



City of Oxford

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Headington Hill Conservation Area

Headington Hill stands to the east of the Cherwell Valley, and when viewed from the west, its hillside forms a green landscape background to the historic University City in its valley setting. The hillside also provides a number of vantage points giving good views down to the City's skyline. The northern part of the hill, between Marston Road and Headley Way and above Cuckoo Lane, comprises a residential area originally laid out in late Victorian times on a grand scale but subsequently much divided. The southern part of the hill contains the public parks of Headington Hill and South Park, together with schools and the Oxford Polytechnic. The retention of trees and characteristic buildings, the provision of public footpaths and the protection of viewpoints, together with their 'view cones' looking down on Oxford, are seen as important elements for the preservation of the character of the area and for the enhancement of its public enjoyment. The Council, therefore, in seeking to conserve and enhance its character, designated the Headington Hill Conservation Area on 24th October, 1977.

Objectives of Conservation. When considering town planning applications for development within the area, the Council will be guided by the following principles.

(1) Non-residential uses will not generally be approved within the area to the north of the line of Cuckoo Lane. Certain special residential uses might be acceptable providing they are compatible with the use of surrounding properties and providing they generate no more traffic than would have arisen from ordinary residential development.

(2) Any new residential development should be compatible with the existing character of the area in the way of space about, and between, buildings. The actual density of development will be dictated by the form of development proposed and be constrained by its potential traffic generation, physical impact on the surrounding area and on important trees.

(3) Any new buildings proposed should be in keeping with the heights of existing buildings and not break through the general line of tree tops, and are therefore unlikely to exceed three storeys.

(4) The design of new buildings should be of a high standard, and control of building materials will be reserved. Materials should not be of a type that 'stand out' from a distance.

(5) Outline planning applications will not be considered in the area unless sufficient sketches to show the character of the proposed development are submitted.

(6) Substantial extensions to, or intensification of, the existing institutional uses within the area north of the line of Cuckoo Lane, will not be approved, except where it is clear that no additional traffic will be generated over and above that which would arise from alternative ordinary residential development and where they otherwise comply with these principles.

(7) Whenever possible the generation of further traffic in the area, and particularly on roads not fully up to Highway Authority Standards, should be avoided.

(8) The Development of any site shall take account of the existing trees and new development take place in a way which will preserve trees worthy of retention. Applications shall include a tree survey indicating the size, situation, species and spread of all trees on the site. New trees shall be planted by developers when and where the Local Planning Authority sees fit.

(9) The Town and Country Amenities Act, 1974, requires anyone intending to cut down, top, lop, uproot, damage or destroy any tree in a Conservation Area to give the Council 6 weeks notice of their intention (in writing). Where appropriate the Council will use this control to ensure that existing trees shall not be removed or destroyed. Planting and re-planting will be required or encouraged as a positive step for the enhancement of the area, and to maintain the green hillside as seen from the west.

(10) Illuminated advertisements or signs of any nature will not be approved anywhere in this area, and other non-illuminated signs shall be kept to a minimum and sited in unobtrusive positions.

(11) Developers will be required to co-operate in providing a network of public footpaths and open spaces as indicated on plan No. TP/791/B; the appropriate authority being prepared to accept the dedication of such areas and responsibility for their maintenance. (The information contained on TP/791/B is reproduced upon the map in this folder).

(12) Account will be taken of viewpoints looking down to the historic City of Oxford, and care taken to see that their 'view cones' are not obscured by new development or planting. These viewpoints will be connected by footpaths and, where appropriate, form small public or private open spaces.

(13) Anyone wishing to demolish an unlisted building of more than 115 cubic metres, within a conservation area, must first apply for listed building consent to the Council, under the Town and Country Amenities Act 1974. In considering any application account will be taken of the importance of the building to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and, if its site is proposed for redevelopment, the quality of the proposed development. In addition, statutory listed buildings are subject to strict controls on demolition, extensions or alteration in any way whatever.

(14) In compliance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1971, where an application for any development is made in this area which may affect the character or appearance of the area, the Council shall:-

- (a) display on site for 7 days, and publish in the local newspaper, a notice of this development; and make available for public inspection details of the application;
- (b) wait 21 days beginning with the date of publication to allow for objections and representations to be made;
- (c) take these representations into account when considering the application.

The Council is well aware that successful conservation cannot be achieved by the use of town planning and development controls only. Much must depend on the goodwill and co-operation between those involved; the land and property owner, the statutory authorities, local residents and their associations, the individual and the planning authority. It is hoped that this co-operation will be obtained since it is in their mutual interest to ensure that an environment of great value is not only maintained and preserved, but enhanced. The Planning Department will be pleased to advise on matters affecting conservation and buildings at any time.

The Statement of Principles adopted for the Headington Hill Conservation Area was approved by Council on 28th November, 1977.

Douglas Murray, Dip. T.P., A.R.I.B.A., M.R.T.P.I., F.R.S.A.,
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Map extract taken from O.S. 6 inch to the mile map of Oxford.
Printed by City of Oxford (Offset Litho). January 1978.

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New Headington Hill footpaths

-  Proposed
-  Existing links



Headington Hill Conservation Area : designated 24.10.77

CAPO drawing no. TP 791 A