

Browne Jacobson advises Oxford City Council on Barton Park affordable housing deal

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UK and Ireland law firm Browne Jacobson is supporting Oxford City Council to boost its affordable housing stock in a complex asset transfer deal.

The council last week ratified plans to turn 352 properties on the Barton Park development into council homes, saying this would represent a “significant boost” to its current asset base of about 7,800 socially rented homes.

The council’s housing revenue account will be used to buy 168 homes from its OX Place development company for £33.4m, with existing tenancies transferring to council tenancies.

A further 184 homes will be bought directly from developer Vistry Group for £39.7m, using the council’s budget from 2024/25 to 2027/28. These will also be let on secure council tenancies to people on the housing register.

Browne Jacobson’s team of [real estate](#), [construction](#) and [tax specialist lawyers](#) is acting for the council in the acquisition of the 168 homes. This involves obtaining landlord consent for leasehold properties, interacting with several estate management companies and project management to complete the transaction efficiently.

[Zo Hoida](#), Partner specialising in [regeneration projects](#) for government clients, said: “Delivering regeneration projects in urban areas that also provide sufficient affordable housing to communities is one of the biggest issues in society right now and a key priority for local authorities across the country.

“This major investment by Oxford City Council is therefore a significant statement of intent in increasing its stock of housing for social rent, and we’re proud to be playing a supporting role in overseeing the complex transaction involving the council’s wholly-owned housing subsidiary.”

This is the latest project in which Browne Jacobson has advised Oxford City Council on transactions involving OX Place.

Others included acting for the local authority on the acquisition of 90 homes in Railway Lane from the subsidiary company, as well as on the acquisition of 89 properties at Barton Park from Redrow, with a sub-sale on to OX Place.

Construction began at Barton Park in 2015 and remains ongoing. The development will eventually deliver 885 homes on a 36-hectare site to the north-east of Oxford.

Key contact

Henrietta Scott

Head of Marketing



PRTeam@brownejacobson.com
+44 (0)330 045 2299

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