

Today's exhibition provides detailed information about the progress of the Oxford West End Renaissance, outlining the key developments and strategy projects that will be taking place within the local area over the next few years.

Welcome...



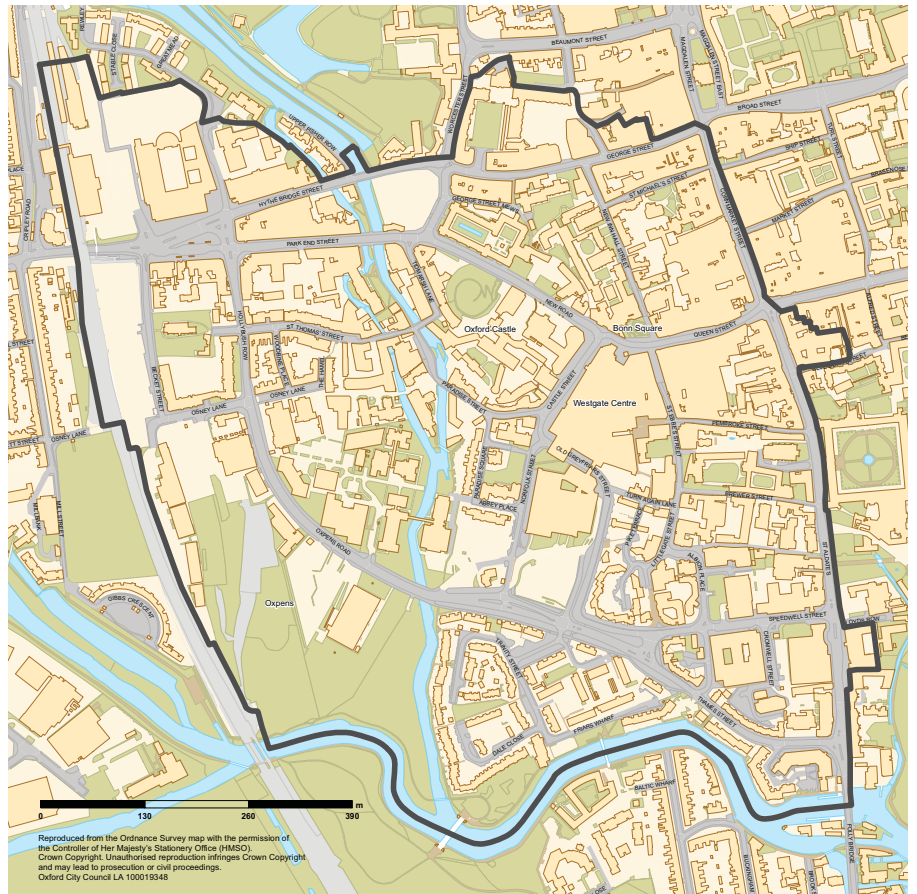
Members of the West End Partnership are on hand to answer any questions, and are more than happy to chat through any concerns or suggestions that you may have.

The Vision

Oxford's West End Renaissance is an exciting long-term regeneration programme that is set to create a vibrant, modern and stylish city quarter with a distinctive sense of place. Shops, restaurants and offices will be located alongside new homes and educational and leisure facilities; all connected by beautiful streets and public squares. Improving the West End for the existing community is a key aspiration for the West End Renaissance.

Where is the West End?

The West End boundary stretches from the railway station at its north-west corner to Folly Bridge in the south-east, dominating a large area within Oxford city centre.



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The West End Partnership is the collaborative team responsible for over-seeing the regeneration programme, consisting of Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council and the South East England Development Agency.

West End Partnership



Strategies

The Partnership is developing a range of strategies to inform and guide the West End Renaissance, to ensure that:

- **Development sites** work well together as a whole (West End Area Action Plan)
- **Transport** implications can be well managed and improved
- The **quality of the materials**, signage and furniture in the street is high and well-maintained
- New buildings are built with **high 'green' credentials**
- Existing and future residents and workers combine successfully to form a **strong and balanced community**
- A network of **open and green spaces** is provided for the benefit of all
- **Culture** forms an important part of plans for the future
- Opportunities are made available for the **provision of learning and skills**
- The required **support** is provided for **businesses** in the area
- **Tourism** is sensitively handled and accommodated
- All potential sources of **funding** are explored and exploited
- A clear line of **communication** is maintained between the local community and the Partnership

As each strategy is signed-off by the West End Executive Committee, it will be uploaded to the Oxford West End website for public view.

Development sites

To learn more about the specific development sites that these strategies aim to guide, why not watch the presentation and take a look at the development sites map and programme plan, which outlines the projected construction timeframe.



In order to guide future development and changes in the area, Oxford City Council prepared an Area Action Plan (AAP) for the West End.

West End Area Action Plan



This important policy document will ensure that all development within the West End includes an appropriate mix of uses, is of a suitable scale and is designed and built to the highest quality whilst adhering to all environmental standards.

The AAP was adopted as City Council policy in June 2008 after three years of production, which included community involvement and examination by an independent planning inspector.



The Area Action Plan is structured around the four aims of the West End Renaissance, namely to create:

An attractive network of streets and spaces



A high quality built environment



A strong and balanced community



A vibrant and successful West End



The AAP also addresses the delivery and implementation of the regeneration programme, including new infrastructure and funding.

These aims, and ways to achieve them, will be outlined in further detail in relation to each strategy. If you would like to read the policy document and its appendices in more depth, copies of the AAP can be found on the tables.

The Transport Strategy plays a vital role in the Renaissance, ensuring that the West End can operate successfully without causing detrimental harm to the quality of the local environment and the people who currently live there.

Transport



As elsewhere in Oxford the emphasis will be on encouraging sustainable modes of travel (walking, cycling and public transport).



The West End will be well served by bus, rail and also walking and cycling links, so people

travelling to and within the West End can do so easily without needing to use a car.

The following actions will be taken:

- All major public transport interchanges in Oxford city centre will be improved
- Traffic routing and control changes will be used to reduce delays to buses
- An efficient bus network that serves new and existing destinations will be established

- Existing pedestrian and cycle links will be enhanced, and new ones created
- Streets and spaces will be designed to give priority to pedestrians and cyclists
- The Park & Ride will be expanded
- The supply of both public and private car parking will be limited, (although the current level of public parking provision will be maintained)
- Abundant cycle parking will be provided
- Marketing and information campaigns will promote alternatives to the car
- The West End Partnership will work with businesses to produce travel plans
- Car clubs for residents will be encouraged



Various sites within the West End are currently used for transport functions; this is an inefficient use of scarce city centre land, often detracting from the quality of the urban environment. The West End Partnership will therefore look at opportunities to bring these sites forward for redevelopment or for other uses. These include the long stay tourist coach park at Oxpens (which will be relocated to the edge of the city) and car parking at Worcester Street and Oxpens.

Other large-scale transport projects within the West End are outlined in the presentation, including the redesign of Frideswide Square, facilitating the pedestrianisation of Queen Street, railway station improvements and the creation of a new road that will pass through the Oxpens site.



The West End Renaissance has created an exciting opportunity to establish an attractive network of streets and spaces in Oxford city centre.

Improving the street environment

The West End Renaissance aims to provide a series of linked public spaces, each with its own feel and function, for people to linger and to gather for events and festivals. Well-designed streets will provide places to meet and to interact, while people can relax away from the hustle and bustle of city centre life in quiet and tranquil green spaces.

To achieve this objective various aspects need to be tied together, including cultural activity, transport, and urban design.

Transport elements may include changing the way buses and other traffic is routed in the city centre to reduce their impact on the city's streets and spaces. In Queen Street for example, motor traffic will be reduced to deliveries only.

The traffic on major routes will be controlled in a more sophisticated way to create a slow, continuous flow of vehicles in the city centre. This will reduce the intrusion of vehicles, and also help to lessen local air pollution associated with queuing traffic. Such an approach may also have the effect of reducing unnecessary through-traffic.

Urban design elements such as lighting, public art, signs, street furniture, trees, plants and surfacing materials will contribute to the attractiveness and functionality of the public realm.

In order to promote a high standard of design, a **Design Code** has been produced as a framework for designing, developing and building in the West End; it is a tool for describing the kind of place the West End should become. If you would like to read the Design Code in more detail, specifically regarding street design, it is located in section D, appendix 3 of the West End Area Action Plan (copies of which can be found on the tables).

Cultural activity in the area will breathe life into the street environment, both during the daytime and evening. In addition, the atmosphere of the West End will be enhanced by designing multi-use buildings with active uses on the ground floor next to the public



space, (and less active uses such as residential accommodation or offices on the floors above). You can read more about this later in the exhibition.

Key spaces for such improvement include Bonn Square, Oxpens, Queen Street, Frideswide Square, Hythe Bridge Street, Park End Street, the Westgate redevelopment, Oxford & Cherwell Valley College's redevelopment and the Worcester Street car park, all of which are discussed in further detail in the presentation.

The West End Partnership aims to ensure the regeneration of the West End becomes an exemplar programme, leading the way forward in terms of sustainability and social and environmental awareness.

Sustainability



A great deal of care and attention has already been paid to assessing the impact of the West End Renaissance on the environment, and on the West End's historical features. Each development must adhere to sustainability standards, addressing climate change on a local level. These include sustainable urban drainage systems and rain water harvesting to mitigate the risk of flooding; efficient and renewable energy; waste and recycling; and the encouragement of biodiversity.

Construction

The re-use and responsible use of construction materials, energy-efficient systems and technologies can improve living and working conditions and reduce building running costs.

District heating procurement

This scheme will link developments to an area-wide combined heating, cooling and electricity network, offering important efficiency savings in terms of carbon dioxide emissions and also in terms of floor space and plant requirements for each building. The next phase of the project will involve setting up an Energy Services Company (ESCo) to operate the scheme.



Flooding

The Thames and other local waterways add diversity and interest to the West End, enhancing the open space and the outlook of buildings. However, in Oxford flood risk must always be dealt with carefully; climate change means that flood risk in the West End will be greater for future generations. Developers will need to bear this natural risk in mind and respond with imagination. Flood risk must not be made worse – now or in the future – by new development in the West End. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the West End has been undertaken to assess the potential risk facing the various sites in the West End from flooding.

Heritage

Oxford's West End contains numerous areas of historic interest, from Saxon buildings and quirky street names to long gone breweries. The aforementioned Area Action Plan will ensure that any development within the area must be designed with an understanding of the area's heritage, street patterns, views, and important buildings.

The West End is a sustainable location for residential development. Located in the heart of Oxford, it offers the opportunity for city centre living, where people can walk or cycle to work, shop, socialise and catch public transport.

Community and neighbourhood cohesion

The provision of new housing will form a vital part of the West End Renaissance. It is expected that the West End will eventually accommodate about 600-800 new dwellings, which will strengthen the existing community and help support more facilities that bring benefits to the community as a whole. Creating a strong and balanced community will be key to the success of the West End.

Housing mix

It is essential to ensure a balanced and mixed community by requiring some larger dwellings in the West End. This will help to attract families, who are likely to stay longer in the area and will hopefully create a more stable community. Oxford City Council will therefore refuse planning permission for residential development that does not help achieve an appropriate mix of dwelling types. This mix will equally apply to the affordable housing element of a residential development.



Affordable housing

There is a huge need for affordable housing in Oxford, and the redevelopment of the West End offers an important opportunity to help meet some of this need in a highly sustainable location. 50% of all new residential developments within the West End will therefore be affordable, (in the ratio of 80% social rented and 20% shared ownership). Applications for commercial development will also be asked to provide the number of affordable homes to meet the additional demand created. This is considered to be equivalent to 1-5% of staff employed.



health and social service providers. These include the several hostels and drop in centres already located in the West End catering for groups of people who are sometimes hidden. The West End Partnership will continue to work with agencies such as the Primary Care Trust, homeless person and specialist alcohol services, the police, Benefits Agency, Probation Service and social services to find creative and progressive solutions to the varied problems faced by some members of our community.

Amenities to support new housing

It is important that plans for large increases in housing in the West End take into account the need for local, supporting amenities. Amenities such as increased school capacity, local open space, additional health facilities and improved social services are vital. It is important that these will be located with easy access. The West End Partnership is working with local service providers to ensure that these amenities are planned for.

Hidden parts of the community

Another important element of the community in the West End is evident from the number of facilities and services provided by the various

A network of green spaces will be established that includes pocket parks and tree-lined streets, providing a sense of tranquility within the city centre.

Green infrastructure



This will involve enhancing features that already exist, (including Oxpens Field, Paradise Square and access to the Thames) and supplementing them where appropriate.

Trees

Trees will be planted at key points throughout the West End, in particular along Oxpens Road. The use of suitable native trees and shrubs will be encouraged, preferably from British grown 'local' stock. A variety of species have been identified as being particularly suitable, including Silver Birch, Wild Cherry, Sessile Oak and White Willow.



Wildlife

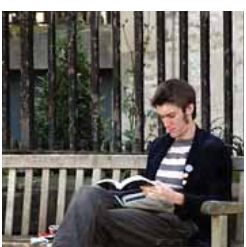
Buildings and public spaces have the potential to provide habitats for wildlife. Ways of achieving this, through appropriate design, include: planting trees and shrubs; providing green roofs; creating flight lines and foraging opportunities for bats; and erecting bat and bird boxes.



Creating more natural banks and planting native aquatic and emergent vegetation will enable new species of plants and animals, such as water voles, to colonise the West End's waterways. All waterside development proposals will protect or create wildlife habitats along the watercourse. Aims of the regeneration include bank side treatment, the creation of new water channels and the control of Japanese Knotweed.

Recreation

Use of the West End's beautiful and historic waterways, (including Castle Mill Stream) as attractive streamside parks and routes through the area will be encouraged and promoted. The West End Renaissance aims to provide public art, directional signage, information boards, and footway lighting. It is also the intention to introduce new, fully accessible, waterside footways using sympathetic materials.



Increasing the variety of stimulating attractions and leisure facilities and enhancing the shopping experience for visitors and local residents are key objectives for the West End Renaissance.

Culture and leisure



Culture

Facilities that add diversity to the cultural scene, including cultural attractions and events, festivals, and cultural employment uses such as artists' studios and exhibition areas will be encouraged. Studios, workspaces and galleries would assist people in creative professions to stay in Oxford. In addition, these kinds of uses at ground level encourage day and evening activity, which help to enliven the street environment.

There is some private-sector backing for two new attractions in the West End: a hands-on cultural centre for science (Science Oxford) and a Story Museum celebrating children's literature and storytelling. Science Oxford would offer flexible exhibition space, performance space and a hands-on zone. The Story Museum would draw on the rich heritage of children's storytelling in Oxford, featuring exhibitions, audio-visual presentations and unique archives.

Studies have also investigated the potential and demand for a concert hall. A large music/performing arts venue could be incorporated as part of a mixed-use development with more commercial conference activities.

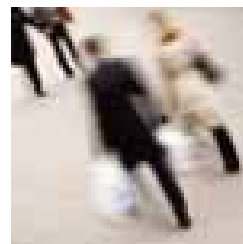
Leisure

The main leisure facility in the West End is the ice rink; it is in poor structural condition and is too small to stage entertainment or top-level ice hockey successfully. Both the building and the plant are 'life-expired' and the rink would require almost complete re-development to bring it up to the standard of a modern facility. A study has already been carried out examining options for the future of the ice rink and the ice rink site.

Every effort will be made to ensure that the current ice rink remains open until the plans for the Oxpens site have been confirmed. However, whatever the outcome, it is important that a leisure opportunity should still be available in the Oxpens area.

Shopping

The West End area already includes several of Oxford's key shopping streets. A recent Retail Needs Study identified a need for Oxford to expand its retail facilities over the coming years. Planning permission has been granted for the redevelopment of the Westgate Shopping Centre (see the presentation), which will enhance Oxford's shopping scene and provide much employment in the retail and construction sectors.



The West End is an excellent location for new, flexible office accommodation, easily accessible for staff and visitors. Businesses will benefit from direct links to London and international airports and close proximity to the UK rail network.

Business



Employees will be able to relax in new public spaces during their lunch hour, and the introduction of a vast range of facilities in the area will perfectly suit entertaining and corporate events.

Office accommodation

The creation of more offices will help to establish a mixed-use area, and will bring important daytime activity to the West End. Apart from the Oxford Business Park, there are relatively few modern office developments in Oxford, and good-quality modern office space is in demand. The West End offers a rare opportunity to provide some new office accommodation, in modern and flexible spaces. Planning permission will therefore be granted for up to 15,000m² of additional office floor space in the West End, in order to help address this demand.



Public sector offices

Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council currently operate from various offices across the city centre. There is an opportunity for the city and county councils to join offices, which could help to ensure efficient use of land and working practices. Several of the existing sites could then be released for other development. The Oxpens site has been identified for the proposed joint offices, helping to support the new bus route along Oxpens Road.

Conference facility

The demand for conference facilities in Oxford exceeds supply by 40%, specifically for a larger purpose built conference centre for 500-800 delegates. The West End offers an opportunity for the development of a top-of-the-range conference centre, with Oxpens being the most suitable site for development.

Learning & skills

The West End Renaissance will create many new jobs, specifically in the areas of construction (whilst development takes place) and customer service (with the provision of new retail, leisure and tourism facilities).

A feasibility study is currently being put together to establish how training providers and businesses, together with local authorities, partners and communities can work together to ensure local people are equipped with the high quality construction, retail, hospitality and customer service skills needed to make the West End a successful, thriving and sustainable place for the benefit of residents, employers and visitors.



Tourists are important to Oxford's economic wellbeing. Oxford's unique architecture and academic reputation are known worldwide; Oxford is a 'must see' for many people, receiving over 9 million visitors each year.

Tourism



Being popular brings with it a number of challenges:

How should visitors be managed once they are in the city, both to ensure that their experience is of the highest quality and to minimise any problems for the destination?

Facing stiff competition, how can Oxford ensure that it maintains its appeal to new generations, keeping pace with the demands of an increasingly sophisticated market?



A strategy for tourism in Oxford has been commissioned by Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council to help address the above questions. It identifies how the various organisations and enterprises involved can work together to ensure tourism continues to flourish in the future and carries on generating benefits for Oxford and the surrounding area.



How will the West End benefit tourism?

The West End Renaissance has a key role to play in developing tourism for the city, offering the opportunity to create a destination based on responsible development principles, including economic stability, strong community development and environmental responsibility.



The local area has a rich and interesting heritage and character; the careful restoration and successful regeneration of Oxford Castle have already set the tone for the rest of the West End Renaissance. In addition, new, high quality public realm and green space improvements will be beneficial to visitors.

Marketing and communications will aim to be socially and environmentally responsible at all times, guided by the Oxford West End brand values.

Marketing and communications



Collaborate!

As we bring the shared vision of Oxford's future to life, we will engage with all stakeholders, partners and future users, asking for and responding to their views at all times.

These brand values, in addition to the ones below, incorporate and reflect the aspirations and objectives of the entire West End Renaissance programme.

Demand excellence

In Oxford's West End only the very best will do. We'll demand the highest quality in every aspect of planning and execution and be driven by the desire to improve quality of life in Oxford.

Seek balance

We will strive to find the common ground as we develop the new city quarter – balancing the old with the new, public realm with private space and commerciality with altruism.

Be open

Oxford's West End will be open, welcoming and accessible to all. Open-space and access are integral to the development. We'll be open-minded and encourage open, honest dialogue.

Think future

Whenever new ground is broken, we will create something our grandchildren can be proud of. We'll be forward thinking, socially responsible and strive to create something memorable and lasting for future generations.

Imagine!

The new city quarter will delight and surprise and be a focus for Oxford's energy, diversity and creativity. We'll be innovative in our thinking and pioneering in our delivery. In the West End we'll do things differently!



The Oxford West End Renaissance requires huge investment and is being funded by both public and private sectors, including the West End Partnership, Communities and Local Government's New Growth Points initiative, and also streamlined developer contributions.

Funding



A strategy is being devised to identify any alternative funding sources and develop a fund raising strategy for the West End, aimed at filling any funding gaps that the aforementioned sources cannot meet.

Communities and Local Government's New Growth Points initiative is designed to provide support to local communities who wish to pursue large scale and sustainable growth, including new housing, through a partnership with Government. The Government invited local authorities to submit strategic growth proposals which were sustainable, acceptable environmentally and realistic in terms of infrastructure. Oxford City Council was allocated £1.2 million for the first year (2007/8) and £5.5 million for the 3-year period 2008/9 to 2010/11.



Developer contributions will be collected in a streamlined way, and will be pooled so that larger infrastructure, (including transport, schools, community facilities and open space) can be put in place once adequate contributions are received.



For transport improvements, funding through the current and future Local Transport Plans may be possible. Some funding (£6 million) is already allocated from the Access to Oxford package secured by the Highway Authority for improvements to the railway station and forecourt.

Furthermore, the Housing Corporation (to become the Homes and Communities Agency) will hopefully be able to supply a Social Housing Grant towards affordable housing. The West End has been identified as a strategic site in the Regional Housing Strategy.

More information about funding and developer contributions can be found in the West End Area Action Plan (located on the tables).

The West End Renaissance is not just about changing the built environment of the area. It is about changing the way people think about the West End and how they interact with the area and each other.

Become involved



The West End Renaissance is not set in stone; your views can have an impact on what happens. The regeneration of the West End will only be successful with input from the local community.

How can I share my opinions and suggestions?

If you live or work in the area, the best way to get involved is by joining the Oxford West End Community Group (WECG). This group meets every few weeks to discuss local issues, including the progress of the West End Renaissance. They have already helped to form part of the Neighbourhood and Community Cohesion Strategy, outlining the existing community make-up and highlighting changes that they feel are needed in the area.

To join the group simply express your interest on the WECG sign-up card, leaving your name and contact details, and we will send you an email with information about when and where the meetings will take place. All you have to do then is simply turn up!

Keep informed

If you don't feel that you can spare the time to attend the Oxford West End Community Group meetings, but still want to be kept informed about the regeneration programme on a regular basis, why not sign up to the e-newsletter? This can be done via the website, at www.oxfordwestend.co.uk, or just let us know on the feedback form if you'd like to be added to the list.

The Oxford West End website will soon have a dedicated West End community section, with links to forums where you can discuss the regeneration with other forum members.

Get in touch!

If you have any questions or suggestions relating to the regeneration, speak to a member of the West End team today or simply get in touch after the exhibition:

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Contact details can also be found on the back of the West End Renaissance brochure and on the website.

And finally...

There's a lot of information to take in, so why not relax in the Oxford Town Hall café – pick up your 20% discount voucher on the way out!

