

THE DESIGN RESPONSE DOCUMENT - MAY 2015





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Density, Phasing and Heights

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WOODSTOCK -A DESIGN RESPONSE

Comments received from consultees in relation to the previous masterplan -

Summary

"Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people" Para 56 NPPF

It requires the proposals to establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, optimise the potential of the site to accomodate development, respond to local character and history, create safe and accessible environments.

The need for recognisable design identity that reflects Woodstock, creates a sense of place, and is 'good 21st Century design'."

Cherwell District Council Urban Design Consultant

1.0 | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our response to comments received and what we have done to address comments -

This Design Response Document has been prepared by West Waddy ADP to *comprehensively and positively* respond to all Urban Design related comments that have been made during the consultation undertaken for the proposed sustainable extension to Woodstock.

The Design Response *addresses and understands* those urban design comments received from Cherwell District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council – including their Urban Design Consultants, as well as comments received from other organisations and bodies such as Historic England (previously English Heritage), The International Council on Monuments and Sites UK (ICOMOS), Sport England the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE).

We have made *notable and compelling* changes to the framework masterplan for Woodstock East to address all points raised.

Our intention was clear at the outset and....

....we have listened

....we have understood

....we have designed a response that we feel is the right answer for this special place.

Siting alongside this document and submitted to Cherwell District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council are the following documents that *clearly and robustly* demonstrate how all technical issues have been addressed and how Woodstock East will be an exemplary sustainable development:

- Sustainability Statement
 May 2015
- Technical Response to Consultation – May 2015
- Blenheim Palace Legacy Document – May 2015

The structure of our Design Response flows in such a way that the comments received are set out along side our response to these comments. In addition we have highlighted how we have looked to *react to and respond to* the received comments within the masterplan framework design.

Some of this information is illustrative, - We make no excuses for this because we feel that it helps to *explain and communicate* our intentions for the way this sustainable development could unfold over future generations.

This has been a *positive and productive* process and whilst we do not agree with all of comments received, we do feel that the integration of key themes has helped to create a truly exemplar masterplan which we believe presents the best option for the future development of Woodstock.

Whilst we have *integrated and developed* many of the ideas received over the consultation process within many themes and subject areas, there were a number of **Key Themes** that ran throughout the comments received.





These Key Themes were;

Connectivity – creating a well connected, legible place with a clear mental map;

Landscape – creating a landscape led masterplan, based on a network of green spaces and taking inspiration from the Parkland at Blenheim Palace and the influence of Capability Brown;

Character – creating a masterplan which is more in character with Woodstock and the scale, form and character of existing spaces and places within the town. This helps to create and identity and a sense of place;

Heritage – ensuring that the masterplan responds sensitively and appropriately to the historic constraints including the proximity to the World Heritage Site and the setting of the Scheduled Monument which is located in the centre of the masterplan.

May 2015

Placemaking - At Woodstock East we are aiming to create a **special place**. This is **not just another housing development but an exemplary, high quality and memorable place** that reflects and is respectful to its connection with Woodstock and the World Heritage Site at Blenheim Palace.

This place is a **legacy** for Blenheim Palace. It is supported and enriched by the promise of **long-term investment** and **stewardship** from the Estate. This place reflects the already respected brand that Blenheim Palace has established nationally and it is useful at this point to look at Blenheim Palace's positioning statement;

"With its own special place in Britain's history, Blenheim Palace is a true national treasure, a living and enriching experience which brings wonder, delight and discovery to all those who visit, time and time again."



This place, this masterplan is no different. It will be a special place. It has a relationship with a national treasure and can reveal a lost treasure in the Scheduled Monument. Most importantly it will be a place to live which, like Woodstock, is much loved and brings delight to those who spend time there.

The masterplan creates a series of **places and spaces** that are **well defined**, **logical**, **robust** and located in places that offer a clear structure to the masterplan. These places have been given notional names to help with their descriptions. In the fullness of time, these names can be amended and could be subject to a round of **public consultation**, allowing future residents to name **their** spaces and places.







As later expressed, the connectivity network is one that **'completes the jigsaw'** and these places and spaces are integral to this approach.

The **two key memorable places** within this masterplan, the places that a visitor remembers as being special; are the local centre **'Hensington Place'** and the Scheduled Monument Park – **'Woodstock Park'.**



In addition to responding to and addressing these aforementioned Key Themes, we have also developed a set of Masterplan Strategies which explain this approach and a Design Code which reinforces how this development could be imagined at future stages of the planning process.

We would suggest that the Local Authorities could attach **Planning Conditions to the grant of outline planning permission**. This would provide the **comfort in the knowledge** that a more detailed design code can be prepared and submitted at **reserved matters stage**, elaborating upon the general framework outlined within the following headings;

- Character areas
- Procurement
- Stewardship
- Landscape management
- Phasing
- The Quality of the development

It cannot be argued that the huge range of improvements in this masterplan now result in a place that:

-is exemplary;
-is well considered;

....demonstrates that it is special, has a sense of place and is not just another housing development;

....provides a legacy for the future of the town of Woodstock and Blenheim Palace.

Above all, Woodstock East represents exemplary placemaking for the benefit of present and future generations. These improvements result in a masterplan that is exemplary, well considered, which provides a sense of place and legacy for the future of the town of Woodstock - it is a special place and not just another housing development



A summary of the changes made to the masterplan; after we listened to consultee comments and integrated positive design changes to the revised masterplan scheme

1

- 1 The new primary road, '**Marlborough Drive**' creates a **legible street network** connecting all sides of the development east to west and north to south.
- 2 There is more direct north south connectivity in the centre of the development through 'Vanbrugh Square'. This route is vehicular but connects to the Oxford Road and the Shipton Road by means of a pedestrian and cycle route.
- 3 New pedestrian and cycle links **connect to existing Flemmings** Way and Hedge End from **'Hensington Place'**.
- 4 The local centre 'Hensington Place' is now expressed as a more organic and logical triangular space integrating all of the pivotal areas of the masterplan.
- 5 The 'Care Village' has been moved from fronting the Oxford Road to have a better relationship with Woodstock and is located to the west of 'Hensington Place'. This provides the opportunity to create a better two sided residential street in 'Marlborough Drive' and the entrance to the development.
- **6** The historic route of **'heh straet'** has been reinstated; running north south along the historic hedgerow.
- Improved pedestrian connectivity allows **permeability** through the north south historic hedgerow
- 8 The masterplan pulls development back away from the south edge and Oxford Road.
- Ocmmunity orchard planting and allotments to the south of the residential edge respect the assumed vista of the Scheduled Monument and reflect its agricultural nature.

- ① The transport interchange (parking area) is located closer to the Oxford Road providing better access to bus stops.
- Woodstock Park' creates a key node and community focus for the development.
- 'The Avenue' creates a tree lined walk between the sports facilities and 'Hensington Place'.
- An increased employment area to the gateway with Shipton Road offers improved & varied employment opportunities for Woodstock.
- A high quality two-sided landscape gateway is introduced along the Oxford Road.
- A green square has been introduced in 'Victory Park', this space is for formal sports connected to Woodstock by 'The Avenue'.
- ⁽⁶⁾ The **Primary School access** road has been **improved** and is now a straight direct, **legible street** which is **walkable** from the local centre.
- 'Vanbrugh Square', a residential green space provides play facilities.
- 18 New Woodstock Town Football Club and the Mixed Use Games Area (MUGA) are better integrated with the masterplan.
- 19 New pedestrian routes have been shown in the landscape edge to improve connectivity to bus stops, and to connect to the existing footpath and cycle way to the south of the Oxford Road.
- A 3km circular route around the outside of the development edge has been introduced.

PRINCIPLES OF DEVELOPMENT

Comments received from consultees in relation to the previous masterplan -

The site has to fulfil a number of roles:

- It has to be an entrance to Woodstock, signalling the town's special status;
- It has to respect the World Heritage Status of the Palace;
- It has to recognise the presence and uncertainty that the **scheduled monument** creates;
- It has to enhance the **richness of the townscape** and improve on the poor planning and design of the post war expansion of the town;
- It has to be a connected piece of the town;
- It has to reflect some of the **best formal and informal architecture** of the country, yet respond to the needs of climate change in its design.

Cherwell District Council Urban Design Consultant - March 2015



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2.0 | PRINCIPLES OF DEVELOPMENT

Our response to comments received and what we have done to address comments -

Our vision and objectives for this project have not changed from the initial submission, but they have been reinforced and explored with more rigour and integrity. The objectives have always been **to create an attractive, distinctive and integrated new quarter of Woodstock**. We believe that Woodstock East will be of such high quality that it will comprise a future Conservation Area for the town.

It will be a mixed and active neighbourhood that integrates with the surrounding landscape and built context, provides an attractive, recognisable entrance to the town, interprets and **responds to the historic context** and contributes to a regional strategy.

We would completely agree that the site has to fulfil a number of important roles as set out in the list overleaf and summarised by Cherwell District Council's Urban Design Consultant. It has always been our intention that development would follow a set of core principles, as detailed in the following section. These core principles have informed, and will continue to inform, the design of the scheme based around a central theme of creating a heritage gateway and a landscape led, well connected masterplan.

1 - HERITAGE GATEWAY

The site's relationship to the Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site and a Scheduled Monument were considered to be defining features of the site and opportunities which should be enhanced. The vision for the site is built on these heritage features and opportunities. The development aims to :

- Create an approach into the town through a landscape gateway; reflecting the World Heritage Site boundary and bring forward a recognisable two sided, high qulaity entrance to Woodstock;
- Create a Park around the Scheduled Monument providing interpretation and an insight into the towns past;
- Seamlessly integrate the development with the historic town of Woodstock.

2 - RESPECTS THE PAST

- Provide an extension to the existing heritage trail that makes interpretation and history accessible to the public;
- Protect and provide access to the Scheduled Monument.



Our 8 principles for development are the backbone to the submitted masterplan

3 - A GATEWAY

- Reflect the World Heritage Site boundary and bring forward a recognisable entrance into the historic town so that it is easily identifiable, creating a sense of place;
- Create a noticeable and attractive development that reflects Woodstock and creates a clear sense of arrival to the town.

4 - A LEGIBLE AND WELL CONNECTED PLACE

- Connect to Oxford and creating better connections between Oxford and Blenheim Palace;
- Ensure that a range of transport modes is provided for, connecting the development to Woodstock and further afield.

5 - A MIXED AND ACTIVE COMMUNITY

- Provide a mix of housing for a varied and diverse range of people, including housing for elderly persons, families and individuals;
- Create a vibrant and welcoming place with a mix of uses;
- Provide equal access to good homes for all, creating lifetime homes and providing affordable housing to contribute to the housing needs of the county;
- Provide a good range of facilities for the town including a school, open space and leisure facilities;
- Promote healthy and sustainable living through the provision of community and leisure facilities and a safe and attractive environment to live, work and play







May 2015

These principles are reinforced and further strengthened in the revised masterplan design

6 - ECONOMIC VITALITY

- Contribute to the sustainable economic growth of the town and arrest the current decline;
- Contribute to the future success of the wider area;
- Help alleviate the current, perceived or actual parking issues in the town centre by providing a transport interchange removing those cars that use free town centre parking as informal parking.



ECONOMIC VITALITY

7 - AN IDENTITY AND SENSE OF PLACE

- Have a recognisable identity as 'Woodstock' whilst having its own sense of place reflective of good 21st Century design;
- A high standard of architectural and urban design including streets, spaces and individual landmark buildings;
- A safe and attractive development integrating a network of public open spaces with high quality play spaces and safe and attractive routes to shops, schools and community facilities;
- Exemplar standards due to the involvement of the Blenheim Estate and Pye Homes, both of whom are significant long term stakeholders in the local community.



Principles

8 - ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIVE

- Efficient and environmentally conscious design that integrates with the existing landscape and general setting;
- Conserve and enhance the landscape and biodiversity on the site.



THE CONTEXT

Comments received from consultees in relation to the previous masterplan -

.....The site and its **relationship** with the Palace, Park and general landscape and townscape context seems weak.

The relationship between the built form and **wider landscape** has not been understood.

Cherwell District Council Urban Design Consultant - March 2015

May 2015

3.0|THE CONTEXT

Our response to comments received and what we have done to address comments -

This scheme is based on a clear **understanding of the surrounding context** and has, from the outset, understood the

importance of the relationship between the Palace, Park and the wider landscape.

Based on an analysis of the existing fabric of Woodstock and its surroundings, the proposal looks to **integrate with Woodstock**, completing the void that historic ownership patterns have left over time and opening this site back up to the residents of Woodstock.

The design of the proposal is heavily influenced by the existing site constraints. **The design looks to these constraints as a positive attribute**; turning them into opportunities and creating a masterplan that is site specific and unique.

By strengthening the relationship and the design of the masterplan to integrate it further with the town and its context, we feel we can help to deliver a much improved masterplan. This improved relationship can be achieved through **high quality landscaping, connectivity and placemaking**, all of which are explored in further Chapters of this document.

To further reinforce and tell the story of how this masterplan relates to its context, we have carried out further research into the existing character areas in Woodstock. By studying the existing street patterns, settlement form, building heights and densities; as well as observing the varied building typologies and layout patterns that have occurred over time, we are better informed to design a solution for Woodstock that better integrates with this character and **creates a more coherent, liveable place.**

The following Chapter summarises this analysis of existing character areas yet a large amount of the supporting background information can be found in Section 3 of the Appendices of this document.

This work is further reinforced by additional studies, which look at existing street

sections across 10 different areas of the existing town. These existing street sections can be found in Chapter 4 – 'Street Character' as well as Section 4 of the Appendices.

As highlighted in the 'Executive Summary', this masterplan has undergone a number of strategic changes throughout the consultation process. This is undeniably of benefit to the revised scheme and it is through this design work, that we believe **the relationship between the Palace, the Parkland**, the existing town, the setting and the wider landscape has been fully understood and integrated into the proposals and thus communicated throughout this document.

This is further strengthened by revisiting the **4 key themes** that have become the backbone of the revised masterplan design; **connectivity, landscape, character and heritage.** These key themes have a connection, in that they ensure that this masterplan relates to, and understands the context. Woodstock - a settlement which has grown around large open spaces which act as central focuses for the communities within Woodstock



An informal settlement built around a dense market centre core density reduces and grain becomes dispersed in later stages of development



Organic growth over time has seen the evolution of key character areas



May 2015



To gain an understanding of the town, its townscape and architectural qualities, a character assessment was carried out which broke the town into the following character areas.

Each of these areas is illustrated with a historic summary located in Section 3 of the Appendix. Plans are used to identify key townscape features and area densities, images are shown to illustrate design principles relevant to each existing character area.

These design principles and densities are used to inform the proposed design of the new development to ensure that it is in keeping with Woodstock. These key existing character areas are the DNA of Woodstock. They should be respected and used to inspire new character areas and identity within the proposed masterplan

Urban Grain

The Town Centre is the most dense and recognisable part of Woodstock. It is built around a triangular market layout, fitting to the parkland edge. Linear streets continue away from this core following the original railway line and travellers routes.

Plots increase in size towards the periphery of the settlement including the newer suburban housing built to the east where there has been less opportunity for redevelopment and densification.

The urban grain here is much more indistinctive, lending little if anything to the character of the town. Besides the denser, older part of the town, Woodstock is made up of large blocks, separated by arterial routes and intersected by cul-de-sacs and courtyards. Larger open spaces such as the recreation ground and school playing fields sit within the centre of blocks separated from the street scene by a parameter edge of modern housing.

Public uses are well integrated across the town, though activity is found mostly in the historic centre where the leisure-related retail and tourist activity is focused. Public uses including the school and Woodstock Town Football Club that require large plots are contained within larger blocks spreading activity across the town.

STREET CHARACTER

Comments received from consultees in relation to the previous masterplan -

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.....The design could relate to anywhere rather than being grounded in the attributes of Woodstock....

Cherwell District Council Urban Design Consultant - March 2015



4.0 | STREET CHARACTER

Our response to comments received and what we have done to address comments -

Our design principles have always intended that the scheme should and **will relate to Woodstock and its many attributes**. We would agree that the previous masterplan iteration did not express this to its full potential and have taken action to ensure that this is addressed in the evolving scheme.

As anyone who knows Woodstock will tell you, it is a special place which has a character unique to its own setting and to this part of Oxfordshire - being one of a number of market towns in the area. Woodstock however, is uniquely special in that it has grown in partnership with Blenheim Palace and its Parkland and we believe that this has provided Woodstock with a huge benefit over its neighbours in its **success as a sustainable and affluent town**.

The key to ensuring that this new place relates to this unique and setting is to understand the DNA of the place we are integrating with. We have taken a keen interest in continuing the research previously undertaken to further explore the attributes of the town and particularly the streetscapes, the spaces and the places that make it a special place.

Woodstock is not a town that has stood still over time. Like many market towns, it has been a **continuous evolution;** and true to this character, Woodstock should continue to evolve in an appropriate manner for the 21st century and beyond. The organic evolution of this place is clear to see when one studies the street sections, elevations and the patterns of development.

We have expressed this further research and analysis of the streets and spaces through a series of 10 street sections. This has enabled the design team to observe the attributes of the town which highlights the variety and interest that exist here. This has created a place which has a mixture of different building heights, variety in architectural style and age, a range of complimentary but differing architectural details and choice of materials. Only when you consider all of these attributes and how they can be reflected in proposed street scenes and design codes, can the place begin to knit together as a whole.

The following Chapter sets out a summary of the street sections taken and the observations made. The full study can be seen in Section 4 of the Appendices.

An additional area of the masterplan that has benefited from studying the patterns of Woodstock is through the revised legible network of streets and spaces. This is touched on in Chapters 8 and 9 – 'Places and Spaces' and 'A Well Connected Place'.

We feel that the spaces are now more in keeping with those of Woodstock, particularly the local centre which has changed form from a large, rectangular square to a more modest and in-keeping triangular space, much like that of the High Street and Market Place in the existing town.





Town Centre

The characteristics of the Town Centre provide a beneficial guideline for the proposed town square, employment zone, and various streetscapes in the scheme.

Section A

This section cuts through Park Street just before the Parish Church. It explores the way that Woodstock deals with parking and entryways into buildings.

Section B

This section cuts through the entrance of Chaucers Lane. It is an unusually narrow lane that leads up to Park Street.

Section C

This High Street section faces the town hall and explores the streetscape's use of mixed materials and public spaces.

Section D

This High Street section faces west. In Woodstock there is a demand for parking in order to accommodate the many businesses and people that live within the area. This informs how parking may be addressed in the final scheme.

Oxford Road Housing

The characteristics of Oxford Road varies. Streets are used as a precedent regarding residential zones in the proposed scheme and may also inform the appropriate residential architectural style for the scheme.

Section E

This section cuts through the A44 Oxford Road, including the residential areas and the entrance of Blenheim Palace. It shows how green buffers are used along the A44 and the formality of Blenheim Palace.

Section F

Cuts through Ashford Close, where a new development showcases the vernacular of Woodstock in a contemporary manner. The streets are wide with shared surfaces. Terraced homes have small front gardens that are gated as a defensive buffer between the street and front doors.

Section G

Cuts through the entrance of Ashford Close and Rectory Lane's junction. It shows how old and new principles are conjoined with the Oxford Road.



Street Character

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Section - F







In order to design streets and spaces that relate to Woodstock, it is necessary to look at the streets and spaces within Woodstock itself



Shared surface allows for spill out, markets and civic activities Formal planters add character

Parking can double as an s activity space

Climbers soften building surfaces Exposed entries Co

Covered entries



Front doors spill out into the street

Recessed raised entrances to allow for small defensive space Stone pavement treatment Lush greenery on building facade

Narrow lane leading to residential terraces

Various parking options along street Specimen Trees

Park Street and Chaucer's Lane create interest & variety





Parish church set back from the building line creates interest and a green break Pedestrian O routes through

Ornate entrances Bo and more basic entrances

Bollards define A mix pedestrian and bu edge

A mix in materiality and building finishes

Street trees create interest in this hard surfaced street

Variety and character in the street is created through the combination and mix of;

- materiality stone, render, brick
- · architectural styles Victorian, Georgian
- · architectural detailing door detailing, windows
- a varied **building line** and **cornice** lines
- vegetation street trees, planters, vines
- street width and street furniture varies to create enclosure

Though there is variety, there is also cohesion in the street scene, created by;

- materiality repetition of stone, colour and texture
- architectural styles with similar character
- doors and windows create a street rhythm
- building heights are within a **range** 2- 4 stories
- a continuous building line is created by terraces
- a high density centre that provides interest and curiosity through residential and retail properties

THE CONSTRAINTS

Comments received from consultees in relation to the previous masterplan -

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... whilst the western part of the proposal can be **seen as an extension of the town and provides a natural edge to the town**, the eastern proposal is essentially a stand-alone hamlet, that is neither part of Woodstock nor Kidlington.

The need for **some form of separation between Kidlington and Woodstock** would suggest that the proposals for the eastern part of the site should be refused outright...

The archaological remains present the masterplan and the community with **a real opportunity** to interpret the Scheduled Monument, which has been lost for around 1000 years...

Cherwell District Council Urban Design Consultant - March 2015

5.0 | CONSTRAINTS

Our response to comments received and what we have done to address comments -

Successful design can be governed and influenced by its constraints, however it is when constraints are related to their context and truly understood that these constraints can become a true benefit and opportunity to the scheme in order to create a special place.

This chapter illustrates the constraints of the site, which have provided the design team with the foundations for a site specific and **interesting design concept to emerge**.

The following pages set out the main constraints and **opportunities of the developmen**t, firstly looking at the wider scale.

It has been suggested that this development could impose a lack of separation between Woodstock and Kidlington.

We do not accept this viewpoint, and would reinforce that there are a number of true barriers which exist between our site and Kidlington. **A natural separation** already occurs and is unlikely to be straddled by development. The factors creating separation include;

- The edge of the Oxford Green Belt, which runs to the east of the site boundary hedge;
- The existing woodland edge and historic hedge boundary to the east;
- 3. The location and proximity of London Oxford Airport which creates a large void in the coalescence of any built form;
- 4. The location of Langford Locks, the edge of which is over 1.5km away from the most eastern point of the site and;
- 5. The existing railway line.

There are also a number of real, on site and surrounding constraints that create the opportunity to ensure **a place that is site specific and well integrated**. These have been outlined below and can be seen in further detail in the original Design and Access Statement. The development has a crucial relationship with the neighbouring **World Heritage Site**. It is important that the two work together and support one another to ensure the longevity of the town.

In relation to the site itself, one sensitive constraint is the potential harm that any development could cause to the World Heritage Site, especially if it were perceived that views into and out of the Parkland were harmed as a result of development.

We have introduced a strategy to create a **'Landscape Gateway' to Woodstock**, this is discussed in more detail in 'Chapter 7 – Landscape Led Masterplan'.

This strategy would see the creation of a **designed tree and landscaping belt** along the southern edge of the site.

The primary function of this belt is to create a gateway from the Bladon roundabout, however it is through the recommendation and advice from Heritage England, that this is also seen as an intervention which will

Ecological strategy for the retention of the existing bat corridor and historic hedge



5

protect the World Heritage Site through the insertion of an **attractive and high quality landscape edge**.

The east and western sides of the development are brought together by **a 7.5** hectare central greenspace, 'Woodstock Park'.

The location of this park is determined by the location of the Scheduled Monument (please see technical appendices for more information regarding the Scheduled Monument).

Rather than treating this monument as a negative constraint to connectivity, we have taken the view that this is **a positive benefit and opportunity** for the scheme and the community.

'Woodstock Park' will act as a community space, with the sports pitches to the north, accessible to all and **linking the existing and proposed communities together** as a central resource. Whilst also containing the buried remains of a roman villa, 'Woodstock Park' brings together many aspects of the masterplan including historic hedgerows, a provision for **high quality sports, ecology and residential development**.

The park also offers an opportunity to create large areas of wildflower meadow planting, which can be designated as a nature reserve and help to strengthen the retained and enhanced hedgerows in terms of **biodiversity and habitat.**

Whilst this development can offer a substantial greenspace of circa 7.5 hectares in area, it is crucial that **connectivity across this space is maintained.** This requires the occasional breaking of the historic hedgerow that runs north south to the west of 'Woodstock Park', defining its western edge.

In order to ensure that this hedgerow still remains a **continuous habitat** for bats, insects and small mammals, these breaks can be mitigated through strategic planting and by designing in chamfers to the strengthened boundary planting that encourage connectivity for humans as well as animals. The sketch strategy to page 30 explains this concept.

In addition to the constraints as outlined above, there are others which have had a bearing on the original design layout, these are fully explained in the original Design and Access Statement and include the following;

- Proximity to London Oxford Aerodrome
- Monument view cone
- Common land
- Ecology (miotis bat flight path)
- Green Belt (a natural boundary)
- Utilities, water pipe
- Proximity to the conservation area

In the wider context, the masterplan fits with the natural boundaries of the settlement - a Green Belt edge, woodland screening and existing hedges



These constraints and existing boundaries and features in the area preclude this development spreading towards Kidlington - a natural separation exists



The setting is defined by a set of surrounding constraints and opportunities



Archaeological remains pose a constraint to the masterplan - but an opportunity to create a public park and the chance to interpret the remains



Legend

- Positive anomaly possible cut feature (archaeology)
- Weak positive anomaly possible cut feature
- Negative anomaly possible earthwork (archaeology)
 - Positive anomaly probably of geological origin
 - Positive anomaly probably of modern (e.g. agricultural) origin
- Ferrous spike probable ferrous object
- Magnetic disturbance caused by nearby metal objects/services
- Scattered ferromagnetic debris

The site constraints set the framework for the development of this site...







Historic hedgerows provide opportunities to create habitats and structure. The archaeological remains and scheduled monument create a potential separation between development areas which should be turned into an opportunity.
... but they should be seen as an opportunity - to create a unique place, a masterplan design that is site specific







An opportunity for a key community green space and connection to the rural context to the north and to Blenheim Palace parkland to the south. Constraints determine the location of the primary movement network - limited vehicular connectivity is achievable towards the A44.

AN IMPROVED MASTERPLAN

Comments received from consultees in relation to the previous masterplan -

The public square could play a major role. However its size and location works against that. Its size, which would appear to be similar to the Blenheim Palace courtyard is far too large for the scale of buildings that will surround it. Its location is unlikely to be attractive to retailers as it has limited passing trade. Thus its role would be diminished..."

"... The Care Village also has a role to play. It offers the opportunity to create a statement of arrival into the western part of the development, in the same way that the Cow Yards of the palace do.

A clear form of development is needed. As it is, the masterplan for the care village seems to have no design philosophy, no urban or landscape design strategy and results in an incoherent set of apartment buildings, houses, and nursing facilities, each block of which is surrounded by car parking. Some dwellings have exposed backs to access.

In addition the development, including the main building, turns its back to the rest of the site including the proposed square, and lacks appropriate links. Whilst accepting the possible need for a care home, the current scheme needs to be reconsidered..."

Cherwell District Council Urban Design Consultant - March 2015



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6.0 AN IMPROVED MASTERPLAN

Our response to comments received and what we have done to address comments -

This Chapter explains the rationale behind the **evolution of the Masterplan** for

Woodstock East from the initial concept to the current layout. It encompasses the changes that have related to all of the consultee comments received and looks to address them all.

The first pages in this Chapter run through the process of evolution; from the initial masterplan concept through to the submitted scheme. An expansion of this explanation can be found in the Section 5 of the Appendix as well as in the original Design and Access Statement.

As expressed in the Executive Summary, there were a number of **key themes** that ran throughout the consultee comments to the initial framework masterplan which we have focused on improving to ensure that we create a seamless masterplan which is wholly appropriate for this place. These keys themes were;

Connectivity – creating **a well connected**, **legible place** with a clear mental map.

Landscape – creating a landscape led masterplan, based on a network of green spaces and taking inspiration from the Parkland at Blenheim Palace and the influence of Capability Brown.

Character – creating a masterplan which is more **in character with Woodstock** and the scale, form and character of existing spaces and places within the town. This helps to create and identity and a sense of place.

Heritage – ensuring that the masterplan **responds sensitively and appropriately** to the historic constraints including the proximity to the World Heritage Site and the setting of the Scheduled Monument which is located in the centre of the masterplan.

Although these themes are expanded in the following chapters, they have resulted in the culmination of a number of **key improvements to the masterplan**. These changes are outlined below; • The East - West primary road, 'Marlborough Drive', has been relocated to avoid as much of the archaeological remains as is possible. Following the point where it breaks through the north south hedge, this placemaking road curves down towards the east to meet the proposed new roundabout location on the A4095 – Upper Campsfield Road. This roundabout location is 70m south of the original location as illustrated in the submitted masterplan framework.

• The benefit of moving the roundabout further south, is that it reduces the need for removal of a higher number of 'Category B' trees and crucially allows the transport interchange to be located closer to the A44 Oxford Road.

• The relocation of 'Marlborough Drive', is part of a wider network of legible connected streets, which create a clear mental map of the places and spaces created within the development. • Another of these key organising routes is the introduction of a more direct north south road, which runs parallel to the A4095 in the centre of the development through 'Vanbrugh Square'.

This route is vehicular but connects to the A44 Oxford Road and the Shipton Road by means of a pedestrian and cycle route. This has been introduced to improve connectivity of this area of the site and to the north, taking access through an existing agricultural gap in the field edge.

• To the west, 'Marlborough Drive' routes through the proposed local centre – 'Hensington Place' and is connected directly to a new route running towards the north west which gives access to a relocated Care Village and most importantly pedestrian and cycle connectivity to existing Flemmings Way and Hedge End.

• The location of the Care Village has been moved from fronting the A44 Oxford Road to having a better relationship with the context of Woodstock and is now located to the west of 'Hensington Place'. The Care Village still shares it's facilities with the wider community however it now has a better aspect onto the square and more of a presence with a sunnier aspect and spill out space into the 'Hensington Place'.

• By relocating the Care Village to the north west, this frees up the plot to the Oxford Road for residential development. This gives us the opportunity to create a better street in 'Marlborough Drive', as it enters the scheme. A better, two sided, legible and defined entrance which is more in keeping with the character of Woodstock.

• The scale, form and shape of the local centre has also been improved. This was previously a large square and is now expressed as a more organic and logical triangular space which integrates all of the pivotal areas of the masterplan through the existing hedge line.

• The Primary School has maintained its location, however the access road to the school has been improved and is now a straight direct, legible street which is walkable from the local centre.

• A green square has been introduced in the 'Victory Park' character area, this space is for formal sports and begins to create a sports campus with the proposed MUGA and pitches to Shipton Road.

• The sports provision is linked to the MUGA and football pitches by the 'Avenue' - a green tree lined vista which connects to 'Hensington Place'.

• The employment area to the east has almost doubled in size from 7,500m2 to 13,800m2 of employment space, this provides much needed employment space for Woodstock and reflects the need in the town. The increase in employment allows the transport interchange to be moved southward as described above.

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• The connectivity across the 7.5ha green space 'Woodstock Park' has increased dramatically as described in earlier chapters.

• Landscape enhancements have been made as well as an improved landscape network and strategy which is described in detail in 'Chapter 7 – Landscape Led Approach'.

• Further to discussions with Heritage England, 3 concerns arose with regard to the Scheduled Monument and the potential harm that could be caused.

The first was that if 'Marlborough Drive' were to be shown in a more southerly location, this would cause significant harm to the Scheduled Monument – this road has been moved back further north to remove any harm.

Secondly, the increased number of connections through the north south historic hedgerow could cause potential harm to the setting of the Scheduled Monument. This will be mitigated with planting on both sides of the pedestrian gaps through the hedge.

Lastly, the vista from the buried Roman Villa is assumed to orientate in a south easterly direction. With this in mind, this iteration of the masterplan pulls development back away from this edge; increasing the gap between the development and the planting to the A44 Oxford Road.

This landscape edge will be planted with ornamental orchard trees to respect the agricultural nature of the villa, as well as integrating allotments to the far east of the landscaped edge.

• Further pedestrian gaps have been shown in the landscape edge to the A44, this is to improve connectivity to bus stops, and to connect to the existing footpath and cycle way to the south of the A44.

• In addition, the historic route of 'heh straet' used to run alongside the historic hedge and the pest house. We have introduced a route alongside the hedge which reinstates this historic route and will make reference to CDC's SPD 'Historic Routes in Cherwell District'.

• A circular route around the outside of the development edge has been introduced. In total this route allows a circular walk of approximately 3km.

In summary the above changes highlight the extent that the design team has gone to, to ensure that all consultee comments have been addressed and developed in a positive manner to create a masteplan, and a place, which is truly exemplary and robust in its intentions and manifestation.

The development of the original masterplan framework plan from concept to submission



The initial masterplan;

- Connecting Woodstock from Oxford Road to the development
- Creating a core open space around the Scheduled Monument and archaeological remains.

Stage 2;

- Integrating the Scheduled Monument through a repositioned green corridor.
- Creating an extended pedestrian linkage through the site.

Stage 3;

- Responding to airport constraints.
- Relocating the recreational facilities into a network of landscaping and open spaces that, links Woodstock with the sites community spaces.

A masterplan framework building upon on the constraints and opportunities of the site



Stage 4;

- Responding to the archaeological remains.
- Altering the school layout to form a better connection to the playing fields and the Upper Marlborough School.

Stage 5;

- Incorporating employment, the local centre and primary road connections.
- Integrating the 'common' in the green space network.

Stage 6;

 The submitted illustrative masterplan set out one scenario but it is flexible and should be reinforced by design codes at a later stage. The development of a new masterplan started with the submitted scheme and considered all comments received from consultees to create a place more appropriate to Woodstock



This resulted in a more legible, better connected, landscape led masterplan based on a network of spaces and places that reflect the context



Design workshop - possible relocation of the primary road through a southerly gap in the archaeology?





A very clear, legible framework



The emerging masterplan



Moving the primary road 70m south through an existing gap in the archaeology improves legibility and connectivity but advice from Heritage England suggests that this would cause harm to the SAM



We explored a more appropriate local centre; in scale and form, with a primary road location that compliments the constraints





This has resulted in a more legible, better connected, landscape led masterplan which transforms the constraints of the site into opportunities

PLACES AND SPACES

Comments received from consultees in relation to the previous masterplan -

... The locations of the main public open spaces are defined, however the local places and spaces (squares, crescents, pocket parks etc) do not appear to be clearly defined. It is unclear why the green corridors are located where they are, and what their purpose is...

Cherwell District Council Urban Design Consultant - March 2015

May 2015

7.0 | Places and Spaces

Our response to comments received and what we have done to address comments -

At Woodstock East we are aiming to create a **special place**. This is **not just another housing development but an exemplary, high quality and memorable place** that reflects and is respectful to its connection with Woodstock and the World Heritage Site at Blenheim Palace.

This place is a **legacy** for Blenheim Palace. It is supported and enriched by the promise of **long-term investment** and **stewardship** from the Estate. This place reflects the already respected brand that Blenheim Palace has established nationally and it is useful at this point to look at Blenheim Palace's positioning statement;

"With its own special place in Britain's history, Blenheim Palace is a true national treasure, a living and enriching experience which brings wonder, delight and discovery to all those who visit, time and time again."



This place, this masterplan is no different. It will be a special place. It has a relationship with a national treasure and can reveal a lost treasure in the Scheduled Monument. Most importantly it will be a place to live, work and play which, like Woodstock, is much loved and brings delight to those who spend time there.

The masterplan creates a series of **places and spaces** that are **well defined, logical, robust** and located in places that offer a clear structure to the masterplan. These places have been given notional names to help with their descriptions. In the fullness of time, these names can be amended and could be subject to a round of **public consultation**, allowing future residents to name **their** spaces and places.

As previously expressed, the connectivity network is one that **'completes the jigsaw'** and these places and spaces are integral to this approach.

The **two key memorable places** within this masterplan, the places that a visitor remembers as being special; are the local centre **'Hensington Place'** and the Scheduled Monument Park – **'Woodstock Park'.**

The proposed primary road, 'Marlborough Drive', should be seen as the **placemaking road** and the necklace that links together a series of events, places and spaces as described below;

1. Landscape Gateway

A high quality, designed, two sided landscape gateway from the Bladon roundabout frames and announces the main entrance to the development. This is a start of a **placemaking road**, a vehicular, bus, pedestrian and cycle entrance to the development from the Oxford Road;

2. Residential Entrance

This entrance creates a gateway to **'Marlborough Drive'**. It is a high quality, defined, legible, two- sided residential street that sets the tone and quality for the rest of the development. It is the front door to a special place and the materiality and detailing will reflect this;

3. The Main Event

'Marlborough Drive' travels north toward the main event – 'Hensington Place';

4. Hensington Place - gateways

'Hensington Place' is the community focus, the local centre, the node that connects together **4 crucial gateways** – the **pedestrian gateway** to Woodstock, the **residential gateway** from the Oxford Road, the **educational gateway** to the Primary School and the **landscape gateway** to 'Woodstock Park';



5. Hensington Place - activity 'Hensington Place' is fronted on all sides with **activity and residential** accommodation providing natural surveillance.

To the southeast, residential properties – apartments and town houses **define** the curve of the enclosure.

To the north, the space is bound by the gateway street to the Primary School and **education quarter** with town houses and a retail unit providing a destination and creating activity within the space.

To the west, the **Care Village** interacts with the square with the potential to provide facilities that can be used by the wider community, such as a hairdresser or dentist;

6. Community and Arts Hub

'Hensington Place' has been reduced in size and scale and a more informal space has been created. A **central focus** for the square has been created through the insertion of a building to north west of the square.

The use of this building is to provide the community with a '**Community and Arts Hub'.** This allows the opportunity to create a possible link with the Blenheim Estate through their Art Foundation. The purpose of the Art Foundation is to promote contemporary art for the wider community.

The **'Community and Arts Hub'** can provide an opportunity to display 'taster' pieces of art, linking to main exhibitions within the World Heritage Site.

This **nodal building** could be the subject of an **architectural competition** and should be seen as a 'gem' and a focus within this space, linking together the 4 nodal routes and axis across the masterplan;

7

7. A well defined pedestrian edge

The connection to the existing edge to Woodstock is the key in **connecting this place**. We are proposing that the existing public footpath running along the south section will be improved and extended to Shipton Road to the north.

All of the new residential units which form a boundary with this new footpath will create an **active frontage** to the footpath and turn to front onto it. This will create a safe and legible new route which is overlooked and of a **high quality landscape design**. It will allow this new place to front this edge of Woodstock rather than turning its back on the existing settlement.

8. Creating landscape suspense

As you travel west on 'Marlborough Drive', through 'Hensington Place', one approaches a green edge and a gap in the historic hedgerow that creates intrigue and suspense. On entering this **green gateway**, the landscape opens out to reveal before the visitor, a large public park, **'Woodstock Park'** to the right and a plethora of community facilities;

9. Woodstock Town Football Club

To the north, the visitor is aware of the Woodstock Town Football club and a multi use games area, these sports facilities are **discretely screened by 'The Avenue'**, an attractive, tree lined route which connects pedestrians from 'Hensington Place' to further less formal sports facilities within **Victory Park**;

10. Woodstock Park

'Woodstock Park' can be appreciated as an **expansive, 7.5 hectare**, community greenspace which opens out and extends to the landscape planting belt on the southern boundary.

It is the centre of the community and acts much like a **village green**, providing flexibility and a space to play. An informal lane of residential properties fronts onto the park providing a high quality backdrop as well as natural surveillance over the spaces.

The Park itself is a wide expanse of pedestrian routes, jogging trails, a place to fly a kite, a place to have a picnic with family and friends, a place to walk your dog and a place, most importantly, to **appreciate the ancient history** of this site. 'Woodstock Park' reflects and interprets the **Scheduled Monument**, a buried Roman Villa, of agricultural character. Plaques, art, topography and way finding will tell the story behind the history of the Scheduled Monument. This once lost piece of history is **revealed** to the visitor.

11. 'Heh Straet'

Another historic addition that helps to reveal the character and history of this place is the **reinstatement of historic 'heh straet'**. This is in the form of a pedestrian and cycle route which runs alongside the north south historic hedge and intersects with key east west connectivity through 'Woodstock Park' and the residential areas;

12. A residential gateway

When one moves through the park along 'Marlborough Drive', the residential edge has been pulled as close as possible to 'Hensington Place' this creates **a gateway into the development** and is signified by the potential for statement gateway buildings to **announce** this section of 'Marlborough Drive.

This section of the street is higher in density, it comprises of 2 and a half to 3 storey residential town houses and apartments **defining the street.** Variety will





be created through a varied cornice line, building detailing, materiality, fenestration and doorways.

The street will be defined in places through the introduction of tree planting, of a columnar variety and a planted swale either side of the road.

This street will vary in width with protruding buildings and elevation details creating variety and interest in the street scene, much like is seen in Woodstock High Street;



13. Employment provision

As one approaches the end of this street, to Upper Campsfield Road- to the left hand side, the employment area creates a defined edge and provides the **capacity for 13,800m2 of employment space** of mixed use and size.

This offers **well-managed space** for established businesses as well as **SME's and workshop** type employment spaces. These spaces will be of a contemporary 'barn-like' architectural style;

14. Transport Interchange

To the right hand side of the street as you approach Upper Campsfield Road, the transport interchange provides a **parking area for 300 cars**. This facility provides a **'3-pronged approach'**. The parking can provide the facility for those wishing to catch a bus to Oxford to park here and walk to the bus stops on the A44, in addition, it provides overflow car parking space for Woodstock Town Football Club. The Club has had to turn down promotion due to the **lack of facilities** on its current site. Most importantly this parking area helps to relieve the parking issues in Woodstock Town Centre, which sees many of the **spaces and places within existing Woodstock** littered and ruined with vehicles lining the streets;

15. Vanbrugh Square

To the south of 'Marlborough Drive', the residential area is characterised by a **high quality green square** - 'Vanbrugh Square'. This space provides the opportunity for **play** for all ages of children and is overlooked and framed by residential development on all four sides. There are key pedestrian and **homezone links** between this green square and 'Woodstock Park';

Overall, we believe that this network of spaces and places is now clear and legible and provides a framework for a well-designed successful place with identity and character.

This framework should be read in conjunction with the outline design code in 'Chapter 13' that highlights our intentions for the quality and diversity of individual character areas. It is important to define a network of successful places and spaces that reflect the character of Woodstock and give this special place identity and structure













May 2015

This strategy for places ensures that all sides of the masterplan connect with green vistas leading to key masterplan destinations



Local Centre - Providing a small scale public realm for the surrounding residential area



School Campus



Woodstock Park
A 7.5ha park which connects the masterplan providing a community focus



Connection of green spaces

- The Avenue
- Community Sports green (Victory Park)
- Residential Courtyard (Vanbrugh Square)



Α

Hensington Place - the local centre is a pivotal focus for the masterplan and provides a hard surfaced space appropriate to its context





Hensington Place integrates the Care Village, the connections to Woodstock, the Primary School, the residential entrance of Malborough Drive and the gateway to Woodstock Park and Victory Park



Hensington Place provides a statement building - a Community and Arts hub



Connecting to Blenheim Palace Art Foundation



Sculpture in the public realm



High quality shared surface space



Community and Arts centre - a gem



Information and tourism



Sculpture in the public realm



An opportunity for play to create activity



Creating a set piece - key buildings frame spaces



High quality landscaping, the integration of water

Hensington Place provides a statement building - a Community and Arts hub

A new legible two sided street links the local centre to the School Campus;

Residential units up to 3 storeys frame and define the square to better reflect Woodstock's town centre character;

Street trees create pocket spaces along the edge of Hensington Place and define the edge of the space;

The Care Village is relocated to create a better integration with the local centre and more architectural definition from the main gateway entrance;

Pedestrian and cycle links connect with the existing context of Woodstock, providing a seamless integration.



Community and Arts Hub creates a focal point



B The education quarter is fronted by a new 2 FE primary school - this important new quarter creates an integrated education strategy delivering the longevity, unprecedented sustainability and legacy for future generations of Woodstock



A new 2 form entry primary school is at the centre of the education quarter, with a close relationship to existing Marlborough School

2



A MUGA and training pitch provide facilities for the education quarter as well as Woodstock Town Football Club





The existing sports field is retained. To the east a new dedicated coach park for use by Marlborough School and the education quarter improves the safety of the surrounding roads.





Places and Spaces

Woodstock park provides the opportunity to express the underlying archaeology through planting, design, gentle topography, art installations and heritage trails



Calendar Garden - Heuvelland, Belgium



Wild Flower Meadow - Barlow, UK



May 2015



Meadow Park - Lyons Colorado USA





11 Minute Lane - Wanas, Sweden





Using signage that reflects Woodstock



С

A strategy for heritage and public arts helps to integrate this new heritage destination in the wider context of Woodstock

The public arts strategy for the site links onto the existing heritage trail in Woodstock. Currently a trail of information plaques associated with key historic landmark buildings in Woodstock. The new strategy will extend this trail into the new development through a linked series of art monuments representative of the history of Woodstock.

These will provide landmarks, historic interpretation through associated information plaques, interactive objects as play sculptures or street furniture and a tourist attraction.

The art sculptures are connected through a 'Capability Brown' inspired concept and landscape. 'Capability Brown' is responsible for the majority of the Blenheim Palace Parkland landscape design. As in many of his designs buildings and monuments are connected via strategic views through a naturalistic landscape. The sculpture positions are linked by views through avenues of strategically placed buildings and landscape features.









Signage that reflects Woodstock and sculptural seating



Formal signage that reflects Woodstock



Key views over the site between sculptures



Art to reflect the town's history and natural play structures



Glazed panels that allow history to be visible and sculptures in the landscape

The Scheduled Monument in Woodstock Park is an opportunity to interpret history and make heritage accessible to all



Art to reflect the town's history - New Woodstock was founded to provide lodgings for Henry II retinue and hunting party when visiting Woodstock Park







Using levels to define seating spaces





Using pavilion structures to outline the ancient historic monument, to further reveal the rich tapestry of history below



Revealing the rich history of the site through signage and graphics

May 2015

The masterplan creates the opportunity to integrate with the Blenheim Palace 'brand' through use of materials, signage and wayfinding









Places and Spaces