

Oxford City Council

# Report from Marston Road Design Workshop (18.03.23)

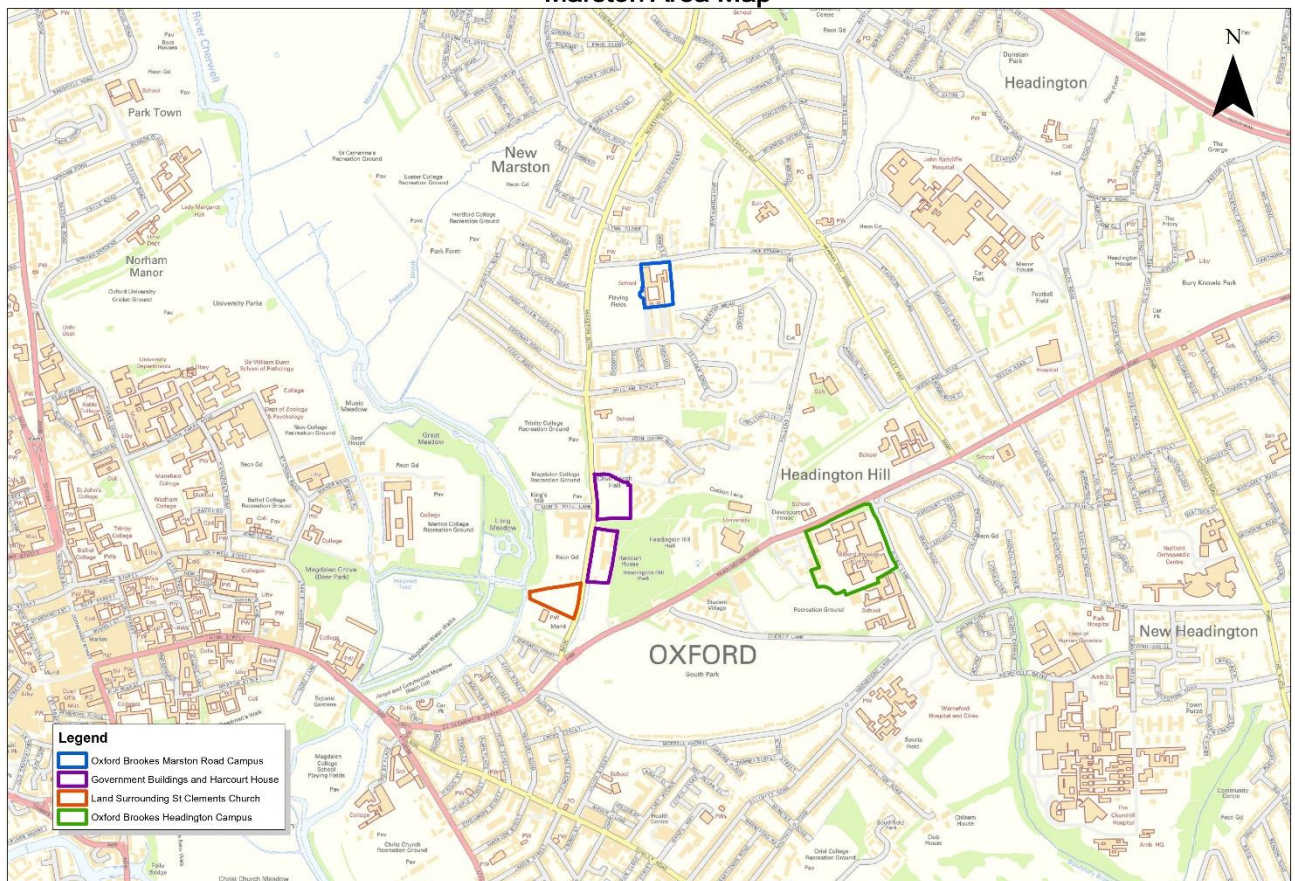
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# Executive Summary

- A design workshop was organised by Design South East (DSE) and Oxford City Council (OCC), with the aim of gathering local knowledge, experience and aspirations to support the drafting of development policies in the Oxford Local Plan 2040.
- Three sites that were considered as part of the workshop are allocated for development in the Oxford Local Plan 2036 (OLP2036) and are to be taken forward as development sites in the Oxford Local Plan 2040 (OLP 2040). The sites are located on Marston Road and are in the Marston Road and Old Road Area of Focus as set out in the draft OLP 2040 Plan. The sites are:
  - **Site 1: Land surrounding St Clement's Church (Policy SP18 OLP 2036)**
  - **Site 2: Government Buildings and Harcourt House (Policy SP16 OLP 2036).**
  - **Site 3: Oxford Brookes University Marston Road Campus (Policy SP50 OLP 2036).**

Marston Area Map



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## Venue and Participants

- The workshop was held on the morning of Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2023 in the Abercrombie Building at Oxford Brookes University's Headington Campus, and ran from 09:30 until 13:30.
- A total of 22 people attended the workshop, in addition to 5 members of staff from OCC and 3 session organisers from DSE.

### Workshop Structure

- The participants were each assigned to small groups, with each group focusing on a specific site. There were six groups in total, with two groups looking at each of the three sites.
- The workshop was divided into three parts, with group discussion sessions held either side of an in-person visit to the three sites that were the subject of the workshop. Three exercises were carried out over the course of the discussion sessions and the feedback from these exercises is summarised below.

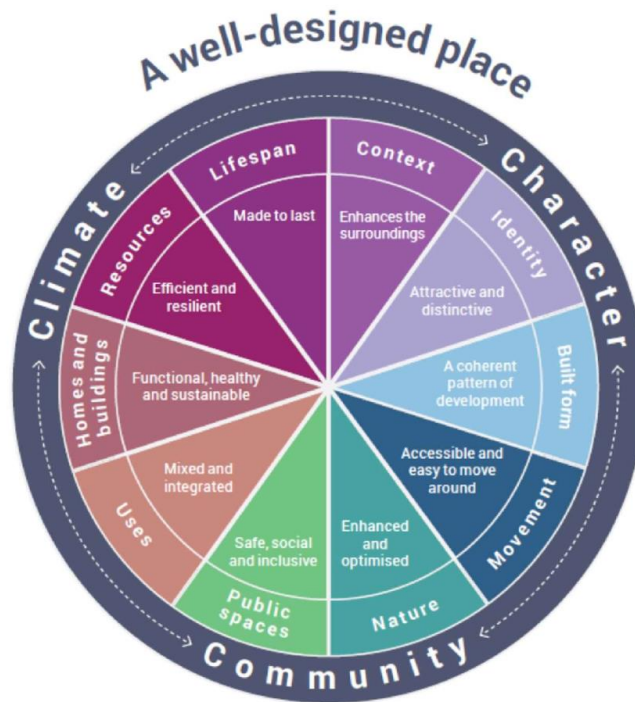
### Summary of Outcomes: Exercise 1 ('Good design is...')

- Exercise 1 was an icebreaker exercise undertaken at the beginning of the workshop. The exercise took the form of an open-ended question in which groups were asked to list what they thought generally constituted good design, without reference to any specific site.
- **Ease of use, responsiveness to people's needs and inclusivity** was the most common characteristic of good design according to participants, with all groups referring to the importance of these features in their comments. Other common responses which emerged from the exercise were the importance of **acknowledging existing local context** and of **environmental sustainability**, with a majority of participating groups referring to these themes in their responses.

### Summary of Outcomes: Exercise 2 (What did the group value/dislike about the place and what aspects could be improved?)



- The groups each visited their respective sites and upon returning were asked to list those things that they liked and disliked about the places they visited, along with those aspects that they felt could be improved about their sites.
- Following the ten characteristics of well-designed places as set out in the National Design Guide (see below), the groups visiting **Site 1** valued the current mix of **Uses** in the area, with amenities such as a school, scout hut and pub contributing to a strong sense of community **Identity**. The opportunities provided for **Movement** through pedestrian and cycle connections to open space and to the city centre were also appreciated, while the presence of **Public Spaces** and **Nature**, in the form of the existing areas of green space around the site were also seen as positive characteristics of the area.



### The Ten Characteristics of Well-Designed Places (National Design Guide, 2019)

- The groups visiting **Site 2** also valued the presence of **Nature** and greenery, in the form of the adjacent Headington Hill Park, along with the opportunities for **Movement** between the site and the rest of Headington provided by Cuckoo Lane. The **Built Form** of the existing Harcourt House building was also seen as a positive characteristic of the site.
- In common with the other two sites, those groups visiting **Site 3** spoke positively of the presence of **Nature** around their site, in the form of the adjacent Milham Ford Nature Park and other nearby green spaces. The **Built Form** of the existing campus building, the **Movement** and connectivity to the wider area, and the mix of **Uses** nearby were also appreciated by these groups.
- As can be seen in these responses, there was a large degree of overlap in those characteristics which were most valued by the groups, possibly due to the close proximity of the three sites to one another. **Nature**, **Movement**, nearby **Uses** and the **Built Form** of existing buildings in the area were all popular responses to this question.
- Similarly, the most commonly held dislike between the groups related to the high level of traffic and dominance of cars along Marston Road, particularly towards the road's southern end, where two of the sites are located. Improvements to pedestrian and cycle infrastructure in this area were popular requests, while guests also frequently spoke of a desire for new and improved foot and cycle connections to other parts of Oxford, particularly the city centre.

### Summary of Outcomes: Exercise 3 (Key Design Principles)

- In the final exercise, the groups were asked to provide their own key design principles for any prospective development of their sites and these have been summarised below:

#### **Site 1:**

1. The development should be set back from Marston Road and other site boundaries.
2. Pedestrian and cycle access from the site should be improved and expanded, particularly towards the city centre.
3. No additional traffic should be generated because of any development.
4. The design and scale should relate to that of St Clements Church and the nearby Islamic Centre.
5. Biodiversity and nature on the site should be retained and improved and natural drainage methods should be used (SuDS).

#### **Site 2:**

1. A pedestrian crossing should be provided and traffic calming measures installed on Marston Road.
2. Passive surveillance of streets and spaces should be included in design for the purpose of improving safety and security.
3. The development should respond to the context of the site and the existing Harcourt House building.
4. The development should be set back from Marston Road and maintain an open, green frontage without a high wall.
5. Pedestrian and cycle connections to the wider area should be improved.
6. New community amenities such as a café should be provided.

#### **Site 3:**

1. The frontage and quad of the existing building should be retained and any redevelopment should be focused on the buildings to the rear.
2. Drainage should utilise the natural slope of the land from the campus building down to Milham Ford.
3. Mature trees and greenery around the site should be maintained and enhanced.
4. Improved access should be provided between the site and Milham Ford.
5. The scale and height of the existing buildings should be maintained for any new development.

6. A mix of uses should be retained on the site rather than solely new housing.

### **Summary of Feedback from Workshop Participants**

- Guests were given an opportunity to complete feedback forms at the end of the session, with 5 questions listed on each form. The questions were as follows:  
**Q1.** 'Did you enjoy the workshop and find it interesting?' (Guests were also encouraged to give a score from 1-5 with 1 representing the most negative response and 5 being the most positive.)  
**Q2.** 'Was there anything you didn't like about the workshop?'  
**Q3.** 'Do you feel that you were able to contribute and were listened to?'  
**Q4.** 'Do you have any suggestions for future workshops?'  
**Q5.** 'Do you have any final comments?'
- 16 feedback sheets were completed in total.
- Guests generally enjoyed the workshop and felt it provided a good opportunity to contribute, with all respondents providing positive answers to **Q1** and **Q3**. Those guests who left further comments felt most positively about the structure and interactivity of the workshop and its relevance to their local area. All respondents felt that the event had enabled them to contribute and felt listened to, with the small group structure and discussion format of the event received favourably on a whole.
- The most common issues with the workshop raised by respondents concerned the lack of available time to complete tasks and some problems with the organisation of the event. The time constraints were felt to be a particular issue regarding the site visits. Difficulties with sound and being unable to hear speakers were also raised by some guests.
- Several guests also felt that more information should have been provided about the sites with regards to their allocation in the Local Plan and had further questions about the overall remit and purpose of the event.
- A number of suggestions were made regarding the widening of participation and improvements to the publicity surrounding the event. Some comments around this theme included a need to invite more young people, to increase the diversity of participants, to invite developers (as long as interests are clearly stated), to invite councillors earlier and to recognise that not all potential guests use the internet. It was felt that leafleting houses was a good idea and that this should be expanded, and that there should also be greater outreach to local residents associations and through school newsletters. There was a general desire for further engagement between participants and OCC in the form of future events.

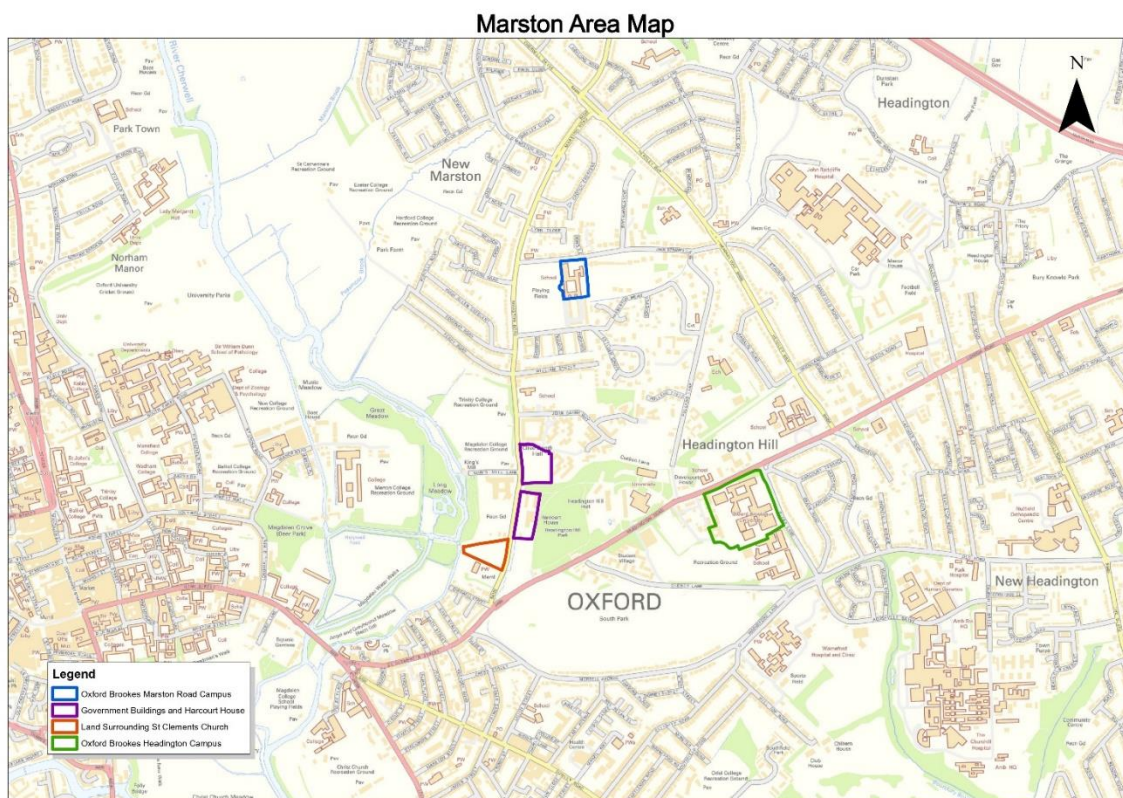
## Introduction



## Purpose of Event

- A design workshop was organised by Design South East (DSE) and Oxford City Council (OCC), with the aim of gathering local knowledge, experience and aspirations to support the drafting of development policies in the Oxford Local Plan 2040.
- Three sites that were considered as part of the workshop are allocated for development in the Oxford Local Plan 2036 (OLP2036) and are to be taken forward as development sites in the Oxford Local Plan 2040 (OLP 2040). The sites are located on Marston Road and are in the Marston Road and Old Road Area of Focus as set out in the draft OLP 2040 Plan. The sites are:

- **Site 1: Land surrounding St Clement's Church (Policy SP18 OLP 2036)**
- **Site 2: Government Buildings and Harcourt House (Policy SP16 OLP 2036).**
- **Site 3: Oxford Brookes University Marston Road Campus (Policy SP50 OLP 2036).**



- The workshop session sought to draw upon a focus group of residents from the local community and from civic groups. The intention was to gather local knowledge and experiences to inform contextual analysis and to generate area-specific high quality

design principles which could help to make the most of potential development opportunities at these locations and across this area of focus.

## Promotion and Organisation

- The workshop was promoted to the public through a variety of means. Emails were sent to community groups and amenity societies such as the Oxford Preservation Trust and Oxford Civic Society, along with local residents who had previously responded to OCC consultations and wished to remain involved. Advertisement notices were posted on community noticeboards in local businesses and 250 flyers were hand-delivered to residential addresses close to the sites in question in the weeks leading up to the event. OCC also advertised the event on its website and through social media channels, such as Facebook.
- The flyers and advertisements contained a QR code which when scanned generated a default email that could be sent to [odrp@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:odrp@oxford.gov.uk) confirming attendance. The [odrp@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:odrp@oxford.gov.uk) address was also provided on the flyer, along with a named OCC contact for those who may prefer to confirm their attendance by other means.
- Upon booking their place at the workshop, participants received a confirmation email which provided details of the exact room where the event would be held, along with a map and itinerary.

## Have YOUR say & share your ideas on making new development work in your area



**Join our design workshop**  
**Date:** Saturday 18th March 2023 (9:30am - 1:30pm)  
**Location:** Abercrombie Building  
Headington Campus, Gipsy Lane, Oxford OX3 0BP

This workshop will be focussed on the Marston Road area. Please come along to have your say and show your ideas on a plan to improve your local area.

The sites we will look at:

- Government and Harcourt House
- Land surrounding St Clements Church
- Oxford Brookes Marston Road Campus



If you and/ or a neighbour want to attend please get in touch with Rosa.  
Email: [odrp@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:odrp@oxford.gov.uk) or scan QR code



An example flyer that was delivered to nearby residents.

## Venue and Participants

- The workshop was held on the morning of Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2023 in the Abercrombie Building at Oxford Brookes University's Headington Campus, and ran from 09:30 until 13:30.
- A total of 22 guests attended the workshop, alongside 5 members of staff from OCC and 3 session organisers from DSE.

## Workshop Structure

- Upon arrival, the attendees were assigned to small groups, with each group focusing on a specific site. There were 6 groups in total, with two groups looking at each of the three sites. **Groups 1 and 2** focused on **Site 1**, **Groups 3 and 4** focused on **Site 2** and **Groups 5 and 6** focused on **Site 3**. The 5 attendees from OCC were also each allocated to a group and participated in discussions.
- The workshop was divided into three parts, with group discussion sessions either side of an in-person visit to the sites that were the subject of the workshop. In the discussion sessions, groups were encouraged to participate in exercises, in which they shared their thoughts with the rest of the room. At the end of the workshop, guests were also given the opportunity to anonymously share their thoughts about the event by completing written feedback forms.

### Workshop Structure

Session	Tasks
<b>Introduction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome to the workshop (DSE)</li> <li>• Introductions and icebreakers in groups (<b>Exercise 1</b>)</li> <li>• Outlining objectives of workshop (DSE/OCC representatives)</li> </ul>
<b>Session 1: Design in planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendees were introduced to key concepts within urban design through the 10 characteristics of well-designed places in the National Design Guide.</li> </ul>
<b>Session 2: Place audit briefing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The groups were briefed on their respective sites and given an opportunity for preliminary discussion ahead of the site visits.</li> <li>• Guests were instructed on how to successfully conduct a place audit and what to look out for on their visits.</li> </ul>
<b>Session 3: Site visits/place audits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Site visit 1 - Land surrounding St Clements Church</b></li> <li>• <b>Site visit 2 - Government and Harcourt House</b></li> <li>• <b>Site visit 3 - Oxford Brookes Marston Road Campus</b></li> <li>• The two groups who had been designated to each site combined into larger groups and visited their respective sites on foot. Each group was accompanied by a DSE member who oversaw the structure of the place audit.</li> <li>• Groups visited and audited their own sites before visiting others if time allowed.</li> </ul>
<b>Session 4: What we value/dislike/would like to see improved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groups were asked to share what they liked, disliked and felt should be improved about their sites and the wider area (<b>Exercise 2</b>).</li> </ul>
<b>Session 5: Key design principles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groups were asked to provide up to 10 design principles that they felt should be applied to their site going forward (<b>Exercise 3</b>).</li> </ul>
<b>Feedback</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendees were encouraged to anonymously fill out individual feedback forms with their thoughts as to whether they enjoyed the workshop along with any potential improvements that could be made for future events.</li> </ul>

## Feedback from Exercise 1: 'Good Design is...'

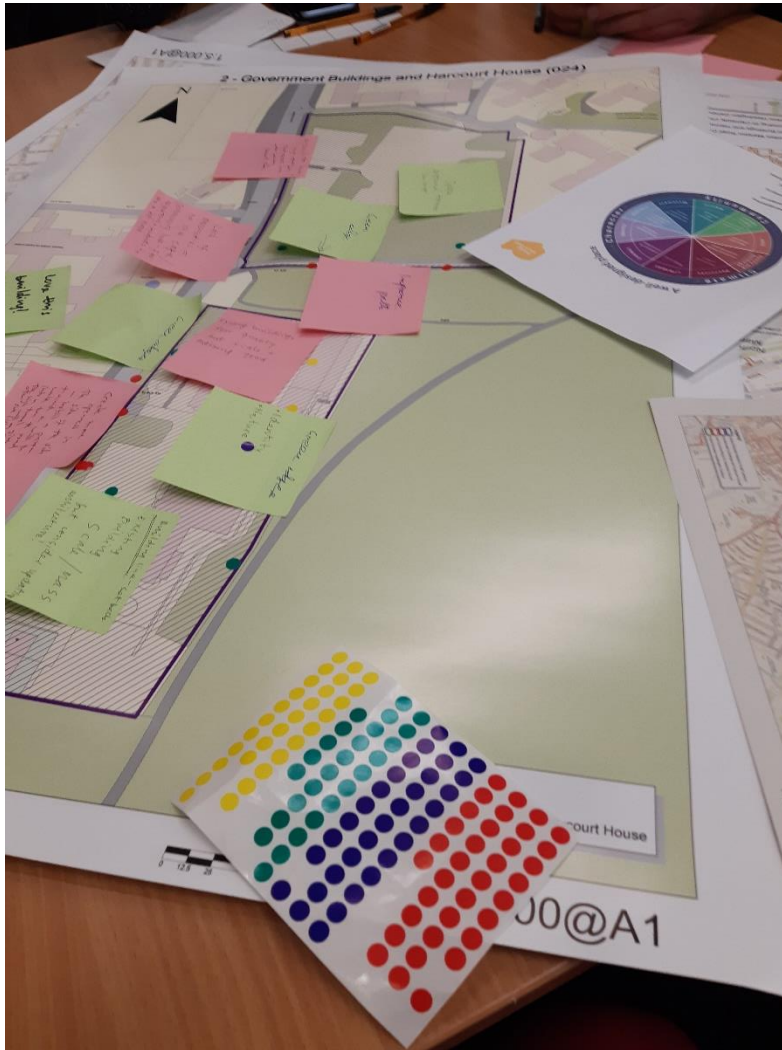
- The groups were first asked about their own principles for good design in an open-ended question that was unrelated to the specific sites that were the focus of the workshop. Each group was presented with a sheet of paper containing the heading '*good design is...*' and asked to provide their own responses to this question.
- Responses were provided both in the form of summary comments provided by a single scribe from within the group, as well as on sticky notes which were attached to the sheets. Response sheets to this question were received from 5 of the 6 groups present, while the comments from the remaining group were summarised by a member of DSE who was acting as a scribe for all groups.
- The most common feature of good design in the view of the participating groups was its ease of use and responsiveness to needs (responses included 'fit for purpose', 'easy to understand', 'takes account of needs of people', 'functions well for users and residents', 'tailor to needs', 'accessible, inclusive'). All groups made references to themes of this nature.
- Other common themes which emerged from the exercise were the importance of respect for existing local context ('understanding the character of the place', 'respectful of context of existing area, blending in', 'sympathetic to its surrounds',

'takes account of existing context') and that of environmental sustainability ('sustainable, 'green sustainable', low carbon'). Most participating groups referred to these themes in their responses.

- In addition, more than one group made comments relating to each of the themes of aesthetic appeal, community interaction, positive emotional responses such as joy and pleasure, nature and biodiversity, comfort, connectivity, scale and longevity.

## Feedback from Exercise 2: What did the group value/dislike about the place and what aspects could be improved?

- Upon returning from their site visits, the groups were asked to list those things that they liked and disliked about the places they visited, along with those aspects that they felt could be improved about these places.
- Visual aids were provided to assist participants in identifying characteristics of their sites. These included A1 and A4 sized maps of both the immediate sites and the wider Marston Road area, along with coloured sticky notes and stickers and coloured pens. Guests were encouraged to draw on the maps and use all of the resources at their disposal to share their thoughts on their respective sites. A colour-coding system was introduced for these visual aids, with green notes and stickers used to represent things that participants liked about their site, while red/pink represented things that participants disliked. Opportunities for improvement were represented with yellow/amber.



- Each group was provided with a scribe sheet containing four boxes to fill out. The first box featured the heading: '**GREEN: What did the group value about this place?**', while the second was labelled '**RED: What did the group dislike about this place?**' The third box was headed '**AMBER: What aspects of this place could be improved?**', while the fourth was intended for any further comments.
- The groups were also asked to relate those things that they valued to the ten characteristics of well-designed places in the National Design Guide (NDG) and to list three characteristics that they felt their sites successfully achieved to the rest of the room. The two groups working on Site 2 (Groups 3 and 4) opted to work together for this exercise and produced a single set of comments between them.

### Analysis of Feedback by Site

**Site 1 - Land surrounding St Clement's Church (Groups 1 and 2)**



**1- Land Surrounding St Clements Church (117)**



**Things these groups liked:**





- Both groups valued the green meadow to the south-west of the site (Angel and Greyhound Meadow) and identified its quietness and biodiversity as positive features.
- The historical setting of the existing St Clements Church and the ‘characterful’ appearance of both the church and the nearby Islamic Centre was also viewed positively by both groups. It was felt that these buildings could set a precedent for any new development.
- William Street was considered a positive feature of the wider area, along with nearby access to trees, parks, wildness and woods and the historic wall along the side of Marston Road. The ‘community’ identity provided by the mix of uses and amenities along Marston Road was also viewed as a positive characteristic of the area, and the sense that Marston was something of a ‘forgotten place’ within Oxford, situated on the periphery of the busy city centre, was also remarked upon as a positive marker of identity for those living locally.
- The area’s connectivity to the city centre and to nearby areas of open space was seen as a positive characteristic on a whole, although it was also felt that this connectivity could be improved upon.
- The positive NDG Characteristics provided by Group 1 were **Uses/Identity** and **Movement**, while those contributed by Group 2 were **Public Spaces** and **Nature**.

Things these groups disliked:



- Both groups voiced their disapproval of the heavy traffic on Marston Road, along with the lack of regular public transport along the road and the absence of a pedestrian crossing for safe access between the site and Headington Hill Park/South Park. Related issues were also raised concerning the speed of traffic along this section of road and the fact that pedestrians and cyclists are required to share space on the carriageway.
- The poor design quality of some nearby buildings was also seen as a negative by both groups, particularly that of the existing government buildings site (part of site 2).
- Other issues raised included the inaccessibility for the general public to the university-owned land to the rear of the site. Safety concerns about the footway on the west side of Marston Road were also raised, as the heavy tree cover and sparse street lighting in some areas meant these parts could be poorly lit at night.

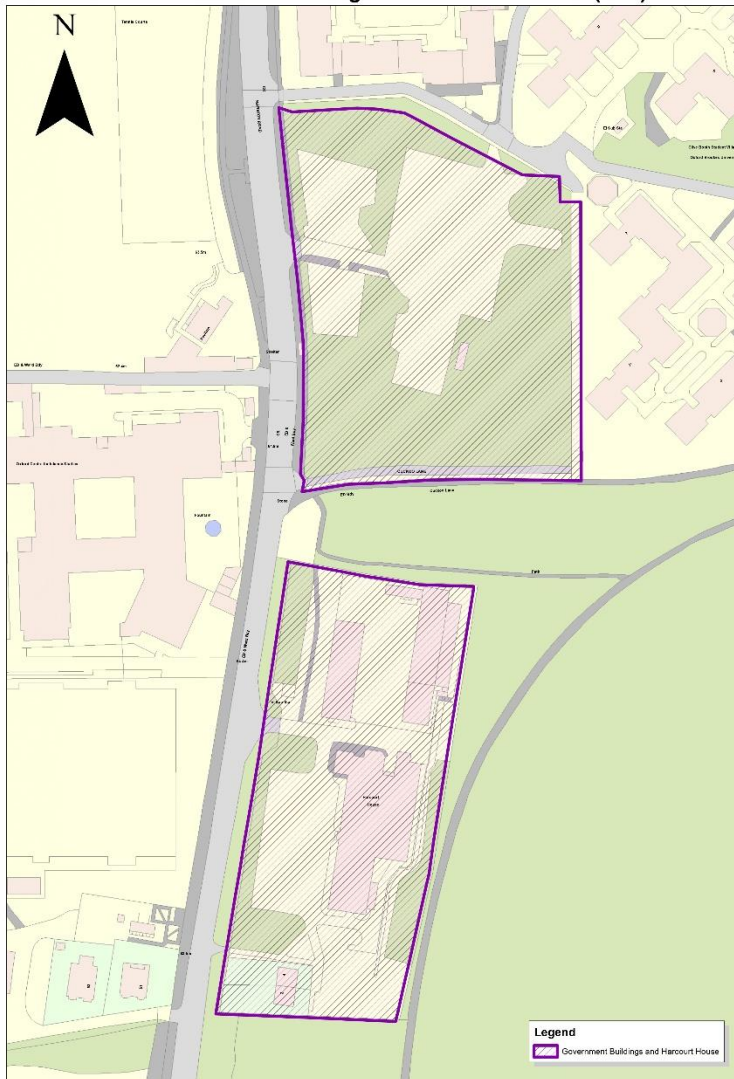
Things these groups felt could be improved:

- It was felt that pedestrian and cycle access between Marston and the city centre could be improved through the creation of a pedestrian/cycle route connecting Marston Road and Jowett Walk.
- An increase in 'wildness' around the site was also seen as something that would be desirable.

**Site 2: Government Buildings and Harcourt House (Groups 3 and 4)**



2 - Government Buildings and Harcourt House (024)



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Things these groups liked:



- As was the case with Site 1, the green spaces and edges surrounding this site were received positively, with these features contributing to the 'identity' and 'nature' NDG characteristics that were provided as examples of quality design. The good connectivity between the area and the rest of Headington via Cuckoo Lane was also seen as a positive aspect of the site.
- The built form of the existing Harcourt House building was also viewed positively, and its set back, scale and mass were seen as appropriate for the local context. The Islamic Studies centre building opposite also received praise for its variety and design.
- The positive NDG characteristics provided by these groups were **Nature, Movement** and **Built Form**.

Things these groups disliked:

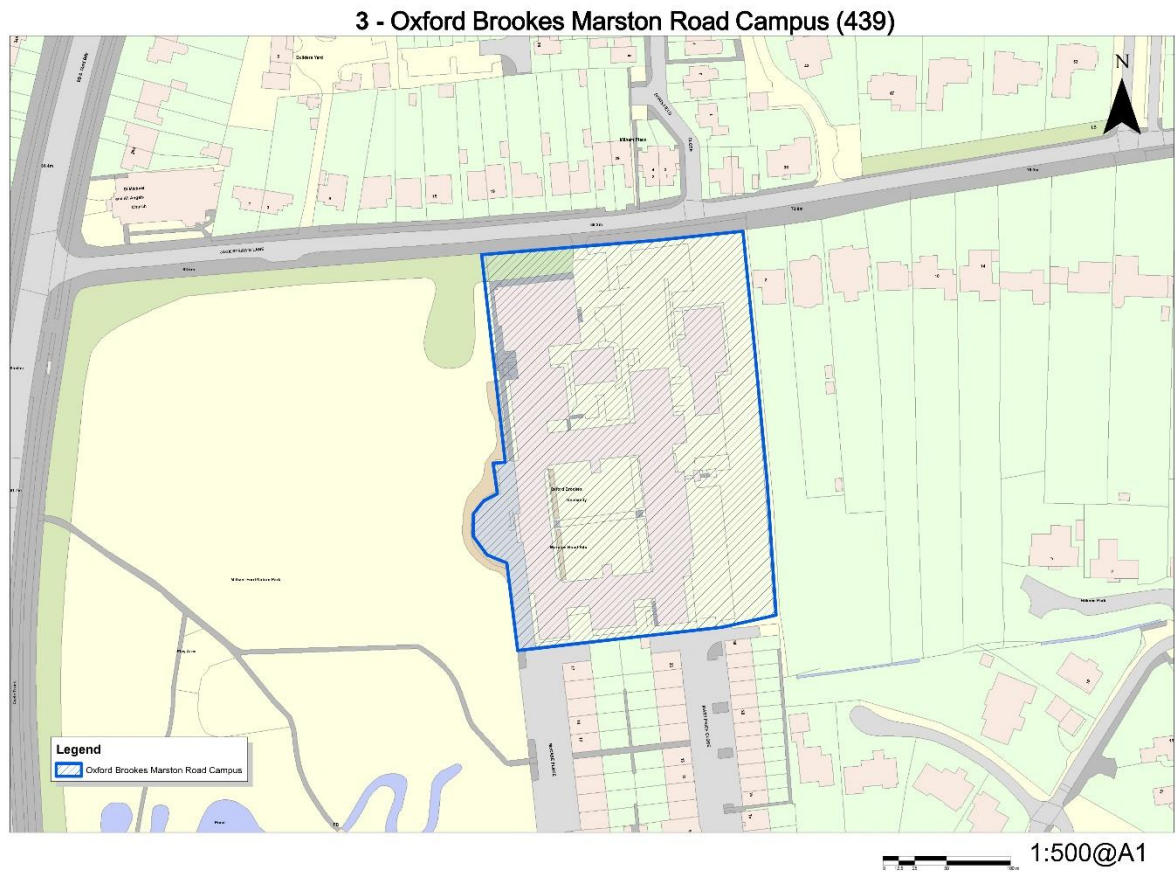


- The 'car-centric' nature of the southern section of Marston Road was viewed negatively, with the lack of pavement outside the current site raised as a particular problem. Due to this lack of pavement and the presence of railings around the site, the area was perceived to be 'unfriendly' and 'unhospitable' to visitors.
- While the built form of the existing Harcourt House was viewed positively, it was considered that the existing buildings were poor quality and needed updating architecturally while retaining their general form. Additionally, the form of the nearby Clive Booth postgraduate accommodation fronting Marston Road was viewed as 'blocky'.
- It was felt that the immediate area lacked some amenities, such as a café or community hub that could allow for greater mixing between local residents and students.

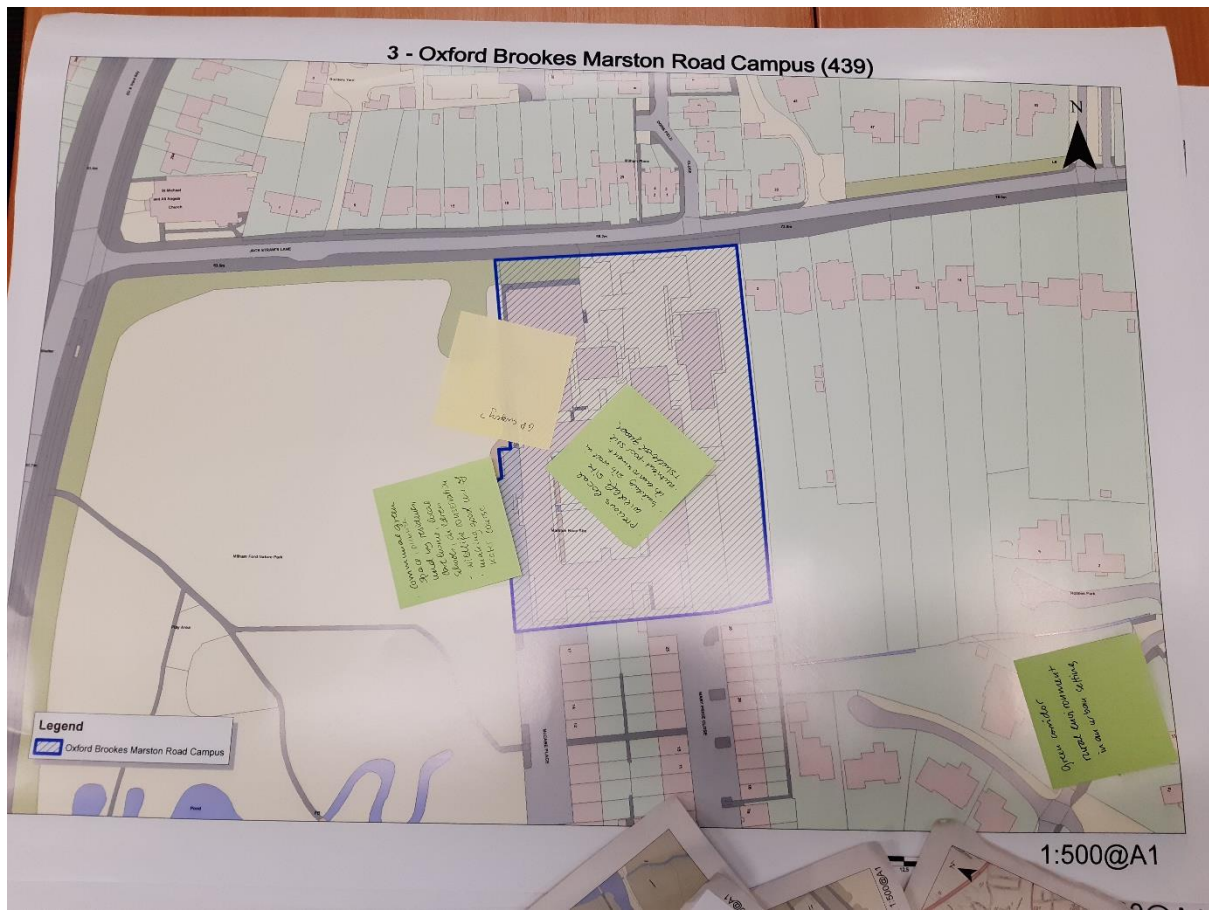
Things these groups felt could be improved:

- While the connectivity of the area was seen as a positive, it was felt that this could be improved further with a 'diagonal path' that would connect Cuckoo Lane to Mesopotamia Walk and on towards the city centre. The condition of the existing footway on Cuckoo Walk was also raised as something to improve.
- The groups believed that it was essential that a pavement be installed outside the site and that any new development should lead to greater openness towards its surroundings. A high wall should be avoided due to the existing presence of a wall on the opposite side of Marston Road, which would lead to a 'tunnel' effect for visitors.
- Traffic-calming measures were also recommended so that pedestrians would have priority over cars on Marston Road, while improvements to visibility were also suggested.

**Site 3: Oxford Brookes University Marston Road Campus (Groups 5 and 6)**



Things these groups liked:



- The mix of uses in the area, such as the allotments, scout hut, pub and local shops, were viewed positively by both groups for the sense of community they generated. Similarly, the religious buildings (church and mosque) were praised for fostering diversity in the area. It was felt that although there is a heavy student presence in the area due to the proximity of Oxford Brookes University, that students were not overly dominant and that on the whole, the area had a 'good mix' of people.
- Both groups felt positively about nearby roads such as Harberton Mead, Jack Straws Lane and Pullens Lane as they provided green corridors with lots of trees, which created a 'rural environment in an urban setting'.
- Milham Ford Nature Park, which fronts the campus building, was received positively due to its use by many groups from across the local community, as well as its effective use of the water course for biodiversity. Nature was listed as an important NDG characteristic of the site and wider area by both groups.
- The built form of the campus building was viewed positively, ('colonnade', 'sits well in its environment') and its use as an active site with important societal value in its training of medical staff was also commented on favourably. Of particular appeal was the private 'quad' space within the campus, which is designated as a local wildlife site.
- On the whole, it was felt that the arrangement of nearby buildings provided a safe environment for users of Milham Ford, due to the ability for residents to look out onto the green space.

- Connectivity within the area and to the wider city was viewed positively, with the existing cycle path between Marston and the city centre mentioned as a particular positive feature.
- Both groups offered **Nature** and **Built Form** as positive NDG characteristics, with Group 5 also liking the **Uses** of the area and Group 6 viewing **Movement** positively.

Things these groups disliked:

- As with the groups on both other sites, these groups visiting this site disliked the southern end of Marston Road opposite Harcourt House for its poor road safety. Jack Straws Lane was also mentioned as a road that could sometimes be dominated by traffic and was referred to by one group as a 'rat-run'. While the religious buildings in the area were viewed positively for their effect on community diversity, the impact of inadequate parking for the users of these institutions was seen as a negative aspect.
- Several of the concerns of these groups related to safety, both in terms of traffic and regarding crime and anti-social behaviour. While it was seen as a positive that most of Milham Ford was overlooked by houses, the fact that the ends of houses faced the park on the Harberton Mead side was viewed negatively due to its impact on safety. Issues of drug dealing, and usage were reported in Milham Ford. It was also felt that the Harcourt House and Government Buildings site could feel 'a bit unsafe and empty at night'.
- The poor design quality of some existing buildings and features was listed as a negative characteristic of the area, with some of the buildings towards the rear of the campus and the builders' yard site to the north of Jack Straws Lane identified as particularly detrimental to character. Some extensions on private dwellings were also criticised for their quality.
- While the amenities nearby were generally received positively, a lack of local healthcare facilities was seen as a negative aspect of the area.

Things these groups felt could be improved:

- It was suggested that future development on the site could integrate a GP surgery into the buildings.
- Improvements to cycling infrastructure and safety were recommended on Jack Straws Lane, along with improved signage for shared pedestrian/cycle space in the area.
- It was felt that the internal appearance of the campus site could be improved and could potentially link to other backland development that is taking place to the rear of the site.

## Feedback from Exercise 3: Key Design Principles



- Following on from **Exercise 2**, the groups were asked to list up to ten design principles that they would like to see prioritised in any prospective future development. The following section contains a summary of the main design principles proposed for each of the three sites.

### **Site 1 – Land surrounding St. Clements Church (Groups 1 and 2)**

#### **1. The development should be set back from Marston Road and other site boundaries.**

One group also mentioned a need to set any development back from the watercourse of the River Cherwell to the rear, while the other group proposed that development be focused on the central part of the site to create a set back from other boundaries.

#### **2. Pedestrian and cycle access from the site should be improved and expanded.**

It was felt that new routes should be opened up towards the city centre and to the river to the rear, while any development should also improve access for pedestrians on Marston Road, particularly when crossing from the site to Headington Hill Park. One group referred to the creation of a new access to Marston Road but the other group stated that they would prefer any new development to use the existing access routes to the Magdalen college fields and to the air cadets (ATC) centre.

#### **3. No new (additional) traffic should be generated as a result of any development.**

#### **4. The design and scale should relate to that of St Clement's Church and the Islamic Centre.**

One group also suggested that new development could be an opportunity for 'distinctive' design and stated that they would like to see 'interesting roofscapes' rather than flat roofs, while the other proposed that any development should be no higher than 3 storeys.

#### **5. Retain and improve biodiversity and use natural drainage.**

The tree lines and hedgerows along the Marston Road and St Clements boundary should be retained and the bottom third of the site should be left wild and not developed. Biodiversity should be increased more broadly and the site should integrate natural SuDS measures for drainage.

- One group also stated that they would prefer uses that can be seen to benefit the Marston community, such as a nursery or old people's home, rather than market housing.

### **Site 2 – Government Buildings and Harcourt House (Groups 3 and 4)**

**1. Provide a pedestrian crossing and install traffic calming measures on Marston Road.**

It was felt that this would lead to a more pedestrian friendly and less 'car-centric' environment.

**2. Ensure passive surveillance of streets and spaces to improve safety.**

Concerns were raised about the area not feeling safe for passing pedestrians and cyclists at present and ensuring that streets and spaces were overlooked as a result of any new development was considered a priority for these groups.

**3. Development should respond to context of site and existing Harcourt House building.**

It was felt that the scale and massing of existing buildings on site was right for the area and this should be retained. Variety in the roofline was considered desirable, as was the use of wood cladding to tie in with the surrounding woods and nature.

**4. Development should be set back from road and maintain an open, green frontage.**

The groups felt that the site should have an open feel without the presence of a high wall and that space should be retained at the front of the site to provide a green frontage.

**5. Connections to the wider area should be improved.**

The groups believed that public access through to the university campus should be enhanced with improved safety measures such as CCTV and lighting. Additionally, connections between Kings Mill Lane and Cuckoo Lane could be improved with a wider pedestrian and/or cycle way or through a new diagonal path.

**6. New community amenities could be provided.**

There was support for a small new supermarket shop and/or a café, as this provision was felt to be lacking in East Marston. Space for a community market was also suggested.

**Site 3 – Oxford Brookes University Marston Road Campus (Groups 5 and 6)**

**1. The frontage and quad of the existing building should be retained.**

These parts of the existing building were admired both for their aesthetic qualities and contribution to biodiversity (in the case of the quad) and it was felt they should be retained. The buildings and spaces to the rear of the site were considered to be more appropriate for any redevelopment.

**2. Drainage should utilise the natural slope of the land from the campus building down to Milham Ford.**

**3. Retain and enhance mature trees and greenery around site.**

**4. Better access between site and Milham Ford.**

It was felt that connections between the south of the site and the park could be improved, in particular. Any improvements could also provide opportunities for increased natural surveillance and safety.

**5. Existing scale and height should be maintained for new development.**

**6. Retain a mix of uses on site.**

It was felt that overly dense housing would not be desirable and that the retention of medical training uses would be ideal. In particular, there was support for a GP surgery on the site as this was felt to be lacking nearby.

## Feedback from Workshop Participants

- Guests were given the opportunity to complete feedback forms at the end of the session, with 5 questions listed on each form. The questions were as follows:

**Q1.** 'Did you enjoy the workshop and find it interesting?' (Guests were also encouraged to give a score from 1-5 with 1 representing the most negative response and 5 being the most positive.)

**Q2.** 'Was there anything you didn't like about the workshop?'

**Q3.** 'Do you feel that you were able to contribute and were listened to?'

**Q4.** 'Do you have any suggestions for future workshops?'

**Q5.** 'Do you have any final comments?'

- 16 feedback sheets were completed in total and a summary of key findings is provided below.

## **Key Findings**

**Q1:** On a whole, the guests enjoyed the workshop, with all respondents to Q1 answering positively and all of those who gave a numerical score opting for a '4' or '5'. Additionally, those guests who left further comments felt most positively about the structure and interactivity of the workshop and its relevance to their local area.

**Q2:** Things that participants disliked about the workshop included issues around time and organisation (mentioned by 8 of the respondents), with several guests stating that the event felt quite 'rushed', while others commented on particular elements of the workshop (e.g. not enough time for site visits, too long spent discussing national policy). Two responses commented on difficulties with sound and being able to hear speakers. Several guests felt that more information should have been provided about the sites with regards to their allocation in the Local Plan and had questions about the remit and purpose of the event.

**Q3:** All respondents felt that the event had enabled them to contribute and felt listened to. The group structure and discussion format were viewed positively on a whole. One respondent suggested that a question and answer session would have been beneficial.

**Q4:** The main suggestion for future workshops involved widening participation through improved publicity, with 8 respondents making suggestions to this effect. Some comments around this theme included a need to invite more young people, to increase diversity of participants, to invite developers (as long as interest is clearly stated), to invite councillors earlier and to recognise that not all potential guests use the internet. Other suggestions included the provision of a fact sheet before the event, mini copies of the maps for guests to take away with them and a PA system. As with Q2, some guests also felt that more information should have been provided about the 'rules of engagement', e.g. potential plans for the sites and key objectives of the existing site allocations.

**Q5:** Further comments included recommendations for increasing engagement. It was felt that leafleting houses was a good idea and that this should be expanded, while

there should also be greater outreach to local residents associations and through school newsletters. There was a general desire for further engagement with future events, while two respondents also requested copies of the notes from the event.