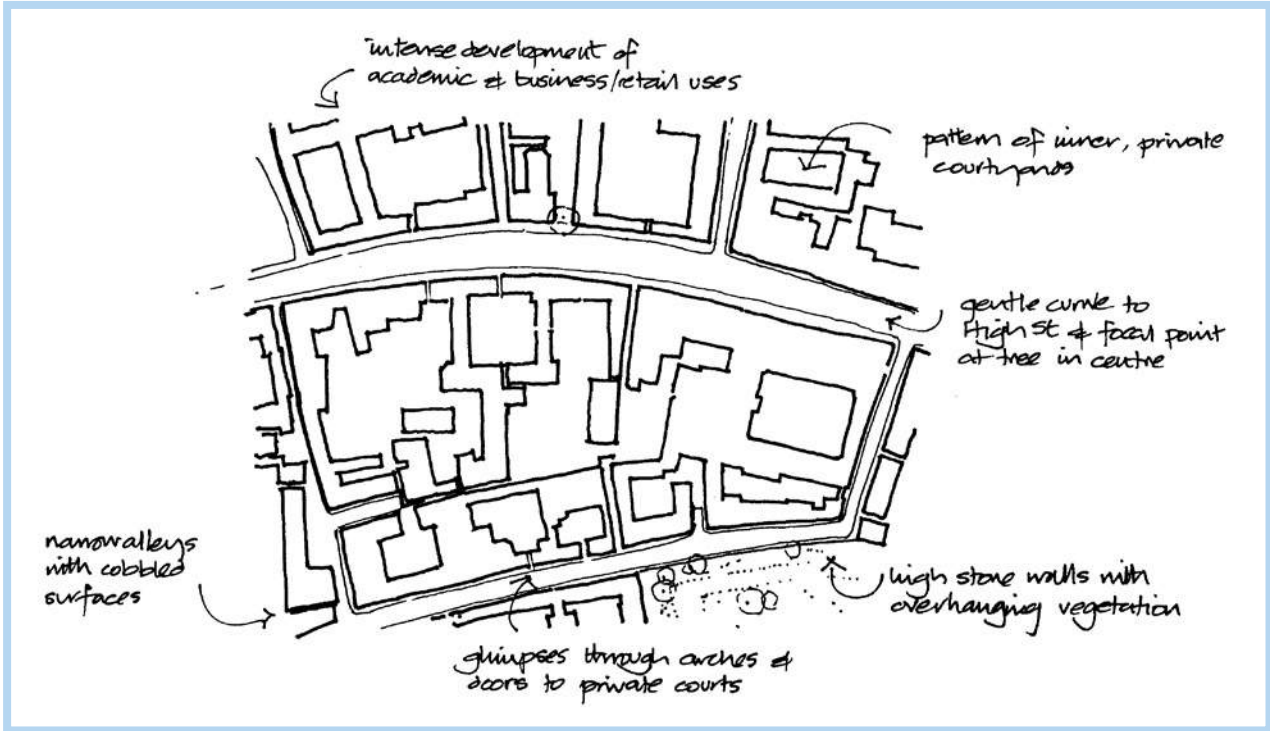


I HISTORIC CORE



IA Historic City Core

IA OXFORD HISTORIC CITY CORE

Description

The *Oxford Historic City Core* is the oldest part of Oxford, dating back to the 10th century, originating on the tip of the river terrace separating the floodplains of the Thames and Cherwell Rivers. The underlying landscape type is part of the *Settled and Open River Terrace* which gives rise to the gently domed topography of this central area. This is noticeable in the steep rises when approaching the centre from the west along New Road or Castle Street, from the south along St Aldates or from the east on approach to the High Street. This, the oldest part of the city, is known for its skyline of spires and domes, which are best viewed from the surrounding hills and have been painted by many artists, including the great English artist, J.M.W. Turner (*photo 1*). Turner had a long-lasting love of Oxford and the architecture of the historic core of the city provided subjects to which he returned again and again throughout his career.

The core exhibits a distinct hierarchy of streets. The wide streets of St Giles, Cornmarket, St Aldate's, Broad Street and the High Street form a loose grid, whilst the connecting streets and narrow alleys form an irregular pattern, in which the older colleges are located. The High Street lies on a gentle curve, noted by Lewis Mumford as being the natural curve that any pedestrian follows, as he leaves his footprints in the dew of an open field. It is a street rich in landmark buildings with one notable, landmark tree at its apex which the town planner, Thomas Sharpe, called '*one of the most important trees in the world*' (*photo 5*).

Cornmarket, along with Queen Street and George Street, are now the core of retail and commercial activity, with new shopfronts and 20th century development contrasting with the medieval built form and quiet side alleys, backstreets and college quads. These streets are described by Jan Morris as '*ugly in a way peculiar to 20th century England... it is as though some Illinois Main Street has been superimposed upon a medieval European thoroughfare, and it reflects a hybrid culture that exists nowhere else.*'

St Giles is a wide, open space, that continues to play host to one of the great country fairs of medieval England, for which the whole wide street of St Giles is closed for two days each year. The gates into the town have long since disappeared, but their locations are recorded in place names, such as the modern Westgate shopping centre and St Michael at the North Gate. The Saxon tower of St Michael's is the oldest building in Oxford and stands amidst the 20th century dominated shopping street of Cornmarket (*photo 2*).

The Medieval street pattern behind these main streets remains largely intact, and it is within this maze of Medieval alleyways (*photo 3*) that some of the most unexpected views and historic buildings and spaces are hidden. An example of this is the alley that unexpectedly strikes off to the south of Holywell into a warren of mediaeval cottages where the Turf Tavern nestles beneath the walls of New College.

The character of the core area is typified by the historic streets and their diverse historic buildings, an example being the varied façade of Broad Street where the

IA OXFORD HISTORIC CITY CORE



Photo 1: This view of the historic core from Headington Hill has been recorded by many artists.



Photo 2: View down Cornmarket Street from the former Saxon north gate of the city.



Photo 3: A maze of medieval alleyways are hidden behind the main streets.



Photo 4: High density of architecturally distinctive buildings contribute to townscape quality.



Photo 5: Landmark Sycamore at a nodal point in the High Street.



Photo 6: Narrow alleys heighten the impression of scale of buildings.



Photo 4: Street furniture and paving materials are distinctive.



Photo 9: The historic core has a sense of vitality.



Photo 6: Tantalising glimpses through doorways.



Photo 8: Private college grounds form a network of open space.

Palladian Clarendon Building, Wren's Sheldonian and the classic Old Ashmolean sit side by side. The sheer density of architecturally distinctive and 'landmark' buildings illustrates the level of craftsmanship and quality of the built environment in this historic core (*photo 4*). This is reflected in the high density of listed buildings within the centre of Oxford. Street furniture and paving materials also are distinctive in contributing to the character of the core area, in particular the stone paving, stone setts, cobbles, railings, wall-mounted streetlights, and timber or cast iron bollards.

The historic core contains a high density of buildings that lie cheek by jowl. The narrowness of the alleys heightens the impression of the scale of the buildings, although they are rarely more than 3-4 stories high (*photo 6*). Continuous street frontages, provided by building facades or high rubblestone boundary walls, provide a clear division between the public and private realm, but frequent doorways and arches provide tantalising glimpses through to quadrangles or open spaces behind that form the 'inner sanctum' of the historic core (*photo 8*). Private college grounds form a network of open spaces throughout the area in the form of small courtyards and gardens (*photo 9*). Many of these college gardens are on English Heritage's register of historic parks and gardens.

Large, mature trees are a notable feature in this part of the city. They are landmark features and, where they are visible over walls or through doorways, indicate the presence of private open space. Where trees are in the public realm, their presence is particularly notable, such as the pink blossom of the almond outside St Mary the Virgin, which makes a spectacular display in February.

The high density of buildings leaves few public open spaces in the historic core. Public open space is limited to small square paved spaces on street corners, Bonn Square by the Westgate centre (*photo 10*) and the churchyard of St Mary Magdalen, enclosed by railings.

The centre of Oxford is brought to life by sounds of shoppers, students and the ringing of bells. Elmer Davies wrote that 'Oxford is a city where too many bells are always ringing in the rain'. The best known of these is the Great Tom of Christ Church. Private car traffic is excluded from the central area but buses and taxis ferry tourists and shoppers around the city, with students on their bicycles weaving between the traffic and pedestrians. The unexpected quiet corners and alleys are, however, never far away from the busiest nodes of the city centre. These quiet backwaters, with their stone setts and enclosing buildings, create a distinctive quality of sound as one walks or cycles, which is reinforced by the tactile experience underfoot.

Although there are no designated sites of ecological importance the few remaining sections of Medieval town walls, preserved within the grounds of New College and Merton College, are important archaeological features as well providing a refuge for cliff plant communities. The mature trees and ivy covered walls in and around the college squares also provide a quiet refuge for song birds.

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	<i>Settled and Open River Terrace</i> which gives rise to the gently domed topography of this central area.
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Evolution of townscape	<p>A multitude of periods are represented in the historic core, from the Medieval town walls and core College buildings to late 20th century buildings, such as the Sackler Library on St John Street.</p> <p>Carfax is an historic crossing point of two routes and the 'central node'.</p> <p>Post Georgian infill and superimposed 20th century shop frontages are often dominant at street level.</p>
Archaeological and historic interest	<p>Historic streetscape of medieval streets within Saxon and later defences (town walls), with principal buildings of city and University.</p> <p>North and east suburbs of medieval town with college and university buildings.</p> <p>11th century castle</p>
Street and block pattern	<p>Wide streets of St Giles, Cornmarket, St Aldate's, Broad Street and the High Street on a loose grid pattern with an irregular pattern of smaller streets and alleys between.</p> <p>Continuous street frontages - building or boundary walls with frequent glimpses through to quadrangles or open spaces behind.</p>
Private/public realm interface	<p>Clear division between public and private realms, but with tantalising glimpses of the private from the public realm leading to the impression of an 'inner sanctum'.</p>
Massing and enclosure	<p>High density of buildings, often of narrow widths, lie cheek by jowl.</p> <p>Narrow alleys create an enclosed streetscape, although buildings are rarely more than 3-4 stories high.</p>
Architecture and built form	<p>Large scale limestone college buildings with quads and cloisters.</p> <p>Timber framed buildings with a characteristic jetty, plastered and colourfully painted.</p> <p>A large number of distinctive buildings over a large area with great attention to detail and a high quality of craftsmanship.</p>
Streetscape	<p>Streetscape contrasts between wide, open main streets and narrow, enclosed side-alleys.</p> <p>Paving materials are varied, from tarmac and concrete paving slabs of the main thoroughfares to cobbles and stone sets in alleyways.</p> <p>Square stone setts are often seen set into the footway at vehicular entrances. Great variety in texture and surfacing.</p> <p>Black painted cast iron lamp posts, bollards and street signs convey a sense of continuity across the core.</p> <p>Trees are landmark features (for example the almond outside St Mary the Virgin and the sycamore outside All Souls College, both on The High Street) and markers for private open space where they are visible over walls or through doorways.</p>
Open space	<p>High density of buildings leaves few open spaces in the historic core. Public open space is limited to small square paved spaces on street corners and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bonn Square, a memorial garden laid out in 1897, by the Westgate • Churchyard of St Mary Magdalen surrounded by railings

	Private College grounds form a network of open spaces throughout the colleges in the form of small courtyards and gardens.
Biodiversity	No designated sites of ecological importance. Old stone walls and mature trees and the open spaces of the colleges and the castle are the most notable habitats.
Land use, culture and vitality	Vibrant city centre with motorists, buses, tourists, shoppers, office-workers and students using the same space. Unexpected quiet corners and alleys - contrast between vitality/tranquillity is a unique and special feature. Academic associations are very strong - students walking and on bicycles contribute a continuous vitality and movement linking the busy core streets to the backstreets and connecting side alleys.
Access and traffic	Through-routes are diverted around the edges of the historic core leaving the city centre to buses, taxis, pedestrians and bicycles. The result is a vibrant, but pedestrian-friendly environment.
Views and visual patterns	The skyline of the historic core, as seen from the surrounding hills, is critical to the perception of Oxford. Views are generally confined by the street and block pattern, although there are many tantalising glimpses of courtyards and cloisters through doorways and arches and long views across Christ Church meadow from the edge of the historic core. Visual sequences are continually changing with views towards landmarks of trees, spires and domes.
Designations	Falls entirely within a Conservation Area and mostly within the City Centre Archaeological Area Castle and remnant city walls are both Scheduled Ancient Monuments Eight Historic Parks and Gardens (all College gardens)

Evaluation of character and quality

The historic core of Oxford is unique and internationally recognised for its historic buildings, unique skyline and academic history. The area is clearly definable through its street pattern, building density, architectural character and streetscape detailing such as furniture and paving materials. Townscape quality is exceptional, although the streetscape detail in the commercial centre detracts from the quality of the built fabric.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	High
Biodiversity	Low - local interest
Historic Integrity	High - SAMs, listed Historic Parks and Gardens, Conservation Area
Re-creatability	Low - impossible to re-create

Intervisibility	High
Open Space	Low

Sensitivity to change

This area is highly sensitive to change as a result of its distinctive street and block pattern, historic time depth, its visibility from the surrounding hills and its international renown.

Despite some post-war infill development and streetscape changes, particularly along Cornmarket and Queen Street, the core has retained its historic integrity. More recent changes, such as building of the Sackler Library, have demonstrated that change can be positive if it pays due regard to scale, material and detail and the quality of the landscape surrounding it. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- inappropriate shop frontages that obscure the historic built fabric at the pedestrian level;
- deterioration of the built fabric including, street furniture, paving, boundary walls and buildings through air pollution, vibration from passing traffic and pedestrian traffic;
- small scale incremental addition of elements such as signage to the streetscape resulting in cluttering of the streetscape;
- ageing and subsequent loss of city centre trees;
- over-use and erosion of the small public open spaces such as Bonn Square;
- increasing number of buses that could dominate the townscape;
- new building that does not pay regard to the spatial characteristics of the townscape, is of low quality materials or results in the erosion of high quality landscape between the buildings

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The overall objective for this area is to consolidate the quality of the urban fabric. This will require urban/town centre management that balances the needs and interests of different user groups, whilst aiming to conserve the distinctive townscape and architectural characteristics. Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- balancing the interests of collegiate, business and visitor needs through a town centre management scheme;
- re-designing and re-defining the purpose of the public open spaces within the city centre;

- enhancing the streetscape through rationalising the use of paving materials such as stone setts, cobbles and paving slabs and the use of street furniture such as timber/cast iron bollards, lamp posts and street signs;
- ensuring new built development respects the historic street and block pattern and scale and density of buildings as described above;
- ensuring a programme for planting of new trees is in place as soon as possible, particularly for important landmark trees;
- considering opportunities for further tree planting as part of a program of streetscape improvements;
- developing a design guide for this part of the city that provides guidance on built form and scale, materials, colours and detailing to inform new development, changes to shop frontages or extensions/alterations to existing buildings.

2 HISTORIC FRINGE

Generic Description

The Historic Fringes are areas that border the historic core of Oxford. These areas have strong links with the historic core, but have a separate identity as a result of their later period of development, scale and detailing. The University and Western Fringes, although of the same generic type as a result of their relationship with their respective historic cores, show distinct differences in character. This is explained further below. The *Historic Fringe* lies mostly on the *Settled River Terrace* landscape type, but has also expanded out onto the *Pastoral Floodplain*, particularly on the west of the city.

Key Characteristics

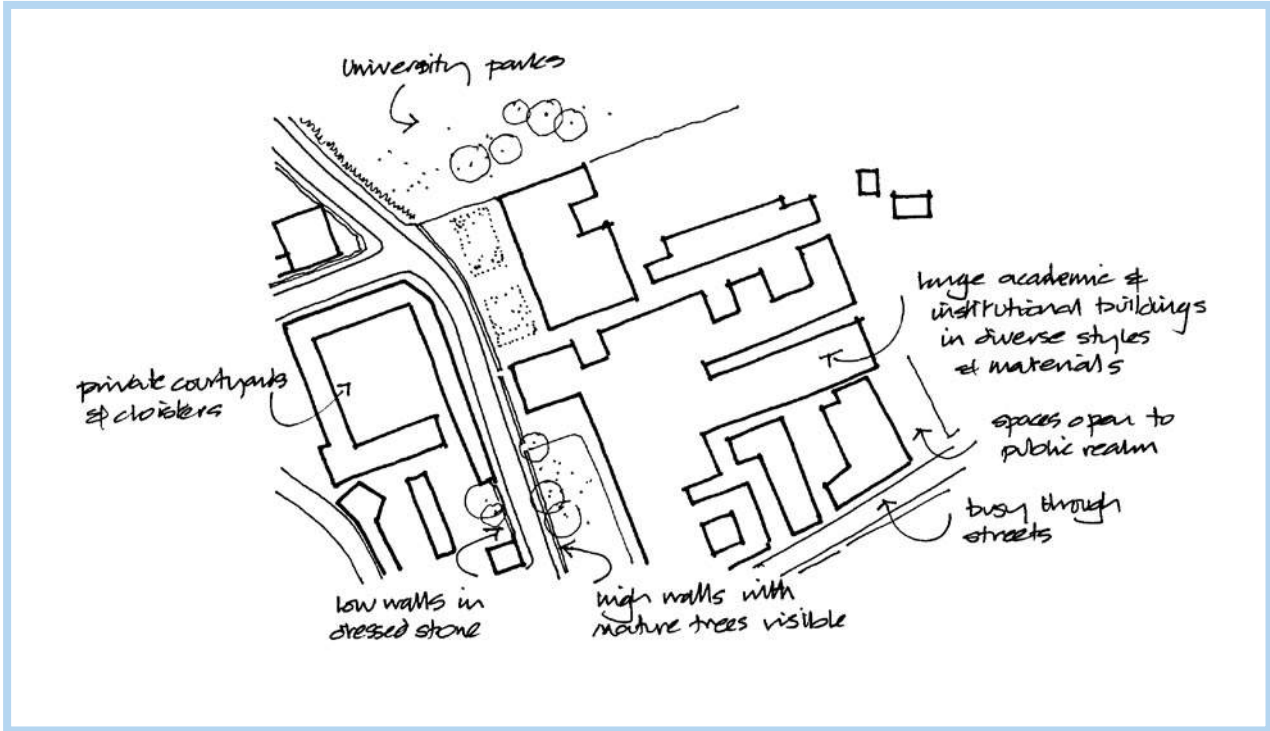
- areas bordering the historic core of Oxford;
- larger scale layout than the historic core;
- often contain modern infill or redevelopment;
- typically have a large amount of greenspace.

Character Areas

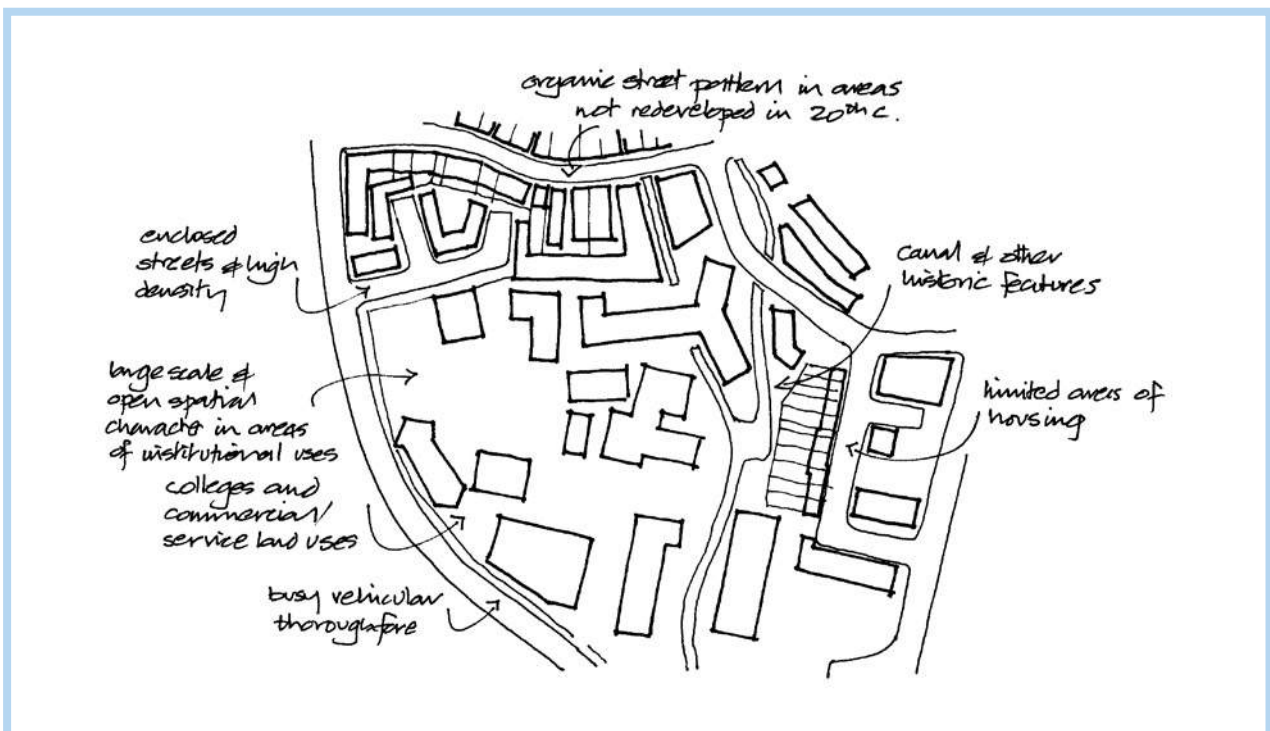
2A University Fringe

2B Western Fringe

2 HISTORIC FRINGE



Example 1: 2A University Fringe



Example 2: 2B Western Fringe

2A UNIVERSITY FRINGE

Description

The University Fringe, lying to the north and east of the historic core, is characterised by college buildings of mixed ages, with an open spatial quality which contrasts strongly with the historic core (*photo 1*). The area was developed as the academic institutions grew, mainly during the 19th century, spreading towards the River Cherwell. Extensive areas of open space are located here, including the Victorian University Parks, Botanic Gardens and college playing fields, as well as the network of formal open spaces that are integral to the quad and cloisters layout of the Colleges (*photo 2*).

The area is characterised by University and College buildings in the Victorian neo-gothic style, using stone or multi-coloured brick, including Mansfield (1838) and Keble (1868) Colleges as well as the University Museum (1855) and the Oxford Union (1857). The modern architecture of St Catherine's (1963) and Wolfson (1966) Colleges also reflects the traditional geometric layout of buildings surrounding a quad. The modern laboratory buildings of the large science area behind the University Museum have been built since 1900 where they dominate the area around the University Parks (*photo 3*).

Older buildings within this fringe include Worcester College, founded in 1714 on the site of the 13th century monastic college on the former fringes of Oxford, and the original Radcliffe Infirmary (1759), the building upon which the University Observatory stands.

The classic quads and cloisters layout of the Colleges may be seen throughout this area, including Magdalen College whose centre, a 15th century Cloister, is surrounded by quads. Magdalen College lies on the site of the former St John's Hospital, whose buildings covered a large area outside the city walls (*photo 4*).

Vehicular circulation is a noticeable feature of the area, with busy traffic on the 'edge of centre' route along St Cross Road and South Parks Road, especially now that the High Street has been closed to private vehicles.

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	<i>Settled River Terrace</i> which gives rise to the gently domed topography.
Evolution of townscape	Predominant period 18th - 19th century, with significant 20th century expansion such as the science buildings (including laboratories) in former fields of St Giles and Holywell.
Archaeological and historic interest	Site of the 13th century monastic college on the former fringes of Oxford, and the original Radcliffe Infirmary The Botanic Gardens were founded as Oxford's Physic Garden in 1621

2A UNIVERSITY FRINGE



Photo 1: More open spatial quality and mature vegetation on edge of historic core.



Photo 2: Quiet academic quarter with variation in buildings and boundaries.



Photo 3: Mix of architectural styles and ages, and busy vehicular route.



Photo 4: Boundary walls and glimpses through entrances.

Street and block pattern	Large blocks accommodating college buildings
Private/public realm interface	In places the clarity of the public private realm is lost, especially in areas of 20th century development such as in pedestrian spaces between large buildings
Massing and enclosure	<p>Many university buildings and their settings are large scale, with some smaller scale residential streets such as St John's Street, Pusey Lane and Little Clarendon Street.</p> <p>Nearer the historic core and around the older buildings, stone walls enclose and define the street, but in other areas of later development the buildings have more space between them and no enclosing features.</p>
Architecture and built form	College buildings and hospitals typically of brick or limestone. Also an array of modern materials, such as concrete, particularly noticeable in Little Clarendon Street.
Streetscape	<p>Stone boundary walls, stone setts at vehicular accesses.</p> <p>Trees act as landmark features along streets.</p>
Open space	<p>University Parks was designed and laid out in 1850s on the site of former meadows belonging to Merton College. The parks cover approximately 90 acres and contain the only first class cricket ground in England with free public viewing.</p> <p>The Botanic Gardens are a formal storeroom and laboratory for botanic specimens, founded as Oxford's Physic Garden in 1621.</p> <p>Clarendon Square.</p> <p>College Playing Fields, open amenity grassland, often with vegetation around the margins.</p>
Biodiversity	<p>The University Parks, a locally designated site of ecological interest, provide an extensive area of parkland habitat; including herb-rich grassland, veteran trees and a diverse range of invertebrates and birds.</p> <p>Parkland habitats, including Magdalen Grove and to a lesser extent the Botanic Gardens and quads are likely to be important for veteran and mature trees, which can support small breeding birds, bats and invertebrates. Magdalen Grove SSSI is additionally notified for its fossiliferous river terrace deposits.</p> <p>Riverside habitats.</p>
Land use, culture and vitality	Busy academic area containing the main university buildings including university museum and laboratories, with an oasis of peacefulness in the Parks and access to the tranquil Cherwell valley.
Access and traffic	<p>Longwall Street to Parks Road is used as the main alternative route to the High Street, leading to congestion.</p> <p>The Cherwell is inaccessible to the public along parts of its length.</p>

Views and visual patterns	The spatial character allows views past buildings and above walls, to other buildings and a skyline of trees and roofs.
Designations	Much of the area is within the central Conservation Area. Listed Historic Parks and Gardens: Botanic Gardens and Magdalen Grove, Magdalen Grove SSSI Holy Cross Cemetery is of local importance for nature conservation.

Evaluation of character and quality

This area is closely linked to the historic core, with the college buildings, open spaces and riverside contributing strongly to the sense of place. The spatial character here begins to be less dense and larger scale, helping in the orientation and legibility of the area as one which is close to, but not of, the core historic area.

The historic buildings, integrity of built form and good condition of streetscape elements contribute to a perception of high landscape/townscape quality.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	High
Biodiversity	High - of national importance as a result of a SSSI
Historic Integrity	High - two listed Historic Parks and Gardens
Re-creatability	Low
Intervisibility	High - views of historic core
Open Space	High - University Parks and Botanic Gardens provides large amount of open space close to historic core

Sensitivity to change

This area is sensitive to change as a result of its historic landscapes, tranquil open spaces, biodiversity interest and its position on the edge of the Cherwell Valley and as a setting to the historic core. It also lies within the viewcone of the key viewpoints identified from South Park, Elsfield and Headington Hill and this heightens its sensitivity to tall built elements.

The main change to the area since the intensive building during the Victorian period has been the building of the science area since 1900. Infill development has generally been well integrated into the street and block pattern, but the closure of the High Street has increased the traffic on the route from Longwall Street to Parks Road,

severing the integration with the historic core and detracting from the area's quiet character. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- new built development that does not respect the street and block pattern or scale of built development typical of the area;
- streetscape details such as signs, bollards and paving materials that do not respond to the local character;
- use of low quality materials;
- new built development that affects the open landscape of University Parks or the rural landscape of the Cherwell Valley or obstructs access to the Cherwell Valley.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The core objective will be to conserve the historic integrity of built form, street and block pattern and tranquil open spaces and to address traffic issues and the impact on the perceived connection of the area to the historic core.

Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- conserving the quiet character of the streets in this area, by minimising the impact of vehicular traffic;
- conserving the distinctive large scale street and block pattern;
- conserving, and building on, the historic palette of materials and spatial patterns of the streetscape;
- conserving public access to the Cherwell;
- considering views of the historic core from Elsfield and Headington Hill in planning any new tall buildings.

2B WESTERN FRINGE

Description

The Western Fringe wraps around the western edge of the historic core of Oxford. It is an area accommodating diverse land uses and ages of development. It is dominated in parts by the busy Oxpens Road and key vehicular conduits into the centre such as Park End Street, as well as access to the railway station and bus station (*photos 4 and 8*). However, between these busy routes and nodes, lies a dense jumble of historic buildings, retail and service development, and residential and academic land uses (*photos 2 and 3*).

The area has evolved in a piecemeal way, with remnants of Victorian residential development, largely cleared in the post war period, making way for commercial development and later, in the 1960s, for the broad sweep of Oxpens Road. The Westgate Centre, built in the late 1960s, and the Oxford College of Further Education, occupy significant parts of the area.

The large scale buildings of the Western Fringe lie mostly on the alluvial floodplain of the Thames (Isis), although the remnant historic centres of St Ebbes and St Thomas' correspond to river terrace gravels. The Oxford Canal is a key feature of this area, creating a linear greenspace, which in places is almost lost in the dense urban areas (*photos 5 and 6*).

The area is characterised by the juxtaposition of large scale post war commercial development with the remnants of older settlements and the canal. Today, it is an area dominated by busy roads, large modern buildings and piecemeal commercial and residential development, which strongly influence the perception of the western approach to the historic city. The canal provides the only public open space in this part of the city (*photos 1 and 7*).

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	<i>Pastoral Floodplain</i> forming the large scale, flat landscape. Also part lies on <i>River Terrace</i> .
Evolution of townscape	The area comprises ages of development from Victorian onwards. Major clearance and redevelopment in 1940s and 1960s.
Archaeological and historic interest	The station is on the site of the old Rewley Abbey and pastures. The main area of commercial development in the south is on the former Greyfriars and Blackfriars monastic precincts.
Street and block pattern	Now dominated by sweep of Oxpens Road with major routes into centre, with deformed grid behind and large single-use development plots.
Private/public realm interface	Whilst most street frontages are densely developed, the piecemeal development of the area has created, in places, a lack of clarity about which areas are private or public, especially in late 20 th century

2B WESTERN FRINGE



Photo 1: A mix of land uses and development styles and ages.



Photo 2: An open spatial character at the approach to the city centre.



Photo 3: Mixed ages of development with the Norman castle in the background.



Photo 4: Traffic dominated streetscape near the railway station.



Photo 5: The Oxford Canal - a hidden asset in the city.



Photo 6: New housing overlooking the river, but with some attractive pedestrian routes.



Photo 7: Approaches to river through new housing area off Thames Street.



Photo 8: Service businesses, mix of building ages and styles, and dominant vehicular route.

	housing and around the Westgate centre.
Massing and enclosure	Varies from open and wide streets, to enclosed and human scale in areas close to historic core.
Architecture and built form	<p>Dominated by large scale public and commercial buildings, but with buildings from all periods from Victorian onwards.</p> <p>Some Victorian red brick buildings with stone detailing and window surrounds.</p> <p>Stone, buff brick, red brick, concrete and glass buildings of inter war/post war era.</p> <p>Dark brown brick of the 1950s town houses bordering the inner ring road.</p>
Streetscape	<p>Diverse, from remnant Victorian paving and canalside details, to modern street lamps and furniture.</p> <p>Signage produces a cluttered streetscape.</p>
Open space	<p>Little open space. Grass verges on street corners. Small public courtyards adjacent to churches eg St Ebbes.</p> <p>Landmark features within townscape e.g. mature trees associated with older districts and mature willows of floodplain.</p> <p>Young deciduous trees border the ring road and separate housing from the busy road.</p> <p>Canal Corridor –a green link into the heart of the area. Green banks of the canal including the well-used tow path. Open grass and large amount of tree cover.</p> <p>Churchyard of St. Thomas's - Small area of rough species-poor grassland and scattered mature trees.</p>
Biodiversity	Contains no designated sites of ecological importance. The canal provides an important linear habitat mosaic including marginal vegetation, bankside trees and freshwater and provides a corridor for migration. The canal supports a range of common wetland birds, a population of coarse fish and the nationally protected water vole. Wasteland and the rail corridor also support pioneer communities that may be important for invertebrates.
Land use, culture and vitality	<p>Public and Commercial buildings with pockets of post war residential housing along the ring road and new housing around the railway station.</p> <p>Busy area - key transport nodes and routes into historic city centre, and active retail and service sector.</p>
Access and traffic	<p>Car access constrained with no-through roads.</p> <p>Pedestrian and cycle access contorted and Oxpens Road is major barrier to movement.</p>

Views and visual patterns	Diverse, from open views on main thoroughfares, to enclosed spaces and contorted streets and routes of dense areas.
Designations	Part falls within the city centre Conservation Area (castle and surrounds; crown courts)

Evaluation of character and quality

Despite its proximity to the historic core, this area has a confusing street and block pattern and poor legibility. It is not an easy area to get around on car, bicycle or on foot and there is little open space and poor visibility of the canal that flows through this part of the city.

The station is the first point of arrival for many visitors, but the streetscape and lack of clarity of routes creates a confusing introduction to Oxford, with few clues as to the character of the historic city the visitor is about to enter. Despite the problem with legibility, landscape quality is perceived to be moderate due to the historic time depth, indicated by the varying ages of buildings and presence of historic features such as the Norman castle.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	High
Biodiversity	Low - local interest associated with Canal
Historic Integrity	High - Rich history - Oxford Castle (SAM); Worcester College Gardens (listed Historic Garden); Conservation Area status
Re-creatability	Low
Intervisibility	High - views of historic core
Open Space	Low - limited to Canal corridor only

Sensitivity to change

This area is highly sensitive to change as a result of its historic time depth and its gateway location, and proximity, to the historic core. It also lies within the viewcones of the key viewpoints identified from Raleigh Park and Boar's Hill and this heightens its sensitivity to tall built elements.

This area has undergone many changes over the years, that has led to a loss of clarity of the urban form. This part of the city is one where change has been incremental and some of this poorly integrated into the older fabric and context of the historic city. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- new built development that does not respect the street and block pattern or scale of built development typical of the area;
- streetscape details such as signs, bollards and paving materials that lead to cluttering of the streetscape and affect legibility and pedestrian movement;
- use of low quality materials in built development and the streetscape;
- increases in traffic along the inner ring road;
- ageing and subsequent loss of mature trees;
- creation of additional car parks in highly visible locations or where they displace native habitats associated with the floodplain.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The core objective for this area will be to address the fragmentation of layout and development styles, through a programme of development and streetscape improvements which should be guided by an overall planning brief.

Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may therefore include:

- enhancing pedestrian and cycle access and provide an attractive link from the station into the historic centre of Oxford through the West Gate of the city;
- the development of a design guide for the use of materials, colours and street furniture;
- conserving and enhancing the historic neighbourhoods of St Ebbe's and St Thomas and their settings;
- protecting mature trees and seek to replant similar species to provide continuity;
- restoring the 'floodplain' character of the remaining open spaces and increasing the visual presence of the canal and other waterways to provide a landscape structure for the area;
- minimising the dominance of roads and traffic;
- enhancing the large car parks by tree planting to soften their impact and provide screening of visual intrusion of cars;
- minimising loss of open land along the rail and canal corridors and consider opportunity for new open spaces to link into these areas;
- considering the use of appropriate street furniture to enhance sense of place, improve the western approach to the city and support, rather than fragment, historic core.

- considering views of the historic core from Raleigh Park and Boar's Hill in planning any new tall buildings.

3 HISTORIC VILLAGE CORES

Generic Description

A number of former satellite villages to the city have now become absorbed into the urban area. Each village has its own identity, although a number of townscape characteristics are common to all, such as the organic street patterns and the use of local Coral Rag stone. In some cases, the village character has remained intact despite the growth of the city around and into the village, whereas in other places subsequent development has all but destroyed the historic features.

The villages are identifiable on maps of 1751, but subsequently became engulfed by the expanding city, as demand for housing grew around areas in easy reach of the city centre. In most cases the villages are situated on high ground, gravel or stone outcrops, on the drier ground overlooking the Thames floodplain.

The village cores are defined by their small scale village streets, the use of coarse Coral Rag stone and soft red brick as principle building materials, village greens and historic street features such as stone kerbs and black cast iron lamp posts. Winding streets and alleys and rising ground are typical and create intimate, enclosed settlements with continuously unfolding visual patterns.

The presence of mature trees, of both parkland and native woodland or wetland species, is a common feature, overhanging garden walls or creating interesting skyline views in association with roofs and chimneys. The villages are also often adjacent to areas of ecological interest and historic patterns of land use, often related to water courses.

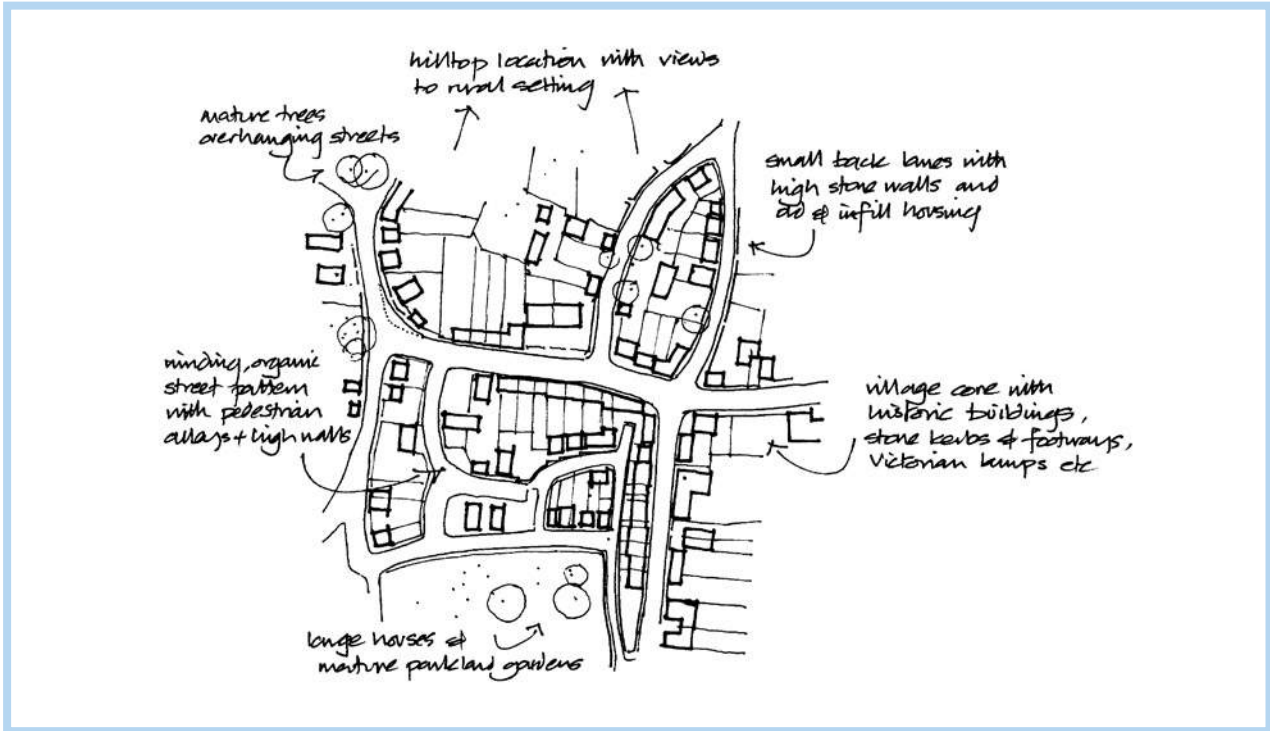
Key Characteristics

- Location on high ground or drier areas adjacent to the floodplain;
- discrete village cores with a cluster of historic buildings, often focussed around a church;
- winding streets and an organic layout responding to topography and natural features;
- cottages and walls constructed from coarse 'Coral Rag', and later buildings in soft red brick with ashlar stone details such as mullions;
- stone kerbs, historic lamp posts and street furniture are important details;
- village greens and verges with specimen trees;
- significant areas of ecological interest adjoin the village cores, especially meadow and commonland;
- views over surrounding landscape.

Character Areas

- 3A Old Marston Core
- 3B Old Headington Core
- 3C Temple Cowley Core
- 3D Church Cowley Core
- 3E Littlemore Village
- 3F Iffley Village
- 3G Lower and Upper Wolvercote
- 3H Headington Quarry

3 HISTORIC VILLAGE CORES



Example 1: Old Headington Core

3A OLD MARSTON CORE

Description

Marston began life as a small hamlet of the manor of Headington, growing up on an 'island' surrounded by marshy ground. This island corresponds to the drier land of the second river terrace of the River Cherwell. This village is focussed around a 14th century church and 17th century manor house. The surrounding properties are loosely clustered small houses and cottages, built in the local vernacular style, and scattered along a winding lane. They vary in date from Medieval to 19th century and are typically local limestone with stone, thatch or slate roofs. Red brick and clay tiles are also present, but rarely seen together. The public realm is tightly defined by street frontages and stone walls. Large gardens are typically enclosed by stone or brick walls and contribute to the open greenspace. Cottages are separated from the narrow lane by low stone walls, formal hedges or grass verges that are characteristic of the streetscape. Black cast iron lamp posts, stone kerbs and grass verges are also features of the streetscape.

The historic core of Marston is set within a rural landscape, surrounded by remains of a medieval field system and belts of trees. Large gardens with open lawns, ornamental shrubs and parkland trees further enhance the leafy rural village character.

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	<i>Settled River Terrace</i> - drier land surrounded by marshy land.
Evolution of townscape	Medieval village centre of Marston with later infilling and expansion surrounded by open arable fields of Marston Field.
Archaeological and historic interest	The Medieval field system is still visible on the outskirts of the village. 14th century church 17th century Manor House
Street and block pattern	Winding, organic main streets, with narrow winding leafy lanes and dead end streets off to the sides.
Private/public realm interface	Public realm is tightly defined by street frontages and stone walls.
Massing and enclosure	Numerous scales of buildings are represented - from terraced cottages to the manor house and school buildings. Characteristic loosely scattered building pattern as a result of large plot size.
Architecture and built form	Post medieval buildings of Coral rag stone Soft red brick cottages and houses, some with colour render, and with slate or clay tile roofs and varying frontages to the road. Different building ages and styles and scales contribute to a varied character. Ashlar limestone details including stone mullions. Buildings up to 3 storeys but mostly with low storey heights.

3A OLD MARSTON CORE



Photo 1: Winding village street with stone kerbs and grass verges.



Photo 2: Cottages of local limestone and soft red brick.

Streetscape	Black cast iron lamp posts, stone kerbs and grass embankments. Overhanging mature vegetation.
Open space	There is a large amount of greenspace throughout the village, in the forms of gardens, grass verges, allotments and recreational open space. The village is surrounded by fields, which provides a rural setting for the village. Large gardens and grounds to larger houses with open lawns, ornamental shrubs and trees. Public open space includes the recreation ground of mown amenity grassland with scattered trees, fragmented by Marston Ferry Road, allotments and a cemetery.
Biodiversity	The village is adjacent to the extensive meadow areas of the Cherwell Valley which are designated as areas of local nature conservation interest. Small areas of mown and grazed semi-improved grassland, surrounded by hedgerows occur within the village.
Land use, culture and vitality	Quiet residential village centre on the outskirts of Oxford
Access and traffic	A40 ring road encroaches on rural setting to the north and east. Main village street ends in a dead end at Mill Lane discouraging through-traffic, although there is access to the A40 ring road via Elsfield Road.
Views and visual patterns	Winding village streets, close street frontages and walls create varied visual sequences and a sense of expectancy.
Designations	Conservation Area status Local conservation interest in meadows by Cherwell

Evaluation of character and quality

Marston village is distinctive and largely intact, with a strong sense of its post-medieval character. The winding village street, stone and soft red brick buildings, stone walls and mature trees make Marston Village distinctive from its surrounding suburbs. There is a strong sense of place in its old rural village character and the quality of landscape and streetscape is high.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	High
Biodiversity	Low - local nature conservation interest
Historic Integrity	High - medieval church; Conservation Area
Re-creatability	Low
Intervisibility	Low - no views of historic core
Open Space	Moderate - private greenspace in gardens, verges and surrounding fields

Sensitivity to change

The village is highly sensitive to change as a result of its historic vernacular, rural setting adjacent to the Cherwell valley and its distinctive village streetscape.

Whilst new development has taken place on the edges of the village, including road improvements and upgrades affecting the rural setting of the village, the historic character has remained largely intact. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- new housing infill that does not respond to the street and block pattern and scale of built development in the surrounding townscape;
- conversions or extensions to existing buildings which are insensitive to the historic vernacular;
- new built development on the outskirts of Marston Village that intrudes into the setting to the village and restricts access;
- road improvement that alter the curvature of the village street;
- ageing and subsequent loss of vegetation, both in the public and private realm;
- deterioration of streetscape features such as lamp posts, boundary walls and stone kerbs as a result of their age.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The overall objective for the area should be to conserve the distinctive village character, and to seek opportunities to restore original details where these have been compromised by 20th century development.

Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- conserving the remnant medieval field systems which reflect the history of the hamlet and provide a rural setting to Marston village;
- resisting road improvements that would alter the winding character of the village street or the characteristic stone kerbs which line it;
- conserving the loosely scattered building pattern and variety of orientations when planning new infill development;
- maintaining the leafy character of the suburb by planting new native trees, both in the public and private realm, to ensure the next generation of trees grow up to replace existing stock;
- encouraging use of local stone and soft red brick, with slate or clay tile roofing, as the dominant building materials within the village;

- conserving and restoring local details such as stone kerbs, black lamp posts, black street signs and black drain pipes as features of the streetscape;
- managing areas of grassland within the village as meadows to increase wildlife interest.

3B OLD HEADINGTON

Description

Old Headington is a former village which has now been absorbed into the suburbs of Oxford. The village is set around a winding village street, with smaller lanes and a network of alleys with high stone walls. A church and some large houses, set in extensive grounds, are juxtaposed with the smaller cottages and houses, some fronting directly onto the street. The buildings and walls are generally of stone or brick, some white washed with slate and clay tile the dominant roofing materials. Rough stone kerbs, Victorian black cast iron lamp posts and black drain pipes are notable features of the streetscape.

The well maintained gardens and mature trees give the area a leafy character. This feeling of space is enhanced by Bury Knowle Park, to the south, and views northwards, downhill, to the countryside beyond. However, modern development is also visible, with the John Radcliffe Hospital to the west, modern day Headington to the south, and the A40 ring road to the north and east.

The village lies within the ancient bounds of the royal forest of Shotover and Stoward and has its origins in a Saxon manor house on the hills to the east of Oxford. The manor was ruined by medieval times, but many of the post-medieval stone houses and the medieval Church of St Andrew have survived - these now form the historic core of *Old Headington*. This historic residential core has the character of a rural 17th-19th century Oxfordshire village, despite 20th century infill development.

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	<i>Settled Plateaux</i> - the village is in an elevated position on a plateau above the floodplain to the east of Oxford
Evolution of townscape	Part of Saxon manor Key period of remaining historic buildings is 17-19th century
Archaeological and historic interest	Medieval centre of Headington, based around St Andrews Church. The village core is bounded by fields to the north which formed part of Headington Meads, former meadows on the side of Headington Hill now fragmented by the northern bypass.
Street and block pattern	Winding, organic main streets, with narrow winding leafy lanes and pedestrian alleys with high stone walls
Private/public realm interface	Public realm is tightly defined by street frontages and stone walls. Some access to backs of buildings due to alleys.
Massing and enclosure	Numerous scales of buildings are represented - from terraced cottages to the manor house and school buildings
Architecture and built form	Coral Rag stone or brick cottages and houses with slate or clay tile roofs and varying frontages to the road. Ashlar limestone details including stone mullions. Brick mostly soft red with some buff details. Buildings up to 3 storeys but mostly with low storey heights.

3B OLD HEADINGTON CORE



Photo 1: The village centre with St Andrew's Church in the background.



Photo 2: Tight street frontages, mature trees and stone & soft red brick.



Photo 3: Pedestrian alleys with high stone walls.



Photo 4: Distinctive street lighting and boundary walls.



Photo 5: Winding Lanes.

Streetscape	Black cast iron lamp posts, stone kerbs and grass embankments. Overhanging mature vegetation. Stone walls, or brick with half round red or blue brick coping.
Open space	Large gardens, typically enclosed by stone or brick walls, with mature trees including parkland species. Proximity to Bury Knowle Park - closely mown grass scattered with mature trees and recent planting, enclosed by a stone wall. Church grounds Mature lime, oak and beech and ornamental garden trees
Biodiversity	Although it does not contain any designated areas, Old Headington is an ecologically rich area, with gardens and churchyards providing a mosaic of wildlife habitats, notably mature trees, scrub and rough grassland. The proximity of the wider countryside to the north increases the area's interest.
Land use, culture and vitality	Quiet residential village centre on the outskirts of Oxford
Access and traffic	A40 ring road encroaches on rural setting to the north and east
Views and visual patterns	Elevated position allows glimpses from public realm to open space, countryside and 20 th century elements - which will be more evident from private areas at the backs and edges of the developed area. Winding streets, close street frontages and walls create varied visual sequences and a sense of expectancy.
Designations	Conservation Area status

Evaluation of character and quality

The village is distinctive and largely intact, with a strong sense of its post-medieval character. The winding lanes and alleys, stone and soft red brick buildings, stone walls and mature trees make Headington Village one of the city's most well loved suburbs. There is a strong sense of place in its old rural village character and landscape quality is perceived as being high.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	High
Biodiversity	Low -local interest
Historic Integrity	High - medieval centre and Conservation Area
Re-creatability	Low
Intervisibility	Low - no views of historic core skyline
Open Space	Moderate - Headington Meads is large area to the north of Headington and Bury Knowle Park

Sensitivity to change

The village is highly sensitive to adverse change as a result of its rural character, historic vernacular and elevated position on a hill. Whilst new development has taken place on the edges of the village and in infill plots, the historic character has remained largely intact. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- new housing infill that does not respond to the street and block pattern and scale of built development in the surrounding townscape;
- new housing infill that results in fragmentation of the area and loss of pedestrian access through the area via the existing distinctive alleys;
- conversions or extensions to existing buildings which are insensitive to the historic vernacular, particularly on those elevations that face onto the street;
- ageing and subsequent loss of vegetation, both in the public and private realm;
- deterioration of streetscape features such as lamp posts, boundary walls and stone kerbs as a result of their age.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The overall objective for the area should be to conserve the distinctive village character, and to seek opportunities to restore original details where these have been compromised by 20th century development.

Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- conserving streetscape patterns, with winding streets and alleys and irregular orientation of buildings;
- maintaining the leafy character of the suburb by planting new trees, such as horse chestnut and oak, to ensure the next generation of trees grow up to replace existing stock;
- encouraging the planting of new large scale trees in the private realm;
- resisting infill in locations where it would erode the spacious, leafy character;
- maintaining local stone and soft red brick, with slate or clay tile roofing, as the dominant building materials;
- conserving and restoring local details such as stone kerbs, black lamp posts, black street signs and black drain pipes;
- managing areas of grassland within the village as meadows to increase wildlife interest, particularly Bury Knowle Park and St. Andrew's Churchyard;
- conserving the rural setting of Headington Meads to the north of the village.

3C TEMPLE COWLEY CORE

Description

Temple Cowley is an 18th Century rural settlement named after the long lost medieval house of the Knights of Templar. The historic core has now largely been infilled and overlain by 19th and 20th Century suburbs and institutional buildings, eroding its character as a historic village. Despite this, it is still possible to distinguish the character of the village core with stone houses and cottages unified by boundary walls of the typical coarse Coral Rag. 20th Century suburbs have overwhelmed the setting of the village core.

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	Located on the edge of the <i>Settled Plateaux</i> which gives rise to steep, elevated topography with views over the city below.
Evolution of townscape	Historic 18th century village core with significant 19 th and 20 th century infill development
Archaeological and historic interest	Medieval village centre of one of Cowley's manors, and location of former house of Knights Templar
Street and block pattern	Small scale streets with overlying larger scale 19th and 20th Century institutional buildings and late 20 th century cul de sac housing
Private/public realm interface	Clarity of public / private areas partially lost in areas of cul de sac housing.
Massing and enclosure	Diverse densities and plot sizes; street proportions vary from tight and small scale to more open by institutional buildings
Architecture and built form	Older residential buildings in coarse Coral Rag with some ashlar stone detailing, with clay or slate roof tiles; more recent buildings of red brick with stone detailing and clay tiles
Streetscape	Ragstone walls and some stone kerbs as the only remaining distinctive detail
Open space	Recreation Ground is open with short mown amenity grass and few trees.
Biodiversity	This area does not contain any areas of particular ecological note, although it is adjacent to the important local wildlife sites of Cowley Marsh SLINC and Barracks Lane Meadow (SLINC).
Land use, culture and vitality	Quiet historic core close to the modern day Cowley centre
Access and traffic	Quiet narrow residential streets
Views and visual patterns	Views over city below from Crescent Road
Designations	Conservation Area status

Evaluation of character and quality

This area retains some distinctive details and some buildings typical of 18th century Oxford villages. However, later development has significantly broken down both streetscape patterns and integrity of materials and building styles that has eroded the

quality of the landscape/townscape. Landscape quality is perceived as being moderate.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	Moderate
Biodiversity	Low - local interest
Historic Integrity	Moderate - survival of some historic features and Conservation Area
Re-creatability	Low
Intervisibility	High - view from Crescent Road to the historic core skyline
Open Space	Low - Little open space

Sensitivity to change

This area is moderately sensitive to change. It occupies an elevated position (high visibility) and contains some historic elements that are sensitive to change. However, the village character of the area has been significantly compromised already reducing its sensitivity to further change. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- new housing infill that does not respond to the street and block pattern and scale of built development in the surrounding townscape;
- conversions or extensions to remaining historic buildings which are insensitive to the historic vernacular, particularly on those elevations that face onto the street;
- new built development that would obscure views of the historic core from Crescent Road;
- ageing and subsequent loss of vegetation, both in the public and private realm;
- deterioration or loss of streetscape features such as ragstone boundary walls.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The strategy should be to conserve the remaining historic features and to recreate its village character through careful choice of materials, scale and pattern of development.

Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- conserving the traditional street layouts of the village core;

3C TEMPLE COWLEY



Photo 1: A few remaining cottages and ragstone walls.



Photo 2: Ragstone boundary walls are all that is left of the former village, with 19th & 20th Century redevelopment.



Photo 3: Long views to the city centre from the elevated ground.



Photo 4: New cul de sac development has created a new townscape pattern.

- conserving views to the historic city core from Crescent Road;
- conserving and maintaining the characteristic ragstone walls, which give this area its historic 'Oxford village' character;
- considering use of street furniture, such as lighting and signage, to enhance the historic village character of the area;
- promoting use of local materials - Coral Rag and soft red brick with clay tiles or slates - in any new built development.

3D CHURCH COWLEY CORE

Description

Church Cowley Core is a fragment of a small rural village centred on one narrow street and the 12th century Church of St James. It lies on an elevated area of sandstone to the south of the city. From this vantage point it has views towards the city centre. Today, it is a small surviving remnant of an historic village, set within a green oasis, surrounded by the inter-war and later suburbs and shopping centre of Cowley. Although it is small, the core is distinct and characterised by the Coral Rag cottages and walls which are a feature of all of the historic village cores. Clay tiles and thatch are the typical roofing materials.

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	Located on the edge of the <i>Settled Plateaux</i> which gives rise to steep, elevated topography
Evolution of townscape	12th-18th century remnant village core
Archaeological and historic interest	12th century Church of St James the Apostle Medieval village centre of one of Cowley's manors
Street and block pattern	Narrow street with Coral Rag built cottages and walls, descending steeply
Private/public realm interface	Cottages opening straight on to the street and stone walls create clarity of public and private areas
Massing and enclosure	Intimate scale of street and buildings provides sense of enclosure
Architecture and built form	Small stone cottages of coarse Coral Rag with clay tiles and thatch roofing.
Streetscape	Black Victorian street lamps, hedges, coral rag walls and mature trees.
Open space	St James' Church grounds - grass grounds with many mature specimen trees.
Biodiversity	No designated sites of ecological importance, although the mature trees and grassland have a high local biodiversity value. The old church building may support roosting bats.
Land use, culture and vitality	Quiet residential street.
Access and traffic	Through traffic uses streets as a short cut to Cowley centre.
Views and visual patterns	Views over city below
Designations	Part is covered by Conservation Area status.

Evaluation of character and quality

This area is typical of 18th Century rural settlements in Oxford, with the dominant use of local stone. Its small scale streets, stone cottages and walls, and views to the city, create a small pocket of high quality and distinctiveness in the urban environment of Oxford.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	High
Biodiversity	Low - local interest as noted above
Historic Integrity	High - survival of historic features; a Conservation Area
Re-creatability	Low
Intervisibility	Low - No views of historic core
Open Space	Low - little open space

Sensitivity to change

This area is highly sensitive to change as a result of its prominent position on a steep slope, its survival of historic features and leafy character. Change has been successfully integrated into the street and block pattern of the village core with sensitive use of local materials. However, the use of the streets as a short cut to Cowley centre has resulted in a dominance of traffic. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- conversions or extensions to remaining historic buildings which are insensitive to the historic vernacular, particularly on those elevations that face onto the street;
- ageing and subsequent loss of trees in the private realm;
- deterioration or loss of streetscape features such as ragstone boundary walls;
- increasing traffic levels and increased parking on the narrow streets.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The overall strategy for this area should be to conserve the remaining historic features, and to enhance its village character through streetscape improvements and tree planting programmes.

Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- conserving the open spaces between the buildings and encouraging planting new large trees to ensure long-term survival of the leafy character of this area;
- conserving and maintaining the characteristic Coral Rag walls;
- maintaining a dominance of local materials - Coral Rag and red brick with clay tiles or thatch - that define the historic core;
- considering controlling through traffic.

3D CHURCH COWLEY CORE



Photo 1: Narrow intimate street with stone cottages and mature trees.



Photo 2: St James Church.



Photo 3: Historic walls and buildings.



Photo 4: Leafy streets, stone walls and overhanging vegetation.

3E LITTLEMORE VILLAGE

Description

Littlemore Village lies on the *Settled Plateaux* landscape type, on a plateau some 15m above the Thames floodplain to the west. The oldest part of the village consists of a manor house, farmhouse and associated barns which date from the 15th to 18th centuries. Subsequent construction of two schools, cottages and houses, and surviving Ragstone walls, completed its character as an 18th century Oxfordshire village. In the 1830s the Vicar of the University Church in Oxford, Revd John Henry Newman built St Mary and St Nicholas parish church and converted former farm buildings into Newman's College. This enhanced its status as a village and its connections with Oxford. Today it forms part of the suburbs of Oxford, but despite this it has retained a distinct village character.

The curved street layout (see *sketch*) with its blind side-alleys and the organic block pattern of short terraces and larger detached dwellings is characteristic of a village settlement. Roadside verges and stone kerbs contribute to the historic character. There are few road markings which enhance the rural character of the village. The building density is varied, with a wide range of building styles and ages and orientation within a small area.

The underlying geology of sands and calcareous sandstones of the Corallian formation is reflected in the building materials. Ragstone cottages and boundary walls are a feature of the village. The area has a warm tone with warm red brick cottages complementing the older Ragstone buildings.

The streetscape is characterised by the winding village street that provides an unfolding sequence of views. Views to landmarks such as the church and mature trees form important features of the village street. Many of the cottages face directly onto the street or lie behind narrow front gardens bounded by low coral rag walls. In places the boundary walls are high and provide a sense of enclosure, which emphasises the line of the street.

Open space is restricted. However, mature trees within the school grounds, church grounds and on roadside verges are important features of the skyline. The black street signs are common and distinctive features of the city of Oxford.

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	Located on the <i>Settled Plateaux</i> , a flat plateau south of the ring road.
Evolution of townscape	15th century Oxfordshire hamlet 3 miles south of Oxford consisting of a manor houses, farmhouse and barns. Erection of parish church and College by Newman in 1840s.
Archaeological and historic interest	15 th -18th century building cluster at the core of the village.
Street and block pattern	Curvilinear streets merge at an important nodal point in the village. Organic block pattern with short terraces and detached houses with

	spaces between buildings, and short blind alleys. Buildings face directly onto the street or lie behind small front gardens.
Private/public realm interface	Clear distinction between fronts and backs of properties.
Massing and enclosure	Numerous scales of buildings are represented - from terraced cottages to manor houses and school buildings.
Architecture and built form	Diverse mix of type and orientation of architecture, but predominantly pre-Victorian.
Streetscape	Mature trees prominent on the skyline and act as landmarks, particularly the cedar in the church grounds. Black street signs, common to Oxford, few road markings, and high and low coarse Coral Rag boundary walls.
Open space	Limited to church grounds, school grounds and roadside verges/greens. Trees contribute to a leafy character, particularly around the church and school. Open grass verges and greens provide a setting to the historic buildings.
Biodiversity	Contains no designated sites of ecological importance, although locally important biodiversity habitat, such as grassland and mature trees, are found in the churchyard and school grounds. The roofs of old buildings may also support roosting bats.
Land use, culture and vitality	A quiet residential suburb of Oxford that has retained a distinct village character, with academic links to Oxford (Newman's College).
Access and traffic	Main streets are busy through-routes. The nodal point of the village is the roundabout outside the church.
Views and visual patterns	Curved roads provide unfolding views along the village street. Blind alleys to the sides constrain views.
Designations	Conservation Area centred on Sandford Rd / Cowley Rd / Oxford Rd

Evaluation of character and quality

The heart of area is recognisable as an Oxfordshire village by virtue of its gently curving village street, organic pattern of buildings representing a diverse range of ages and its characteristic Ragstone buildings and boundary walls. These features combine to give an impression of high townscape quality.

The ring road underpass to the north and the bridge over the railway line to the south are both gateways into Littlemore Village.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	High
Biodiversity	Low - local interest

3E LITTLEMORE VILLAGE



Photo 1: Littlemore retains a distinct village character, despite being part of the suburbs of Oxford.



Photo 2: Victorian cottages.



Photo 3: Rural agricultural buildings in the village core.



Photo 4: Local stone and slate are common.



Photo 5: The curving village street has landmark trees along its length.

Historic Integrity	High - preservation of historic features; Conservation Area
Re-creatability	Low
Intervisibility	Low - no views of historic core
Open Space	Moderate - limited open greenspace

Sensitivity to change

The village is highly sensitive to change as a result of its historic features, unfolding sequence of views along the village street and its scenic quality.

Littlemore's Conservation Area status has helped to conserve the built fabric of the village. However, the streetscape has undergone changes which have affected the character of the village, including infill resulting in the loss of greenspace, dilution of distinctive architecture and blocking of views to important landmarks such as the church. The replacement of original lighting columns with post-war municipal columns and the loss of greens and verges have also resulted in changes in Littlemore's character.

Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- new housing infill that does not respond to the street and block pattern and scale of built development in the surrounding townscape, such as the suburban cul de sac;
- conversions or extensions to existing buildings which are insensitive to the historic vernacular, particularly on those elevations that face onto the street;
- ageing and subsequent loss of vegetation, both in the public and private realm;
- deterioration of streetscape features such as lamp posts, boundary walls and stone kerbs as a result of their age.
- ageing and subsequent loss of mature specimen trees;
- use of new materials and textures that stand out against the muted tones of the historic core.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The overall objective for this area should be to conserve the curving village street and block pattern that relates closely to the streetscape and to seek to regenerate the village streetscape and historic village character through attention to detail as set out below.

Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- regenerating the village streetscape and improving legibility by developing a co-ordinated lighting and signage strategy;
- conserving and maintaining the ragstone boundary walls;
- enhancing the nodal point of the village through traffic calming, lighting and signage to encourage use of the space for meeting, waiting, social exchange;
- considering a long-term replacement plan for special and landmark trees, for example the Cedar in the churchyard;
- considering creating new village greens as public open space and a setting to the historic buildings of the village core;
- maintaining a dominance of local materials - Coral Rag and soft red brick with clay tiles - that define the historic core and using warm, but not bright, colours;
- avoiding road improvements such as road straightening or widening that would alter the winding character of the village street;
- ensuring new built development maintains the small scale of the village street, contributes to the public realm and avoids blocking views of historic buildings or landmark trees.

3F IFFLEY VILLAGE

Description

Iffley Village lies on the northern edge of Rose Hill, overlooking the Isis, to the south of the city. Its leafy, winding lanes are populated with a range of historic cottages and later residential development.

Its character as a medieval agricultural village began to alter from the end of the 18th century with the building of wealthy country houses in landscaped grounds that were within easy reach of the city. Today, it has a suburban, residential character, although it has retained its distinct village core around the historic winding leafy lane of Church Way and the Norman Church of St Mary. In this central part of the village stone walls and stone cottages covered with thatch or tile are typical. The low density of development has allowed green spaces and mature trees to play an important part in the character of the area, with the survival of village greens and verges. Properties on the west side of the village, on Church Lane, have long gardens leading down to the floodplain.

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	Located on the edge of the <i>Settled Plateaux</i> type, on the rocky promontory of Rose Hill, which gives rise to steep, elevated topography and a wooded skyline.
Evolution of townscape	Noted in the Domesday Book, including 12th-19th century development. Developed as a suburb for Oxford in the 18th century.
Archaeological and historic interest	Until 19 th Century was main way to Henley. Tree Lane was a medieval sheep way. Norman church of St Mary and ancient rectory.
Street and block pattern	Gently winding lanes, with streets rising from Church Way. Long plots extend from detached houses, with some larger houses and infill development.
Private/public realm interface	Clear except in infill development areas, where houses back on to main street.
Massing and enclosure	Winding streets, mature vegetation and stone walls create strong sense of enclosure.
Architecture and built form	Cottages and walls of coarse Coral Rag with clay tiles or thatch roofing. Red brick and stone villas with clay or slate tiles. 18th and 19th century Villas within landscaped grounds
Streetscape	Winding village street with coarse Coral Rag walls and cottages. Black Victorian street lamps, hedges, village greens and mature trees.
Open space	Significant mature trees and vegetation in private gardens. Village greens and verges. Iffley meadows along western edge, bordering the Thames floodplain.
Biodiversity	Large private gardens, village greens, St. Mary's Churchyard and adjacent low fertility grassland fields and road verges also provide important habitats for wildlife. Iffley Meadows are designated as a SLINC.

Land use, culture and vitality	Quiet, residential rural village on the edge of the Thames
Access and traffic	No significant traffic issues. Good access to Thames floodplain.
Views and visual patterns	Glimpses to the Thames floodplain
Designations	Conservation Area Iffley Meadows LNR and SLINC

Evaluation of character and quality

Iffley village has for at least two centuries been sought after as a place to live and commute to the centre of the city. Its location, overlooking the river and floodplain, and its leafy winding streets and cottages with a predominant use of local stone, combine to create an area of very high quality.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	High
Biodiversity	Moderate - Iffley Meadows LNR and SLINC
Historic Integrity	High - survival of historic features; Conservation Area
Re-creatability	Low
Intervisibility	Low - no clear views of historic core
Open Space	Moderate - Iffley meadows along western edge and access to adjacent Thames Valley

Sensitivity to change

This village is highly sensitive to change as a result of its historic integrity, biodiversity interest and proximity to the Thames floodplain.

Whilst the core historic areas on Church Way have been little affected by recent development, other areas have been subject to limited infill development and changes to architectural detailing. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- new housing infill that does not respond to the street and block pattern and scale of built development in the surrounding townscape, such as the suburban cul de sac;
- new built development that changes the clarity of definition of public and private areas;

3F IFFLEY VILLAGE



Photo 1: Leafy streets, stone walls and old cottages.



Photo 2: Enclosed streets, rising ground and mature trees.



Photo 3: New development behind old walls.



Photo 4: Village green and large villas.



Photo 5: Thames floodplain forms a setting to the village.

- conversions or extensions to existing buildings which are insensitive to the historic vernacular, particularly on those elevations that face onto the street;
- ageing and subsequent loss of vegetation, both in the public and private realm;
- deterioration of streetscape features such as lamp posts, boundary walls and stone kerbs as a result of their age.
- use of new materials and textures that stand out against the muted tones of the historic core.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The overall strategy should be to conserve the existing rural village character and protect against inappropriate development or loss of key townscape/streetscape features. Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- ensuring any new built development responds to the organic pattern of development, maintaining small scale built form along the village street;
- conserving the greens, verges and large gardens as a setting to the buildings of the historic core;
- retaining, and providing more opportunities for, views to the Thames floodplain and enhancing access to the river where possible;
- planning for replacement planting of mature trees in the public realm to ensure long-term survival of the leafy character of this area;
- encourage planting of new large trees in the private realm to ensure the survival of the leafy character of the area;
- conserving and maintaining the characteristic Coral Rag walls;
- using local materials and colours - buff coloured stone (local Coral Rag) and soft red brick with clay/slate tiles or thatch - in new built development.

3G WOLVERCOTE

Description

Wolvercote lies at the extreme north west edge of Oxford, on river terraces in the Thames floodplain. The village is in two parts: Lower Wolvercote to the west, a distinct island in the floodplain; and Upper Wolvercote, which merges into the inter-war suburbs to the east.

Lower Wolvercote has a small medieval core focused on the winding streets of Godstow Road and Mill Road, and leads to the Isis at Godstow Bridge and the well known Trout Inn, and to the site of Godstow Abbey. The Trout Inn has associations with Matthew Arnold, Lewis Carroll and Colin Dexter's Inspector Morse. The village is historically strongly linked to its waterside location, with both the river and its associated sluices and drains, and the Wolvercote Mill Stream which powered the paper Mill. Views from many parts of the village out into the floodplain are marked by the meadows, large willows, and distant views to the city centre.

The village centre is focussed around a village green, surrounded by buildings of a variety of ages, including two pubs. Stone walls are a feature of the village, marking its boundary with the common land of the Thames floodplain. The walls, uneven stone kerbs, unmarked roads and distinctive small black lamposts contribute to the village character. The older core is overshadowed by a large paper mill whose chimney is a prominent landmark, seen for some considerable distance across the Thames floodplain. For over three centuries Wolvercote has made paper, much of it used for Bibles, printed by the University Press. To the north and south of the historic village core, Edwardian and inter-war development includes a more regular grid of streets of semi-detached, bay fronted post war properties finished in pebble-dash.

Upper Wolvercote overlooks the floodplain, on ground which rises steeply, and is focused around the 14th century Church of St Peter. Its village core comprises a small scale, winding central street with old cottages and more recent infill. Its special character comes from its position on the edge of a floodplain from where it overlooks Wolvercote Green, an historic green which forms part of the floodplain. The green has allowed the village to maintain its rural setting on its western edge, which gives Upper Wolvercote a strong sense of place. Coloured render on a number of buildings is a distinctive feature.

It is noticeable that whilst the older properties in both parts of the village face the floodplain, the inter-war houses back on to the surrounding landscape.

The railway cuts through the two settled areas, and forms an eastern edge to Upper Wolvercote. Vehicular traffic is evident from the nearby Western Bypass, and on summer days many people drive through the village to the Trout Inn.

3G WOLVERCOTE



Photo 1: Historic Core of lower Wolvercote.



Photo 2: Upper Wolvercote overlooking Wolvercote Green



Photo 3: Village green with paper mill in background.



Photo 4: Inter-war development with variety in boundary details.



Photo 5: Distinctive stone boundary walls and mature vegetation.



Photo 6: Modern flats with semi public areas at ground level.

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	<p>Upper Wolvercote is located on the edge of the <i>North Oxford River Terrace</i> which gives rise to gently rising landform on which the village is built, overlooking the floodplain.</p> <p>Lower Wolvercote lies on a <i>River Terrace Outlier</i> within the Thames floodplain.</p>
Evolution of townscape	An ancient settlement, with evidence of development from the 14th-19th century. Medieval centre of part of Wolvercote on the Common, with later infilling and expansion.
Archaeological and historic interest	<p>Surviving village green on the floodplain.</p> <p>Medieval centre of part of Wolvercote on the Green.</p>
Street and block pattern	Winding medieval village streets, with more regular blocks of 20 th century residential development.
Private/public realm interface	<p>Some confusion at boundaries to old Paper Mill.</p> <p>Edges of village green are ill-defined in terms of ownership, creating unplanned car parking areas.</p>
Massing and enclosure	Tightly developed areas, with a more open village core and glimpses to floodplain from historic core areas.
Architecture and built form	<p>Small scale stone cottages in historic areas, in 'Coral Rag' and red brick buildings with thatch, clay or stone tile roofs. White or coloured render is also characteristic.</p> <p>Modern infill adds a variety of colour and texture with larger scale modern flats and houses encroaching on setting.</p>
Streetscape	Coarse Coral Rag stone walls, stone kerbs unmarked roads. Open nature of verges and village green in core.
Open space	<p>Strong historic connections and access to Wolvercote Green in the floodplain adjacent to the village.</p> <p>Trees (oak, horse chestnut, Scot's pine and ornamental garden trees) contribute to a leafy character</p> <p>Village Green - a triangular area of mown grass with some immature trees. The green is bounded by permeable wooden posts along one edge and robust wooden fences along the other two. A playground is enclosed by fencing and contains brightly coloured equipment.</p>
Biodiversity	Wolvercote Green is part of Port Meadow SSSI, and adjacent to the cSAC, a candidate site of international importance. The Green supports unimproved grassland managed as hay meadow and the aquatic and wetland habitats of the recently restored College Pond and the Oxford Canal.
Land use, culture and vitality	Residential, tranquil rural village on the edge of the floodplain. Popular route to Trout Inn.
Access and traffic	Through traffic to riverside and pub.
Views and visual patterns	<p>Views over the Thames floodplain.</p> <p>Large paper mill, adjacent to the historic core, is visible from great distances across the floodplain</p> <p>Views of the spires of Oxford from edges of the village</p>

Designations	Conservation Area in core area and extending into floodplain.
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Evaluation of character and quality

This is a distinctive village lying on an island of gravel within and beside the Thames floodplain. The historic centre of Lower Wolvercote focuses on the village green and winding road to the floodplain, with much evidence of its waterside heritage in the drains, bridges, mill stream and river. Upper Wolvercote too, overlooks and is closely associated with the floodplain. These historic core areas and the association with the floodplain are highly distinctive and attractive settlements.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	High
Biodiversity	Moderate - proximity to areas of international importance
Historic Integrity	High - survival of historic features; Conservation Areas
Re-creatability	Low
Intervisibility	High - clear views across Port Meadow to skyline of spires and domes
Open Space	Moderate - proximity to large areas of open space including greens and commons

Sensitivity to change

The village cores are highly sensitive to change as a result of their visible location on the edge of the Thames floodplain, their cultural and ecological association with the floodplain and historic integrity.

The historic village has been significantly affected by 20th century development. In places, the layout of development breaks the historic pattern of houses overlooking the floodplain, and much of the detailing of property boundaries and landscape elements such as at the village green has been executed without attention to the historic vernacular. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- new housing infill that does not respond to the street and block pattern and scale of built development in the surrounding townscape;
- conversions or extensions to existing buildings which are insensitive to the historic vernacular;
- built development on the village greens;

- expansion of the settlement on its edges that obscures its present stone walls boundaries and severs links with the surrounding floodplain;
- road improvements that alter the curvature of the village street or urban and municipal detailing of the streetscape and open spaces including kerbing, road marking, signage and fencing;
- ageing and subsequent loss of vegetation, both in the public and private realm;
- deterioration of streetscape features such as lamp posts, boundary walls and stone kerbs as a result of their age.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The general strategy in this area should be to conserve the existing rural village character, enhance the detailing of the public realm, and maintain connections with the floodplain.

Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- conserving the village green and floodplain in its natural state - resist any more urbanising elements;
- planning a re-planting programme to ensure over mature trees are replaced with similar species to ensure the survival of the leafy character of this area;
- conserving the characteristic 'Coral Rag' walls;
- using local materials and colours - Coral Rag and light brick with clay/slate tiles or thatch - in any new built development;
- maintaining the characteristic stone wall boundary with the floodplain - any new development should maintain this type of wall as a boundary with the surrounding landscape;
- conserving the village green as a rural village green, and improving the play area and boundaries in keeping with the rural village environment ;
- conserving the open character of the village green, using only native species of tree as features of the green;
- considering using climbing vegetation to unify the new development with the old;
- suitable species of tree are horse chestnut, lime and Scot's pine within the village with willow and poplar on the edges of the floodplain or along water courses;
- conserving the setting of historic buildings, ensuring that new development does not overshadow these features;

3H HEADINGTON QUARRY

Description

This area, which is now a densely developed residential suburb, is unique in lying over former quarried land, creating a sharply undulating landform and organic layout of cottages and other small buildings. It lies on the Corallian limestones that form part of the *Settled Plateaux* landscape type, and was quarried from the medieval period, providing much of Oxford's building stone.

The area forms a definable entity, containing many stone and brick cottages from the 18th and 19th centuries, interspersed with more recent residential development. The buildings are generally detached, and their orientation is diverse in response to the street layout and undulating ground, although there are some short terraces as well. A distinctive feature of the area is the organic layout and twisting lanes, set within the humps and bumps of the former quarry and tips. It is also criss-crossed with footpaths contained by rubble stone walls, with some short cul de sacs and tightly developed courts. The twisting, turning nature of roads through the area creates a distinctive pattern of visual sequences. The northern part of the area is densely developed and is designated as a Conservation Area.

South of the village is a large area of ancient woodland which links with the wooded slopes of Shotover, both visually, historically and ecologically. This area includes quarry pits surrounded by less dense development of houses of a variety of ages, from where stone was transported down Old Road into central Oxford. The old quarries provide public open spaces and are of interest in terms of industrial archaeology and biodiversity.

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	Located on the elevated <i>Settled Plateaux</i> . Local topography influenced by old quarries.
Evolution of townscape	Medieval and later quarrying, followed by development in the 18th-20th century.
Archaeological and historic interest	Industrial archaeology - the quarries in this area have their origin in Medieval times when much of Oxford's building stone was quarried from this area. The southern half of the area forms part of the large historic area of Quarry Coppice in Shotover. Former Roman road to eastern edge.
Street and block pattern	Twisting lanes and dramatic changes in level are characteristic, with walled footpaths. Organic layout and small plot sizes.
Private/public realm interface	The residential areas are very permeable, with back gardens exposed to view, but the streets are tightly developed presenting mostly continuous frontages.
Massing and enclosure	Distinctive in its small scale and enclosed streets and alleys.
Architecture and built form	18th century rubble stone cottages, late 19th century brick buildings

3H HEADINGTON QUARRY



Photo 1: Winding streets with stone and brick walls.



Photo 2: A mix of old and new buildings, and a remnant village green.



Photo 3: Pedestrian alleys with stone walls are a feature.



Photo 4: Undulating ground of the old quarries now forms an area of public open space.



Photo 5: Diverse orientation, height and aspect of old and new houses.

	and more recent residential infill in diverse materials. Buildings are generally detached, and their orientation is diverse in response to the street layout and undulating ground. Locally quarried Coral Rag is the dominant built material of walls and buildings and slate is dominant roofing material.
Streetscape	Coral Rag stone walls, swan neck light standards, overhanging vegetation. Narrow streets and footways, some with rough stone kerbs. Buildings on the street frontage or set back up to 6 metres.
Open space	High level of tree cover within the area, and historic oak woodland on the footslopes of Shotover, formerly part of the Quarry Coppice in Shotover. Old quarry pits unsuitable for building have become areas of public open space within the built fabric.
Biodiversity	Headington Quarry supports a great range of ecologically important habitats, associated with both disused quarries and remnants of the undeveloped pastoral landscape, including meadowland and ancient woodland. The area includes a geological SSSI and 3 SLINCs.
Land use, culture and vitality	Residential Peaceful, tranquil area - rural character. Morris dancing is a local tradition.
Access and traffic	Some short cut routes to east from bypass.
Views and visual patterns	Mosaic of built form at diverse orientation and levels, creating quick succession of unfolding views with the area, Views over roofs and chimneys to backdrop of Shotover woodland.
Designations	Dorchester Close SLINC; Magdalen Meadow SLINC; Stansfield Study Centre SLINC. Conservation Area in northern, village area.

Evaluation of character and quality

This area is very distinctive in its layout and abrupt changes of level, with old cottages and more recent buildings laid out in a tightly packed organic arrangement. The tight, close grain of the village is a unique characteristic in the city. The permeability of the village is also notable, due to its back alleys and overviews from higher to lower areas.

Its local rubble stone buildings and walls express its association with the quarries, which provided building stone for many of Oxford's Colleges. It is an area which appears well kept and loved by its residents, and which has a unique charm.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	High
Biodiversity	High - areas of national value
Historic Integrity	High - survival of historic features; ancient woodland; Conservation Area

Re-creatability	Low
Intervisibility	Low - no views of historic core
Open Space	Moderate - large areas of open space to the south including woodland

Sensitivity to change

This area is highly sensitive to change as a result of its unique evolution and street/block pattern, rural village character and ecological/geological importance.

Whilst the area has developed in an unplanned way, and has successfully absorbed new houses throughout its history, the village character could be compromised though a number of potential changes, which might include the following:

- extensions that change the stone and brick vernacular of cottages;
- new development that changes the scale and grain of the village character;
- parking places and pull-offs from the winding lanes that threaten the integrity of the stone walls which characterise this area;
- new garages and driveways that are visible from the street;
- erosion of stone/brick walls and replacement with other materials e.g. wooden fencing.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The landscape strategy should aim to conserve its distinctive village character and develop appropriate management regimes for the wooded areas and open spaces. The historical land use and resulting landform and other features of archaeological interest should be protected and explained through interpretation and educational awareness programmes.

Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- planning new built development or extensions to existing dwellings to respect the scale, architectural style and materials of the local vernacular;
- planning infill development so that it responds to , and enhances, the small, tight grain of the townscape;
- maintaining red brick or rubble stone walls that are characteristic of the narrow lanes, resisting new entrances where they would threaten existing walls;
- maintaining the existing organic road pattern and road widths;

- conserving mature trees and planting new trees, both in the public and private realm, to safeguard the long term tree population;
- management of the quarry pits to maintain diversity of vegetation and respect archaeological and geological interest;
- encouraging appropriate management of the ancient woodlands to enhance biodiversity and provision of recreational access.

4 VICTORIAN SUBURBS AND VILLAGES

Generic Description

The Victorian suburbs and villages represent a significant period of growth of the city. All areas, except for New Headington, lie on the *Settled and Open River Terrace* where they have sometimes spilt onto the *Pastoral Floodplains* landscape types. The shapes of areas reflect the limitations the Victorians experienced in locating dry land for new built development. Where the river terraces form a narrow band or discontinuous islands, the oldest properties are found on the terraces and more recent development extends into adjacent areas of floodplain, for example as seen at Grandpont or New Osney. North Oxford contrasts with these areas where the broader river terrace allows more spacious residential development.

The Victorian Suburbs and Villages townscape type is defined by its regular street and block patterns, its red or buff brick built houses with stone and tile detailing and slate roofing. The individual character of the houses is defined by differences in detailing and these subtle differences produce a streetscape of variety and colour. Front gardens play a large part in the character of the streets, adding colour through their ornamental trees and shrubs. Pubs and churches are features of the townscape and there are often factories associated with the larger suburbs such as North Oxford and East Oxford. Busy shopping streets have often grown up on the major through-route. Each Victorian suburb or village is distinctive in its own right and each is described as a separate character area.

Key Characteristics

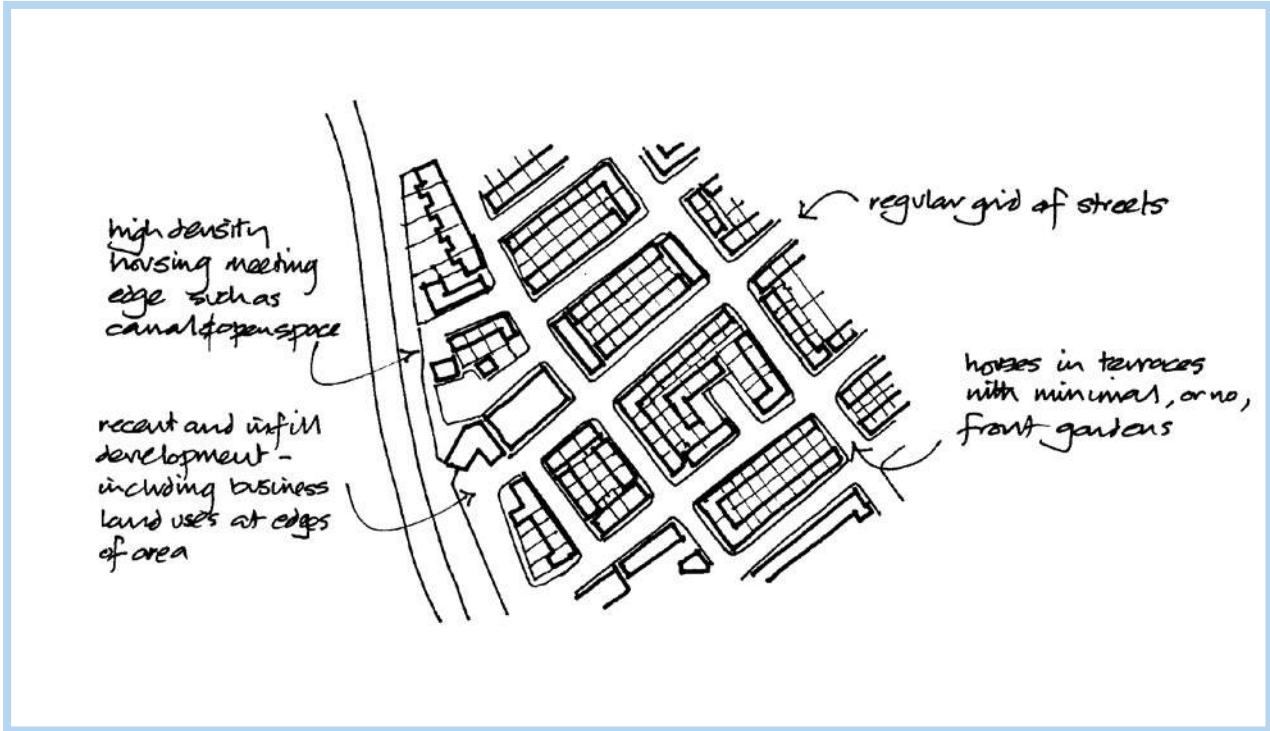
- large areas of Victorian housing laid out in a regular street pattern;
- industrial premises often associated with each area of housing;
- pubs and churches are local features of the townscape, and often form landmarks;
- mature private gardens play an important role in the ecological fabric providing a mosaic of habitats including mature trees, dead wood, ponds, scrub and flowering plants;
- historic 'Oxford style' lamp posts, street signs and street furniture.

Character Areas

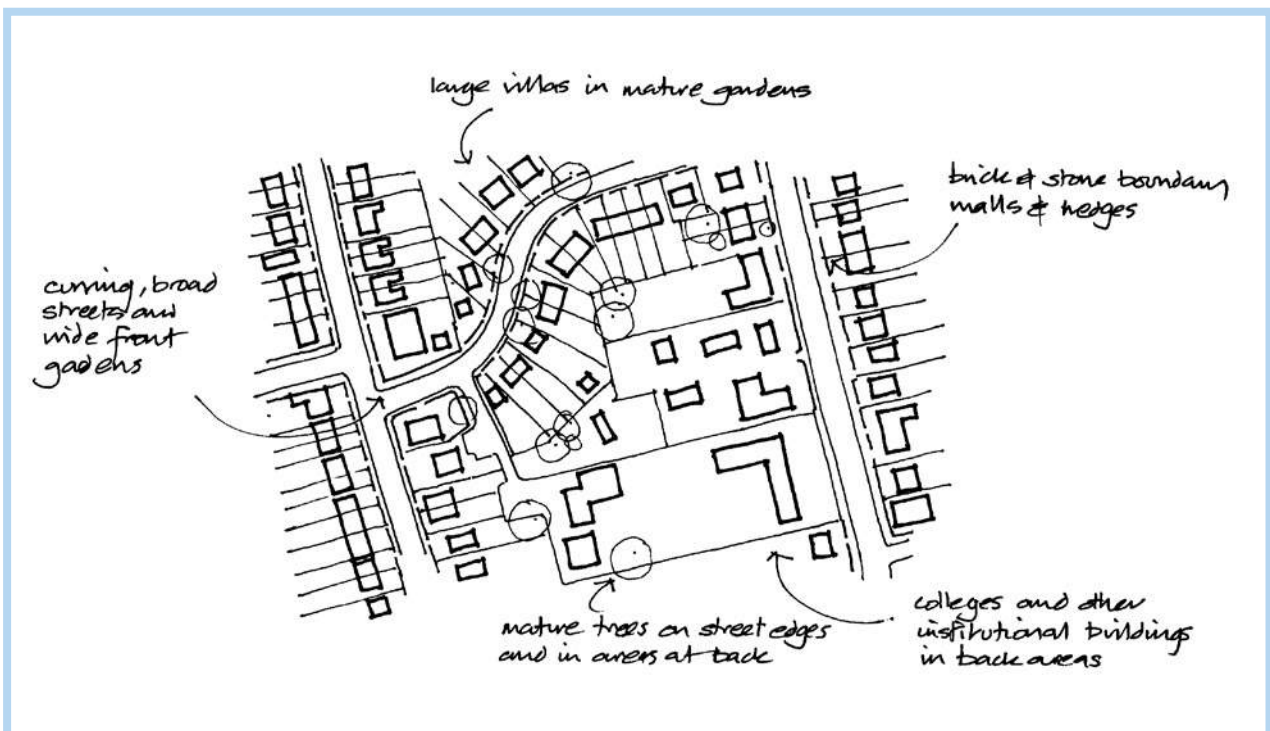
- 4A North Oxford Suburb
- 4B Jericho
- 4C Grandpont
- 4D East Oxford

- 4E New Osney
- 4F Summertown
- 4G New Headington
- 4H New Marston Village

4 VICTORIAN SUBURBS AND VILLAGES



Example 1: 4B Jericho



Example 2: 4H New Marston Village

4A NORTH OXFORD SUBURB

Description

The clearly defined North Oxford Suburb, a product of a handful of local architects and builders, originated in 1854 with the construction of the terraces and squares of Park Town. Villas were then developed in Norham Gardens in 1860 and development continued for the rest of the century, gradually moving north. This suburb lies on the North Oxford River Terrace, a domed ridge of gravels between the floodplains of the Thames and Cherwell and represents one of the first extensions from the historic core. It lies between the University Fringe to the south and Summertown to the north.

The area is built on a loose, and sometimes curvilinear, grid of broad streets. The generous proportion of the street blocks reflects the scale of the individual properties and gardens. (*photo 1*) The planned streets of magnificent individually designed villas dominate the suburb, although some streets contain inter-war semi-detached houses, with occasional late 20th century infill units. The typical Ruskinian buff and red brick detailing, carved stone capitals, ashlar lintels and mullions, and gothic architecture are partly what give this suburb its unique character. (*photo 2*)

The view from the street is dominated by the interplay of the individual villas with mature and diverse trees and garden planting. Whilst there are no long views out of the area, the patchwork of trees and buildings creates an ever-changing spatial quality and interplay of light and shade. The individuality of roofs and chimneys, and the silhouette of mature trees creates a distinctive skyline. The wide streets are bordered by generous front gardens, some which are used for parking on wide gravel drives. (*photo 3*)

The low boundary walls are in many cases distinctive in their use of red brick and half-round coping, sometimes in conjunction with railings or clipped hedges, all overhung with trees and bushes. (*photo 6*)

Open space is almost all privately owned and dominated by mature tree planting. The Victorian style gardens soften the architecture and add colour and texture to the townscape. Banbury Road and Woodstock Road are two of the major conduits of movement connecting the historic core to the northern suburbs. They are well known for their leafy character created by a variety of trees within private front gardens (*photos 4 and 5*).

Since its original purpose providing accommodation for the Oxford Dons it has retained close links with the university – many properties are owned by the University or by Oxford academics. North Oxford contains many schools, mostly private, and colleges. Students on bicycles are a common sight in the quiet streets.

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	Settled River Terrace which gives rise to the gently domed topography.
Evolution of townscape	Planned mid-late Victorian garden suburb Later 19th century development of middle-class and artisan housing in St Giles' fields Some inter-war semi-detached Occasional late 20 th century infill
Archaeological and historic interest	Architectural fabric
Street and block pattern	Generous loose grid with large blocks reflecting scale of properties and gardens Gentle curve on many streets
Private/public realm interface	Clear pattern following grid block form
Massing and enclosure	Large detached properties with generous gaps between buildings Houses set well back from boundaries and wide streets
Architecture and built form	Large detached or semi-detached villas often gothic and Italianate with Ruskinian or Arts and Crafts detailing Some prominent churches (esp St Philip & St James) Buff and red brick detailing, carved stone capitals, ashlar lintels and mullions, red clay wall tiles and pitched porches Multi-faceted pitched roofs with mainly clay tiles, prominent chimneys
Streetscape	Mature vegetation especially in front gardens which softens architecture and screens views, creates leafy character. Front gardens average 5-10 metres with gravel driveways and brick wall or other boundaries Low red brick walls with plinth detail and half round brick coping Iron railings or neatly clipped hedges
Open space	All open space privately owned and predominantly greenspace Large gardens, college and school grounds provide a significant amount of greenspace Mature garden planting provides green backdrop to the leafy suburb
Biodiversity	The maturity of the gardens provide a wealth of habitats and support a great diversity of wildlife that largely goes unrecorded.
Land use, culture and vitality	Quiet residential suburb with close links to the university Some schools and colleges Students cycling
Access and traffic	Major through-routes along Banbury and Woodstock roads Connections to canal corridor to west and playing fields adjacent to R Cherwell to east

4A NORTH OXFORD



Photo 1: The generous proportion of the street blocks reflects the scale of individual properties.



Photo 2: Buff red brick detailing and gothic architecture is typical.



Photo 3: Wide Streets are bordered by generous front gardens.



Photo 4: Trees within private gardens contribute to the streetscape.

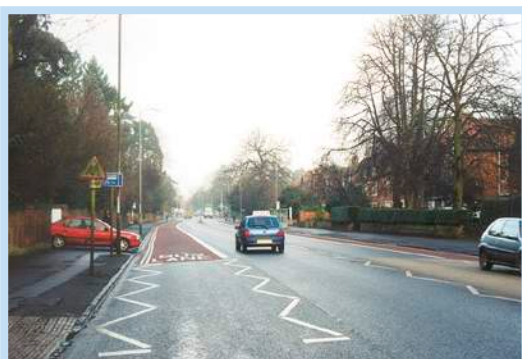


Photo 5: The Banbury Road is a major conduit of movement through the area.



Photo 6: Low red brick boundary walls are distinctive.

Views and visual patterns	Prominent spire of church of St Philip & St James visible from many elevated viewpoints around city Views within area constrained by mature vegetation and block pattern and curving roads
Designations	St Hugh's Grounds - Grade II* listed planted c.1920 by Annie Rogers, follower of Gertrude Jekyll and Arts and Crafts Movement Much of area is in a Conservation Area

Evaluation of character and quality

The North Oxford suburb is a distinctive and recognisable part of Oxford due mainly to its scale and individuality of the gothic architecture, mature trees and leafy streets. The associations with the University and the continuing link to academic institutions, remains a strong presence. It has a close relationship with the historic core and a strong sense of place that is distinctive to academic Oxford.

Banbury Road and Woodstock Road are important gateways to the historic core from which many people perceive a sense of high townscape quality.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	High
Biodiversity	Low - local interest and unrecorded garden habitats
Historic Integrity	High - unique Victorian suburb
Re-creatability	Low
Intervisibility	Low - no views of historic core skyline
Open Space	Low - gardens and college grounds only

Sensitivity to change

This area is highly sensitive to change as a result of its distinctive street and block pattern, the distinctive architectural fabric and its cultural connections to the University.

Much of the area has not suffered from inappropriate development or other changes; its status as a Conservation Area has been instrumental in conserving its character. Incremental change will have occurred in response to new uses such as the greater evidence of cars and conversion of buildings to business and institutional uses. Whilst the landscape has matured there has been a parallel deterioration in the fabric of townscape such as the condition of the boundary walls. Some infill development has occurred and on the whole this has been well integrated into the local pattern of townscape. Change should respect and respond to local character so that it enhances the townscape. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- inappropriate or poorly designed extensions;
- provision of car parking that displaces front gardens and results in the removal of boundary walls;
- infill development, between existing buildings and on backland sites, that results in a change in the spatial characteristics of the area;
- elevational changes (e.g. removal of porches) and replacement of traditional details (e.g. replacement of windows);
- creation of new driveways that results in changes to footways;
- loss of mature vegetation and trees as a result of over-maturity;
- demolition of historic buildings;
- addition of features that would block the view corridors along the Banbury and Woodstock Roads.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The overall objective for this area should be to conserve the distinctive townscape, architectural and landscape characteristics. Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- encouraging private owners to ensure continuity of locally appropriate varieties of garden trees and shrubs (refer to the 'The Gardens of the North Oxford Victorian Suburb',¹⁰ for suitable species);
- consider planting new large scale street trees - both native and exotic species may be appropriate in this area, reflecting the Victorians' enthusiasm for exotic species;
- encouraging renovation or rebuilding of boundary walls in the locally distinctive style;
- ensuring that the richness and diversity in architectural detailing is conserved through replacement of fabric of the buildings such as window sills, roofing slates, windows and doors in the same styles and materials;
- ensuring that infill development responds to the generous spatial characteristics of the local townscape and respects the quality of open space between the buildings.

¹⁰ Oxford City Council (1978, reprinted 1985) The Gardens of the North Oxford Victorian Suburb.

4B JERICHO

Description

Jericho lies immediately to the north-west of the city centre, on a first level river terrace of the Thames, between the Oxford Canal and Walton Street. It is Oxford's first purpose-built residential suburb, being built at the beginning of the 19th century as a means of accommodating workers in the expanding local businesses, the Oxford University Press (1830) and the Jericho Iron and Brass Foundry (1825), now Lucy's. It has therefore historically been a predominantly working class area and was recorded as a slum in Thomas Hardy's novel "Jude the Obscure".

The suburb is built on a tight grid street pattern - the narrow streets are characterised by long terraces of early Victorian cottages with flat frontages and front doors directly onto narrow footways. This results in a hard urban streetscape with little vegetation and a dominance of cars. The simple two storey terraced cottages are typically red and buff brick, sometimes with painted stucco exteriors (*photo 1*) and all with slate roofs. Oxford University Press is large early 19th century factory, late classical in style, and reminiscent of barracks from the back.

The school grounds of St Barnabas First School the Oxford University Press front quad and St Sepulchre's cemetery provide important green open spaces in an otherwise hard urban environment (*photo 2*). Glimpses through the triumphal arch of Oxford University Press into its private courtyard. St Sepulchre's cemetery is the only public open space. It was opened in 1849 as an 'overflow' for the parishes of North Oxford whose churchyards had been filled as a result of 19th Century cholera epidemics - it has not been used since the 1950's, and retains its Victorian character.

The Oxford Canal forms the boundary to the west of Jericho (*photo 5*). Once the home to bargemen and factory workers, it is now a fashionable suburb of Oxford. Walton Street, the main thoroughfare (*photo 3*) on the eastern edge of the area, is now the heart of Jericho with many exclusive shops and restaurants and a lively character both day and night.

Checklist and Key Characteristics

Underlying landscape type	<i>Settled River Terrace</i> which gives rise to the gently descending topography towards the canal.
Evolution of townscape	Oxford's first purpose-built residential suburb with a tight grid street pattern Early 19th century development of artisan housing in St Thomas' field Some late 20th century infill
Archaeological and historic interest	The Oxford canal running along the western boundary

	Architectural fabric and pubs
Street and block pattern	Tight grid with small block size Odd block shapes at the edges, adjacent to the canal
Public/private realm interface	Very well defined at front and back, but breaks down along canal where there is access to the canal
Massing and enclosure	Tight streets of terraces High density of buildings at a human scale
Architecture and built form	Simple two-storey terraced houses with front doors directly onto the street Some North Oxford Gothic terraces on Kingston Road Red and buff brick or painted stuccoed exteriors with slate roofs Stone lintels and wooden sash windows Mostly flat-fronted with little detailing Oxford University Press and Lucy's iron works is are large early 19th century factories St Barnabus Church (rubble wall with brick features) tower is a landmark
Streetscape	Narrow streets with sense of enclosure and shade Front doors lead directly onto the street in most cases Narrow footways Black street signs and bollards with some 'Victoriana' wall-mounted lights Highly urban environment with few front gardens and no street trees
Open space	Predominantly a hard built environment, although pockets of private greenspace can be found tucked away behind the main street Back gardens and front gardens (where they exist) are small Formal closely mown grass quad with a lone copper beech at the entrance to the Oxford University Press St Barnabus open playing field typical of 1960s school grounds, surrounded by a row of trees and a wall with railings St Sepulchre's Cemetery is a Victorian graveyard hidden amongst the back streets
Biodiversity	No recorded sites of ecological interest, but area is adjacent to the aquatic and marginal habitats of the Oxford Canal, which has known populations of water vole Although unrecorded, St Sepulchre's Cemetery may contain grassland of ecological interest.

4B JERICO



Photo 1: The architectural form is dominated by simple two storey terraced cottages.



Photo 2: The trees in the grounds of St Barnabus School provide a leafy character.



Photo 3: Walton Street is the main thoroughfare and heart of Jericho and has a lively character.



Photo 4: The Oxford Canal forms the western boundary of Jericho.

Land use, culture and vitality	<p>A residential suburb built for the first industrial community in the city with close links to Oxford University Press, iron works and the canal</p> <p>Now a fashionable Oxford suburb</p> <p>Walton Street is a busy thoroughfare, both by day and night, with shops, bars and a thriving restaurant culture</p>
Access and traffic	<p>Walton Street/Kingston Road is the only through-route - congestion and parking are sometimes a problem</p> <p>Streets within Jericho are all dead-ends at their western end, where the canal forms a barrier to movement</p>
Views and visual patterns	<p>Prominent square tower of St Barnabus is visible, across Port Meadow, rising above the trees that line the Oxford canal</p> <p>Views are generally constrained along the narrow streets</p> <p>Occasional glimpses out to the canal corridor from dead-end streets</p> <p>Glimpses through OUP's triumphal arch into the private courtyard</p>
Designations	Part is designated as a Conservation Area

Evaluation of character and quality

Jericho is an identifiable, self-contained district of Oxford. It has a unique charm owing to its narrow streets, density of built form and human scale. It is regarded for its quality of lifestyle rather than built fabric which, in its own right, is not of high quality. In fact, some say that the area is named Jericho because if a railway whistle is blown loud enough the walls will fall down.

Jericho has a close relationship with the historic core as a result of its proximity to the centre of Oxford. Oxford University Press front quad is reminiscent of the architecture of the colleges and contributes unique Oxford character to this suburb. Although open space is limited, St Sepulchre's Cemetery is an important open space being one of Jericho's most peaceful hidden spots as well as an integral historic part of this early Victorian suburb. The perception of landscape quality is moderate.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	Moderate
Biodiversity	Low - local interest and unrecorded garden habitats
Historic Integrity	Moderate - early Victorian suburb
Re-creatability	Moderate
Intervisibility	Low - no views of historic core

Open Space	Low - open space is limited
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Sensitivity to change

Jericho is highly sensitive to change as a result of its distinctive and intact street and block pattern, the regularity of the streetscape and its location close to the city centre, on the edge of the Thames Floodplain.

Jericho has remained largely intact in its simplicity of urban form and streetscape. However new built development, particularly on the edges of the suburb, has resulted in a contrasting urban form and changes in the scale of the area. Changes and 'improvements' to individual buildings have resulted in changing patterns in doorways and fenestration, altering the continuity of the streetscape.

The simplicity of the urban form and streetscape is crucial to Jericho's character and change should respect and respond to this character. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- home improvements that result in changes to the regularity of the architectural elevation of the terraced cottages;
- deterioration of original materials and details;
- change of use of residential terraces, for example from residential to commercial;
- poorly designed extensions, particularly to the front elevations where they affect the line of the street;
- new built development and infill that does not respond to the street and block pattern typical of the area.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The overall objective for this area is to conserve the integrity of the street and block pattern and architectural form and seek to enhance links through to the canal corridor. Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- encouraging regeneration of the fabric of the buildings such as window sills, roofing slates and sash windows and considering provision of guidance to indicate how to add variety and detail to the streetscape without eroding the integrity of built form;
- conserving the details of elevation, such as sash windows, red and buff brick detailing, painted stuccoed exteriors, slate roofs, stone lintels;
- maintaining the vibrancy and individual sense of place of Walton Street though encouraging variety and attention to detail;
- conserving the public open spaces which are important to the local community and enhancing links to the canal corridor.

4C GRANDPONT

Description

This narrow finger of Victorian development is located on the river terrace deposits and floodplain on the southern approach to the city, south of Folly Bridge. The oldest properties are built on first river terrace deposits with later Victorian development encroaching onto the adjacent areas of floodplain.

This compact area is built on a tight grid of streets and is characterised by a small block size. Buildings are predominantly simple two-storey terraced 'cottages' along narrow streets, with some limited infill of more modern developments of flats. The tight streets are lined with terraced cottages, many with front doors directly onto the street that provides a sense of enclosure and human scale (*photo 1*). However, this pattern breaks down on the north-western edge where a much lower-density pattern of 20th century development predominates. In this area the street and block pattern is larger and the public/private realm interface is less clearly defined. (*photo 2*)

The cottages are built from red and buff brick with some blue brick detailing on the older properties (*photo 3*). Roofs are typically slated. Generally the cottages are notable for their absence of ornamentation, although grander three storey and four storey villas line the Abingdon Road, which forms a main approach to central Oxford (*photo 4*). The Abingdon Road is unique in that it is developed down just one side resulting in views out across the floodplain from motorists and properties that line the road. The former waterworks building and public houses along the Abingdon Road form local landmarks.

The regularity of fenestration, doorways, low red brick garden walls and hedges, and black street signs provide integrity and a unified frontage to the street. The Abingdon Road presents a less intact frontage with a variety of commercial and residential premises and a discontinuous avenue of mature limes. The density of development means that there are few street trees although well maintained gardens with small trees and shrubs as well as climbers against buildings contribute to a green environment.

The area has strong links with the surrounding floodplain land with frequent views to poplars, willows and pylons at the ends of streets (*photo 5*). Hinksey Park is an important area of recreational greenspace and provides connectivity with the wider floodplain at Hinksey Lake. There are also areas of private greenspace such as the Oxford Bowls Club, which have restricted access and limited visual presence. Together, the back gardens provide a significant amount of greenspace as seen from the air. In addition there is direct access into Grandpont, an attractive natural park restored on the former Oxford Gasworks site.

Checklist and Key Characteristics

Underlying landscape type(s)	<i>Settled and Open River Terrace and Rivers and Pastoral Floodplains</i> landscape types that give rise to the flat topography of this area.
Evolution of townscape	earliest buildings correspond to river terrace deposits later 19 th century development of middle class housing extended along the Abingdon Road in the former St Aldate's fields some late 20th century development on the western edge
Archaeological and historic interest	architectural fabric
Street and block pattern	tight grid with small block size distinct break in pattern at Hinksey Park much larger block size on the north-west corner associated with 20th century development
Public/private realm interface	very well defined at front and back public and private realms are in close proximity - many doors open directly onto the street
Massing and enclosure	tight streets of terraces - many have no front gardens high density of buildings at a human scale
Architecture and built form	simple domestic two-storey terraced houses, often with front doors directly onto the street absence of ornamentation and detail except on 'public' buildings (former waterworks and public houses) and distinctive terraced villas along the Abingdon Road that have wooden balustrades and turrets red and buff brick with some blue brick detailing or brick and render with slate roofs first and second storey bays with stone lintels and wooden sash windows notable area of modern development in the north-western part of the area (flats, school, offices and health centre). two late 19th century churches.
Streetscape	fenestration and doorways contribute a regularity to the streetscape narrow or no front gardens and narrow footways provide human scale streets and sense of enclosure low red brick walls with half-round coping and hedged boundaries provide a unified frontage onto the street black street signs municipal lighting highly urban environment with few front gardens and no street trees sporadic avenue of limes along the Abingdon Road
Open space	predominantly a hard built environment with pockets of greenspace

4C GRANDPONT



Photo 1: Doors lead directly onto the street.



Photo 2: Lower density 20th century development defines public and private space less clearly.



Photo 3: Red brick with buff and blue brick detailing is distinctive.



Photo 4: Distinctive buildings with turrets and balconies on the Abingdon Road.



Photo 5: Views to the floodplain setting.



Photo 6: Incremental changes in doorways and fenestration alter the character of the streetscape.

	<p>in back gardens</p> <p>Hinksey Park is unusual in that it provides open space in a Victorian area</p>
Biodiversity	<p>The waterworks site has the potential to provide feeding habitats for birds and bats. The extensive green space of the Open River Terraces and Floodplain to either side of this narrow residential character area are important 'green' corridors. The adjacent Hinksey Pools, for example, provide a range of aquatic habitats, and are designated of local ecological importance. Mature trees within Hinksey Park and back/front gardens provide some habitat value.</p>
Land use, culture and vitality	<p>Quiet residential suburb close to the historic core.</p> <p>Hinksey Park is a well used space</p>
Access and traffic	<p>Abingdon Road is a busy approach to central Oxford, although it passes along the edge of the suburb and does not directly affect the character of the quiet backstreets.</p>
Views and visual patterns	<p>former Oxford Waterworks building with its tall red brick chimney is a distinctive landmark</p> <p>views are generally constrained along the narrow streets</p> <p>views out to the floodplain from dead-end streets and the Abingdon Road</p>
Designations	<p>Hinksey Park is protected open space</p>

Evaluation of character and quality

Grandpont is a residential suburb with a distinctive urban character owing to its position on a narrow 'bar' between two floodplains. The regularity of the streets and the characteristic dead-end streets between Vicarage Road and Lake Street are distinctive and the suburb has the character of a 'neighbourhood village'. Low brick boundary walls/hedges provide a unified frontage to the street.

The perception of townscape quality is high as a result of the intact street/block pattern and architectural integrity, the regularity of fenestration and doorway details, materials and black street signage. The quality of landscape is also high with the presence of Hinksey Park, a key open space and strong visual and physical connectivity with the extensive green spaces of the floodplains that surround this townscape 'island'.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	High
Biodiversity	Low - local interest
Historic Integrity	Moderate - intact Victorian suburb
Re-creatability	Moderate
Intervisibility	Low - no views of historic core skyline

Open Space	Moderate - adjacent to Thames floodplain with good access
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Sensitivity to change

This area is moderately sensitive to change as a result of its distinctive street and block pattern, the regularity of the streetscape and its location in the Thames floodplain. It also lies within the viewcone of the key viewpoints identified from the South Hinksey A34 interchange and this heightens its sensitivity.

Where infill has occurred it has taken place in discrete blocks where it does not disrupt the harmony of the Victorian street and block pattern. However new built development, particularly on the western edge of the area, has resulted in breaking of the street and block pattern, contrasting urban form and confusion of the public and private realms. Some changes and 'improvements' to individual buildings have resulted in changing patterns in doorways and fenestration, altering the continuity of the streetscape.

The regular street and block pattern, simplicity of the urban form and streetscape is crucial to Grandpont's character and change should respect and respond to this character. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- home 'improvements' that change the elevational detail of the terraced cottages, for example the addition of porches;
- deterioration of original materials and details and replacement with newer, mass produced materials;
- change of use of residential terraces, for example from residential to commercial;
- poorly designed extensions, particularly to the front elevations where they affect the line of the street;
- new development on the edges of the urban area that results in loss of connection with the surrounding rural floodplains and results in conflicts between access traffic and car parking for residents along narrow streets;
- further loss of mature street trees along the Abingdon Road.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The area has very little scope to accommodate change, given the compact nature of development. The overall strategy should be to conserve the integrity of built form and streetscape and seek to enhance the Abingdon Road approach to Oxford's historic core. Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- encouraging regeneration of the fabric of the buildings such as window sills, roofing slates and sash windows and considering provision of guidance to indicate

how to add variety and detail to the streetscape without eroding the integrity of built form;

- conserving the details of elevation, such as sash windows, doorways, coloured brick detailing and patterning, renders, slate roofs and stone lintels;
- conserving physical and visual links to the floodplain context;
- conserving the distinctive one-sided development along Abingdon Road thereby conserving the close links to, and views across, the floodplain;
- ensuring development does not encroach further onto the adjacent *Floodplain* landscapes – even small-scale development may threaten the integrity of these important open spaces;
- enhancing the character of the Abingdon Road through a co-ordinated programme of streetscape improvements including a framework of street trees;
- maintaining the character of Hinksey Park through monitoring maturation of trees and setting up a programme of re-planting;
- considering views of the historic core from the A34 Hinksey interchange in planning any new tall buildings.
- encouraging retention of front gardens, maintenance of boundary walls and hedges, and planting of garden trees and shrubs to conserve the unified frontage of private properties to the street, perhaps through preparation of a guidance document.

4D EAST OXFORD

Description

East Oxford lies partly on the low lying Oxford clay and partly on the second river terrace east of the Cherwell Valley, where it is contained between the rising scarp of South Park to the north and by the Thames Valley floodplain to the south. It is comparable to the North Oxford Victorian Suburb in size, but is distinctly different in its character. The historic core of the area is St Clement's, a medieval bridge-head settlement and site of the medieval Church of St Clement and St Edmund's Well (now The Plain - *photo 1*). However, the majority of the East Oxford suburb was built after 1850, at a time when the town was expanding to accommodate the growing population working in connection with the University and its services.

The suburb has a distinctive street and block pattern, radiating out from the Plain roundabout, the great meeting place of the London, Cowley and Iffley Roads. These radiating routes, which climb gradually in altitude as they move away from the river, and their interconnecting streets form a distinctive 'spider's web' formation of streets on a tight grid. There is a general trend towards a larger street and block pattern, larger scale properties and more spacious gardens, as one moves south and east.

Most of the historic buildings of St Clement's were burnt or pulled down during the Civil War and the area now represents a mixture of building ages and styles. The Black Horse Pub (17th century), Stone's Almshouses and flat fronted plaster houses (18th century) are found just across the street from the Florey building (1968-70) whose modern shape and materials contrast with the historic buildings. The majority of the East Oxford suburb, though, is characterised by terraced brick houses with bay-windows and small front gardens (*photo 2*) or older simple terraced cottages, sometimes colour rendered, with doors directly onto the street. There are often larger buildings and pubs on the street corners and three and four storey gothic red brick houses with steeply pitched roofs and detailing reminiscent of the villas of North Oxford are distinctive features of the Iffley Road (*photo 3*). Larger red brick houses with steeply pitched roofs and gothic windows are common north of the Cowley Road, on the way to Headington. The slate roofs are particularly distinctive of this area, as is the dominance of buff brick, often with red brick detailing. The distinction between the private and public realms is generally clear, following the grid block form. However, there is some confusion at the western edge where backs of houses are exposed to the floodplain and at St Clement's where cul de sacs back onto the floodplain meadows.

Victorian industrial buildings, some derelict, fit comfortably within the urban fabric providing features of interest (*photo 4*). Another feature of this area is the religious institution. Distinctive buildings including the Anglican All Saints Convent in Leopold Street, St Stephen's House Theological College, the unusual flint church and friary of St Edmund and St Frideswide, and St Bartholomew's Chapel and almshouses on the site of a medieval hospital on the Cowley Road. Trees within these grounds provide a distinctive green skyline for East Oxford (*photo 5*).

4D EAST OXFORD



Photo 1: The Plain is the site of the Medieval church of St Clements.



Photo 2: Regular streets of Victorian terraced brick cottages have bay windows and small front gardens onto the street.



Photo 3: Large properties on the Iffley Road are reminiscent of North Oxford.



Photo 4: Industrial buildings are landmarks.



Photo 5: Trees within the grounds of religious institutions provide a green backdrop.



Photo 6: The Cowley Road is a major conduit of movement between the city centre and the outer eastern suburbs.

The regularity of fenestration, doorways, low red brick garden walls and hedges, and black street signs provide integrity and a unified streetscape within the residential streets. The Cowley Road, a busy commercial area with shops, bars and community facilities, presents a less intact frontage where post war buildings of Tesco's and Blockbusters lie sandwiched between Victorian properties and shop frontages have masked the architecture at street level (*photo 6*). New street tree planting along the Cowley Road is still young, but avenues along Iffley Road and Morrell Avenue are well established and indicate the importance of these routes into the city. The Cowley and Iffley Roads are busy through-routes to the outer suburbs of East Oxford. Views of the University Church and Radcliffe Camera down the Cowley Road visually connect this suburb to Central Oxford.

There is limited public open space in this area as a result of the density of built form. The recently refurbished Manzil Gardens, churchyards, allotments and pub gardens therefore provide important public open space. Front and back gardens of houses and the University sports ground, although private, also provide an important contribution to the overall greenspace and ecology of the area.

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	<i>Settled River Terrace</i> landscape - landform rises gently from the Cherwell floodplain, across the low lying Oxford clays and onto the gravels.
Evolution of townscape	Medieval bridge-head settlement with 19th century expansion along the London Road Radiating streets east from St Clement's associated with the development of former open fields of Cowley for mixed artisan and middle-class housing Occasional late 20 th century infill
Archaeological and historic interest	Medieval Church of St Clement and St Edmund's Well on the site of the Plain The Black Horse Pub dating to the 17th Century Architectural fabric of medieval bridge-head settlement of St Clement's including the Stone's Almshouses, Port Mahon Pub and flat fronted plaster houses date from the 18th Century The hospital (16th century) and chapel (14th century) of St Bartholomew
Street and block pattern	Distinctive 'spider's web' formed by main roads radiating from St Clement's and interconnecting streets on a tight grid Gentle curves on the main Iffley, Cowley and London Roads Straight connecting roads with regular block pattern Street and block size becomes larger to the south and east
Private/public realm interface	Clear pattern following grid block form Some confusion at the western edge with exposed backs to the floodplain and at St Clement's where cul de sacs back onto the floodplain meadows
Massing and enclosure	Tight streets of terraces with small (2-4m) front gardens providing

	<p>sense of enclosure</p> <p>High density of buildings along narrow streets with narrow footways</p> <p>Much more open character on the Iffley and Cowley Roads</p>
Architecture and built form	<p>Older buildings in St Clement's are of rubblestone ('Coral Rag') - different building styles and ages contribute to a varied character.</p> <p>Close to St Clement's are typical early Victorian simple two-storey terraced houses with front doors directly onto the street constructed from red and buff brick, often used together in patterns or colour rendered exteriors</p> <p>Late Victorian/Edwardian properties in larger terraces with bay windows and front gardens - combination of red and buff brick with stone lintels and mullions, and gables to the front</p> <p>Gothic style red brick houses several storeys high on the Iffley Road</p> <p>Larger Victorian industrial buildings and workshops with timber cladding, multi-faceted or asymmetric pitched roofs</p> <p>Slate or clay tile roofing and prominent chimneys</p> <p>Some prominent churches</p>
Streetscape	<p>Low brick walls enclose front gardens, typically including tile creasing and half-round coping</p> <p>Mature garden shrub planting softens the streetscape</p> <p>Avenues along Iffley Road, Morrell Avenue and recent tree planting along the Cowley Road.</p> <p>Municipal lighting.</p>
Open space	<p>Predominantly a hard urban environment - public open space is limited to grounds of religious institutions, allotments and the newly designed Manzil Gardens.</p> <p>University sports ground forms a large area of open space adjacent to the Thames floodplain.</p> <p>The Plain roundabout is inaccessible as a result of its location on a roundabout, surrounded by busy roads. Trees enhance the Plain as a focal point and contribute to setting of larger buildings.</p> <p>Trees in back gardens and grounds of the religious institutions make an important contribution to the skyline.</p>
Biodiversity	<p>St. Clements provides an important, albeit narrow, link between the Cherwell Valley and the open spaces of South Park and Headington. Existing greenspace in and around St. Clements is therefore highly significant.</p>
Land use, culture and vitality	<p>Busy, vibrant suburb - particularly along the Cowley Road which has a variety of shops as well as a thriving music scene and restaurant culture.</p> <p>Busy area - the Plain is the point at which routes into Oxford, from the east, converge.</p> <p>Students and residents cycle between East Oxford and town along the main London, Cowley and Iffley Roads.</p>
Access and traffic	<p>London Road is main route out of Oxford to Headington and the</p>

	<p>east. Cowley and Iffley Roads are also busy- through-routes, converging on The Plain.</p> <p>Side-streets are quiet.</p> <p>Limited access to the Thames Floodplain to the west via footpath links.</p> <p>Good access to South Park and Headington Hill to the north.</p>
Views and visual patterns	<p>Views to the Plain, the 'gateway' to east Oxford, from Magdalen Bridge</p> <p>Long views up and down main streets - eg from the Cowley Road to the spire of St Mary's church in the city centre</p> <p>Views along side streets are constrained by block pattern and eccentric curving street pattern.</p> <p>Views from the elevated ground at the top of Divinity Road over remainder of the suburb.</p> <p>Religious buildings and pubs scattered throughout provide landmarks</p>
Designations	<p>St Clement's and the Iffley Road form part of the St Clement's Conservation Area.</p> <p>The former Leper hospital and chapel of St Bartholomew is a Conservation Area</p>

Evaluation of character and quality

The radiating street and block pattern, high quality of buildings and individuality of shops and businesses on the Cowley Road provide a unique sense of place. This is an area of diversity and vitality where minor landmark buildings on street corners provide local sense of place and views along the Cowley Road connect it to the historic core of Oxford.

The perception of landscape and townscape quality is high, despite some incongruous post war buildings along the Cowley Road. The London, Cowley and Iffley Roads are important gateways to the historic core from the east and routes down which many people perceive a sense of townscape quality.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	High
Biodiversity	Low - local interest
Historic Integrity	High - intact Victorian suburb with medieval site of St Clement's; Conservation Area
Re-creatability	Moderate
Intervisibility	High - views down the Cowley Road to the historic core

Open Space	Low
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Sensitivity to change

East Oxford is moderately sensitive to change as a result of its regular street and block pattern, architectural distinctiveness and its location on major routes into the city centre from the east. St Clement's is particularly sensitive as a result of its important nodal location at the meeting of several historic routes, historic buildings and position on the edge of the Cherwell floodplain. Part of the area also lies within the viewcone of the key viewpoints identified at Garsington and South Park and this heightens its sensitivity.

The area of St Clement's and the Iffley Road have been protected from inappropriate development or other changes through its status as a Conservation Area. However, the remainder of the area has experienced and continues to experience change including some large scale infill of new development, particularly along the Cowley and Iffley Roads. Some of this stands out as incongruous in its townscape context. There is evidence of small scale infill taking place throughout the area as well as evident changes in elevational, boundary and paving detailing, such as some inevitable deterioration in materials through wear and tear. Positive changes include landscape enhancements such as tree planting on the Cowley Road, and the refurbishment of Manzil Gardens and St Mary's churchyard. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- home improvements that result in changes to the regularity of the architectural elevation of the terraced cottages;
- deterioration of original materials and details and replacement with new materials and style;
- deterioration of front gardens of rented properties that result in a general degradation in streetscape quality and diminishing urban wildlife habitats;
- extensions to the front elevations of buildings resulting in changes to the line of the street;
- new development on the edges of the urban area that resulting in loss of connection with the surrounding floodplain landscape;
- loss of street trees along the major routes such as Morrell Avenue, Iffley Road and Cowley Road as a result of old age;
- infill development between existing buildings and on backland sites that does not respond to the street and block pattern typical of the area;
- demolition of historic buildings, such as Victorian industrial buildings;
- increase in size of shops, loss of local businesses and introduction of chain stores on the Cowley Road that would result in loss of its unique character;

- changes that would result in the obstruction of views down to the Cowley Road to the historic core.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The landscape strategy should be to conserve the street and block pattern, scale of built form and diversity of land uses while enhancing and enlivening the streetscape through encouraging exploration of new forms and styles of development. Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- encouraging renovation or rebuilding of boundary walls in the locally distinctive style;
- maintaining close development control policy/activity along the Iffley Road and St Clement's to protect against inappropriate development;
- conserving Victorian factory buildings and Religious buildings as features of the townscape, considering conversion to other uses rather than demolition and re-building;
- considering views of the historic core from Garsington and South Park in planning any new tall buildings;
- consider enhancing streetscape through co-ordinated use of lighting, furniture, signage and street trees;
- encouraging use of churchyards for public open space enjoyment through opening them up both visually and physically;
- conserving the visual links between the Cowley Road and the historic core;
- encouraging initiatives in organic and local food production, ecological design and permaculture - building on resources and attitudes already present in East Oxford;
- conserving the Plain as a green gateway to east Oxford, replanting a new generation of specimen trees to replace those that are reaching the end of their life and allowing continued movement of wildlife between the green spaces of South Park and the Cherwell Valley;
- consider promoting the history of St Clement's as an important bridge-head settlement through information boards, plaques or city trails.

4E NEW OSNEY

Description

New Osney is an area dominated by dense residential town houses built between 1850 and 1900, on the alluvial floodplain of the Isis, to the west of the railway. The whole area is threaded by branches of the Isis which give this area its unique character and sense of place, distinguishing it from other Victorian suburbs across the city. The distinctive area known as Osney Island is cut off by waterways and accessed by a single road bridge.

The history of the area goes back to the 12th century with the site of Osney Abbey (founded in 1129) located between the railway and the Mill. Osney Abbey was largest and most important of the medieval monasteries of Oxford and was the site of the Cathedral before the Bishop's throne was transferred to Christ Church in 1545. All that remains of the abbey today is some 15th century stone work in Osney cemetery.

The Thames is another important archaeological feature with its associated lock, mill and industrial riverside architecture (*photos 1 and 2*). Red brick terraces are tightly packed along narrow streets where front doors lead directly onto the street resulting in a sense of shade and enclosure. The street and block pattern is interrupted by the canal and railway where dead-end streets are common (*photo 3*). The regular pattern also breaks down on the southern edge where modern cul-de-sacs and crescents predominate.

Terraced houses are simple domestic two storey cottages. They are red brick, or plaster rendered, with slate roofs and doors directly onto the street (*photo 4*). The regularity of type and pattern of fenestration and doorways contributes an integrity to the streetscape. This is enhanced by the red brick garden walls, black street signs and consistent width of road and footway. The large red brick industrial buildings associated with the canal stand out as landmarks, contrasting with the human scale of the domestic terraces (*photo 5*).

Branches of the Thames with adjacent grassy banks lined with pollarded willows are characteristic features of this area and provide a range of aquatic and marginal terrestrial habitats, acting as wildlife corridors through the urban area. The peaceful Osney Cemetery is also an important wildlife haven, an area of ruderal grassland and trees hidden behind a boundary wall and railings (*photo 6*).

New Osney is a quiet residential urban area that is disconnected from the city centre by the railway line. Access is over a pedestrian footbridge from where there are good views over Osney Cemetery and the surrounding terraced streets.

Checklist and Key Characteristics

Underlying landscape type(s)	Built on alluvial floodplain of the Isis. <i>Pastoral Floodplain</i> landscape type with many waterways - townscape is on a series of 'islands'.
Evolution of townscape	Mainly one age with some older Georgian houses and cottages

4E NEW OSNEY



Photo 1: The Thames and its associated architecture is a major feature.



Photo 2: The Thames National Trail follows the Thames towpath.



Photo 3: Dead-end streets are common.



Photo 4: Simple domestic mid 19th Century terraces are typical of the built form.



Photo 5: Industrial buildings associated with the Thames stand out as landmarks.



Photo 6: Osney cemetery is hidden behind walls and railings, but provides a large open space.

	<p>woven into the fabric.</p> <p>Mid 19th century artisan housing development on Osney Meadows in the floodplain of the Isis</p>
Archaeological and historic interest	<p>Historic site of Osney Abbey (founded in 1129) between the railway and the Mill.</p> <p>The Thames and associated architecture and Osney Lock.</p>
Street and block pattern	<p>Tight grid of narrow streets with small block size</p> <p>Many dead-ends to the waterways and railway</p> <p>Street and block pattern breaks down at the southern edge where modern cul-de-sacs and crescents dominate.</p>
Public/private realm interface	<p>Very well defined at front and back on linear streets</p> <p>Breaks down at sites on the edges of the area, particularly around modern cul-de-sacs.</p>
Massing and enclosure	<p>Tight streets of terraces - many have no front gardens resulting in high enclosure.</p> <p>High density of buildings at a human scale</p> <p>Low storey heights with the exception industrial canal-side buildings.</p>
Architecture and built form	<p>Simple domestic two-storey terraced houses, often with front doors directly onto the street</p> <p>Absence of ornamentation and detail except on 'public' buildings (church and pubs) and industrial canal-side buildings</p> <p>Red brick and render with some buff brick and ashlar detailing with slate roofs</p> <p>Simple fenestration (sash windows) and doorways (no porches).</p> <p>Notable area of modern development in the southern part of the area by Osney Lock.</p> <p>St Frideswide Church on the corner of Botley Road/West Street</p> <p>Bridge on Bridge Street is a 'gateway' to Osney Island</p>
Streetscape	<p>Fenestration and doorways contribute a regularity to the streetscape</p> <p>Narrow or no front gardens and narrow footways provide human scale streets and sense of enclosure</p> <p>Low red brick walls and hedges provide garden boundaries</p> <p>Black street signs</p> <p>Municipal lighting</p> <p>Highly urban environment with few front gardens and no street trees</p> <p>Row of mature willows along the canal on East Street</p>
Open space	<p>Predominantly a hard built environment with back garden greenspace</p> <p>Osney Cemetery is a peaceful open space enclosed by stone wall and railings</p>

	<p>St Frideswide Church grounds are surrounded by mature Horse Chestnuts that provide a green skyline</p> <p>Branches of the Thames (or Isis) with adjacent grassy banks and rows of pollarded willows form a context for the Thames Path National Trail</p> <p>Trees in back gardens, church yard and along the canal provide a green skyline</p>
Biodiversity	<p>Osney Cemetery contains a mix of mature trees and woodland with a rough, ruderal grassland. Backwaters of the River Thames provide a range of aquatic and marginal terrestrial habitats for a variety of wildlife. These waterways also provide crucial wildlife links through developed areas.</p>
Land use, culture and vitality	<p>Quiet residential suburb with some established industrial land uses adjacent to the Thames, Osney Mill and Lock and Osney Cemetery</p> <p>Botley Road is a major route into the city and is dominated by traffic - splits the area north and south of the Botley Road.</p> <p>Thames tow path is part of the Thames National Trail - a well used walking route - perception of the townscape from this route is nationally important.</p>
Access and traffic	<p>Isolated 'island' surrounded by the branches of the Thames and the railway.</p> <p>Access to the city centre is via road underbridge or pedestrian overbridge only.</p> <p>Botley Road separates north and south parts of the area</p>
Views and visual patterns	<p>Views are generally constrained along the narrow streets</p> <p>Views open out along the Thames from East Street</p> <p>Elevated views of the townscape and Osney Cemetery from the pedestrian overbridge</p> <p>Large industrial buildings stand out above the regular rooflines of the terraces</p>
Designations	<p>Osney Town Conservation Area</p> <p>Thames National Trail</p>

Evaluation of character and quality

Osney is an area of distinctive townscape and landscape character owing to its isolated 'island' position close to the city centre. Its isolated position means it has a distinctive 'backwater' character with characteristic dead-end streets to the river and railway. It has a special relationship with the Thames and Thames National Trail.

The perception of townscape quality is high as a result of the intact street/block pattern and architectural integrity. The regularity of fenestration and doorway details, materials and black street signage further enhance this integrity. Little redevelopment has taken place for a site so close to the city centre. The quality of landscape is also high with the presence of the Thames (and Thames National Trail) and the mature trees and woodland of Osney Cemetery. There is little reference to the historic site of Osney Abbey.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	High
Biodiversity	Low - local interest
Historic Integrity	High - historic site of Osney Abbey; Conservation Area
Re-creatability	Moderate
Intervisibility	Moderate - some filtered views to the historic core
Open Space	Moderate

Sensitivity to change

Osney is highly sensitive to change as a result of its distinctive and intact street and block pattern, the regularity of the streetscape and its location close to the city centre, within the edge of the Thames Floodplain. It also lies under the viewcone of the key viewpoints identified from Raleigh Park and Boar's Hill and this heightens its sensitivity.

This area has seen little change for a site so close to the city centre. However, modern infill has begun to break down the regular street and block pattern on the edges of the area, particularly to the south. Contrasting urban form and confusion of the public and private realms are also issues on this southern edge. Some changes and 'improvements' to individual buildings have resulted in changing patterns in doorways and fenestration, altering the continuity of the streetscape, but this is rare.

The core architecture of Osney Island is protected by its Conservation Area status. However, the simplicity of the urban form and streetscape throughout is crucial to New Osney's character and change should respect and respond to this character. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- home 'improvements' that do not respect the simplicity of the elevations of the terraced cottages;
- deterioration of the original built fabric such as windows, doors and roofs and replacement with new styles and materials;
- extensions to the front elevations of buildings resulting in changes to the line of the street;
- new built development that does not respond to the street and block pattern typical of the area;
- ageing and subsequent loss of mature willows along the Thames;

- rising water levels resulting in more frequent flooding.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The overall strategy should be to conserve the integrity of built form and streetscape and connections with the Thames. Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- preserving the isolated 'island' position and the backwater character this results in through restricting the development of wider or more direct access into the area;
- conserving historic bridges over the waterways and using these to inform appropriate designs for additional bridges- bridges are part of the character of this area;
- encouraging regeneration of the fabric of the buildings such as window sills, roofing slates and sash windows and considering provision of guidance to indicate how to add variety and detail to the streetscape without eroding the integrity of built form;
- conserving the details of elevation, such as sash windows, doorways, coloured brick detailing and patterning, renders, slate roofs and stone lintels;
- conserving the distinctive one-sided development along East Street thereby conserving the close links to, and views across, the Thames;
- ensuring development does not encroach further onto the adjacent *Floodplain* landscapes – even small-scale development may threaten the integrity of these important open spaces;
- continuing traditional management techniques such as pollarding of willows to maintain character of the open spaces;
- preserving industrial riverside buildings, either in industrial, business or residential use;
- enhancing the character of the Botley Road through a co-ordinated programme of streetscape improvements including a framework of street trees;
- maintaining the character of the open spaces (St Frideswide church grounds, Osney cemetery and river banks) through monitoring maturation of trees and setting up a programme of re-planting;
- consider providing some interpretation on the historic site of Osney Abbey;
- considering views of the historic core from Raleigh Park and Boar's Hill in planning any new tall buildings.

4F SUMMERTOWN

Description

Summertown was a village until 1879 when it was annexed by Oxford City. It is an area of mixed ages and styles of building to the north of the *North Oxford Victorian Suburb* where the built up area is at its narrowest. The first buildings appeared in Summertown pre 1850, but the predominant period of development is late 19th century. The streets are typical of a Victorian suburb with terraces set out on a series of side-streets of the main Banbury and Woodstock Roads that run north to south through the area. The regular grid of streets tends to a looser grid with larger block size to the west along the Woodstock Road.

Building styles are varied: the earliest parts are characterised by long terraces of two storey red or buff brick cottages with first storey bays and small front gardens enclosed by low red brick walls (*photo 1*). These earlier terraces are characterised by slate roofs. The Summertown Villas are larger country houses with Arts and Crafts detailing - gables to the front, tile hung fronts, carved stone capitals and ashlar lintels and mullions (*photo 2*). The spaces between these villas are more generous and the front gardens wider and mature front garden vegetation which softens architecture and creates leafy character. In between are detached inter-war houses. St Edward's School was built in a gothic style in 1873 and is a feature of the area (*photo 3*).

The Woodstock and Banbury Roads form the main through-routes. The Woodstock Road is residential in character while the Banbury Road is now the commercial centre of Summertown (*photo 4*). The western side of the commercial centre is characterised by the same moderate sized terraced properties as in the surrounding streets, whose lower floors have been converted to shop frontages. Large 1960s concrete and brick buildings such as the Oxfam offices and the Oxford Local Examination Delegacy dominate the eastern side of the shopping street. Although of sympathetic materials, their flat roofs stand out against the traditional built form and they are a large scale compared to the rest of Summertown. Mature trees along the Banbury and Woodstock Roads make an important contribution to the townscape, enhancing the appearance of these streets

The built area of the *North Oxford River Terrace* is at its narrowest point allowing the open fields of the River Terrace either side to have an influence on the character of the area. There is also a relatively large amount of greenspace within the townscape fabric in the form of front and back gardens, recreation grounds and school grounds.

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	<i>Settled River Terrace</i> , giving rise to gently domed topography. Suburb lies on a river terrace between the Thames and Cherwell floodplains
Evolution of townscape	Early 19th century suburban village with late 19th century infill of middle-class housing. Occasional late 20 th century infill, particularly along the Banbury

4F SUMMERTOWN



Photo 1: Early Victorian terraced cottages have first storey bays and small front gardens.



Photo 2: Summertown villas are larger, more ornate properties with larger front gardens.



Photo 3: St Edward's School was built in a Gothic style in 1873.



Photo 4: The Banbury Road is the commercial centre of Summertown.

	Road
Archaeological and historic interest	Architectural fabric
Street and block pattern	<p>Main routes into the city centre are Banbury and Woodstock Roads running north to south through area</p> <p>Connecting side-streets run east to west</p> <p>Regular grid of streets with a looser grid with large block size to the west along the Woodstock Road</p>
Private/public realm interface	Clear pattern following grid block form
Massing and enclosure	<p>Streets of terraces with small-moderate sized front gardens and moderate road widths.</p> <p>Sense of enclosure provided by garden planting in areas with larger front gardens</p> <p>Wider streets with large detached or semi-detached properties with generous gaps between buildings along the western boundary (with the Woodstock Road) and eastern boundary (with the Cherwell floodplain)</p>
Architecture and built form	<p>Early houses are two storey long terraces of red or buff brick with first storey bays and slate roofs - small front gardens enclosed by low red brick walls.</p> <p>The Summertown Villas country houses with Arts and Crafts detailing - gables to the front, tile hung fronts, carved stone capitals and ashlar lintels and mullions.</p> <p>Semi-detached inter-war housing with generous front gardens on the edges.</p> <p>Late 20th century commercial and business properties, including multi-storey blocks e.g. Oxfam offices, along the Banbury Road.</p>
Streetscape	<p>Earlier streets have narrow (2-4m) front gardens and little garden vegetation resulting in a hard urban streetscape.</p> <p>Later streets have wider front gardens (4-8m) and mature front garden vegetation which softens architecture and creates leafy character.</p> <p>Mature trees along the Banbury and Woodstock Roads make an important contribution to the townscape, enhancing the appearance of the streets.</p> <p>Municipal street lights</p> <p>Low red brick walls with plinth detail and hedges are typical</p>
Open space	<p>This is predominantly a hard urban environment</p> <p>School grounds (e.g. St Edward's School Grounds) although private, contribute to the greenspace and wooded skyline</p> <p>Mature garden planting provides a green backdrop along some roads</p>
Biodiversity	There are no designated sites of ecological importance within this area. Private gardens and school grounds provide the most notable habitats, including mature trees, scrub and flowering herbs.
Land use, culture and vitality	Busy main shopping street on the Banbury Road is a hub of activity.

	Side streets from a quiet residential suburb with some schools and colleges
Access and traffic	Major through-routes along Banbury and Woodstock roads Connections to <i>Open River Terraces</i> either side of the urban area.
Views and visual patterns	There are no notable views to or from the area as it lies in a flat area between two floodplains. The <i>surrounding Open River Terraces</i> act as visual buffers between the floodplain and built area. Views within the area are typically along the straight streets, constrained by mature vegetation in summer. Long views down the wide Banbury Road.
Designations	None

Evaluation of character and quality

This area is a distinctive and recognisable part of Oxford due mainly to the Arts and Crafts Summertown villas, the Banbury Road commercial centre of Summertown with the Oxfam offices and its leafy streets.

The perception of townscape and landscape quality is moderate, tempered by the presence of some incongruous late 20th century buildings along the Banbury Road. The degree of mature tree cover enhances the perception of quality. The Banbury Road and Woodstock Road are important gateways to the historic core from which many people perceive a sense of the quality of the townscape.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	Moderate
Biodiversity	Low - local interest
Historic Integrity	Moderate - some Arts and Crafts and gothic architectural interest
Re-creatability	Moderate
Intervisibility	Low - no views of the historic core
Open Space	Low

Sensitivity to change

Summertown is moderately sensitive to change. While it has a distinctive street and block pattern, some distinctive architecture and is on the main Banbury Road into the centre of Oxford, it is not in a highly prominent location and does not have valued historic or sites of major biodiversity interest.

Summertown has experienced change over the years, perhaps most notably the post-war office and commercial developments on the Banbury Road. The suburb continues to experience incremental change including changes in elevational and boundary detailing as well as a gradual deterioration in materials due to wear and tear. Parallel with the deterioration in townscape fabric is maturation of the landscape with street and garden trees growing and changing the streetscape. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- infill development between existing buildings and on backland sites that does not respond to the street and block pattern typical of the area;
- parking in front gardens that results in the removal of front boundary walls and loss of vegetation;
- ageing and subsequent loss of mature trees and vegetation;
- changes that result in the blocking of views along the Banbury and Woodstock Roads, two major routes through the area;
- home improvements and insensitive extensions that result in changes to the regularity of the architectural elevation of the terraced houses;
- deterioration of original built fabric and replacement with new materials and styles.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The overall objective for this area should be to conserve the regular street pattern, architectural integrity and leafy character of Summertown and to enhance the Banbury Road through streetscape enhancements. Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- encouraging private owners to ensure continuity of locally appropriate varieties of garden trees and shrubs through production of a guidance leaflet as produced for the North Oxford suburb;
- consider planting new large scale street trees - both native and exotic species may be appropriate in this area, reflecting the Victorians' enthusiasm for exotic species;
- producing guidance on replacement of architectural features such as roof tiles, windows, boundary walls and doors;
- conserving the distinctive Arts and Crafts style Summertown villas and their grounds which are important to the character of the area.

4G NEW HEADINGTON

Description

New Headington is the only Victorian suburb not to be built on *River Terrace* or *Floodplain* landscape types. It is located on the road to London, to the south of the existing historic village of Old Headington. It was developed between 1850 and 1880 as a planned Victorian Village at a time when the windmill of Windmill Road would have still stood, amongst open fields. The 'village' is now surrounded by inter- and post-war suburban housing.

This planned Victorian village is identifiable from its surroundings by its distinctive grid pattern of streets lined by short and long terraces with narrow gaps between terraces and narrow plot widths. The high density of dwellings and narrow street widths are typical of this period of development and result in a sense of enclosure and human scale in such neighbourhoods (*photo 1*). The early cottages lie in long terraces of red or buff brick with first storey bays and slate roofs. Low red brick walls, with half-round coping, and hedges typically surround small front gardens, although many of these have been replaced with concrete or Bradstone walls. Later Victorian and Edwardian houses are recognisable by their larger scale and more flamboyant style with tile hung fronts, gables to the front, two storey bays and ashlar lintels and mullions (*photo 2*). Inter-war and post-war infill of bow-fronted houses adds to the variety of architecture seen in this village. Oxford's familiar black street signs give this area some sense of place.

Simple fenestration and doorways contribute regularity to the streetscape where they remain intact. However, alterations and additions, such as porches and windows fragment this pattern (*photo 3*). Views are constrained by the street and block pattern, channelling views down the long, straight streets. The shark protruding from the roof of a house in the New High Street has become a well-known landmark around Oxford since it appeared in 1986. This is an urban environment with no public open space and limited private greenspace as a result of the density of building. The ecological significance of the area is also limited, private gardens contributing the most notable habitats.

Checklist and Key Characteristics

Underlying landscape type(s)	Built on <i>Settled Plateaux</i> - gently undulating area at foot of Shotover.
Evolution of townscape	Mixed housing development following enclosure in Headington Fields. Evidence of incremental development of various ages. Now surrounded and encroached upon by inter-war and post-war suburbs of Headington.
Archaeological and historic interest	Victorian village architecture
Street and block pattern	Traditional grid pattern of streets with small block size and narrow plot widths

4G NEW HEADINGTON



Photo 1: Narrow streets of Victorian terraced cottages are typical.



Photo 2: Later Victorian and Edwardian houses have gables to the front and two storey bays.



Photo 3: Alterations and additions fragment the regularity of the streetscape.



Photo 4: A mixture of housing styles is present, but the low red brick boundary walls are a unifying feature of the streetscape.



Photo 5: Alterations and additions fragment the regularity of the streetscape.



Photo 6: Red brick boundary walls contrast with the lush garden vegetation.

	Mixed pattern of short terraces and long terraces with variable shaped infill and narrow gaps between adjacent terraces
Public/private realm interface	Very well defined at front and back on linear streets
Massing and enclosure	Tight streets of terraced dwellings at high density Narrow front gardens, narrow footways and narrow streets result in sense of enclosure and human scale Very similar throughout despite mix of ages
Architecture and built form	Early houses are two storey long terraces of red or buff brick with first storey bays and slate roofs - small front gardens enclosed by low red brick walls. Later Victorian and Edwardian houses with gables to the front, tile hung fronts, two storey bays with ashlar lintels and mullions and larger front gardens. Alterations, additions (e.g. porches) and new build are common. Infill of inter-war bow-fronted housing and post 1960s gable-fronted dwellings are also visible.
Streetscape	Fenestration and doorways contribute a regularity to the streetscape where they remain intact Narrow or no front gardens and narrow footways provide human scale streets and sense of enclosure Low red brick walls, with half-round coping detail, and hedges provide traditional garden boundaries although new concrete and Bradstone walls are common Black street signs Municipal lighting Highly urban environment with small front gardens and few street trees
Open space	No public open space Predominantly a hard built environment with limited back and front garden greenspace - medium sized ornamental shrubs and trees within these gardens soften the streetscape
Biodiversity	There are no designated sites of ecological importance within this area. Private gardens provide the most notable habitats, including mature trees, scrub and flowering herbs.
Land use, culture and vitality	Quiet residential area entrapped within the Headington suburbs.
Access and traffic	Windmill Road is a major through-route between Old Headington and New Headington/The Slade The village is accessed through the surrounding inter- and post-war suburbs of Headington
Views and visual patterns	Views are constrained along the narrow streets Shark protruding from the roof of a house on the New High Street is a local landmark
Designations	

Evaluation of character and quality

New Headington is distinguishable from the inter-war and post-war suburbs of Headington as a result of its regular grid street pattern and the distinctive Victorian and Edwardian architectural detailing.

The perception of townscape quality is not as high as other Victorian suburbs and villages as a result of the mix of styles and materials introduced over the years and the alterations it has experienced.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	Moderate
Biodiversity	Low - local interest
Historic Integrity	Low - poor survival of architectural detailing
Re-creatability	Moderate
Intervisibility	Low - no views of the historic core
Open Space	Low

Sensitivity to change

New Headington is moderately sensitive to change. While it has a distinctive street and block pattern, much of its distinctive architectural detailing has already been lost. In addition it is not in a highly prominent location and does not have valued historic or sites of major biodiversity interest.

This area has seen a large degree of change as a result of infill development, extensions, additions and increases in traffic. Changes and 'improvements' to individual buildings have frequently resulted in changing patterns in doorways and fenestration, altering the continuity of the streetscape

The simplicity and regularity of the urban form and streetscape throughout is crucial to New Headington's character and change should respect and respond to this character. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- home 'improvements' that do not respect the simplicity of the elevations of the terraced cottages;
- deterioration of the original built fabric (e.g. street lamps, tiles, porches, garden walls, windows) and replacement with new styles and materials;
- extensions to the front elevations of buildings (e.g. garages and porches) resulting in changes to the line of the street;
- ageing and subsequent loss of garden vegetation and trees;

- replacement of garden walls with close board fencing, concrete or 'Bradstone' walls.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The overall strategy is to restore the integrity of built form and traditional streetscape details. Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- encouraging regeneration of the fabric of the buildings such as window sills, roofing slates and sash windows and considering provision of guidance to indicate how to add variety and detail to the streetscape without eroding the integrity of built form;
- conserving the details of elevation, such as sash windows, doorways, coloured brick detailing and patterning, renders, slate roofs and stone lintels;
- encouraging re-stocking of gardens with garden vegetation and trees to soften the streetscape;
- ensuring that any extensions properties take place in such a way that they conserve the regularity in fenestration and doorways on the front elevation to the street;
- consider providing some guidance on restoration of boundary walls including advice on materials, heights and details.

4H NEW MARSTON VILLAGE

Description

New Marston Village is a Victorian village built on the East Oxford River Terrace overlooking the Cherwell Valley. It consists of just three streets, Ferry Road, Edgeway Road and William Street, the first houses being built around 1890 amongst open fields when there was a brickworks on Jack Straws Lane. However, a number of houses on William Street predate 1890 and as such are architecturally rare examples of Victorian style. There is now a great diversity of housing styles and ages in Ferry Road and William Street and the village is surrounded and encroached upon by inter-war and post-war suburbs of New Marston.

The village is set out on gently curving, parallel streets with small block size and narrow plot widths. The mixed pattern of short terraces and long terraces and narrow gaps between adjacent terraces is typical of a planned Victorian village of this age. The tight streets of terraced dwellings at high density and narrow footways result in sense of enclosure and human scale.

Despite the great diversity of housing styles results from a history of infill and alterations, the traditional architectural style is still visible. Two storey long and short terraces of red or buff brick with first storey bays and slate roofs and small front gardens enclosed by low red brick walls are typical (*photo 1*). Many of these garden boundary walls have been lost or replaced by concrete or Bradstone alternatives. Infill housing is in a variety of forms but mostly two storey. Inter-war bow-fronted housing and post 1960s gable-fronted dwellings are present (*photo 2*). The municipal lighting is not distinctive, but the ubiquitous black street signs remind us that we are still in Oxford. Marston Road is a busy through-route that divides the village into north and south, although it is here that the village shop and pub are found. There is an air of a small, but distinct neighbourhood.

Despite the lack of green space within the area, there is ready access to the 'countryside' with the wooded skyline of Headington Hill sheltering the village to the east and the open green expanse of the Cherwell Valley to the west. Both of these landscape elements form an important setting for New Marston Village (*photo 3*). The farm at the end of Edgeway Road enhances the rural village character.

Checklist and Key Characteristics

Underlying landscape type(s)	Located on the gently rising land of the East Oxford River Terrace, overlooking Cherwell Valley.
Evolution of townscape	Late 19th century development on the former open arable fields of Marston Field. The first houses were built around 1890 amongst open fields when there was a brickworks on Jack Straws Lane. There is now a great diversity of housing styles and ages in Ferry Road and William Street Now surrounded and encroached upon by inter-war and post-war

4H NEW MARSTON VILLAGE



Photo 1: Short and Long Victorian terraces are typical of New Marston Village.



Photo 2: A variety of housing styles are present.



Photo 3: The wooded ridge of Headington Hill provides a backdrop to the village in this view from the Cherwell floodplain.

	suburbs of New Marston.
Archaeological and historic interest	Some good examples of Victorian architecture.
Street and block pattern	Gently curving parallel streets with small block size and narrow plot widths Mixed pattern of short terraces and long terraces with variable shaped infill and narrow gaps between adjacent terraces
Public/private realm interface	Very well defined at front and back
Massing and enclosure	Tight streets of terraced dwellings at high density Narrow front gardens, narrow footways and narrow streets result in sense of enclosure and human scale
Architecture and built form	Two storey long terraces of red or buff brick with first storey bays and slate roofs - small front gardens enclosed by low red brick walls. Infill of inter-war bow-fronted housing and post 1960s gable-fronted dwellings are also visible.
Streetscape	Fenestration and doorways contribute a regularity to the streetscape where they remain intact Narrow or no front gardens and narrow footways provide human scale streets and sense of enclosure Low red brick walls, with half-round coping detail, and hedges provide traditional garden boundaries although new concrete and Bradstone walls are common Black street signs Municipal lighting Highly urban environment with small front gardens and no street trees
Open space	No public open space There is very little greenspace in this dense, planned Victorian village. However, the village is surrounded by open space and countryside is easily accessible. Cherwell Valley forms a tranquil setting to the south-west and separates New Marston from central Oxford Front and back gardens with trees, shrubs and grass that soften the streetscape.
Biodiversity	There are no designated sites of ecological importance within this area. Private gardens provide the most notable habitats, including mature trees, scrub and flowering herbs.
Land use, culture and vitality	Urban residential area spanning the Marston Road, on the edge of the Marston suburbs. Sense of community at a village scale.
Access and traffic	Marston Road is a major through-route and divides the village in half. Side streets are quiet dead-end roads.
Views and visual patterns	Views within the area are constrained by the curvature of the

	<p>narrow streets.</p> <p>Eye is drawn to local landmark buildings such as the old Scout building on Ferry Road</p> <p>Headington Hill provides a green backdrop to the village streets</p> <p>The housing along Ferry Road is visible, from the Cherwell floodplain, across the open river terrace where roofs of properties are highly visible.</p>
Designations	None

Evaluation of character and quality

This area forms a small, but distinctive, planned village core on the edge of the large suburb of New Marston. It is distinguishable from the inter-war and post-war suburbs of Marston as a result of its regular grid street pattern and the distinctive Victorian architectural detailing.

The perception of townscape quality is not as high as other Victorian suburbs and villages as a result of the mix of styles and materials introduced over the years and the alterations it has experienced.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	Moderate
Biodiversity	Low - local interest
Historic Integrity	Low - Victorian architecture
Re-creatability	Moderate
Intervisibility	Low - no key views of the historic core
Open Space	Low

Sensitivity to change

New Marston Village is moderately sensitive to change. While it has a distinctive street and block pattern, some of its distinctive architectural detailing has already been lost. Its position on the edge of the Cherwell Valley and on the side of Headington Hill makes it visible (particularly its roofscape) from sensitive locations within the Cherwell floodplain. It also lies within the viewcone of the key viewpoints identified from Headington Hill and this heightens its sensitivity.

This area has seen changes over the years as a result of infill development as well as extensions and additions to existing properties. Changes and 'improvements' to individual buildings have frequently resulted in changing patterns in doorways and fenestration, altering the continuity of the streetscape.

The simplicity and regularity of the urban form and streetscape throughout is crucial to the character of New Marston Village and change should respect and respond to this character. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- home 'improvements' that do not respect the simplicity of the elevations of the terraced cottages;
- deterioration of the original built fabric (e.g. street lamps, tiles, porches, garden walls, windows) and replacement with new styles and materials;
- extensions to the front elevations of buildings (e.g. garages and porches) resulting in changes to the line of the street;
- ageing and subsequent loss of garden vegetation and trees;
- replacement of garden walls with close board fencing, concrete or Bradstone walls.
- changes (in shape and materials) to roofs of properties on Ferry Road that are highly visible from the Cherwell floodplain, across the open fields of the *St Clement's Open River Terrace*;
- increases in through-traffic on the Marston Road further splitting the village core in two and inhibiting pedestrian movement between the two halves;
- increased pressure for parking along narrow streets resulting in conversion of front gardens to parking areas.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The overall strategy should be to enhance the integrity of built form and traditional streetscape details. Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- encouraging regeneration of the fabric of the buildings such as window sills, roofing slates and sash windows and considering provision of guidance to indicate how to add variety and detail to the streetscape without eroding the integrity of built form;
- conserving the details of elevation, such as sash windows, doorways, coloured brick detailing and patterning, renders, slate roofs and stone lintels;
- discouraging conversion of front gardens into parking spaces and encouraging re-stocking of gardens with garden vegetation and trees to soften the streetscape;
- enhancing wildlife links between the Cherwell Valley and Headington Hill through additional native planting;
- consider providing some guidance on restoration of boundary walls including advice on materials, heights and details.

- giving careful consideration to the use of roof materials on properties of Ferry road as they are very visible from the Cherwell floodplain;
- conserving the scale of built form and restricting tall development that would block views to the wooded setting of Headington Hill;
- considering views of the historic core from Headington Hill in planning any new tall buildings;
- consider planting more large scale native trees along Marston Road to improve the appearance of this route into Oxford.

5 INTER-WAR/POST-WAR SUBURBS

Generic Description

The inter-war and post-war suburbs represent a significant period of growth of the city, linked with the industrialisation of Oxford and particularly the growth of the motor industry. The pattern of development is typified by wide streets with crescents and cul-de-sacs. Houses are typically semi-detached or in short terraces and the dominant materials are red brick, often with a render or pebbledash finish. The houses often have driveways and front gardens with shrubs and trees, which soften the streetscape. Front garden boundaries are one of the features which differentiate between these areas, ranging from unified patterns of low stone or brick walls, to a variety of walls, fences and hedges.

Schools, community centres and recreation grounds often form part of the urban fabric. These suburbs tend to have a weak sense of place as a result of mass produced building materials, standard layouts, styles and details, although the ubiquitous black Oxford street signs contribute a sense of place.

The key habitats in this type are neutral and wet grassland, woodland, wetland and ponds. The areas are otherwise often lacking in mature vegetation, with planting in front gardens being important in contributing to the townscape character.

Key Characteristics

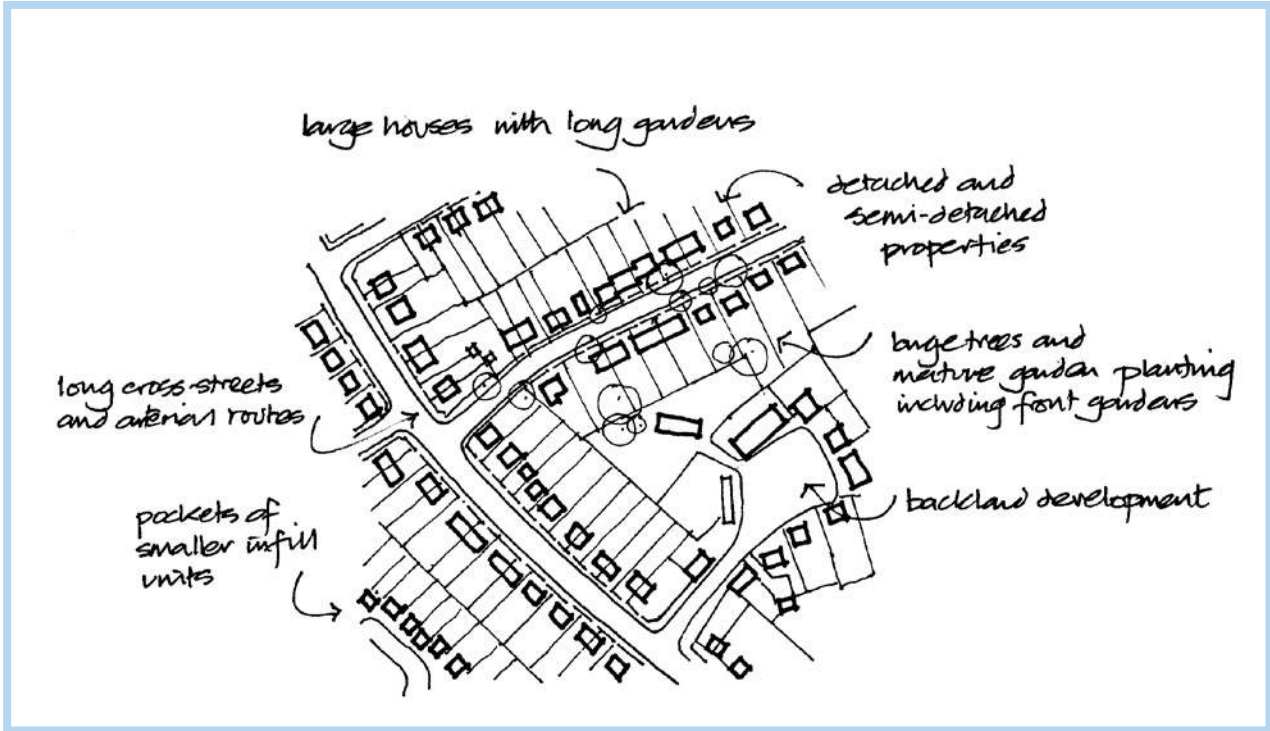
- wide streets with crescents and cul-de-sacs;
- houses are typically semi-detached or in short terraces;
- dominant materials are red brick, render or pebbledash finish over part or all of the building;
- front gardens, enclosed by low walls and hedges;
- schools, community centres and recreation grounds often form part of the urban fabric;
- tend to have a weak sense of place as a result of standard layouts, styles and details;
- the suburbs have a good range of wildlife habitats, including a number of sites of national importance.

Character Areas

- 5A Rose Hill
- 5B Cowley Residential Suburb
- 5C Florence Park and Cowley Marsh
- 5D New Headington (south)

- 5E New Headington (north)
- 5F New Marston
- 5G Cutteslowe
- 5H North Oxford
- 5I New Hinksey
- 5J Botley
- 5K Barton
- 5L Littlemore
- 5M Sandhills and Risinghurst

5 INTER-WAR/POST-WAR SUBURBS



Example 1: 5G Cutteslowe/Sunnymead

5A ROSE HILL

Description

Rose Hill is a distinctive domed hill - an outcrop of Ampthill Clay over the calcareous sandstone plateau. The inter-war area of housing was initially developed to the east, on the opposite side of the hill from Iffley Village. This area has a strong street pattern, with gentle curving crescents responding to landform. The houses are simple short terraces and semi-detached properties of red brick with wooden or stone window lintels and gently pitched roofs with clay tiles. Front and back gardens are bordered by low red brick walls and neatly clipped hedges which hide the front driveways from view and soften the streetscape. The wide roads are bordered by grass verges and the occasional mature tree which provides a visual focus for the street.

Post-war development continued the pattern of gently curving crescents around the south side of Rose Hill infilling the gap between Rose Hill and Iffley Village. The houses are two storey red brick houses with concrete tiles and smaller pebble dash dwellings now with corrugated iron roofs. Low brick walls and hedges typically enclose front gardens, but chicken wire fencing or wooden board fences have replaced some of these.

The central focus to this suburb is 'The Oval', a central roundabout and public open space, adjacent to the school and community centre. The crest of the hill remains undeveloped although it has been denuded of much of its original vegetation, being developed as the recreation ground and school playing fields. Mature oaks within and around the school grounds are therefore important features and contribute to a green skyline. An area of allotments separates the neighbourhoods of Rose Hill and Iffley and despite being adjacent, there are no vehicular through-routes between the two settlements and they remain separate in their identity. There are views to adjacent wooded skylines from many of the streets, providing a sense of elevation and individual sense of place.

Checklist and Key Characteristics

Underlying landscape type(s)	Forms part of the <i>Settled Plateaux</i> landscape type, although Rose Hill is actually an isolated outcrop of Ampthill Clay.
Evolution of landscape/townscape	Inter-war development on former Iffley fields.
Archaeological and historic interest	None evident
Street and block pattern	Planned inter-war and post-war suburbs of short terraced houses with a distinctive road layout of gently curving crescents which reflects topography.
Public/private realm interface	Clear distinction between the public and private realm. Large areas of open public space on the hill top.

Massing and enclosure	Short terraces and semi-detached houses with moderate gaps between. Medium density suburb with some sense of enclosure within streets. Sense of exposure in open spaces on the hill top.
Architecture and built form	<p>Short terraces and semi-detached houses. Older houses are dark red brick with stone mullions and lintels and clay tiles.</p> <p>Many houses are finished in pebble dash typical of the inter-war period.</p> <p>Post war houses are a variety of materials and styles and include flats, terraces and semi-detached houses.</p> <p>Central focus provided by 'The Oval' with adjacent school and community centre of the same age as surrounding housing.</p>
Streetscape	<p>Grass verges planted with municipal street trees.</p> <p>Low red brick walls with neatly trimmed hedges surround front gardens.</p> <p>Front gardens and short driveways - cars are often parked off-road on short drives, in front of the houses.</p> <p>Trees play an integral part in the character of the suburb - trees in private gardens contribute to the leafy character.</p>
Open space	<p>Gardens provide a large amount of greenspace as seen from the air. The top of Rose Hill is open greenspace, composed of school grounds, recreation grounds, the 'Oval' turning circle and allotments. Open space includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small front gardens and larger back gardens typically contain ornamental shrubs and trees and grass. Brick walls and neatly clipped hedges form boundaries. • The 'Oval' turning circle is open mown grass space at the brow of the hill with paths, benches and semi-mature trees. It provides a green focus for the area. • Active allotments have views over to the wooded ridge of Boar's Hill and Wytham Hill to the west and act as a green buffer between built up areas of Rose Hill and Iffley. • School grounds and the recreation ground are close mown amenity areas with hedgerows/semi-mature trees along boundaries and views to distant wooded ridges.
Biodiversity	This area does not contain any designated sites of ecological interest, although private gardens provide locally important urban wildlife habitats and large areas of open space provide wildlife habitat, especially in the form of mature trees.
Land use, culture and vitality	Peaceful residential suburb of Oxford with an individual sense of community.
Access and traffic	<p>No through roads – results in a peaceful suburb.</p> <p>Despite being adjacent, there are no vehicular through-routes between Rose Hill and Iffley Village and they retain separate</p>

5A ROSE HILL



Photo 1: Older houses are of red brick with stone lintels and mullions.



Photo 2: Street trees are features of the streetscape.



Photo 3: The Oval forms a focal point for the development.



Photo 4: The distinctive topography allows views out to the surrounding wooded hills.



Photo 5: Allotments provide open space on the hill top.



Photo 6: Mature trees are important features of the open spaces.

	identities.
Views and visual patterns	Views to adjacent wooded skylines from many of the streets provide a sense of elevation and individual sense of place. Ancient oaks are an important feature and contribute to the wooded skyline.
Designations	No designations.

Evaluation of character and quality

This area is distinctive as a result of its underlying landscape. The distinctive topography, street layout and central focus of The Oval with its mature oaks gives the area a sense of uniqueness. However, the quality of built form is not high and overall landscape quality is perceived to be moderate.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	Moderate
Biodiversity	Low - unrecorded sites of local interest only
Historic Integrity	Low
Re-creatability	High
Intervisibility	High - views of the historic core from the allotment gardens on the hill top
Open Space	Moderate – open greenspace on the hilltop provides recreational areas and a wooded skyline

Sensitivity to change

The semi-enclosed nature of the landscape and absence of nationally valued historic or ecological features means these areas are not particularly sensitive to change. However, the part it plays in providing a setting to the Thames and providing a wooded skyline means it has some sensitivity. Sensitivity may be described as moderate.

Since the inter-war period this area has seen progressive built development and changes in landscape management of the open areas resulting in the expansion of close mown amenity playing fields and school grounds. Change should respect and respond to local character so that it enhances the townscape. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- inappropriate or poorly designed extensions;

- infill development, between existing buildings and on backland sites, that results in a change in the spatial characteristics of the area;
- ageing and deterioration of the built fabric, including boundary walls;
- ageing of landscape features, particularly hedges and mature oaks;
- change in use of front gardens to driveways and storage areas;
- increasing intensity of landscape management such as grass cutting that would result in a decrease in biodiversity.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The landscape strategy should aim to maintain the wooded skyline as a setting to the Thames corridor and to enhance the streetscape through conservation and reinstatement of local features such as boundary walls and mature native trees. Key areas to consider for policy development and landscape/townscape enhancement may include:

- encouraging the conservation of low brick walls and hedges as boundary features and encouraging reinstatement of boundaries where they have been lost;
- continuing to plant new trees, particularly oaks and limes, to maintain the historic character of this hill and to maintain a wooded skyline as seen from the western banks of the Thames;
- encouraging the retention and management of front gardens as important elements of the streetscape;
- maintaining allotment sites as areas for recreation and urban ecology and promoting use of allotments;
- considering opportunities to enhance the ecological character of the open spaces, particularly the school grounds and recreation ground, through encouraging more diverse margins and additional native tree planting.

5B COWLEY RESIDENTIAL SUBURBS

Description

The inter-war residential development of Cowley grew up rapidly with the arrival of the motor industry. Morris bought up large areas of cheap land in Cowley and large estates were built by the council to house the factory workers. This is one such area, although many of the original factories have since gone.

The two discrete suburbs lie on the *Settled Plateaux* landscape type, an undulating platform of calcareous sandstone and limestone. These suburbs are characterised by enclosed street blocks with crescents and cul de sacs, which respond to the landform. The areas are densely developed with much consistency in the architectural style of building of the inter-war period. These are typically populated by semi-detached houses with bay windows, pitched roofs and centrally placed chimney stacks. Building materials are predominantly brick and pebble dash, often painted white, and roofs are red clay or concrete tile.

Front gardens contain short driveways and are enclosed by walls of reconstituted stone, brick or concrete. Vegetation is limited within the area, although planting in front gardens makes an important contribution to the street scene. There are few street trees and few features unique to Oxford.

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	Forms part of the <i>Settled Plateaux</i> landscape type - an undulating area of calcareous sandstone.
Evolution of townscape	Inter-war residential and post-war commercial.
Archaeological and historic interest	Cemetery.
Street and block pattern	Planned street layout with long blocks. Some cul-de-sacs and variable orientation. Lack of clarity of orientation, especially towards Rose Hill area.
Private/public realm interface	Mostly clear relationship with exception of some edges to open areas.
Massing and enclosure	Large semi-detached houses set on streets, with views contained at street ends, creating fairly enclosed street pattern.
Architecture and built form	Variety of materials including red brick and pebble-dash finishes in light colours. Predominantly clay tile roofs with some in slate. Prominent bays and chimneys at apex of semi-detached properties.
Streetscape	Front gardens enclosed by low walls, in a variety of materials including reconstituted stone, brick and concrete. Some grass verges. Tall late 20 th century light columns. Some stone setts at crossovers to vehicular entrances.
Open space	Small recreation grounds and cemetery, predominantly mown grass with ornamental planting. Boundaries of local stone.

	<p>with ornamental planting. Boundaries of local stone.</p> <p>Small front gardens, larger back gardens. Typically ornamental shrubs and trees and grass.</p> <p>Few trees are present in this area, but include ornamental trees in gardens and larger trees in Rose Hill cemetery including pine and copper beech.</p>
Biodiversity	This area contains no designated areas of ecological importance. Private gardens, allotments and the cemetery have the potential to support some wildlife habitats, including mature trees, scrub and flowering herbs.
Land use, culture and vitality	Quiet residential suburb.
Access and traffic	Maze like quality to street layout. Acts as a disincentive to through traffic. Open space areas are enclosed and access is limited.
Views and visual patterns	Repeating pattern of streets with semi-detached houses with gables and chimneys. Few long views out of the area with the exception of areas near Temple Cowley which have views to hills to the east.
Designations	None.

Evaluation of character and quality

The northern part of this area is closely associated with Cowley Motor Works, and has a more open streetscape quality. By contrast the area closer to Rose Hill is a spatially contained area with a maze of similar streets. The area is similar to many other inter-war suburbs in the city. It does not have unique identity or distinctive characteristics. Whilst the condition of housing is generally good, boundary walls are in variable states of repair, and there is a lack of street trees.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	Moderate
Biodiversity	Low
Historic Integrity	Low
Re-creatability	High
Intervisibility	Low
Open Space	Low - limited open space provision

5B COWLEY RESIDENTIAL SUBURB



Photo 1: Inter-war bay fronted semi-detached houses.



Photo 2: Wide streets with reconstituted stone walls and diverse streetscape elements.



Photo 3: Home improvements - new windows, door and other features.



Photo 4: Cemetery provides green space in and area otherwise lacking in vegetation.

Sensitivity to change

This area is not particularly sensitive to change. However, changes to architectural elements and the condition and style of front garden boundaries has in the past detracted from the townscape quality. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- inappropriate or poorly designed extensions and home improvements;
- ageing and deterioration of the built fabric, including boundary walls;
- ageing and subsequent loss of vegetation;
- increasing streetscape 'clutter' such as telegraph poles, lamp posts, sign posts and other vertical features.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The core objective will be to maintain the integrity of the inter-war design character and to encourage appropriate restoration of front garden boundaries. Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- developing design guidance for home improvements and extensions or new infill development, in character with the inter-war design vernacular;
- developing design guidance for front garden boundaries to encourage appropriate restoration;
- planting native trees on streets and in open spaces to reflect the underlying landscape character and to soften the open urban streetscape;
- seeking opportunities to enhance the ecological character of the open spaces, particularly the school grounds and recreation ground, through encouraging more diverse margins and additional planting appropriate to the underlying landscape type.

5C FLORENCE PARK AND COWLEY MARSH

Description

Florence Park is a discrete residential suburb of inter-war and post-war housing focussed around Florence Park, a post-war designed city park. This suburb lies on the flat landscape of the *East Oxford River Terrace*, which is an area of low lying clays, silts and gravels associated with the River Thames and its tributaries. A tributary stream flows east-west through the character area - a large proportion of open space in this area corresponds with the first river terrace and alluvium surrounding this tributary stream. A cycle way follows the course of the stream and bankside vegetation marks the course of the stream.

The southern edge of the character area is defined by a siltstone slope, with *Between Towns Road* running along its crest. The townscape pattern is particularly distinctive along this edge, the pattern of streets reflecting the landform and focussed around Florence Park with an avenue of trees creating a strong axis leading up to the entrance of the park. Wide streets are lined with semi-detached houses with bay windows, pitched roofs and small front gardens surrounded by low brick or re-constituted stone walls. Many of the houses are finished in pebble dash and slate is the dominant roofing material. Major through routes include *Oxford Road*, *Rymer's Lane* and the *Iffley Road* which can become congested with traffic. The *Iffley Road* is notable for its mature avenue of limes which dominates the street and indicates its importance as an historic route into central Oxford.

Cowley Marsh is unusual in that it is an area of mixed land uses, styles and ages of building. It is dominantly inter/post-war industrial and residential development on former common land at the foot of *Headington Hill*, although some Victorian Terraces and more recent flats and estates also feature.

Cowley Marsh itself is a large area of meadows which has gradually been encroached upon by building. It is now a recreation ground, laid out as a sports area with tennis, cricket and football facilities. There is also a floodlit 'streetsport' site with markings and equipment for roller hockey, basketball and five-a-side football and a children's play area. In the wild top corner at the edge of the recreation ground is a meadow and nature reserve. Many wildflowers, including some rare species such as the Common Spotted Orchid, flower along the edge of the copse. From the back of Cowley Marsh it is possible to walk up and over what was formerly known as *Lye Hill*, now *Southfield Golf Course*, along to the *Boundary Brook* and up through the *Lye Valley Nature Reserve*.

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	Florence Park on <i>Settled River Terrace</i> giving rise to a low-lying, flat landscape of clays, gravels and silts cut through by a tributary stream of the Isis. Cowley Marsh on <i>East Oxford River Terrace</i> - a flat landscape at the bottom of <i>Lye Hill</i> .
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5C FLORENCE PARK AND COWLEY MARSH



Photo 1: Approaches to Florence Park



Photo 2: Later 20th century housing by Cowley Marsh



Photo 3: Wide streets with a variety of materials on elevations and to front walls



Photo 4: Well used allotments on former common land



Photo 5: Open spaces with new tree planting.



Photo 6: Open and undeveloped areas of Cowley Marsh.



Photo 7: Mature trees on Iffley Road.

Evolution of townscape	<p>A residential suburb of inter-war and post-war housing focused around Florence Park, a post-war designed city park opened in 1936.</p> <p>Development on the former common land of Cowley Marsh.</p>
Archaeological and historic interest	<p>Inter-war/post-war suburban development on Cowley and Iffley fields and part of the common land of Cowley Marsh.</p>
Street and block pattern	<p>An organic grid of long street blocks where adjacent to Florence Park, but shorter streets and some crescents and cul-de-sacs to the east and west of the central area.</p> <p>A more rectilinear grid in housing areas in Cowley Marsh, with institutional and industrial buildings in large plots.</p>
Private/public realm interface	<p>Clear relationship of fronts and backs although back garden boundaries border the open space areas.</p> <p>Areas around open space and industrial land uses on Cowley Marsh include some exposed back garden or yard boundaries.</p>
Massing and enclosure	<p>Residential areas marked by close spaced semi-detached properties in generally wide streets, with front gardens of generally three to six metres. The longer streets create an open spatial quality, contrasting with the more tightly developed pockets.</p> <p>Diverse land uses adjacent to Cowley Marsh are more open and larger in scale.</p>
Architecture and built form	<p>A combination of detached, semi-detached and terraced houses. Materials are predominantly render or pebble-dash and red brick with clay tile roofs. Bay windows and gable ends are features of some streets.</p> <p>Cowley Marsh area includes 2 and 3 storey recently built flats, large scale industrial buildings.</p>
Streetscape	<p>Front gardens are enclosed by low walls of reconstituted stone, brick and concrete, with some streets including a lot of diversity whilst others close to Florence Park have consistent brick wall detailing. Large and mature street trees are notable features on some of the main thoroughfares.</p>
Open space	<p>Florence Park is a large city park alongside Boundary Brook with ornamental planting, formal avenues, sports provision and open grass areas.</p> <p>Hedgerows and trees mark out former enclosure boundaries.</p> <p>An avenue of trees creating a strong axis leading up to the entrance of Florence Park, a designed park which forms the focus of the area.</p> <p>The Iffley Road contains a mature avenue of limes.</p> <p>Well used allotments are located alongside the stream on the former common land of Cowley Marsh.</p> <p>The open areas of Cowley Marsh include open sports fields and</p>

	unused open areas.
Biodiversity	<p>This area contains a large amount of open space, extensive allotments and school grounds. These contain aquatic habitats, mature trees, short grassland, scrub and flowering herbs. The area includes an important wildlife and educational resource, the Boundary Brook Nature Park, created from 2 ha of allotments, the Park scrub, woodland, a pond and wildlife garden.</p> <p>The majority of the remaining areas of wet grassland and marshland in Cowley are designated as areas of local importance, i.e. SLINC. Cowley Marsh is a small area of wet grassland, scrub and woodland.</p>
Land use, culture and vitality	<p>Florence Park is a well used open space. The majority of the area is a quiet residential suburb.</p> <p>Cowley Road is in part a well used shopping street, with a large number of restaurants.</p>
Access and traffic	A generally quiet residential area although the Iffley Road and Cowley Road are major routes leading to the city centre.
Views and visual patterns	Views are generally contained within the area with the exception of some longer views to Temple Cowley and of mature trees above the skyline of roofs and chimneys.
Designations	Cowley Marsh SLINC

Evaluation of character and quality

This area is in two parts. One is a distinctive suburb focused around Florence Park, which has a more coherent pattern of inter-war development and is higher in landscape and townscape quality. The other, east of the Cowley Road, is an area of a greater diversity of development styles and of lower townscape quality.

The inter-war housing is similar to many other inter-war suburbs in the city. It does not have a particular identity or distinctive characteristics. The condition of housing and boundary walls is generally good. In places, street trees are mature and create an important sense of maturity to the urban environment, whilst other have a lack of street trees. Open space in the area, including Florence Park, Cowley Marsh and the corridor of Boundary Brook, are valuable components of the urban landscape.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	Moderate - variable throughout the area.
Biodiversity	Moderate - Cowley Marsh SLINC
Historic Integrity	Moderate - former common land remain as public open space
Re-creatability	High

Intervisibility	Low - no views of historic core
Open Space	Moderate/high - former common land

Sensitivity to change

The inter-war housing areas are generally quite robust, other than in respect of incremental changes such as through home improvements and dilapidation of boundary walls. Cowley Marsh is an historic open space - a meadow landscape typical of Oxford - and parts of it are particularly sensitive to change. It is hidden away and not given the protection of other areas of common land such as Port Meadow. Cowley Marsh also lies within the viewcone of the key viewpoint identified at Crescent Road and this heightens its sensitivity. Overall sensitivity of the area may be described as moderate.

The main changes to the area are evident in the Cowley Marsh area, where post war development has incrementally begun to erode the open character.

Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- inappropriate or poorly designed extensions and home improvements;
- ageing and deterioration of the built fabric, particularly front garden boundaries;
- ageing and subsequent loss of trees and other vegetation;
- graffiti, vandalism and neglect of the industrial areas;
- planting of inappropriate tree species such as *Leylandii* as wind breaks or visual screening features;
- new built development gradually eroding remaining green spaces and encroaching on the corridor of Boundary Brook or on the open areas of Cowley Marsh;
- streetscape 'clutter' such as telegraph poles, lamp posts, sign posts and other vertical features.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The core objective should be to conserve and restore the integrity of the inter-war development patterns, using an appropriate range of building materials and to conserve areas of functional open space. Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- improving the ecological value of school grounds and floodplain characteristics, through appropriate planting and management including willow and poplar;
- developing management plans to enhance biodiversity of the open spaces;

- planting street trees to enhance main routes, strengthen street patterns and provide a varied skyline;
- conserving a rural setting to Boundary Brook;
- conserving allotments on former common land as public open space and urban wildlife resources;
- protecting and enhancing the corridor along Boundary Brook to maintain access along its length and to allow it to function as a wildlife corridor, and supporting work by the Oxford Urban Wildlife Group at Boundary Brook Nature Park;
- considering restoring culverted sections to a more natural character;
- developing design guidance for home improvements and extensions or new infill development, in character with the inter-war design vernacular;
- developing design guidance for front garden boundaries to encourage appropriate restoration.

5D THE SLADE

Description

The Slade is an area of inter and post-war residential estates in the parish of Cowley. It was developed on an area known formerly as Headington Moors, an elevated area, grazed by cattle and sheep, overlooking east Oxford. It remains closely linked to the large open areas adjacent to the Boundary Brook.

The street layouts and building styles are typical of the inter-war and post war period, with defined street blocks with a regular proportion of front to rear garden space. Front garden boundary walls are a typical feature of the area in a range of materials, particularly reconstituted stone.

This area of housing overlooks a large open space, which contains a number of natural features and recreational facilities. It includes the area of fen along the Lye Valley. This valley, containing the course of Boundary Brook, is a rare example of the underlying landscape punctuating the urban fabric. Its hidden valley character and rare fen vegetation make it an important asset and unique landscape feature which forms a setting for the built development.

There are wide views over Oxford and to the wooded ridges beyond.

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	<i>Settled Plateaux</i> landscape type - housing on the edge of the deeply incised Lye valley.
Evolution of townscape	Formerly known as 100 acres and Slade in Cowley Parish, shown as open land on the 1777 map. Inter-war and post-war housing development.
Archaeological and historic interest	Relationship to remnant natural landscape of Lye Valley.
Street and block pattern	Regular grid of long street blocks with some streets on a gentle curve.
Private/public realm interface	Clear definition of public and private areas.
Massing and enclosure	Street widths vary from wide streets with large front gardens which create an open spatial quality, to streets with a narrower proportion of street and garden.
Architecture and built form	Generally semi-detached properties, with some small blocks of flats, mainly finished in render or pebble-dash with clay tile roofs.
Streetscape	Notable features include front garden boundaries, many of which are in reconstituted stone, but with a variety of other elements including hedges and fences. In the wider streets, parking is common in the front garden areas.

Open space	<p>Little public open space - confined to grass verges and playing fields on the edges of the Lye Valley.</p> <p>Few trees. Conifers create shadows and block views. Deciduous garden trees soften the streetscape.</p> <p>Open grass verges and communal open space is closely mown with some ornamental tree species typical of post war estates.</p>
Biodiversity	The Slade is densely developed land, with little in the way of open space, where private gardens make the most significant contribution to ecology.
Land use, culture and vitality	Quiet residential suburb.
Access and traffic	No evident traffic problems. Access to open areas is restricted to few locations.
Views and visual patterns	Wide views over open area, and longer views to city and hills beyond.
Designations	None.

Evaluation of character and quality

The area is similar to many other inter-war suburbs in the city. It does not have a particular identity or distinctive characteristics. Whilst the condition of housing is generally good, boundary walls are in variable states of repair, and there is a lack of street trees.

The relationship with the open space of the Lye Valley, and the elevation and resulting views, contribute significantly towards enhancing the quality of the urban environment.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	Moderate
Biodiversity	Low
Historic Integrity	Low
Re-creatability	High
Intervisibility	Moderate - no views of the historic core, but good views over East Oxford
Open Space	Low

5D THE SLADE



Photo 1: Inter-war semi-detached houses with mature garden planting.



Photo 2: Flats overlooking open space to the west.



Photo 3: Wide views over Lye Valley and hills beyond the city.



Photo 4: Wide streets with generous front gardens and driveways.

Sensitivity to change

This area is not highly sensitive to change due to its lack of particular identity or distinctive characteristics. However, its elevated position above the Lye Valley makes this western edge visually sensitive to change. Changes such as minor changes to buildings through home improvements, and the incremental change to front gardens, in particular to boundaries, have resulted in minor changes in the townscape. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- inappropriate or poorly designed extensions and home improvements;
- ageing and deterioration of the built fabric, including boundary walls;
- ageing and subsequent loss of vegetation;
- increasing streetscape 'clutter' such as telegraph poles, lamp posts, sign posts and other vertical features.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The core objective will be to enhance the streetscape character through consistent use of materials in home improvements and boundary walls. Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- carrying out a programme of native planting in the vicinity of the Lye Valley;
- preserving views across Southfield Golf Course, particularly from public spaces;
- maintaining and improving access to the Lye Valley and Southfield;
- developing design guidance for home improvements and extensions or new infill development, in character with the inter-war design vernacular;
- developing design guidance for front garden boundaries to encourage appropriate restoration.

5E NEW HEADINGTON

Description

This is an extensive area of inter and post-war housing surrounding the planned Victorian village of New Headington, and incorporating the hamlet of Titup, on the old Oxford to London road. The population growth of Headington between 1921 and 1931 resulted in the formation of a suburb, linking the three individual Headington Villages. The new suburb was, and still is, focused around the busy London Road, a major arterial route into Oxford from the east, and a busy shopping street.

The area contains a diversity of residential architectural styles, with a large number of semi-detached properties which are often bay fronted. Materials are predominantly render, pebble-dash and red brick. There are pockets of much more recent development as infill plots where space has allowed.

There are a number of interesting historic elements to the area, for example, the 13th century windmill of Windmill Road was destroyed and replaced many times, but still survives as a road name. The old Crossroads Quarry pit on the corner of Windmill Road and Old Road is a surviving reminder of Headington's importance as a quarrying village. The last remaining pillar of the Headington Union workhouse on the London Road alludes to a different past and the avenue along Woodland Road has survived as an important local feature.

The whole area lies on the calcareous sandstone plateau of the *Settled Plateaux* landscape type. Boundary Brook is a landscape feature which once bounded the city to the east, but which was taken underground to allow the expansion of Headington.

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	<i>Settled Plateaux</i> landscape type - flat landscape at the top of Headington Hill.
Evolution of townscape	An area of swift growth as a residential suburb in the early inter-war period. The area was formally a part of Headington fields (shown as arable on 1802 map). There have been smaller pockets of more recent infill housing and flats.
Archaeological and historic interest	Place name evidence of former land uses.
Street and block pattern	Generally long street blocks with some cul-de-sacs, especially in areas of infill. London Road acts as an arterial route dividing the area into two.
Private/public realm interface	Generally clear pattern of public and private spaces, with some overlooking of public spaces by house fronts.

5E NEW HEADINGTON



Photo 1: Long streets with uniform semi-detached houses.



Photo 2: Mature front garden vegetation.



Photo 3: Infill development in backland plots.



Photo 4: Avenue of trees on woodland road.



Photo 5: Views to John Radcliffe hospital.



Photo 6: Open grass areas in major greenspaces.

Massing and enclosure	Fairly uniform pattern of streets of semi-detached houses, in a low to medium density layout. Street widths vary but with quite open proportions.
Architecture and built form	Semi-detached and detached inter-war houses with brick, render or pebble dash finishes. Some buildings include half timbered detailing and reconstituted stone on front elevations. Clay tile roofs are predominant.
Streetscape	Streets include a diverse selection of front garden boundary treatments, including brick reconstituted stone, fences and hedges. Some brick walls have distinctive brick piers. There is a lack of mature vegetation in front gardens.
Open space	Recreation grounds, old quarry on corner of Windmill Road and Old Road. There are notable mature trees along Woodlands Road and on the edges of the John Radcliffe Hospital site.
Biodiversity	The quarries support small areas of biological interest in their scrub and partially vegetated rock. Small recreation grounds provide little in the way of semi-natural habitat, with private gardens making the most significant contribution to ecology.
Land use, culture and vitality	Residential with commercial/retail along London Road. Busy scene along the London Road - quiet residential suburb behind.
Access and traffic	London Road is a major artery road into the city centre.
Views and visual patterns	There are long views on some streets, including that from Woodlands Road towards the city centre and in areas adjacent to the recreation grounds. There are some longer views to Headington and beyond from the Barton Road area.
Designations	The old quarries of Rock Edge and Magdalen Quarry are notified as geological SSSIs for their outcrops of Upper Jurassic reef limestone.

Evaluation of character and quality

The area shares many characteristics of the inter-war suburbs in the city, although it contains a more diverse mix of architectural styles, and later infill development. There are also a number of historic associations, such as street names, with connections and views to adjacent areas.

Whilst the condition of housing is generally good, boundary walls are in variable states of repair, and there is a lack of street trees. The overall quality of the urban environment varies but it is a popular and well cared for residential area.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	Moderate
Biodiversity	Low
Historic Integrity	Moderate - quarries are remnants of past land use
Re-creatability	High
Intervisibility	Low - no views of the historic core
Open Space	Low

Sensitivity to change

This area is not particularly sensitive to change. The London Road is most sensitive to visual change as it is a main arterial route in and out of Oxford and forms an impression on motorists entering Oxford from the east.

The main change to the area has been through infill development on backland plots, and through incremental changes to architectural elevations and front garden boundaries. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- inappropriate or poorly designed extensions and home improvements;
- ageing and deterioration of the built fabric, including boundary walls;
- ageing and subsequent loss of native trees;
- changes that would sever historic connections and footpaths through the area, for example Woodlands Road/Cuckoo Lane;
- increasing streetscape 'clutter' such as telegraph poles, lamp posts, sign posts and other vertical features.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The core objective should be to enhance the streetscape quality by encouraging appropriate detailing of home improvements, and front garden boundaries. Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- developing design guidance for home improvements and extensions or new infill development, in character with the inter-war design vernacular;
- developing design guidance for front garden boundaries to encourage appropriate restoration;
- maintaining connections between adjacent historic landscapes and conserving historic features in the townscape;

- increasing tree cover, making use of locally common species in open space areas;
- conserving the avenue along Woodland Road as a local historic feature and preserving the historic route (Cuckoo Lane) behind the Manor Ground stadium;
- enhancing the character and biodiversity of recreation grounds by using local species and differing management regimes;
- consider developing a long term plan to reinstate Boundary Brook as a landscape feature.

5F NEW MARSTON

Description

An extensive area of inter- and post-war residential housing between the historic villages of Headington and Old Marston. This extensive area of residential estates lies on the edge of the *Headington Settled Plateaux* landscape character area, wrapping around the footslopes of Headington Hill and extending out onto river terrace and floodplain landscapes.

The housing on the hillside to the south of Peasmoor Piece is built on an area of former woodland known as Hengrove Wood. The remainder was built on the flat open arable fields of the river terraces and floodplain pastures. The street and block pattern is typical of any planned inter-war and post-war suburb and consists of wide streets, cul-de-sacs and crescents of short terraces and semi-detached houses. The area is traversed by the major through-routes of Marston Road and Headley Way/Cherwell Drive that are particularly busy during rush hour. Grass verges are planted with municipal street trees and provide a buffer between housing and traffic on the busy through roads.

Open space is mostly provided by recreation grounds and gardens and is generally characterised by manicured lawns developed at the same time as the housing. Mown playing fields and recreation grounds are of limited ecological value, with the majority of the ecological interest occurring in private gardens. However, the Milham Ford School site and Peasmoor Piece are two locally important sites for nature conservation and designated SLINCs. Milham Ford School grounds contains important areas of lowland meadow grassland, a nationally important habitat, and is a good example of how recreation and wildlife can be accommodated side by side.

Checklist and Key Characteristics

Underlying landscape type(s)	Forms part of the <i>Settled Plateaux</i> and <i>River Terrace</i> landscape types but also expands into the <i>Pastoral Floodplain</i> landscape type - a flat, low-lying landscape at the bottom, and partially extending up the northern side, of Headington Hill.
Evolution of landscape/townscape	Inter-war and post-war development on Cow Pasture (formerly pasture) and Marston Field (formerly arable). The housing on the hillside to the south of Peasmoor Piece is built on an area of former woodland known as Hengrove Wood.
Archaeological and historic interest	None evident
Street and block pattern	Planned inter-war and post-war suburbs of wide streets, cul-de-sacs and crescents of standard semi-detached inter-war period houses.
Public/private realm interface	Generally a clear distinction between the public and private realm, but it is less clear around blocks of flats e.g. along Stockley's Road. Large recreation grounds form part of the public realm.

5F NEW MARSTON



Photo 1: Milham Ford School is a landmark.



Photo 2: The Marston Road is a major thoroughfare.

Massing and enclosure	Short terraces and semi-detached houses with moderate gaps between. Medium density suburb with some sense of enclosure within streets.
Architecture and built form	Semi-detached and detached inter-war houses finished in pebble dash with short driveways within front gardens. Some large blocks of flats to the north of the area.
Streetscape	Grass verges are planted with municipal street trees and provide a buffer between housing and traffic on the busy through roads. Low red brick walls with neatly trimmed hedges surround front gardens. Front gardens and short driveways - cars are often parked off-road on short drives, in front of the houses.
Open space	Open space is mostly recreation grounds and is generally characterised by manicured lawns developed at the same time as the housing. Open space includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front and back gardens with ornamental trees that contribute to the streetscape. • Milham Ford School site that contains playing fields, wildflower meadows, marsh and scrub with mature trees. The row of Lombardy Poplars is a landmark of the school. Sports and wildlife survive side by side. It is an important recreational, educational and wildlife site, designated as a SLINC. The grounds also provide an important setting to the school building which is a prominent feature of the townscape. • Peasmoor Piece - an informal area of young woodland. An informal footpath winds through the woodland providing informal recreational opportunities and linking the urban area with the Bayswater Brook floodplain. Important informal recreational area exhibiting native vegetation and responding to underlying landscape character. Provides important wildlife habitats and links to the floodplain and is designated as a SLINC. • Recreation grounds are open flat, closely mown, grassed spaces with ornamental tree planting around the edges. They are valuable open greenspace, but provide little contribution to character or sense of place
Biodiversity	Mown playing fields and recreation grounds are of limited ecological value, with the majority of the ecological interest occurring in private gardens. However, the Milham Ford School grounds SLINC contains two small, but important areas of lowland meadow grassland, a nationally important habitat containing pyramidal and bee orchid, hairy violet and cowslip. Song thrush, spotted flycatcher and common blue butterfly have also been recorded. The Peasmoor Brook cuts through the area providing aquatic and wetland habitats, a notable feature of the north western boundary of the New Marston recreation ground and designated as a SLINC.
Land use, culture and vitality	Large, busy residential suburb of Oxford.
Access and traffic	Marston Road provides the main route to St Clement's and the city centre.

	<p>Cherwell Drive/Headley Way form an extension to the Marston Ferry Road, a major route that links north Oxford with Headington, one of the few crossing points of the Cherwell floodplain.</p> <p>Marsh Lane is a busy route at rush hour that provides access to the northern by-pass.</p>
Views and visual patterns	<p>Views across the Cherwell floodplain from the western edge of the area.</p> <p>The Milham Ford School building and its row of Lombardy Poplars is a prominent landmark</p>
Designations	Milham Ford school grounds and Peasmoor Piece contain SLINCs.

Evaluation of character and quality

Although this area has some locally distinctive features, such as Milham Ford School with its lombardy poplars and Peasmoor Piece, the street form and architecture is typical of an inter-war and post-war development that could be found in any city across the country. The combination of lack of distinctiveness of character and moderate state of repair of the landscape results in a moderate landscape quality.

Indicators of Landscape Value

Landscape Quality	Moderate
Biodiversity	Moderate - two SLINCs
Historic Integrity	Low
Re-creatability	High
Intervisibility	Low - no views of the historic core
Open Space	Low – open recreation grounds provide a limited amount of greenspace

Sensitivity to change

The semi-enclosed nature of the landscape and the absence of distinctive historic or built features means this area is not particularly sensitive to change. However, the presence of sites of local ecological importance and the visibility of housing on the edge of the Cherwell Floodplain means these areas are more sensitive to change. It also lies within the viewcone of the key viewpoints identified at Headington Hill and Elsfield and this heightens its sensitivity to built elements.

Since the inter-war period this area has seen progressive built development as well as conversion of former agricultural land to close mown amenity playing fields and school grounds. More recently changes in landscape management have enhanced the

nature conservation interest of the area. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- inappropriate or poorly designed extensions and home improvements;
- ageing and deterioration of the built fabric, including boundary walls;
- ageing and subsequent loss of native trees;
- increasing streetscape 'clutter' such as telegraph poles, lamp posts, sign posts and other vertical features.
- new built development on the edges of the area that would intrude into the Cherwell Valley or the settings of Old Marston and Headington Village;
- new built development on ecologically sensitive sites;
- tall built elements that may be highly visible, particularly on the edges of the area.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The landscape strategy should be to conserve areas of open space and to enhance the streetscape through conservation and reinstatement of local features such as boundary walls and mature native trees. Key areas to consider for policy development and landscape/townscape enhancement may include:

- enhancing the wooded character of the side of Headington Hill (Derwent Avenue, Coniston Avenue and Bowness Avenue on the site of the former Hengrove Wood) to restore woodland character;
- conserving the building of Milham Ford as a landmark feature and enhancing views of the building from the main road;
- conserving the biodiversity of Peasmoor Piece and Milham Ford through appropriate management;
- enhancing willow planting, and managing by pollarding, along Peasmoor Brook;
- increasing the number of street trees, particularly focussing on native species, to enhance the leafy character of the suburb;
- preserving grass verges as a feature and considering enhancement of their ecological (and aesthetic) value by introducing new species and changing management (grass cutting) regimes;
- considering opportunities to enhance the ecological character of the open spaces, particularly the school grounds and recreation ground, through encouraging more diverse margins and additional native tree planting;
- encouraging the conservation of low brick walls and hedges as boundary features and encouraging reinstatement of boundaries where they have been lost;

- encouraging the retention and management of front gardens as important elements of the streetscape;
- maintaining allotment sites as areas for recreation and urban ecology and promoting use of allotments;
- considering impacts on the floodplain of the Cherwell and the setting of Headington Village when planning any new built development;
- considering views from Headington Hill and Elsfield in planning any new built development.

5G CUTTESLOWE/SUNNYMEAD

Description

The Cutteslowe/Sunnymead suburb lies to the north of Summertown, on the edge of the Cherwell Floodplain. It is an area of curved streets and cul-de-sacs carved in two by the A40(T) ring road. To the south is an area of 1930's residential housing characterised by short terraces of red brick with small front gardens. To the north, and bordering the ring road, is a post 1960s estate built around Templar Road. No signs remain of the former Cutteslowe wall, a division of two communities which plagued the area from 1930 to 1959 when the wall was finally demolished.

The streetscape is characterised by grass verges planted with municipal street trees that provide a buffer between housing and traffic on the busy through roads. Low red brick walls with neatly trimmed hedges surround front gardens and are important features of the streetscape, defining the boundary between the public and private realms. The area to the north contain blocks of flats set in semi-private grounds where the distinction between the public and private realm is less clear than the earlier housing to the south. Front gardens are another important feature of the streetscape.

The A40 fragments the area in two, creating a barrier to movement. However, a new pedestrian/cycle bridge over the ring road now links the Cutteslowe and Templar estates. This feature is a new landmark as well as providing good views of the hills surrounding Oxford and views to the Radcliffe Hospital.

Its position on the edge of the floodplain means the townscape is bordered by open space. Part of the Sunnymead Recreation Ground lies on the Cherwell floodplain and this differs in character from the upper part of the recreation ground which lies on the river terrace. This open space affords rural views across to the Cherwell floodplain where large willow pollards along the banks of the Cherwell form a distinctive skyline.

Checklist and Key Characteristics

Underlying landscape type(s)	Settled River Terrace - gently domed finger of land between Thames and Cherwell Floodplains.
Evolution of landscape/townscape	Inter-war and post-war development on former open fields (mixed arable and pasture) of Cutteslowe, Water Eaton and St Giles.
Archaeological and historic interest	The line of the former Cutteslowe Wall.
Street and block pattern	Planned inter-war and post-war suburbs of curved streets and cul-de-sacs carved in two by the A40(T) ring road.
Public/private realm interface	Generally a clear distinction between the public and private realm, but it is less clear around blocks of flats e.g. on the Templar Estate.
Massing and enclosure	Short terraces and semi-detached houses with moderate gaps between. Medium density suburb with some sense of enclosure

	within streets.
Architecture and built form	<p>The built forms is divided in two types:</p> <p>Inter-war Cutteslowe Estate: short terraces of red brick or white washed, pitched clay tile roof, central chimneys.</p> <p>Post-war Templar Estate: short terraces of one and two storey dwellings, buff brick with pitched concrete tile roofs and central chimneys.</p> <p>Variety of materials - age-dependent rather than location-specific.</p>
Streetscape	<p>Grass verges are planted with municipal street trees and provide a buffer between housing and traffic on the busy through roads.</p> <p>Low red brick walls with neatly trimmed hedges surround front gardens.</p> <p>Front gardens and short driveways - cars are often parked off-road on short drives, in front of the houses.</p>
Open space	<p>Open space includes back gardens, school grounds, grass verges, recreation grounds and allotments. Open space includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunnymead Recreation Ground - a wide open grassed area showing change in character between the floodplain and terrace areas. • Allotments with some uncultivated plots - important open space and urban ecology. • School grounds - open mown amenity grassland with little nature conservation or landscape interest. • Grass verges and communal areas - typically closely mown grass with ornamental trees.
Biodiversity	<p>The compact development of Sunnymead contains little in the way of open space, with opportunities for wildlife largely restricted to private gardens. However, the recreation grounds and allotments on the western banks of the Cherwell provide important habitats for wildlife.</p>
Land use, culture and vitality	<p>Quiet residential suburb away from the noisy A40(T) that runs through the middle.</p>
Access and traffic	<p>A40 forms a barrier to movement, although a new pedestrian/cycle bridge over the ring road now links the Cutteslowe and Templar estates.</p> <p>The Sunnymead Recreation Ground is one of the few places where the Cherwell is publicly accessible.</p>
Views and visual patterns	<p>Open views across the Cherwell Floodplain from the Sunnymead Recreation ground. Large willow pollards along the banks of the Cherwell form the skyline.</p> <p>Good views of surrounding hills from the new pedestrian/cycle bridge over the ring road.</p>
Designations	<p>Recreation ground and allotments form part of the Green Belt.</p>

5G CUTTESLOWE/SUNNYMEAD



Photo 1: Inter-war housing south of the ring road.



Photo 2: Post-war housing north of the ring road.



Photo 3: The northern ring road divides the area in two.



Photo 4: Sunnymead recreation ground lies on the edge of the Cherwell Valley.

Evaluation of character and quality

Although this area has some locally distinctive features, such as the Sunnymead Recreation Ground and views over (and access to) the Cherwell Valley, the street form and architecture is typical of an inter-war and post-war development that could be found in any city across the country. The combination of lack of distinctiveness of character and moderate state of repair of the landscape results in a moderate landscape quality.

Indicators of Landscape Value

Landscape Quality	Moderate
Biodiversity	Low - local, unrecorded interest only
Historic Integrity	Low
Re-creatability	High
Intervisibility	Low - no views of the historic core
Open Space	Moderate – Sunnymead Recreation Ground and allotments form part of wider open space of the Cherwell floodplain

Sensitivity to change

The semi-enclosed nature of the landscape and the absence of unique or distinctive historic or built features means this area is not particularly sensitive to change. However, sensitivity is enhanced by its position on the edge of the Cherwell Valley. Overall sensitivity may be described as moderate with the most sensitive areas along the eastern edge where they abut the Cherwell floodplain.

Since the inter-war period this area has seen progressive built development. More recently there have been positive changes including the new footbridge over the ring road that has improved access and communication between north and south and the sensitive management of the recreation ground for nature conservation. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- new built development that encroaches into the Cherwell floodplain;
- inappropriate or poorly designed extensions and home improvements;
- ageing, including boundary walls;
- ageing and subsequent loss of native trees;

- ageing and deterioration of the built fabric streetscape features, particularly garden boundaries, that form the interface with the private realm.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The landscape strategy should be to conserve areas of open space adjacent to the Cherwell floodplain and to enhance the streetscape through conservation and reinstatement of local features such as boundary walls and mature native trees. Key areas to consider for policy development and landscape/townscape enhancement may include:

- conserving allotments as food producing areas, open recreational space or wildlife sites, providing opportunities for habitat creation on the edge of the floodplain;
- planting of native trees typical of the river terrace landscape, such as poplar and willow, to enhance sense of place;
- conserving Sunnymead recreation ground as open space and considering opportunities to enhance its ecological character;
- consider increasing the number of street trees, particularly focussing on native species, to enhance the leafy character of the suburb;
- preserving grass verges as a feature and considering enhancement of their ecological (and aesthetic) value by introducing new species and changing management (grass cutting) regimes;
- encouraging the conservation of low brick walls and hedges as boundary features and encouraging reinstatement of boundaries where they have been lost;
- encouraging the retention and management of front gardens as important elements of the streetscape.

5H NORTH OXFORD FRINGES

Description

This large residential area lies at the northern edge of Oxford. It is bisected by a number of major arterial routes, including the A40 (T) and the Banbury and Woodstock roads, which lead into the city centre. Within these major routes there are broad streets with mainly detached properties with large gardens. The area begins to merge with the Victorian residential areas of North Oxford with similar associations with academic life.

The area lies on the *North Oxford River Terrace* between the Thames and Cherwell floodplains. It is a leafy suburb of wide streets, built on the open farmland of Wolvercote, Cutteslowe and Water Eaton Fields. There is a large proportion of open space on the northern fringe, including the unique landscape of Wolvercote Cemetery. A large lake, hidden and encapsulated by back gardens, is one of the largest water bodies in the city.

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	<i>Settled River Terrace</i> - gently domed finger of land between Thames and Cherwell Floodplains.
Evolution of townscape	Development on the open arable land of Wolvercote Field and mixed farmland of Cutteslowe and Water Eaton Fields. The area developed mainly from the Edwardian period onwards, up to the late 20 th century.
Archaeological and historic interest	Wolvercote cemetery and lodge.
Street and block pattern	A largely regular grid between arterial roads, with wide drives, avenues and closes.
Private/public realm interface	Clarity of public and private realms.
Massing and enclosure	Wide streets with large houses set within large garden plots. Mature trees and garden shrubs create a partially enclosed quality, particularly in the summer months.
Architecture and built form	Generally two storey detached and semi-detached houses, with much diversity in materials and architectural style. Bays and porches are common features.
Streetscape	Wide streets include many trees in both public and private areas. 'Coral Rag' walls are a common front garden boundary feature.
Open space	Open space is concentrated in the northern edges of the area, linking to adjacent rural areas. Playing fields and sports grounds are typified by open grass areas with some ornamental planting around the edges. Remnant hedgerows, surviving from agricultural landscape, are visible around some of the

	grounds. Wolvercote Cemetery is a well maintained open space, with open grass, ornamental trees and memorial garden. It was a Victorian cemetery opened in 1894.
Biodiversity	Wolvercote Cemetery and adjacent playing fields provide limited wildlife habitats in the form of mature trees and close mown grasslands. The lake is one of the largest waterbodies in the city and has the potential to provide a variety of aquatic habitats. The wooded railway is an important green corridor link to the open countryside north of Oxford.
Land use, culture and vitality	Quiet residential suburb. an extension to the academic suburbs of North Oxford.
Access and traffic	Quiet streets adjacent to major arterial routes.
Views and visual patterns	Rich and diverse streetscape creates continuously changing visual interest.
Designations	None.

Evaluation of character and quality

This area relates closely to the Victorian suburb of North Oxford. Its spacious and mature character creates a residential area of high quality. However, the diversity of building styles and materials, which includes a number of late 20th century properties presents a less unified townscape quality to that of North Oxford.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	High
Biodiversity	Low - unrecorded locally important sites
Historic Integrity	Low
Re-creatability	High
Intervisibility	Low - no views to historic core
Open Space	Low

Sensitivity to change

This area is not highly sensitive to change as a result of its low historic integrity, biodiversity and intervisibility. However, its gateway location means that it forms an impression of Oxford for many travellers entering the city from the north and this increases its sensitivity to change.

5H NORTH OXFORD FRINGES



Photo 1: Wide streets, large houses and mature trees and shrubs.



Photo 2: Variety in style, age and materials of houses.



Photo 3: Ornamental tree planting in Wolvercote Cemetery.



Photo 4: Open character of recreation areas.

Change over the years has included infill development, additions and extensions that have contributed to the varied character of the streetscape. Such changes may continue to affect the character of the townscape and may be negative if they result in loss of trees or garden vegetation, or changes to front garden boundaries. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- ageing and deterioration of the built fabric streetscape features, particularly garden boundaries, that form the interface with the private realm.
- infill between existing house plots to the extent that it changes the perception of a low density suburb and erodes the leafy character of the suburb;
- inappropriate or poorly designed extensions and home improvements;
- increasing state of disrepair to front garden boundaries;
- ageing and subsequent loss of native trees and other vegetation both in the public and private realms.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The core objective will be to conserve the maturity and verdant quality of this residential area. New development such as infill or extensions will need to be carefully considered in relation to street and block pattern, architectural detailing and boundaries to retain the distinctive qualities of the area.

Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- ensuring any new development respects the scale of the block pattern and architectural form;
- enhancing biodiversity in open spaces by planting native species and managing margins for wildlife;
- maintaining the leafy character of the suburb through a programme of further street tree planting to replace ageing trees;
- developing design guidance for home improvements, extensions, new infill development, boundaries and garden planting.

51 NEW HINKSEY

Description

An area of interwar housing on the narrow belt of raised river terraces on the floodplain of the Thames. The main Abingdon Road forms a strong axis which cuts through the area – the side roads are quiet residential streets. Buildings are typically 1930's redbrick two storey with square bay fronts either semi detached separated by short driveways or in short terraces of four or five houses. Larger premises including commercial developments line the Abingdon Road.

This is an important gateway to Oxford, the transition from the floodplain to the urban area marked by a rehabilitation centre and the park and ride. Occasional mature limes along the Abingdon Road are landmark trees; elsewhere there are few street trees, with greenery confined to ornamental species within front and rear gardens. Gardens are frequently bound by low brick walls, occasionally with privet hedges, although boundaries have frequently been replaced by closeboard fencing or ornamental walls resulting in a fragmented street frontage. The area has strong links with the surrounding floodplain land – with views out to the west and east to poplars, willows (and pylons). There is limited public greenspace within the area, apart from a standard close mown recreation ground.

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	Forms part of the <i>Settled River Terrace</i> – narrow extension of the terrace on the Thames Floodplain.
Evolution of townscape	Predominantly 1930's housing on former meadowlands of St. Aldate's and South Hinksey meadows.
Archaeological and historic interest	None evident
Street and block pattern	Planned street layout of linear streets and crescents off the main Abingdon Road. Blocks are short terraces or semi-detached.
Private/public realm interface	Mostly clear relationship.
Massing and enclosure	Large semi-detached houses set on streets, with views contained at street ends, creating fairly enclosed street pattern.
Architecture and built form	Two-storey, short terraces or semi-detached. The residential suburb divides into two distinct areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An area of public housing to the east of the Abingdon Road – standard flat fronted two-storey terraces with concrete/rendered walls and red tiled roofs set along wide streets, with privet hedges forming the boundaries to front gardens. • Typical 1930's residential development to the west of the Abingdon Road of red brick, often finished in pebbledash, with square bay windows. Many houses have front driveways and side garages reducing the need for street parking.

51 NEW HINKSEY



Photo 1: Buildings are typically 1930's square bay fronted and semi-detached.



Photo 2: Boundaries are constructed in a variety of materials.



Photo 3: Trees within private gardens are important features of the streetscape.



Photo 4: The Abingdon Road is a major arterial route in and out of Oxford.

	Rehabilitation centre has a large block size and is set within grounds - forms a landmark on the Abingdon Road
Streetscape	<p>Closeboard fences or ornamental walls frequently replace garden walls and hedges. The various styles and heights of boundary create a mixed, street frontage, with little softening greenery.</p> <p>Within the residential area there is virtually no street planting – with greenery limited to ornamental cherries, cypress, willow and occasional privet hedges in gardens. There is a discontinuous avenue of mature lime trees along the Abingdon Road.</p>
Open space	Very little open space – limited to a small rectangular recreation ground at Coldharbour at the southern most end of the area. However, views to the greenspaces of the adjacent Open River Terraces and Floodplain are important and include the trees on rough ground to the east of the railway and the allotments fronting onto the east side of the Abingdon Road.
Biodiversity	Private gardens and a small mown recreation ground are the only habitats. Ecological potential may be enhanced by proximity to the extensive open land of the floodplain.
Land use, culture and vitality	Residential suburb. The Abingdon Road, a main approach to the historic city core, includes some commercial premises.
Access and traffic	The Abingdon Road is a major arterial route in and out of Oxford. Side streets are quiet.
Views and visual patterns	<p>Repeating pattern of streets with semi-detached houses with gables and chimneys.</p> <p>Long views down the Abingdon Road, framed by street trees. Rehabilitation centre is a landmark.</p>
Designations	None.

Evaluation of character and quality

New Hinksey is an important southern entrance to the City of Oxford. The rehabilitation centre forms a landmark feature and softens the transition to the urban area. The character area as a whole has a weak sense of place as a result of mass produced materials and styles typical of the interwar period and as such forms a weak 'gateway' to Oxford. The street trees along the Abingdon Road are critical to the character of this gateway. Whilst the condition of housing is generally good, boundary walls are in variable states of repair and overall landscape quality may be described as moderate.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	Moderate
Biodiversity	Low - unrecorded local sites only
Historic Integrity	Low

Re-creatability	High
Intervisibility	Low - no views of historic core
Open Space	Low

Sensitivity to change

The gateway location of this suburb means it is sensitive to change, particularly to changes along the main Abingdon Road. Changes to architectural elements and the condition and style of front garden boundaries has in the past detracted from the townscape quality. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- inappropriate or poorly designed extensions and home improvements;
- built development that blocks views down the Abingdon Road or across the adjacent Thames floodplain;
- ageing and deterioration of the built fabric, including boundary walls;
- ageing and subsequent loss of native trees, particularly along the Abingdon Road;
- increases in traffic and congestion along the Abingdon Road;
- new built development on the edges of the area that would intrude into the Thames Valley.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The location between extensive areas of floodplain is a key consideration and means that any future change should be carefully managed to respect and enhance this setting. The overall strategy should be to consider opportunities for the creation of a more fitting gateway to Oxford. Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- enhancing the character of the Abingdon Road approach to the historic centre through a co-ordinated programme of streetscape improvements including a framework avenue of street trees;
- retaining a 'green frontage' along the east side of Abingdon Road and views across the green corridor of the Thames, recognising the importance of this area in contributing to 'sense of place' along the approach road;
- enhancing the character of recreation ground at Coldharbour, including opportunity to improve ecological value through planting and management (recognising proximity to the floodplain);
- encouraging private planting of garden trees and shrubs to enhance green character. In this area, with wider streets and less pressure for street parking there are also considerable opportunities for new street tree planting;

- developing design guidance for home improvements and extensions or new infill development, in character with the inter-war design vernacular;
- developing design guidance for front garden boundaries to encourage appropriate restoration.

5J BOTLEY ROAD

Description

An area of mixed residential development, located largely on the floodplain of the River Thames extending to the west of the historic core of Oxford along the Botley Road. Older Victorian terraces are located on islands of first river terraces with later development corresponding to the floodplain, showing evidence of evolution of the built form in response to its surrounding environment.

The Botley Road acts as the main arterial street with large blocks of flats and semi-detached inter-war houses set back from the road behind grass verges and a majestic avenue of limes that provide a uniting feature along a very varied streetscape (*photos 1 and 2*). Many short, tight side-streets project at right angles from the main road, ending in dead-ends at the floodplain (*photo 3*). Each street and block has its own unique character with architectural styles and materials relating to the age of development. The details such as sash windows, framed wooden doors of properties and low red brick boundary walls in the side streets are important aspects of the architectural integrity of the area.

Framed views along side streets to the floodplain beyond provides a green setting for streets and is a feature of this area. The main road is the only connection between the streets and as such the area does appear to have a discrete, recognisable character being made up of a series of unconnected residential roads of varying ages and types of development.

Checklist and Key Characteristics

Underlying landscape type(s)	Lies on the lowlying, flat landscape that forms part of the <i>Rivers and Pastoral Floodplains</i> landscape type, containing the course of the Botley Stream.
Evolution of landscape/townscape	Development on former floodplain meadows. Older Victorian terraces are located on islands of first river terraces. Later development corresponds to the floodplain.
Archaeological and historic interest	Early Victorian terraces located on gravel river terrace 'islands'.
Street and block pattern	The Botley Road acts as the main arterial street with large blocks of flats and semi-detached inter-war houses set within generous open space. There are also a number of cul-de-sacs off the main Botley Road e.g. Prestwich Place. Many short, tight side-streets project at right angles from the main road, ending in dead-ends at the floodplain. Each street and block has its own unique character.
Public/private realm interface	The public/private realm is clearly identified streets with older Victorian properties. The flats on the Botley Road have semi-private open space around them where the boundaries between the public and private realms is less clearly identified.

5J BOTLEY ROAD



Photo 1: Botley Road is a major arterial street with a majestic avenue of limes.



Photo 2: Blocks of flats and semi-detached houses are set back from the road.



Photo 3: Short, tight streets end in deadends at the floodplain.



Photo 4: Early Victorian streets relate to the first river terrace deposits.



Photo 5: More recent development relates to the floodplain.



Photo 6: Low red brick walls, fenestration and doorways unite the streetscape.

Massing and enclosure	<p>The Botley Road is a wide street with large block sizes and street trees.</p> <p>The side streets are tight, narrow streets lined with terraces that provide enclosure.</p>
Architecture and built form	<p>Mixed blocks of housing – variety of scale and design, including terraces of Victorian artisan houses, inter-war semi detached and modern infill (flats).</p> <p>Materials vary depending on the age of properties as do streetscape details. The details such as sash windows and framed wooden doors of properties in the side streets are important aspects of the architectural integrity of the area.</p> <p>A series of small hump-backed bridges along Botley Road indicate the presence of watercourses and provide glimpses along green corridors of the streams.</p>
Streetscape	<p>Grass verges along the Botley Road set the buildings back from the main road. The avenue of mature limes along the Botley Road provide a uniting feature along a very varied streetscape.</p> <p>The regularity of fenestration and doorways along the older streets is an important feature.</p> <p>Low red brick boundary walls provide integrity of the streetscape.</p> <p>Within the side streets there is limited street or private planting.</p>
Open space	<p>Very limited open space, within character area, but enveloped by open floodplain land to the north and south, including Botley recreation ground and extensive playing fields. These formal recreation areas are set within a framework of poplars and willows and provide access to the wider natural landscapes of the Thames floodplain. There is pedestrian access to this land, and beyond, from most residential streets.</p>
Biodiversity	<p>Botley is dissected and bounded by backwaters of the Thames which support a good range of aquatic and marginal wetland habitats. The waterways are essential, if narrow, links between the open meadows to the north and green spaces to the south.</p>
Land use, culture and vitality	<p>Botley Road is a busy, often congested approach road.</p> <p>Side streets are generally quiet, residential areas</p>
Access and traffic	<p>Th Botley Road is a major access to the west linking to the A34, - frequently highly congested.</p>
Views and visual patterns	<p>Views down Botley Road, framed by the magnificent avenue of limes towards the landmark of Seacourt Tower.</p> <p>Framed views along side streets to the floodplain beyond provides a green framework for many streets.</p> <p>Rooftops are visible from Raleigh Park.</p>
Designations	<p>No designations.</p>

Evaluation of character and quality

The special character of this area is due to the close relationship between the built environment and the surrounding floodplain and the evidence of evolution of the built form in response to its surrounding environment. The view of the floodplain at the end of each street contributes to the quality of life in these streets. Botley Road is an important axis to the historic centre of Oxford, but the variety of architectural styles and materials along this street do not present an integrated built form and this combined with the moderate state of repair of the landscape elements results in a perception of moderate landscape quality.

Indicators of Landscape Value

Landscape Quality	Moderate
Biodiversity	Low - local, unrecorded interest only
Historic Integrity	Moderate – survival of early Victorian terraces
Re-creatability	High
Intervisibility	Low – no views of the historic core
Open Space	Low – although close links to surrounding floodplain

Sensitivity to change

The semi-enclosed nature of the landscape and the absence of unique or distinctive built features means this area is not particularly sensitive to change. However, sensitivity is enhanced by its position within the Thames floodplain and within the viewcone of the key viewpoint identified at Raleigh Park. Overall sensitivity may be described as moderate with the most sensitive areas abutting the floodplain.

The area has seen progressive built development from the early Victorian up to the present day. The avenue of limes have matured to impressive stature while there have been incremental changes in elevational details of the houses. The recent building of houses with garages fronting the street in Harley Road has broken the regularity of fenestration and doorways along the side streets. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- home 'improvements' that do not respect the simplicity of the elevations of the terraced cottages;
- deterioration of the original built fabric (e.g. street lamps, tiles, porches, garden walls, windows) and replacement with new styles and materials;
- extensions to the front elevations of buildings (e.g. garages and porches) resulting in changes to the line of the street;

- built development that encroaches on the adjacent Thames floodplain;
- ageing of landscape features, particularly the lime trees along Botley Road.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The landscape strategy should be to consider opportunities for the creation of a more fitting gateway to Oxford and to enhance the streetscape of both the Botley Road and the dead-end side streets through conservation and reinstatement of local features such as boundary walls and elevational details. Key areas to consider for policy development and landscape/townscape enhancement may include:

- ensuring development does not encroach further onto the floodplain – even small-scale development will threaten the integrity of these important landscapes;
- enhancing character of the Botley Road approach to the historic centre through a co-ordinated programme of streetscape improvements including proposals for renewing the framework of street trees which are an important feature of this area;
- considering use of streetscape furniture such as lighting columns to form a distinctive gateway to Oxford;
- considering opportunities to enhance connectivity between the floodplain landscapes to the north and south of the Botley Road e.g. along stream corridors;
- encouraging the conservation of low brick walls as boundary features and the reinstatement of boundaries where they have been lost;
- considering providing advice on how to incorporate elevational changes-renovations to houses while retaining the key features of the streetscape such as fenestration, doorways and boundaries;
- encouraging the retention and management of front gardens as important elements of the streetscape;
- considering views from Raleigh Park in planning any new built development or changes to the area.

5K BARTON

Description

The suburban settlement of Barton is set on a steep hillside (of Headington Hill) overlooking the Bayswater Brook Valley. It is a predominantly post-war re-development of the hamlet of Barton. The hamlet of Barton was closely attached to Old Headington and is probably the same age - in 1246 it was already known as Old Barton. Barton was severed from Headington by Oxford's first section of ring-road, built from Headington roundabout to the Banbury Road roundabout in the mid-1930s. Barton Manor (17th century) and the street sign reading Barton Village Road and the only surviving remnants of the former stone built village of Barton. The post war houses are of a variety of styles, but the most distinctive are the rows of steel clad pre-fabricated houses which are colourfully painted and have been carefully positioned to follow the contours of the valley side. Although there is little tree cover or vegetation, the overall townscape is colourful. The rural views over the Bayswater Valley also give the area a distinct sense of place and semi-rural character.

The neighbourhood has a sense of community with well kept gardens and houses with individual character in its detailing. As observed by Stephanie Jenkins in a piece on Barton's history 'The great God of the locality is DIY, and every evening and weekend he spreads his invisible rule Black and Decker drill over the estate'¹¹.

Checklist and Key Characteristics

Underlying landscape type(s)	Lies on the slopes of the <i>Settled Plateaux</i> landscape type, on a steep valley side overlooking the Bayswater Brook Valley.
Evolution of landscape/townscape	Suburban inter-war/post-war planned development on the arable fields of Barton Field and Sandhills Field and on part of Barton Common at the top of hill. Evidence of the former medieval Barton Village in street layout and remnant ragstone buildings, most notably Barton Manor.
Archaeological and historic interest	Historic core of Barton village and remnant village street.
Street and block pattern	Curvilinear streets with crescents that respond to landforms, cul de sacs and pedestrian alleys. Short terraces, semi detached houses and blocks of flats.
Public/private realm interface	The public/private realm is not clearly defined with confusion around parking courts and in respect of pedestrian alleys and around maisonettes.
Massing and enclosure	Density is medium to high, but many areas have a sense of exposure due to its position on a steep hillside.
Architecture and built form	Barton Manor House is a distinctive three storey ragstone building constructed from the local limestone with clay tile roof and dormer

¹¹ www.users.ox.ac.uk/headington/texts/historylinks

5K BARTON



Photo 1: Views over the Bayswater Valley provide a sense of alienation.



Photo 2: Rows of colourful steel-clad houses are a feature of the area.



Photo 3: Barton Manor is a surviving remnant of Barton Village whose frontage is directly onto the street.



Photo 4: Semi-detached houses are typical of the inter-war period.



Photo 5: Public openspace along the Bayswater Brook provides opportunities for recreation.



Photo 6: Post-war development is set back from the street behind walls and gardens.

	<p>windows.</p> <p>Range of two storey semi-detached red brick or steel construction houses built along the contours of the hillside.</p> <p>Colourfully painted steel clad buildings are distinctive and add colour to the townscape. Local 'Coral Rag' walls and stone kerbs are surviving features of Barton Village.</p>
Streetscape	<p>Older properties e.g. Barton Manor House are set directly onto the street, along the old winding village street.</p> <p>Inter-war and post-war development is set back from the street, behind front gardens. Municipal street trees include Norway maple and cherry.</p>
Open space	<p>This area has a relatively large amount of greenspace, both within and surrounding the suburb including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barton Village Recreation Ground - an amenity open space managed for recreation and sports. • Open space by Bernwood First School, North Way - a mown grassy area with some mature trees and scrub on a steep slope with views over the Bayswater Brook valley. • Recreation Ground along Bayswater Brook - an open amenity green space alongside Bayswater Brook that provides a setting for the brook. High landscape, ecological and recreational value.
Biodiversity	<p>The Bayswater Brook provides aquatic and marginal habitats. Mature trees and rough grassland are also important habitats.</p>
Land use, culture and vitality	<p>Quiet residential suburb with a semi-rural character.</p>
Access and traffic	<p>The suburb is severed from Headington by the Oxford by-pass. Bayswater Road is a rural road linking Oxford with its rural landscape setting.</p>
Views and visual patterns	<p>Views over the rest of the suburb and the Bayswater Valley help with orientation.</p> <p>Exposed backs of properties creates unstructured visual patterns due to the openness.</p> <p>Repetitive views down streets.</p> <p>Roofs are very visible from viewpoints on the top of the hill.</p>
Designations	<p>No designations.</p>

Evaluation of character and quality

Barton is an historic hamlet which has seen substantial redevelopment. Its distinctiveness is due to its topography and aspect which connects the area to the rural rather than the urban context. The coloured pre-fab buildings are particularly distinctive with their 'seaside' colour painted exteriors. The perception of quality varies across the area – from the historic village street with historic buildings, to

streets with well manicured front gardens and semi-private areas that possess little identity or sense of place. Overall landscape quality may be described as moderate.

Indicators of Landscape Value

Landscape Quality	Moderate
Biodiversity	Low - local, unrecorded interest only
Historic Integrity	Moderate – survival of Barton Manor
Re-creatability	High
Intervisibility	Low – no views of the historic core
Open Space	Moderate

Sensitivity to change

Barton is sensitive to change as a result of its location on a highly visible hillside on the rural outskirts of Oxford. Overall sensitivity may be described as moderate with the most sensitive areas abutting the Bayswater Brook and prominent hillsides.

The area saw substantial change during the inter and post-war period when the rural village character of Barton was obscured by new built development. Since then change has been incremental and mostly as a result of small scale changes and improvements to individual properties. The area is currently in a state of flux as new building works are taking place. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- extensions to the front elevations of buildings (e.g. garages and porches) resulting in changes to the line of the street;
- built development that encroaches on the setting of Boundary Brook;
- ageing of landscape features, particularly the mature trees in the public realm;
- ageing and deterioration of built features such as boundary walls;
- changes that would obscure the original village street.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The landscape strategy should be to conserve the semi-rural character of this suburb and to enhance the wooded landscape character of the hillside. Key areas to consider for policy development and landscape/townscape enhancement may include:

- introducing local detailing and features where possible, for example the use of local stone walls as was a feature of the old Barton Village;

- maintaining the colourful character of Barton, using carefully selected colour to enhance streets;
- considering opportunities to introduce more native planting, particularly trees, to enhance its wooded valley side character;
- continuing to respond to landform with any new building - this will ensure development does not look out of place;
- considering use of streetscape furniture such as lighting columns to form a distinctive gateway to Oxford from this rural approach;
- conserving views across the valley to the landscape beyond and opening up views to the brook where possible.

5L LITTLEMORE

Description

Littlemore is a discrete residential suburb of inter-war and post-war housing on the southern edge of Oxford. It is focussed around the historic Littlemore village core (3F) and lies on the raised area of the *Settled Plateau* landscape type. The suburb is isolated from the main part of the city by the ring road and has a distinct sense of separateness from Oxford. The area has been developed incrementally extending from the historic core and includes very mixed development reflecting the dominant building style of the era ranging from the 1950's to the present day. The area cannot be described as having a single distinct character – and rather consists of a series of separate residential enclaves with few connections or similarities between them.

The planned street layout of gently curving crescents supports long and short blocks of residential houses. Some cul-de-sacs have a variable orientation, especially near the eastern by-pass. The more recent residential developments have no boundaries demarking the space to the front of properties with lawns, shrubs and trees spilling out onto the street forming part of the public domain creating a relaxed informal streetscape.

The area includes a relatively large amount of open space, ranging from the communal lawns and wide verges around the 1950's and 1960's development, as well as extensive allotment gardens, school grounds and a recreation ground. The spacious layout of development allows for some public trees, for example groupings of birch and lines/clusters of ornamental trees, typically, maple, cherry, birch and rowan. Small-medium trees (field maple, whitebeam) and shrubs are a feature of the gardens surrounding the recent residential development.

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	<i>Settled Plateaux</i> landscape type - flat landscape.
Evolution of townscape	An area of swift growth as a residential suburb in the post war period. Includes 1950's public housing, 1960's estates and more recent infill development in the form of 'garden estates'. The area also encapsulates terraces of Victorian cottages at Chapel Lane. The area surrounds <i>Littlemore Historic Core</i> (3F).
Archaeological and historic interest	Hedge lines have been retained within the urban fabric e.g. forming boundaries to allotment gardens.
Street and block pattern	Planned street layout of gently curving crescents with long and short blocks. Some cul-de-sacs and variable orientation. Lack of clarity of orientation, especially near the eastern by-pass.
Private/public realm interface	The more recent residential developments have no boundaries demarking the space to the front of properties with lawns, shrubs and trees spilling out onto the street forming part of the public domain

5L LITTLEMORE



Photo 1: The spacious layout allows for a number of public trees.



Photo 2: More recent residential developments have no boundaries demarcating public and private space.



Photo 3: Lines of mature trees mark former hedgerow boundaries.



Photo 4: Chain link fencing is a common boundary feature of the older housing.



Photo 5: Mature trees within the historic core of Littlemore form a backdrop to views.



Photo 6: Streetscape detailing includes paving patterns.

	creating a relaxed informal streetscape.
Massing and enclosure	Fairly uniform pattern of streets of short terraces, in a low to medium density layout. Street widths vary but with quite open proportions.
Architecture and built form	<p>Mixed age, scale and design of residential development including 1950's public housing, 1960's estates and flats, plus more recent infill of 1980's development of housing within 'garden' cul de sacs.</p> <p>Very variable materials, depending on age of development, including concrete/pebble dash utilitarian style finish, red and buff brick. The more modern developments are a mix of brick with wood facing and large 'picture' windows.</p> <p>The community centre (shops and surgery) includes a bizarre floorscape of coloured brick.</p>
Streetscape	<p>Public housing surrounded by lawns, along wide roads with grass verges.</p> <p>Older 1950's housing have low chain link fencing forming the boundary to the street.</p> <p>Most development includes driveway/garages with little requirement for on street parking.</p> <p>The spacious design of development allows for public trees, for example groupings of birch in association with the 1960's shopping centre, and lines and clusters of ornamental trees (typically, maple, cherry, birch, rowan). Small-medium trees (field maple, whitebeam) and shrubs are a feature of the gardens surrounding the recent residential development. In addition mature native trees – part of historic hedgerow lines form boundaries around the open spaces, school grounds and allotments.</p>
Open space	<p>The area includes a large amount of open space, ranging from the communal lawns and verges around development, to the extensive allotment gardens, school grounds and recreation ground.</p> <p>The recreation ground (main access from Oxford Road) comprises close mown grass, pitches and a children's play area. It provides a well used public footpath route between the Oxford road and the estates of Kempson Crescent. A remnant hedgeline of elder, ash and hawthorn forms the boundary with the allotments to the north</p> <p>Modern development is set within shared greenspace with well maintained lawns and shrubberies that make an important contribution to the streetscape.</p> <p>School playing fields are extensive areas of mown grass. Lines of mature trees mark a former field hedgerow boundaries.</p> <p>Extensive allotments form the boundary along the ring road to the north and the railway to the south.</p>
Biodiversity	The southern edge of Littlemore, with its railway embankment scrub, trees and rough grassland and the neighbouring allotment garden provides the most notable habitats in this area. Private gardens and the churchyard of St Mary and St. Nicholas (within adjacent historic core) provide additional habitats in the form of mature trees.

Land use, culture and vitality	Residential suburb, surrounded by schools, recreation grounds and allotments. Includes local 'centre' with shops and surgery.
Access and traffic	Fragmented from the rest of the city by the eastern by-pass. The area is access from the main village street of the historic core of Littlemore, providing an attractive entrance.
Views and visual patterns	Gently curving streets restrict long views. Mature trees within the historic core of Littlemore form a backdrop to views.
Designations	None.

Evaluation of character and quality

The area shares many characteristics of the other inter-war and post-war suburbs in the city and as such does not have a distinct sense of place. Whilst the condition of housing is generally good, boundary walls are in variable states of repair, and there is a lack of street trees. The overall quality of the urban environment may be described as moderate.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	Moderate
Biodiversity	Low
Historic Integrity	Low
Re-creatability	High
Intervisibility	Low - no views of the historic core
Open Space	Low

Sensitivity to change

This area is not particularly sensitive to change. The main changes to the area so far has been through infill development in backland plots, and through small scale changes to architectural elevations and front garden boundaries. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- extensions to the front elevations of buildings (e.g. garages and porches) resulting in changes to the line of the street;
- loss of hedgerow boundaries;
- ageing and subsequent loss of mature native trees;
- ageing of built materials including garden boundaries.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The core objective should be to enhance the streetscape quality by encouraging planting and unified front garden boundaries. Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- enhancing the character of the recreation ground and the open mown grass spaces around development through more creative management of the grasslands, including selective relaxing of mowing regimes;
- considering opportunities for further public/street tree planting, including larger native species where space permits;
- conserving allotments as valuable greenspace and urban wildlife resources;
- conserving and managing the remnant hedgerow boundaries – including replanting and management of the shrub layer.

5M SANDHILLS AND RISINGHURST

Description

An area of swift growth during the inter-war period on the former Quarry Green common, Quarry Coppice woodland and Forest Hill fields, within the bounds of the former Shotover Royal Forest . The suburb of Sandhills and Risinghurst occurs mainly on the flat plateau of the *Settled Plateaux* landscape type, but extends onto the slopes of the *Enclosing Limestone Hills* at Shotover.

The suburb is set out on a grid of wide, straight streets with semi-detached housing set in gardens with generous spaces in between. Street and block pattern breaks down at the edges where cul de sacs and closes predominate and the public/private realm is less clear.

Streets are generally wide with open proportions with semi-detached bay fronted houses, finished in pebble dash, set back behind front gardens and bounded by distinctive low coral rag walls. Grass verges provide a separation between pedestrian and vehicular traffic and are a visual setting to the street. Lime, Horse Chestnut and Scots Pine are present on some streets where they provide colour and textural interest as well as a sense of landscape maturity.

The area is carved in half by the A40 dual carriageway, an important eastern approach to Oxford, which fragments the area. Kiln Lane, an historic lane leading to Shotover, is a distinctive street with some distinctive historic buildings along its length. Green spaces tend to be school grounds and recreation grounds typical of the same period and often bear no relation to underlying landscape character. The lower density of housing has allowed pockets of more recent, higher density infill to occur within the townscape fabric.

Although there is little variation in housing style, some distinctive landscape details such as stone kerbs, low coral rag walls and vernacular buildings provide a sense of place. There are views to the adjacent wooded ridge of Shotover, enhancing the semi-rural character.

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	Mostly on the flat plateau of the <i>Settled Plateaux</i> landscape type, extending onto the slopes of the <i>Enclosing Limestone Hills</i> at Shotover
Evolution of townscape	An area of swift growth as a residential suburb in the inter-war period on the former Quarry Green common, Quarry Coppice woodland and Forest Hill fields. More modern infill around the edges. Kiln Lane, an historic lane still survives with some historic buildings along it.
Archaeological and historic interest	Falls within the bounds of the former Shotover Royal Forest.

5M SANDHILLS AND RISINGHURST



Photo 1: Low coral rag boundary walls are distinctive features of the streetscape.



Photo 2: Cul-de-sacs predominate on the edge of the area.



Photo 3: Mature vegetation is an important feature of the streetscape.



Photo 4: Vernacular buildings along Kiln Lane.



Photo 5: The former allotment site has great ecological potential.



Photo 6: Shotover provides a wooded backdrop to the area.

Street and block pattern	<p>Wide, straight streets on a grid with semi-detached housing set in gardens with generous spaces in between. Street and block pattern breaks down at the edges where cul de sacs and closes predominate.</p> <p>Large scale buildings (schools and offices) sit within open grounds enhancing sense of space.</p>
Private/public realm interface	<p>Generally clear pattern of public and private spaces, defined by low coral rag walls. Some confusion on the edges of the area where cul de sacs predominate.</p>
Massing and enclosure	<p>Wide street widths with open proportions and a medium/low density of housing.</p>
Architecture and built form	<p>Standard interwar housing design with properties finished in pebble-dash, set back from the roads with private front gardens and driveways. Clay tile roofs are predominant.</p>
Streetscape	<p>Houses are set back behind front gardens which are often bounded by low coral rag walls - Coral rag boundary walls and stone kerb edging are distinctive features of the streetscape.</p> <p>Grass verges provide a separation between pedestrian and vehicular traffic and are a visual setting to the street. Lime, Horse Chestnut and Scots Pine are present on some streets where they provide colour and textural interest as well as a sense of maturity of the landscape.</p>
Open space	<p>Open space in this area is generally characterised by private gardens and school playing fields. There are smaller intermittent features which contribute to greenspace, such as the overgrown allotments that provide a significant area of scrub land with strong ecological and recreational value.</p>
Biodiversity	<p>A small but varied nature reserve, the C.S. Lewis reserve SLINC, occurs on the southern boundary of the estate. The reserve contains a pond, woodland, marshland and outcrops of sandstone and is managed by BBOWT.</p>
Land use, culture and vitality	<p>Quiet residential suburb with the busy A40 approach passing through the centre. Away from the A40 the character is rural and tranquil - the presence of the rural landscape setting is clearly sensed.</p>
Access and traffic	<p>The A40 dual carriageway acts as an arterial route carving the area in half - this is an important gateway to Oxford from the east.</p> <p>Access to Shotover and the rural landscape setting along Kiln Lane.</p>
Views and visual patterns	<p>Views to adjacent ridge of Shotover to the south, and over the Bayswater Brook valley to the north, enhance the rural character.</p>
Designations	<p>C S Lewis reserve is a SLINC.</p>

Evaluation of character and quality

Although the architecture and built form is of the standard inter-war layout and style, the interest is in the landscape setting to, and streetscape of, the suburb. Sandhills and Risinghurst is a semi-rural suburb that lies within the bounds of the former Shotover Royal Forest and wooded hill of Shotover provides an historic backdrop to the area today.

The use of the locally quarried Coral rag in the garden boundary walls is a distinctive features of the streetscape and this gives the suburb a unique sense of place. The rough stone kerbs also contribute local detailing that is absent from other inter-war and post-war suburbs. Kiln Lane is an important historic route that has links with the Roman potteries that have been located in this area. The condition of streetscape elements is good and the mature trees enhance the quality of the landscape. Overall landscape quality may be described as high.

Indicators of landscape value

Landscape Quality	High
Biodiversity	Moderate - C S Lewis reserve is a SLINC
Historic Integrity	Moderate - formerly part of Royal Forest and still retains rural wooded character.
Re-creatability	High
Intervisibility	Low - no views of the historic core
Open Space	Low

Sensitivity to change

This suburb is an important location at the eastern gateway to Oxford and as a result is sensitive to change. Its position on the footslopes of Shotover further enhance its sensitivity. The most sensitive features are the distinctive boundary walls, mature trees and historic connections to Shotover.

The main change to the area was the rapid development on greenspace during the inter-war period. Since then the area has seen incremental changes through infill development in backland plots changes to architectural elevations and front garden boundaries. Signs of improvement to housing, especially in the Sandhills area, suggest a period of character transition through gentrification/social change. Threats to local character could arise as a result of:

- deterioration of the original built fabric;
- extensions to the front elevations of buildings (e.g. garages and porches) resulting in changes to the line of the street;

- loss of the distinctive ragstone boundary features;
- ageing of streetscape details such as the stone kerbing;
- changes to the layout and rural character of Kiln Lane;
- built development that severs access to the wider rural landscape;
- ageing of landscape features, particularly mature native trees.

Objectives, policy development and enhancement opportunities

The core objective should be to conserve the distinctive boundary walls, mature trees and historic connections to Shotover and to enhance the eastern gateway to Oxford. Key areas to consider for policy development and townscape enhancement may include:

- consider planting more native trees to enhance the variety and maturity of the streetscape and to integrate the suburb into its rural wooded setting of the historic Forest of Shotover;
- encourage planting and management of garden vegetation as an important feature of the streetscape;
- managing the former allotment site for both ecological and recreational worth;
- retaining important streetscape details such as the coral rag boundary walls, stone kerbs and mature native trees and developing design guidance for front garden boundaries to encourage appropriate restoration;
- conserving the setting of, and views to, vernacular buildings along Kiln Lane;
- consider improving the ecological and aesthetic value of grass roadside verges though changes in grassland management;
- considering further tree planting along the A40 to enhance the eastern approach to Oxford and the rural character of this side of the city;
- retaining rural boundaries and open views across to Bayswater Brook wooded valley and Shotover hill.

6 POST 1960S SUBURBS

Generic Description

There are three principle areas of post 1960's development throughout Oxford. One of these, Blackbird Leys, is a large residential estate on the outskirts of the city, with associated retail and service centres. Other areas include smaller pockets of housing from the 1960's to the 1990's which are closely linked to other city suburbs. The landscape and townscape quality of these areas is variable, with some of the larger estates suffering from inherent design weaknesses, whilst some of the pockets of more recent development have been well planned and detailed. Where development has been piecemeal, there are often issues of a lack of a clear townscape identity to the area as a whole.

Much of the 1960's development, and especially that at Blackbird Leys, is laid out in such a way that there is, in places, a lack of clarity about which areas are private and which public. In areas where this is the case, such as parking courts and pedestrian areas, there is a sense of neglect and issues of personal safety. Where architectural quality is also low, this creates areas with a weak sense of place and lower townscape quality. Open spaces associated with such areas tend to be bland spaces of mown grass which do not respond to the underlying landscape character.

Later pockets of housing development tend to be more self contained and inward focused, often on short cul-de-sacs with small areas of shared greenspace. Pedestrian and cycle access through the larger of these areas, such that south of Blackbird Leys, is often good, whereas vehicular access is maze-like with difficulty in orientation.

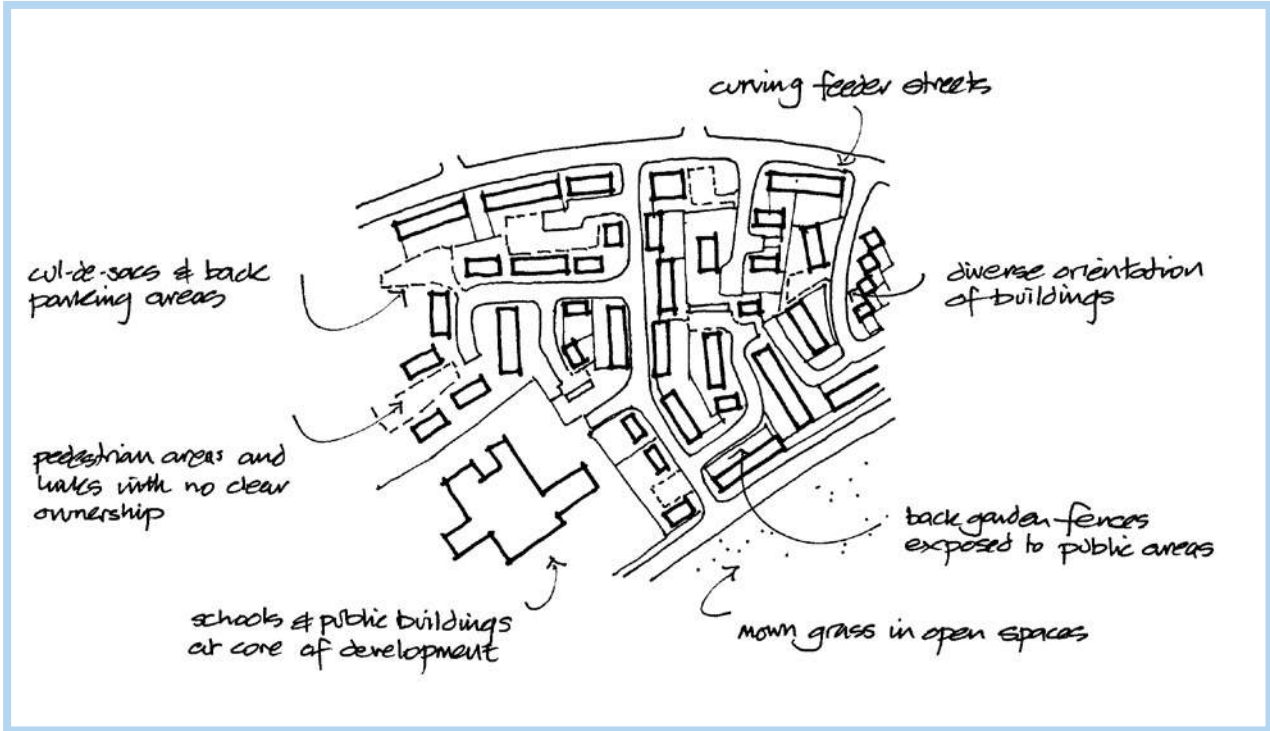
Key Characteristics

- discrete residential estates on the eastern suburban belt of the city;
- lower townscape and landscape quality in areas of 1960's development, as a result of layout and architectural detail;
- smaller pockets of late 20th century development which are often inward looking and self contained;
- open spaces of closely mown grass which have limited ecological value and which do not respond to the underlying landscape character.

Character Areas

- 6A Blackbird Leys
- 6B Wood Farm
- 6C Horspath Road Area

6 POST 1960S SUBURBS



6A Blackbird Leys

6A BLACKBIRD LEYS

Description

Blackbird Leys is the largest post 1960s suburb of Oxford, and is divided into two parts: a large 1960's development; and, to the south of Northfield Brook, a more recent residential area. The 1960's area is typified by curvilinear road layouts with cul-de-sacs, centred on a large open area and a parade of shops and other public buildings.

The 1960's area contains a large number of houses and flats which are mostly two or three storey, but include two tower blocks which are landmark features of the area. The area is largely built in red brick with flat roofed blocks or pitched roofed detached properties. The central open space provides a large recreation area with limited belts of mature trees. There is a health centre, library, leisure centre, row of shops and two schools at the centre of the estate.

The Northfield Brook creates a belt of open space which divides this larger area from that to the south. It includes areas of nature conservation interest and the Spindleberry Nature Park.

The southern area of residential development is relatively new, and is typified by a maze of short cul-de-sacs with interconnecting pedestrian routes. This area is mainly accessible from Grenoble Road to the south, although one connecting street, Windale Avenue links this across the Northfield Brook to the 1960's area.

A mature avenue of Horse Chestnuts on Windale Avenue leads up to a group of historic agricultural buildings in the centre of the estate – creating a nucleus of buildings with an architectural style which derives from the context of rural Oxfordshire. Other buildings on this extensive estate are built in orange and yellow brick with block paving as the dominant highway and footway material. Small pockets of open space are located within this area.

Checklist and key characteristics

Underlying Landscape Type	<i>Settled Plateaux and Clay Vale.</i> A flat area on the edge of the clay vale.
Evolution of townscape	City estate on former open arable fields of Littlemore and Sandford Fields. Vernacular farm buildings retained within development. Blackberry Lane Roman Road passes through estate on east. Post 1960s housing and service centre.
Archaeological and historic interest	Historic route of Blackberry Lane passes through area. Nucleus of vernacular farm buildings including large 'Cotswold' barn and dovecote.
Street and block pattern	1960's area contains a number of curvilinear feeder roads off which there are numerous short cul-de-sacs and parking courts. The housing is arranged in short blocks with pedestrian access through

	<p>some development backs.</p> <p>Southern development area is fed from distributor roads and comprises short curved streets and short cul-de-sacs, with little opportunity for through routes.</p>
Private/public realm interface	In a number of places in the 1960's area, there is confusion between fronts and backs of properties, with resulting spaces where ownership is not clear. Orientation within the housing areas is sometimes confusing.
Massing and enclosure	Housing is high density with buildings from two to four storeys, with two tower blocks. Around the edges of the open space the spatial character is open and windswept.
Architecture and built form	Two storey short brick terraces and semi-detached houses, small blocks of flats and two tower blocks. Materials are predominantly red brick and cladding in 1960's area, and mixed red, yellow and blue brick detailing in later development area.
Streetscape	In 1960's area, macadam surfacing is ubiquitous, with some variation in street lamps, and limited vegetation in housing areas. In later area, block paving is common, with immature street tree planting.
Open space	<p>The central public open space in the 1960's area comprises an expanse of close mown grass, with some areas of mature trees. In other areas along feeder roads there are wide grass verges and local areas of communal grassland associated with individual streets or blocks of flats, and allotments.</p> <p>Northfield Brook and Spindleberry Nature Park form a central belt of open space with a natural character, acting as a wildlife corridor and recreational space.</p> <p>The avenue of mature horse chestnuts along Windale Avenue is a distinctive feature.</p>
Biodiversity	Spindleberry Nature Park is an important local wildlife resource with woodland, scrub, rough grassland and freshwater habitats linking into surrounding open countryside.
Land use, culture and vitality	Quiet residential suburb with central shopping and services centre.
Access and traffic	Feeder roads and external distributor roads contain the majority of the traffic, with quieter cul-de-sacs and connecting pedestrian alleys.
Views and visual patterns	Long views from distributor roads including some open views to the south and east. Short views within residential courts and cul-de-sacs.
Designations	None.

Evaluation of character and quality

This is a large area of housing, which divides into two parts. The 1960's area comprises a residential area which lacks evident quality in architectural detailing, and suffers from a layout which has problems in respect of clarity of ownership of common spaces. In many places the streetscape is somewhat bleak and is considered an area of lower quality.