Environmental *Change* Institute

Making the local economic case for low carbon – an Oxfordshire case study

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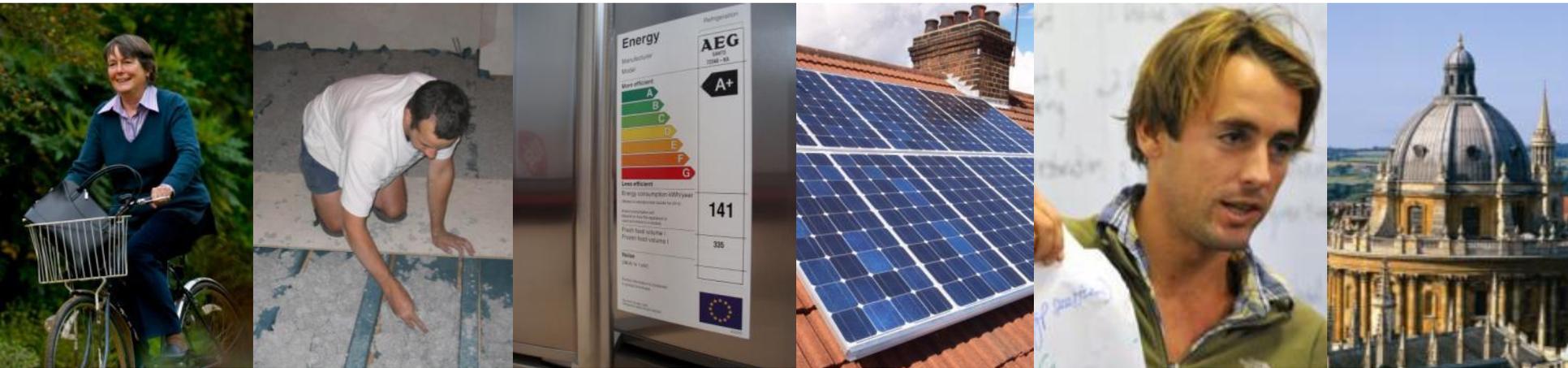
Summary of presentation

- **Background to the project**
    - Local context
    - Strategic Economic Plan

- **Report findings**
    - Economic analysis (comparative advantage)
    - Scenarios to 2030

- **Debates with stakeholders**

- **Discussion**

Oxfordshire's Low Carbon Economy

A report by the Environmental Change Institute and Low Carbon Oxford
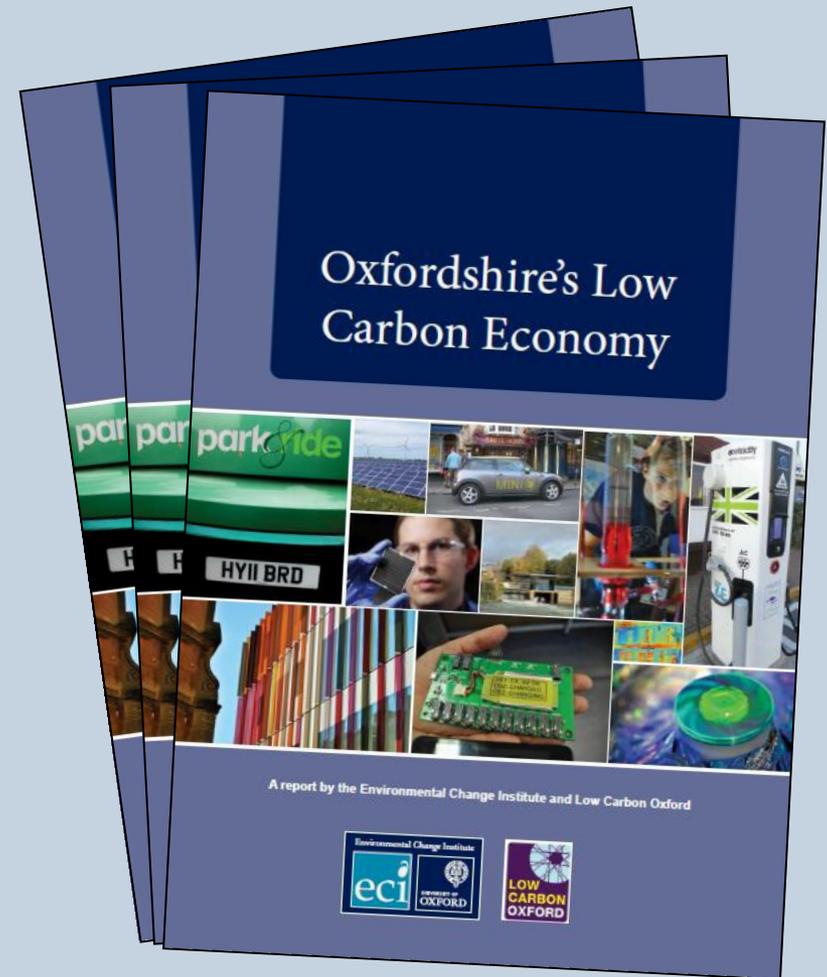
Local economic and political context

- ~100km from London
- In the top 3 UK regions for R&D jobs
- Knowledge-based economy
- Two leading universities
- Largely affluent, educated population
- Pockets of deprivation
- Political tensions and governance issues between City and County
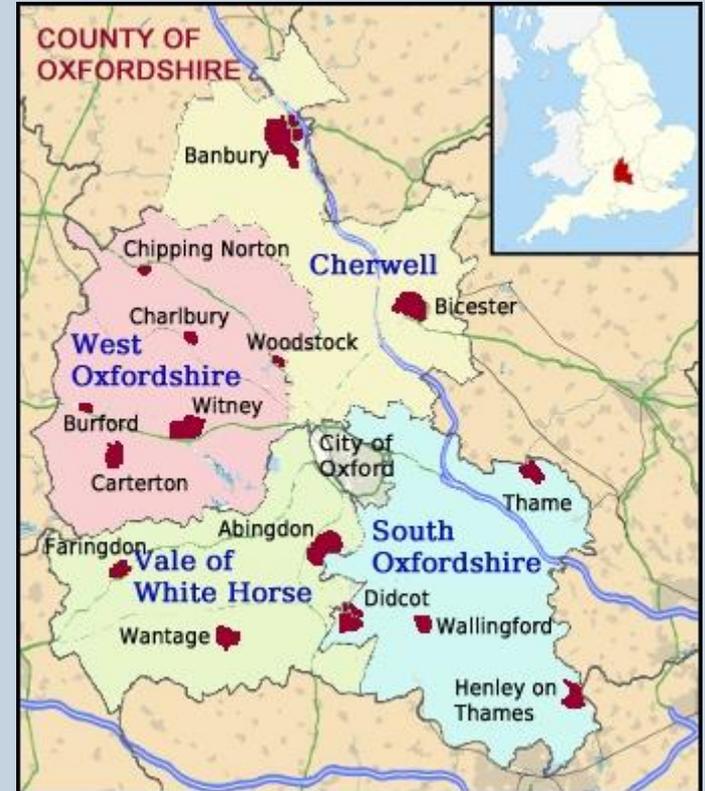
Strategic Economic Plan to 2030

- €8.9 bn investment to 2030
- €9.3 bn gross value added (GVA)
- €1 bn public sector funding (~10% of total)

- Upto 100,000 new homes
- Faster broadband
- Better road network
- Better public transport

Focus on the 'knowledge spine', building on intellectual strengths (universities and industry)

Oxfordshire's economic strengths (comparative advantage)

All economic sectors

- Tertiary education
- Health
- Research (science & engineering
- Engineering
- Publishing
- Market research
- Motor vehicle manufacturing
- Advertising

Energy & Env. Sector

- Building technologies
- Alternative fuels
- Wind
- Alternative fuel vehicles
- Nuclear power
- … and associated professional services

- €1.6 bn sales
- ~7% of GVA
- 8,800 jobs

Three scenarios for infrastructure investment in Oxfordshire to 2030

Figure 5.1 **Additional GVA and jobs over additional investment in transport, housing and energy infrastructure, three scenarios**
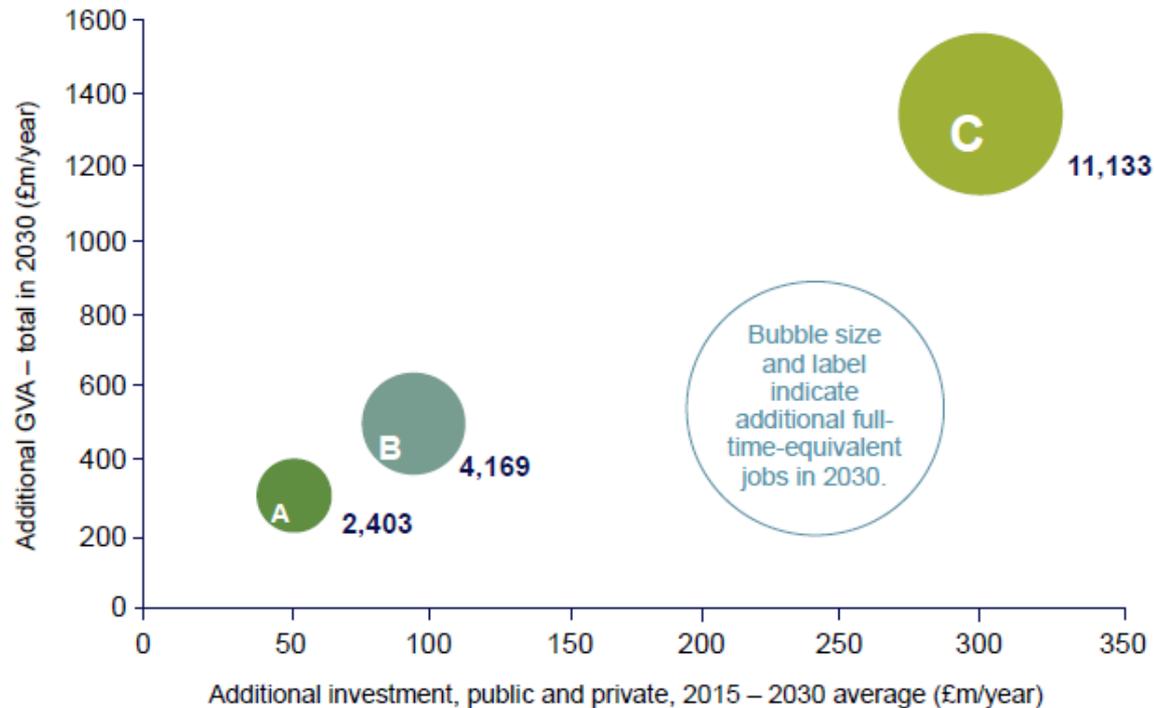
Debates with stakeholders

Predominant stakeholder viewpoint:
- 'Low carbon' as an economic sector
- Innovation = new technology
- The need is to identify and support technology clusters

Report authors' viewpoint:
- 'Low carbon' as a cross-cutting theme for the whole economy
- Innovation = new technology, practices, business models, social arrangements, etc
- Technology clusters in pre-determined economic sectors do not go far enough

Living Laboratories – a way forward?
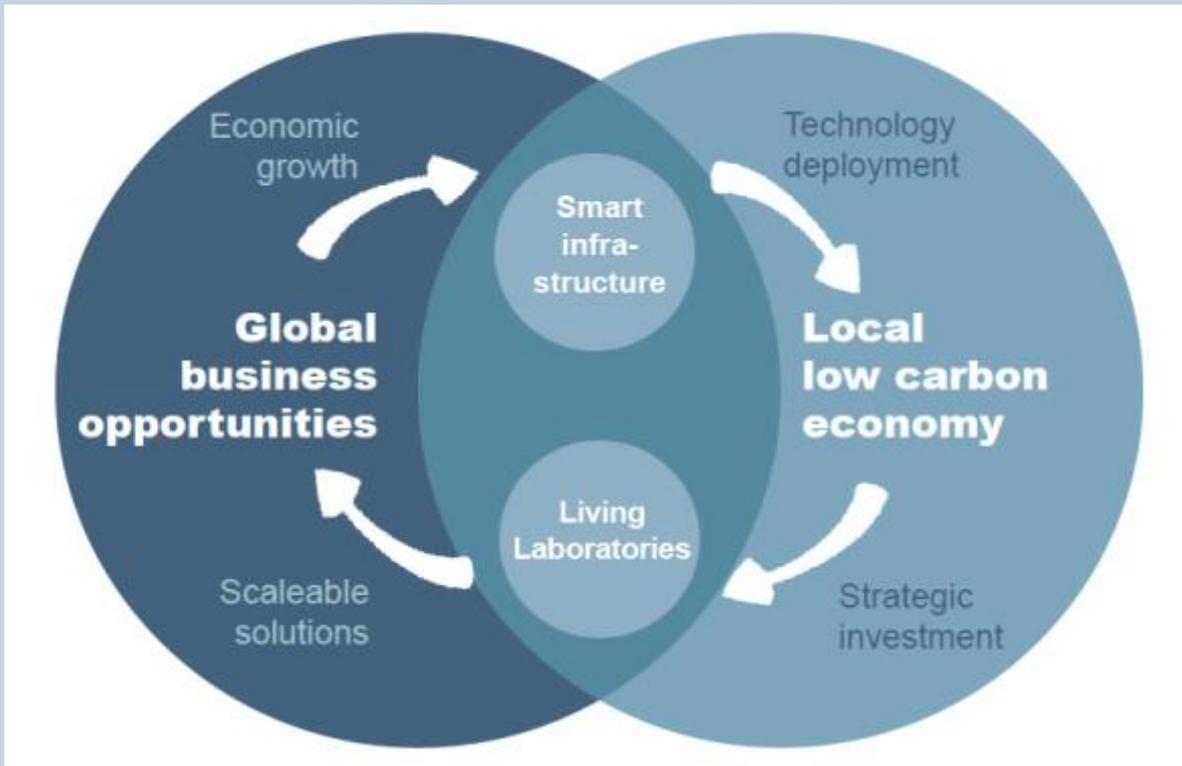
Discussion

- A plausible local/regional strategy has to be context-specific
- A 'low carbon' strategic vision is in competition with other visions of the future
- Our quantitative analysis is imperfect … but it helps!
- Some stakeholders wanted us to 'prove' that investment in low carbon would out-perform other kinds of investment
- Fragmented governance is a particular problem in our city region
- Current activity is about 1% of what is needed for scenario C
- Has the report made any difference?

Thank you.
Comments or questions?

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http://www.eci.ox.ac.uk/research/energy/olce/index.php