

Diamond Place Supplementary Planning Document

July 2015

Building a world-class city for everyone



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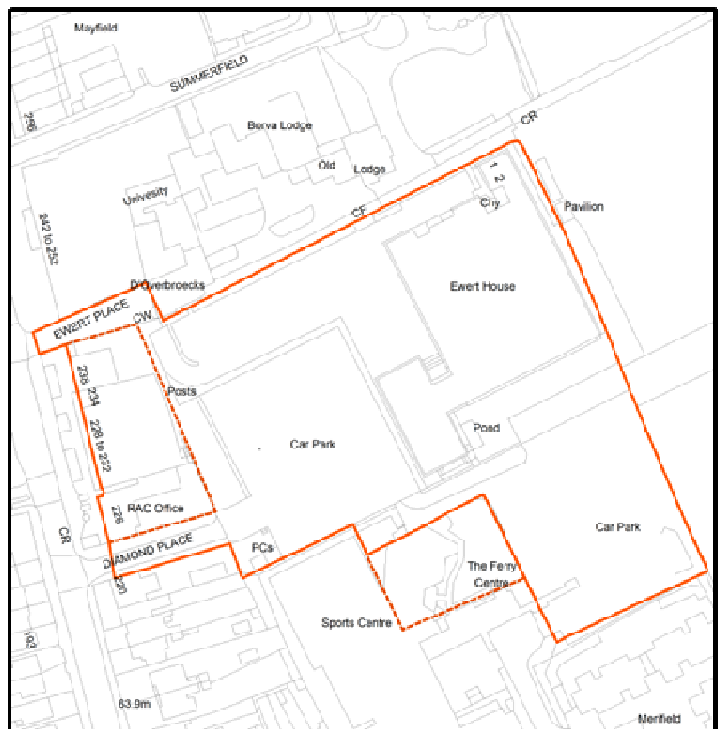
INTRODUCTION

OPPORTUNITY FOR DEVELOPMENT AT DIAMOND PLACE

1. The Diamond Place site is of significance to the Summertown area because of its size, its location behind the district shopping area and its current uses, all of which give potential for development to bring considerable benefits, building on improvements to the district centre environment that have been implemented recently. The surface level car parks and the low density Ewert House that are on the site currently do not make efficient use of land in this prime location. There is an excellent opportunity to develop the site in a way that enhances the local area, without loss of the important functions it already performs.

2. The map shows the site area considered in this document. The site includes the Summertown and Ferry public car parks and Ewert House. Ewert House is owned and occupied by the University of Oxford. It houses a large examination school, ISIS Innovation Ltd and hosts courses of the University of Oxford Department for Continuing Education. The solid line in Figure A shows the area allocated in the Sites and Housing Plan. The dotted line shows the area considered in this document. It includes only the land of the two main landowners, where development is most likely to come forward in the near future; however, if any of the site facing the Banbury Road comes forward and can be developed in a way that improves linkages between the Banbury Road and Diamond Place site, this is likely to be welcomed. The area does include the community centre, which has been brought into discussions about the site because of the opportunity to consider the wider area. The site is approximately 1.5 hectares.

Figure A: The Diamond Place SPD Boundary



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REASON FOR PRODUCING A SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

3. The City Council's Sites and Housing Plan 2013 includes policy SP14: Diamond Place and Ewert House, which allocates the site for a retail-led mixed-use development. The site was included in the Sites and Housing Plan only after it was established that it is likely to come forward for development. The site is owned by the University of Oxford and the City Council. Both landowners are interested in releasing the site for development. Both landowners agree that there are many advantages to developing the site as a whole.

4. Because of the importance of the site to the local area and because of the significant potential of the site to bring benefits to the area if developed carefully, the City Council is publishing this development brief in the form of a Supplementary Planning Document. Production of this development brief has been a creative exercise with the local community to find ways to enhance and improve the area, in line with policies in the adopted Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

5. WHAT IS THIS DOCUMENT?

6. A Supplementary Planning Document gives detail to existing adopted policies. There are many adopted policies that are likely to be relevant to development on the site, in particular in the Core Strategy and the Sites and Housing Plan. The SPD is intended to give detail in particular to Policy SP14 (Diamond Place and Ewert House) of the Sites and Housing Plan. The SPD must be in compliance with this policy. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 state (paragraph 8(3)) that: *'Any policies contained in a supplementary planning document must not conflict with the adopted development plan.'*

7. The SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of any planning application made on the site. Once the landowners are ready, detailed plans for the site can be drawn up based on the guidance in this SPD and a planning application can be made. The intention of a development brief is to provide guidance for whoever develops the site; it is not for a development brief to specify who will develop the site. The development brief provides certainty for the public and developers and will help applicants make a successful planning application that can move smoothly through the planning process because the potential for conflicts and objections is minimised.

8. The SPD should be drafted with an understanding of the surrounding area and how the site fits into it. A site character appraisal was undertaken and has informed the document. It is available as Background Paper 1.

9. Consultation with landowners and other stakeholders has informed this document. This has included discussions with Oxfordshire County Council about access to the site, with the City Council's parks and leisure department about open space potential on the site and with the City Council's car parking department about parking levels. The Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage have been consulted on Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Assessment that was carried out.

VISION

10. This development brief is informed by consultation with the local community, by existing planning policies and by an understanding of the site and its context. The City Council's Character Appraisal Toolkit was used to aid understanding of the site. The results of this are shown in Background Paper 1.

11. The main body of this development brief is in three sections below: Uses; Access and Movement; and Design and Layout. Each of these sections begins with an analysis of the physical context. This draws out negative aspects of the site which development may help to overcome and positive aspects which may be enhanced. A vision for future development of the site is drawn from this understanding of the site context and the opportunities development of the site may bring. The analysis of context in the 3 sections below has led to the development of this vision.

12. The site is located just behind the busy Banbury Road. The site has no vehicular through traffic at present. However, existing uses within and around the site already draw people in to it, meaning it is far from a dead backland space. Future housing development east of the site will also increase the number of people travelling through it. A wide mix of uses can be supported on the site, which will benefit from the proximity of the district centre and also help to support it.

13. Being located behind the busy Banbury Road and Marston Ferry Road means that the site is significantly quieter and more tranquil. There are few areas of public open space near the district centre; however the popularity of spaces to gather, such as the wide pavement on the east side of Banbury Road and the grassed area outside the community centre, shows the demand that there is for such a space. This need and the nature of the site as a quieter part of the district centre should be exploited by the creation of a delightful open space that is at the heart of the new development.

The mix of uses developed on the site will bring extra activity to create a successful place. It will have its own identity as a quieter, more tranquil part of the district centre, offering an attractive public open space for people to stop and enjoy. This space will be designed creatively, with flexibility in mind to cater for changing needs and seasons and needs of different age groups, including children and teenagers. Development of the site will extend the greenery and tree planting that help make the surrounding area attractive.

USES

SITE CONTEXT- EXISTING USES AND RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

15. Figure B below shows the main uses on and around the site. Primary uses on the site are the public car parks and Ewert House, which is owned by the University of Oxford and has a number of functions, including holding courses of the University’s continuing education department, a large examination hall and offices of the University Estates and Isis Innovation. Surrounding the site there is a wide mix of uses, including retail, leisure, education, private open space and student housing, reflecting the site’s location within Summertown’s vibrant district centre (see Figure C).

Figure B: Existing uses within and surrounding Diamond Place

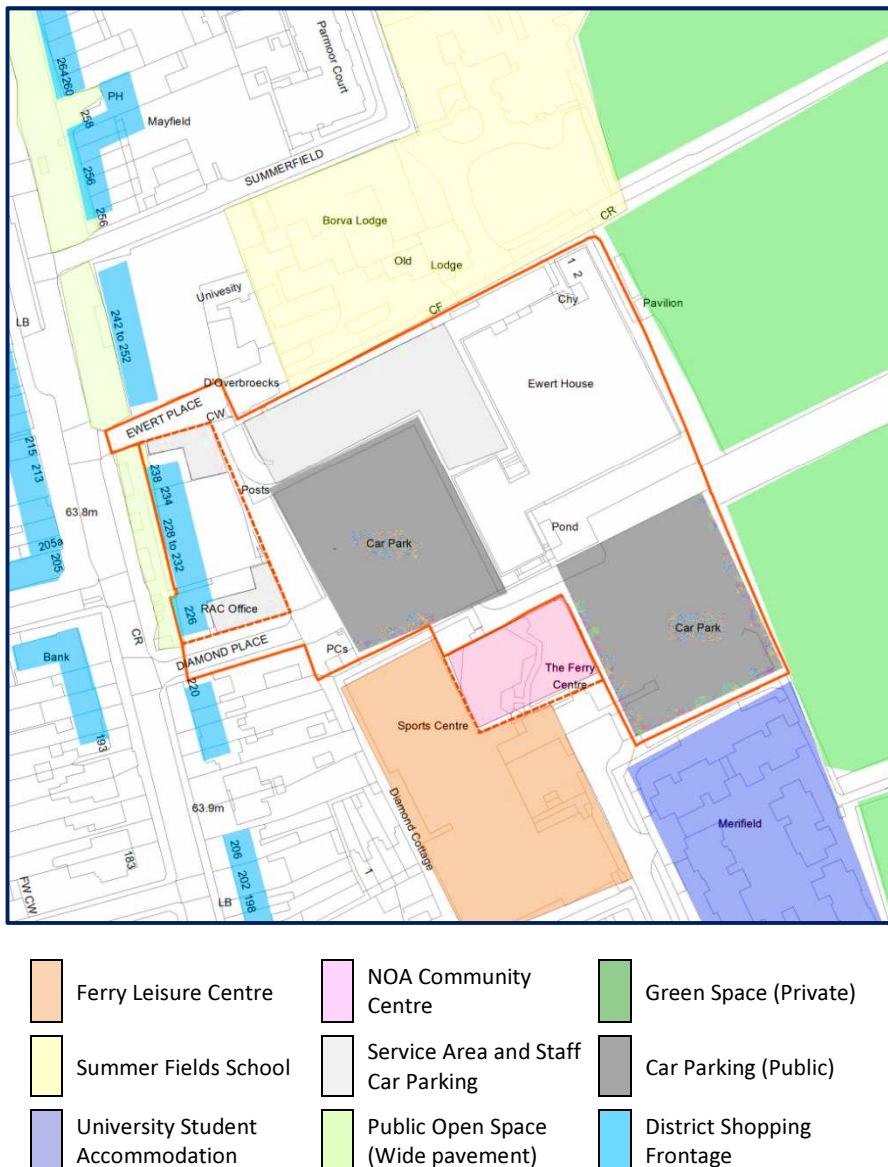
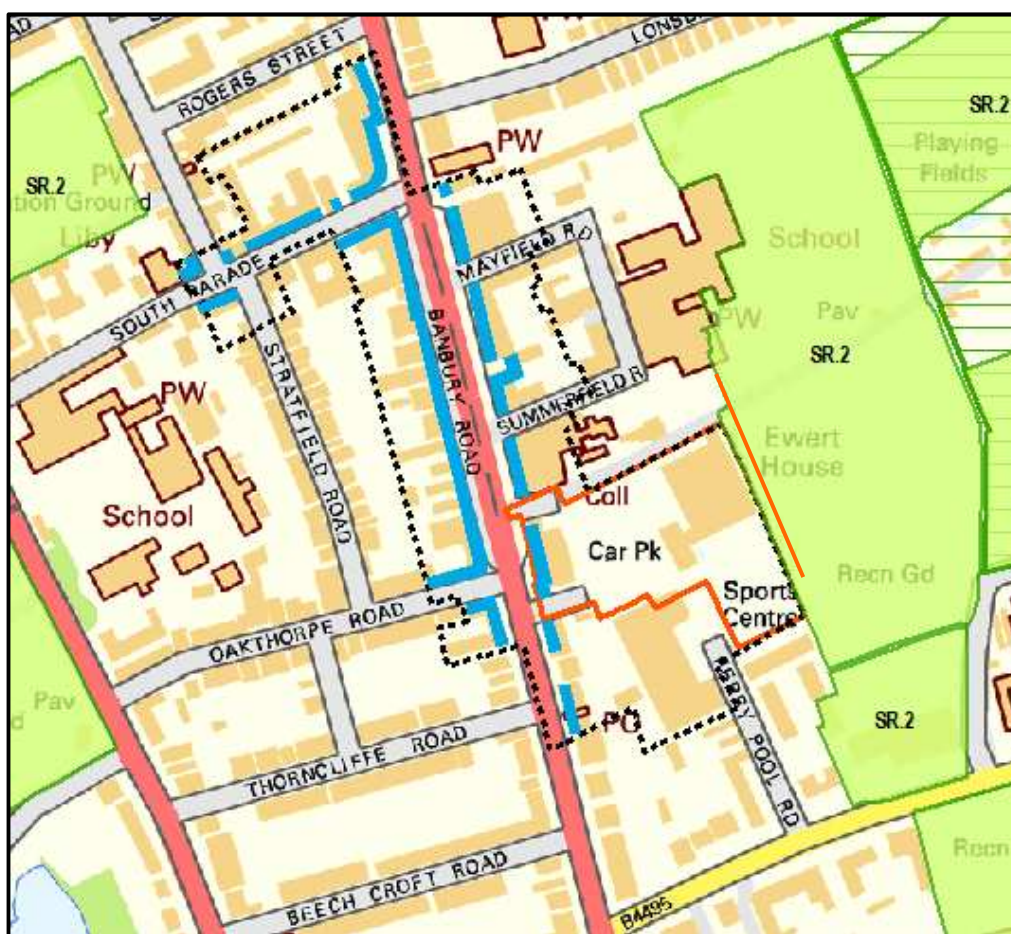


Figure C: Extract from the Policies Map 2013



14. Figure C shows that the site falls within Summertown’s District Centre as defined in Oxford’s Local Plan. Policy CS1 of the Core Strategy states: ‘District centres are suitable for retail, leisure, employment and other uses serving district level needs...Planning permission will be granted for such development provided it is of an appropriate scale and design and maintains the mix of uses available’.

15. Policy SP14 of the Sites and Housing Plan relates specifically to the Diamond Place site. This policy states: ‘Planning permission will be granted for a retail-led mixed use development at Diamond Place and Ewert House which could include the following uses: residential, employment and student accommodation. Other town centre uses may also be appropriate’.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VISION

16. Achieving the right mix of uses should be the starting point for design considerations on this site. There are many benefits to accommodating a mix of uses. A variety of uses will create a varied place on many levels. It will lead to varied building types and forms, and it will attract different people at different times of the day, ensuring activity appropriate to a district centre site. Having many uses in a small area maximises people's opportunities to access a wide variety of uses whilst spending a minimal amount of time travelling between them. Different uses may also support each other, ensuring the success of the development. Some uses attract people to a site, for example housing, workplaces, markets and large stores. Other uses such as smaller shops and restaurants rely on these uses that draw people in.

PROPOSED MIX OF USES



Primary uses- Retail

17. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states, in paragraph 23, that: 'It is important that needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses are met in full and are not compromised by limited site availability. Local planning authorities should therefore undertake an assessment of the need to expand town centres to ensure a sufficient supply of suitable sites.' District centres are included in the definition of town centre.

18. Oxford's Retail Needs Assessment was updated in 2008 to inform the Core Strategy. This found that the need for non-food retail was likely to be met largely by City Centre development. There was more need for food retail predicted. Paragraph 2.13 of the Retail Needs Study Update 2008 says that development which maintains and enhances the role of district centres is encouraged; mainly convenience, standard durable and specialist goods.

19. The Core Strategy described all Oxford's district centres as performing well, with Summertown providing an important focus for local facilities and services. Its position within the retail hierarchy was said to continue to offer opportunities to enhance and strengthen its role. The study says that Summertown has '...the second

highest retail rents, and low yields. Vacancy rates are slightly higher, but demand for floorspace is higher than in Headington...'

20. This generally positive picture still applies. The City Council undertakes retail surveys of the city's shopping centres twice each year. These surveys give a general indication of the health of our shopping centres. The most recent survey (undertaken in August 2014) shows that there are no vacant units, reduced from the 2 vacant units (2% of the total) that were present in February 2014. This is compared to 3% in August 2013 and 2% in January 2013. This suggests a shopping centre in good health. There are 5 charity shops in the shopping centre, as there were in February 2013 and January 2013, suggesting no increasing trend at the current time. This is 7.8% of the total A1 retail units and 5% of total units. At August 2014, 63% of units are A1 (shops), compared to 64% in February 2014 and 65% in January 2013.

21. The re-development of this site provides an opportunity to enhance the offer of Summertown's district centre. Development should include retail of around 1,000m². Retail development should be provided as more than one unit and could also include restaurants and cafes to encourage variety, acknowledging that, while the lack of empty units suggests a district centre in good health, it is the Local Plan target of 65% A1 units in the district centre that it is difficult to reach. Retail units should not create blank frontages to a street and sales areas should be on the ground floor to help create an active, vibrant place.

22. If a retail needs study/market appraisal suggests there is demand for more retail, this would be encouraged if it can be shown to be beneficial to creating a successful scheme, without any negative impacts on urban design, parking pressures and achieving a balanced mix of uses on the site.

Primary uses- Health Centre

23. General Practitioners (GPs) at the Banbury Road and Summertown Practices are interested in re-locating to a new centre on the Diamond Place site. Both GP practices and local people perceive there to be a high level of need for a new health centre and there is a great deal of public support for this use.

24. When planning the development of the site, the developer should investigate whether there is still interest from local GP practices in re-locating to the site and whether it is likely a new GP surgery can be commissioned on the site (decisions on commissioning GP surgeries are not taken by the City Council). If the GPs are still interested, and in a position to be able to move to the site, their needs should be

accommodated. Developers will be expected to demonstrate that the potential to include a health centre has been fully explored.

25. The health centre is likely to require at least 1,200 to 1,300 m², gross internal floorspace. A health centre may be accommodated in a single block, or on the ground floor of a block with other uses, such as residential, above. It may also be combined with facilities such as a community centre. Ground floor accommodation will be most accessible, but it is also likely that a modern health centre can be designed to cover more than one level, with facilities on the ground floor for those who are less mobile, and with adequate lifts and so on to enable good access to other floors.

Primary uses- Community and leisure facilities

26. The site allocated in the Sites and Housing Plan is adjacent to the Ferry Leisure Centre. The leisure centre is a very popular and successful facility, and plans for the site should allow for some expansion. At present, the blank facades of the leisure centre and the attached single storey community centre do not relate well to the rest of the site. An extended leisure facility could be better incorporated into the site, with a welcoming and attractive entrance that draws people in. There is an excellent opportunity to combine uses to create a community hub on the site, with potential co-location of the GP surgery, and some flexible, modern community and leisure space.

27. New leisure and community facilities should be multi-functional, with small and large rooms capable of accommodating a large range of uses. Facilities should appeal to all groups in the community and they should be accessible to all. The existing community centre is popular and well used. New community facilities must be available for the existing community association to run. They should be at least equivalent to the size of the existing community centre. There should be a main hall able to accommodate a range of uses and which is suitable for hiring out for functions. It is vital that the existing community association is supported and maintained during construction and that alternative facilities are available in the area.

28. The new facility, potentially combined with a GP surgery, would be a community hub at the heart of the new development. It should contribute to creating distinctive local identity, stimulating pride and a sense of belonging and supporting individual well-being and enjoyment. The facilities would contribute to social inclusion and a high quality of life.

Primary uses- Housing

29. Residential development should be provided on the site to deliver much needed housing. It will also help to create a vibrant mixed-use development. The site is expected to contribute to Oxford's housing target and residential should be more than a minor ancillary use.

30. It is desirable for the development to include a combination of both general market housing and elderly persons' accommodation to help achieve a mixed and balanced community. The accessibility of the site and nearby facilities makes it a good location for elderly persons' accommodation.

31. Residential development on the site (including self-contained elderly persons' accommodation) will need to comply with the requirements for affordable housing set out in Sites and Housing Plan Policy HP3 and Core Strategy Policy CS24. At least 50% of the dwellings on the site must be affordable, and of these, a minimum of 80% should be social rented tenure, with the remainder being of intermediate tenure (including shared ownership and affordable rented housing). A balance of dwellings sizes of both affordable and market housing should be provided according to Core Strategy Policy CS23: Mix of Housing. More details about current requirements are provided in Appendix 2.

32. All the proposed new dwellings must meet the Lifetime Homes standard and at least 5% of all new dwellings must be either fully wheelchair accessible or easily adapted for full wheelchair use. 50% of these must be provided as open market dwellings.

Primary uses- Public parking provision

33. It is important that car usage is not encouraged by the availability of parking. The NPPF states that 'transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development, but also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives... The transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes, giving people a real choice about how they travel... Encouragement should be given to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion.' Part of the intention of the city centre and district centres being the focus for development that attracts large numbers of visitors is to ensure the maximum amount of choice in how people travel to access shops and services. Many people are able to access the Summertown district centre by foot, bicycle or bus.

34. However, there will be those who need to drive or who drive for particular types of trips, such as if they are coming from a location without good public transport connections to the site, if they are not very mobile, if they are making a

combined trip or if they expect to have heavy shopping to carry. The NPPF also states (paragraph 40) that 'Local authorities should seek to improve the quality of parking in town centres so that it is convenient, safe and secure, including appropriate provision for motorcycles...' It is important that the demand for parking does not exceed the spaces available to an extent that leads to unacceptable parking pressure on surrounding streets or that deters visitors.

35. The two public car parks on the site are both well used. They are important as they support the leisure centre and the shops and services in the district centre. There is also a relatively large car park on the site that serves Ewert House. This means that the existing parking spaces can be replaced, with some additional parking to serve new development on the site, without public parking creating additional, unnecessary car journeys. Parking for the new housing is a considered separately(see paragraph 60-62 below).

36. The level of additional public parking required to serve new development on the site should be calculated based on the City's current parking standards. The table in Appendix 1 shows the estimated amount of additional public parking (in addition to replacement of existing parking) that will be expected. In addition to car parking spaces, adequate public cycle parking spaces must be provided. The number of spaces should be based on most up-to-date policy and guidance, which is currently the Parking Standards TAs and TPs SPD 2007. However, the Travel Plan and Transport Assessment, as well as discussions with the County Council about need in the area, should all also influence the number of public cycle parking spaces provided.

Access to temporary car parking

37. Policy SP14 in the Sites and Housing Plan requires that provision is made for local temporary parking during construction. As parking on the site serves the district shopping centre and leisure centre, it is important for the long-term success of the areathat public car parking at a similar level to that available at the moment continues to be provided throughout the period of development. There are several ways that this might be achieved. One is to erect a temporary decked car park on the part of the site not under construction at the time. Depending on phasing of construction, this may need to be moved, which would have implications for cost and practicality. Another option might be to bring forward development of a multi-storey car park that will provide the long-term public car park for the site. This may be more restrictive in terms of options for siting the car park, as if the final location of the car park is to be over an existing area of public parking it is likely it would lead to too much loss of parking for too long a period.

38. A good solution for temporary parking is considered to be to provide an off-site temporary car park. This would need to be located close enough to the district centre that people are not discouraged from using it. This option leaves freedom to develop the site in the most logical way. A site with excellent potential to provide the car park has been identified, which is a playing field belonging to Summer Field School. The playing field is located immediately east of the Ferry Pool car park. The site is shown on Figure D below.

39. The playing field is currently protected by Local Plan Policy SR.2. If lost it would need to be replaced with an equivalent facility. The field is in use by Summer Field School and they have space available elsewhere within their site to re-provide the facility. The use of the playing field for a temporary car park would be part of a long-term plan to develop the site for housing. Housing in this location has potential to be well linked to existing development in Summertown, close to transport links on Banbury Road and with access from the Diamond Place site.

Figure D: location of Summer Fields School's playing field that it is anticipated may be used as a temporary car park



Potential temporary car park and housing site



Other uses

40. The uses outlined above are considered to be well suited to the site's location. They would increase the offer of the district centre, in terms of new retail and cafes and also in terms of providing a community hub. The site also offers an opportunity to provide much needed new houses. These proposed uses will all work well together and will complement the provision of a town square. It is also

important that there are publicly available toilets and recycling facilities in the new development.

41. As long as the successful provision of the proposed uses is not compromised, other uses may also be acceptable on the site. Policy SP14 of the Sites and Housing Plan says the location is suitable for town centre uses, which includes a wide range of uses. The site currently contains some office use at Ewert House, where Isis Innovation is located, and re-provision of these uses on the site, if that is desired by the University, could complement the overall mix.

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT BRIEF FRAMEWORK FOR MIX OF USES

- **A mix of uses should be developed that is appropriate to the location in the district centre. Uses should support each other and add to the offer and vibrancy of the existing district centre.**
- **Primary uses expected are:**
 - **Retail**
Retail of around 1000m² on the ground floor with other uses above. There should be more than one unit, which may include cafes and restaurants.
 - **Health Centre & Community Hub**
The site would make an excellent location for a new health centre and the potential for this must be explored by the developer. The health centre would work well if provided as part of a new 'community hub', which would combine community and leisure facilities with the health centre.
 - **Housing**
The need for new housing in Oxford is great and this should be provided on the site, including above other uses. Because of the proximity of facilities and the potential for a new health centre, elderly persons' accommodation is particularly encouraged.
 - **Public Car Parking**
The existing car parks are well used and important to sustaining the success of the district centre, so the existing level of public parking should be re-provided, with an increase appropriate to the additional new uses on the site.
- **Other uses will be considered if they are compliant with existing policy**

and can be shown to support this preferred mix of uses.

ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

SITE CONTEXT

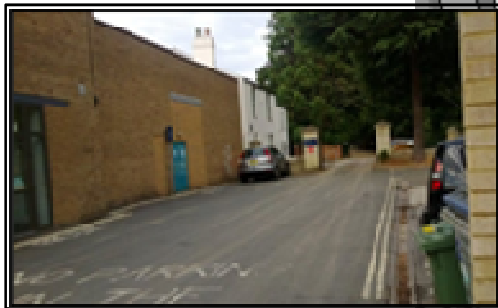
42. There are three vehicular accesses into the site. Ewert Place provides access for the private car park attached to Ewert House. Diamond Place provides vehicle access to the Summertown Car Park and Ferry Pool Road provides access to the Ferry Sports Centre Car Park. There is no vehicle access between the car parks. Other than those using the car parks, vehicles access servicing areas of the retail units that front Banbury Road from Diamond Place and Ewert Place. Coaches bringing school children for swimming lessons also access the Ferry Car Park.

43. Vehicles enter and exit Ferry Pool Road on to Marston Ferry Road. Marston Ferry Road is a busy vehicular route, although it is less important for buses than the Banbury Road. Access on to this road is problematic because of the long queues that form waiting for the lights at the junction of Marston Ferry Road and Banbury Road. These queues mean that drivers wishing to turn right can be stuck for a considerable time, encouraging them to pull forward early, blocking eastbound traffic, which may also then back-up and affect traffic on the Banbury Road. Ferry Pool Road itself is also very narrow and not suitable for any significant two-way increase in traffic flow.

44. Ewert Place and Diamond Place carry traffic entering from and exiting to the Banbury Road. The Banbury Road is a busy route for cars and is also a very important route for buses, with 27 buses per hour currently, which are mainly double-deck vehicles that are full during peak hours, meaning a flow of maybe 1,500 bus passengers per hour. Cars exiting Diamond Place to turn right in particular can create an unwelcome delay to traffic by blocking the flow south as they await a gap in the northbound traffic, which could impact on bus journey times and reliability. However, in practice the pedestrian crossing across Banbury Road to the north of Diamond Place has the additional consequence of enabling relatively unproblematic right turns from Diamond Place. Diamond Place is wider than the other two vehicle accesses and also has the clearest sight line into the site, as shown in the photo below. This is likely to be the most suitable access for any additional traffic movements and is suitable as the main entrance to the site.

45. Figure E below shows the views along each of the roads that access the Diamond Place site. A route with a good view into and out of the site provides best potential for linking the site visually with the surrounding area and for creating clear access into the site. The photos show that the relatively long and narrow route along Ferry Pool Road provides only a limited view into the site. There are not clear views into the site from Ewert Place; views end at the gates of D'Overbroeck's College, and any access along this road would require a 90 degree turn at the end. There is much better potential to emphasise the site's links with Banbury Road along Diamond Place. This road is short and wide and provides a strong visual link between the site and heart of the district centre.

Figure E: views along each of the access routes into the site



View into the site along Ewert Place



View into the site along Diamond Place



View into the site along Ferry Pool Road

46. Cyclists and pedestrians make frequent movements in various directions. An important pedestrian and cycle route runs from Banbury Road to Cherwell School, located just beyond the site boundary; many pedestrian and cycle movements can be observed across the Ferry Pool car park to the footpath that joins its south east corner. The leisure centre, community centre and Ewert House attract pedestrian movements from the Banbury and Marston Ferry Roads. There are also pedestrian movements from the district centre to the public toilets in Diamond Place.

47. The existing surface level car parks do not create a good environment for pedestrians or cyclists. The space is designed for cars; within the site there are no streets and there are no defined routes. This leads to potential conflicts between users and compromises safety and the users' perceptions of safety.

48. The diagram in Figure F below shows the key movements that are anticipated through the site. The Banbury Road is where the majority of shops and services of the district centre are located; it is the main draw for visitors in the area. The development of the district centre over time is a function of its location on the principal route of the Banbury Road. This has allowed the district centre to develop naturally in the most accessible location. The site is located behind the Banbury Road, and it is important that routes and uses are carefully located to exploit movements that people are likely to want to make, enabling them to be made as safely and directly as possible. The need for uses to be easily accessible and visible should also be considered.

49. Some of the movements depicted in Figure F are already important and some new movements are expected to arise because of new development in the area, in particular to and from the development of a temporary car park initially, with housing in the longer term, on the Summer Fields School playing field shown on the map. The map shows broadly the desire lines to existing or anticipated facilities or connections, drawn as direct lines.

50. It will not necessarily be efficient or practical for new routes to follow the anticipated desire lines exactly, but routes should enable movements to be made in an efficient way. The map in Figure G shows that streets in the surrounding area are largely set out in a grid pattern. A grid pattern of streets is often considered to enable good connectivity and efficiency of movement.

Figure F Main actual and anticipated movements through and around the site









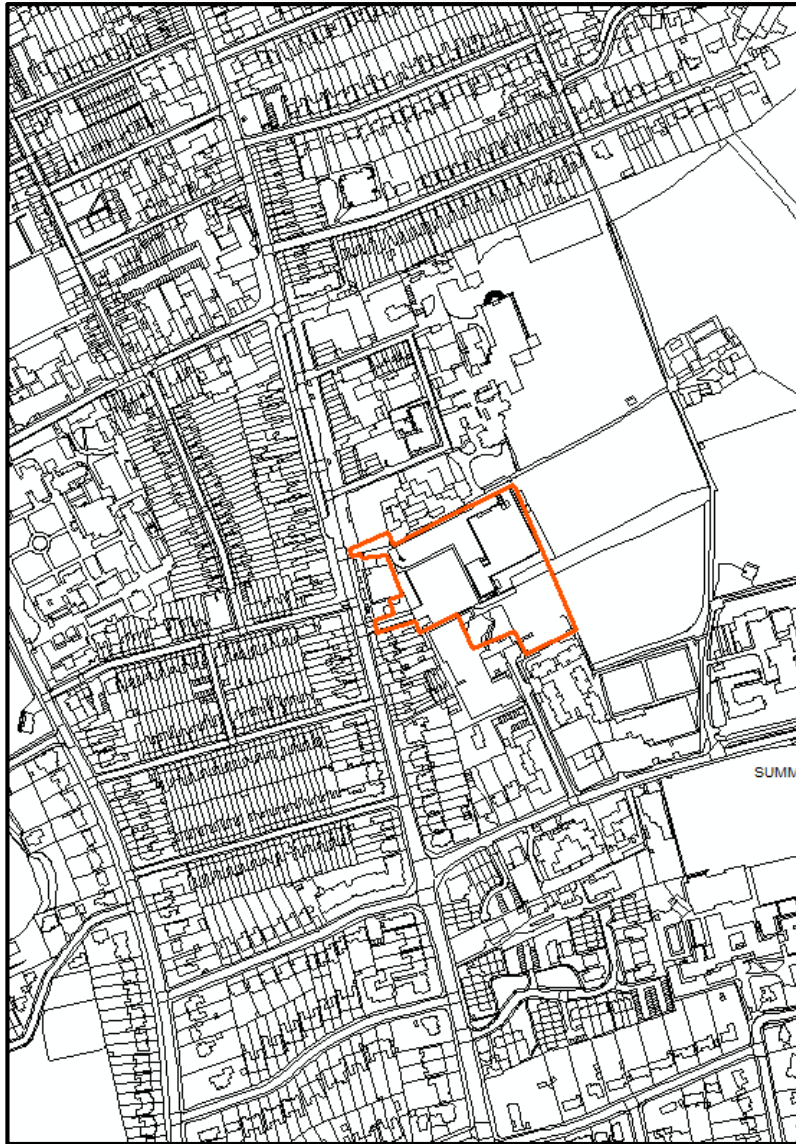
- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
|  | Anticipated key vehicle movements |  | NOA Community Centre |
|  | Anticipated key pedestrian and cycle movements |  | Temporary car park and strategic housing site |
|  | Cherwell School |  | Leisure Centre |

Figure G Street pattern of the surrounding area



VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

51. People experience and understand a place by moving through its streets and other public spaces. Getting the basic structure of streets and other public spaces right is fundamental to creating an urban environment that works, in a way that connects the development to the surrounding area. If this is wrong then the place will not be successful, however well designed the individual buildings are.

52. A successful structure of public spaces will make it easy to travel through the site by a variety of routes. The site should be integrated (both physically and visually) with its surroundings. The urban design term often used to describe the desired structure of streets is 'permeable'. Routes should first be designed to create permeability. Once that is achieved, consideration should be given to the treatment

of them to ensure that the space within the site is easily read and the opportunities on the site understood (it should be 'legible').

53. People use particular elements of a space to help them navigate and 'read' it. Streets, focal points such as junctions and squares, landmarks and edges should all be present on the site in a considered way that makes the space easily understood and remembered. Visibility along a street should be maximised and the appearance of the development should be visually appropriate so that people understand what is available. Open spaces such as squares should be related to important public buildings if there are any. Main routes should be made to look more important, for example by their width, the design of buildings along them and planting. Similarly, junctions should be treated differently.

PROPOSED ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

Routelayout, access and circulation

54. General good urban design principles must be applied to the location of new routes in the site. There should be a variety of routes through the site and attractions and facilities of the site should be clearly visible along these routes. This can be achieved when it is obvious where routes are and where they lead, which is helped by having continuous routes. To maximise people's choices travelling around the site and to ensure that the routes are easy to read, a pattern of roads that are connected and relatively straight is preferable, which also references the surrounding street pattern of Summertown. Many of the perimeter blocks that create the street pattern in Summertown are larger than could be accommodated on the site, although some to the north are smaller. Because of the site's size, shape and proposed uses, the principle will need to be adapted, but keeping in mind the advantageous aims of creating a clear distinction between public and private space and enabling a consistent building line that makes places feel safer and that creates a better relationship between buildings and the public realm of the street.

55. It is important that the entrance to the site is clear and attractive. Diamond Place should provide the principal access into the site and the safety and ease of use of this junction for pedestrians and cyclists should be prioritised. The clear view into the site from Banbury Road and also out of the site to the attractive buildings on the west side of Banbury Road should be retained as far as possible. There will be an increase in vehicle movements along Diamond Place, as the two public car parks that are currently located on the site are expected to be combined and so the amount of public parking accessed from Diamond Place currently will be approximately doubled, and there will be additional traffic generated by the new housing. The availability of so many facilities nearby as well as public transport will mean that a

limited number of car journeys will be created by the new housing. Parking standards for housing are discussed below.

A route across the site from Diamond Place to the east side of the Ferry car park will enable a good connection to the Summer Fields School playing field beyond. This will be an important connection as it is expected that the site is to be used as a temporary car park and later for housing. Development of the Summer Fields School site offers potential for improved pedestrian and cycle access to Cherwell School. There is also potential for connecting the principal route through Diamond Place with the Sustrans cycle route to the east. These possible improved routes should be explored through any future development of the Summer Fields School site. Diamond Place should be designed with this longer term possibility in mind.

56. To improve connectivity with the surrounding area there should be a clear route for cyclists and pedestrians from Ferry Pool Road, connecting to the route to Diamond Place. However, it should not be possible for vehicles to cross the site using this route as a rat run to avoid the traffic lights on the corner of Banbury Road and Marston Ferry Road. It is likely that two-way vehicle access to Ewert Place will remain practical for delivery and service vehicles and for access.

Pedestrians and cyclists

57. To ensure permeability for all users, it is most efficient if routes are shared. Spaces will be more flexible if designed for everyone. The space can then be segregated or not, depending on needs at the time, although priority should be given to pedestrians rather than vehicles however roadspace is designed.

Parking standards to minimise the need for new vehicle movements to the site

58. Transport strategy in the city is to encourage travel by sustainable modes. Because of the existing pressures on the access points described in the context section above it is also particularly desirable to minimise the number of new car journeys generated. It is important that the opportunities are taken to take advantage of the excellent location of the site to encourage walking, cycling and public transport.

59. The Sites and Housing Plan sets the standards for residential car parking. It says that 'Planning permission will be granted for car-free or low-parking houses and flats in locations that have excellent access to public transport, are in a controlled parking zone, and are within 800 metres of a local supermarket or equivalent facilities. The Diamond Place site meets all these criteria. The Sites and Housing Plan refers to disabled parking. On sites of 20 or more homes, disabled parking should be

provided for at least 5% of dwellings. Wheelchair accessible or adaptable homes on this site should also provide allocated disabled parking.

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT BRIEF FRAMEWORK FOR ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

Route Layout and Design:

- Street design should give priority to pedestrians rather than vehicles.
- Good urban design principles should be followed in designing routes to ensure they are permeable and legible.
- Principles set out in Manual for Streets should inform design.

Access and Circulation:

- The development should be connected to the surrounding area, including the pedestrian access to Cherwell School and vehicle access to a temporary car park and potential future housing development to the east of the Ferry Pool Car Park.
- A Transport Assessment will be required with any application to show how the access and circulation strategy minimises impacts on traffic flow on Banbury Road and Marston Ferry Road.
- Planning applications must show how consideration has been given to access for service vehicles, including delivery vehicles, emergency vehicles and dustbin lorries.
- Any planning application will need to show how coaches taking children to the leisure centre will be accommodated.

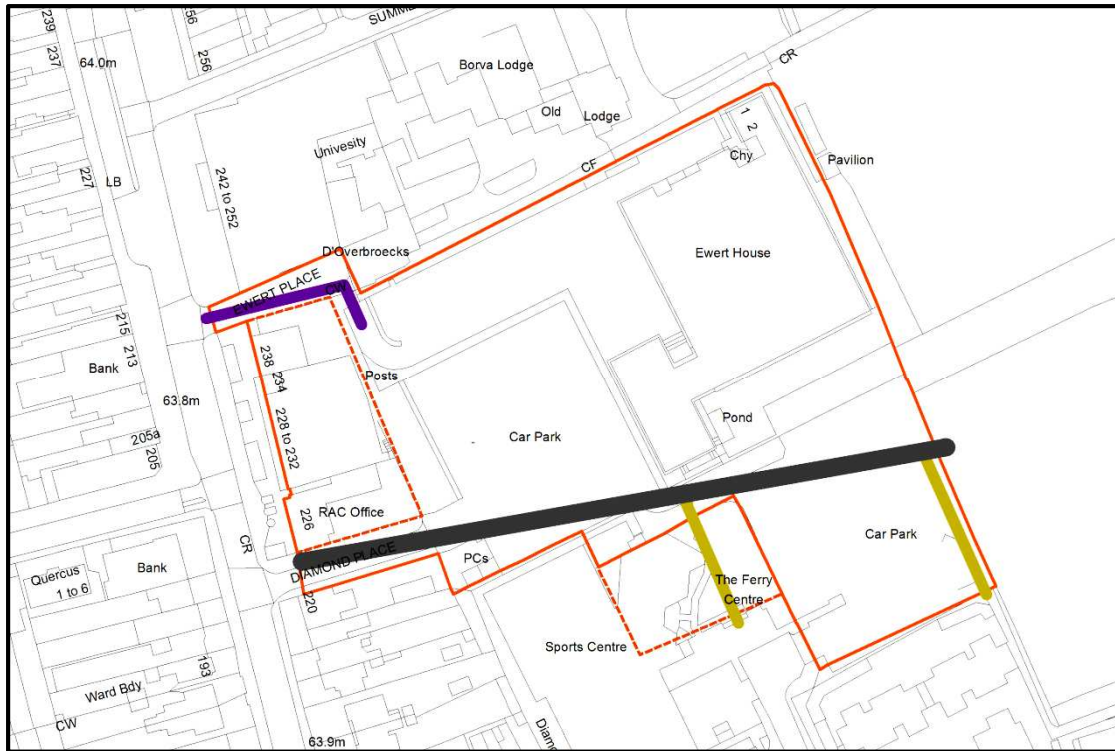
Residential Parking Standards:

- The total number of parking spaces should equal no more than the equivalent of 2 spaces per 3-bedroom dwellings, although a lower amount should also be considered. For flexibility, spaces may be allocated to 2- or 3-bedroom dwellings. Provision should be made for the existing electric car club vehicle based at Diamond Place, and the possibility of expanding the car club provision investigated. The elderly accommodation should meet requirements for disabled parking, but other than that is considered highly suitable for being car-free. This makes efficient use of space and encourages travel by sustainable modes.
- Residential cycle parking should be provided at the level set out in Policy HP15 of the Sites and Housing Plan (or any policy that supersedes this), ie there should be at least 2 spaces for dwellings of

up to 2 bedrooms and at least 3 spaces for dwellings of 3 or more bedrooms.

60. Figure H below shows a potential principal route for vehicles that would enable movement from the Banbury Road to the temporary car park site to the east of the Ferry Car Park. The route will need to curve or have a dog-leg to enable development on the south side that wraps around the edge of the leisure centre. Ewert Place will not be a main entrance to the site but access from this road will be possible for access/servicing vehicles, or it may be beneficial to have one way car access and pedestrian and cycle access from here linking to other routes on the site, depending on the proposed layout of uses. High quality pedestrian and cycle access to the east of the Ferry Car Park will enable connection to the existing pedestrian and cycle path that leads to Cherwell school and the Marston Ferry Road. Access should remain along Ferry Pool Road to the leisure centre for coaches and servicing vehicles and for access to existing developments. Pedestrians and cyclists should be able to continue along this route to connect with the principal new route, allowing a cut through to Banbury Road or new development to the east. However it is important that cars are not able to use this route as a rat-run to avoid the lights at the junction of Banbury Road and Marston Ferry Road.

Figure H diagram of key routes and accesses that should be provided for in any new development



Primary Route

Minor or Pedestrian and Cycle Only Route

Access and Servicing Only Route

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

CONTEXT

61. A character assessment of the Diamond Place site has been carried out using the Oxford City Council Character Assessment Toolkit. This is available as Background Paper 1. This section contains a brief summary of this and considers further the character of the surrounding area.

Public Realm, trees and landscaping

62. The surface level car parks on the site do not create a particularly attractive public realm. Although the public car parks do constitute a large space that is for use of the public, they are not an attractive public space to linger in and enjoy. The space is designed for cars. The demand for a space to meet, gather or just stop is evidenced by the frequent use of the grassed area outside the community centre.

63. The public realm of much of the surrounding area is very attractive. There are few public open spaces in the surrounding area; it is the streets that constitute the main areas of public realm. The streets exhibit many of the key features identified as important in creating a successful public realm. There are continuous building frontages, a clear distinction between public and private spaces and 'active frontages', ie they have plenty of doors and windows facing the street.



64. Because most buildings adjoining the site are related to surrounding streets the site is faced by a large amount of blank façade in the form of solid walls and fences. There is a real opportunity for new development to relate better to

surrounding buildings in order to enhance the character of the area and create better public spaces.

65. The wider area is characterised by significant numbers of trees, many of which are mature trees. Some of these are in gardens or in private spaces, such as at Summer Fields School. In residential streets most visible trees are in front gardens rather than planted in the street. However, there is also a significant amount of tree planting along the Banbury Road shopping area, which has attractive trees on both sides of the street.

66. The site itself contains trees of a variety of species including beech, birch, cedar, cherry, false acacia, hornbeam, laburnum, Norway maple, sycamore and tulip tree. Most of the trees have been planted to help landscape the car parks. Their value is collective, and while in the present context of the site use they make an important contribution to visual amenity in the area, it is unlikely that they are suitable for being retained within new development.

67. However, there are some large mature trees within the site which are significant to the area as individuals, in particular the false acacia which stands on the north side of the access from Diamond Place; the cedar tree which stands near to the entrance of D'Overbroeks College; and the sycamore tree which stands in the south east corner of the site near to the footpath from Marston Road. These are marked on the aerial photo below (Figure I). This photo also shows that the planting on the northern edge of the Ferry car park follows the line of the hedgerow between the school fields to the east. It could be a remainder of an old field boundary, and incorporating this feature into the design should be considered.

Figure I: Significant individual trees



Building scale and form

68. The surrounding area contains buildings of a variety of heights. Most residential streets have 2 (or 2.5) storey houses, although there are also many 3 and some 3.5 storey residential buildings, both houses and flats and in newer and older styles. Taller houses tend to be found along the principal route of Banbury Road. The greater width of principal streets such as the Banbury Road can mean that a taller building will be less likely to dominate the street or to create excessive shading. The western side of the Banbury Road shopping area has mainly 2 and 2.5 storey buildings, allowing evening sun to reach the eastern side (which is where the widest pavement is located, creating an area of open space). The eastern side of Banbury Road mostly contains modern buildings with offices above and retail beneath. These vary from 3-4 storeys, the uses they are designed for making these taller than residential buildings with the same number of storeys.

69. The roofline does not vary much along the western side of the Banbury Road, but there is not a continuous roofline and there is a lot of variety in heights of the gable fronted windows. There is a mix of roof types in the area, with the newer blocks on the eastern side of Banbury Road having flat roofs or a very low pitch and older buildings tending to have gabled roofs with a high pitch, many of those on the Banbury Road having a variety of dormers and gabled roofs over dormers. These create a lot of interest and variety in the street scene.

70. Most traditional buildings in the area are brick, mainly red brick but not exclusively. Many also have stone detailing around windows and doors. Roofs are mainly tile or slate. The newer buildings on the east side of Banbury Road shopping area are also mainly brick (of a flat brown colour), and also include some mainly glass buildings and some with concrete.

VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

71. The quality of the built environment will have a strong effect on how people use and feel about the space. It is important that good urban design principles are followed so that the space is successful. Sound general principles on urban design are repeated in much guidance such as the Urban Design Compendium and Buildings for Life, and the proposed development should reflect these. Good design starts from an understanding of context. Development on the site should seem to be a part of the surrounding area, drawing from its positive features and taking opportunities to enhance the site and enrich the area. Analysis of the site context should form the basis of the design concept and that should be made clear in the design and access statement.

72. Development of the site provides an excellent opportunity to create a new public open space to meet needs in the area. Conditions on the site will be ideal for creating an open space with activity and interest, with enough passers-by to mean it is well-used and not neglected, yet also offering more calm and tranquillity than can be found on the busy Banbury Road.

73. The place will be varied, safe and attractive, making it a well-loved part of the district centre. Development on the site should be distinctive and vibrant with active frontages to promote surveillance and maximise the amount of activity that takes place in the public realm.

74. A good mix of uses will also help the 'robustness' of the development, as will maximising the flexibility of spaces so that there is potential to use space for different purposes. It is important that development is designed to accommodate future changes in use, lifestyle and demography. The development should also be designed for energy and resource efficiency and create flexibility in the use of property and public spaces.

URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

Public realm, trees and landscaping

75. Development of this site presents an excellent opportunity to provide a popular new public open space. There is clearly a need in the area for a public space in which to gather, as evidenced by the popularity of the small grassed area by the community centre. Outdoor seating related to cafes on the eastern side of Banbury Road where there is a wide pavement is also popular.

76. The Sites and Housing Plan requires that 10% of the site area of a housing development is used for public open space. On mixed use schemes, the calculation is based on the area of the site used for housing. In this case, where much housing may be provided above other uses, the total area of the site that includes housing at any level should be taken as the basis of the calculation. As the percentage is usually based on site area, the calculation of site area that includes housing should incorporate roads, accesses and off-street parking. Based on this development brief, this should be an area of over 800m². Added to that should be additional space required to replace any loss of the public space related to the community centre. It is important that the final size of the open space proposed should be enough to deliver a useable space that meets needs.

77. The most appropriate character of a public open space will depend on the character of the development and needs in the area. Oxford City Council's Green

Space Strategy 2013 can be used to assess need for parks. It outlines a number of aspirational walking distance standards to various sized parks. Mapping carried out as part of the Strategy shows that Diamond Place is outside of the aspirational walking distance of 400m to formal and informal local sites and 750m to formal and informal neighbourhood sites.

78. The development site is not large enough to deliver a park that meets the definition of a neighbourhood park (which are generally larger than the site itself). It could only deliver a Local Park, which may be a green recreation area or a small playground. There is potential for the space to meet a variety of needs and aspirations in the area. The idea of the open space being delivered as a town square fits with the mix of uses expected on the development site, which will include car parking and other district centre uses that draw people into the site.

79. The open space should be creatively designed to meet the needs of the whole community. Public open space is needed as a place to gather and stop and rest. This also helps reinforce the purpose of visiting a district centre and will add to its success. Although it could incorporate outdoor seating for cafes, it is important that there are also public areas of seating. The space should be large enough and flexible enough to hold public events, such as markets and street theatre.

80. The space should feel welcoming to all, which means that opportunities for children's play should be designed in. This does not have to mean formal pieces of play equipment, which might not be in keeping with the design. Spontaneous and incidental play is equally valid, and features of the open space should be designed with consideration of how a multi-purpose function may be achieved. For example, a small area of amphitheatre-style seating would create a gathering space for all ages, a performance space and could also be designed for children to walk and balance on and other informal play. Variations in surfacing or a painted games area, for example mazes and hopscotch, will allow play without compromising the flexibility of the space to be used for markets or performances.

81. New development should exploit the opportunity to add greenery and create a sanctuary from the busy radial route of Banbury Road. Planting will be very important in the space to soften the landscape of the busy urban area and to bring something additional to the area. As well as trees and potentially grass, this should include other imaginative planting and natural features. A space that stimulates the senses will be appealing for all ages and planting that creates different smells will have wide appeal. Access to music and sound could also help enrich the feel of the space. A water feature would create sound as well as being visually attractive and having further potential for play. A quieter more intimate area may be created with trees, arbours and trellising.

82. The open space should be designed as an integral part of the new development, drawing inspiration from the surrounding area and enhancing its environment and offer. It should reflect the character of the area as a quieter part of the district centre. Public art pieces will help create character and a sense of place and sculptures may create an opportunity for play. The palette of materials used should reflect those used in the new development and the surrounding area.

83. If well located the space will be a focal point of the development. The ideal location for the public open space is discussed in the layout section below.

84. Although a new public open space will be the focus of public realm on the site, all new streets should be treated as public spaces that should be attractive to be in. It will be important that street furniture is of high quality that works well in the space. The new street furniture on the Banbury Road is well designed and will be a good starting point when considering the style of street furniture to incorporate into the development site.

85. Tree planting will be a very important feature of the development. Trees should be a part of the public realm design on the principal street(s) in the development. The large, significant individual mature trees on the site should be retained if possible. There must be over-riding reasons that provide a robust justification for removal of any of the trees. However, there may be significant technical challenges in developing around the false acacia in particular. This tree is located to the north of the Diamond Place entrance, where there is a change in levels that may impede successful development of the site. The many high quality and valuable trees near the site along its northern and eastern boundaries must not be harmed by development.



Building scale and form

86. The relationship between building facades and the public realm is important in creating attractive public spaces. Attention to the scale and form of the buildings can help to ensure that a space is readable, that it is comfortable to be in, without excessive shading for example, and that creation of active frontages helps it feels safe and vibrant.

87. Maximising the amount of 'active frontage' onto a street can help ensure a place feels safer because of the perception of surveillance of the street, and it can also make it feel livelier. At ground floor level there should be plenty of entrances and windows to occupied space. Currently, the site is faced by blank facades on nearly all sides as development faces away from the site. Ideally, these should be eliminated with back-to-back development. It is optimal that building fronts face other building fronts, although given the constraints of the size and shape of the site this may not be possible. If it is not feasible, the opposite façade should be very active street frontage (many entrances, preferably variation in uses, detailing on the frontage, no blank facades), or alternatively any backs of buildings not facing areas of public realm and that will be blank facades should face the blank facades that already face the site. The priority is that active frontages face the key new public spaces created on the site.

88. Buildings heights will have an effect on how the development is experienced. They will also impact on the surrounding area. Higher buildings can become attractive features of development. Higher building heights can also make efficient use of space. However, high buildings are not a feature of the area and would not be in keeping with surrounding development. There will not be major routes through the site of a width that could accommodate a very tall building without it having a negative impact on the public realm, by overbearing and excessive shading. The space that would be required around the building to prevent these potential negative effects on this relatively small site would negate the advantages of saving space and would not help to create an attractive street. The highest building height should be similar to the higher buildings already located in the district centre. Beyond the site to the east is open fields, with some potential for residential development. Lower heights should reflect the more open character to the east of the site and potential for future housing development.

89. The ultimate choice of heights will need to be explained in the design statement. The buildings should not be higher than those in the surrounding area. 4 or 3.5 storey buildings will be appropriate on the main routes through the site. The change in levels means that 4 storey buildings are likely to be appropriate near to the existing block fronting Banbury Road that includes the Co-op. This building is 9.8

metres high from ground to eaves, but is on ground raised above the height of the majority of the site. There should be a variety of heights across the site. Lower buildings should be considered on western sides of streets and public spaces, particularly where they are narrow, to avoid creating excessive shading and to allow evening light into the space.

90. Irrespective of overall height, the tops of buildings need to be carefully designed because of the contribution they make to the overall skyline. Consideration should be given to where the development might be seen from, and whether views out might be possible. Before its development Summertown provided good views of the central Oxford skyline. The potential for a publicly accessible view from the multi-storey car park should be considered. If the development might be viewed from viewing places in the city centre, development should provide an attractive skyline feature.



Example of roofline heights used to create interest and articulation of different uses on a terrace in Witney.

There should be interest in the roofline. The rooscape should not dominate by its height or by any unbroken mass. The bulk, form and grain should complement the surroundings.

91. The selection of materials should seek to recognise and contribute to the particular location, rather than considering the building in isolation. Large blocks and terraces should have visual interest, ensuring that there is physical articulation of a building's separate uses and of separate plots.

This could be through use of chimneys, water drainage pipes and guttering, small set-backs and so on. The repetition of architectural elements such as shapes, windows and structural bays should be considered. There should be variety in the roofline, but it should not create an uncomfortable lack of continuity. The architectural design should relate well to the public realm through use of windows and entrances.

Parking provision-design consideration

92. Public car parking is an important use of the site that helps to support the district centre. Surface level car parks are not efficient use of the space; neither are they a very attractive use of the space. The prime location of the site means that it should be able to deliver so much more. To make a more efficient use of the space

and to create a more attractive public realm, a different parking solution will be needed.

93. A multi-storey car park is likely to be the most practical way of providing public parking on the site while allowing other uses to be developed. The opportunity to create an enhanced public realm that is provided by the removal of surface level car parks should be exploited. This means that a lot of thought needs to be given to how the multi-storey car park is designed into the site.

94. The advantage of extra decks is considerable in terms of the reduction in overall footprint of the car park and freeing up of space for other uses. However, it is important that the car park is not of a height that would be too dominating in a district centre surrounded by open space and residential development. Car park storeys are generally lower than storeys of other buildings so there may be potential for up to three decks in some parts of the site (or four storeys, which would be lower than four storey flats and commercial buildings in the area). However, nearer the sensitive boundaries of the site, in particular the boundary with the dormitories of Summer Fields School to the north, a two-deck (3-storey) car park would be more likely to be appropriate.

95. Careful design of the car park will be vital. It must be designed to ensure it feels safe, for example with good and even lighting, minimised visual obstruction and clear pedestrian routes and signage. Furthermore, the visual impact of the car park will be as much related to its design as its height. In order to create a new development that integrates with the surrounding area and that provides new attractive public realm to enhance the district centre, careful thought will need to be given to the design of the car park.

96. It might be possible to 'wrap' other buildings around the edges of the car park, which would hide it from view. This should be investigated. To achieve this effect it may be necessary to create a large block. If this is the case, design features may be needed to visually break up the block (as described in paragraph 93 above). It is also important if using this approach to ensure that a good living or working environment is created in the surrounding building.

97. Rather than the whole car park being 'wrapped' by development, it may be that other buildings may be used to screen one or two sides, in particular to avoid the blank façade of the multi-storey car park fronting a street or public open space. The blank facades can be treated in a variety of ways to improve their aesthetic and to screen views outwards and aid privacy. Techniques may include the use of 'green walls' (which would require a maintenance plan) and decorative use of a variety of materials such as woods, acrylic and metals, for example perforated or coloured

panels and louvres. Careful choice of materials may also help visually incorporate the car park into the surrounding development.



98. Residential parking provision will have an impact on the overall appearance of the development and feel of the public realm. It will need to be carefully considered. As well as being of benefit in terms of encouraging use of more sustainable modes, low residential parking provision will also be of benefit to the overall functioning and aesthetics of the scheme. To reduce the impact of private residential parking further, it may also be possible to provide private residential parking within the new multi-storey on one of the levels or a section of a level.

99. Generally, private residential parking is provided within the curtilage of the building (including in a garage, as undercroft parking, or on-plot parking to the front or side), on street at the front of the building or in a forecourt. A combination of all these options may be used. It is attention to detail that will result in a successful provision of private residential parking.

100. Garages must be a well-designed part of the development and should not dominate entrances and building frontages or prevent active frontages. Space for planting will also be important. Similar considerations apply to undercroft parking. Parking to the front of dwellings, either within the plot or on-street, must be carefully and practically landscaped, with planting and changes of materials. If on-plot parking to the front of properties is considered there must be a strong boundary treatment so the division of public and private realm is clear. Courtyard parking may be acceptable. It is important it is in a position whereby it does not dominate the street-scene. It is also important that it is overlooked and feels safe and secure. Courtyard parking can end up unused or it can remove activity from the street as only back entrances to properties are used. These risks will be minimised in this

location because of the many nearby facilities and likely high use of public transport, walking and cycling.



Environmental considerations

101. Development on the site should be carefully designed to limit as far as possible any negative impacts of the buildings on the environment and human health. Building sustainably has environmental benefits such as lowering demand for energy and lowering emission of greenhouse gases, and it also helps to create pleasant living and working environments. Renewable resources should be exploited, for example through maximising solar gain and by incorporating on-site renewable energy generation.

102. The City Council has developed policies and a supporting SPD and Technical Advice Notes to ensure high standards in terms of energy efficiency. On-site renewable energy generation of 20% of total energy demand is expected for larger developments. Attention must also be given to careful siting and design of buildings to reduce energy consumption, for example through selection of materials based on consideration of their environmental impact over time, which will relate to factors including their extraction and production, building construction and maintenance, and from where they are sourced. A Natural Resource Impact Analysis and Energy Statement will need to be completed as appropriate.

103. Much of the site is covered by hard surfacing currently. That means that its development presents an excellent opportunity to incorporate features that will reduce the amount of rainwater run-off. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be incorporated into the development. SuDS may include a wide range of potential measures. Consideration should be given to selecting techniques that have wide benefits, for example enhancement of visual and recreational amenity. There may be the opportunity to use plants and trees on green roofs, in rain gardens and so on.

As well as reducing water run-off, green roofs may provide insulation and create a wildlife habitat.

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT BRIEF FRAMEWORK FOR URBAN DESIGN

- **Established urban design principles such as contained in the Urban Design Compendium should be applied to ensure that a public realm is created that people have a positive experience of using.**

Summary of principles to be followed in designing public realm

- **Street furniture should be of good quality and designed to fit with its surroundings, for example the new street furniture on Banbury Road. It should be designed to consider the needs of the elderly and disabled.**
- **There should be a clear distinction between public and private space, with clearly defined street frontages.**
- **Any application for planning permission will need to include a survey of existing trees within or adjacent to the site, including an assessment of their quality and value and a detailed assessment of the constraints they impose on site layout and use in accordance with British Standard 5837:2012 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction; Recommendations'. An Arboricultural Impact Statement which identifies the effect of proposed development on all trees, together with a Tree Protection Plan and an Arboricultural Method Statement must also be included.**

Summary of principles to be followed in designing building scale and form

- **The SPD should require any planning application to show how consideration has been given to creating a maximum amount of active frontage. Large blocks should present their shorter side and main entrance to the most important street. If they are likely to have a side that is a blank edge, especially if it is not a public facility such as a health centre or community facility, it should be set back from the street corners in order to allow active frontages along its blank side.**
- **The City Council will consider whether a proposal may have a**

negative impact upon neighbouring properties, in particular whether a proposal would cause overbearing or affect daylight and sunlight to nearby properties. Building heights should vary depending on the street type. The effect of higher buildings on sunlight to the street should be considered, and set-backs may be required. Taller buildings can be over-bearing on a narrow street, and also create too much shading. On north-south aligned streets it is important that buildings on the western frontage do not block sunlight to the eastern side. The wider principal route will be more suitable for higher buildings.

- The height of buildings should vary along the same street frontage.

Summary of principles for design of the public car park

- Any planning application will need to show that consideration has been given to how the design of the car park fits with the overall design of the scheme and also creates a safe and easy to use internal environment. Consideration should be given to provision of electric charging points.
- Where possible the car park should be wrapped by other uses.
- Attention should be given to the decoration and screening of any blank wall.
- The opportunity should be taken for the roof or upper deck to enhance the roofscape

Summary of environmental principles to be followed

- Existing planning policies for energy and resource efficiency should be followed. Buildings should meet the current standards of energy efficiency and renewable energy in place at the time of reserved matters applications.
- Development must incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to manage any increases in surface water drainage.

Layout-location of uses

104. An indicative block plan has been produced that shows how the proposed uses for the site might fit and work together (Figure J below). The indicative layout applies the framework set out in this development brief. The positive features of this layout are:

- New development obscures the ‘inactive edges’ that exist currently around the site. New routes are faced by development that will create activity and interest in the public realm.
- Development will wrap the car park on the two sides that face important new areas of public realm, hiding it from view. The car park is close to the existing shopping area. The pedestrian access should lead out close to the new public open space, most likely through an archway through the new retail and residential block. A new ‘community hub’ would have an entrance as shown on the map, which will be close to the pedestrian route from the car park and which interacts well with the new public space. Good lighting and clear routes will be vital.
- The location of the car park utilises the change in levels to mean that a four storey car park with approximately 270 spaces can be accommodated without the height being dominating. This means that the overall footprint and land-take of the public car parking is minimal.
- The residential development close to the sensitive northern boundary with Summer Fields School is set back, which along with the significant drop in levels at this boundary means it should not be intrusive. Trees already provide some screening here too. There is potential for more trees to be planted to create better screening, especially as younger trees will provide screening at a level above the wall and below the tops of the mature trees.
- The layout gives the option of vehicle access to the car park being off Diamond Place or Ewert House, or to have one-way in and one-way out access. Vehicles won’t be drawn through the site. The pedestrian access will be separate, for safety and to exit close to the public open space, which will help create a lively well used space, and will also draw people past new retail development.
- The open space is not a hidden away feature. It is located so it will be an attractive and welcoming focal point of the district centre. It is south facing and will have a good micro-climate.
- The location of retail next to the public space will enable cafes or restaurants to have attractive outdoor seating.
- Routes allow circulation around the site, maximise choices. They join with existing accesses, including the pedestrian access to Cherwell School, and also allow future access through to the east.
- Pedestrians and cyclists will be able to cut through the site from Ferry Pool Road to Diamond Place. Road design would prevent cars using this route as a rat run to avoid the junction of Marston Ferry Road/ Banbury Road. However, the turning circle at the end of the Ferry Pool Road might not be large enough

for coaches dropping school children off for swimming lessons or for road cleaning and emergency vehicles. Some kind of gate onto Diamond Place might be necessary for these vehicles.

Figure J: indicative site layout block plan



Key

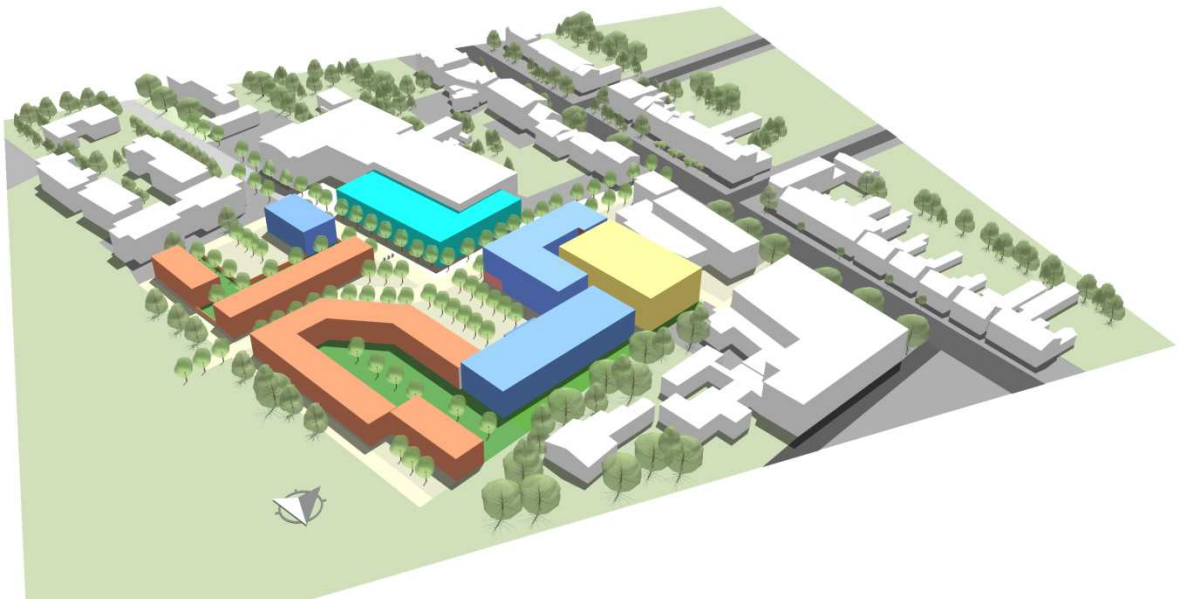
-  Retail with flats above
-  Multi-storey car park
-  Community hub – extended leisure centre, community uses and GP surgery
-  Residential (flats)
-  Residential (houses)
-  Private amenity space
-  Pedestrian access

The following diagrams show 3-dimensional illustrations of the indicative block-plan from a variety of angles.

Key

- Retail
- Multi-storey car park
- Community hub – extended leisure centre, community uses and GP surgery
- Residential (flats)
- Residential (houses)
- Private amenity space







APPENDIX 1

Diamond Place – Non Residential Parking Standards

Development Type	Local Plan Parking Standards	Development Expected	Standard for this amount of development in a TDA*
Retail	Food retail: 1 space per 50m ² up to 1,000m ² ; 1 space per 14m ² thereafter Non-Food Retail (A1 + A2): 1 space per 50m ²	1,000m ²	5 spaces
Health Centre	2 spaces per treatment room or 1 space per 100m ² Plus 1 space per 2 staff	1,300m ²	3.25 spaces + staff spaces
Community Centre	1 space per 5 seats or 1 space per 10m ² of seating/assembly space	170m ²	4.25 spaces

* Transport District Area (TDA) - parking standards reduces to 25%

APPENDIX 2

Balance of dwellings requirements

Core Strategy: Policy CS23 Mix of Housing states that:

'Planning permission will only be granted for residential development that delivers a balanced mix of housing to meet the projected future household need, both within each site and across Oxford as a whole. Mix of housing relates to the size, type and tenure of dwellings to provide for a range of households, such as families with children, single people, older people and people with specialist housing needs. Appropriate housing mixes for each neighbourhood Area are set out in the Balance of Dwellings SPD. The City centre and district centres will be expected to deliver higher densities.'

The Balance of Dwellings SPD sets out the following as the appropriate mix for a district centre: 15-25% 1-bed, 35-50% 2-bed, 20-30% 3-bed, 10-20% 4+bed.

If guidance is updated before an application is submitted the updated mix should be followed.

Contact:

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