

24/01209/DISC UPPER HEYFORD DESIGN CODES

Urban Design Comments

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Introduction

These comments relate to an amended Design Code submission for the approved development 18/00825/HYBRID at Heyford Park. Pertinent Conditions include:

- Condition 6, which requires the Design Code to be submitted and approved prior to the determination of any reserved matters applications.
- Condition 4, which expects the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and documents which include: Parameter Plans (September 2020); Design and Access Statement (March 2020); and Green Infrastructure Strategy (March 2020)

Relevant Policy and design guidance includes:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Chapter 12 Achieving Well-Designed Places, which amongst other things expects development to function well and add to the overall quality of the area; be visually attractive; sympathetic to local character and history; and maintain a strong sense of place. The NPPF is clear that development that is not well designed should be refused.
- The National Design Guide (MHCLG, 2021), which sets out ten characteristics of well-designed places.
- Building for a Healthy Life (Homes England, 2020) and companion document Streets for a Healthy Life.
- Cherwell Local Plan 2011-31 which expects development at Upper Heyford to meet high quality design standards.
- The Cherwell Residential Design Guide SPD (2018), which explains what high quality design means in practical terms.

The following submission documents have been considered

- Phase 11, 13, 16, 17, 39, 40 Design Code, October 2024, Revision B
- Heyford Design Code CDC Comments Table with A2 Response

Appraisal

Object: The proposed design coding includes details of layout and appearance that does not reflect design policy and guidance. The code advocates design that would be unacceptable if developed further as reserved matters applications. It is also noted that there is inconsistency of coding language, plan descriptions and references throughout the document.

The comments below are offered as guidance and are not exhaustive.

Section 1 Introduction

- Page 8 Text: Change 'Design codes serve as detailed design guidance...' to 'design rules'. The codes need to be clear, specific and unambiguous.
- Page 8 Diagram: Suggest dates and document references are added for clarity.
- Page 9 Example code box bottom left corner: Suggest this example needs to be a Mandatory Code 'M'. Suggest Mandatory/ Non-Mandatory should be described as follows: 'Mandatory elements of which there is no flexibility...Departure from mandatory elements is only

acceptable when agreed with CDC. All other non-mandatory guidance is important and must be taken account of when developing scheme designs. If proposals do not accord with this type of guidance, clear justification must be provided, and it must be shown that the alternative design solution will in no way undermine the key design objectives expressed within the code.'

- Page 9: add information about how the various plans and diagrams should be used.
- Page 9 summary table bottom right: Second column suggest 'mandatory' coding needs to be labelled 'mandatory' rather than 'coding'.

Section 2 Site Analysis

- Page 17 first para: 'our design code'. Please reference the document, do you mean the approved March 2020 DAS?
- Page 17 first para: 'these areas are outlined in the masterplan' Please provide reference to specific masterplan/document. Is this a reference to the masterplan in the approved DAS?
- Pages 18 – 21: if this is intended to be a reprisal of the principles set out in the approved DAS please use the same text/ images.
- Pages 18-21: Please remove the photographs because they are generic and do not respond to character.
- Pages 18-21: Please remove materials palette – suggest this is new coding and should be included in separate section or with each phase.

Section 3 Additional Coding

- I suggest this section is labelled 'Strategic Coding'.
- Page 23 Routes Plan: This plan could be developed further and labelled as the 'Strategic Regulating Plan' Mandatory.
- Page 24 Para 2: 'Our design code aligns meticulously with Heyford Park standards' please reference the standards.
- Page 24 Street types: please add some detail about the built form that define these street spaces - frontages, enclosure, height to width ratio, boundary treatments etc..
- Page 24 Secondary Road: 'These roads are purposefully designed to resemble primary vehicle routes, even with reduced planted verges and direct driveway access. This approach is intended to alert drivers that they are entering a residential area.' This doesn't make sense.
- Page 24 Shared Surface/Lanes/ Mews and Tertiary Street/Private Drive. I'm not clear what the intended difference is between the typologies described. Suggest the shared surfaced streets could be simply characterised as 1) Mews Streets 2) Edge Lanes.
- Page 25 Highway surface materials palette: this is too generic to be useful within a code document. Consideration should also be given to footpaths etc.
- Page 25 Traffic Calming: Suggest this code needs to be Mandatory.
- Page 25 Traffic Calming: Review to ensure proposals are inherent to the design – if specific code is needed maybe title 'Pedestrian priority/low speed neighbourhoods' or something similar.
- Page 25 Traffic Calming: Suggest considering Copenhagen crossings for pedestrian/ cycle priority at junctions.
- Page 25 Adoption Arrangements: I'm not sure if this is a design code or just reiterating that OCC standards have been followed? Either way remove the word 'potential' from the second para.

- Page 26- 27 Highway Road Types: Please re-name section and diagrams 'Streets' rather than roads because they take in more than just the carriageway.
- Page 26- 27 Highway Road Types: Remove proliferation of dormers on sections and plans – dormers should be used sparingly as per CDC design guidance.
- Page 26- 27 Highway Road Types: There is a general lack of containment to the streets. I would expect greater containment for internal streets in particular with a looser arrangement to the development edge. There are no garages/ car ports/ cycle storage/bin stores shown on the drawings – these could be used to close the gaps between buildings.
- Page 26 Primary Road Plan: 3m footway – how is pedestrian and cycle movement managed and prioritised over vehicle movement?
- Page 26 Primary Road Plan: Reference to 'Landscaped Boulevards – what is the spacing of trees/ how will they relate to lighting requirements?
- Page 26 Primary Road Plan: Any consideration of building height to provide containment to the very wide street?
- Page 26 Primary Road Plan: Suggest vehicle crossovers are reduced by grouping on plot parking and using a variety of parking typologies including off plot.
- Page 2 Secondary Road Plan: On-plot parking perpendicular parking in front of the building line is not supported because it results in disjointed building lines, a lack of containment, wide streets and car dominated frontages. If perpendicular or chevron parking is considered necessary this should be off plot, fully integrated into the street scene and public realm design.
- Page 26 Secondary Road Plan: Parking laybys that result in deflections for pedestrians not supported.
- Page 26 Secondary Road Plan: Tree planting seems to entirely be within private front gardens so cannot be relied upon. Suggest planting within build outs and integrated with public realm parking etc.
- Page 26 Secondary Road Plan: Left-over spaces to the side of buildings where public/private ownership is unclear is not supported.
- Page 27 Shared Surface/Lanes: In addition to other comments the mews/ coach house is likely to require some private outdoor space. Parking needs to be fully integrated into public realm design with good levels of containment.
- Page 27 Tertiary Street/Private Drives: In addition to other comments, I suggest visitor parking bays should be created with localised informal road widening rather than formal/engineered bays that eat into open space.
- Page 28 Highways Coding Table: The table doesn't offer much more than OCC's technical requirements. It should be reviewed taking into account all place making comments above and labelled as mandatory.
- Page 29 Coding Box: All of the points are required by existing guidance – the code should be providing more specific standards, labelled as mandatory.
- Page 30 Parking Typologies: This section does not offer anything over OCC's existing technical standards.
- Page 30 Parking Typologies: 'to support good urban design, allocated spaces are provided (e.g. space in front of a garage for reason of road safety) this will enable the number of unallocated spaces to be reduced).' How does this support good urban design? CDC's design guide page 75 says: 'The allocation of car parking spaces (on-ploy or in communal areas) reduced flexibility and is less efficient in meeting overall car parking needs.'

- Page 30 Parking Typologies: 'A limited number of rear parking court yards are acceptable provided that they are actively overlooked by dwellings to provide natural surveillance' Please amend text to reflect CDC design guide page 77, which states: 'Communal parking areas or parking courtyards to the rear of properties are the least preferred solution. Although rear parking reduces the visual impact of cars on the street it also reduces human activity on the street and large rear courtyards can be bleak spaces.'
- Page 31 Image 1: Image is not of a parking square.
- Page 31 Image 2: Image is not of a landscaped parking court.
- Page 31 Image 3: Poor example of parallel parking – no protection to landscaping. I suggest best practice examples such as those in 'Streets for a Healthy Life' are considered.
- Page 31 Image 4: Perpendicular – poor example resulting in large area of hardstanding review 'Streets for a Healthy Life'.
- Page 31 Image 5: Hardstanding– On plot parking in front of the building line is generally not supported.
- Page 31 Image 6: I'm not sure how a detached garage contributes to the quality of design?
- Page 31: Internal Garage: The image illustrates frontage parking including consecutive frontage parking, which is sub-optimal.
- Page 31: Please ensure table reflects comments, CDC and other best practice guidance for high quality public realm design.
- Page 32 box at bottom left corner titles 'as a guide': I'm not sure this adds anything beyond existing guidance/ requirements however it should be labelled as mandatory code rather than guidance. Suggest last bullet replace 'shed' with 'secure cycle store'. Please specify code requirements for visitor cycle parking i.e. locations, shelter, overlooking, as part of mobility hubs? Including coding for apartments – cycle parking should be located close to the main entrance as part of the main building footprint.
- Page 32 Recycling and refuse: This is general technical requirements rather than design coding. The coding needs to at the very least reflect CDC's design guide which states amongst other things that if bin stores are visible from the street they should be of a simple design, screened by vegetation or enclosed by walls of the same material as the property.'
- Page 32 images bottom right corner: These do not reflect CDC design guidance as above – acceptable precedent images need to be used.
- Page 33 first para: 'Consideration of the visual impact that sustainable measures may have on the development have been considered from the inception of the design' Replace 'have been' with 'will be'. Suggest solar panel design needs to be coded: including roof orientation, integration with roof form and materials.
- Page 33 – Sustainability: Coding should include measures to allow for flexible uses/adaptability, building orientation in relation to natural light/heating and cooling, tree planting for shading and shelter, integration of SuDS, sustainable building materials.
- Page 34 – Public Open Space: 'The design emphasises inclusivity...' change to 'The design will emphasise inclusivity...'
- Page 34 – Street Scape: 'The streetscape is carefully curated' change to 'The streetscape will be carefully curated'.
- Page 34 – Biodiversity: 'Biodiversity is enhanced..' change to 'Biodiversity will be enhanced...'. 'The development aims' replace aims with 'will'.
- Page 34 – Connectivity: 'Connectivity is...' replace 'is' with 'will be'. 'are designed' change to 'will be designed'. 'The layout promotes' change to 'The layout will promote'.

- Page 34 – Play and Recreation: ‘The development is designed’ replace ‘is’ with ‘will be’. ‘These include’ change to ‘These will include’.
- Page 34 – Sustainable Drainage: ‘SuDS are’ replace ‘are’ with ‘will be’. ‘Include swale and attenuation basins where appropriate’ delete ‘where appropriate’ and add ‘rain gardens’.
- Page 35 – Sustainable Drainage: Add ‘raingardens’ replace ‘incorporated’ with ‘integrated as part of the public realm design’ delete ‘to engineer design’.
- Page 36 and 37 Typical soft landscape palette text: Replace ‘should’ with ‘will’ throughout.
- Page 37 typical images: These don’t add anything to the design code and should be removed.
- Page 38 first para: reference to a plan on page 81 – this doesn’t seem to be correct.
- Page 38 second para: states that the phase plans are ‘indicative’, however they are labelled as ‘parameter plans’. It should be clear whether these plans are illustrative or code plans. It should also be noted that the plans diverge from those plans/ design principles presented in the approved DAS document.
- Page 38 General Urban Design Principles: Reference is made to ‘the plan opposite’ there is no plan opposite.
- Page 38 Architectural Design: replace ‘aspire to’ with ‘will’. ‘our architectural design approach’ change to ‘the architectural design approach...’ ‘This includes’ change to ‘This will include’ Suggest this section is Mandatory Code.
- Page 38 Building details: suggest rather than code this is a summary of the coding that will follow within each phase.
- Page 38 Development Block Principles: Reference to ‘Regulating Plan’ reference? Reference to rear courtyards needs to at the very least reflect CDC’s guidance. Agreed code elements of this section should be ‘Mandatory’.
- Page 38 Legibility and Wayfinding: Suggest this is labelled as ‘Mandatory’.
- Page 38 Key Corners: ‘Key corners identified on the Urban Design Principles Plan’ Please reference the plan location. Remove text stating, ‘precise number and location of these are subject to detailed design during any Reserved Matters Application.’
- Page 39 Urban/Built form. This text reads as an introduction to the proceeding phasing section – therefore I’m not sure why it is in a code box.
- Page 39 Key outward facing frontages. ‘Designs for these frontages should be approached using composite street elevations. Change to ‘Designs for all frontages will be...’
- Page 39 Landmark Buildings. I suggest landmark buildings don’t necessarily need to look obviously different to any of the other buildings – there placement and design is important however they will need to form part of a composition.
- Page 39 Materials. ‘Preference should be given to a limited palette of materials’ amend to ‘Preference will be given to a limited palette of high-quality materials.’
- Page 39 Separation. Please reference the document where these typical separation distances have been taken from.

Sections 4-9 Parcel 11,13,16,17,39 and 40

- Please clarify is these are ‘Parcels’ or ‘Phases’ the document uses both references interchangeably.
- Generally, a location key plan in the top corner of each page would be helpful.
- Pages 43, 55, 67, 79, 91 and 103 state: ‘Below is an extract of the approved parameter plan and alongside is the proposed parameter plan’ Calling both plans ‘parameter plans’ is just confusing please refer to the new plans as ‘Regulating Plan’.

- Page 43, 55,67,79,91 and 103 Plan/Key: I suggest the movement routes are illustrated and shown as: 1) XX Street (Vehicle, Pedestrian, Cycle) 2) Pedestrian and Cycle Route 3) Pedestrian Route. Surrounding route hierarchy should also be identified for context.
- Pages 43, 55, 67, 79, 91 and 103 Key: Delete the words 'potential' and 'indicative'.
- Pages 44, 45, 68, 69, 80, 81,104 and 105 Plan: Remove routes from plans.
- Pages 44, 45, 55, 56, 67, 68, 79, 80, 91, 92, 104 and 105 Plan: Suggest this information should also be included on a combined Regulating Plan – is a separate plan needed?
- Page 46, 58, 69, 82, 94 and 105 Landscape Text: 'Landscape Principles' remove the word 'Principles' because this is Code.
- Pages 46, 58, 69, 82, 94 and 105 Plan: Suggest the majority of this information should also be included on a combined regulating plan/ the plan duplicates some information on other plans such as frontages and routes.
- Page 47, 59, 70, 83, 94 and 107 Sections: A key plan on the page would be useful.
- Code Summary Tables: Needs to be reviewed to respond to comments.

Sections 4 Parcel 11

- Page 43 Plan: The plan does not reflect the layout shown on page 79 of the approved DAS – the DAS plan should be referred to with divergence explained and agreed.
- Page 43 Plan/Key: I suggest the movement routes are illustrated and shown as: 1) XX Street (Vehicle, Pedestrian, Cycle) 2) Pedestrian and Cycle Route 3) Pedestrian Route. Surrounding route hierarchy should also be identified for context.
- Page 44 Density text: Delete 'A variety of densities are envisioned within Parcel 11' Suggest starting the para 'Medium and higher density will reflect...'
- Page 44 Key: Remove 15-20dph, remove 21-30dph.
- Page 45 Building Heights text: Delete: 'Building heights will vary across parcel 11'.
- Page 45 Plan: suggest western and southern boundaries up to 4 storeys (approved param plan allows for up to 13m)
- Page 45 Plan: Amend to reflect plan page 78 of approved DAS.
- Page 46 Landscape Text: the text on the left-hand side should be clearly identified as Mandatory code.
- Page 46 last bullet: '...informal elsewhere to reflect the street hierarchy' The street hierarchy is relatively formal/urban in this location – I suggest this needs to be reconsidered.
- Page 46 text: suggest some additional text relating to the north-east corner space – purpose, character etc...
- Page 46 Plan: Amend to reflect layout plan page 78 of approved DAS.
- Page 47 Sections: crop sections to just building frontage, remove building detail.
- Page 47 Section A: Is the chain link fence existing or proposed?
- Page 48 Plan: Amend to reflect layout plan page 78 of approved DAS.
- Page 48 Plan and Key: This information can be included on a combined regulating plan – single lines identifying Primary Route, Secondary Route, Tertiary Route, Cycle/Pedestrian Route and Pedestrian Routes.
- Page 48 Text: Delete: 'Further typologies such as private drives and mews locations are not defined at this stage but are illustrated alongside as possible locations.'
- Page 49 Text and Diagrams: This section needs to reflect and build upon the character principle already established in the DAS – page 78 Heyford Bespoke and Page 80 Trident North. Built form principles need to reflect the CDC Residential Design Guide.
- Page 49: Statements such as 'mix of materials' are too generic to be useful.

Sections 5 Parcel 13

- Page 55 and 58 Plans: The plans do not reflect the layout shown on page 87 of the approved DAS – the DAS plan should be referred to with divergence explained and agreed.
- Page 55 Key: Various labels in the key need to be removed because they're not on the plan.
- Page 55 and 57: Are stand-alone plans necessary to illustrate a single density and single height?
- Page 60 Plan: Is a stand-alone plan necessary to illustrate a single road?
- Page 60 Key: The road should not be labelled as 'private' because it provides access to existing residential areas to the north.
- Page 61 Text and Diagrams: This section needs to reflect and build upon the character principle already established in the DAS – page 86 Officer Housing. Built form principles need to reflect the CDC Residential Design Guide.

Section 6 Parcel 16

- Page 67 Plan: The plan does not reflect the layout shown on page 75 of the approved DAS – the DAS plan should be referred to with any divergence explained and agreed. The proliferation of internal courtyard cul-de-sacs and staggered building lines for frontage parking is unlikely to be acceptable.
- Page 67 Plan/Key: I suggest the movement routes are illustrated and shown as: 1) XX Street (Vehicle, Pedestrian, Cycle) 2) Pedestrian and Cycle Route 3) Pedestrian Route. Surrounding route hierarchy should also be identified for context.
- Page 68 Density text: This needs to be written in plain English: I.e. densities will need to respond to adjacent settlement and public open space – then explain how they will respond.
- Page 68 Key/Plan: How does the key correspond to the plan – there are four colour bands in the key and two on the plan, none of which seem to colour match. I'm not convinced the two density ranges on the plan are realistic/ helpful.
- Page 69 Plan: What is the rationale for 3 stories to the perimeter of the top left parcel? What is the rationale for three stories through the bottom left parcel? What is the rationale for a triangle of 3 stories within the right parcel?
- Page 70 Plan: Proposals to reflect plan page 75 of approved DAS unless otherwise agreed.
- Page 71 Section: SuDS pond seems an incredibly deep crater. Suggest more coding is needed for SuDS design in general. Amongst other things this should cover integration with the landscape i.e. varies bank profiles, combination of permanent and seasonally wet areas, design of inlets and outlets etc.
- Page 71 Plan and Key: This information can be included on a combined regulating plan – single lines identifying Primary Route, Secondary Route, Tertiary Route, Cycle/Pedestrian Route and Pedestrian Routes. Please ensure all perimeter routes have 'weak links' for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Page 73 Text and Diagrams: This section needs to reflect and build upon the character principle already established in the DAS – page 74 Heyford South Rural Transition. Built form principles need to reflect the CDC Residential Design Guide. Amongst other things chimneys need to be integral to the building both in terms of construction, location and preferably working either providing a route for smoke, ventilation etc.; Dormers can be used occasionally, but overuse can disrupt the roofline, they should be well proportioned and slim line.

Section 7 Parcel 17

- Page 79 Plan: The plan does not reflect the layout shown on page 75 of the approved DAS – the DAS plan should be referred to with any divergence explained and agreed. Cul-de-sacs

and staggered building lines for frontage parking is unlikely to be acceptable. I suggest that the related Sports Park needs to be included.

- Page 79 Plan/Key: I suggest the movement routes are illustrated and shown as: 1) XX Street (Vehicle, Pedestrian, Cycle) 2) Pedestrian and Cycle Route 3) Pedestrian Route. Surrounding route hierarchy should also be identified for context.
- Page 80 First Paragraph: The reference to Camp Road is a copy and paste from parcel 11 and makes no sense.
- Page 80 Second Paragraph: This is a copy and paste from parcel 16 and also makes sense because the southern edge will abut a sports park.
- Page 80 Key/Plan: How does the key correspond to the plan – there are four colour bands in the key and two on the plan, none of which seem to colour match. I'm not convinced the two density ranges on the plan are realistic/ helpful.
- Page 81 Text: Dormers should not be relied upon for visual variation – please reflect Cherwell Residential Design SPD.
- Page 81 Plan: The entire parcel is up to 2.5 storey – is a stand-alone plan necessary to illustrate this?
- Page 82 Plan: Plan to reflect plan on page 75 of the approved DAS to include the sports park, which provides the landscape setting to this parcel.
- Page 83 Section: Please crop section to frontages only.
- Page 83 Plan and Key: This information can be included on a combined regulating plan – single lines identifying Primary Route, Secondary Route, Tertiary Route, Cycle/Pedestrian Route and Pedestrian Routes. Please ensure all perimeter routes have 'weak links' for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Page 85 Text and Diagrams: This section needs to reflect and build upon the character principle already established in the DAS – page 74 Heyford South Rural Transition. Built form principles need to reflect the CDC Residential Design Guide. Amongst other things chimneys need to be integral to the building both in terms of construction, location and preferably working either providing a route for smoke, ventilation etc.; Dormers can be used occasionally, but overuse can disrupt the roofline, they should be well proportioned and slim line.

Section 8 Parcel 39

- Page 91 Plan: Western parcel frontage should be in-line with the existing frontage to the north. The parcel should wrap around the northern and southern sides retaining adequate space for existing and proposed landscaping. The pedestrian route extends around the front of a proposed parking area – the parking area should form part of the public realm with a safe pedestrian route behind this. Please remove the 'indicative road' there is no need for roads within a parcel that is surrounded by roads on three sides. Please remove the focal point and landmark buildings – the entire composition of buildings will need to be well considered to integrate with existing built form.
- Page 92 Density Text and Plan: I think the density needs to reflect existing dwellings adjacent the plot – it's unhelpful to talk about density on such a small plot.
- Page 93 Heights Text: Three stories would not be appropriate because the immediate context is two stories.
- Page 93 Heights Plan: Suggest a stand-alone plan is not necessary.
- Page 94 Landscape Plan: See comments in relation to Page 91 plan. Fussy strips of buffer/hedge planting between parking bays would be difficult to maintain.
- Page 95 Section: The section shows an unnecessary level of architectural detail, which is not approved.

- Page 96 Text: The text is generic and does not relate to the parcel.
- Page 96 Plan: The plan is unnecessary and can be combined with an overall regulating plan.
- Page 97 Text and Diagrams: This section needs to reflect and build upon the character principle already established in the DAS – page 78 Heyford Bespoke. In particular the bespoke approach needs to reflect the site's residential context. The house type illustrations are generic and derivative – in our post application meeting we discussed how the character, proportions etc.. of former officer housing on Dow Street and Carswell Circus should be considered.

Section 9 Parcel 40

- Page 103,106, 108 Plan, 107 Section: The plan and section does not reflect the layout shown on page 81 of the approved DAS. Considerations need to include frontage to McGuire Drive and private/ communal space for apartments. I'm not convinced a public footpath will be achievable/desirable depending on agreed layout. The DAS plan should be referred to with divergence explained and agreed.
- Page 104Text: I suggest the entire site area could be higher density.
- Page 104 Plan: The key doesn't correspond with the plan.
- Page1095 Text and Diagrams: This section needs to reflect and build upon the character principle already established in the DAS – page 80 Trident North. Built form principles need to reflect the CDC Residential Design Guide. Statements such as 'mix of materials are too generic to be useful within a code.