

## Design For Change Workshop 2

### Diamond Place Site Analysis

The second workshop started to focus in on the Diamond Place site, exploring strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints. There was much better representation of young people at this session, but traders remain under-represented.

39 people attended, representing the following groups:

- Local residents
- Cherwell School (Head)
- Cherwell School students x 6
- Oxford University Development
- Transport and Environment Consultant
- Summertown and St Margaret's Neighbourhood Forum
- St Andrew's Church
- Low Carbon Oxford North
- Oxford City Council
- Summertown NHS
- St Michael's + All Angels Church
- Cuttleslowe Community Centre



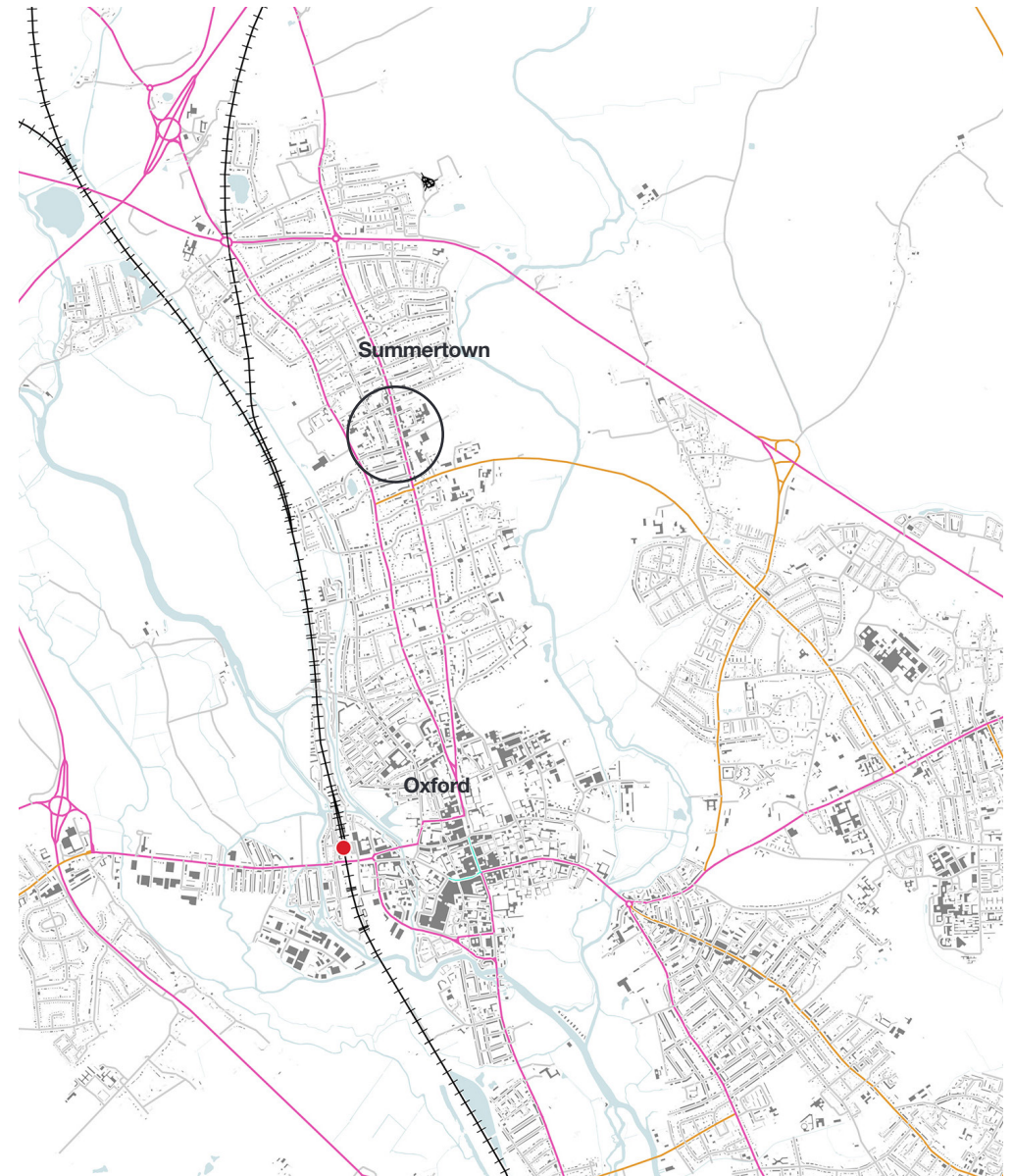
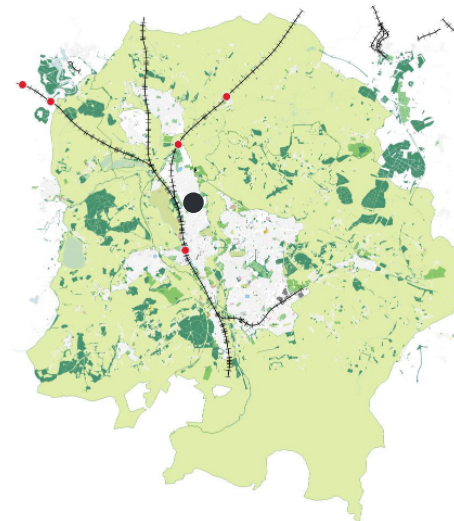


Summertown's location makes it a highly attractive place to live, and therefore also creates huge pressures on space. The workshop began with a discussion about the wider context in order to understand why development of the Diamond Place site is so crucial.

- Summertown is an important district of Oxford rather than just a suburb
- It is easily accessible from the City Centre, which creates the challenge of traffic and high land values.
- It is tightly constrained by greenbelt. The Green Belt around Oxford covers 66,868 hectares, about 13% of the total area of the county
- This is why development pressures are so intense
- This is going to be made worse by the planned housing developments to the north
- Provision will be made for at least 10,884 new homes to be built in Oxford over the Local plan period 2016-2036.
- There are not many other opportunity sites like Diamond Place to meet these needs.



**The green belt forces North Oxford into a tight wedge with limited space for expansion.**



## Diamond Place - Strengths and Weaknesses

Workshop attendees divided into five mixed groups to complete the first task.

Each group used green stickers to mark positive features onto a site map worksheet, and red stickers to highlight areas of weakness. The worksheet asked participants to describe these individual strengths and weaknesses in more detail, and decide what the overall good and bad qualities of the site were.



### Strengths

- School students using site every day
- Leisure centre and Community Centre: mixed uses are good, creates a nucleus for the community (high footfall)
- Surrounded by greenery
- Site that is alive and constantly used
- Bike storage
- Small green space by NOA is popular
- Public toilets are useful facility (but unattractive)
- Green bushes / trees alongside Ewert House
- Recycling facilities good
- Trees around site/ boundaries
- Well used through cycle access
- Car parking supports local facilities
- Multiple access points

### Weaknesses

- Everything looks away from site.
- WCs very ugly (ok inside)
- Connectivity is not good enough
- Poorly lit – not safe + welcoming
- No usable greenery on site. Public space/ seating could be much better
- Feeling of darkness
- Not welcoming / poor surveillance
- Poor cleanliness – dumpsters/ backyards of shops spill onto site
- Bins around Ferry Leisure Centre car park
- Student Resi – unattractive and gated
- 226 – 238 Banbury Road frontages and rear of shops unattractive
- Ewert Place – ambiguous access / parking / pedestrians
- Diamond Place is not shared access route
- Terrible passageway between school and bowls club – blind corner / narrow width/ dirty/ poorly lit. But useful connection
- Cycling bottleneck where car park meets outside NOA
- Poor lighting
- Poor wayfinding
- Blank walls on entrance buildings – (no surveillance)
- Leisure Centre + NOA – poor quality building (facilities are good)
- Conflicting through connections
- Too much car access and parking
- South of site more restricted due to Leisure Centre



STICK A GREEN STICK ON SOMETHING THAT IS GOOD  
STICK A RED STICKER ON SOMETHING NOT SO GOOD  
NUMBER THE STICKER AND ADD COMMENTS IN THE SPACE TO THE RIGHT

2

SURROUNDED BY GREENERY BUT NOT ON SITE

SCHOOL STUDENCES USING SITE (GOOD DM)

CONNECTIVITY IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH

POORLY LIT NOT SAFE + WELCOMING

PC'S VERY UGLY AND WIDE INSIDE

LEISURE CENTRE

NO THROUGH ROADS

OPPORTUNITY TO BUILD A SENSE OF PLACE (H. LEFT OVER)

EVERYTHING LOOKS AWAY FROM THE SITE

OPPORTUNITY FOR POOL POINT

SITE OBSERVATIONS - GOOD AND BAD BITS

HAVING A LEISURE CENTRE + COMMUNITY COUSE MIXED USE GOOD

SPACE FOR OPPORTUNITY FOR A HOURLY SERVICE SITE THAT IS ALIVE + CONSTANTLY USED

FEELING OF DARKNESS

OPPORTUNITY TO LOOK AT TWO SITES TOGETHER

OPPORTUNITY TO REIMAGINE CAR PARKING. + RE-PURPOSE CAR PARKING IN FUTURE. ⇒ FLEXIBLE / ADAPTABLE BUILDING

OPPORTUNITY FOR A FRIENDLY, FOCAL POINT FOR COMMUNITY (COFFEE?)

WE NEED TO ADD AFFORDABLE / SOCIAL HOUSING / OLDER PEOPLE HOMES REALLY IMPORTANT FOR PROPER LINKAGES

COULD BE MUCH BETTER

NOT WELCOMING

OVERALL STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

|             |              |             |              |               |            |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|------------|
| Greenery    | Public space | Boundaries  | Buildings    | Cleanliness   | Lighting   |
| Car parking | Cycling      | Pedestrians | Surveillance | Accessibility | Wayfinding |

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2

BINS

Car park

Line of Poles

MOA

The Ferry Leisure Centre

Diamond College

FERRY POOL ROAD

SITE OBSERVATIONS - GOOD AND BAD BITS

Any landscaping over 2 stories close to the east border will have a privacy problem as they will overlook the school grounds

Recycling + Bins

Alleyway needs improvement

Green space - informal meeting space

The hall in the leisure centre is underused and could be repurposed as part of the development.

Wadham accommodation is unattractive, gated

OVERALL STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

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2

Line of Poles

MOA

The Ferry Leisure Centre

Diamond College

FERRY POOL ROAD

SITE OBSERVATIONS - GOOD AND BAD BITS

Good

- Well used through cycle access
- Lack of buildings to demolish as open car parks.
- Car parking that supports local facilities.
- NBA + Ferry nucleus for the community by generating high footfall
- Small area of open space that seems popular.
- Multiple options for access to change its focus at some points.

Bad

- The through connections are confusing
- Multiple car accesses + 3 multiple car parks. Car parks.
- Poor surveillance, recycle bins rubbish.
- Hidden site looking ab backs
- This side more restricted due to leisure centre
- Utilitarian, lack of green

Opportunity future pop - adjacent site allocated for development.

OVERALL STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

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1

Line of Poles

MOA

The Ferry Leisure Centre

Diamond College

FERRY POOL ROAD

SITE OBSERVATIONS - GOOD AND BAD BITS

MIXED USE INCLUDING THE UNIV

LIMITED PARKING AT THE POINT WE NEED IT ALL

POSTS / DUMPSTERS (BAG) REACHABLES

OVERALL STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

|             |              |             |              |               |            |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|------------|
| Greenery    | Public space | Boundaries  | Buildings    | Cleanliness   | Lighting   |
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## Diamond Place - Opportunities and Constraints

Each group then used a map to record site constraints and opportunities in order to commence the process of designing for the future.



### Opportunity

- Opportunity for a friendly focal point for community.
- Informal green meeting space central to scheme
- Opportunity to build a sense of place
- Space for a Health Centre
- Look at two sites together. Comprehensive development, respect site boundary
- Re-imagining car parking and re-purpose car park in future (flexible/ adaptable scheme)
- Add affordable / social housing / older people homes
- Hall in the leisure centre is underused and could be repurposed within development. More multi-purpose space
- Electric charging points
- Benches needed
- Better bin store which does not block desire line. Ice-berg bins underground?
- Address backs of buildings. Create fronts onto site.
- More cycle racks
- Site is a place of travel through – needs to give people a reason to stop, relax, socialise
- Space for all ages and at all times of day
- Limited demolition required (car park sites) = easier to make change
- Adjacent site allocated for housing development = opportunity for integration.
- Use green plot behind Ferry Leisure Centre (Diamond Cottages) for staff parking
- Improve Cherwell School route
- Separate car and pedestrian access
- Link and share facilities of Leisure Centre, Health Centre and NOA
- Playground
- Consider demolishing or redeveloping Co-op building (226 – 238 Banbury Rd) and incorporating into site
- Parking to site under housing – better integrated

### Constraint

- Any building over 2 storeys close to the east border will have a privacy problem as they overlook the Summerfield school fields
- Existing substation + cost of relocation
- Existing community of users needs to be maintained (mix of uses and integrated sites)
- Wadham Gated community
- Access required to Summerfield School in case of future development
- Level change – could this be an opportunity for parking?
- Backs of Wadham/ Merrifield onto site.
- Some trees need retaining
- Underground services

