

Design For Change Workshop 4

Architecture, Materials and Form

Until this workshop, exploration of the site and emerging designs had only been explored in 2D plan form. In this session the group created image collages, and we had a wider group conversation about how the outputs of the Design For Change workshops might be used by the site owners. A short presentation on sustainable low energy architecture also prompted conversation about environmentally conscious design principles.

This session had a slightly smaller attendance, with 26 participants.

- Local residents
- Cherwell School (Head) and students
- Oxford University Development
- Summertown and St Margaret's Neighbourhood Forum
- Low Carbon Oxford North
- Oxford City Council
- Beechcroft Road Resident Association



Ideas and Precedents Mood Board

Participants divided into 5 groups and spent one hour preparing a basic visual brief - selecting precedent images from a set of example project photographs to explore materiality, massing, textures and ambience for the Diamond Place site.

Some opinions varied between groups but common themes presented, which are explored within the following pages.

Popular Themes

- Variety of materials and appearance: not boring designs.
- Interesting warm textures and colour
- Staggered heights and levels - avoid monolithic blocks and consider articulations such as balconies
- Car parking screened with planting
- Multi-purpose public spaces
- Inviting, central public space with seating
- Soft landscape and soft edges between buildings and streets
- Sustainable low energy design using renewables
- Safe cycling and walking

Planting screening car park



Warm brick tones



Large balconies / Buildings set in landscape



Communal spaces



Safe cycling and walking with soft edges



Variety of design creating interesting streets



Active frontage



Staggered heights and landmark corners



Soft threshold between homes and streets



Group 1

Architecture

- Not too repetitive: Different forms/ variety of materials.
- Levels/ terracing of buildings. Not monolithic
- Not standard developer homes
- Proper sized balconies
- Individual front doors
- Accessibility / adaptable flats

Sustainability

- Sustainable: Renewable energy, under-floor heating, low carbon materials, fabric first, district heating, solar panels
- Active travel
- Recycling

Public Realm / Community

- Well integrated buildings and greenery. Homes connecting to green spaces
- Cars out of sight (green wall)
- Open pathways
- Cars don't cross site
- Welcoming / inviting. Active community spaces. Places to sit
- Multi-purpose spaces
- Safe/ open
- Soft landscape – not too hard/ urban.
- Soft edges
- Good night-time lighting
- Community growing

Active Community Spaces (inside and outside)



Balconies + connections to Green space



Connectivity / Safe and Open spaces



Soft edges



Balconies + overlooking. Meeting spaces



Good nighttime lighting



Architecture

- Retirement apartments – soft light, warm materials

Sustainability

- Ground source heat pumps viable on site?
- District heating?

Public Realm

- Multi-purpose public spaces : Meeting place / Communal spaces /Green spaces
- Gentle density and green spaces
- Covered bike parking
- Parking below flats : Green screen hiding public car parking
- Health centre important

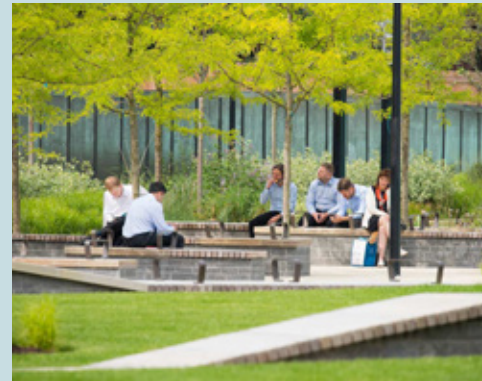
Warm materials



Green space and Gentle density



Green spaces to meet



Parking below flats



Distinct and varied forms



Multi-purpose public space



Group 3

Architecture

- Not boring design – variations
- Slim structure and big windows
- Plaza – columnnade
- Public building (health centre) – main focus of plaza.
- Chairs/ benches to sit without buying coffees
- Textures of walls and floors – cobbles / stones/ brick
- Distinct character

Sustainability

- Solar PVs and renewable energy generation on homes
- Energy expert involved in design process
- Community energy use.

Public Realm / Community

- Soft edges
- Integrated trees
- Wall gardens
- Permeable surfaces to avoid flooding problem
- Covered seating areas
- Pocket parks

Distinct character. Plaza / columnnade



Repeating proportions, interesting design



Integrated trees



Cobbles - texture and history



Covered seating



Clinician centre at heart of plaza



Group 4

Architecture

- Variety and vibrancy
- Articulated facades
- Broken roof lines
- Focal points and landmarks
- Glass entrances to community spaces
- Strong corners and focal points/viewpoints
- Interesting textures/ colours

Sustainability

- Green roofs / sustainable
- How do you make building interesting and energy efficient?
- Off site manufacturing
- Zero carbon/ reduce energy costs
- Orientation - passive gain



Public Realm / Community

- Line entrance with trees
- Central public space
- Activity
- Pedestrian priority
- Shared spaces
- Children's play facilities
- Green walkways/ access
- Car park – other uses at weekends/ etc (eg. Market)
- Biodiversity – small features like bird boxes / letting grass grow
- Natural habitats

Child playspace



Colour and texture



Corners and focal points / landmarks



Car park - other uses at weekend



Biodiversity



Green walkways



Group 5

Architecture

- Brick preferred – warm colours
- Like mews housing
- Like mixture of materials
- Active frontage

Sustainability

- Solar PV
- Sustainable gardens
- Flats – more sustainable/ energy efficient than houses
- EV charging
- Car share
- Bike parking

Public Realm / Community

- Cosy streets
- Central square
- Play space
- Vegetation – helps to reduce overheating
- Animals and nature
- Safe cycling and walking through site
- Trees
- School drop-off point

Articulations / staggered form and brickwork



Pitched roofs / bricks



Cost streets



Vegetation, animals and nature



Bike parking

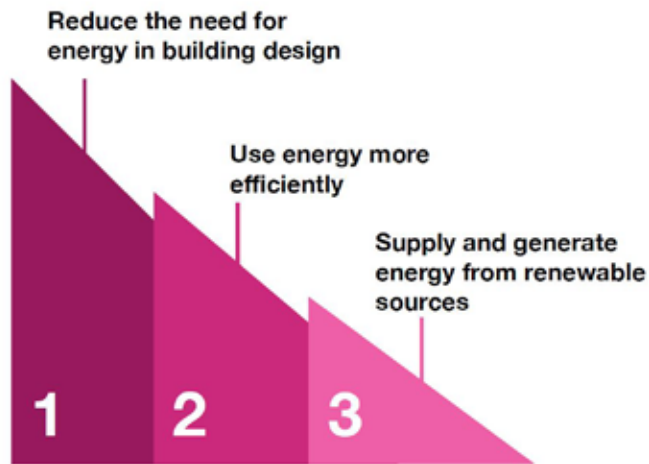


Active frontage



Sustainable Architecture

Energy hierarchy



Electricity greener than gas!

Form matters







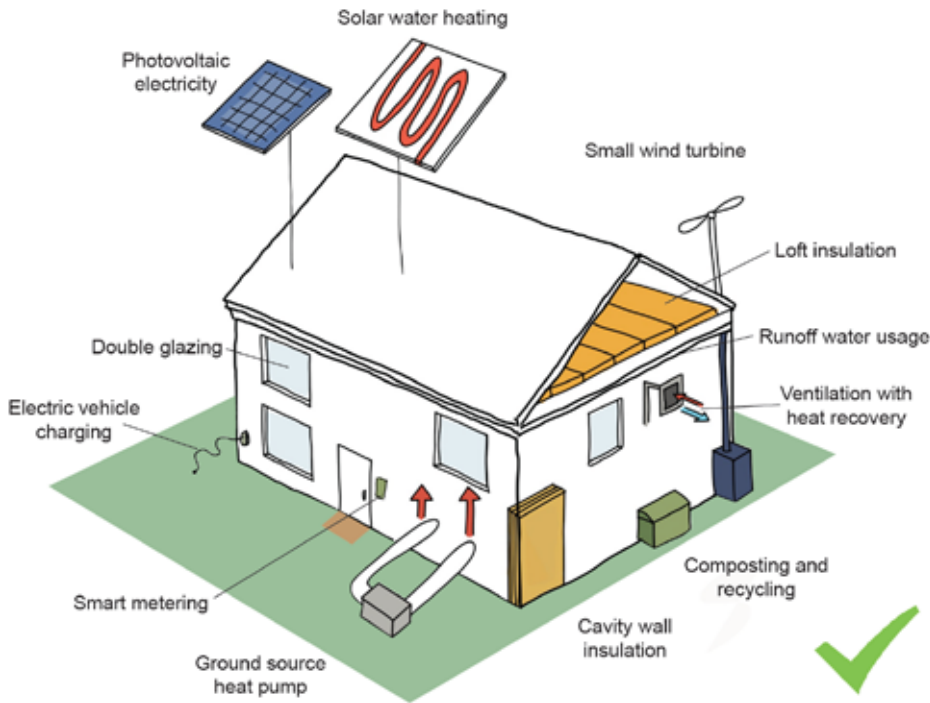
Type	Form Factor	Efficiency
 End mid-floor apartment	0.8	Most efficient
 Mid-terrace house	1.7	
 Semi-detached house	2.1	
 Detached house	2.5	
 Bungalow	3.0	

Figure 4 The types of home and their Form Factors



Nick McCullen:
Understanding the
Relationship between
Energy Consumption
and Urban Form
(2017).

Lower energy usage
per capita in denser
areas

