those who engaged in person. It also includes numbers of those who submitted and completed feedback forms and the number of visits to the OUD website linked to each stage.

Stage	Nature of Engagement	Date	Attendee Numbers
<b>Stage 1</b> <b>Meet the Team &amp; Scoping Issues and Ideas</b>	Stakeholder workshop (invitation only) Begbroke Science Park	Friday 8 July 2022 9:30am - 12:30pm	34
	<b>Yarnton</b> Drop-in exhibition Yarnton Village Hall	Tuesday 12 July 2022 6-8pm	90
	<b>Begbroke</b> Drop-in exhibition Begbroke Village Hall	Wednesday 13 July 2022 6-8pm	104
	<b>Kidlington</b> Drop-in exhibition Kidlington Football Club	Thursday 14 July 2022 6-8pm	98
	Completed feedback forms submitted in person or online		

<b>Stage 2</b>  <b>Proposal Development Options</b>	<b>Site walkabout</b>	Wednesday 19 Oct 2022 2-4pm	16
	<b>Stakeholder workshop</b> (invitation only) Begbroke Science Park	Thursday 20 Oct 2022 9:30am-1pm	20
	<b>OU proposal review workshop</b> Online (via Teams)	Thursday 10 Nov 2022 2-5pm	39
	<b>Begbroke</b> Drop-in exhibition Begbroke Village Hall	Tuesday 22 Nov 2022 6-8pm	74
	<b>Kidlington</b> Drop-in exhibition Kidlington Football Club	Thursday 24 Nov 2022 10am-12pm	84
	<b>Yarnton</b> Drop-in exhibition Yarnton Village Hall	Thursday 24 Nov 2022 6-8pm	62
	Completed feedback forms submitted in person or online		44

<b>Stage 3</b>  <b>Emerging Proposals</b>	<b>Stakeholder workshop</b> (invitation only) Begbroke Science Park	Friday 1 March 2023 9:30am-1:00pm	44
	<b>Begbroke</b> Drop-in exhibition Begbroke Village Hall	Wednesday 8 Mar 2023 6-8pm	68
	<b>Yarnton</b> Drop-in exhibition Yarnton Village Hall	Thursday 9 March 2023 2-4pm	72
	<b>Kidlington</b> Drop-in exhibition Kidlington Football Club	Thursday 9 March 2023 6-8pm	63
	<b>OU All Staff briefing webinar</b> Online (via Zoom)	Thursday 30 March 2023 10-11:30am	226 (300 booked)
	Completed feedback forms submitted in person or online		24

<b>Stage 4</b>  <b>Application Preview</b>	<b>Advanced preview</b> <i>(Invitation only) running into</i>	12 July 2023 5-6pm	41
	<b>Begbroke</b> Drop-in exhibition Begbroke Village Hall	6-8pm	
	<b>Yarnton</b> Drop-in exhibition	13 July 2023	36

	Yarnton Village Hall	1-3pm	
	<b>Kidlington</b> Drop-in exhibition Kidlington Football Club	13 July 2023 6-8pm	36

### Stage 1 Engagement

- 4.5 The format for the BID project's first stakeholder event was a structured daytime workshop for invited stakeholders (mainly local community organisations, service providers and agency representatives). A total of 34 people attended, including OUD, OU and design and community engagement team representatives. The workshop was held on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2022 at the Begbroke Science Park, due to its central and locally known location. It was a half day session that was designed to cover all of the main development themes and issues that may arise, including links between them. The format comprised initial briefing presentations, questions, group workshop and discussion session with feedback, followed by lunch. Separate feedback forms were provided at the end.

The community drop-in exhibitions were held over three days to enable participation from the greatest number of people. Different venues and different days of the week were arranged to maximise participation. These open, public drop-in sessions were held in community-based venues, on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> July, from 6-8pm at Yarnton Village Hall, on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> July, from 6-8pm, at Begbroke Village Hall and on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July, also from 6-8pm, at Kidlington Football Club. The full schedule of events can be seen in the table below:

Stage	Nature of Engagement	Date	Attendee Numbers
<b>Stage 1</b> <b>Meet the Team &amp; Scoping Issues and Ideas</b>	Stakeholder workshop (invitation only) Begbroke Science Park	Friday 8 July 2022 9:30am - 12:30pm	34
	<b>Yarnton</b> Drop-in exhibition Yarnton Village Hall	Tuesday 12 July 2022 6-8pm	90
	<b>Begbroke</b> Drop-in exhibition Begbroke Village Hall	Wednesday 13 July 2022 6-8pm	104
	<b>Kidlington</b> Drop-in exhibition Kidlington Football Club	Thursday 14 July 2022 6-8pm	98
	Completed feedback forms submitted in person or online		98

- 4.6 The events were widely publicised, in advance, through the local press and social media posts on Facebook and information flyers. The information flyers were distributed, using the Royal Mail postal service, to approx. 8,850 addresses in the 3 neighbouring villages of Begbroke, Yarnton and Kidlington.

4.7 Each of the community drop-ins included an exhibition setting out the team involved, approach, and potential themes for consideration. There were team members from OUD (and OU) and their specialist consultants present to respond to queries and have conversations with people who attended. A feedback form to provide comments in a structured format was available. In addition to the exhibition panels, there was a large, vinyl aerial floormap of the Begbroke site and surrounding area, to further aid understanding of the site, its location and setting. Overall, approximately 326 people engaged over the 3 days of this first stage drop-in exhibitions with 98 completed feedback forms submitted.



Images from the Stage 1 engagement events: (clockwise from top left) Local stakeholders' workshop; Yarnton community drop-in exhibition; Kidlington Football Club community drop-in exhibition; Begbroke community drop-in exhibition

### Stage 2 Engagement

4.8 OUD held a second round of engagement events, which included a site visit, stakeholder workshop and public exhibitions, between Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> October – Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022, showing how the plans for the site had been progressed since the earlier July events (Stage 1). This exhibition stage was intended to assist attendees, including any first-time viewers to understand the principles and emerging design, and previous participants to see progress based on feedback received.

<b>Stage 2 Plan development options</b>	<b>Site walkabout</b>	Wednesday 19 Oct 2022 2-4pm	16
	<b>Stakeholder workshop (invitation only) Begbroke Science Park</b>	Thursday 20 Oct 2022 9:30am-1pm	20
	<b>OU Masterplan review workshop</b>	Thursday 10 Nov 2022 2-5pm	39

	Online (via Teams)		
	<b>Begbroke</b> Drop-in exhibition Begbroke Village Hall	Tuesday 22 Nov 2022 6-8pm	74
	<b>Kidlington</b> Drop-in exhibition Kidlington Football Club	Thursday 24 Nov 2022 10am-12pm	84
	<b>Yarnton</b> Drop-in exhibition Yarnton Village Hall	Thursday 24 Nov 2022 6-8pm	62
	Completed feedback forms submitted in person or online		44

4.9 As with the Stage 1 engagement, the drop-in exhibitions were advertised in advance using a number of media forms. In addition to posting the information on the OUD website [www.oud.co.uk](http://www.oud.co.uk), a flyer was once again posted (through Royal Mail) to approx. 8,850 addresses within the 3 neighbouring villages. Invitation emails were also issued to previous respondents/attendees who had provided contact details and to various stakeholder groups to encourage attendance and information dissemination. Those attending the Stakeholders' Workshop also received invitation emails.

In addition to the above, there was a media communications strategy to support and promote the project, the process and the events.

4.10 The format of the events and means of engagement was similar to Stage 1 with the following in place:

- Exhibition boards
- Face-to-face discussions
- Large floorplan showing a sketched masterplan of emerging ideas
- Feedback form

4.11 At this Stage, a total of approximately 295 people engaged, by attending the site walkabout the Stakeholders' workshop and the physical exhibition events, with 44 completed feedback forms submitted.



*Images from the Stage 2 engagement events: (Top left) Site walkabout; (Top right) Stakeholder workshop; (Middle left) Yarnton Community drop-in exhibition; (Middle right) Begbroke Community drop-in exhibition; (Bottom) Kidlington football club Community drop-in exhibition*

### Stage 3 Engagement

4.12 The third stage of engagement, once again followed a similar format to the previous 2 stages, with a Stakeholders' workshop followed by 3 community drop-in exhibitions. It also included an online briefing session for all OU staff. The Stakeholders' workshop was again held at Begbroke Science Park, on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023, with the 3 drop-in exhibitions taking place on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> in the community venues as before (see table below). The OU online session was held via Zoom on 20<sup>th</sup> March.

<b>Stage 3 Emerging Proposals</b>	Stakeholder workshop (invitation only) Begbroke Science Park	Friday 1 March 2023 9:30am-1:00pm	44
	<b>Begbroke</b> Drop-in exhibition Begbroke Village Hall	Wednesday 8 Mar 2023 6-8pm	68
	<b>Yarnton</b> Drop-in exhibition Yarnton Village Hall	Thursday 9 March 2023 2-4pm	72
	<b>Kidlington</b> Drop-in exhibition Kidlington Football Club	Thursday 9 March 2023 6-8pm	63
	<b>OU All Staff briefing</b> Online (via Zoom)	Thursday 30 March 2023 10-11:30am	226 (300 booked)
	Completed feedback forms submitted in person or online		

4.13 The aim of this stage was to present the emerging proposals and continue to show how the plan had progressed following input from the community and stakeholders, with an opportunity to discuss the evolution of the plan with the team.

4.14 The same methods of communication were used to advertise the events as with previous stages. In addition to posting the information on the OUD website [www.oud.co.uk](http://www.oud.co.uk), a flyer was posted (through Royal Mail) to approximately 8,850 addresses covering the 3 villages surrounding the site. Invitation emails were issued to previous respondents/attendees who had provided contact details, to encourage attendance and information dissemination. Email invitations were also sent to stakeholders inviting them to attend the workshop. OU staff were contacted directly via email and internal newsletters. The publicity for the OU briefing session was managed internally by the OU Comms team.

4.15 In addition to the above, there was a media communications strategy to support and promote the project, the process and the events.

4.16 The format of the community drop-in events and means of engagement included the following:

- Exhibition boards, including a double sized exhibition panel of the Masterplan
- Face-to-face discussions
- Feedback form



The format for the Stakeholders’ workshop included briefing presentations, group discussions, feedback from discussions and the feedback form. Made available to aid the discussions were large copies of the emerging masterplan.

The OU online briefing session included a briefing presentation, followed by an opportunity for participants to post questions. A panel, made up of representatives from OU, OUD and the design team were in attendance to respond to questions raised.

At this Stage, a total of approximately 473 people engaged, by attending the site walkabout the Stakeholders’ workshop, the physical exhibition events and the OU online briefing session, with 44 completed feedback forms submitted.



Images from Stage 3 engagement events: (Top left) Stakeholders’ workshop; (Top right) Begbroke community drop-in exhibition; (Middle left) Yarnton community drop-in; (Middle right) Kidlington community drop-in exhibition; (Bottom) OU Online briefing, panel session

### Stage 4 Engagement

4.17 The fourth and final stage of engagement on the BID was held on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023. The format was a drop-in exhibition which, was held in the local community venues as in previous stages.

<b>Stage 4 Pre Submission Application Preview</b>	Stakeholder Preview (invitation only) leading to	Wednesday 12 July 2023 5-6pm	41
	<b>Begbroke</b> Drop-in exhibition Begbroke Village Hall	6-8pm	
	<b>Yarnton</b> Drop-in exhibition Yarnton Village Hall	Thursday 13 July 2023 1-3pm	36
	<b>Kidlington</b> Drop-in exhibition Kidlington Football Club	Thursday 13 July 2023 6-8pm	36

4.18 The aim of this stage was to give participants a preview of the final Masterplan, pre-submission, with an opportunity to discuss with the team how the plan had evolved, and the changes made following the earlier three stages of engagement and feedback provided.

4.19 As with previous stages, the drop-in exhibition was advertised in advance using a number of media forms. In addition to posting the information on the OUD website [www.oud.co.uk](http://www.oud.co.uk), a flyer was posted (through Royal Mail) to approximately 8,850 addresses within the three surrounding villages. Invitation emails were also issued to previous respondents/attendees who had provided contact details and to various stakeholder groups to encourage attendance and information dissemination.



Images from Stage 4 engagement events: (Left) Yarnton community drop-in; (Right) Begbroke community drop-in exhibition



*Images from Stage 4 engagement events: (Left) Kidlington community drop-in exhibition; (Right) Yarnton community drop-in exhibition*

4.20 The format of the exhibition and means of engagement was similar to the earlier stages and included the exhibition boards and face-to-face discussions with representatives from OUD, OU and the OUD design team.

4.21 This was supplemented with all the exhibition material being made available online on the OUD website.

4.22 There was no opportunity for formal feedback at this stage, as this is due to occur within the formal statutory consultation period post submission.

#### **Politician briefings**

4.23 In addition to the multi-stage community engagement process, the OUD team held online politician briefings at each stage for councillors and the local MP. This was to appraise them of the status, the issues emerging, and the anticipated next steps in development of the proposals, including the consultation taking place in their area.

4.24 These briefings were not in themselves a formal part of the community involvement process. Many of the politicians participated in the process by attending workshops and/or drop-in sessions in their area. Their contributions are captured within the records of those events.

## 5. Consultation Responses

- 5.1 The following sets out the headline feedback elements from Stages 1 to 4 of the engagement process. Further details are provided within the formal report for each stage in Appendices A, B and C.

### **First Stage**

- 5.2 This initial stage in July 2022, had a strong response with 326 participants and 98 formal responses. There was a strong degree of commonality across the various discussions, workshop feedback, and feedback form rankings. There were minor variations between the three villages of Yarnton, Begbroke, and Kidlington, in terms of what to prioritise for the BID development, but generally the messages were consistent.

Listed below is what we interpret as an overview of the leading messages, though it is best to examine the reports in the appendices for the full detail.

#### **a. Housing numbers and location**

Questions were raised about the actual numbers of homes proposed, and where these may be located. Some were concerned about the cumulative effect of the PR8 site homes alongside Merton College (PR9) and the proposed Blenheim Estate 500 homes, including, for instance, the growing population impact on local services and the risk of increased flooding. For those who expressed an opinion, there was some preference for focusing development in the northern part of the PR8 site, adjacent to the existing Science Park.

#### **b. Housing type and affordable provision**

Questions were raised by some participants around who the housing was actually for – e.g. students, researchers or Oxford’s unmet demand (if different)? How much could be for local key workers, such as nurses and teachers? There was an argument made for ‘proper’ social housing not just ‘affordable-labelled’, but which is not really affordable to most people.

#### **c. Development pattern**

There was concern expressed that the cumulative effect of the proposals would be to create one ‘sprawling urban area’ between the existing villages. There was a desire expressed to retain the distinctive local character and identities of Kidlington, Yarnton and Begbroke. Some people suggested they believed that ‘100 metre buffer zones’ were expected on the northern and the southern boundaries, adjacent to the nearby properties (It was unclear as to the origin or validity of this suggestion). Some clarity about the open areas to be retained as ‘green’ within local plan policy was considered potentially reassuring for local people.

#### **d. Sandy Lane**

A very significant level of concern about the prospective closure of Sandy Lane, as the level, crossing, bridge & vehicle connection(s) provide an important everyday link to services, schools, and even families. Concern at lack of clarity/honesty about what and who is driving the policy approach. Most attendees are opposed, though a handful are not, including some neighbouring residents and others who already walk or cycle. There was a desire by many to see what bridge options were available, and what local impact these could have.

#### **e. Footpath network and access**

Many local residents were concerned that future development would mean potential loss of ‘their’ well-used footpaths, which people wanted to see maintained with public access, and ideally enhanced (e.g. widths and surfaces). The character and walkability of retained paths

was considered hugely significant for some, for both walking and cycling.

**f. Traffic/Movement Traffic impact**

Concerns were communicated regarding both the specific PR8/BID and cumulative impacts of the proposals on the existing road network, given the existing view that congestion is significant at the roundabout to the south of Sainsburys and where the A4260 meets the A44. A request was made to model 'local consideration impacts' very carefully ahead of any application.

**g. Safe crossings**

Safe crossings to school (and other facilities) were raised and a pedestrian crossing across the A44 at Begbroke was brought up a lot. It has apparently been promised for years – yet local children going to Marlborough Secondary School have to cross the A44 to get to the bus stop, with parents normally needing to take them as there is no signal controlled crossing.

**h. Public transport**

Three specific aspects of public transport were raised

- Support for improving the public transport provision and frequency, due to a lack of bus routes connecting existing local village communities.
- Some support for a new rail station/halt in the medium-term future as a key element and major draw to the location.
- The idea of having safe pedestrian routes to the bus stops and a future station, so people can easily walk to them, aiding their effectiveness.

The phasing and timing of public transport improvement was considered very important (such as early links to Langford Lane stops ahead of network improvement) because that affects longer term behaviours.

**i. Flooding**

Flooding, both surface and foul, was viewed as a major 'live' issue, notably at multiple locations around Yarnton, including on the PR8 site and along the northern boundary of Begbroke (Rowel Brook) which is prone to flooding. It was considered by attendees that any new development at PR8 could make all this worse, adding to the impact of the Merton College PR9 development. It was explained that 'the farmer' had made some alterations downstream of Begbroke that had actually made the flooding worse. Residents sought reassurance that the OUD proposals will not make flooding worse and indeed will improve the situation. This is a challenge as flood channels within Yarnton are not maintained – with an absence of clarity as to who owns these or is responsible for their maintenance.

**j. Green space and wildlife**

The provision of green space, with adequate public access to it, was considered a priority by many, particularly those who already use it. For some, especially those living nearest the site boundary at Yarnton, Begbrook and even Kidlington, there was a desire for a 'green buffer' gap to reduce visual impact. For others, the importance lay in the biodiversity of wildlife corridors and catchments, such as along the Rowel Brook corridor and the existing SSSI to the North of the site, both of which are used by bats. There was a request for more information on the OUD approach to biodiversity protection and enhancement (reference was made to the research work completed by Belinda Dow on ecological opportunities on the site).

**k. Jobs – access, skills, opportunities, innovation**

There were some verbal requests to learn what kinds of jobs there may be, and who would be equipped for them, skill-wise. What kind of innovation will be happening here? Will there be opportunities for local people?

#### **I. New service roles – opportunities for providers**

The question was raised as to whether local suppliers, for instance in retail, food and hospitality or health, schools and childcare services, would be eligible and encouraged to supply these services to the development, and, if so, when that process would be programmed.

#### **m. Amenities and services**

A lack of local amenities was identified in both Begbroke and Yarnton villages, with the need for many to drive to Kidlington for daily needs. (Some don't attempt to drive to Oxford due to the traffic and congestion)

Discussions around the types of facilities that would be useful for the local community included the following suggestions:

- **Convenience shopping** (that offers something better than Budgens on the A44). Many parents would also like to be able to let their children walk to a local shop by themselves, currently not possible.
  - A **bakery** and/or food producer
  - A **good quality playground**, particularly for older children, as they already have one for younger children within Begbroke. 'Adventure playground in the park' type was suggested
  - A **café** near to the playground with outdoor seating for parents
  - The **canal route upgraded** and opened up for active travel, as well as
  - More **use of the canal** itself – including kayak hire
  - **Local schools** – welcomed to enable children in the locality to walk to school – currently a lot of primary school children are driven to school
  - A need to expand **doctors' surgery** capability locally, in the right location
  - **Multifunctional facilities** for community use, ideally with a gym
  - **Green areas** for open informal leisure
  - Safe, easy **access to the brook**
  - Safe movement **network for cyclists and pedestrians**
  - **Two lit netball courts** – there are 80+ members of a netball club for youth and adults (but poor quality court provision).
  - **Social space**
  - New development should have **green roofs and grey rainwater harvesting**
  - Inclusion of a **rugby club** relocation
  - **Train station** – major benefit to locality, it would put Begbroke ID on the map
  - **Good mobile phone reception** – currently poor
- n. Community infrastructure comments**
- What kind of energy strategy will be employed at Begbroke ID? Will that include solar? Will renewable energy be available to the community?
  - A creative parking strategy will be required to help address/lower car usage. Electric charging will need to be part of that.

- Some discussions were held around demonstrating the effect of future mobility options. It was suggested some case studies could be shown on the website in the future.

**o. Name**

There were a range of views on the working title name of Begbroke Innovation District. The association with Begbroke was challenged by some Yarnton residents (less so from Begbroke) though some supportive reference was made to Begbroke Hill.

**p. Consultation fatigue and trust**

There was frequent evidence that trust in the various agencies and bodies, including the Cherwell District and Oxfordshire County Councils, National Agencies, Oxford University & its Colleges, as well as developers, is fragile locally. There was some expression of ‘general disgruntlement’ about the scale of development happening around Oxford, and the ‘constant’ consultation involved. (At the same time there was a varied appreciation of the Local Plan site allocation process).

There was some scepticism around BID consultation purpose and whether OUD was going to listen to people’s views in their proposals and design development. They felt that they have gone through this process before with other developers, without any benefit to them. They also wanted to be made aware of the consultation programme in good time and know what they should expect at each stage. They also wanted to be informed as to what is being done with their feedback and comments, as this had not happened in the past.

**Second Stage**

- 5.3 The second stage of engagement ran during October and November 2022, with a little more focus on the proposed details and potential impact of different components of the emerging proposals.

The collective feedback presented a wide range of themes for reflection, review and opportunities for scheme development and refinement.

Below, listed in themes, are the main headlines that were discussed between community members and the OUD team across the three community drop-in exhibitions. Once again, there was a strong degree of commonality across the various discussions, with some local variations. They also broadly accorded with the earlier workshop feedback, July drop-in sessions, and subsequent feedback form content.

**a. Sandy Lane Closure**

A significant level of concern was raised about the proposed closure of Sandy Lane. When attendees were told about OUD’s proposal for an enhanced bridge over the railway crossing, the concept was well received. Many attendees were also concerned about connectivity in the interim period in response to immediate closure of Sandy Lane, with a number suggesting alternatives to maintain connections between Kidlington, Yarnton, and Begbroke.

**b. Public Transport**

Frequent, reliable, and better-connected public transport was a common concern raised by attendees, particularly between Begbroke, Yarnton, Kidlington, Oxford Parkway, and Oxford. Additionally, there seemed to be support for a new railway station in the Begbroke Innovation District, which would be a useful connection in and out of Oxford and elsewhere.

### **c. Traffic**

Traffic congestion was brought up frequently. Particularly along the A44, where congestion is already occurring on a regular basis, what would it look like with a whole new village living in the area? Especially in addition to the other PR sites and the stadium, attendees raised concerns that there is an urgent need for better provisions regarding active travel and public transport to help alleviate traffic. It was also added that there should be stronger East-West connections for traffic, including providing important links for the existing communities.

### **d. Active travel and safety**

As the A44 is often congested with traffic, and when it is not congested, it is a high-speed road, there needs to be safe and accessible crossings along it. We are told that safe crossings have been promised in the past by Oxfordshire County Council but there has been no follow-through. In addition to safe crossings, attendees discussed the need for well thought out and safe cycle lanes and active travel routes, particularly for commuters and children. Cycle paths along the canal should be kept and improved upon.

### **e. Access to Green Space**

One of the most prominent concerns is the loss of green space. As the new development is being built upon released green belt, attendees were worried about loss of green space and access to it. Maintaining certain vistas, trails, agricultural land, and biodiversity were all topics brought up at the drop-ins.

### **f. Other surrounding developments and overdevelopment**

Concerns over the cumulative impact of new surrounding developments that could lead to urban sprawl, population congestion, loss of green space, and flooding in existing villages. Many attendees brought up Botley West Solar Farm specifically, but also referenced the new football stadium and PR9. Creating strong links between and working alongside the other new developments was suggested frequently.

### **g. Housing**

Attendees at all three drop-in sessions raised concerns over the number of total houses being built on site and the composition of housing types. The desire for specific numbers and ratios of houses for private sale, university accommodation, key worker housing, and affordable housing were all frequently discussed concerns.

### **h. Flooding**

As flooding is already a major issue without new development in the area, attendees had concerns over further impact on flood risk, specifically near the canal and around Yarnton. Sustainable and on-site water management is desired for the new development, and some attendees felt reassured about OUD's approach to mitigating the risk as they are currently running soak-ability tests.

### **i. Services and Amenities**

Interest in the prospect of more cafes, local shops, and pubs was raised at the drop-in sessions. In addition to new potential services and amenities, there were concerns regarding schools, as improvements should be made to current schools rather than draining them if a new one is built. Lastly, GP and other health practices would be needed with an influx of a new population.

### **j. Design representation**



Clearer maps were requested, with legends to improve legibility and understanding for the public, as it was stated it was not indicative enough of how the site would look in the future.

#### **k. Sustainability**

General concerns were raised around the new Begbroke Innovation District being net zero and prioritising ecology, biodiversity, ground solubility, and minimising the overall impact of development.

#### **Third stage**

- 5.5 The third stage of engagement ran during March 2023 where the emerging proposals were presented with further detail on the potential contribution of the different components.

The main headlines discussed between community members and the OUD client and design team across the three drop-in sessions and at the Stakeholders' workshop are listed in this section below.

#### **Sandy Lane**

- Confusion around the road and level crossing closure policy
- Distrust of county/district council explanation and justification
- Critical role of link between villages
- Private vehicle access important, especially for those with special accessibility requirements
- Emergency vehicle access critical
- Community shuttle bus is a welcome idea
- Interim solutions needed during construction

#### **Healthcare facilities**

- Access to GP practices, dentists, and other healthcare related services, important, especially with closure of Sandy Lane

#### **Services and amenities**

- Nurseries and schools are essential, with long term investment
- Community offer: restaurants, pubs, retail, food shops, cafes, pool (critical for swimming lessons given proximity to canal & flooding) were all suggested
- Workspace facilities that include showers/drying space for cyclists

#### **Transport**

- Buses – need to be reliable and well connected, including a bus between the three villages, the science park, Oxford Parkway and Oxford, as current services are not sufficient
- A train station would be a positive, welcome feature
- A44 traffic implications
- Some scepticism around the practicality of 'car is a guest' approach
- Well-connected active travel links, particularly around the canal, welcomed

#### **Housing development & scale**

- Who will live here?
- Must be an affordable component (not just university-linked affordable)
- Mixed housing offer
- Some concerns over the scale, density and height of buildings

- Concerns about overdevelopment across the area – including cumulative impact

#### **Local identity**

- Rename Begbroke Innovation District (to differentiate from Begbroke, and given Yarnton proximity)
- Impact of the new community on existing residents
- Loss of identity, as this development could join up the three villages and turn it into one big sprawling town
- Which parish will Begbroke Innovation District fall into?
- Loss of a part of 'rural' Oxfordshire

#### **Landscape & greenspace**

- Prefer hedgerows instead of fencing
- Ideally, don't move the allotments, but if they are moving, what provisions are in place for a smooth transition?
- Public access to play and playing fields
- Maintain as much natural greenspace as possible for wildlife and biodiversity
- Maintain existing footpaths
- Retain and improve the canal towpath
- Social greenspace is welcome, particularly for the elderly and youth

#### **Fourth stage**

- 5.6 The fourth stage of engagement took the form of a pre-planning communication of the updated proposals at three exhibitions in local community venues and online. The intention was to provide a preview and explanation of the proposals, in particular how they had changed during 2022 and 2023, ahead of the submission of a planning application to Cherwell District Council. The exhibitions took place on Wednesday 12 and Thursday 13 July, at Begbroke Village Hall, Yarnton Village Hall and Kidlington Football Club respectively, while the material was also available live online at [www.oud.co.uk](http://www.oud.co.uk) from the same date.
- 5.7 Some 8,000 homes were leafletted, along with personal and stakeholder organisation invites and social media promotion. There were 113 attendees in total at the 3 different exhibitions, including: 41 attendees at Begbroke, 36 at Yarnton and 36 at Kidlington. The attendees included many repeat attendees (the majority), but also some 'new' people.
- 5.8 It had been agreed there would be no formal mechanism for responses (1) because the proposals were not going to be altered before submission and (2) so as not to be confused with or displace the statutory consultation the Council would soon undertake once the planning application documents were lodged.
- 5.9 However, many informal comments and observations were made and are noted in Appendix D. There was a fairly high level of awareness of the proposals, a fair measure of acceptance, and less fear about what may happen at BID, with many positive responses about the OUD process, approach and information. There was a mix of familiar recurring issues raised, alongside and range of new points, often relating to future stages of design and delivery.
- 5.10 Recurring themes, raised previously, included:
- Concern about risk of merger/coalition of separate historic settlements in the medium terms, as greenfields/green belt is developed.

- Some remained unhappy, opposed to principle – due to loss of countryside, fields, green belt, etc
- Others remaining opposed were concerned about urbanisation and loss of rural character, etc footpaths/verges/lighting, coverage of buildings and dense urban sprawl.
- The bridge link and ease of local connectivity, especially for older residents, remains the over-riding concern, and sense that OUD is trying to address.
- Effect of PR9 flood impact/overflow issues on PR8 infrastructure – Yarnton is regularly wet/flooded
- Concern about flooding to east of canal (Kidlington) – how to manage and mitigate this risk?
- Important role of the area for walks, runs, recreation – for wider community
- General concern about cumulative impact on already congested roads/junctions/roundabouts – esp around peak hours
- Support for importance of technology in approach – and keenness to see PVs used

#### 5.11 New issues, including more detailed points, raised included:

- Some specific thanks for OUD BID consultation – both the staged process and level of information, ‘telling the whole story’.
- Acknowledgement (by several) that OUD have taken on board many earlier points/comments – including from people ‘opposed to the principle’.
- Role of railway and canals in shaping area’s character – please make most of these
- Restrict public access to a proportion of the open space in order to promote biodiversity
- Can there be a strong green buffer between Begbroke village and the BID development area.
- These proposals appear to provide better, safer walking options
- Keeping people abreast of changes in paths/links/loops, as construction progresses
- Need to provide for mobility scooters – easy to use, smooth surfaces, bridge(s) over the railway
- Request for more specificity/early on community proposals especially health provision.
- Can there be a hall/conference facility available for community booking – for seminars/events/presentations, etc?
- Tracking and measurement of data and performance over time (eg movement/jobs/energy/health/biodiversity) is supported as key dimension of distinctive/innovative community.
- Which part will BID start from – what is in initial phases and what impact(s) will that have?
- People want to know when they may be affected, and in what way.

- 5.12 This pattern indicates that the Stage 4 pre application sessions provided a lot of new intelligence, as people began to reflect more on the future and detail of design, delivery, timing and impact, rather than just the principle and broad parameters.
- 5.13 Although not impacting on the forthcoming outline application, much of the content may be useful in informing the development of the next stages that will come forward in any reserved matters applications.

## 6. Responses in the Application Proposals

6.1 The issues raised have been addressed through the development stages of the proposals, as illustrated below. The column on the left shows' issues raised over the stages of consultation and engagement. These are broken down by thematic sector. The column on the right indicates the response to the issues raised within the development of the proposals, which may have been influenced by other factors outside the community consultation commentary (e.g., Council policy, research, statutory agency standards, etc).

<b>Matters raised during consultation</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>1 Principle, scale and character of overall development</b>	<b>Principle and scale response</b>
<p>Concern was expressed by some at</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the loss of green fields/green belt</li> <li>• the prospective scale of development, and</li> <li>• its impact on the surrounding communities</li> </ul>	<p>This is a major planning allocation of 190 hectares to accommodate housing, science activity, local facilities, including school provision, play space and parkland and various connecting routes. The proposals are required to comply with the mixed use Innovation District approach set out in the Local Plan allocation PR8. The design of the proposals was modified several times to accommodate green space, address the management of flood risk, and create distinctive neighbourhoods that relate to, but do not have an adverse impact upon, the surrounding communities.</p> <p>Many of the suggestions for improvements, links, green routes, bridges, etc were specifically taken up from the various engagement sessions and discussions with local people and incorporated into the proposals.</p>
<b>2 Housing</b>	<b>Housing response</b>
<p>Information was sought at the various stages of consultation process on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the scale, location and number of homes</li> <li>• the type and tenure</li> <li>• who might live there</li> </ul>	<p>While the precise numbers were part of a dialogue process with the Council planners, the order of magnitude was explained, and the layout adapted to take account of comments received.</p> <p>In particular, the breaking into distinct neighbourhoods that related to the flood risk management approach was a key response, alongside creating places that minimised traffic generation and through routes.</p> <p>The illustrative masterplan indicates that the site could deliver approximately 1,800 homes, (though this could increase if a greater portion of smaller homes/flats are delivered).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Around half of the homes will be for sale or rent on the open market, and the remaining half will be delivered within affordable tenures, including</li> </ul>

	<p>social rent, discount market rent and university-linked housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For the university housing, the expectation is that occupiers will be younger researchers staying for 3-4 years, while the remainder of occupancy will be more open.</li> </ul>
<b>3 Workspace &amp; innovation</b>	<b>Workspace &amp; innovation response</b>
<p>Some, especially those linked to the University/Science Park, requested information on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the types/sectors/sizes of workspace</li> <li>their general location</li> <li>the terms of occupancy</li> </ul>	<p>Partly in response to comments received about access and support facilities, the proposed development includes a range of workspace growing around, and out from the existing science park. Approximately 155,000sq metres floorspace is planned, with a focus to include 'Deep Tech' research from across the University divisions, including life sciences, agriculture, energy and sustainability. This would also include artificial intelligence, robotics, advanced material science, biotech, quantum computing, photonics and electronics many of which are already represented at BSP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Their location is planned to be mainly around the central and eastern quadrants, on the flatter land towards the railway.</li> <li>There is an aspiration for a range of spaces from virtual to incubator, start up, spinout, grow on, scaling up and large innovation businesses. Leases and licences would be appropriate to support a vibrant ecosystem but are not specified at this stage of planning.</li> </ul>
<b>4 Community facilities</b>	<b>Community facilities response</b>
<p>Comments were made, and questions were raised, about</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the impact on the community services</li> <li>what community services/activities may be possible</li> <li>the type and location of schools</li> <li>the approach to allotments/growing space</li> </ul>	<p>In response to comments received, the proposals were developed to include a mix of new provision within the BID site.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development will provide retail, a café, and various community facilities, including school(s), nurseries and meeting places/halls. Retail provision will be focused within the local centre, on land safeguarded near the Farmhouse.</li> <li>The plan has been designed to accommodate a 3FE primary school, a 2FE primary school, and a secondary school. The 3FE primary school would be located just south east of the new local centre. The secondary school would be delivered east of the central park (former landfill) area, and the 2FE primary school would be delivered in the south of the site. (The precise location and phasing of these is still under</li> </ul>

	<p>discussion with the various statutory authorities and providers.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The current proposal is that the existing allotments would need to be relocated to new sites at some point in the future (probably between 3 and 6 years' time). The plans shows current options for new sites. There would be relocation assistance for allotment occupiers as part of the Section 106 Agreement.</li> </ul>
<b>5 Flooding</b>	<b>Flooding response</b>
<p>The current and potential future impact of localised flooding was raised in terms of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The areas already prone to flooding</li> <li>Flood capacity and potential external impact on nearby communities</li> <li>The role of nature led, biophilic interventions within the plan</li> </ul>	<p>Flooding is recognised as important in its historic impact and in current day and future risk. The responses and observations from various community participants included their personal and collective experiences.</p> <p>The drainage strategy evolved is sensitive to the specific local conditions, aiming to link with the landscape and mimic the current drainage patterns, and to increase biodiversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The flood risk management strategy involves not developing in flood zones, including the Rowel Brook. Detailed modelling of the Rowel Brook catchment and connecting watercourses, including the Oxford Canal, surface water catchment and an investigation into groundwater flows are being used to inform the flood risk management strategy, taking into consideration all sources.</li> <li>Sustainable drainage techniques (SuDS) are proposed to capture, convey and store water prior to it being discharged to the ground on areas of the site where water is able to soakaway or into the site watercourses. The discharge of surface water will be restricted to 'green field' (i.e. pre-development) runoff rates.</li> <li>The approach has been reviewed by the Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authority and Thames Water in the development of the plans.</li> </ul>
<b>6 Landscape and biodiversity</b>	<b>Landscape and biodiversity response</b>
<p>Comments and suggestions provided included</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Optimising greenery generally in quasi rural area</li> <li>Enhancing biodiversity</li> <li>Role of trails and loops</li> <li>Importance of maintenance (and its funding) to future proof place quality</li> </ul>	<p>These wide-ranging community aspirations, received from across all villages, were drawn upon to inform the strong landscape-led approach to the proposals, including green and open areas, footpaths and roads, flood management, and neighbourhood areas with housing and workspace.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The landscape and development approach means that approximately 50% of the overall application site will remain open and accessible.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The aim is to provide 20% biodiversity net gain.</li> <li>• There will be a range of nature networks and walking loops, building on existing provision, as well as a range of formal and informal place spaces across different parts of the site, such as the housing neighbourhoods.</li> <li>• The approach to management and maintenance of the site will be via a special purpose vehicle.</li> </ul>
<b>7 Connectivity and movement</b>	<b>Connectivity and movement response</b>
<p>A major local issue, especially in early sessions, comments were made on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the loss of level crossing connection and proposed bridge connection,</li> <li>• the functionality of the ‘car is guest’ internal street network</li> <li>• importance of servicing and disabled access</li> <li>• needs for welcome cycle connections to ‘join up’ externally</li> <li>• apparent dependence on public transport</li> </ul> <p>A great many concerns were around Sandy Lane, where Local Plan policy requires the Lane to be closed to vehicular traffic and be for pedestrians and cycling only. As part of Oxford Phase 2, Network Rail is proposing to close Sandy Lane crossing and replace it with a pedestrian and cycle bridge over the railway</p>	<p>The strong views made on connectivity and transport by different modes, made from the very outset of consultation, have strongly influenced the approach to the overall plan and its relationship with the surrounding area. The general movement strategy is to suppress the impact of vehicles within the BID site and on the networks around it. The proposals seek to reduce the need to use a car and creates a high-quality and permeable network of walk and cycle routes, as well as improvements to public transport.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In response to community concerns about Sandy Lane, OUD are in discussions with NR around a proposed pedestrian, cycle and public transport bridge. These discussions are ongoing and subject to approval, detailed design and funding. The pedestrian, cycle and public transport bridge option does not form part of the BID planning application proposals</li> <li>• The proposals seek to have the ‘car as a guest’ with minimum through traffic, a public transport link, more walking and cycling links and safeguard land for a potential future railway station.</li> <li>• There would still be internal access for servicing, and also for disability access.</li> <li>• There are likely to a range of contributions from different sites to aid the cycling links to central Oxford, Parkway station and elsewhere.</li> <li>• A range of public transport improvements are being developed along the Woodstock-Oxford corridor, which will benefit the wider community and enable more trips to be made by sustainable modes.</li> </ul>
<b>8 Energy and carbon</b>	<b>Energy and carbon response</b>
Sustainable energy approaches were advocated by contributors, including	Although mainly linked to the reserved matters and building regulations stages, after this planning stage,



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low energy strategy for whole Innovation District,</li> <li>• Carbon neutrality approach</li> <li>• Use of solar power and heat pumps</li> <li>• Gas free heating</li> <li>• Passivhaus housing approach</li> </ul>	<p>the OUD team response has evolved from the many discussions, and proposes a number of elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circular economy principles and net zero carbon framework standards adopted in the design of the masterplan and development of the energy strategy to ensure operational sustainability.</li> <li>• An all-electric, fossil fuel free energy strategy to achieve net-zero carbon operational energy. A decentralised strategy is proposed, utilising air source heat pumps as primary technology, maximising on onsite renewables generation by implementing Solar Photovoltaic panels, storage and a Smart Grid.</li> <li>• An integrated water management strategy and zero waste principles embedded into the design of utilities and service provision as part of a regenerative, community-focussed approach.</li> <li>• Targets for capping whole life carbon through construction and operation for housing, commercial / education and labs / R&amp;D</li> </ul>
<p><b>9 Planning, phasing &amp; sequencing</b></p>	<p><b>Planning, phasing &amp; sequencing responses</b></p>
<p>Requests for clarity, partly to appreciate the timing and nature of impact, were sought around</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What the application would cover</li> <li>• Where and when the project would start</li> <li>• When it might ‘finish’</li> </ul>	<p>The OUD team added an extra stage of engagement in March 2023, to enable further community input and dialogue, ahead of finalising this planning application and presenting at the ‘preview’ stage in July 2023.</p> <p>The final exhibition sessions explain that the application plan necessarily retains a number of spatial fixes, but also includes a degree of flexibility so that different buildings and designs can come forward over time, depending on needs and priorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The outline application will have all matters reserved, to enable flexibility in delivery. Instead, it will propose a flexible set of controls and parameters within which future reserved matters applications can be made. The illustrative masterplan will demonstrate one way in which the flexible controls can enable a high quality development to come forward. There will be Strategic Design Guidelines and parameter plans to control aspects such as use, scale, green infrastructure and character.</li> <li>• The detailed design stages and Reserve Matter submissions will have to comply with the outline planning application.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The construction of the Innovation District would take place over several carefully phased stages across a decade or so. It is anticipated that this would commence from late 2025, assuming permission is granted.</li> </ul>
<b>10 Other comments</b>	<b>Other responses</b>
<p>The phased, interactive engagement process has been generally welcomed, particularly the face to face sessions in each village, including by some opposed to part or all of the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunities have been sought to be further involvement in detailed (design) steps as the projects continues.</li> </ul>	<p>The interactive process was specifically tailored to provide a range of opportunities to meet, discuss, and engage around the issues related to the plan. These all helped in the progressive refinement of the broad concepts and detailed plan content over time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There will be further opportunities for the community (including youth and specialist sectors) to engage before, during and after the outline and development stages.</li> <li>The main development and design-related consultation will be around the reserved matters applications. This will include in-person and online forms of engagement that will be consistent with earlier mechanisms, and publicity for them, and will therefore familiar to members of the local community and other stakeholders.</li> </ul>

6.2 Following submission of the Outline Planning application, there will be a period of statutory consultation led by Cherwell District Council. If the Outline Application is permitted, it will be subject to future Reserve Matters applications and there will be further opportunities to review and comment on specific components and designs.

6.3 In the meantime, the record of all engagement stages will continue to be held on the Oxford University Development (OUD) website so that the background, evolution and outcomes are transparently recorded.

## 7 Concluding Remarks

- 7.1 This Statement of Community Involvement, and the accompanying evidence base within the appendices, provide detail of the community consultation and engagement that was undertaken to inform the community about the evolution of the BID proposals which are the subject of this outline planning application.
- 7.2 It is considered that the methods of engagement used were appropriate and follow best practice to obtain feedback effectively from a wide group of local residents, community interest groups, local business, local agency and organisations and other local stakeholders.
- 7.3 The consultation process provided multiple opportunities for a wide range of stakeholders and members of the public to engage with the BID proposals through the early introductory meetings, site walkabout, workshops, exhibitions, website and feedback forms.
- 7.4 The total attendance exceeded 1,200 participants across the various events and modes. Every effort was made to provide a range of formats and methods for people of all ages and geographical locations to participate in the process. A total of 166 feedback forms were submitted, in that period, either in-person or online.
- 7.5 The issues raised in the consultation stages have been considered by the BID project and design team, and the extensive feedback from these various sessions has informed both the approach and details of the proposals which are now submitted as part of this outline planning application. There will be further opportunity to comment upon the proposals both during the statutory consultation process and in future stages of development.
- 7.6 There will be further opportunities for the community (including youth and specialist sectors) to engage before, during and after the outline and development stages. The main development and design-related consultation will be around the reserved matters applications, as these come forward. This will include in-person and online forms of engagement that will be consistent with earlier mechanisms and the publicity for them. They will therefore be familiar to members of the local community and other stakeholders.

**APPENDIX A**

STAGE 1 ENGAGEMENT REPORT – Meet the Team and Scoping Issues and Ideas

***ATTACHED AS SEPARATE PDF***

**APPENDIX B**

STAGE 2 ENGAGEMENT REPORT – Masterplan Options

***ATTACHED AS SEPARATE PDF***

**APPENDIX C**

STAGE 3 ENGAGEMENT REPORT – Emerging Masterplan

***ATTACHED AS SEPARATE PDF***

**APPENDIX D**

STAGE 4 NOTE - Pre-Application Submission Preview Exhibition

***ATTACHED AS SEPARATE PDF***





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