

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD ESTATE STRATEGY

The University's Estate Strategy 2024–2029 sets out the guiding principles that will enable us to deliver the excellent facilities that will support our academic mission.

The University's estate is large, diverse, and complex, and it has been growing steadily for many years. We are proud of the many excellent buildings we have created, but we need to balance investment in new facilities with the ongoing maintenance of our existing estate to create far more pleasant and comfortable environments for work and study, supporting the University's core academic mission of research, education, public outreach and innovation.

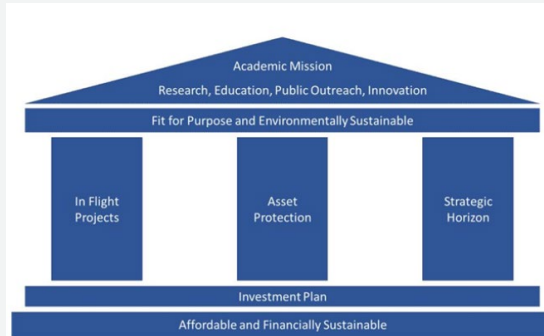
This means delivering an estate that meets the needs of staff and students and meets modern standards in terms of accessibility and safety, provides a stimulating learning environment, well suited to its purpose and is sustainable over the long term in both financial and environmental terms. We must also ensure we provide the resources needed to maintain this high standard.

Our Estate Strategy aims to put us in a position to do all this. It does not exist in isolation; it is one of the enabling elements that will underpin delivery of our overarching strategic aims and the University's mission: the advancement of learning by teaching and research and its dissemination by every means.

The strategy was produced in close collaboration with colleagues all over the collegiate University, and by reflecting on what we have been told through a wide range of engagement and consultation activities.

While quality and functional suitability are key priorities, so is the flexibility to adapt as our needs change in future so that the estate continues to support the University's core mission.

It will be delivered through a set of linked guiding principles.



Key principles

At the heart of the strategy are guiding principles that will inform the long-term management of the estate during this period. They are:

- The purpose of the estate is to **support the University's core academic mission of research and education, including public outreach and innovation.**
- The functional estate must be **fit for purpose and adaptable to meet existing and developing academic priorities.**
- The University must **conserve its historic built and natural environment**, ensuring appropriate and careful use of listed buildings and green spaces.
- The University estate must **meet threshold standards** (quality, legal compliance, and environmental sustainability).
- The University estate must be **affordable and financially sustainable.**

Our estate in numbers

Over 270 buildings that we use for teaching, research, administration, sports, libraries, museums, and ceremonial events.

200 properties that we manage commercially, including office space, warehouses, and property.

The University estate contains some of Oxford's oldest and finest buildings. The **oldest dates from 1326**, and 20% of our buildings are listed, including the Radcliffe Camera, Sheldonian Theatre and Old Bodleian Library.

Green spaces including

70 acres of green parkland in central Oxford

1000 acres of ancient semi-natural forest at Wytham Woods

Agricultural land around the city, including over **100 acres** at Park Farm on the banks of the Cherwell which can be used for academic research.



OTHER OBJECTIVES

Support delivery of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy, which commits the University to achieving net zero carbon emissions and a net gain in biodiversity by 2035

Provide an estate that enables and adapts to different working styles, fostering collaboration both within and beyond the University, including the development of innovation districts at Begbroke and Osney Mead.

Align with the emerging policies and expectations of the Oxford Local Plan to 2040

Create positive working environments, improve the condition of our buildings and the increase sharing of our spaces and teaching spaces

Continue to be careful custodians of our heritage assets for the city of Oxford and beyond, through meticulously planned conservation and maintenance

ADDITIONAL ACTIONS

Ensure that every decision about the estate takes long-term sustainability into account.

Continue to listen and work in partnership with colleagues as well as students, stakeholders, and communities.

Develop 'Oxford Standards' for types of space (such as offices, laboratories, or lecture theatres), and work to ensure that every space meets them. This will help us use the space we have more flexibly and efficiently.

Assess functional suitability (fitness for purpose) of our existing estate.

Continue to work with our development partners to create innovation districts, making the existing Begbroke masterplan a reality and developing another for Osney Mead.



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

By 2029, we will have achieved, or made significant progress towards achieving, the following:

- A University estate that is financially and environmentally sustainable while also providing the flexibility to meet emerging or unplanned needs.
- Addressing the challenges posed by major facilities that are reaching the end of their design lives through deep refurbishment or demolition and replacement
- Developed and implemented a comprehensive set of 'Oxford Standards'
- Restructured and improved our repair and maintenance activities to use resources more efficiently.
- Improving the efficiency of our space usage and the sharing of our teaching spaces, as measured through occupancy and utilisation rates.
- Put ourselves in a position to achieve net zero carbon emissions and a positive overall impact on biodiversity by 2035.

CONCLUSION

Oxford is one of the world's leading universities, and it needs an estate to enable it to continue to deliver its ambitious plans. While the challenges we have identified will take longer than the period the Strategy covers to address completely, we believe that by 2029 we will have made major improvements in the estate's overall quality, functional suitability, environmental sustainability, and financial credibility.

Providing an estate that is better maintained and better suited to its purpose will in turn support recruitment and retention of the best staff and students, helping sustain academic excellence far into the future.

