

Oxford City Council

Building a world class city for everyone

www.oxford.gov.uk



Career Opportunity

Role information

Job Title	Principal Planner
iTrent Ref No.	002851
Position Type	Fixed Term up to 16 months
Hours	37 Hours per week (part-time working will be considered for suitable candidates)
Grade and Salary	G8: £48,888 per annum full time (pro rata for part time); £2047 Market Allowance (pro rata for part time) (reviewed annually)
Location	Hybrid - Oxford Town Hall and Work from home
What hybrid looks like in this role	The hybrid working model provides for a mix of home and office working to support business needs and work-life balance. There is no set requirement for a minimum number of days in the office, but this can be set by the need to visit the office for any site visits or team meetings. All equipment for working from home is provided.
Service Area	Planning and Regulation
Responsible to	Major Projects Team Leader
Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974	Not Exempt
Candidate Screening	Not required
Driving Licence	Not required
Political Restriction	This post is not politically sensitive

The Role

Oxford City Council are looking for a Principal Planner to join our Major Projects team. This is a lead officer role within the team dealing with significant major projects across the city, helping to deliver on the city's growth agenda.

Oxford is a world class city with an international reputation, and the Development Management team has been involved in projects that have transformed Oxford in recent years including the £440m Westgate Shopping Centre, 885 home urban extension at Barton, and the mixed-use employment led development at Oxford North. The team are also involved in projects for prestigious employers in the historic core of Oxford; where the demand to provide new development in the context of one of the world's finest cities presents a unique and exciting challenge.

The ability to negotiate effectively whilst delivering excellent customer service is essential and you must be pragmatic with a can-do and solution focussed attitude to support our ambitions.

If you want to be part of this and help contribute to an exemplary planning service, then we'd like to meet you.

For an informal discussion about the post please contact **Hayley Jeffery** by email hjeffery@oxford.gov.uk

About us

Our ambitious leadership team and dedicated staff are working hard building a world class city for everyone. Oxford City Council has accelerated plans to build more affordable and council housing in the city. We provide services to help reduce inequality and improve the health and wellbeing of Oxford's residents and are taking a lead on reducing emissions and increasing biodiversity to become a net carbon neutral city of the future.

We are a supportive and collaborative bunch of people working towards shared goals, where new ideas and initiatives are valued. We strive to deliver service excellence, take accountability for our actions and communicate with honesty and respect. There has never been a more exciting time to join us! Help us to build successful places in which to live and work and build a fairer, greener city in which everyone can thrive.

We offer generous holiday of 29 days a year with an additional 4 days after 5 years' service and an excellent range of benefits including the Local Government Pension Scheme, payment of professional fees and subscriptions, Personal accident insurance, Travel loans, Travel to Work Discount Scheme, Eye care, Gym membership, Cycle to Work Scheme, Staff Offers Discount Scheme, an Employee Assistance Programme and discounts for Oxford attractions. You can find out more in our Candidate Pack.

In addition, we are committed to supporting career development opportunities and learning and development.

Role purpose

- To provide a full development management service by dealing with all aspects of a range of planning and related applications and appeals, including providing planning advice to all service customers at all stages of the planning process, servicing committees and also undertaking relevant compliance work.
- Assisting with the effective and efficient running of development management team, including allocating cases, clearing other officers' recommendation reports and signing out decisions, as well as supervising the workload and providing coaching, mentoring and support to other team members.
- Assisting with improvements to the development management service and with developing, implementing, and embedding new processes and procedures.

Role responsibilities and main duties

- Providing comprehensive pre-application advice and advising on the need for planning permission.
- Dealing with a wide range of cases, including major, politically/ environmentally sensitive and other highly complex cases, and with all aspects of planning related applications, appeals, legal agreements and other planning obligations and dealing with conditions compliance and all other post-decision matters, including carrying out site visits, planning merits assessments, preparing recommendation reports, appeal statements and relevant/necessary action.
- Allocating applications and other work in the team
- Clearing officers delegated and/or committee recommendation reports and signing out decisions.

- Attending and presenting applications and taking the lead at Planning Committees as necessary.
- Defending the Council's decisions at appeal by means of written representations, appearance at informal hearings, or as an expert witness at public inquiries and court hearings as necessary and appropriate.
- Coaching, supporting and/or mentoring other planning colleagues and supervising their workloads.
- Liaising with other technical and professional colleagues on consultations, applications, appeals and office procedures.
- Where appropriate and necessary promoting and contributing to the work of cross disciplinary internal and external working groups, including partnerships with external bodies and liaison with statutory consultees.
- Making a positive contribution to the work of the service by keeping up to date with case law and legislation, promoting and developing the application of IT.
- To monitor service area delivery and support continuous service improvement, challenging existing practice and actively seeking ways of achieving greater outcomes and leaner delivery
- To act as an ambassador for the service area both internally and externally representing the service area priorities and organisation initiatives as appropriate
- To contribute to projects and to service project teams as required
- To support development and delivery of a system of continuous review and improvement within the Service so that 'traditional thinking' is challenged and innovation pursued in support of being the 'Best in Class'.

Who we are looking for

Candidates will be shortlisted on the basis of demonstrating that they fulfil the following criteria that is listed to be 'Assessed at: Application' on their application form and should include clear examples of how they meet these criteria.

Each of the criteria below will be measured through, the application form, interview, test/exercise or documentation (eg a qualification document).

Essential Criteria

Assessment stage

Completion of a degree or post-graduate planning course or equivalent, providing eligibility for membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI).	Application; document
Significant practical experience of Development Management preferably in a UK local authority. The successful candidate should have considerable experience of dealing with a wide range of planning and related applications and appeals of various complexity and sensitivity, including substantial major schemes.	Application; interview; test
Experience and proven ability to negotiate effectively with a wide range of customers, such as applicants, agents, residents and interest groups on planning issues and delivering improvements to	Application; interview

proposals and planning benefits through legal agreements and ideally Planning Performance Agreements.	
Experienced in exercising judgement to make balanced assessments and put forward rational, evidence-based and well-argued recommendations.	Interview; test
Demonstrable evidence of CPD and good working knowledge of current planning policy guidance and practice, such as case law / policy guidance / development control processes / planning enforcement and relevant best practice.	Interview
Experience of and willingness to coach, support and mentor other planning colleagues in the team and supervise and get involved with other colleagues' workload as necessary in all respects.	Application; interview
Computer literate with good understanding and experience of databases (e.g. uniform), use of email / electronic calendar / internet / spreadsheets / word processing / keyboard skills.	Application; interview; test
Good oral and written communication / presentation skills, sufficient to write reports and communicate / present planning issues to relevant audiences.	Application; interview
Good organisational skills and experience of managing own workload, prioritising and coping with high workloads and pressure.	Application; interview

Desirable Criteria

Assessment stage

Flexible approach to workload, to ensure that corporate, departmental and service requirements, including performance targets, are met.	Application
Experience of undertaking essential site visits and surveys	Application
Experience of being an expert witness at planning inquiries	Application; Interview
Ability to work outside normal working hours and attend evening/weekend meetings as required.	Application

Notes to applicants

In addition to the above criteria, Oxford City Council has developed and embedded a suite of values and behaviours. Full details of these can be found on our web page, under Working for Us. Please familiarise yourself with these values and behaviours. If you are invited for interview, you will be asked questions based on them. More information about working for the Council, our values and vision, is available on our website.

How to apply

Applications should be made via our online application system (no CVs please) .
For further information and how to apply online, please visit www.oxford.gov.uk
If you are unable to access our website, please call 01865 252848. Note: For roles that require a DBS Certificate (Enhanced and or Barred List check), candidates are required to supply their <u>complete</u> work history. You will be notified of the outcome of your application either way. If you are selected for interview, you will be informed whether the interviews will be online or in-person. Please note, for hybrid roles the successful applicant will be expected to work from home. You should ensure that you have reliable and secure Wi-Fi access; a suitable workspace and are prepared to undertake distance learning and training.
Closing Date: 27 August 2026

Late applications will not be processed

Interview Date(s): TBC

We are an equal opportunity employer:

We are striving to become a more inclusive employer and to represent the communities that we support. We have policies in place to ensure that every applicant and employee can flourish and succeed. Currently we are underrepresented in some areas and would particularly welcome applicants from ethnic and minority communities. All applicants will be given fair consideration for work and will not receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of any protected characteristic.

Our commitment to Safeguarding:

Oxford City Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk and requires all staff and volunteers to demonstrate this commitment in every aspect of their work.

