

This report is public	
Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) Final Report	
Committee	Executive
Date of Committee	13 July 2026
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Leader of the Council - Strategic Leadership and Regeneration
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	30 June 2026
Report of	Executive Director Place and Regeneration, Ian Boll

Purpose of report

This report introduces the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) and seeks the Executive's endorsement following the Oxfordshire Leaders Joint Committee endorsing the OxIS on 24 April 2026.

1. Recommendations

The Executive resolves:

- 1.1 To note and endorse the final Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) has been prepared on behalf of the Oxfordshire Leaders Joint Committee, to provide a comprehensive understanding of the key strategic infrastructure necessary to support future development in Oxfordshire to 2050. The final report was considered and endorsed by the Oxfordshire Leaders Joint Committee in April 2026 and recommended its subsequent approval by constituent councils.
- 2.2 The Strategy builds on previous iterations to align with the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision for sustainable development, focussing on nine key outcomes that include carbon neutrality, enhanced natural environments, and transformed connectivity. As a high-level strategy, it identifies the critical systems, facilities, and services required to enable long-term growth across the county.
- 2.3 Oxfordshire is planning for substantial growth, driven by its role in the Oxford-Cambridge corridor, with major developments planned. This future development represents a transformative scale of change for the county and a significant infrastructure delivery challenge across all sectors. The prioritisation analysis for strategic infrastructure projects in Cherwell covers strategic projects beyond those considered in existing and / or emerging local plan infrastructure delivery plans.

- 2.4 Delivering the necessary infrastructure to support growth is estimated to cost at least £9 billion to 2050 in capital alone, excluding revenue, maintenance and land costs, of which currently identified secured funding is limited to £1.4 billion, highlighting a funding gap of over £7.6 billion.
- 2.5 The Stage 1 OxIS baseline assessment identified over 550 strategic infrastructure projects. This necessitated the need to undertake a logical, consistent and transparent sifting process to reduce the number of projects for inclusion in the focussed prioritisation process. Following the project sifting, a remaining schedule of 115 projects was taken forward for further consideration in the Stage 2 OxIS through the Prioritisation Framework Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA). The full list of projects remains part of the Strategy.
- 2.6 The Strategy has identified several key infrastructure delivery dependencies and synergies including Oxfordshire's ability to deliver sustainable development depending on addressing electricity network constraints at Bicester, wastewater treatment capacity upgrades, water supply resilience and improved digital and transport connectivity.
- 2.7 The Strategy identifies cross-sector benefits from delivering an integrated green and blue infrastructure network alongside other sectors' investment to address sub-regional greenspace needs and nature recovery. An example is the River Cherwell waterway park – a landscape-scale strategic project for improving mid-Cherwell's green and blue infrastructure network as proposed by the Cherwell Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy.
- 2.8 Priority transport infrastructure projects impacting Cherwell district, include Motorway improvements at junction 9 and 10 of the M40 and A34 corridor improvements to increase safety and capacity. Improvements to the Banbury railway station and proposed railway stations at Begbroke and Ardley are listed as priorities. In terms of active travel, the Strategy supports the delivery of the Oxfordshire Strategic Active Travel Network through schemes in the Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plans.
- 2.9 The Strategy identifies significant electricity network constraints particularly in Bicester, where connection times currently hinder development. Plans to upgrade the East Claydon Grid Supply Point, providing electricity to Bicester and other areas of Cherwell district is a priority energy project.
- 2.10 The Strategy also highlights regeneration opportunities, for example, in Banbury and Bicester to be supported through the potential for coordinated infrastructure delivery. The key infrastructure projects in the Banbury and Bicester include:
- Banbury - Multi-modal transport corridor improvements to east – west strategic movements and Warwick Road, The expansion of the Banbury Horton General Hospital.
 - Bicester - North West Bicester strategic link road, Bicester community hospital extension, North West Bicester district heating network and potential connection to Ardley Energy Recovery facility, Bicester Sewage Treatment Works upgrade and Highway capacity improvements to peripheral routes.

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications		Commentary		
Finance		There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Kimberley Digweed – Finance Business Partner 5 June 2026		
Legal		OxIS is a non-statutory strategic evidence and coordination document, it does not form part of the statutory development plan. OxIS will be a material consideration for future proposed developments but should not override the adopted Local Plans, policies or statutory tests. It should therefore not be treated as determinative in decision-making. Denzil-John Turbervill, Head of Legal, 8 June 2026		
Risk Management		Whilst there are some risks relating to funding, dependencies and delivery timescales, these are mitigated through effective partnership working and a clear prioritisation framework and monitored through the service operational risk. The Strategy provides a flexible and robust basis for managing risk and supporting sustainable growth. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance & Insight Team Leader, 2 June 2026		
Impact Assessments		Positive	Neutral	Negative
Equality Impact				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?			X	
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?			X	
Climate & Environmental Impact		X		
		The Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy is expected to have a positive climate and environmental impact in supporting long-term sustainable development through infrastructure delivery aligned to the Oxfordshire Strategic		

				Vision. It aligns with other strategic plans such as the Oxfordshire Local Area Energy Plan and Oxfordshire Local Nature Recovery Plan in delivering the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision which aims to create a greener (enhancing environmental sustainability and protecting natural spaces, improving air quality, promoting sustainable transport and achieving carbon neutrality in council operations by 2030 with a net-zero county by 2050), fairer and healthier county with thriving communities, a sustainable economy and improved wellbeing for residents.
ICT & Digital Impact				Not applicable
Data Impact				Not applicable
Procurement & subsidy				Not applicable
Council Priorities	This relates to the Council Priorities as follows: • Economic prosperity by supporting long-term sustainable development and economic growth. • Community Leadership through identifying long-term social and health infrastructure needs and promoting infrastructure to support healthy lifestyles. • Environmental stewardship by identifying strategic green and blue infrastructure projects that seek to protect the environment and address the impacts of climate change through sustainable future development. • Quality housing and placemaking by supporting long-term sustainable development through the identification and delivery of strategic infrastructure.			
Human Resources	N/A			
Property	N/A			
Consultation & Engagement	Stage 1 technical consultation took place in August and September 2025 and was followed by consultation on the Stage 2 report from 19 February to 19 March 2026.			

Supporting Information

3. Background

- 3.1 The first Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) was prepared in 2017. It was a requirement of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal and supported the preparation of a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan, "The Oxfordshire Plan 2050". A second Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy was produced in 2021. The second

OxIS in 2021, took a slightly different approach focussed on local place-based projects and a comprehensive multi-criteria assessment of infrastructure linked to accelerating housing delivery and economic growth through infrastructure schemes. The third iteration of the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy was commissioned in late 2024 and is the subject of this report.

- 3.2 The first iteration of OxIS was a comprehensive costed list of infrastructure projects, albeit with a strong focus upon transport - including active travel - and a methodology for ranking those schemes. The second iteration of OxIS was endorsed by the Oxfordshire Growth Board in 2019. It set out the updated strategic infrastructure requirements for planned growth in Oxfordshire to 2040 and recast the methodology for ranking the same, the Multi Criteria assessment or MCA. Following the decision not to proceed with the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, the OxIS was refocussed around four key principles:
1. To identify the infrastructure required for growth in Oxfordshire and promote the strategically important pieces of infrastructure to the Government, particularly projects with uncertainty of delivery, either through lack of funding or blockages to development.
 2. To fill the gaps in knowledge of infrastructure needs common across the county, namely energy, transport, health, water and green (and blue) infrastructure.
 3. To ensure that the schedule of infrastructure projects is up to date taking into account the progress in preparing Local Plans and supporting infrastructure delivery plans.
 4. To ensure the infrastructure projects are assessed and prioritised.
- 3.3 The OxIS is not a statutory policy document and is aimed at both informing and supporting key documents such as Local Plans, Infrastructure Delivery Plans and service providers' investment strategies, to act as a prospectus and investment document for infrastructure in Oxfordshire and to enable the members of the Oxfordshire Leaders Joint Committee to use that information to make better, more informed strategic decisions on the county's infrastructure requirements. It sets out an evidence base to inform decisions on future strategic infrastructure requirements.
- 3.4 The OxIS sits beneath the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision. It offers a place-based infrastructure narrative, which enunciates the ambitions of the Strategic Vision to deliver sustainable growth that seeks to enhance Oxfordshire's built and natural environments and make it a better place to live and work by 2050.
- 3.5 This iteration of OxIS is a new strategy that both builds upon, and links back to, previous iterations as appropriate. A benefit and risk for delivering planned sustainable growth is the timely delivery of infrastructure. There is broad agreement that if we are to deliver sustainable growth, then we must also have the necessary infrastructure provided in a timely way to support that growth. Appropriate infrastructure will enable the 'good growth' as described in the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision that benefits new and existing communities and continues to develop Oxfordshire as an attractive and vibrant place to live, work and enjoy leisure and other activities.
- 3.6 The third iteration once again updates the county's infrastructure requirements in the light of the current economic climate, updated local plans, updated policies, and ambitions for Oxfordshire to provide a clear statement of strategic infrastructure

needs to 2050 with a clear understanding of the benefits and implications of the same.

- 3.7 An OxIS Stage 1 Baseline report was published in September 2025 and a copy is contained in Appendix 1. The appendices to the OxIS Stage 1 baseline assessment are contained in Appendix 2. The Stage 1 OxIS documents should be read in conjunction with the Stage 2 Prioritisation report as they comprise the final OxIS. A copy of the OxIS Stage 2 Prioritisation report is contained in Appendix 3 and the Stage 2 report appendices are contained in Appendix 4.
- 3.8 Throughout its preparation, the Oxfordshire Joint Leaders Committee (OJLC) has considered the progress of latest version of the OxIS, most recently at the meeting of the OJLC in April 2026. The final report was considered and endorsed by the Oxfordshire Leaders Joint Committee in April 2026 and recommended its subsequent approval by constituent councils.

4. Details

Introduction

- 4.1 The Strategy was commissioned by the Oxfordshire Leaders Joint Committee and applies to all local authorities within Oxfordshire, considering the county in its wider regional context. This includes interrelationships with neighbouring authorities and strategic geographies such as the England's Economic Heartland (the sub-regional transport body) and the Oxford to Cambridge corridor. Consultants were appointed in early 2025.

Project objectives

- 4.2 The OxIS project objectives are to:
- Provide an understanding of the strategic infrastructure to support future growth
 - Prepare an evidence-base to support planning of sustainable development
 - Prepare a key investment document and a vehicle for engagement, and
 - Align with, and inform, parallel plans, strategies and initiatives.
- 4.3 The intended audience for OxIS comprises Members and officers of Oxfordshire local authorities, government, infrastructure providers, businesses and residents. The final Strategy sets out the strategic infrastructure requirements in Oxfordshire to support the anticipated growth to 2050. It is a high level, strategic study of the funding and delivery implications of the key strategic infrastructure requirements. The OxIS clearly identifies types of infrastructure, which has historically been the responsibility of other statutory bodies, needed to enable and support sustainable development. Examples include energy, water and sewerage, strategic health facilities and super-fast broadband.
- 4.4 Local authorities in Oxfordshire need to plan for these other forms of infrastructure, which support and sustain health and wellbeing and mitigate potentially harmful effects of development, such as water resilience against shortages, flood alleviation and environmental management. This Strategy addresses this wider infrastructure landscape and recognises that different infrastructure providers are at various stages of their delivery cycles. The Strategy builds upon previous strategies to align with the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision.

- 4.5 As a high-level document, the strategy identifies critical systems, facilities and services required to enable long-term growth. It functions as a statement of ambition and a tool for engagement, intended to inform local plans and guide investment priorities for local authorities, government bodies and infrastructure providers. It also considers the best mechanisms for securing funds to deliver these projects, such as through council funding, government funding, private sector delivery, or developer contributions.

OxIS in Cherwell

- 4.6 Within the Cherwell context, this new iteration of OxIS sets out energy infrastructure upgrades to the electricity grid supply point at East Claydon in Buckinghamshire to provide increased capacity and resilience for future development connections primarily in Bicester. It also includes strategic transport infrastructure needs on the strategic road network at motorway junctions and the A34 corridor as well as strategic active travel infrastructure schemes to support regeneration in Banbury and Bicester, projects relating to the hospitals in Banbury and Bicester, sewage treatment works upgrades and green and blue strategic infrastructure, such as the potential for a River Cherwell Waterway Park in mid-Cherwell. Appendix 5 is a list of the OxIS projects in the Cherwell district.

Stage 1 – Baseline assessment (Jan 2025 to August 2025)

- 4.7 The approach to preparing the Strategy followed a two-stage process. Stage 1 was a baseline assessment of current infrastructure needs. Stage 1 was developed using long-term growth scenarios beyond the current local plan periods. Upper and lower growth thresholds were used to assess the infrastructure needs of theoretical growth based on housing and employment trajectories. The Stage 1 report identifies over 550 strategic infrastructure projects to support future development, and a copy is contained in Appendix 1.

Stage 2 – Prioritisation framework (September 2025 to February 2026)

- 4.8 Stage 2 focussed on consultation feedback, funding sources, infrastructure project sifting and a prioritisation (framework development) process to identify the key strategic infrastructure. A copy of the final Stage 2 report is contained in Appendix 2. The long list of Stage 1 projects has been sifted down to just over one hundred projects in the Stage 2 prioritisation report using a framework multi-criteria assessment (MCA).
- 4.9 A “balanced scorecard” approach was used to assess individual infrastructure projects against social, environmental and other criteria based on the themes in the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision. This approach means that some projects do not receive the same priority as they would have done in previous infrastructure strategies that focussed more on growth and development. Infrastructure projects are presented in the Stage 2 report grouped into national/regional, district and local geographies.

Prioritisation Outcomes

- 4.10 The prioritisation framework, as developed, provides the OLJC and partners with a tool and not just a set of fixed outcomes. While the Strategy has chosen to present
- Cherwell District Council

one set of base case outcomes as a demonstration to reflect the balanced scorecard approach across all themes and criteria, the Framework can be further used to present more refined outcomes according to the thematic, spatial or temporal interest of the use that can be used to promote different messages to different audiences as required.

- 4.11 The key infrastructure challenges facing Oxfordshire and Cherwell are covered including transport, energy and digital, water, social and health, It is estimated that the infrastructure funding gap to support growth from 2025 to 2050 is at least £9bn of which currently identified secured funding is limited to £1.4bn.

Key findings – Cherwell

- 4.12 The Strategy references the known electricity network constraints in Bicester (the East Claydon Grid Supply Point Strategic Development Plan is a specific project), wastewater treatment capacity upgrades, water supply resilience and improved digital and transport connectivity. For example, in terms of regionally important health and social care infrastructure, the expansion of the Banbury Horton Hospital is in the top 10 list of priority projects. M40 and A34 improvements are also show as prioritised OxIS projects of national/regional significance.
- 4.13 There are identified cross-sector benefits from delivering and integrated blue and green infrastructure network alongside other sectors' infrastructure investment to address sub-regional greenspace needs and nature recovery. This includes nature-based solutions to flood mitigation such as the River Cherwell Waterway Park.
- 4.14 Projects that support regeneration and growth in Cherwell include improvements to Banbury railway station, a proposed railway station at Begbroke and Ardley and the delivery of active travel networks through coordinated delivery of regeneration projects and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans. The key infrastructure projects in the Banbury and Bicester include:
- Banbury - Multi-modal transport corridor improvements to east – west strategic movements and Warwick Road, The expansion of the Banbury Horton General Hospital site.
 - Bicester - North West Bicester strategic link road, Bicester community hospital extension, North West Bicester district heating network and potential connection to Ardley Energy Recovery facility, Bicester Sewage Treatment Works upgrade and Highway capacity improvements to peripheral routes.

Engagement and consultation

- 4.15 Engagement with technical and other stakeholders has taken place during the preparation of the Strategy, most recently with a virtual consultation taking place for four weeks between 19 February and 19 March 2026, including infrastructure providers such as utility companies and transport operators. The Stage 1 Baseline Report was published for technical consultation in August and September 2025.

Alignment with other strategies

- 4.16 The Strategy aligns with other strategies and evidence workstreams including the Oxfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy, Oxfordshire Local Area Energy Plan, Oxford Growth Commission interim report, Oxfordshire Rail Strategy 2040. It

highlights potential for coordinated infrastructure delivery to support regeneration projects in Bicester and Banbury.

5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 5.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: Do not endorse the OxIS – by not endorsing the Strategy, the Council would not benefit from the use of the data, and outputs it provides, in informing future plans and strategies.

Option 2: Endorse the Strategy – this is the recommended option.

Option 3: Endorse the Strategy with amendments. Officers have actively engaged in the preparation of the OxIS as part of the project working group from procurement to the final outputs and deliverable. The final reports meet the requirements of the project brief, and no further amendments are required.

6 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 The final Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy is a comprehensive countywide assessment of the strategic infrastructure needs to support sustainable development to 2050. It was endorsed by the Oxfordshire Leaders Joint Committee on 24 April 2026 following a proactive approach to the Strategy's development with other Oxfordshire local authorities. It provides a potential tool for the prioritisation and funding of infrastructure projects and evidence for promoting the infrastructure needs to a wider range of audiences. Engagement included technical stakeholders has contributed to the final. Further collaboration with stakeholders will be required Oxfordshire local authorities progress the delivery of infrastructure to support growth.

Decision Information

Key Decision	No
Subject to Call in	Yes
If not, why not subject to call in	N/A
Ward(s) Affected	All

Document Information

Appendices	
Appendix 1	OxIS Stage 1 Baseline Report, Prepared for the Oxfordshire Leaders Joint Committee, August 2025
Appendix 2	OxIS Stage 1 Baseline report appendices, August 2025
Appendix 3	OxIS Stage 2 Project Prioritisation Report, Prepared for the Oxfordshire Leaders Joint Committee, January 2026 (Revised April 2026)
Appendix 4	OxIS Stage 2 report appendices, January 2026 (Revised April 2026)
Appendix 5	List of Cherwell OxIS projects
Background Papers	None
Reference Papers	Oxfordshire Leaders Joint Committee report, Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS), 24 April 2026
Report Author	Andrew Bowe, Strategic Transport and Infrastructure Lead Officer
Report Author contact details	Andrew.bowe@cherwell-dc.gov.uk 01295 221842
Executive Director Approval (unless Executive Director or Statutory Officer report)	Executive Director Place and Regeneration, Ian Boll, 10 June 2026