

Headington Hill Conservation Area Stakeholder Workshop 08.11.12

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Proposed amendments

Page 1

Amend sentence in Summary to read "The northern part of the hill, between Marston Road and Headley Way, comprises a residential area **which was** originally laid out in Victorian times on a grand scale but subsequently much divided."

Amend character features point 8 to read "Late 19th to mid 20th century residential suburb ~~has~~ created an established character of large houses in mature landscaped grounds on tranquil lanes in the north of the area."

Page 2

Amend character features point 14 to read "~~Educational institutions~~ **Headington School** in the south of the conservation area ~~reflecting~~ **illustrates** Oxford's developing reputation as a centre for excellence in education. ~~and~~ **Oxford Brookes University and Cheney School illustrate** the development of the city's citizens' need for further education establishments.

Amend Issues point 3 to read "~~Sustaining Development with intrusive~~ **Sustaining** Development with intrusive architectural character – developments in the past that were notable for introducing architectural forms that were intrusive to the character of the area include the 1960s residential blocks at the rear of Cotuit Hall, the former 1970s buildings of Plater College and the Pergamon Press building within Headington Hill Hall campus. The rectilinear forms, poor quality materials, repetitive detailing and large scale of these buildings did not reflect the historic residential character of **much of** the conservation area. Conversion of landscaped garden settings of buildings for car parking also has a significant negative impact on the character of the area and its historic interest.

Page 5

Amend para 2 to read "This character appraisal has been prepared by Oxford City Council following survey within and around the Conservation Area undertaken between Summer 2011 and Spring 2012. This included the involvement of stakeholders representing local **residents'**

groups as well as review of heritage assessments prepared by or on behalf of a number of institutional landowners (see Sources below) community. Public consultation on the draft appraisal was undertaken in June and July 2012, following which the appraisal has been amended to take into account representations made by the public. ~~A final draft will then be presented to the City Council's East Oxford Planning Committee for their endorsement~~ **This revised draft was presented to the East Area Planning Committee who endorsed it on 14th August 2012. To build consensus on the assessment presented within the appraisal an additional stakeholders' meeting was held on 8th November 2012 to consider amendments to the appraisal and, subsequently, the findings of a number of character assessments prepared by, or on behalf of, institutions in the area were reviewed to consider whether they raise matters that could add to the assessment as endorsed. A number of minor amendments were subsequently agreed and the updated appraisal endorsed by the chair of the planning committee with the committee's approval.**

Amend para 8 to read "This means that proposals that fail to fulfil these requirements should not be accepted and the ~~government~~ **NPPF** explains that where a proposal involves harm to a designated heritage asset it should only be allowed if the public benefit of the proposal outweighs the harm.

Page 6

Amend para 4 to read "This appraisal was prepared with the assistance of representatives of Resident's Associations for Pullens Lane, Jack Straw's Lane, Harberton Mead, Feilden Grove, and Headington Hill. It was informed by discussions with ward Councillors of Oxford City Council and the New Marston Wildlife Group. The findings of a number of assessments of the character of the area prepared on behalf of local institutional landowners have also been taken into account. ~~Community Workshops~~ **with residents groups** in the conservation area were held in September 2011, including the use of the City Council's 'Character Assessment Toolkit', a self help guide, used to collect information on the positive and negative contribution of different features of the environment to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Page 8

Amend para 4 sentences 4 and 5 to read "These include Rye St Antony School (with 285 pupils aged 3-18 including residential accommodation for approximately 75), ~~accessed from Franklin Road~~ and occupying two large Victorian houses. Just to the south is EF International Language School, on the site of a third large house but in modern buildings, which provides accommodation for approximately ~~700 students~~ **265 boarders** aged 16+.

Amend para. 5 to read "Between Cuckoo Lane and Headington Road is Headington School, another large school with ~~770~~ **800** pupils aged 11 to 18, including facilities for ~~493~~ **220** boarders.

Page 12

Add after para 1 **“Matthew Arnold’s poems Thyrsis and The Scholar Gipsy, helped to raise awareness of the beauty of views over Oxford from the west in the national consciousness”**

Page 15 Amend para. 1 sentence 4 to read “. Later again, it became a hostel for Oxford College of Technology, and was considerably extended to provide 102 study bedrooms, and a games/lecture room **and dining facilities.**

Amend para. 3 to read **“Oxford Brookes has its origins in the Oxford School of Art, which was houses in the Taylor Institute from 1865, expanding to offer other courses at several sites across the city and becoming the Schools of Technology, Art and Commerce in 1934.** Despite plans being drawn up for the creation of a new campus for Oxford’s growing Schools of Technology, Art and Commerce in ~~1932~~ **1939**, it was not until 1949 that the land formerly occupied by the Morrell’s nursery garden was bought for their realisation.

Page 16

Add after para 3 “

“A steady programme of building and refurbishment has provided the school with excellent teaching and residential facilities, all the twentieth century building being carefully harmonised with the architecture of the original handsome Victorian houses. King House was opened in 1986, the art, design and technology centre in 1989, the information, communications and technology suite in 1991, the eastern extension of the Rendall building in 1993 and the Sumpter building with its science laboratories in 1995. The Janet Ward performing arts centre was completed in 2005; the Morton sports centre opened in September 2008; the refurbishment of the chapel was completed in 2009; the Sixth Form centre was opened in September 2010. A new library and classrooms, in extension of the Rendall building, were completed in 2012.”

Page 19

Para 4 add **“Where the road descends the slope of Headington Hill it plunges into a steep sided cutting with stone retaining walls, which creates a pinchpoint in its route that contrasts strongly with the more open areas to the east and west. Trees growing above the banks of the cutting add to the shading of the area, whilst the bridge crossing the road adds to the sense of enclosure and acts as an important focal feature. The cutting appears suddenly, partly due to a slight bend in the road, adding to its visual interest. The top of the cutting is framed by the open space and tree planting of the reservoirs south of Headington Road and the grounds of Headington Hill Hall to the north, including Top Lodge and the hall’s boundary wall.”**

Page 20

Para 2

Parkland setting of park and playing fields (+4) **(Modify final sentence of to identify glimpsed views to parkland and playing fields from Cheney Lane)**

Forest estate character, width and formality dwindle from further west. Amend para 2 to read **“Tall trees in from the adjacent park and sports grounds line the road giving it a forest estate**

character, channelling views along the road and lean-over, adding to its tranquillity and green character. Two thirds of the way down the lane the trees create a tunnel of foliage casting deep shade over the road".

Para 6

Set back of campus buildings provides spacious character **(note the set back of Oxford Brookes and Cheney School buildings within the plot and green forecourt to Gypsy Lane)**

Add **"Hill Top stands out for addressing Headington Road more directly than other large historic houses on Headington Road"**.

Page 21

Para 3

Occasional noise of sports (pleasant). **(add note to recognise the pleasant contribution of the noise of sports to the surrounding areas).**

Page 23

Para 3

Add at end of para **"and majestic mature trees provide an attractive end stop to the view."**

Para 8

Stone revetments to either side of cutting significant in views. Add to para 8. **"The stone retaining walls of the road cutting are also a prominent feature of these and channel the eye towards the bridge"**.

Page 24

Para 2

Ornamental trees (low scale) in campus and large trees with under storey on Headington Road corner. Tall conifers at Cheney School given prominence by curved road line. Street trees on east side of road on road green verge **(note importance of trees on Gypsy Lane frontages).**

Low railings and planted strip **(add note that low railings to Gypsy Lane provide views to the greenery of the campus forecourt from the road)**

Tree planting reduce impact of big buildings by providing some screening **(note the importance of trees in softening the outline of large campus buildings. These trees are of interest as evidence of the nursery garden of Headington Hill Hall).**

Page 25

Para 1

Insert **"Dairy lodge is visually prominent at the foot of the cutting on Headington Road."**

Para 3.

Strongly modelled stone bridge piers with decorative finials, designed with short span crossing the footpath. Amend first sentence to read "The Headington Road footbridge (formerly also a carriage bridge) was designed by the Oxford architect William Wilkinson and further advertised

the wealth of the Morrells. **It has some artistic interest with rusticated stone piers with decorative finials, an egg and dart motif on the sides of the bridge and parapets of ironwork including a diamond and wheel motif. A second, shorter, span crosses the raised footway.**"

Page 26

After final para. Insert "Parking on Cheney Lane Use of Cheney Lane for car parking has a negative impact on views along the lane and its character as an historic country lane.

Page 27

Amend text to read "Impact of Schools' traffic Local people report that traffic created by parents delivering children to schools in the area causes serious problems through congestion **on Pullens Lane** during the schools rush hours."

Under Bus Stops and street furniture. Amend text to read "**The bus shelter on the south side of Headington Road has recently been moved away from the fronts of private houses, removing an area of untidy street furniture and reducing the crowding and littering that was affecting a narrow section of pavement.** ~~The bus shelter on the south side of Headington Road is located outside private houses at a point where the pavement narrows. It is heavily used, as a result of the number of students and school children using the buses to and from this point and is often a focus of littering, as well as creating a crowded space on the pavement.~~"

After final para add "**Condition of the raised walkway: The stone wall retaining the raised walkway was noted as being in poor condition and in need of maintenance to remove self-sown saplings and to consolidate the verge. The tubular metal hand rail that runs along the edge of the walkway is also considered to be of poor quality and either in need of repair and maintenance or of replacement with a more sympathetic alternative.**"

Despite street lighting the Lane is rather dark at night, which with public park to one side and playing fields on the other, may lead to a sense of insecurity at night. (score relates to insecurity) (-2) **(Add issue after final paragraph to identify the impact of lack of street lighting on Cheney Lane on the feeling of insecurity. Include a note on the tension between providing additional street lighting and maintaining the character of the lane).**

Page 31

Amend para 1 to read "The development of the New Teaching and Library Building for Oxford Brookes University will change the outlook from the enclave by raising the skyline of institutional buildings to the east seen looking outward from the enclave. Local people have expressed concern over potential impacts from loss of light, odour, noise and light pollution, although the scheme has sought to mitigate these. ~~The building is currently under construction and an appraisal of the change of character to the enclave will need to be made following its completion and after time for its assimilation with its surroundings.~~ The development highlights the tensions created through juxtaposition of educational institutions, involving large buildings and vibrant uses, with tranquil residential areas, which are inherent issue to the conservation area."

Reason: Reviewing the area on a five year basis is part of best practice in the management of conservation areas and does not form part of the analysis of the area's significance or issues affecting it.

Page 33

Para 7: Original large plots have allowed development of tree cover **(add note in sentence 1 large plots contribute to establishment of forest scale tree cover)**.

Page 34

Para 2

High Wall noted for having a formal relationship with the Lane due to its forecourt and formal gateway. Pullens Gate relationship of forecourt to the road and former barn with gable to the road **(add note highlighting the formal spatial relationship of High Wall to PL)**.

Page 37

Para 1

Houses standing in clearings and well lit against dark/shaded lane due to trees at front of plot **(add note regarding trees at front of plot on PL and JSL)**

Para 8

Note High Wall in heather brick with flush casements **(add detail to description of High Wall)**.

Page 39

Para 2

A number of typos identified to amend. Amend final sentence to read "The designation of the conservation area in 1977 can be viewed as a step taken to preserve the low density of development in the area and Victorian and Edwardian houses with their **landscape garden** settings, as well as to restrict the impact of institutional development in the area, **particularly the generation of additional traffic.**"

Para 3, sentence 5, amend to read "**Local residents report that use** Use of the lane for coaches and taxis delivering students to Cotuit Hall ~~is also reported to have~~ **has** increased since its change of ownership."

Page 40 (Poor Condition of Pullens Lane South)

Para 3, amend text to read "The road surface has deteriorated considerably and as a result of a prolonged period without adequate **longterm** maintenance and as a result of increasing use by motorised traffic.

Page 42

These character statements have been prepared with the assistance of local residents using the Oxford Character Assessment Toolkit. They provides further detail for each of the streets/lanes on the historic and architectural interest and the positive features of its character, as well as highlighting issues that are of concern to **local residents** ~~the community~~.

Page 43

Enclosure Point 2, amend text to read

Pullens Lane South (from Headington Road to Cuckoo Lane) has little overlooking ~~The long stretch of road without any overlooking, and is visually separate from the northern part of the lane by a sharp bend, which followed by a sharp bend at the southern end of the lane~~

creates a **transition gap** between the activity of Headington Road and the main area of development along Pullens Lane **North**, which further emphasises this transition.

Tranquility

Amend text to read “The tranquil character of the lane reflects its **original** intended development as a high class residential area.

Page 46

Amend typo in para. 1 “Rye St Antony”

Para 2: Marked contrast between areas of shade and light (**add note in to describe contrast of tree tunnel with lighter areas, e.g. Pullens Field**).

Page 47

Amend para 2 “~~This section of road is a surviving element of Cuckoo Lane, probably as it was after realignment or widening in the mid-19th century, following enclosure of the open fields. This section of Pullens lane (commonly referred to as Pullens Lane South) was recorded as a strip of land belonging to Magdalen College on the Corpus Christi map of 1605 and was later recorded as freebord, suggesting it may have formerly formed part of the property that was otherwise sold by the college to Sir Christopher Brome in the 16th century. As such it provides evidence of the former arable landscape of Headington Hill and the medieval pattern of land ownership.~~

Amend para 2, sentence 3 to read “Whilst heavy use of the lane by pedestrians and vehicles during the morning and afternoon has also increased to a point where there is severe congestion at certain **times** of day.”

Amend para. 4 to read “The condition of the road at Pullens Lane South has been an ongoing cause for concern since, at least 2005 and has deteriorated considerably since that time as a result of the road’s inadequate construction for present traffic loads **despite remedial works** , and the lack of necessary maintenance. Recent use by construction traffic has exacerbated this problem.”

Page 48

Add after final para. “**The security gates controlling access to the Pullens Lane allotments were noted as having an industrial character that detracts from the rural character of this part of the lane or of the green space of the allotments.**”

Page 52

Add after final paragraph “**Increased use of domestic security lighting has also detracted from the area’s woodland character**”

Page 61

Add after final para. “ The introduction of ‘street’ lighting to Cuckoo Lane west is necessary for security of users of the lane at night, but is considered to detract from the semi-rural character of the lane. This illustrates one of the tensions of conserving the significance of the conservation area and providing for the requirements of modern city life.

Page 62

Add Character Assessments to list of sources.

Map 2

Change title to "Map 2 Predominant activity in the Conservation Area"

Check Legend for typos.

Add Religious Institution to legend and identify the Convent of the Assumption