

**East Area Planning Committee**

6<sup>th</sup> August 2014

**Application Number:** 14/01494/FUL

**Decision Due by:** 2nd September 2014

**Proposal:** Demolition of various vacant prefabricated buildings. Retention of one prefabricated building plus the construction of 3 storey research building, catering building, 100 space car park and ancillary work for temporary period during construction of proposed Big Data Institute (BDI) Building on adjacent land.

**Site Address:** University Of Oxford Old Road Campus, Roosevelt Drive, **Appendix 1.**

**Ward:** Churchill Ward

**Agent:** Savills

**Applicant:** The Chancellor, Masters and Scholars Of The University Of Oxford

---

**Recommendation:** Approve for a temporary period of 3 years, subject to the separate grant of planning permission on adjacent land to reserved matters planning application 14/01586/RES for the Big Data Institute (BDI) Building,

### **Reasons for Approval**

- 1 The Council considers that the proposal accords with the policies of the development plan as summarised below. It has taken into consideration all other material matters, including matters raised in response to consultation and publicity. Any material harm that the development would otherwise give rise to can be offset by the conditions imposed.
- 2 The proposals represent arrangements required for a temporary period only whilst new construction work takes place on the University's extended Old Road Campus site of which this application site forms part. Access to the site is via the same route off Roosevelt Drive as currently with no additional parking permitted. There are therefore no implications for traffic generation over and above those currently in existence. Nor are there any wildlife or drainage implications.
- 3 Whilst the concerns of neighbours and local residents are noted, such impacts as there are can be mitigated by suitable conditions and the land restored accordingly in due course.

## **Conditions.**

1. Temporary permission.
2. Development in accordance with approved plans.
3. Occupation only following vacation of Rosemary Rue & New Richards buildings.
4. Use by University Campus only.
5. No unapproved tree works.
6. Tree protection plan.
7. Surface design: root protection areas.
8. Arboricultural method statement.
9. Surface to car park.
10. Details of lighting and CCTV.
11. Additional cycle parking.

## **Principal Planning Policies:**

### Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016

NE11 - Land Drainage & River Engineering Works  
NE12 - Groundwater Flow  
NE13 - Water Quality  
NE14 - Water and Sewerage Infrastructure  
NE15 - Loss of Trees and Hedgerows  
NE20 - Wildlife Corridors  
NE21 - Species Protection  
NE23 - Habitat Creation in New Developments  
CP1 - Development Proposals  
CP8 - Design Development to Relate to its Context  
CP11 - Landscape Design  
CP20 - Lighting  
CP25 - Temporary Buildings  
TR3 - Car Parking Standards

### Core Strategy

CS11 - Flooding  
CS12 - Biodiversity  
CS30 - Hospitals and medical research

### Sites and Housing Plan

SP39 - Old Road Campus

### Other Planning Documents

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Policy Guidance (PPG)
- Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

## **Public Consultation**

### Statutory Consultees Etc.

- Environment Agency (i): No objection to application as submitted; suggest

- conditions relating to contamination; and surface water drainage.
- Environment Agency (ii): Previous comments reviewed and suggested conditions not necessary; application in effect retrospective, retaining temporary surfaced car park previously permitted; surface would be removed in due course; application also includes removal of existing portakabins and erection of temporary ones; position may change if additional development proposed on the site.
- Natural England: No objection; will not damage or destroy the interests of the Lye Valley Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI); SSSI does not represent a constraint in determining application; if details change Natural England should be consulted; Standing Advice should be applied in terms of protected species; application may provide opportunities for installation of bat or bird boxes.
- Oxfordshire Country Council: Support proposals; additional cycle parking close to new building requested; surface water drainage details required.

### Third Parties

- County Councillor Brighouse: Further vehicular traffic would be unacceptable; increased congestion in Headington since 1990s; congestion on Old Road leads to rat running of residential streets; commuter parking in residential streets; residents rent out parking spaces to commuters; Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) may assist but not all residents will be able to afford permits; bus services not well used; restrictions on Churchill Drive not enforced.
- 10 Bickerton Road: Impressive proposal; no or little improvement in cycle facilities, bus access and car parking; increased parking pressure; long term infrastructure improvement should be considered including direct rail or road facilities; wildlife corridor to Old Road and Boundary Brook should be enhanced; Old Road Campus would be better located within Barton development.
- Friends of Lye Valley: Hydrological, environmental and pollinator advice should be implemented.
- 63 Old Road: Demolition of current prefabricated buildings welcomed; negative impact of temporary buildings; consideration to be given to how staff access site; details of cycling facilities lacking; Old Road dangerous to cyclists; Travel Plans seldom enforced; staff often park in surrounding streets; at Churchill Hospital etc; speed cameras or other facilities should be considered for Old Road; loss of green space lamentable; screening of buildings required; biodiversity enhancements should be explored; lighting issues at night; air quality and noise pollution are issues; new buildings should not lead to additional noise; no deliveries or collections should be allowed before 7.00am on weekdays or 8.00am at Saturdays; hours of construction should be limited; support for University's cutting edge research, but reservations about proposed development.

In addition to the above the University undertook two consultation events in the form of public exhibitions at the Old Road campus on the 28<sup>th</sup> / 29<sup>th</sup> March and 9<sup>th</sup> / 10<sup>th</sup> May 2014. These events also included consultation on forthcoming proposals on the BDI and Amenities / Bio Escalator buildings. A questionnaire was provided at the events requesting comments in response to various questions. In respect of the temporary arrangements the subject of this planning application and whether respondents were in content with the arrangements, some 82 written responses were received at the first consultation event and 28 at the second. The majority of

respondents were undecided or in agreement with the temporary arrangements in both cases, with only a small minority opposed.

### **Officers Assessment:**

#### **Background to Proposals.**

1. The planning application relates to a roughly rectangular parcel of land measuring 1.25 ha. (3 acres) which was formally part of the grounds to Boundary Brook House (Park Hospital) but has now been acquired by the University for an extension to its Old Road Medical Research Campus. **Appendix 1** refers. The enlarged site is allocated under policy SP39 of the Sites and Housing Plan for medical research, whilst policy CS30 of the Core Strategy indicates that medical research associated with the universities and hospitals will be granted planning permission on existing hospital sites in Headington and Marston.
2. The current application for temporary facilities represents enabling development to allow additional medical research facilities to be provided on the enlarged Old Road Campus site as permitted by outline permission 12/02072/OUT. The proposals therefore seek permission for a temporary car park of 100 spaces, plus temporary office accommodation for decanted staff to allow the construction of the first new building, the BDI Building, which is the subject of a separate report on this agenda. A second building, the Amenities / Bio Escalator Building, is anticipated to be the subject of a further reserved matters application later this year.
3. In these circumstances policy CP25 of the Oxford Local Plan allows for temporary structures and enabling arrangements to be in place during construction. No issues of principle are therefore raised by the current application site for the purposes indicated.
4. Officers consider the principal determining issues in this case to be:
  - site layout;
  - access and parking;
  - landscaping;
  - drainage;
  - biodiversity;
  - archaeology; and
  - sustainability.

#### **Site Layout.**

5. Part of the application site is already laid out as a temporary 100 space car park serving the campus and was required as a facility for displaced parking whilst the Kennedy and NDM buildings were under construction. Those developments have recently been completed and occupied. The intention therefore is to retain the car park for a further temporary period of up to 3 years to allow construction of the BDI building if it gains reserved matters planning permission and is implemented. In addition, north of the car park a series of poor quality and disused temporary buildings previously used by Boundary Brook House are proposed to be

removed, (with one remaining), and temporary office accommodation erected to provide for medical researchers decanted from the existing Rosemary Rue and New Richards buildings. The New Richards Building is itself a temporary structure.

6. Whilst the majority of displaced staff would occupy the temporary accommodation proposed, other staff are decanted to the Richard Doll building or the Oxford Protein Production Facility (OPPF) which has separately been granted planning permission for a first floor extension. A plan identifying the existing buildings on site is attached as **Appendix 2** to this report.
7. The proposed temporary structures required during construction of the BDI building consist of the retained single story building plus new single storey catering and security blocks and new 3 storey office block. The 3 storey block of accommodation is essentially a collection of stacked portacabins, rising to a height of 11.2m. Whilst this is considerably taller than the temporary buildings they replace, it is well short of the 14.2m maximum height permitted to parapet level for the B2 research building ultimately envisaged for this part of the enlarged campus in the outline planning permission. In any event the proposed portacabins are set a minimum of 25m from the Old Road boundary of the site to the north, behind a screening of mature trees and high stone wall. They would be craned into position from the temporary car park.
8. From the northern part of the car park a series of temporary footpaths with low level bollard lighting would link the various buildings to each other, to the car park, and to two pedestrian access points from the footpath / cycle path running alongside and east of the Oxford PGMDE building. The footpath would consist of paving on a sand and geotextile base. In total approximately 1300 sq m of temporary floorspace is provided, accommodating approximately 120 staff. Also provided to the south - east corner of the application site are a temporary electricity sub station and switch room.

### **Access and Parking.**

9. Access to the 100 space temporary car park is taken from the Old Road Campus access road off Roosevelt Drive, opposite the Campus Research Building (Institute of Cancer Medicine). The access itself is approximately 6m wide allowing two way movement with a clockwise circulation around the car park which consists of a compacted gravel based surface. Access to the temporary sub station would be directly off Roosevelt Drive. Both Roosevelt Drive and the campus access road are private thoroughfares rather than public highway and the Highway Authority raise no objection to the further temporary use of the access arrangements currently in place.
10. In the wider context some 251 car parking spaces are currently in use to serve the whole campus and this number would be retained on site as a maximum until such time as new permanent facilities are provided as part of the Amenities / Bio Escalator building. That building is due to occupy part of the current temporary car park site if permitted and would contain permanent car parking to serve the enlarged campus.

11. The cycle parking available on the campus would remain available during construction of BDI, plus a small number of cycle hire stands as part of the County Council on - street cycle hire facility. In addition temporary cycle stands to accommodate up to 40 cycles are indicated adjacent to the temporary security building. This is on the basis of 1 space per 2.8 staff located within the temporary buildings. This is the same ratio as accepted for the enlarged campus as a whole in the outline permission 12/02072/OUT.

### **Landscaping.**

12. The temporary car park occupies part of the parkland setting to the Boundary Brook House site with its mature tree coverage and more recent planting. A hedge consisting in the main of hawthorn, hazel and Norway maple previously ran across the car park site from west to east but was removed to facilitate its construction. It was not visible from outside the site however and was assessed as of low significance in visual terms. To create the access point, a second grouping of hawthorn and field maple specimens were also removed. These were assessed as of moderate visual quality and were generally young specimens with more mature examples nearby retained. A single Norway maple of low quality was also removed from the southern side of the car park site.

13. Officers were satisfied when the previous permission was granted for the temporary car park that the minimum numbers of tree removals were involved, and that none were of outstanding value. The design and layout also responded to the arboricultural constraints of the site with the footprint of the parking area kept well clear of root protection areas (RPAs). Where some encroachment into the RPAs was unavoidable design methods to protect roots were incorporated in the form of permeable surfaces set within cellular confinement materials as recommended in British Standards. With these features in place the car park has operated successfully without damage to important trees. For this latest temporary permission the tree protection measures are extended accordingly, to continue in place for the duration of the temporary permission.

14. Whilst the car park otherwise remains unchanged from the previous temporary permission, 2m wide trenching is required to run underground cabling across the car park from the temporary sub station to the temporary buildings.

15. All these arrangements have been brought forward in full collaboration with the Planning Service's Tree Officer and are accepted accordingly.

### **Drainage.**

16. The application site does not fall within any flood area though the Boundary Brook exists nearby to the eastern side of the campus site and drains towards Lye Valley where an SSSI is located.

17. The temporary surface laid to the car park consists of 200 to 250mm of compacted stone to a so called modified Type 3 specification. This would give a 30% void ratio in the sub base ensuring rapid permeability into the underlying soil,

and mirroring natural conditions. The underlying soil is sandy with the water table located at approximately 3 to 4m. As a consequence the temporary surface would possess good drainage characteristics which would not cause any run off issues but would imitate the natural drainage regime.

18. In response to public consultation statutory bodies have raised no objection to these arrangements continuing.

### **Biodiversity.**

19. Prior to the granting of the outline planning permission two separate wildlife surveys were undertaken during 2008 and 2009. As the bulk of the car park area consisted of mown grass, it was assessed as unlikely to be attractive to reptiles, especially as the site was isolated from suitable reptile habitats elsewhere. The surveys also confirmed the land as being unlikely to be colonised by badgers. Surveys did reveal occasional use of a roof void within the main reception building of the Boundary Brook House by bats however, but this is approximately 80m away from the current application site at its nearest point. It was also assessed that foraging was most likely to be taking place on the hospital site with the possibility of actual roosts nearby but off site to the south. Nearer to the car park site itself some 7 trees were identified with cavities etc which could potentially be suitable as bat roosts, though there was no evidence of actual habitats. None of the trees concerned were removed to make way for the car park.

20. In preparation of this latest application and accompanying case for the BDI building, fresh ecological surveys were undertaken of the sites in May 2014. In terms of the temporary site, none of the buildings still present was identified in the survey as possessing any obvious features which would be likely to be attractive to nesting birds or roosting bats, and none possessed any evidence of bat or bird presence on their exteriors. No bats were seen or filmed to emerge from buildings on site, and no bat calls were recorded by static detectors to suggest any presence. A total of 15 common pipistrelle bats were witnessed and recorded commuting over the site from south to north however during the late evening of 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2014. These were witnessed above the tree canopy.

### **Archaeology**

21. The application site is of archaeological interest as it is located within an extensive landscape of Roman pottery kilns and related infrastructure orientated on the Dorchester – Alchester Road. A desk based assessment has previously been produced for the site and a geophysical survey undertaken. The survey did not reveal any anomalies suggesting the presence of the pottery kilns. However it did record trends in the data which may indicate the presence of localised archaeological features. A condition to the outline permission therefore requires the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a previously agreed scheme of investigation, relating to the whole enlarged campus site.

22. Since that condition was included in the notice of outline permission,

circumstances have changed in relation to the temporary site the subject of this application in that trenching has become required for underground cabling. A further archaeological condition is therefore suggested requiring a watching brief during excavation works for the cable trenching.

### **Sustainability.**

23. The car park is required for a temporary period of up to 3 years. Following that period the temporary buildings and car park surface would be removed and the land restored in readiness for later phases of development of the extended campus. Officers therefore conclude that the grant of planning permission does not give rise to any sustainability considerations over and above the existing arrangements.

### **Conclusion.**

24. The planning application relates to the use of a parcel of land formerly part of the grounds to Boundary Brook House. Although the laying out of the car park with a temporary surface has resulted in the loss of some trees and hedges, none of the losses are of particular significance in arboricultural terms, and no further trees are lost to provide the temporary office accommodation now sought. Nor are there other implications in terms of access, traffic generation, drainage or wildlife. Moreover the use of the land allows the University's medical research campus to continue to operate much as now whilst new research facilities are brought on stream over the next 3 years in line with the outline planning permission granted in 2013.

25. Officers have concluded that the temporary arrangements can therefore be supported accordingly.

### **Human Rights Act 1998**

Officers have considered the Human Rights Act 1998 in reaching a recommendation to grant planning permission, subject to conditions. Officers have considered the potential interference with the rights of the owners/occupiers of surrounding properties under Article 8 and/or Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Act and consider that it is proportionate.

Officers have also considered the interference with the human rights of the applicant under Article 8 and/or Article 1 of the First Protocol caused by imposing conditions. Officers consider that the conditions are necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others and to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest. The interference is therefore justifiable and proportionate.

### **Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998**



Officers have considered, with due regard, the likely effect of the proposal on the need to reduce crime and disorder as part of the determination of this application, in accordance with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. In reaching a recommendation to grant planning permission subject to conditions, officers consider that the proposal will not undermine crime prevention or the promotion of community safety.

**Background Papers:** 12/02072/OUT, 11/01918/FUL, 14/01586/RES, 14/01494/FUL.

**Contact Officer:** Murray Hancock

**Extension:** 2153

**Date:** 28th July 2014

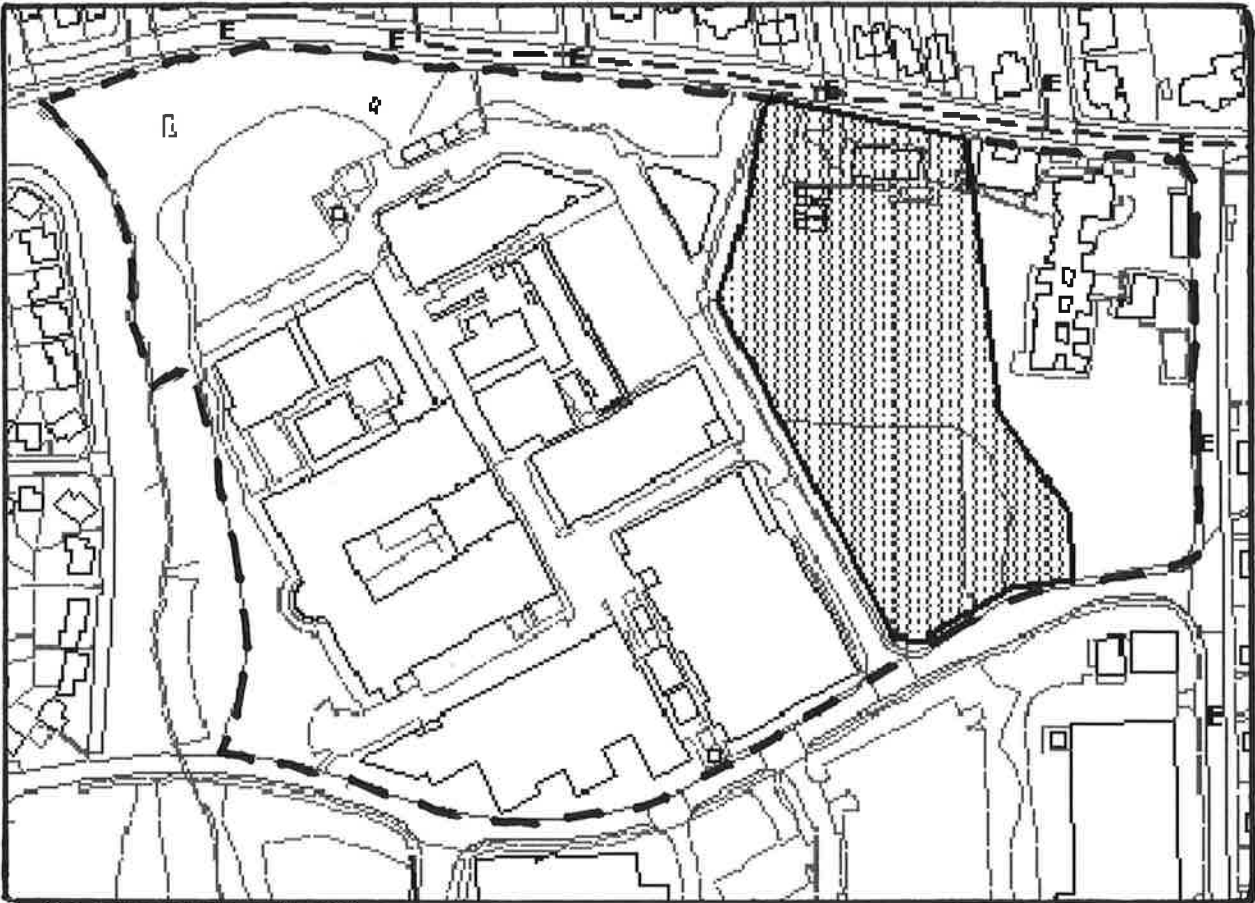
# Appendix 1

## 14/01494/FUL - University Of Oxford Old Road Campus

www.oxford.gov.uk

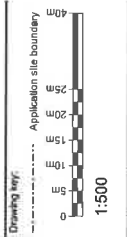


N



© Crown Copyright and database right 2011.  
Ordnance Survey 100019348

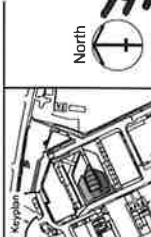
- General Notes**
1. Dimensions are in millimetres unless stated otherwise.
  2. Levels are in metres AOD unless stated otherwise.
  3. Dimensions govern over levels except for Town Planning purposes.
  4. All dimensions to be verified on site before proceeding.
  5. All discrepancies to be notified in writing to Make Limited.
- © Make Limited 2014



Rev	Date	Description	CHK
1	07/14	Issue for issue	

**make**  
 13 Filroy Street,  
 London, W1T 4BQ  
 Tel: +44 (0) 20 7636 5151  
 Fax: +44 (0) 20 7636 5252  
 info@makearchitects.com  
 www.makearchitects.com

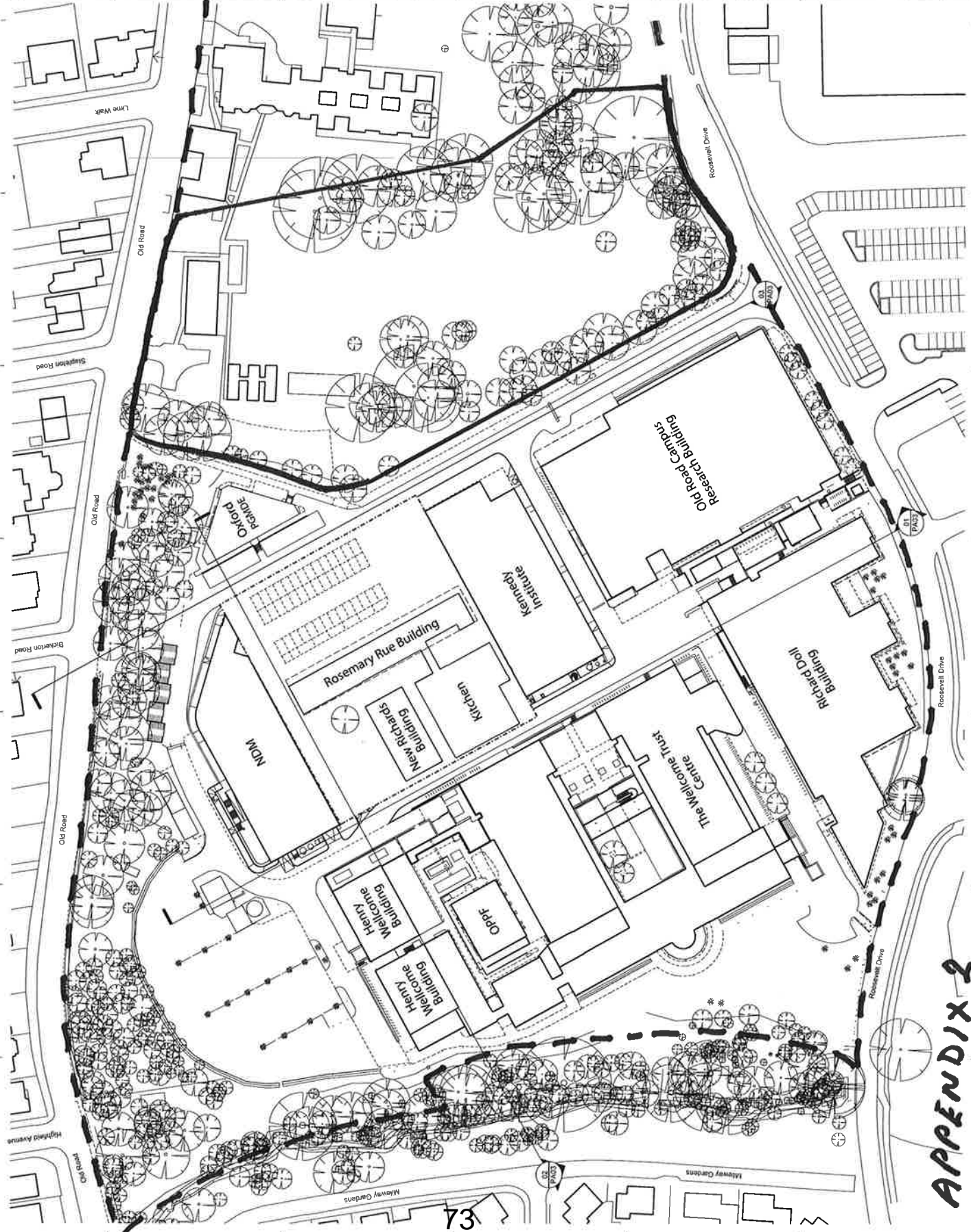
**Client:**  
 Oxford University Estates Services  
 The Malthouse  
 Tūmarsh Lane  
 Oxford - OX1 1NQ



**Project:** Plot B5, Old Road Campus

**Drawing Title:** Existing Campus Site Plan

Scale	1:500	Date	30.05.14
Project No.	0839	Rev No.	00
Draw No.	PA02		



This page is intentionally left blank