

Oxford's Economic Strategy



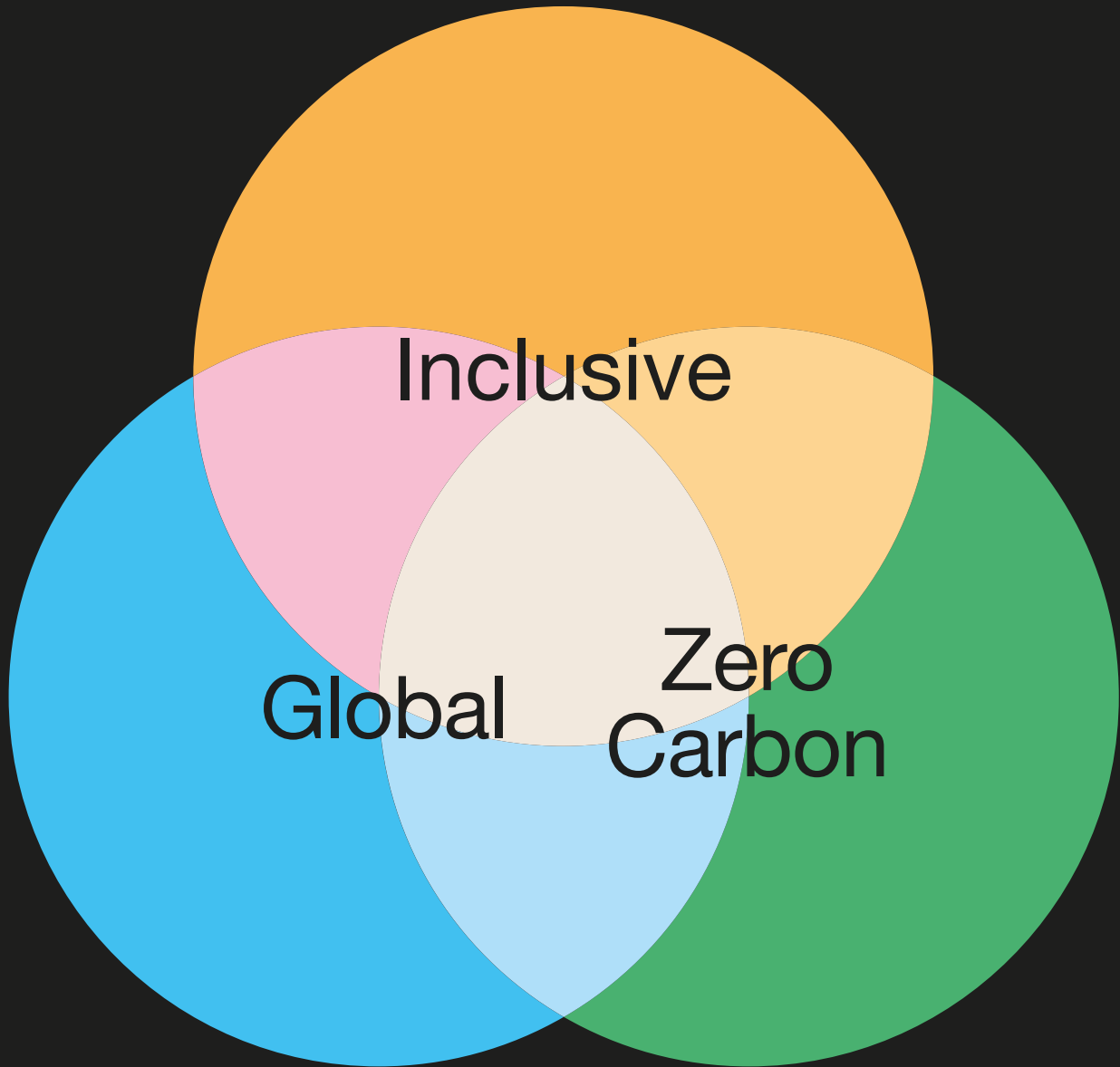
Consultation Draft

Oxford's Economic Strategy seeks to establish a new standard for economic **inclusion** in the city. This will be underpinned by the strength of an influential **global** city economy, evolving in a way which recognises the environmental impacts of growth and harnesses the opportunity of a new **zero carbon** economy

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We will strive to address deep economic inequality and level up the city. We will develop new approaches to support the least advantaged people in the city, striving to guarantee a new standard of prosperity for all



Oxford will become a more powerful, resilient, and influential economy. We will become an even more significant contributor to the UK economy, developing ideas that will change the world

Oxford will deliver the innovation and knowledge which will drive the global low carbon economy. We will embed zero carbon principles across future economic decision making whilst supporting residents and businesses to do the same

Foreword

Oxford is one of the most important city economies in the UK. The fact that the Oxford Vaccine is both developed and manufactured here is just one example of countless world-changing innovations led by the city's universities and businesses across a whole range of fields.

Our city has over 123,500 jobs which contribute around £6.8bn to the national economy each year. It is one of a handful of net contributors to the UK economy, with a globally significant knowledge economy which has led the global response to COVID-19.

Having responded practically to the challenges of the pandemic alongside our partner local authorities, OxLEP, and the business, education and third sectors, the time has come to think about Oxford's economic future. This strategy not only helps Oxford navigate recovery, but ensures it fulfils its potential and role within the UK and globally, but in an inclusive, fair and green way.

To do this, we not only have to respond to immediate challenges, but must also act to address the fundamental and systemic problems which exist in Oxford, the most significant being inequality. This, alongside the chronic under supply of commercial space, housing and inefficient transport infrastructure, have seen the city's economic growth fall behind other places in recent years and leaving individual and institutional potential unfulfilled.

Our strategy seeks to balance our response to a range of factors and drivers; the need to overcome the impacts of the pandemic and Brexit, an imperative to have a better economy which does more for individual residents and the environment, and allows our vital universities and business to compete globally, whilst contributing to the national bottom line.

I am pleased that this approach has been endorsed by the Oxford Economic Growth Steering Board, who have also supported the development of a set of actions which will form the foundations upon which we will build. The endorsement of our partners means we can be confident of a collective approach to delivery which will help us achieve our ambitions of creating an inclusive and zero carbon economy with a global outlook.



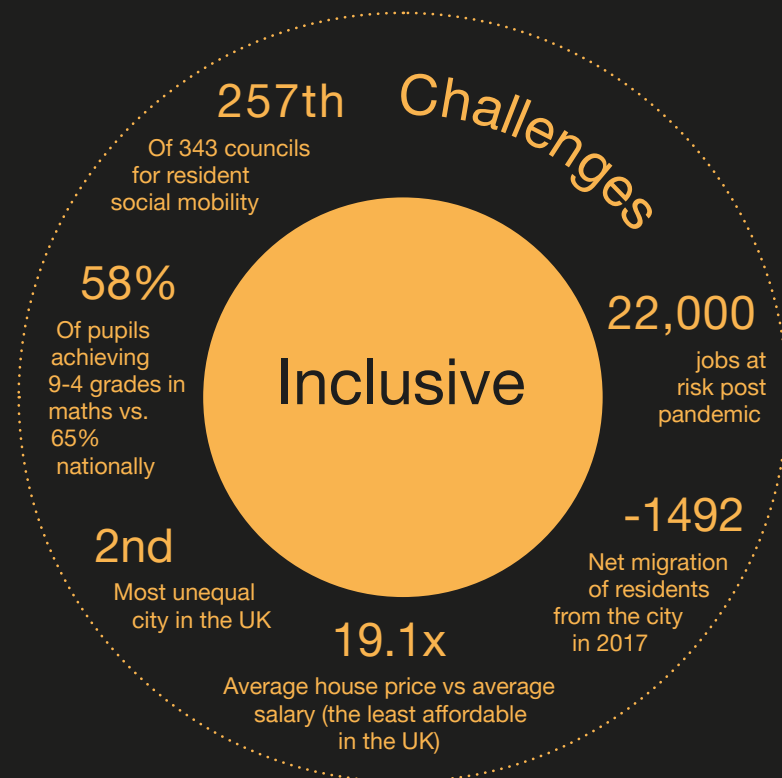
Susan Brown
Leader Oxford City Council

The Case for Action

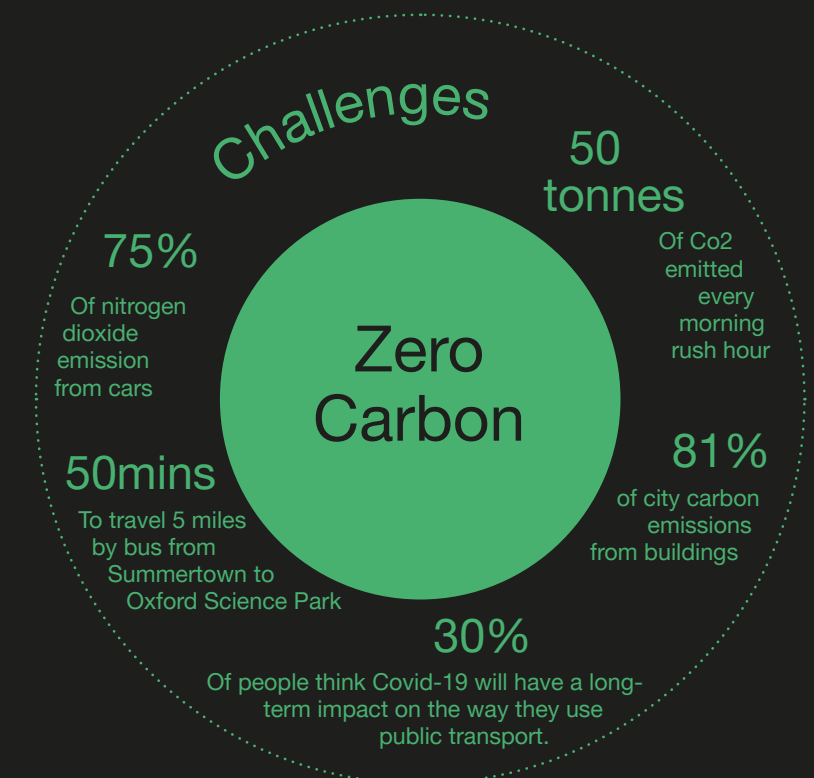
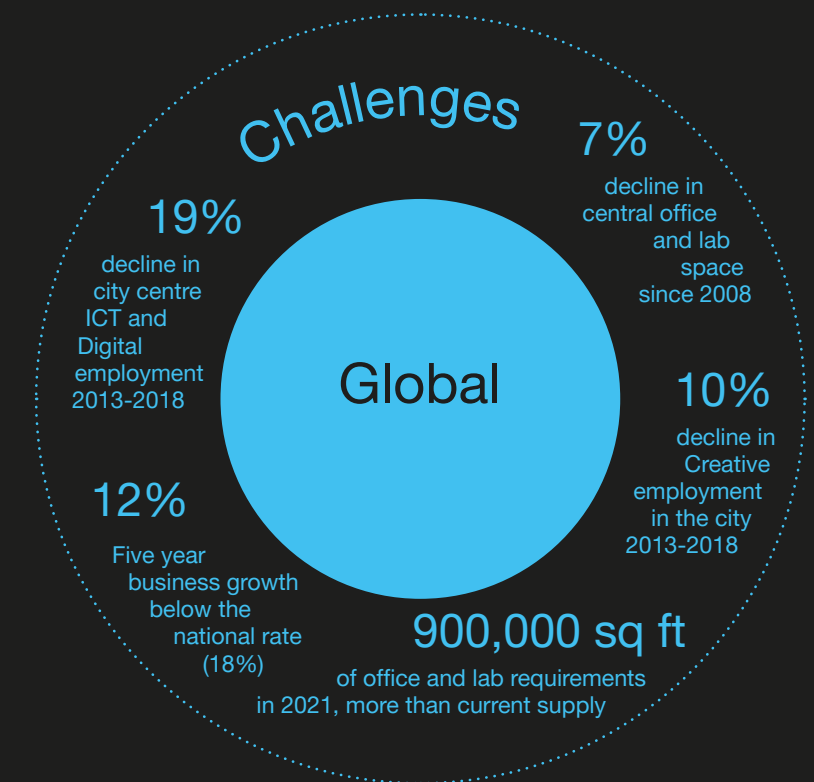
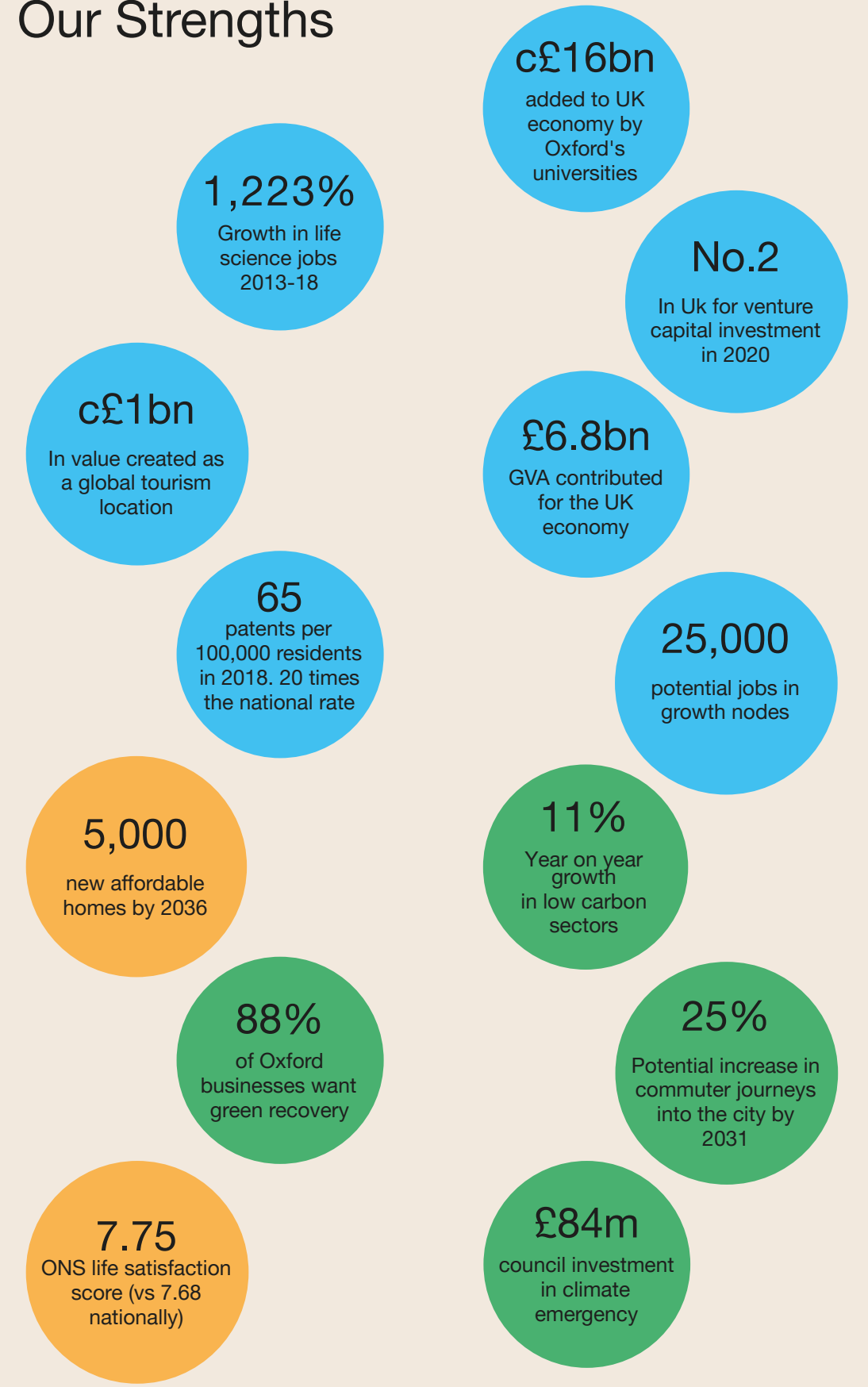
We are aware of our role in supporting the UK's response to the pandemic, but also our responsibility to support each resident and business to overcome the ongoing challenge this brings.

Our evidence tells a story of a city which already has significant influence and strength in some of the world's most important economic sectors.

Evidence also tells us that Oxford is constrained in terms of commercial space and that places within the city are not efficiently connected. Inequality shown within the statistics is stark and shows us the scale of the environmental challenge ahead of us.



Our Strengths



Foundations of the Strategy

Why We Need a New Economic Strategy

Oxford is one of the most important and influential cities in the world. It is home to 151,600 people and 6,000 businesses. It has the highest employment rate in the country, 123,500 jobs, which contribute around £6.8bn to the national economy each year. It is visited by around 8 million people per annum and boasts world class universities, a beautiful city centre, a vibrant leisure offer and enviable green space.

Our economy is underpinned by internationally, nationally and regionally important anchor institutions including the University of Oxford, Oxford Brookes University, Oxford Science Park, Oxford Business Park, John Radcliffe Hospital and MINI Plant Oxford. It is driven by a talented population – around 60% of whom have a degree level qualification or higher.

We have specialisms in knowledge, science and technology based industries and have high employment in robust and resilient sectors with strong foundations of innovation. Our universities have been a major contributor to this, with over 170 active spin-out companies, many of these commercialising rapidly as they attract new funds.

Alongside Oxfordshire, Oxford is one of a handful of net contributors to the national

economy. The city has been identified by Government as a growth engine within the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, which is one of the most important areas for catalysing national productivity and easing the nation's housing crisis.

Our strategy, needs to build on this, recognising the importance of the city in its surrounding context; its ability to create further knowledge and value for itself, **but for Oxfordshire, the South East and UK as whole.** The co-dependence of the City and the University of Oxford is vital to our success. **Helping both universities to grow and evolve is an ongoing priority.**

As the country starts to **recover from COVID-19 and adjusts to life outside of the EU, it needs cities like Oxford** and regions like Oxfordshire to be as strong as possible. To do this, the city will need to address some significant economic challenges.

City-wide, **business growth has slowed in recent years and the number of jobs has increased at a lower rate** than comparable UK cities. Some important sectors such as Life Sciences, Higher Education and Healthcare have prospered, but others such as ICT and Digital have declined mainly because of

a chronic undersupply of commercial space, and also affordable local housing. Several sectors remain highly vulnerable to the impacts of COVID-19, particularly Hospitality, Leisure, Retail, Creative, Cultural and the Visitor Economy.

Investment in transport and active travel infrastructure is fundamental to the success of the economic strategy.

The current offer, which is contributing to congestion, creates a range of economic and environmental costs which are likely to be exacerbated as Oxford's population continues to grow. Journey times can be over 10 minutes per mile by public transport and availability and cost of public transport can inhibit the mobility of much of the population. New models of last mile logistics need to be developed if we are to achieve a more efficient and collaborative economic ecosystem in our city centre.

The city and its neighbouring areas, which are vitally important to the county economy, must also be better connected. Moreover, connections to other important economic nodes and anchors across the country would underpin stronger regional growth across the Oxford to Cambridge Arc and Thames Valley.

Inequality is however, the most significant challenge Oxford faces.

We are the second most unequal city in the country in terms of income, only marginally behind Cambridge. Neighbourhoods that are among the richest in the country sit alongside some of the most deprived.

Prospects for those living and growing up in deprived areas are poor. Average educational attainment in state schools is well below the national average. Pre COVID-19, the Social Mobility Index, which assess areas on prospects for

disadvantaged young people, ranked Oxford 257th out of 343 local authorities for social mobility. It is the least affordable city in the country in terms of house prices. Several of our communities are also those which have been most severely impacted by the pandemic, recession and structural changes in the nature of work. We must respond to this, not only **by seeking to connect people with new opportunities, but to build local capacity to influence and retain wealth in our neighbourhoods, alongside efforts to locate housing in sustainable and affordable locations in or close to Oxford.**

The city has declared a climate emergency. Air pollution is a major issue, particularly in the city centre, alongside traffic, flood risk and biodiversity emergency across Oxford. This will become worse without concerted action given the scale of development and change planned.

The city has the opportunity to respond to these vital issues, by meeting the zero carbon by 2040 challenge. Oxford can also harness the knowledge developed in the city to make the low carbon response part of Oxford's growth and diversification.

This strategy does not exist in isolation. Its influence is wide and as such, needs to be considered in conjunction with other strategies. (see p34)

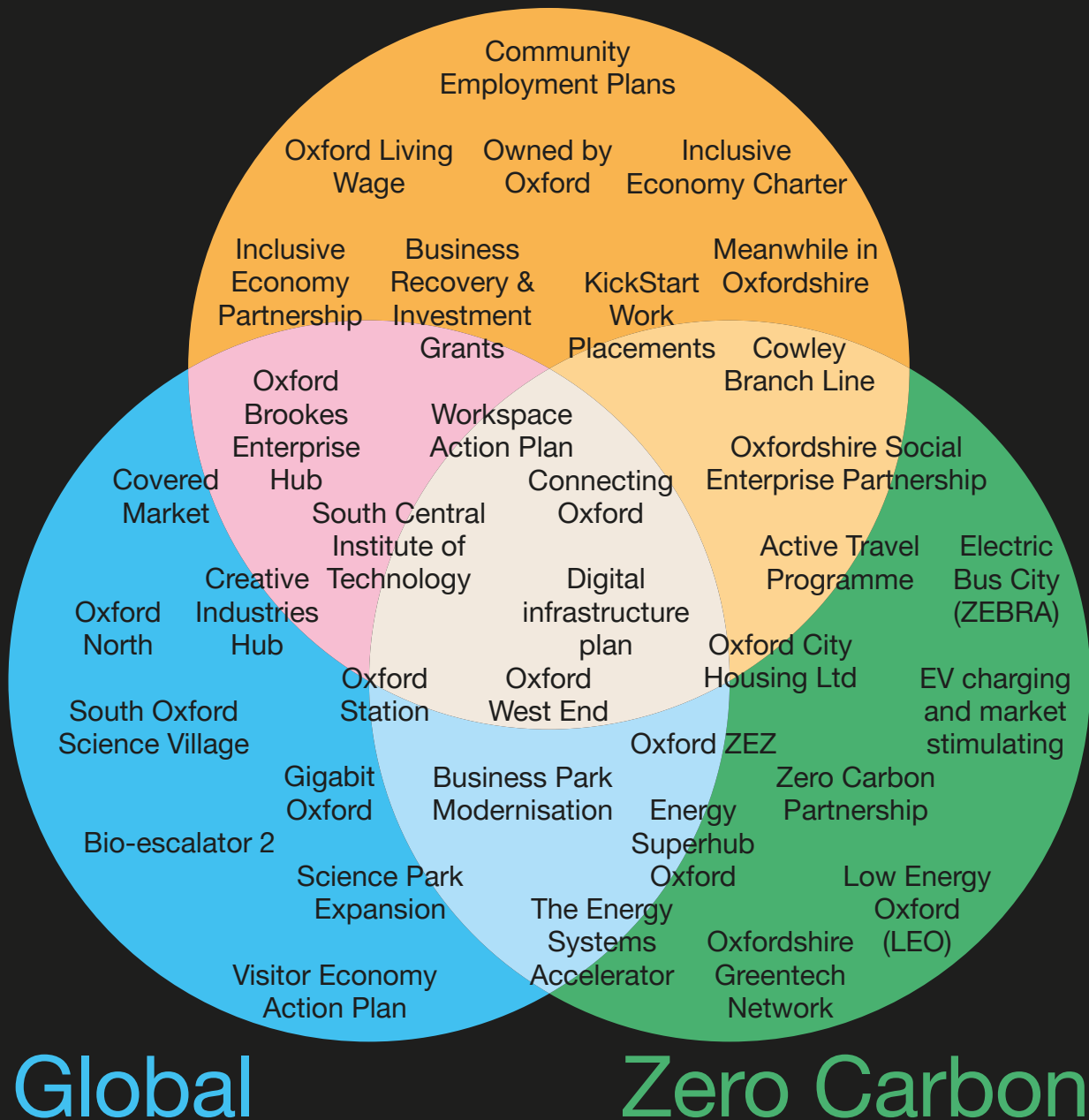
Moreover, the City Council cannot deliver this strategy in isolation. Only by building on the effective collaboration with partners (Oxfordshire County Council, neighbouring district councils, OxLEP, business, education, and third sectors) developed through the pandemic, can we deliver an effective strategy as we re-imagine our local economy.

Building on Existing Momentum

Oxford City Council, and our many vital partners across all sectors, are already delivering and supporting projects which advance our inclusive, zero carbon and global objectives.

We will work together to scale this and ensure that we recognise the links between the three pillars of our strategy

Inclusive



Oxford's Economic Geography

Oxford is strategically placed within one of the country's most important growth regions.

It is an integral part of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc which has been prioritised by Government to drive connectivity, national productivity, and housing growth. With the right investment, it will become a world leading economic region that has the potential to deliver over £190bn each year to the national economy.

It is also a key part of the Oxfordshire 'Knowledge Spine' which includes important knowledge intensive areas from Bicester in the north to the Science Vale business cluster in the south¹. There are also several important nodes for housing growth such as Bicester and vital urban extensions are planned adjacent to the city (e.g. in the north in Cherwell and to the south in South Oxfordshire).

Flood plain and green belt mean space for development in parts of the city is severely constrained. There are however distinct areas where we can accommodate future growth of economic activity, diversification and a growing workforce that need affordable homes. In line with planning policy, these consolidate existing growth nodes with planned urban extensions to provide focus in the north, south and east of the city alongside evolution of the city centre in the West End.

Within Oxfordshire places like Bicester, Didcot, Banbury and Abingdon are all fundamentally linked to the city's economy. All these areas have major economic assets and growth opportunities (e.g. Begbroke Science

Park, Motor Sport Valley, Culham Science Park and the Harwell, Didcot and Milton Park Enterprise Zones). Better connecting these places to the city and each other, will be integral to the creation of an stronger economic ecosystem.

5 Fundamental Investments

The successful delivery of the strategy is predicated on more efficient, sustainable movement of people and goods. Without these five investments we believe our inclusive, global and zero carbon ambitions could be compromised:

1. Investment in a new station for Oxford
2. Investment in the Cowley Branch line extension
3. Connecting Oxford: to reduce congestion, free up essential movement for the economy and allow for re-prioritisation of road space
4. Improved bus provision, information and infrastructure, to better connect people to jobs
5. Major investment in active travel modes, to mobilise a greener workforce

We will work to secure social value benefits across all major investments with partners

Capacity to Accommodate Economic Activity and Growth

Key

- City Boundary
- Urban Extensions
- Zero Emission Zone
- Railway
- Proposed Cowley Branch Line
- Major Roads

Major Economic Nodes

- 1 City Centre
- 2 Oxford Business Park
- 3 Oxford Science Park
- 4 Headington Health Technology Cluster
- 5 Automotive Cluster

Planned Areas for Development & Growth

Northern: the development of Oxford North and new urban development in Cherwell

West End and City Centre: Westerly expansion of city centre through a new innovation district

Eastern: Evolving health clusters around Headington and development east of Barton. Continued evolution of Oxford Brookes Campus.

Southern: Oxford Science Park and Oxford Business Park, the automotive cluster and urban developments at Northfield, South Oxford, Neighbourhood improvements at Blackbird Leys

A Cowley Branch Line reopening of Cowley Branch line to connect Oxford Science Village, Oxford Business Park and surrounding areas to Oxford station and beyond

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B Station Upgrades redeveloping the station and enabling East West rail to improve connections to Swindon, Bristol and other economic nodes

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C City centre Improvements Tactical urban improvements to support enhanced environment and a greater concentration of commercial space centrally

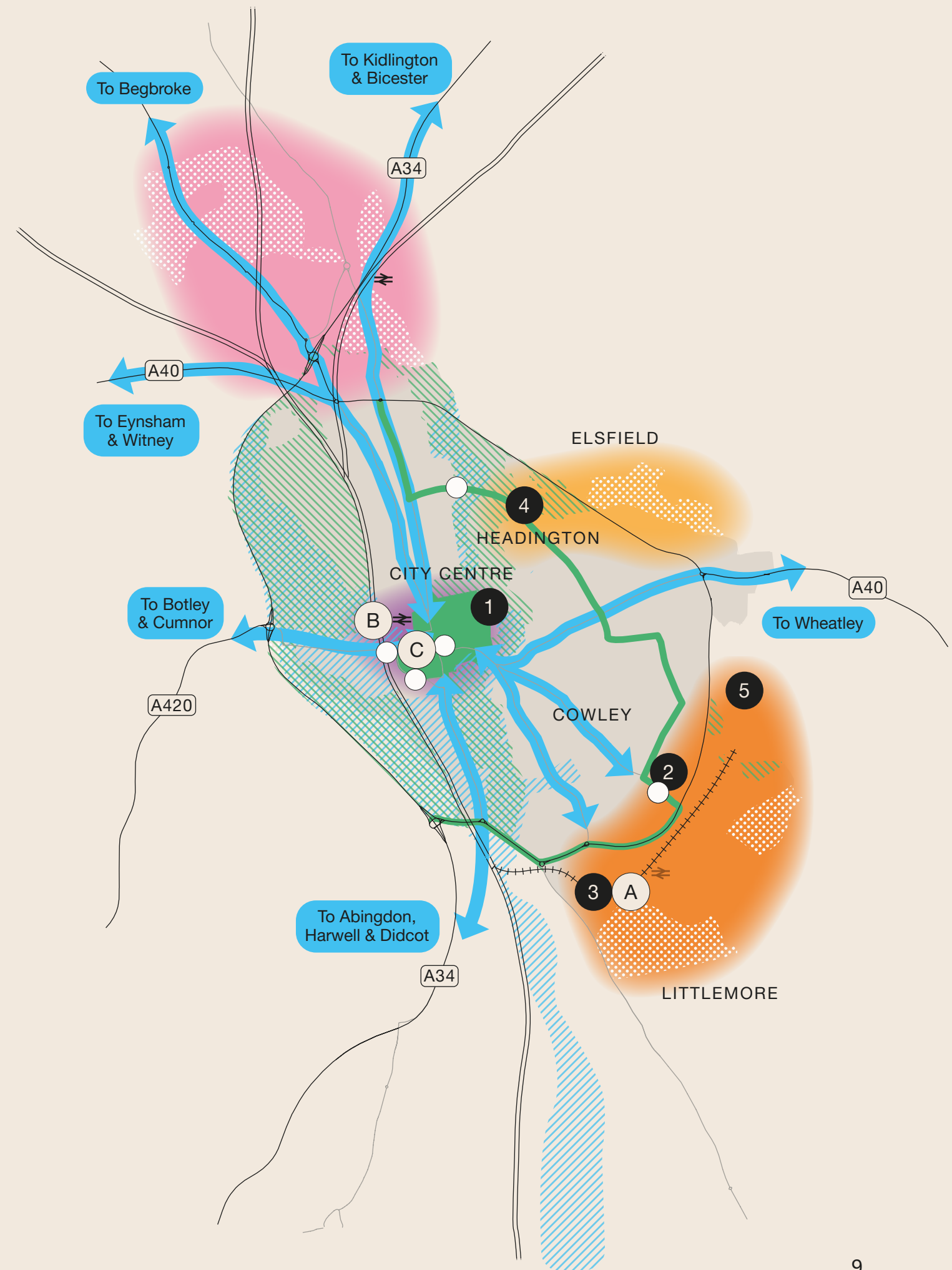
Tactical urban improvements to support enhanced environment and a greater concentration of commercial space centrally

Core Infrastructure Investments

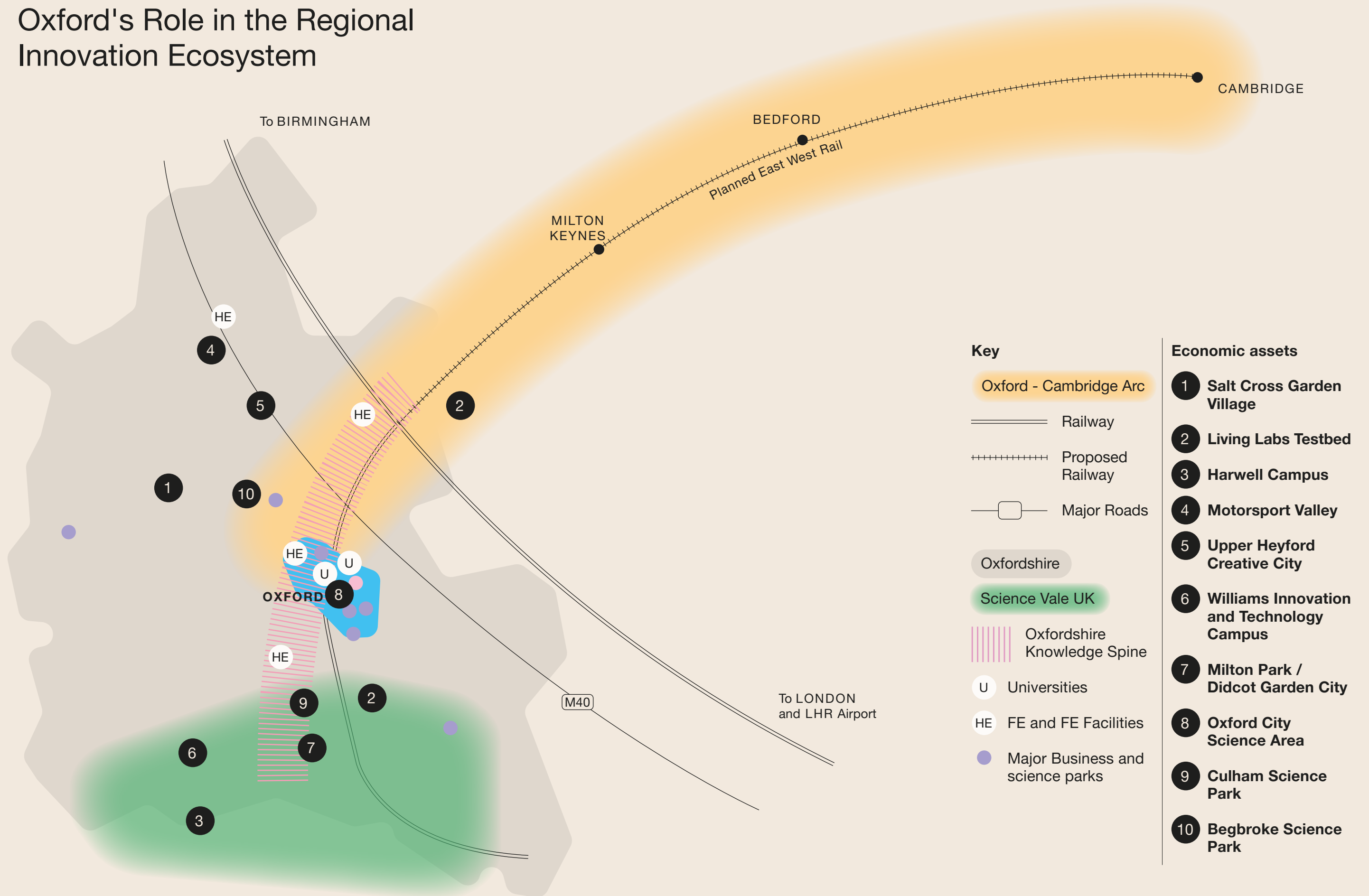
- Indicative Connecting Oxfordshire Traffic Interventions
- Bus and Active Travel Corridor Improvements to reprioritise road space
- Orbital public transport improvements

Development Constraints

- Green Belt within city boundary
- Floodplain within city boundary



Oxford's Role in the Regional Innovation Ecosystem



Enabling a More Inclusive Economy

1

Issue and Opportunity

Whilst Oxford has a strong economy that is growing, the benefits of this are not shared equally. In a city with huge potential, where medical and technology breakthroughs are commonplace, too many residents struggle to make ends meet or participate in their local economy. Addressing this and enabling people to share in future success must be a priority of this strategy.

The scale of the challenge ahead is illustrated by the following:

- Around 10% of residents earn below the national real living wage (£9.50 p/h)
- The average attainment 8 (GCSE equivalent) score per pupil in Oxford is 45.9, below the national and Oxfordshire averages of 46.9 and 47.7 respectively
- Families need £16,000 per annum to avoid food poverty in Oxford. One in ten is not achieving this. 29% of children live in poverty, once housing costs are taken into account
- The difference in male life expectancy is 16 years for the top and bottom performing areas (St Mary's and North respectively)
- The difference in female life expectancy is 10 years for the top and bottom performing areas (Northfield Brook and North respectively)
- The average home costs around 19.05 times more than the average annual salary, the least affordable in the country

- Rental costs in the private rented sector are higher than the national average and most competitor cities

Deprivation is most prevalent in the south and east (incorporating Littlemore, Blackbird Leys, Northfield Brook, Rose Hill and Iffley) where the net annual income is 15% lower than the Oxford average and 57% of neighbourhoods are classified as being in the top 20% most deprived in the country. These areas are also close to our identified areas for growth and development; linking residents to this opportunity is clearly critical.

The pandemic has exacerbated these issues, adding to the case for more fundamental intervention to support those residents who live in or close to poverty. These residents are less likely to have access to savings or the social networks to help them deal with and adapt to the crisis.

How we Define an Inclusive Economy

We define inclusive economy as “Growing prosperity that reduces inequality and is sustainable.” (Plymouth Inclusive Growth Group)

“An Inclusive Economy offers a genuine progressive conceptual frame in which greater consideration is given to social benefits that flow from, and feed into, economic activity. (CLES)

Our Response: Connecting People to Local Opportunities

The Strategy needs to be the foundation for new approaches which address the fundamental challenges that influence the wellbeing of people in the city. Oxford needs a more inclusive economy in which wealth is distributed across our communities and where all citizens can share the benefits of growth. This will require challenging traditional ways of working to guarantee a minimum standard of economic and social prosperity for all of Oxford's residents as well as developing local interventions aimed at giving communities more influence over their economic future.

Fundamental to this are the principles of Community Wealth Building; an approach which gives people more control over their local economy and explicitly takes action to retain wealth within localities.

Our primary response will be to work with partners (including Oxfordshire County Council, OxLEP, the University of Oxford and the Oxford Strategic Partners) to develop an Inclusive Economy Charter through the emerging Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership. This will build on the work that has been undertaken as part of the Inclusive Economy Seminar Series and aligns with the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy aspirations.

This Charter will be a document that sets out commitments and standards that partners will sign up to pursuing as part of their day-to-day operations. It will include ambitions related to minimum standards of economic and social prosperity for residents related to themes like housing, income, employment, participation and democracy. It will set the basis for enhanced participation and a stronger commitment to grassroots economic activity. This builds on and expands the Oxford Living Wage programme.

The City Council's is committed to supporting delivery of affordable homes across the city as well as delivery enabling neighbourhood renewal projects which respond directly to specific local needs. Working with civil society partners, this will include improved participation, bringing people closer to the issues which impact upon their own prosperity and wellbeing.

Guiding Principles for an Inclusive City

A broad range of activities will be undertaken by partners as part of the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership over the next decade. The City Council will drive forward these actions with partners. It is important to

note that an inclusive economy requires better access to decent, affordable homes. This of course is an over-riding priority that aligns with this strategy. Wider areas of focus to create a more inclusive city include:

- 1 Develop an Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Charter and pledge scheme to engage all local business and institutions to play a fuller role in embedding an inclusive economy
- 2 Focus recovery efforts on the needs of the most disadvantaged places, through community wealth building and community economic development
- 3 Further develop and build on the Oxford Living Wage initiative (OLW) to embed the principles of a minimum standard of prosperity
- 4 Support social enterprise, co-operative businesses and civil society sectors, and pursue a more prominent role in the city's future economy
- 5 Support local spending, enhance local business and generate social value through procurement.
- 6 Support local people to better access skills, training and education opportunities to help them prosper and adapt to the expected rapid structural changes to the economy
- 7 Deliver affordable workspace that supports local businesses and organisations providing security to stay in spaces and lower risks to growth
- 8 Explore using the principles of 15-minute neighbourhoods to give residents access to the services, practical and economic assets they need to participate in the economy and society
- 9 Explore options to deliver more affordable travel for local people to travel to employment and education using public transport, cycling and walking
- 10 Pro-actively encourage more mainstream socially and environmentally responsible businesses to locate city-wide

More detail on how Oxford City Council and its partners will take these ambitions forward in the city is provided Delivery Plan.

Enabling People to Stay in the City and Access Opportunities

Crucial to supporting an inclusive economy is enabling a diverse population to live and work in the city and to be able to connect to good employment. This is not just about inclusivity and equality, it will mean that key-workers, graduates and support staff can stay in the city and continue to support our global city ambitions. To do this, we need to deliver thousands of new homes and to ensure that Oxford residents can easily, cheaply and sustainably move to places of work, education and opportunity.

We believe that increasing mobility is fundamental to a successful city economy. Improving connections through public transport and active travel, is a critical part of delivering a more inclusive city and connecting residents to the globally significant opportunities we will support in the city.

We recognise the importance of bus travel for a significant proportion of our population. We also acknowledge that currently active travel is not an option to link enough people to work and education.

It is currently too difficult to travel from some of our communities to areas of employment and education. We know that residents rely on buses, therefore public transport and active travel is a key part of our strategy.

We will work with Oxfordshire County Council to support vital investments such as Connecting Oxford to rapidly increase the accessibility between residential neighbourhoods and key employment areas by bus.

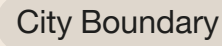

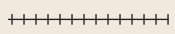


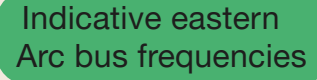


We will also seek to enable all of the economic growth nodes in the city to be linked to more deprived areas of the city by new walking and cycling routes.

Investment in transport and movement is accompanied by a 15 year plan to build 10,000 new homes in the city and 15,500 in our neighbouring growth areas, which will increase supply in the city and increase access to affordable housing for those who need it most.

This is not just about transport. Strong connections will also be enabled through digital accessibility and literacy. We will seek to improve education, access to devices, and technology to address the digital divide and further increase the opportunities for people to thrive in a Global City.

Enabling an Inclusive Economy

Key

-  City Boundary
-  Railway
-  Proposed Cowley Branch Line
-  Major Roads
-  Orbital public transport improvements
-  Indicative eastern Arc bus frequencies
-  Active travel to areas of employment
-  Major Housing Schemes. C10,000 homes within the city

Most deprived UK Neighbourhoods

Bottom 30% Nationally

Local Projects Supporting Affordable Housing, Neighbourhood Inclusion and Education

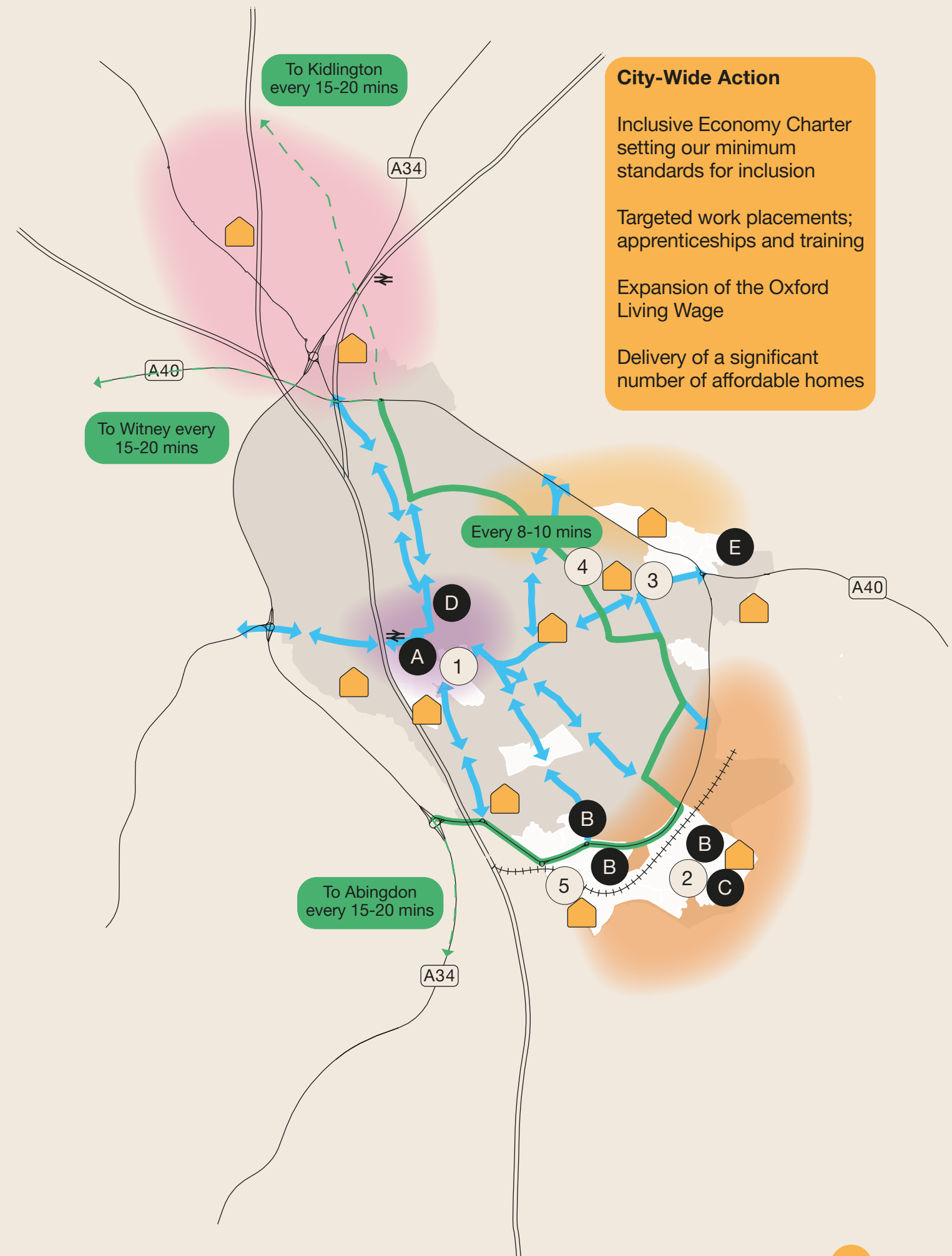
- A West End Developments** provide a significant number of affordable homes
- B New Community Wealth Building Innovation Pilot** in Blackbird Leys, Littlemore and Rose Hill.
- C Blackbird Leys District Centre** 300 homes, community centre and retail/employment
- D Summertown District Centre Scheme** 200 homes
- E Underhill Circus Neighbourhood Centre** Supporting a stronger local community centre alongside new housing

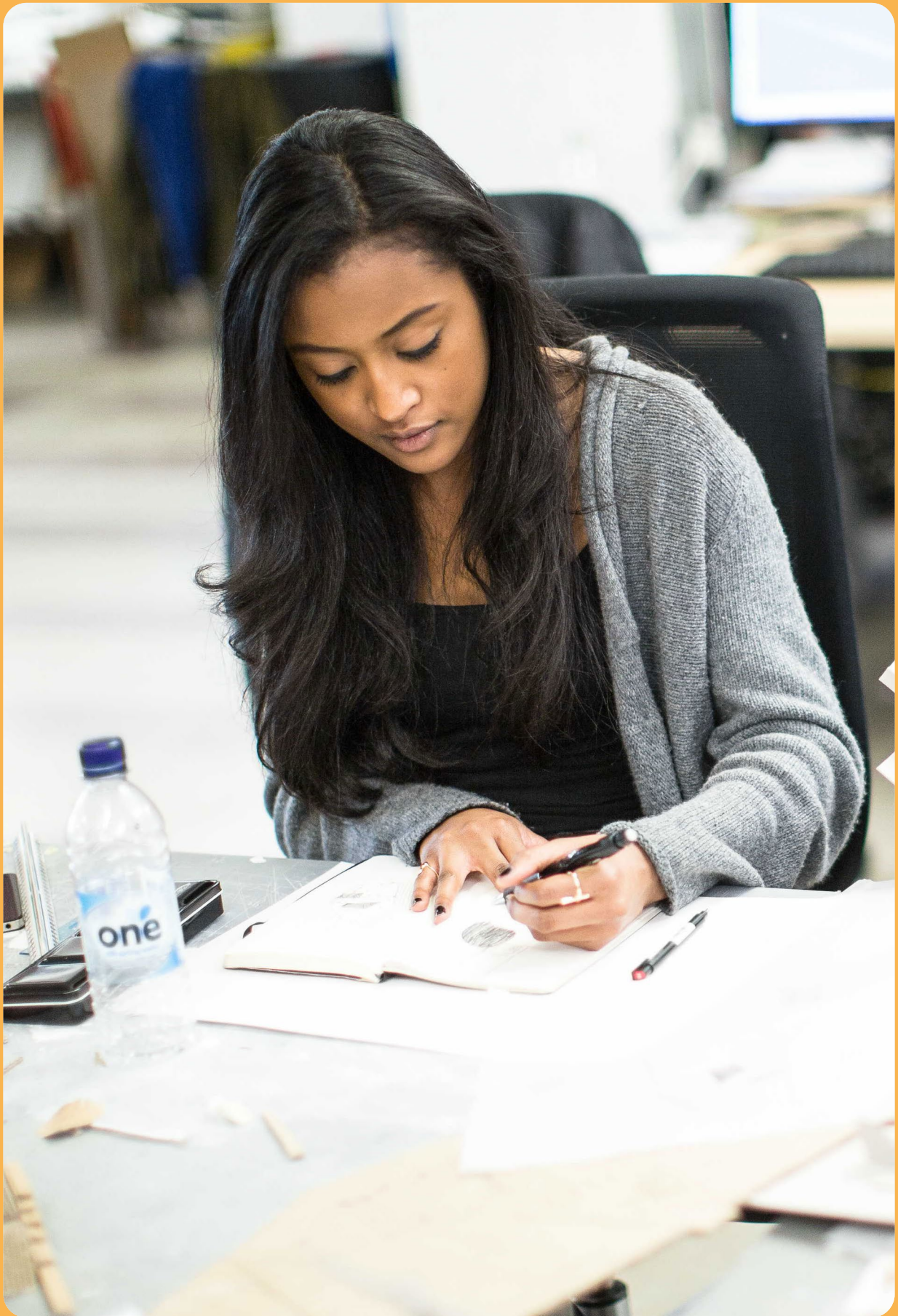
Areas for Growth or Development

- Northern
- West End & City Centre
- Eastern
- Southern

Technical Education

- 1 City of Oxford College
- 2 South Central Institute of Technology (Blackbird Leys)
- 3 Ruskin College
- 4 Oxford Brookes University
- 5 SAE Institute





Becoming a Stronger Global City

2

Issue and Opportunity

Oxford's role in answering the most prominent questions of our time will be key to economic opportunity and societal opportunities globally, as well as employment opportunities locally and regionally.

More than any other city in the world, Oxford has become synonymous with the scientific response to COVID-19. The city will also lead the way in electric and autonomous vehicles, gene therapy, future fuels and the application of quantum technologies, to name a few of our many specialisms. Moreover, **if any area has the ability to demonstrate how it can leverage its economy to address pervasive social and environmental issues, it's Oxford.**

To capitalise upon these opportunities, we believe we need to act more like a global city, becoming more diverse, attracting more talent and enabling innovation. This will be about more than just business and knowledge, it is all encompassing, building upon the global city characteristics we already possess:

Global influence the University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes produce world-leading research, and create new technologies and ideas, which shape global thinking and trends

A talented population around 60% of residents have a degree-level qualification

An open and diverse population around one third of the population was born outside of the UK and we are widely recognised as a tolerant and open place

A distinctive physical environment the city has a rich, varied and unique character than should be protected and enhanced

World class culture Oxford has a rich mix of museums, galleries, universities, theatres, cinemas and other cultural ventures

By becoming an even stronger global city we can make a bigger contribution to the global, national and regional economy. At the same time, this will of course support of greater employment opportunities for local people.

While Oxford may not be as big as London, Paris, Tokyo or New York, the actions set out in this strategy will help it to better harness its real potential, and to be recognised as a successful compact global city with a powerful and influential economy. The city's small size can be an advantage to achieving these ambitions because it:

- Gives stakeholders more influence to curate and shape a dynamic economy
- Allows the public sector to better show leadership on core challenges of inclusion, supply of workspace and connectivity
- Provides a 'living lab' setting which allows partners to experiment and rapidly scale ideas that overcome challenges and realise opportunities across energy, carbon reduction, and mobility
- Means stakeholders are closer to our residents and can have a more direct positive influence on their lives

Our Response: Embracing Global City Characteristics

Being a global city is not about size. It relates to factors like influence, power, accessibility, status and liveability. Using a range of sources² eight core global city characteristics have been identified. These are displayed below

alongside related factors. Focusing upon a 'powerful and influential economy' we will use these as a checklist to help us build the diverse and open economy we want for Oxford.



2. Chicago Council on Global Affairs; AT Kearney's Global City Index; Mori Memorial Foundation Global City Index; the Economist Intelligence Unit's Global City Competitiveness Index

Guiding Principles for a Global City

We want Oxford to become a stronger and more influential global city and, most importantly for this strategy, develop a more powerful and influential economy. This will help Oxford become more productive, competitive and investable.

Areas for action to help Oxford to become a more influential global city economy are:

- 1 Increase the quantum and quality of commercial space on the city's planned and existing sites, with a focus on supporting Life Sciences, Low Carbon, Digital and knowledge driven sectors
- 2 Expedite transport, digital and energy developments that unlock economic opportunities for diversification and innovation in identified growth areas
- 3 Continue to support businesses to adapt to changing economic conditions, embedding principles of good recovery over the medium term
- 4 Help deliver Oxford West End at pace as an internationally significant neighbourhood, attracting talent and investment
- 5 Boost domestic and international inward investment through enhanced promotion nationally and internationally
- 6 Retain a greater proportion of spin out companies that start up in the city and increase the local economic value of knowledge and innovation
- 7 Support the recovery of the visitor economy and seek benefits for visitors and residents
- 8 Mobilise Oxford's population to make the city's workforce a more distinctive factor in its success
- 9 Attract and retain more skilled international workforce, celebrating the cultural diversity this brings

Growing Globally Significant Specialisms

Oxford is already known for globally significant knowledge-based sectors, but more can be done to support higher value sectors to expand and develop. Our science and knowledge economy is unique in its diversity and importance. Life Sciences, Space, Robotics and Materials are all global leaders.

This strategy seeks to provide balance between supporting high value science and more accessible sectors for employment. There are four specific sectors that will be prioritised as part of this strategy. These represent activities with competitive advantages and are areas where Oxford can become or can continue to be a leader on the global stage:

- 1. Health and Life Sciences:** Includes a whole range of life sciences enterprises including drug discovery and development, diagnostics, medical devices, digital health, precision medicine and regenerative medicine
- 2. Technology and Digital:** Includes businesses providing IT, software services and digital applications across a range of sectors
- 3. Creative Production:** Includes a diverse range of activities including publishing, marketing and branding, architecture, crafts, design, fashion, film, theatre, radio, arts and museums
- 4. Green and Low Carbon:** An array of businesses spanning environmental activities, renewable energy, energy storage and low carbon activities in sectors including automotive and transport.

This focus aligns with the Oxfordshire LIS and Oxfordshire Science and Innovation Audit, which include ambitions to support the region to become a global leader in the development of transformative technologies that will underpin the future economy and provide a lasting global competitive advantage.

Priority technologies identified, which cut across the sectors set out above, include **digital health, autonomous vehicles, quantum computing, fusion technology, cryogenics and space.**

Pursuing these sectors will enable Oxford to develop a more influential, innovative and productive economy. They are also high growth industries nationally, so will help create new employment opportunities for Oxford's residents.

The table below provides a brief overview of the drivers, existing assets and future opportunities for these sectors in relation to Oxford. Here, we also recognise the importance of the **visitor economy** in helping us welcome the world to Oxford and further enhance our reputation for history and culture.

Our rapidly growing cohort of socially responsible businesses will drive solutions to the pervasive social and environmental challenges we face. We want to embrace and support creative solutions.

Oxford is already the first B Corp, "B Local" and Social Enterprise County in the UK, in recognition of our leading involvement in these important business models. We will seek to build on this huge potential making this a hallmark of the new economy in Oxford.

Priority Sectors

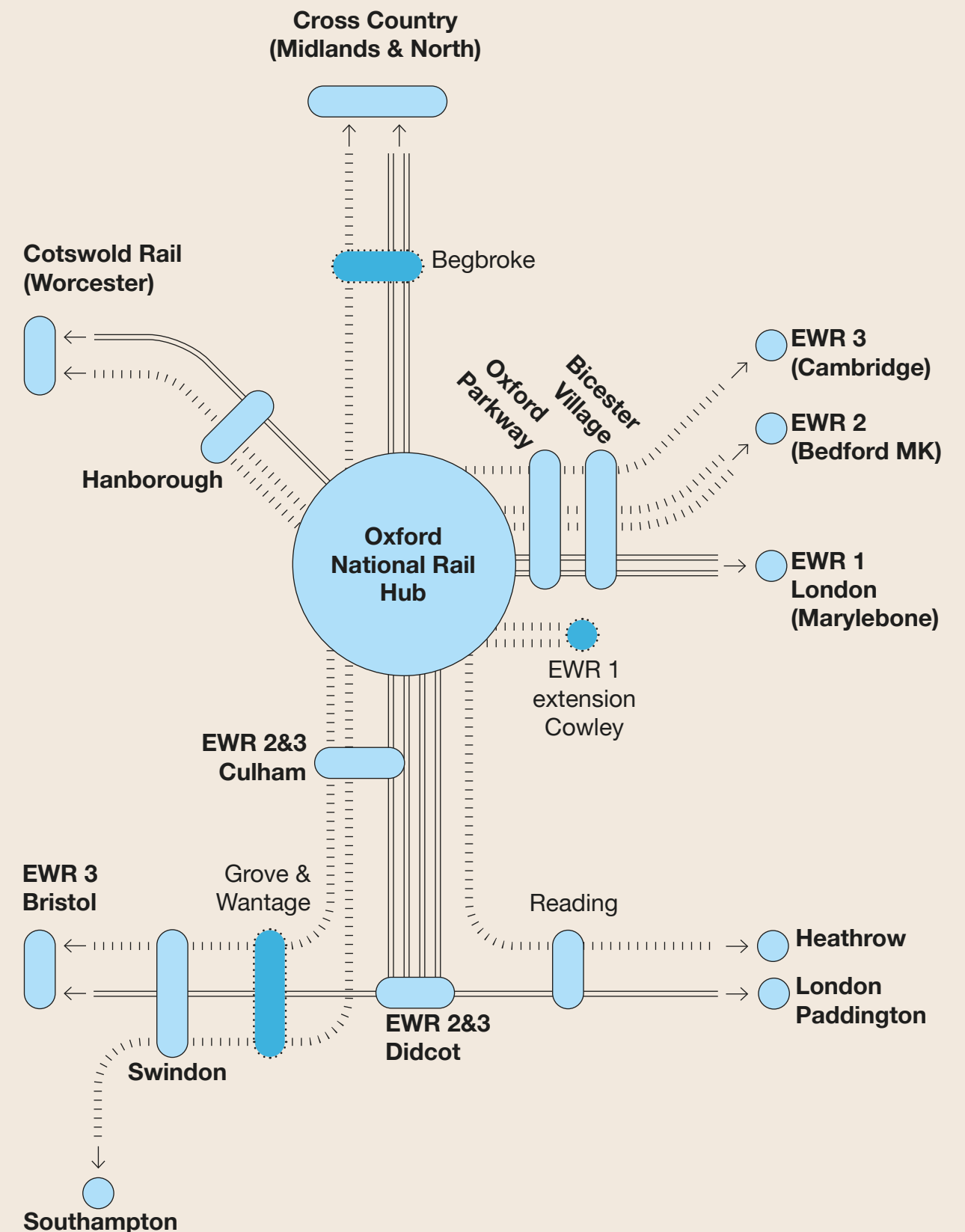
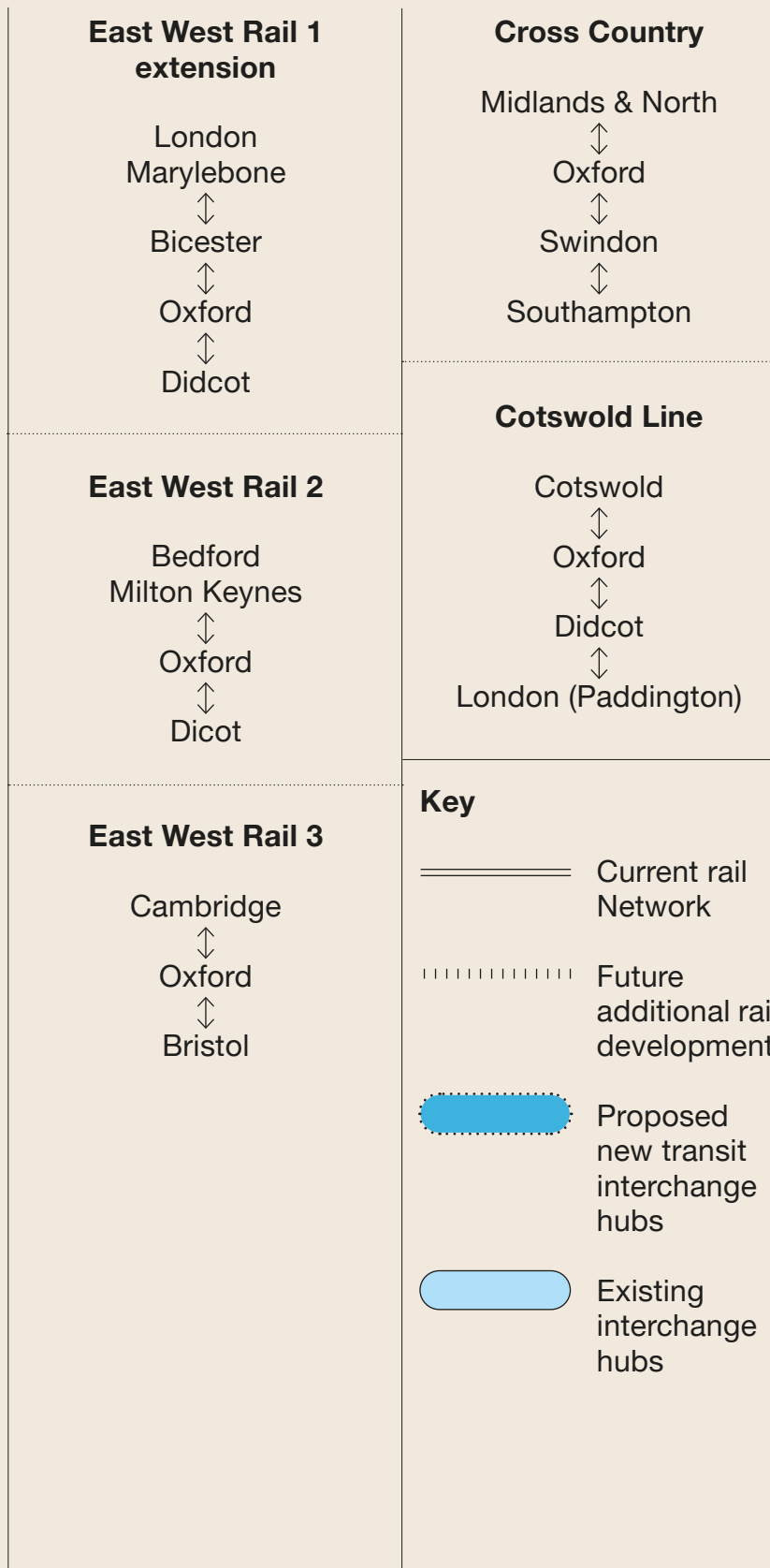
| Sector | Drivers and Trends | Example existing assets | Future opportunities in and around Oxford |
|---------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Health and Life Sciences | Increasing public health expenditure; ageing population; COVID-19; breakthrough technologies in drug discovery, diagnostics, medical devices, digital health, precision and regenerative medicine. | Oxford Science Park John Radcliffe Hospital Oxford University Science Quarter Churchill Hospital | West End Innovation District Warneford Hospital Headington Global Health and Life Sciences Quarter South Oxford Science Village Oxford Business park expansion |
| Technology and Digital | 5G technology; increasing demand for e-commerce; artificial Intelligence; big data, quantum computing development, automation | Oxford Business Park Oxford Science Park Oxford Centre for Innovation Oxford City Centre | West End Innovation District Oxford Business Park expansion Oxford North development Oxford Science Park |
| Creative Production | Rise in e-commerce providing new opportunities; technological innovation increasing productivity and possibilities (e.g. 3D printing); growth in creative and cultural consumption | Oxford City Centre Osney Mead East Oxford Makespace Oxford | Creative and digital industries hub Red Hall at Oxford North Covered Market redevelopment West End Innovation District |

| Sector | Drivers and Trends | Example existing assets | Future opportunities in and around Oxford |
|--|--|---|---|
| Green and Low Carbon | Climate emergency; energy security ; shift in consumer sentiment; Government Policy; University research technology and innovations in renewables, grid technology and battery storage | Oxford Science Park Oxford Centre for Innovation Osney Mead Industrial Estate | Oxford North development West End Innovation District Oxford Science Park expansion Begbroke Science Park expansion |
| Visitor Economy | Already a successful and attractive destination with strong resilience. Ongoing strength of UK as an international tourism location post pandemic. Potential opportunity limited by the size and capacity of the city. | Heritage offer Cultural resonance and strong local offer (film, TV, literature, music and theatre). Access to waterways and green space city-wide and nearby Cotswolds | Support more systematic entry level jobs and career progression in the sector Create more hotel capacity for higher value overnight stays Drive innovation in sustainable tourism and support new attractions in-line with Local Plan |
| Social enterprise and co-operative businesses | Rapid growth in social enterprise, entrepreneurship and purposeful business in response to societal challenges and inequalities. Oxfordshire is the UK's first Social Enterprise Place (Social Enterprise UK). | Neighbourhood Centres Oxfordshire Social Enterprise Partnership (OSEP), OSEP Hubs, Makespace at Aristotle House, Community Centres, Common Ground Cafe. Oxford Hub High volunteering Philanthropy | Use of publicly owned spaces; Meanwhile space, Participatory activities linked to new developments; Enhanced ESG commitments; 'New Workspaces' in city centre and neighbourhood centres |

Oxford: An Emerging National Rail Hub

Successful global cities are well connected, not only internationally, but also locally. Reliable and comprehensive public transport should be seen as much as part of the economic strategy as they are to transport policy. Big investments in growth areas such as the West End, Oxford North, Oxford Science Park and Oxford Business Park require better, more sustainable connectivity. The city itself cannot achieve the benefits of agglomeration and exchange of ideas if people cannot physically connect.

Connecting Oxford via bus and regional and national rail connections will be critical for the city to maximise its contribution to the UK's economic recovery and diversification. Investments in the Cowley Branch Line and proposed east-west rail routes become fundamental for Oxford as a global city, placing us at the centre of a network of transport which extends regionally and nationally. Regionally, Oxfordshire Connect Rail Programme will support connections to the city which create a more efficient and accessible sphere of influence.





Moving Towards a Zero Carbon Economy

3

Issue and Opportunity

Oxford's economy, population and physical footprint have grown significantly over the last few decades. The city is more productive, busy and developed than ever before. This has however, placed pressure on the environment and in Summer 2019 Oxford City Council declared a climate emergency agreeing to try and meet net zero sooner than 2050 through a Citizens Assembly.

This fundamentally changes the way the Council needs to act and the decisions it will make. Net zero will be law by 2050, so the City Council needs to act now to not only achieve this in Oxford, but also to ensure that the knowledge and expertise created in the city helps others to do the same.

Zero Carbon Economy: Responding to Challenge and Delivering Opportunity

If the phase-out of carbon emissions is managed effectively, a variety of economic, social and environmental benefits can be achieved. These include the creation of high skilled, well paid jobs in the zero carbon sector; creating cohesive and desirable places to live by empowering local communities and diverse individuals to drive action; and cutting air pollution.

Restoring habitats, providing urban green infrastructure and shifting to regenerative agriculture can support wildlife while delivering ecosystem services such as natural flood management and urban cooling, and providing health and wellbeing benefits for local people.

Pathways to Zero Carbon Oxfordshire (2021)

One of Oxford's most pressing issues is air pollution, which is relatively high and has increased in recent years³. There are several locations across the city where the national and European legal limit for nitrogen dioxide and other greenhouse gases is exceeded.

Pollution brings a range of economic costs for Oxford and is bad for business. Evidence from the OECD⁴ shows that

high levels of air pollution cause health issues which, in turn, place a financial burden on health services and reduce business productivity through increased employee sickness and reduced cognitive performance. Many cities with high levels of air pollution have also suffered from brain drain of talented people looking for a better quality of life and reduced international tourism where it has impacted the visitor experience.

3. Nitrogen dioxide levels rose by 7.9% between 2018 and 2019

4. Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development

Our Response: Addressing Crisis and Enabling Opportunity

Whilst the challenge of climate crisis is critical to our future, Oxford is uniquely placed to play a prominent role in the national and global response.

The Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership is bringing businesses and institutions together locally, and we are planning for this to evolve quickly, as it must. Oxford will become an exemplar in developing partnership driven solutions to the climate crisis.

Our low-carbon sector is already thriving. The University of Oxford has successfully generated 30 new cleantech spinout companies and two of four national energy systems demonstrator projects are based in Oxfordshire. Our automotive sector continues to lead the way on innovation for autonomous and electric vehicles, with companies including Waymo, Oxbotica, StreetDrone, Arrival, alongside the nearby RACE, Culham, a leading connected autonomous vehicle (CAV) testbed.

Our strategy recognises that the knowledge and innovation realised within the city can, be capitalised elsewhere in the city or in Oxfordshire more generally. We therefore, want to support tangible links to locations like Harwell Campus and Begbroke and ensure that knowledge exchange with companies like BMW, Williams, Mercedes and Siemens can be strengthened.

Alongside this, community groups and SMEs continue to develop solutions to reduce carbon emissions through alternative business models and the sharing economy. We will work to support this activity through our commitment to strengthening civil society and socially orientated business in the city.

We will continue to inform residents and business of the economic benefits of adapting to climate crisis. We will better demonstrate how addressing climate change will save money, tackle inequality and create jobs. Lower household bills, better health from active travel and more affordable transport within the city will all contribute to addressing inequality and improving wellbeing.

There is a clear economic rationale to reduce the negative environmental impacts of Oxford's economic activity, this is coupled with an opportunity to curate an economy that actively contributes to tackling environmental issues. Our approach to a greener economy will blend global solutions with grassroots action, testing new approaches, scaling activity and driving investment as a result.

Guiding Principles to Move Towards a Zero Carbon City

We are committed to putting environmental concerns at the forefront of our approach to economic development and will achieve this by building a more environmentally responsible economy. This economy will be powered by renewables, new energy storage and grid solutions, low carbon transport, digital infrastructure, sustainable construction methods and ethical consumption.

We recognise that any decision we make now will have ramifications on the ability of the council to achieve its carbon reduction targets. The local economy must move rapidly towards net zero or we will incur costs in the future to rectify this. It is therefore important that we act now to ensure that we are able deliver economic growth and development that does not compromise the environmental future of the city.

To achieve this, we will focus on the following ambitions over the next ten years:

- 1 Take proactive steps to measure and reduce the environmental impacts of existing economic activity
- 2 Mitigate the environmental impacts of new development and housing growth, seeking new commitment and innovation from developers and investors
- 3 Support the growth of the green and low carbon technology sectors through innovative partnerships and targeted business support
- 4 Facilitate flows of knowledge both locally and regionally, positioning the city as a leader in the response to climate emergency
- 5 Empower Oxford's business community to decarbonise their operations and those of their supply chains, celebrating successes and good practice
- 6 Amplify neighbourhood projects which support local economic approaches to climate emergency
- 7 Develop budgeting processes which support investment in zero carbon development
- 8 Support and partner businesses and institutions to be more environmentally responsible and address city-wide zero carbon targets
- 9 Deliver the Oxford Zero Emission Zone and develop the next stage of a strategy to reduce emissions in the city

A detailed action plan against these ambitions is set out in the accompanying delivery plan.

Supporting Low Carbon Movement and Growth

We believe that investment in knowledge, growth and diversification of green activity in the city will support the evolution of these sectors in the county as a whole.

As we have previously seen with life sciences, we can create a network of different specialised clusters across the county which are international significance and national importance. The challenge for the city council and its partners is to support the physical and psychological networks and exchange will allow this to happen.

Responsible movement of people and goods is a critical element of our economic strategy, it supports our global city ambitions, and it enables a more inclusive economy by connecting residents to opportunity. It is however, in lowering emissions that we will be best placed to enable a step change in the city's environmental performance.

The Zero Emission Zone and Connecting Oxford will be at the heart of our plans to reduce congestion within the city and ensure that as the economy grows (and parts of the city become busier), there will be dramatically reduced environmental impact from this activity.

We want to innovate in the way we deliver our contribution to this and therefore have identified a range of interventions which will place Oxford at the forefront of innovation in green urban practices in the UK. these include:

- Implementation of Citizen Assembly recommendations
- Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership
- Roll out of low traffic neighbourhoods
- Low Energy Oxford (LEO) City Wide EV charging roll out
- City Wide Housing Retrofit
- Zero Emission Bus Roll-out
- City wide active travel supporting walking and cycling
- Develop local skills to deliver housing retrofit
- City council asset decarbonisation
- Reallocation of road space towards civic spaces, public realm, pedestrianisation.

Enabling Transition to a Zero Carbon Economy

Key


- City Boundary
- Zero Emission Zone
- Major Roads
- Areas for Growth or Development
 - Northern
 - West End & City Centre
 - Eastern
 - Southern

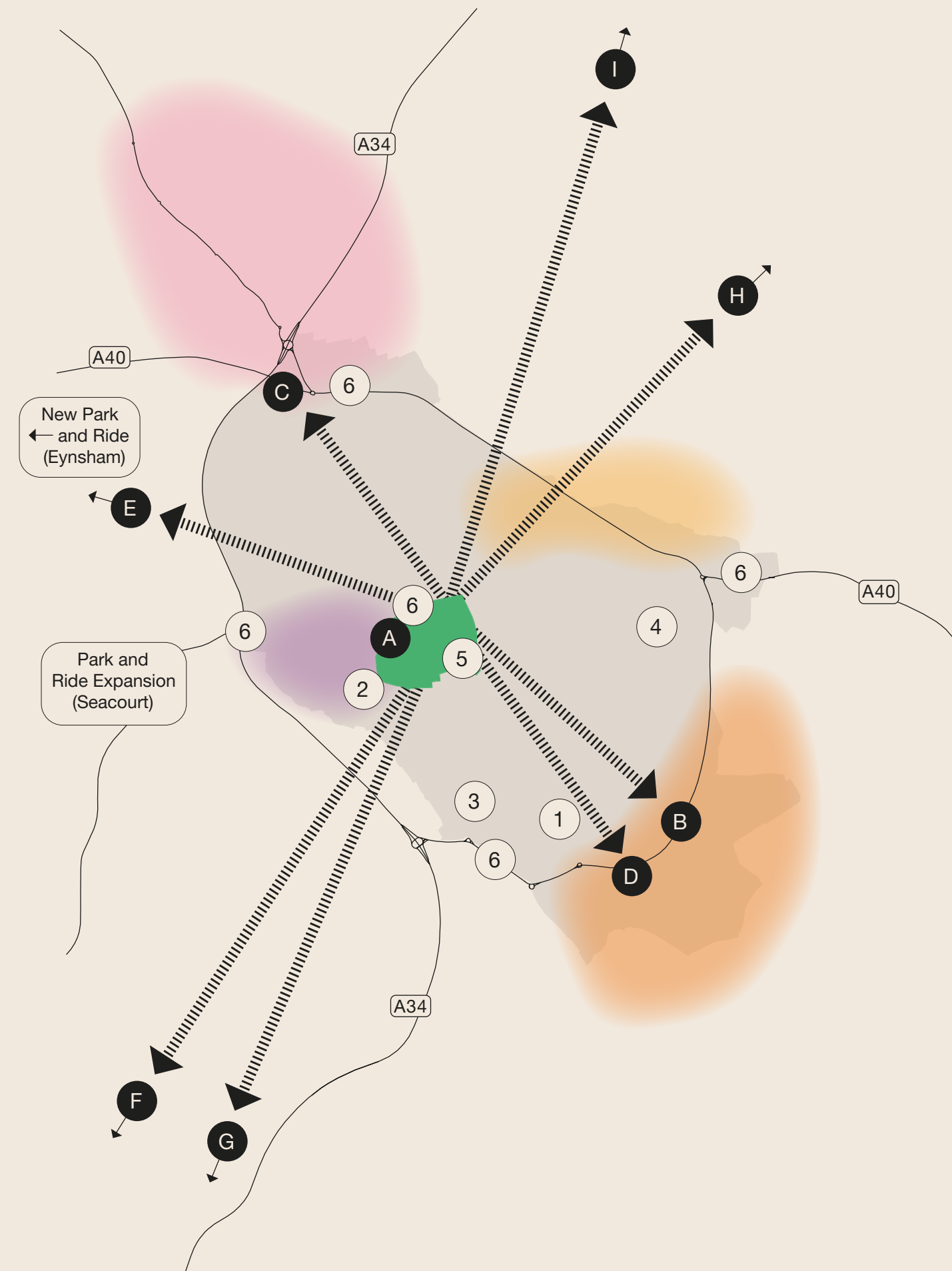
Building a Globally Significant Low Carbon Economy

- A** Energy Systems Accelerator
- B** Automotive Innovation and EV
- C** Oxford North: Capacity for low Carbon Business
- D** Oxford Science Park: Discovery and Scaling
- E** Siemens
- F** Williams Technology & Innovation Centre
- G** Harwell Campus
- H** Living Lab Test Bed

Locally-led Innovation to Enable Low Carbon Economy

- 1 Rose Hill Low Energy Oxford Hub LEO
- 2 Osney Island LEO
- 3 Energy Superhub
- 4 Connected Autonomous Vehicle Trials
- 5 E-Cargo Bike Roll-out
- 6 Potential Delivery Consolidation Centre/s

 Achieving Regional Agglomeration Through Knowledge, Investment and Scaling





The Delivery Plan

Vitality, this strategy is accompanied by a Delivery Plan, to guide action on priority projects, and exploration of new ideas. Alongside the evidence base, this provides a more detailed practical approach to support the delivery of this strategy. It includes:

- Focussed plans for employment and commercial space, the City Centre and the Visitor Economy
- Delivery principles
- A detailed action plan for the next five years of delivery
- Roles and responsibility for delivery
- Approaches to measurement and the triple bottom line
- To support initial delivery in three important areas, three focus areas have been identified to support initial activity. These are creation of more of the right commercial spaces; development of focused plans for the city centre; and positive evolution of the the visitor economy.

This strategy does not exist in isolation. Its influence is wide and as such, needs to be considered in conjunction with other strategies:

- National Industrial Strategy
- National Industrial Decarbonisation Strategy
- OcCam Spatial Framework and Economic Prospectus
- OxLEP Local Industrial Strategy
- Emerging Oxfordshire 2050 Plan
- Oxford Transport Plan
- Oxford Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan
- Net Zero Oxford Action Plan
- Oxfordshire Connect
- Oxfordshire Local Recovery Plan
- Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy
- Oxford Local Plan 2036
- Oxford 2050 Vision
- Oxford City Centre Action Plan
- Emerging Thriving Communities Strategy

Focus on: Space for Growth and New Ideas

Making Oxford a more influential global city and ultimately, the UK a more successful and influential economy, is dependent upon the delivery of more commercial space in the city. We must do this in a way which does not compromise our wider placemaking, zero carbon and sustainability and green and sustainability objectives, but at pace in that will meet business needs. Space in the city is constrained so we need to plan pro-actively to intensify and make more efficient use of employment sites allocated within our Local Plan.

Whilst other cities have seen demand for commercial space reduce, the Oxford market has proved resilient to the impacts of the pandemic and Brexit. According to VSL (2021), lettings have remained consistent whilst rents have increased by as much as 46%. Bidwells estimate c.75% of all lease activity is from knowledge sectors, with demand for science and technology space remaining unfulfilled, suggesting that a lack of suitable space remains the one of the biggest barriers to growth within Oxford.

Our ambition is to provide a rapid and significant uplift in good quality space through planned sites and redevelopment of existing sites, to enable higher value sectors (see page 22/23) to grow and

expand, while also providing more affordable space for small businesses in target sectors, as well as important civil society activity and social or co-operative businesses.

Three strategic principles are accompanied by a series of concrete actions that the City Council will deliver (as landowner, planning authority and enabler), alongside wider landowner, development and economic partners, will deliver. These are set out in detail in the Delivery Plan document.

Significantly increase the quantity of commercial space around the city

- Continue to support the evolution of employment sites such as Oxford Business Park and Oxford Science Park to best meet the needs of an evolving market
- Bring forward the West End Innovation District at pace, as a major business district for the city and the UK
- Support good quality workspace across the city for small businesses, start-ups and innovative businesses (including university spin outs)

- Focus on meeting the requirements of the Health & Life Sciences sector (e.g. Lab, R&D and office space) in Headington, the Northern Gateway and West End
- Focus on meeting the requirements of Green and Low Carbon Sectors (e.g. Lab, R&D and office space) in the West End and Northern Gateway
- Recognising the role that new spaces can play in supporting the evolution of local neighbourhoods and district centres. (e.g. office and co-working space) across the city

Rapidly enable space for businesses to experiment and test ideas

- Explore opportunities with land-owners for affordable meanwhile space within the city centre
- Encourage testing of new ideas by creating more affordable space in neighbourhoods, using public sector assets and more flexible leasing to support new entrepreneurs
- Identify the potential for conversion of existing buildings and spaces to address the shortfall in science, technology and lab space in the short to medium term
- Support the delivery of new meanwhile workspace in the

West End as a precursor for the Innovation District

Prioritise city centre workspace for small and creative businesses

- Focus on understanding and meeting the evolving requirements of Creative Production and Low Carbon (e.g. studio and makerspace) and Technology & Digital sectors in the city centre (e.g. co-working and office space)
- Ensure sufficient quantum of affordable space is available to meet the needs of businesses in these sectors and others that will help diversify the local economy
- Innovate with publicly owned city centre assets to provide more flexible and progressive leases to support inclusive economy ambitions
- Explore the potential of affordable workspace policy in planning to support creative activity, social enterprise and co-operative businesses

Create flexible policies that support new models of workspace

- Test new planning policies related to retail units and business rates to support small businesses use underutilised spaces if and when these become available

Focus on: Oxford City Centre

A strong city centre is fundamental to the successful evolution of Oxford and its surrounding area. We want the centre to evolve and adapt to emerging trends, to enhance and extend its global reach and reputation, becoming more relevant and accessible to the broader range of our local communities.

Our City Centre is one of the most important in the world. History, culture, architecture, commerce and innovation combine in a unique way which is central to the city's success. The evolution of the West End, the opportunity transition to zero carbon post Covid 19 and the resilience of Oxford's property market all provide reasons for optimism. The Oxford Local Plan 2036 includes a policy for the West End and Osney Mead, which promotes regeneration of the area for, high-density urban living together with a mix of uses. The City Council is working with master-planning consultants to develop the West End Spatial Framework to provide detailed advice and guidance on principles for its development. It will provide a strategic framework, which will help to co-ordinate infrastructure, connectivity and transport together with public realm provision, design and a balanced mix of uses.

There is a need to address challenges of congestion, affordability and lack of green space to ensure the city achieves

its potential. An accompanying City Centre Vision and Action Plan has been created to enable this to happen. This has the following objectives:

- Diversify uses in the heart of city by building and repurposing to achieve a critical mass of new places to live and to work, and in doing so, increasing the numbers of people regularly using our amenities subject to demand
- Support the best of our retail, hospitality, leisure and services offer, helping our shops, pubs, bars, restaurants, and services and leisure sector businesses and organisations, to recover and evolve, while ensuring vacant space supports a new wave of business growth and jobs
- Encourage the growth of more economic sectors, including science, tech and creative, helping to attract and retain more talent to work in the city centre because of its amenities, alongside its educational, historic and cultural connections
- Celebrate our outstanding heritage assets, through improved access, sensitive adaptation and retrofit, as well as better public realm, creative lighting and interesting new uses and activity
- Reduce traffic congestion by limiting those driving through,

rather than to, the city's residential areas, destinations, institutions and businesses to create a better city centre environment

- Facilitate investment in a world class public transport network, working with the bus and rail industries to support improved gateways, interchanges and connections, plus faster, more reliable journeys into and through the city centre
- Prioritise investment in and development of a range of new delivery and collection options including electric, pedal-power and more
- Deliver better walking and cycling infrastructure, capitalising on the city and city centre's human scale and accessibility, and responding to the existential threat of the climate emergency
- Create new civic spaces, so people can meet, dwell, relax and celebrate together, while reimagining our streets as safe social spaces, through both commercial and performance activity
- Promote and facilitate more overnight visitor stays, increasing their enjoyment of our city, while maximising the contribution to the local economy
- Strike a balance so that we manage tourist visits more effectively, ensuring greater levels of visitor satisfaction and

increasing return trips, while making the city function better for residents, students and the city's workforce going about their day to day lives

- Improve air quality, create more green space, and improve access to our waterways to support physical and mental health and Oxford's city centre as an even more attractive destination
- Strengthen the feeling of safety in the city centre through the work of the Council's Safer Oxford team, Thames Valley Police, Oxford Community Safety and City Centre Crime Partnerships

In the short term, we have created a set of actions to address immediate challenges, animate and change perceptions of Oxford City Centre. These are:

1. Connectivity and Access

- Deliver Connecting Oxford
- Zero Emission Zone
- Oxford Station Masterplan
- Improve Oxpens and Osney Mead Connectivity
- Last mile logistics
- Visitor coach strategy
- Park and ride improvements

2. Public Realm and Animation

- Public realm improvements
- Shopfront design improvements
- Outdoor seating initiative
- Public realm and movement framework

3. Getting the mix right

- West End Innovation District
- Target and reduce vacant units
- Evolve the covered market
- Change of use application strategy
- Increase and diversify workspace
- Stimulate night time economy
- Brand and promotion

4. Getting the Basics Right

- Homelessness and Rough Sleeping
- Street scene management
- Tourism management
- Reducing crime and antisocial behaviour

Focus on: Evolving Oxford's Visitor Economy

Oxford's visitor economy is already internationally significant, contributing around £988m to the economy every year. Welcoming visitors from around the world is a priority in enhancing the city's global reputation. The ambition is to improve the experience and to maximise the positive economic impact of tourism by encouraging longer stays. Six strategic principles to guide delivery are set out below, with more detail set out within the Delivery Plan document.

Increase overnight stays from international and domestic visitors

Experience Oxfordshire has shown that 85% of the 8 million annual visits are day trips with just 15% being overnight stays. These overnight visits, however, generate 60% of visitor spend so there is an economic imperative to increase the duration of visits.

It is therefore, important that we provide more accommodation and a night time offer which encourages people to stay in Oxford for longer. This links to our City Centre Vision and Action Plan . Practically, the roll out of the Oxford Pass, will help link key elements of our offer and support longer stays

Enhance the tourism offer to encourage and enable exploration

Oxford has a strong base of tourist-attractions centered around the university, colleges, cultural institutions and other heritage assets. To remain competitive, the city will need to assess, diversify and improve the offer in terms of modern amenities, innovative art, music events, work-related conferences, restaurants, hotels and transport options.

Again linking to the City Centre Vision and Action Plan, we will improve movement around the city, but also develop a network of visitor nodes, whether these are for tourists, business visitors or local cultural consumers.

Spread the tourist season throughout the year to decrease the impact of seasonality

Like most cities, Oxford's visitor economy experiences significant fluctuations in tourist numbers throughout the year. More can be done to decrease the impact of this on the sector, such as hosting more events, attracting different types of visitors and diversifying the offer.

More diverse programming, reflecting cultural diversity and a broader range of activities through festival, events and fringe activities will help to amplify existing activity and generate new content.

Enhance tourism management to ensure visits achieve a balance between impact and economic contribution

Oxford has long-been a popular destination for tourists, but over time the number of visitors, especially short-stay day trips via coaches, has created congestion and challenges for the city. There is therefore a need to improve the management of tourist visits in a number of ways including in relation to visitor coaches, digital apps, tourist information, wayfinding and spreading visitor tour groups.

In the short term the City Council, Ox-LEP and Experience Oxfordshire will need to respond effectively to ensure both the city and the county benefits from the government's Destination Management Organisation Review.

Support the tourism sector to recover from the impacts of COVID-19 and the recession

COVID-19 has resulted in an unprecedented health and economic challenge across the world with particularly acute impacts on tourism and visitor travel. The impacts to the visitor economy have been deep and these impacts are likely to continue in the short-to-medium term as governments try to limit the spread of the virus, loosen restrictions and maintain social distancing. Given the importance of the sector to Oxford's economy, it will be important to support the sector to safely re-open, restart and diversify.

The Oxfordshire Economic Recovery Plan sets out a programme of support for visitor economy businesses. This includes new promotion, digital support help to manage visitors and guests in the context of social distancing.

Develop employment and skills pathways to support local careers

Develop appropriate education provision and partnership structures which help support local residents to progress into potentially lucrative careers in hospitality and tourism. This includes recognising and celebrating the diversity of employment within the sector and connecting to the Oxford's growing technical education offer, to support lifelong career development.

