

Blavatnik School of Government

Welcome

Thank you for coming to this first step in a consultation process for the Blavatnik School of Government (BSG) to be located on the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter (ROQ). The information presented here aims to provide some background to the project and its site and to explain the current design proposals. These proposals are in the outline stage of development. Our objective with this presentation is to gather feedback so that the design can be informed ahead of a detailed exhibition and eventual submission of a planning application to the Oxford City Council later this year.

We therefore welcome your views on the ideas that are presented here. Should you have any comments or queries, please feel free to discuss them with a member of our team or alternatively, fill out one of the feedback forms provided.

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PROJECT TEAM

Oxford University Estates Directorate
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A GLOBAL APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP

The Blavatnik School of Government trains the world's future leaders. With a global outlook at the heart of everything it does, the School builds on Oxford's outstanding strengths in international research and education.

Blavatnik students learn how government is organised and justified in different countries. They examine the different ways economic, legal, and scientific solutions are applied. They learn to evaluate delivery and results whether in Brazil, China, India or the United Kingdom, and to communicate effectively with multiple stakeholders.

Blavatnik students are recruited competitively from all over the world. They learn from an outstanding international faculty and from the varied experiences, perspectives and traditions of their classmates.

Training future leaders to thrive amid complexity

Tomorrow's most urgent and significant problems are difficult to solve. They are not just economic, social and political, but also scientific and technological. The Blavatnik School of Government tackles head-on the complexity of these challenges.

The Blavatnik School of Government offers students a pioneering multi-disciplinary programme of study. Alongside the social sciences and law, the School uses philosophy to teach about the moral dilemmas faced by those in public service, it uses history to teach about the differences in government across the world and it draws on scientists and medics to ensure students become informed users of scientific advice. Our MPP course teaches students to bring a critical eye to taken-for-granted assumptions; helps them to understand the nature of scientific - and often contradictory - advice; and enables them to translate that advice into workable policy solutions that serve the public good.

Our innovative curriculum draws upon Oxford's vibrant research community and its cutting-edge, multi-disciplinary research into twenty-first century problems. Blavatnik students learn from Oxford's top scholars, in lectures and seminars; and through Oxford's celebrated teaching methods are challenged to excel beyond what they think is possible.

A curriculum based in practice

Beyond learning 'how to think' - a distinctive hallmark of an Oxford education - the Blavatnik School delivers training in practical skills, implementation and delivery in the public sector.

Students complete short intensive courses taught by practitioners in public sector strategy, communications, negotiation, budgeting and finance, delivery and evaluation. They also attend master classes with top policy-makers, who share their experiences of real world crisis management. They study specific cases of policy implementation in different countries and contexts, drawing out lessons from each.

Our students work in groups and individually, constantly refining the practical skills they are taught. In internships and placements with organisations worldwide, students put their training into practice.

Issue-driven optional courses

Alongside the core curriculum, Blavatnik School students complete two optional courses in which they focus on a particular issue and analyse it in a way which draws together its scientific, economic, political, legal, historical and philosophical dimensions.

Collaboration and technology

Technology makes information easier to gather, and offers ever more exciting ways to collaborate and to disseminate knowledge. The Blavatnik School of Government is working with state-of-the-art technology providers and developers to ensure that students and faculty can leverage these opportunities.

'Oxford has a special place in my heart because of our historic partnership with the Rhodes Trust that gave birth to The Mandela Rhodes Foundation and its mission to build exceptional leadership in Africa. I am therefore delighted about the establishment of the new School of Government at Oxford, which will help train future leaders from all parts of the world. I wish it every success.'

NELSON MANDELA
PRESIDENT OF SOUTH AFRICA (1994-1999)

CURRICULUM

The Master of Public Policy (MPP) course prepares students for a successful career in public service, whether in government, nongovernmental organisations or the private sector.

The MPP programme develops students' analytical skills and critical thinking in order to help them understand better the challenges of government the framing of public policy implementation and delivery, and the evaluation of performance and outcomes. It equips students with the key practical skills - such as negotiation, and managing budgets - that are essential for effective public service.

The course is very intensive and runs from mid-September to the end of August. It mixes Oxford's traditional lecture and teaching environment with practical skills workshops, intensive modules and master classes taught by external experts and public policy practitioners. Classes combine both individual and collaborative learning.

The course commences with a policy week which immerses students in an intensive exploration of a Major Policy Challenge (such as Energy Security, or Global Pandemics) and the first of four practical skills classes.

In subsequent terms students take four compulsory Core Courses, anchored in key disciplines which equip them to:

1. resolve ethical dilemmas in public policy and to understand the historical trajectory of government in different regions of the world (philosophy and history);
2. understand economic drivers and pressures on government and how economists analyse public policy (economics);

3. be informed and critical users of scientific and medical advice provided to government (science and medicine); and
4. understand the practice and organisation of government nationally and globally (politics, law and international relations).

During each of these core courses students attend a Master Class with a high level policy-maker who shares their experiences of real world problems and policies (including examples of policy success and failure)

Two Policy Evaluation courses run alongside the Core Courses:

1. Decision and Data Analytics provides the statistical foundations that are required for policy-makers to make informed decisions.
2. Evidence and Evaluation in Public Policy teaches students to be critical consumers of the 'evidence' that is used in government and in public policy debates.

Over the year students take four Practical Skills classes. These highly focused week-long 'intensives' taught by practitioners equip students with the analytical tools and the practical skills that they need for a successful career in public policy and practice. The classes cover:

1. Strategy and Communication in the Public Sector;
2. Negotiation;
3. Public Budgeting and Private Finance; and
4. Delivery and Management.

Students take two Policy Options in their final term at Oxford. The policy options involve classes that provide contrasting perspectives on particular policy problems and challenges. Students are able to select from a shortlist of topics such as:

- Global Public Health
- Energy Policy and Climate Change
- International Migration and Public Policy
- Fragile States
- Sustainable Urban Development
- Humanitarian Intervention
- Environment and the Public
- Financial Regulation after the Crisis

Finally, students complete a Summer Project. This is undertaken either as an internship in a governmental or non-governmental organisation or as a field study (e.g. conducted in association with a research institute).

Throughout the syllabus our students study practices and experiences from across the world, working closely with their classmates and building a lifelong network of global peers.

'In the Blavatnik School of Government, a brilliant young policy-maker from Zambia will sit in class next to students from Britain, China, Germany, India, Brazil, the United States, the United Arab Emirates and others. They will all sharpen their abilities to serve the public. They will discover how things are done in other countries- and at the global level.'

PROFESSOR NGAIRE WOODS
Dean of the School and Professor of Global Economic Governance



Location

The University and its grounds are an integral part of Oxford, housing academic activities and administrative functions that are unable to be accommodated within the collegiate structure. Much of the core University estate is still located within central Oxford. However, by the 20th century new space in the city centre became increasingly scarce and development was required to take place within restricted areas. In the 1960's, the University undertook an appraisal of future land requirements which became the Holford Report. This report looked at the needs of the University and identified the Radcliffe Infirmary site as the only sizeable plot of land for potential development in the city centre and stated that its acquisition by the University was of prime importance. This acquisition was completed in 2003 and now forms the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter (ROQ).

The location for the Blavatnik School of Government (BSG) is in the south western corner of the ROQ occupying the most prominent location when approaching from the city centre along Walton Street.

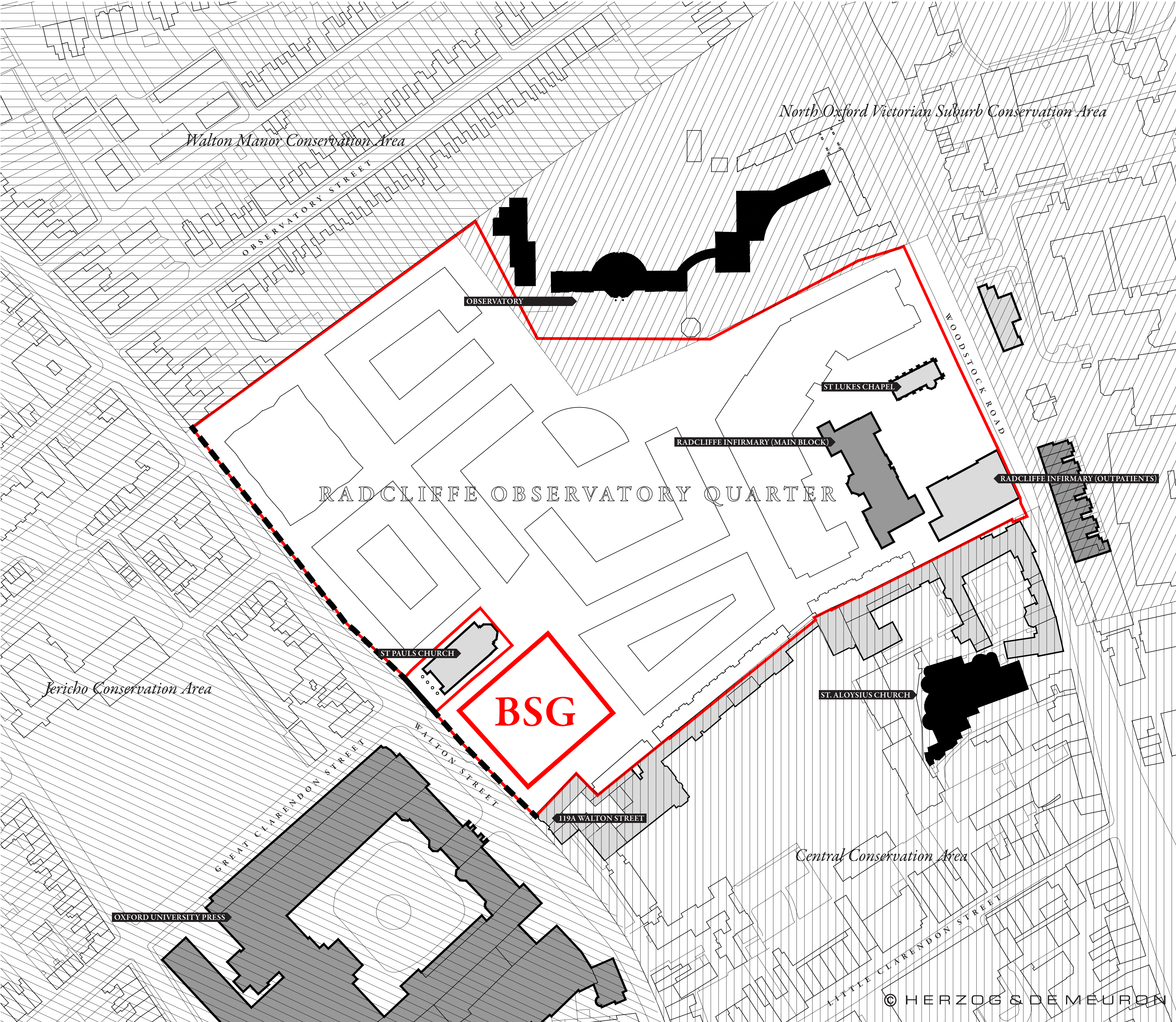
The ROQ extends to 4.231 hectares (10.455 acres). It is bounded on the east by Woodstock Road and to the south by Somerville College. Walton Street defines the western boundary of the site, apart from where it skirts around the site of St Paul's Church (now Freud's Bar). To the north, the site boundary runs parallel to Observatory Street, separating residential back gardens from the ROQ site. The site boundary then abuts Green Templeton College's land until it reaches Woodstock Road again.

The site is in a transition zone between the tightly packed collegiate centre of Oxford to the south and east and the smaller scale, domestic buildings of the suburbs to the north and west. Consequently, the immediate context consists of larger buildings, such as the Oxford University Press, sitting alongside smaller residential buildings.

Dr John Radcliffe played an important role in the development of Oxford, primarily posthumously through his substantial bequest to the University. Following completion of the Radcliffe Camera, the legacy was sufficiently large enough to pay for a new infirmary.

The Radcliffe Infirmary opened on 18th October 1770, funded by the Radcliffe Trust. Developments over the first fifty years of the Infirmary's existence were minimal, but a new church, the Outpatients' Building, the Accident Ward, the mortuary and St. Luke's Chapel were all added by 1865. Development continued but at a slower pace up to the early 20th century when the Infirmary was generally agreed to be short on space and poorly organised. In 1929, the Observatory site was purchased to allow the Infirmary to expand, precipitating major development for the next decade.

However, following the opening of the new John Radcliffe Hospital in the 1970s, new development ceased on the site. This position continued until the hospital was finally closed in 2007. As a result of its role as a working hospital, the buildings of the Radcliffe Infirmary site accommodated a range of medical-related activities as well as administrative and catering facilities, and a chapel. The spanning of construction from the 1770s to the 1970s and the absence of an overall plan meant the site was difficult to navigate and was largely dominated by buildings in a poor state of repair.



Historic Context

With its location and site history the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter unsurprisingly contains several listed buildings and structures. Conservation areas also surround the quarter and a number of neighbouring buildings have statutory listing. This creates a sensitive setting that needs a careful urban and architectural response, which is summarised in the Oxford Local Plan Policy DS.66 that in part states that:

‘The Radcliffe Infirmary contains several listed buildings and other structures that should be conserved when the site is redeveloped. The siting, massing and design of new development should create an appropriate visual relationship with the retained listed buildings and their setting.’

CONSERVATION AREAS

Central

Designation: May 1971 and extended in 1974, 1981, 1985, 1988.

Central Conservation Area incorporates the historic centre of Oxford that originated in the 11th century. It includes most of the Oxford College buildings, and within the immediate setting of the site contains the grounds and buildings of Somerville College from Walton Street to the west. Since 1962 the Council has protected the prospect of the city's unique skyline with its high buildings policy. The City Council's description of the area describes Oxford's historic centre as "one of the masterpieces of European architectural heritage".

Jericho

Designation: February, 2011

Jericho Conservation Area represents the Georgian and Victorian industrial and residential expansion of the City of Oxford into the surrounding countryside. Its development was a product mainly of the three major local employers (the Oxford University Press, the Eagle Ironworks and the Radcliffe Infirmary), who heavily influenced the community and built environment in and around Jericho. It is characterised by its grid iron layout, typified by a uniformity of building line, roofscape, fenestration and materials.

North Oxford Victorian Suburb

Designation: July, 1976

North Oxford Victorian Suburb was created from the Rawlinson Road Conservation Area and an extension of the North Oxford Conservation Area. The area is largely made up of large detached and semi detached houses dating to the mid 19th century and centred around Park Town (1853 – 5). From 1860 the area of Norham Manor was laid out by William Wilkinson, Frederick Codd, H W Moore and others using the High Victorian style. Within the Conservation Area and the immediate foreground of the site is the Radcliffe Observatory.

Walton Manor

Designation: April, 1975

Walton Manor had assumed its street layout by 1850 with small plots of terraced houses, narrow streets and slopes which mark the historical location of former gravel pits. The earliest houses date from the 1820's onwards and are generally terraces of the late Georgian style. Later houses from the 1860's onwards were larger and of the North Oxford Victorian red brick style.

LISTED BUILDINGS

The listed buildings and structures are on the ROQ site are:

- Radcliffe Infirmary (main block), 1759-70, Grade II*
- St Luke's Chapel, Grade II
- Outpatient's Building, 1913, Grade II
- Fountain of Triton, 1858, Grade II
- Gates and Walls to Woodstock Road, Grade II

The listed buildings in close proximity to the ROQ site include:

- The Nuffield Institute for Medical Research the Radcliffe Observatory, 1772-95, Grade I
- The University Printing House (the Clarendon Press), 1820's, Grade II*
- Oxford Area Arts Council (St Pauls Church - Freud's bar), 19th Century Grade II
- 119A Walton Street, 1848, Grade II
- Somerville College, Grade II

The existing site wall of 19th Century vintage, is unlisted and outside of any of the conservation areas, it is proposed for removal to enable the integration of site and Radcliffe Observatory Quarter with Walton Street.