

## **Appendix 6:**

### **Chapter 6 - Enhancing Oxford's heritage and creating high quality new development**

#### ***6.1 Design checklist***

The questions below should be used as a checklist to inform design proposals and be used as a guide to designing new development in a logical way that follows morphological layers and is inspired and informed by the unique opportunities and constraints of the site and its setting. Proposals will be assessed against how they respond to the site character and context and follow the morphological layers design process.

#### Responding to site character and context

- What are the features, opportunities and constraints of the site and its setting?, This could include existing landscaping, trees and hedgerows, water, notable and attractive views in, out and across the site, access points, landscape character, levels, archaeology, buildings or structures of historical or local interest as well as potential barriers like utilities, noise, pollution, major roads and railway lines etc. Have you produced a constraints and opportunities plan to show how these features have been identified and helped inform the design proposal? What elements in the surrounding area have been identified as making a positive or negative contribution to local character? A contextual analysis should be produced which examines the character of the surrounding area and is used to inform the design of new development. What are potential threats to positive character or opportunities to enhance character?
- Are there any heritage assets that may be affected by the development (this may include the setting of a heritage building or buildings, including in wide ranging views to the historic skyline)? How should development respond to these?
- What is the design rationale for the site and proposal?

#### Natural Features and Resources

- How could the physical and natural features of the site such as solar orientation, wind shelter, levels been used positively and imaginatively to maximise their benefits as natural resources?
- How could the existing landscape character or features be incorporated early into the landscaping of the proposal? How could you ensure a joined up network of open spaces to create continuous wildlife corridors?
- How could existing habitats be supported and biodiversity enhanced?
- How have sustainable drainage systems been incorporated into the open space network?

#### Movement

- What existing access points could you use and how could you enhance the permeability of the site and access to surrounding areas? Have you maximised opportunities for creating access links for pedestrians and cyclists?
- Do the roads, streets and paths link up together to avoid dead ends?
- What is the street hierarchy across the site and is this clear? How has this been defined?
- Has the location of open space and buildings been determined before the introduction of streets?

- Have you prioritised the needs of pedestrians, people with disabilities, cyclists and public transport users over the needs of motorists?
- Have you taken account of different users' experiences and needs as they travel through the site?

#### Designing development blocks, density and uses

- What is the best block arrangement for the site context? Have perimeter blocks been used?
- How has the arrangement of blocks been informed by the features identified during the constraints and opportunities plan? How does the density relate to the surrounding context and make the best use of the site?
- How have focal points been incorporated into the layout to create interesting street scenes and help people navigate around the site. These could be focal buildings (new or existing), existing landscaping, an important view for example.
- How have buildings been placed to make the most of the benefits of daylight and sunlight?
- What is the rationale for the proposed uses and mix of units?
- How do the buildings and edges of the site relate to the surrounding area in a positive way?

#### Design of external areas

- Are all spaces clearly defined and have a purpose? This should include well defined private and public spaces, including a choice of open space.
- Are all external public spaces such as streets and parks overlooked by windows serving habitable rooms in buildings and adjacent activity.
- Has left over space and awkward corners been avoided?
- Does the landscaping provide opportunities for sensory richness?
- What type of street furniture, lighting and public art is proposed (where appropriate)? (public art which contributes to local distinctiveness should be provided on all schemes of 20 dwellings or more (gross) or over 2000m<sup>2</sup>. Details of the public art should be submitted with a planning application).
- How is car parking integrated into the development so that it doesn't have a negative impact on the experience of using outside spaces? How has landscaping been used to help integrate parking into the street scene?
- How will lighting impact on the surrounding area?

#### Plots and buildings

- How do new buildings respect the surrounding character or have a distinctive but complementary character informed by the unique characteristics of the site?
- Have the needs of all users been considered from the outset and how has this influenced the final design?
- How does the design of the new buildings make the most of the opportunities and constraints of the site and its setting?
- How does the scale of the new development relate to its surroundings? If an increase in scale is proposed, what is the design rationale for this?
- Have green and brown roofs been incorporated into the development?

### Ensuring quality

- Has a contextual analysis been used to inform design, detailing and materials choices?
- How do materials chosen reinforce the overall design concept and respect the local context?
- If a contrast is chosen, what impact will this have on existing character?
- How have materials been chosen to maximise energy efficiency?
- Have natural materials been chosen to be long-lasting without degradation of their aesthetic appeal or functionality?
- Will materials chosen wear and weather well, and be long-lasting?
- How will materials used for detailed elements such as rainwater goods enhance the overall design?
- Are hard landscaping materials consistent with the overall design of the development and do they facilitate sustainable drainage?
- How easy will it be to maintain, repair or source matching materials? Have the materials been proven to be robust and weather well?
- Has a palette of high quality materials been used to create a calm background for buildings and that is easy to maintain?
- Have you explored sharing conduits or trenches for utilities and servicing so that the amount of street or pavement that needs to be excavated for future maintenance of the utilities is limited?
- Are all publicly visible boundaries robust and use durable, attractive materials?
- What is the proposed approach for future maintenance of buildings, landscaping, streets and open spaces, public art, sustainable drainage systems etc?

### Design and alteration of buildings

- Do alterations to existing buildings respect the form, scale, character and appearance of the existing building?
- What style of development has been chosen and how will that impact on surrounding character?
- How does the building relate to the existing streetscene, appearance and established building lines?
- What are the characteristic aspects of roofscape in the area and how do proposals contribute positively to the roofscape (i.e. to enhance any significant long views the development might be part of and also the experience of the place at street level)
- How will visual interest be created by attractive detailing, high quality materials, depth and shadow lines and fenestration
- Have building details such as windows and entrances are designed with consideration of any positive characteristics in the area and the impact on internal spaces in terms of daylight, privacy, temperature and views

## **6.2 - Oxford's Conservation Areas**

Oxford has 18 Conservation Areas at present. They include a diverse range of qualities from the compact college environment found in the city centre, the open green space found in the Headington Hill Conservation Area, to the vast meadows in Wolvercote and Godstow. See all Conservation Areas on a map.

Architectural styles and landscape qualities are diverse but they all have the common element of containing features that contribute to our historic past. It is the protection of these elements that need to be properly managed, ensuring future generations will value and enjoy their special qualities.

### Oxford's Conservation Areas:

- Bartlemas
- Beauchamp Lane
- Binsey
- Central (University and City)
- Headington Hill
- Headington Quarry
- Iffley
- Jericho
- Littlemore
- North Oxford Victorian Suburb
- Old Headington
- Old Marston
- Osney Town
- Oxford Stadium , Sandy Lane
- St Clement's and Iffley Road
- Temple Cowley
- Walton Manor
- Wolvercote with Godstow