

Agenda

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Planning Review Committee

Date: **Wednesday 29 April 2015**

Time: **6.00 pm**

Place: **The Old Library, Town Hall**

For any further information please contact:

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As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record the meeting please let the Contact Officer know how you wish to do this before the start of the meeting.

Planning Review Committee

Membership

Chair	Councillor James Fry	North;
Vice-Chair	Councillor Jean Fooks	Summertown;
	Councillor Stephen Goddard	Wolvercote;
	Councillor David Henwood	Cowley;
	Councillor Sam Hollick	Holywell;
	Councillor Pat Kennedy	Lye Valley;
	Councillor Mark Lygo	Churchill;
	Councillor Dee Sinclair	Quarry and Risinghurst;
	Councillor Ed Turner	Rose Hill and Iffley;

The quorum for this meeting is five members. Substitutes are permitted

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AGENDA

	Pages
1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
3 LITTLEMORE PARK, ARMSTRONG ROAD: 14/02940/OUT	9 - 60

Site address: Littlemore Park, Armstrong Road, Oxford

Proposal: Outline planning application (with all matters reserved) seeking permission for up to 270 residential dwellings of 1 to 4 bedrooms on 2 to 5 floors to incorporate a maximum of 104 houses and 166 flats. Provision of car parking, cycle and bin storage, landscaping and ancillary works.

Officer recommendation: That the Committee GRANT outline planning permission, subject to the conditions below and the satisfactory completion of an accompanying legal agreement, and to delegate to the Head of City Development the issuing of the Notice of Permission upon its completion:

Conditions:

1. Time Limit for Commencement.
2. Approved plans and documents.
3. Reserved Matters Applications.
4. Phasing of Development.
5. Details of all external materials.
6. Landscaping and Public Realm.
7. Tree Protection Plan.
8. Landscape Management Plan.
9. Site Layout to incorporate space for links to the Science Park and wider area.
10. Ecological Mitigation, Compensation, and Management Plan.
11. Lifetime Homes Standards.
12. Car Parking Standards.
13. Cycle Parking Standards.
14. Sustainability and Energy Strategy.
15. Site Wide Foul and Surface Water Drainage Strategy .
16. Archaeology – evaluation.
17. Noise Attenuation Measures.
18. Flood Risk Assessment Mitigation Measure.
19. Contaminated Land - Risk Assessment.
20. Contaminated Land - Verification Report.
21. Contaminated Land - Unsuspected Contamination.
22. Contaminated Land - Foundation Design and Piling.
23. Secured By Design Measures.
24. Highways - Details of access roads.
25. Highways - Construction Traffic Management Plan.
26. Highways - Travel Plan.
27. Details of Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure.
28. Withdrawal of Permitted Development Right.

Legal Agreement:

- Affordable housing.
- Employment Land Swap – Churchill Site.
- Management of Linear Park.
- Bio-diversity off-setting.
- Future proof pedestrian / cycle links.
- Financial contribution of £50,0000 towards general sports and leisure facilities within Littlemore.
- Financial contribution of £795 per dwelling towards Public Transport Improvement.

**4 ARISTOTLE LANE FOOTBRIDGE, ARISTOTLE LANE:
14/01348/FUL**

61 - 92

Site address: Aristotle Lane Footbridge, Aristotle Lane**Proposal:** Demolition of existing footbridge. Erection of replacement footbridge with ramped approaches and new stepped access. Provision of 12 car parking spaces and change of use of part of land adjacent to railway lines for educational purposes as part of SS Phillip and James School.**Officer recommendation:** That the Committee GRANT planning permission subject to the following conditions:

- 1 Development begun within time limit
- 2 Develop in accordance with approved plans
- 3 Boundary and abutment details, including spur ramp, handrails, boundary walls and bridge parapet details
- 4 Flood plain storage
- 5 Contamination and remediation
- 6 Demolition and Construction Travel Plan
- 7 Sustainable drainage
- 8 Tree protection
- 9 Landscape plan required
- 10 Landscape carry out after completion
- 11 Landscape management plan
- 12 Hard surface design.
- 13 Underground services
- 14 Tree protection plan
- 15 Arboricultural method statement
- 16 Samples of materials
- 17 Sample panels
18. Biodiversity
- 19 Archaeology

Legal Agreement

No CIL contributions or s106 agreement required

5 MINUTES

Minutes from 26 January 2015

Recommendation: That the minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2015 be APPROVED as a true and accurate record.

6 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The following dates are scheduled for meetings of this Committee:-

- 27 May 2015 (if needed)
- 24 June 2015 (if needed)
- 22 July 2015 (if needed)
- 26 August 2015 (if needed)

DECLARING INTERESTS

General duty

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed "Declarations of Interest" or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your* employment; sponsorship (ie payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licenses for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

Declaring an interest

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest.

If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Members' Code of Conduct and public perception

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member "must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself" and that "you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned". What this means is that the matter of interests must be viewed within the context of the Code as a whole and regard should continue to be paid to the perception of the public.

*Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those member's spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR DEALING WITH PLANNING APPLICATIONS AT AREA PLANNING COMMITTEES AND PLANNING REVIEW COMMITTEE

Planning controls the development and use of land in the public interest. Applications must be determined in accordance with the Council's adopted policies, unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. The Committee must be conducted in an orderly, fair and impartial manner.

The following minimum standards of practice will be followed.

1. All Members will have pre-read the officers' report. Members are also encouraged to view any supporting material and to visit the site if they feel that would be helpful
2. At the meeting the Chair will draw attention to this code of practice. The Chair will also explain who is entitled to vote.
3. The sequence for each application discussed at Committee shall be as follows:-
 - (a) the Planning Officer will introduce it with a short presentation;
 - (b) any objectors may speak for up to 5 minutes in total;
 - (c) any supporters may speak for up to 5 minutes in total;
 - (d) speaking times may be extended by the Chair, provided that equal time is given to both sides. Any non-voting City Councillors and/or Parish and County Councillors who may wish to speak for or against the application will have to do so as part of the two 5-minute slots mentioned above;
 - (e) voting members of the Committee may raise questions (which shall be directed via the Chair to the lead officer presenting the application, who may pass them to other relevant Officers and/or other speakers); and
 - (f) voting members will debate and determine the application.

At public meetings Councillors should be careful to be neutral and to listen to all points of view. They should take care to express themselves with respect to all present including officers. They should never say anything that could be taken to mean they have already made up their mind before an application is determined.

4. Public requests to speak

Members of the public wishing to speak must notify the Chair or the Democratic Services Officer before the beginning of the meeting, giving their name, the application/agenda item they wish to speak on and whether they are objecting to or supporting the application. Notifications can be made via e-mail or telephone, to the Democratic Services Officer (whose details are on the front of the Committee agenda) or given in person before the meeting starts.

5. Written statements from the public

Members of the public and councillors can send the Democratic Services Officer written statements to circulate to committee members, and the planning officer prior to the meeting. Statements are accepted and circulated up to 24 hours before the start of the meeting.

Material received from the public at the meeting will not be accepted or circulated, as Councillors are unable to view proper consideration to the new information and officers may not be able to check for accuracy or provide considered advice on any material consideration arising.

6. Exhibiting model and displays at the meeting

Applicants or members of the public can exhibit models or displays at the meeting as long as they notify the Democratic Services Officer of their intention at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting so that members can be notified.

7. Recording meetings

Members of the public and press can record the proceedings of any public meeting of the Council. If you do wish to record the meeting, please notify the Committee clerk prior to the meeting so that they can inform the Chair and direct you to the best plan to record. You are not allowed to disturb the meeting and the Chair will stop the meeting if they feel a recording is disruptive.

The Council asks those recording the meeting:

- Not to edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings. This includes not editing an image or views expressed in a way that may ridicule, or show a lack of respect towards those being recorded.
- To avoid recording members of the public present unless they are addressing the meeting.

For more information on recording at meetings please refer to the Council's [Protocol for Recording at Public Meetings](#)

8. Meeting Etiquette

All representations should be heard in silence and without interruption. The Chair will not permit disruptive behaviour. Members of the public are reminded that if the meeting is not allowed to proceed in an orderly manner then the Chair will withdraw the opportunity to address the Committee. The Committee is a meeting held in public, not a public meeting.

9. Members should not:

- (a) rely on considerations which are not material planning considerations in law;
- (b) question the personal integrity or professionalism of officers in public;
- (c) proceed to a vote if minded to determine an application against officer's recommendation until the reasons for that decision have been formulated; and
- (d) seek to re-design, or negotiate amendments to, an application. The Committee must determine applications as they stand and may impose appropriate conditions.

Planning Review Committee

29 May 2015

Application Number: 14/02940/OUT

Decision Due by: 22 January 2015

Proposal: Outline planning application (with all matters reserved) seeking permission for up to 270 residential dwellings of 1 to 4 bedrooms on 2 to 5 floors to incorporate a maximum of 104 houses and 166 flats. Provision of car parking, cycle and bin storage, landscaping and ancillary works. (Amended plans and additional information)

Site Address: Littlemore Park, Armstrong Road, Oxford

Ward: Littlemore

Agent: N/A

Applicant: Oxford University Hospitals
NHS Trust

At the East Area Planning Committee on the 8th April 2015, Members resolved to refuse outline planning permission for the following reason

'The development proposed would lead to the overdevelopment of the site such that the density would lead to a high number of car journeys, increasing traffic generation in the wider area, and to poor quality of life within the site for future occupiers. Furthermore the links from the site are not sufficiently sustainable to reduce reliance on the private car and there was a risk of the isolation of non-car users. This would be contrary to Policy CS13 and CS18 of the Oxford Core Strategy, Policies CP1, TR1 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, and Policy JP9 of the Sites and Housing Plan.'

The application has been called-in to the Planning Review Committee by Councillors Darke, Price, Rowley, Smith, Coulter, Simm, Cook, Kennedy, Hollingsworth, Pressel, Fry, Turner, and Seamons on grounds that the site is already identified for development within the Sites and Housing Plan and that housing is a city-wide priority for the Council.

This cover report will provide further clarification on these matters and should be read in conjunction with the officer's report dated 12th April 2011 attached as **Appendix 1**

Representations Received

A summary of all comments received from statutory and third part consultees are set out within the original committee report (**Appendix 2**).

Since this report was published further letters of comment have been received from the following addresses

- 4, 58 Oxford Road; Mr C Chaundy

The comments can be summarised as follows:

- The proposal has no real understanding of the impact on neighbouring roads, communities and quality of life
- The Transport Assessment has given misinformation about Oxford Road and inadequate information about the possible impact of increasing traffic
- A more thorough assessment of the impact that the increasing traffic will have on Littlemore Village should be carried out.
- The traffic on Oxford Road is getting worse and will not cope with the further traffic generated from these homes
- The traffic on Oxford Road will make this dangerous for pedestrians and drivers because the road is too narrow
- Oxford Road is not an 'A' road but an unnumbered classified distributor road
- The impact upon Oxford Road should be risk assessed and possible modification of the highway considered to relieve the Oxford Road

Officers Assessment:

1. The East Area Planning Committee were primarily concerned about the following points
 - That the site is located in an unsustainable location with an over-reliance on the private car.
 - The impact of the additional traffic would be detrimental to the existing residential suburb
2. Officers consider that the original committee report (**Appendix 1**) dealt with these points, but would provide the following additional comments

Sustainability of the Site

3. The site is allocated for employment or residential use under Sites and Housing Plan Policy SP30. The Sites and Housing Plan 2011 -2016 was adopted in February 2013 and forms part of the Local Development Framework.
4. The foreword to the Sites and Housing Plan recognises that the plan will deliver the aims of the Oxford Core Strategy in helping to shape Oxford into a more sustainable and affordable place to live and work. The site allocation policies allocate specific sites that are suitable for particular uses, with an emphasis placed on delivering new housing sites, in order to make better use of the available land within the city to address the chronic housing need and support the local economy. The respective sites were assessed against 6 key objectives, one of which being to ensure that all site allocations are in accessible locations or that

their accessibility can be improved to minimise overall travel demand.

5. The Sites and Housing Plan was adopted following an examination in public, in which the Inspector considered that with respect to the location of the individual site allocations *'Oxford is a small city that benefits from good public transport links. Therefore all areas within it are relatively accessible. Consequently, all of the allocations are sustainably located'*. Therefore the delivery of allocated sites within the Sites and Housing Plan are a key part of providing the Councils five year supply of housing and the Oxford City Council's Growth Strategy.
6. As stated within the original committee report (**Appendix 1**) the site is located within the existing residential suburb of Littlemore. The site is near to an existing public transport corridor on the Sandford Road / Oxford Road with bus stops within 400m of the site outside the Littlemore Mental Health Centre. The applicant has agreed to provide a financial contribution towards improving the bus service along this corridor through an evening and weekend service along this corridor in order to enhance the existing bus service. It is also noted that since the Sites and Housing Plan was adopted, potential public transport improvements have been proposed for the area through the potential opening of the Cowley Branch Line rail corridor by Chiltern Railways.
7. The site is a convenient distance from local facilities such as employment opportunities in Oxford Science Park; the shops at St.Nicholas Road Neighbourhood Shopping Centre and Sainsburys (Heyford Hill); along with local schools. The proposed layout has sought to enhance pedestrian and cycle links to and from the site where possible, and therein has created appropriate links to Sandford Road and Oxford Road while also setting aside appropriate land to enable wider links to be provided to the Science Park, Minchery Road, or any potential station for the Cowley Branch Line at a later date.
8. Officers consider that the general principle of developing this site for residential use has been established through Sites and Housing Plan Policy SP30 which considered the sustainability and accessibility of the site through the adoption process of this development plan document. As a result officers consider that it would not be reasonable to refuse permission on the basis that the site is in an unsustainable location with an over-reliance on the private car as this would conflict with the general aims of the site allocation policy (SP30).

Highways Impact

9. A Transport Assessment and Travel Plan have been submitted with the application along with a Technical Note that considers the key transport issues with the proposal. The methodology for this assessment was scoped out and agreed with the Local Highways Authority prior to submission of the document.
10. It has been brought to officer's attention that the Transport Assessment and committee report has incorrectly described the Oxford Road as an 'A' Road (A4158). The Local Highways Authority have confirmed that the A4158 (Oxford Road) is located to the north of the Littlemore roundabout leading towards Rose Hill, Henley Avenue and Iffley Road. The Oxford Road leading southwards from

the roundabout is an unnumbered classified road, as is Sandford Road.

11. Notwithstanding this matter, the Local Highways Authority has confirmed that the description of the Oxford Road as an 'A' road within the Transport Assessment would not have a bearing on the findings of the assessment. The Transport Assessment is a robust document whose methodology for assessing the traffic generated by the residential development was scoped out with the Local Highways Authority prior to submission. As stated within paragraph 37 of the committee report (Appendix 2) the proposed development would create no major impact upon the surrounding road network and the Local Highways Authority have raised no objection to the application in this regard.

Conclusion:

12. The proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of the relevant policies of the Oxford Core Strategy 2026, Sites and Housing Plan 2011-2026, and Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 and therefore officer's recommendation is to approve the development in principle for the reasons set out within **Appendix 2** of this report, but defer the application for the completion of a legal agreement.

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, officers consider that the proposal will not undermine crime prevention or the promotion of community safety.

Contact Officer: Andrew Murdoch

Extension: 252228

Date: 20 April 2015

Application Number: 14/02940/OUT

Decision Due by: 22 January 2015

Proposal: Outline planning application (with all matters reserved) seeking permission for up to 270 residential dwellings of 1 to 4 bedrooms on 2 to 5 floors to incorporate a maximum of 104 houses and 166 flats. Provision of car parking, cycle and bin storage, landscaping and ancillary works.

Site Address: Littlemore Park, Armstrong Road (**site plan**)

Ward: Littlemore

Agent: N/A

Applicant: Oxford University Hospitals
NHS Trust

Recommendation:

The East Area Planning Committee is recommended to grant outline planning permission, subject to the satisfactory completion of an accompanying legal agreement and to delegate to the Head of City Development the issuing of the Notice of Permission upon its completion.

Reasons for Approval

- 1 The proposed development is submitted in outline form with all matters such as access, landscape, scale, appearance, and layout reserved for a later date. The proposed development would make an efficient use of an allocated development site to provide much needed good quality affordable and market housing in a manner that would establish a balanced and mixed community within the existing residential suburb of Littlemore. Although the site is primarily allocated for employment, the Oxford University Hospital NHS Trust has demonstrated that an equivalent amount of B1 employment (employees) could be delivered at the Churchill Hospital site to enable the application site to be used for residential purposes. The illustrative masterplan has demonstrated that the quantum of development could be provided in a manner that subject to minor alterations to the layout would create a coherent sense of place suitable scale and appearance to establish a single neighbourhood that is well integrated into the urban fabric of the surrounding residential area without having an impact upon adjacent residential developments. The application has demonstrated that it would not have an adverse impact in highway safety terms and could provide sufficient off-street cycle and car parking, and pedestrian and cycle links that improve

accessibility to the surrounding network. The outline application contains sufficient supporting information to demonstrate that it would not have an impact upon biodiversity; trees; archaeology; flood risk; drainage; air quality; land contamination; or noise that could not be mitigated through the reserved matters applications subject to appropriate measures being secured by condition or associated legal agreements. The proposal would accord with the overall aims of the National Planning Policy Framework and relevant policies of the Oxford Core Strategy 2026, Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, and Sites and Housing Plan 2011-2026.

- 2 Officers have considered carefully all objections to these proposals. Officers have come to the view, for the detailed reasons set out in the officers report, that the objections do not amount, individually or cumulatively, to a reason for refusal and that all the issues that have been raised have been adequately addressed and the relevant bodies consulted.
- 3 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.

Conditions

- 1 Time Limit for Commencement
- 2 Approved plans and documents
- 3 Reserved Matters Applications
- 4 Phasing of Development
- 5 Details of all external materials
- 6 Landscaping and Public Realm
- 7 Tree Protection Plan
- 8 Landscape Management Plan
- 9 Site Layout to incorporate space for links to the Science Park and wider area
- 10 Ecological Mitigation, Compensation, and Management Plan
- 11 Lifetime Homes Standards
- 12 Car Parking Standards
- 13 Cycle Parking Standards
- 14 Sustainability and Energy Strategy
- 15 Site Wide Foul and Surface Water Drainage Strategy
- 16 Archaeology - evaluation
- 17 Noise Attenuation Measures
- 18 Flood Risk Assessment Mitigation Measure
- 19 Contaminated Land - Risk Assessment
- 20 Contaminated Land - Verification Report
- 21 Contaminated Land - Unsuspected Contamination
- 22 Contaminated Land - Foundation Design and Piling
- 23 Secured By Design Measures
- 24 Highways - Details of access roads
- 25 Highways - Construction Traffic Management Plan
- 26 Highways - Travel Plan

- 27 Details of Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure
- 28 Withdrawal of Permitted Development Right

Legal Agreement:

- Affordable housing
- Employment Land Swap – Churchill Site
- Management of Linear Park
- Bio-diversity off-setting
- Future proof pedestrian / cycle links
- Financial contribution of £50,000 towards general sports and leisure facilities within Littlemore
- Financial contribution of £795 per dwelling towards Public Transport Improvement.

Principal Planning Policies:

Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016

- CP1 - Development Proposals
- CP6 - Efficient Use of Land & Density
- CP8 - Design Development to Relate to its Context
- CP9 - Creating Successful New Places
- CP10 - Siting Development to Meet Functional Needs
- CP11 - Landscape Design
- CP13 - Accessibility
- CP14 - Public Art
- CP17 - Recycled Materials
- CP19 - Nuisance
- CP20 - Lighting
- CP21 - Noise
- CP22 - Contaminated Land
- CP23 - Air Quality Management Areas
- TR1 - Transport Assessment
- TR2 - Travel Plans
- NE15 - Loss of Trees and Hedgerows
- NE16 - Protected Trees
- NE20 - Wildlife Corridors
- HE2 - Archaeology

Core Strategy

- CS2_ - Previously developed and greenfield land
- CS9_ - Energy and natural resources
- CS11_ - Flooding
- CS12_ - Biodiversity
- CS13_ - Supporting access to new development
- CS14_ - Supporting city-wide movement
- CS17_ - Infrastructure and developer contributions
- CS18_ - Urban design, town character, historic environment
- CS19_ - Community safety
- CS22_ - Level of housing growth

CS23_ - Mix of housing
CS24_ - Affordable housing
CS28_ - Employment sites
CS30_ - Hospitals and medical research
HP16_ - Residential car parking

Sites and Housing Plan

HP2_ - Accessible and Adaptable Homes
HP3_ - Affordable Homes from Large Housing Sites
HP9_ - Design, Character and Context
HP11_ - Low Carbon Homes
HP12_ - Indoor Space
HP13_ - Outdoor Space
HP14_ - Privacy and Daylight
HP15_ - Residential cycle parking
SP30_ - Littlemore Park, Armstrong Road
SP8_ - Churchill Hospital Site and Ambulance Research Centre

Other Planning Documents

- National Planning Policy Framework
- Affordable Housing and Planning Obligations SPD
- Balance of Dwellings SPD
- Natural Resource Impact Analysis SPD
- Parking Standards SPD
- Accessible Homes Technical Advice Note
- Energy Statement Technical Advice Note
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule

Planning History

93/00391/NOY - Demolition of some buildings on the site, retention of other buildings & change of use from hospital to B1 and outline application for erection of buildings to provide 22,575 sq. m Business Use Class B1 & associated leisure facilities, new access to Sandford Rd (Amended Plans): Approved

07/02314/FUL - Proposed two storey building for new research premises and ancillary uses, (including some clinical work, and associated teaching) for the Institute of Reproductive Sciences. Plant room, storage, car and cycle parking, access to Armstrong Road and landscaping (Amended Plans): Approved

Public Consultation

A summary of all comments received from statutory and third party consultees are set out in **Appendix 2** of this report.

Pre-Application Discussions / Oxford Design Review Panel

The applicant undertook detailed pre-application discussions through a series of meetings with Oxford City Council and a public exhibition at Littlemore Village Hall on

the 14th August 2014.

The proposal has also been reviewed by the Oxford Design Review Panel on the 8th May 2014 and the 18th September 2014. The responses are enclosed in **Appendix 3** of this report.

Officers Assessment:

Background to Proposals

1. The application relates to approximately 6.28ha of open land in the south-western corner of Littlemore and close to Sandford-on-Thames which is accessed from Armstrong Road. The site is bordered by Armstrong Road to the north, A4074 to the south-west, Littlemore Brook to the south-east, and Sandford Road to the north-west (**site plan**)
2. The site is owned by the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust and was formerly part of the Littlemore Hospital site. It comprises open ground which is covered in rough grass, scrub, and hedgerows. There is a dense copse of trees in the north-west corner adjacent to Sandford Road, and a smaller copse in the central part of the site adjacent to Armstrong Road.
3. Beyond the site boundaries the residential development at St Georges Manor and the SAE Institute lie to the north which were formed from the former Littlemore Hospital buildings. The Oxford Science Park lies to the south-east on the opposite side of the Littlemore Brook. The 'Oxford Nursery' children's nursery is in the north-western section of the site but does not form part of this application.
4. The proposal is seeking outline planning permission for a residential development of up to 270 (1 to 4 bed) units comprising 104 dwellinghouses and 166 flats, provision of car parking, refuse storage and ancillary works.
5. The application is made in outline form with all matters such as access, appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale reserved for a later date should outline permission be granted.
6. An indicative masterplan has been included with the application to demonstrate how the quantum of development could be delivered on the site through a range of dwelling types and buildings of up to five storeys. The masterplan also provides details of the landscaping strategy, public and private open space, infrastructure, access, and parking strategy.
7. Officers consider the principal determining issues in this case to be:
 - Principle of Development
 - Residential Development
 - Employment
 - Site Layout and Built Form
 - Transport
 - Archaeology
 - Landscaping

- Biodiversity
- Flood Risk and Drainage
- Sustainability
- Community Infrastructure Levy
- Other Matters

Principle of Development

8. The National Planning Policy Framework encourages the effective use of previously developed land. This is supported by Oxford Core Strategy Policy CS2 which states that development of Greenfield sites will only be allowed where they are specifically allocated within the Local Development Framework or required to maintain a five-year rolling housing-land supply in accordance with Oxford Core Strategy Policy CS22.
9. The site does not constitute previously developed land but is allocated for development in Sites and Housing Plan Policy SP30. The site is allocated for employment (Class B1) use but does support residential development as an alternative provided an equivalent amount of B1 employment (employees) is created elsewhere in Oxford. The policy also lists the following criteria which would need to be addressed in any proposal.
 - Pedestrian and cycle links should be enhanced through and to the site, including to Oxford Science Park
 - The playing field should be re-provided or a contribution made to another facility
 - A biodiversity survey will be expected to ensure that development would have no adverse impact on any UKBAP habitat
10. The way in which the outline application has responded to these points will be discussed in more detail throughout this report. However, the sites allocation would support the general principle of residential use despite it not constituting previously developed land in accordance with Oxford Core Strategy Policies CS2.

Residential Development

11. Oxford Core Strategy Policy CS23 requires residential developments to create a balanced and mixed community in order to meet future household need. The Balance of Dwellings Supplementary Planning Document (BoDSPD) identifies the site as being within the Littlemore Neighbourhood Area and provides guidance on the mix of units expected from a 'strategic site' of this size.
12. The application is seeking permission for up to 270 units, which according to the masterplan would be made up of the following dwelling types - 1 beds (15%), 2 beds (30%), 3 beds (40%), and 4+ beds (15%). This mix of units would satisfy the aims of Core Strategy Policy CS23 and the BoDSPD.
13. The Core Strategy recognises that the provision of affordable homes is a key priority in creating sustainable mixed use communities. Sites and Housing Plan Policy HP3 requires sites with a capacity for 10 or more dwellings or with an area of 0.25ha or greater to provide a minimum 50% affordable homes on site.

14. The planning statement submitted with the application states that the scheme is capable of providing 50% affordable housing but recognises that the policy indicates that this threshold can be reduced where it can be demonstrated that it would make the scheme unviable. The applicant has not advanced any such justification and therefore officers would seek 50% affordable housing on site in accordance with the policy.
15. The Affordable Housing and Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (AHPOSPD) specifies the preferred mix of dwelling sizes for the social rented and intermediate housing within the on-site provision. The affordable housing provision would need to be secured by a legal agreement which agrees the proportion, tenure mix, and dwelling sizes within those tenures under the above-mentioned policy requirements. This would need to specify the following
- A minimum of 50% affordable units (80% social rent / 20% intermediate housing) as defined by the Sites and Housing Plan and AHPOSPD
 - The mix of dwelling sizes within those tenures to be Social Rent – 1 bed (0-10%), 2 bed (15-25%), 3 Bed (35-45%), 4 bed (10-20%) and Intermediate Housing - 1 bed (0-10%), 2 bed (5-15%), 3 Bed (0-10%), 4 bed (0%) in accordance with the Sites and Housing Plan and AHPOSPD
 - The minimum floor space for the on-site affordable homes within the proposed development to accord with the Sites and Housing Plan and the AHPOSPD
 - The phasing and distribution of the affordable housing
 - The arrangements for the transfer of the affordable housing to an affordable housing provider [or the management of the affordable housing (if no RSL involved)]
16. The Sites and Housing Plan prescribes the standards for residential accommodation. Policy HP2 requires all residential development to be designed to Lifetime Homes Standards, with at least 5% of all new dwellings in schemes of this size to be fully wheelchair accessible or easily adaptable for full wheelchair use and at least 50% of these to be provided as open market dwellings. Policies HP12, HP13, and HP14 set the indoor and outdoor space requirements for dwellings. This is an outline application which has sought to reserve the layout of the development for a later stage, and so details of the internal and external layouts for the proposed dwellings within the scheme are not included. The planning statement recognises that any reserved matters application will need to ensure that the dwellings satisfy the relevant housing policies of the Sites and Housing Plan.

Employment

17. The site is allocated for employment (Class B1) use within the Sites and Housing Plan, but does state that residential use could be supported provided an equivalent amount of B1 employment (employees) provision is created elsewhere within Oxford.
18. The site is owned by the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust. The Trust is developing a strategy to make best use of its existing assets such as the current

hospital sites in order to meet its long term aims to improve clinical services and generate new employment. The supporting text to Policy SP30 acknowledges that the Trust has a preference to focus employment proposals that are linked to the hospitals and medical research on their existing hospital sites and if this is achieved then the Littlemore Park site would be better suited to residential development given the demand for housing within the city.

19. The Churchill Hospital site is allocated for further hospital related uses and employment (B1 (b), B1(c), and B2) use amongst others in Sites and Housing Plan Policy SP8. The policy recognises that this site is currently developed at a low density with scope to increase capacity through appropriate redevelopment that makes a more efficient use of land. It also recognises that the site would be better developed for employment uses such as research facilities which have a particular need to be located close to the hospital.
20. The outline application is seeking permission for residential use on the basis that an equivalent level of employment (employees) could be created at the Churchill Hospital site. The ability to develop the application site for housing would enable the capital receipts from its disposal to be reinvested in the provision of patient services in Oxford, whereas at the present time the Trust pay a capital charge to the NHS for the retention of this undeveloped asset.
21. In terms of employment density the planning statement states that Littlemore Park has a developable area of approximately 4.86ha. In 2007, planning permission was granted for 1,899m² of B1 (b) floorspace over 0.71ha under reference 07/02314/FUL. This was never implemented but the figures suggest that on a pro rata basis a total of approximately 13,007m² of employment floorspace would be achievable at Littlemore Park, which according to the 'Homes and Communities Agency Employment Density Guidance' could generate approximately 1300 B1(a), 450 B1(b), and 280 (B1c) employees per respective use.
22. The Trust is currently developing a masterplan for the Churchill Hospital and proposes to separate the site into 3 zones; Clinical / Patient Use; Research & Development and Employment; and Residential. The Employment Zone comprises the existing low density inter-war buildings and has an area of approximately 7ha. This area could potentially provide approximately 18,723m² of B1(b) floorspace using the same 2007 application for B1(b) floorspace at Littlemore Park as the basis of the calculation. This would suggest that there is capacity to provide approximately 1,872 B1(a), 650 B1(b), and 398 (B1 (c) employees which would exceed those estimated at Littlemore Park.
23. Officers consider that these figures represent reasonable assumptions about the employment levels likely to be generated on the Churchill site. Therefore the applicant has demonstrated that the requirement of Policy SP30 could be fulfilled to enable the redevelopment of Littlemore Park for residential use. This would need to be subject to the completion of a suitable legal agreement that sets out the proposed mechanism for securing the delivery of the new employment uses on the Churchill Hospital site.

Site Layout and Built Form

24. The outline application reserves all matters relating to appearance, layout, and scale of the development for a later date. Nevertheless, the application is accompanied by an indicative masterplan which sets out how the development is anticipated to be laid out at reserved matters stage.
25. The site is best viewed in two parts with the western and north-eastern areas separated by the open space between Littlemore Brook and the pinch point of Armstrong Road.
26. Layout: The illustrative masterplan has shown a residential development at a density of approximately 43 dwellings per hectare. This would be formed through a mixture of terraced dwellings and individual apartment buildings that are arranged around a clearly defined street structure. The layout has a clear public/private realm relationship with buildings facing onto the public realm and private rear gardens that are either back to back or enclosed by boundary walls. The scheme will also employ a home zone in the north-east section in order to encourage pedestrian activity and reduce car speeds. The parking strategy includes undercroft parking for apartment blocks, private parking through garages and bays to the fronts of properties, and on-street parking and visitor parking areas.
27. The Oxford Design Review Panel has commended the distinct site layout of terraced houses around a well-defined street pattern. However the panel has recommended that the layout could be more aligned between the north-eastern and western sections to achieve a single neighbourhood. In particular the street layout to the west should be repeated to the north-east. The rows of terraced housing could be extended closer to Armstrong Road to provide more space to deliver the quantum of houses throughout the site and enable the three houses to the south of the nursery to be incorporated into the scheme rather than being isolated from the development. The siting of the apartment buildings adjacent to the public open space in the north-eastern section provide good passive surveillance of the open space but the blocks to the south of the western edge do not overlook the public spaces. The residential character as an attractive and safe place to live would be improved by employing Home Zones across the entire site rather than just the north-eastern section. The mixture of undercroft, street, and private bay parking would help to reduce the impact of cars across the scheme and make parking areas more legible for residents and visitors. The large parking area alongside the A4074 is likely to feel unsafe for both residents and visitors especially at night. These spaces should be incorporated into the development between the terraces and apartment blocks to create more activity, ensuring that parking is overlooked. Similarly the undercroft parking would need to be designed appropriately to ensure that the frontages of the apartment blocks have sufficient activity at street level.
28. Officers support the recommendations of the Design Panel. The layout in the western section is clearly stronger than the north-eastern section which would benefit from a more defined street structure and the same back to back relationship rather than having a home zone creating an area of public space

between rear gardens. The three dwellings to the south of the nursery are isolated and compromise the pedestrian entrance to the site from the copse in the western corner. The home zone concept is welcomed but it is not clear why this has been employed in one small section of the development rather than the whole site. The parking strategy provides a good starting point but needs developing especially the visitor parking areas alongside the A4074 which could attract anti-social behaviour. The layout of the apartment blocks in the western section should be orientated to achieve surveillance of the open spaces. In this regard it is important to bear in mind that the submitted Masterplan is illustrative only of how the site could be laid out, and that all matters are reserved for further consideration at Reserved Matters stage but with the 'parameter plans' providing a framework accordingly. Certainly the concerns expressed above will need to be addressed in full and the applicant required to demonstrate how the layout is informed by basic urban design principles.

29. Scale of Development: The illustrative masterplan includes a parameter plan which shows the proposed heights of buildings in relation to the surrounding the area. The terraced blocks are predominately 3 storeys, increasing to 4 storeys at the end of the terraces to provide articulation to the terraces. The apartment blocks would be between 4-5 storeys dependant on the topography of the site and also their relationship to other surrounding properties.
30. The Oxford Design Review Panel concluded that the building heights across the site are sound and in particular the taller apartment blocks at the end of the terraces to the west provide a suitable termination to the rows whilst also providing a suitable buffer to the A4074. Again officers support these comments. The site is surrounded by larger scale buildings in the listed St Georges Manor, SAE Institute and the Oxford Science Park and the topography of the site would enable slightly larger scale buildings to be provided than the more modest scale dwellings that are generally seen elsewhere in Littlemore. The buildings along Armstrong Road will be important in terms of informing the general character of the development and therefore care will need to be taken with the scale of buildings in this area. Officers would expect any reserved matters application to include a character assessment which justifies any increase in scale beyond these illustrative parameters and identify appropriate locations for the larger scale buildings within the scheme.
31. Appearance: A traditional palette of materials is to be used in the development such as brickwork, stone, and timber cladding which can be seen in the local context of the listed St Georges Manor and Littlemore village. Officers consider that the development will need to respond appropriately to the site context and surrounding heritage assets such as the listed St Georges Manor. The use of traditional materials would be welcomed though it is not clear at this stage whether the buildings would take a contemporary or traditional form. Any reserved matters application should include a character assessment for the development which justifies the design and appearance of buildings to ensure that they suit the setting.
32. Open Space: The layout will maintain the existing landscape buffers to the A4074, western copse, and mature planting to Armstrong Road to protect the

green infrastructure surrounding the site. The copse in the western corner would form an important feature to the site, with a wildflower meadow and woodland walk and provision of picnic space and natural play area at the entrance to the development. A linear park would be established along Littlemore Brook and around the site perimeter to assist in the creation of flood attenuation and provision of public open space and external play areas.

33. The Oxford Design Review Panel considered that the conceptual sketches of the green spaces are strong but needed to be developed further with a stronger focus for the 'green heart' of the development and draw residents and visitors to the space. Officers recognise that the design policies of the Local Plan make clear that a minimum of 10% of the total site area must public open space. The use of the copse at the entrance and the linear park are positive aspects of the scheme but the design needs further consideration as the site is some distance from existing open land, public parks or children's play areas which place greater emphasis on their provision within the scheme. The masterplan has demonstrated that suitable open space for the development can be provided, but again this will need to be developed further through any reserved matters application.
34. In summary, officers consider that the illustrative masterplan has demonstrated that a residential development of the proposed density could be accommodated within the plot and designed in a manner that could follow basic urban design principles and establish a clear sense of place that responds to the special landscape character of the site and the setting of the historic buildings of St George's Manor adjacent to the site along with the wider context of the Littlemore Suburb. Any reserved matters applications would need to demonstrate that the development would satisfy the requirements of Oxford Core Strategy Policy CS18, Sites and Housing Plan Policy HP9, and Oxford Local Plan Policies CP1, CP8, CP9, CP10 and HE3.

Transport

35. The site is accessed from Armstrong Road which has a signal controlled junction with Sandford Road. Sandford Road and Oxford Road are principal routes that provide access through Littlemore. The Eastern By-pass (A4142) and Henley Road (A4074) are located to the north and south respectively and provide access to the rest of Oxford and beyond.
36. A Transport Statement and Travel Plan have been submitted with the application along with a Technical Note that considers the key transport issues with the proposal. The outline application seeks to reserve all matters including access for a later date although the illustrative masterplan, parking strategy, movement and access plan provides details of these matters.
37. Traffic Generation: The site has been allocated for primarily employment use, with residential use being a suitable alternative. The Transport Statement has included an assessment of the estimated trip generation for both uses, and the methodology for this assessment was agreed by the Local Highways Authority. The forecasts show that the residential development will generate 184 2-way trips

in the AM peak (08.00-09.00hrs) and 193 2-way trips in the PM peak (17.00-18.00hrs). This would be considerably less than for a scheme comprising B1 uses which would generate approximately 414 trips in the AM peak hour and 339 in the PM peak hour but less than a scheme comprising Industrial B2 uses which would have approximately 129 in the AM peak hour and 93 in the PM peak, although these trips would include a higher proportion of HGV vehicles than a residential development. Therefore officers consider that the residential development will have far less impact upon the highway network than the employment use the site that it is primarily allocated for within the Sites and Housing Plan.

38. Access: The Transport Statement has considered the impact upon the following key junctions on the adjacent highway - Armstrong Road / Sandford Road signalised junction, A4074/Henley Road junction, and A4142 Eastern By-pass Road / A4158 Oxford Road roundabout. The modelling shows that the Armstrong Road / Sandford Road signalised junction has capacity to accommodate the development without the need for any improvement works to the junction. The development would not create any significant impacts upon the A4074/Henley Road or the A4142 Eastern By-pass Road / A4158 Oxford Road roundabout and any such impact would be minimal. The Local Highways Authority have raised no objection to the proposal on this basis, although they have requested that any Community Infrastructure Levy obtained from the development should be allocated towards possible improvements to the A4142 Eastern By-pass Road / A4158 Oxford Road.
39. The Armstrong Road / Sandford Road signalised junction has suitable visibility splays to accommodate the development. The secondary roads throughout the site will be accessed from Armstrong Road and have carriageway widths of 6m with dedicated footpaths 2m wide. The infrastructure for the site will be subject to further design as part of any reserved matters application and will also be subject to separate s278 consents with the County Council.
40. Pedestrian / Cycle Links: The site is accessed by pedestrians and cyclists from Armstrong Road with a 2.1m wide footway on the northern side of the road. This links with Sandford Road which provides access to Littlemore and has footways on both sides of the carriageway heading towards Sandford-on-Thames village, and northwards up to the Railway Lane junction and then continuing on the eastern side only.
41. The site allocation policy (SP30) states that pedestrian and cycle links should be enhanced through and to the site, including to Oxford Science Park as part of any development proposal. The proposed pedestrian and cycle links are set out within the Illustrative Masterplan. There are a series of green walks throughout the scheme which link up the main thoroughfares. These include footways on the south-western side of Armstrong Road that are separated from the road by landscaping. A footpath would also be provided through the copse at the north-eastern corner onto Sandford Road which would improve connectivity to Sandford Road.

42. The Masterplan allows for other potential pedestrian and cycle access points to be created in order to improve connectivity to the wider area, including a link into Oxford Science Park and also Minchery Road as suggested by the County Council. The ability to deliver these links depends on the agreement of other landowners. To date the owners of the Science Park have been reluctant to allow the creation of a link into their site. Similarly the County Councils suggestion of a link in the north-eastern corner of the site into Minchery Road would require agreement from Network Rail for a crossing over the Cowley Branch Line and County Council for the use of part of the primary school grounds. Officers recognise that there would be benefits to both links being created in terms of accessibility to the wider area and public transport links. However, the ability to provide these links by way of condition or legal agreement depends on there being a reasonable prospect that they could be delivered which given the different landowners would make this difficult at this stage. The potential opening of the Cowley Branch Line by Chiltern Railways is likely to put pressure on the creation of such links to ensure that any station is accessible to the wider residential area. In order to future proof the ability for these links to be established, officers would recommend that land is set aside free of built development within the areas shown on the illustrative masterplan to enable links to be provided to the Science Park, Minchery Road or any potential station on the Cowley Branch Line. The funding for these links could then come from a variety of other sources as other developments come forward including CIL contributions.
43. During the consultation process concerns have been raised about the Illustrative Masterplan showing pedestrian and cycle routes through the gated community of St Georges Manor. This is a private gated development whereby links through the site could not be provided without permission. The masterplan has subsequently been amended to remove these links.
44. Public Transport: The site is served by the Thames Travel T2/T3 services which run between Oxford City Centre and Abingdon and the Kassam Stadium respectively, Monday – Saturday. This service is accessed via the bus stops outside the Littlemore Mental Health Centre on the Sandford Road. There is also the Stagecoach 16/16a Oxford – Minchery Farm service whose stops are a 12minute walk from the site on the Cowley Road.
45. During the consultation process concerns have been raised with regards to the frequency of the bus service within this part of Littlemore. The services currently run hourly although the T2/T3 does not operate in the evening or on Sundays. Officers accept that the location of the site would place more prevalence on the use of the car however there are accessible public transport links available to the site albeit not as frequent as other parts of the city. Nevertheless the site has been allocated for redevelopment whether for employment or residential use and therefore it is reasonable to assume that frequency and patronage of the services will increase as development is brought forward. The potential opening of the Cowley Branch Line by Chiltern Railways would point to other public transport improvements in the area that may come forward in the future.

46. The County Council has suggested that a financial contribution should be sought towards improving the existing bus service in the absence of the site being able to provide alternative footpath links to Minchery Road. This would be used to procure additional daytime or evening journeys and Sunday service for the Littlemore section of the routes only. The applicant has agreed to provide this contribution at an agreed rate of £795 per dwelling.
47. Car Parking: The parking standards for residential development are set out in Policy HP16 of the Sites and Housing Plan. The supporting text to this policy makes clear that large scale housing development in areas such as this should provide at least 1 allocated space per dwelling (1-4 houses or flats) although in certain areas it may be necessary to achieve the maximum standards which can be 2 spaces per 2-4 bed house / flat. The unallocated parking provision should be calculated according to the number and mix of dwellings and shared between all residents and visitors.
48. The parking strategy states that a total of 445 allocated and unallocated spaces would be provided within the development. There would be approximately 220 allocated and unallocated spaces serving the dwellings which would include 'driveways', 'garages', and 'on-street and group parking'. The allocated spaces would be at a ratio of 2 spaces per dwelling. There would be approximately 225 allocated and unallocated spaces for the flats through 'undercroft' and 'on-street group parking' with the allocated spaces being at least 1 space per unit. The unallocated provision must be available to be shared between all residents and visitors in the development.
49. As this is an outline application the number of spaces are an indicative figure, and the actual numbers of spaces per unit will come forward in the reserved matters application. The parking strategy would broadly accord with the standards set out in Policy HP16, but would need to be refined as part of the subsequent detailed design stage. A condition should be attached requiring the parking provision to reflect the parking standards set out in Policy HP16.
50. Cycle Parking: The cycle parking standards for residential development are set out in Policy HP15 of the Sites and Housing Plan. The minimum provision would be at least 2 spaces for houses and flats up to 2 bedrooms, and 3 spaces for houses and flats up to 3 bedrooms. All cycle storage must be secure, under cover and preferably enclosed and provide level unobstructed external access to the street.
51. The Transport Statement confirms that 2 or 3 spaces would be provided per dwelling and 2 spaces per apartment within the scheme in accordance with the minimum standards. A condition should be attached which requires details of the cycle parking provision to be provided at reserved matters stage and that this should reflect the requirements of Policy HP15.
52. Travel Plan: A Travel Plan has been submitted which proposes a package of measures to promote sustainable transport options and reduce reliance on the car. This includes the provision of Welcome Packs with details of sustainable transport options, provision of pool bicycles, consideration of the provision of high

quality bicycle storage and the appointment of a Travel Plan Co-ordinator. As this is an outline application, the Travel Plan would need to be developed further at detailed design stage. This should be secured by condition.

Archaeology

53. The site is adjacent to a known multi-period archaeological site on the opposite side of Littlemore Brook at Oxford Science Park. The excavations at the Science Park have identified palaeo-archaeological, prehistoric and extensive early Saxon remains, while limited trial trenching within the Littlemore Park site has produced evidence of Roman field system and remnants of Roman pottery manufacturing waste. The pottery evidence is significant because the site is located within an extensive arc of dispersed pottery manufacturing sites associated with the regional Oxford pottery industry which is of national significance in the field of Roman studies.
54. The site is also significant because an extensive 19th century cemetery associated with the former Oxfordshire County Asylum survives within the grounds. Such burial grounds are increasingly being recognised as having high archaeological value because of the potential contribution that scientific analysis of human remains make to our understanding of 19th century population movement and health outcomes. The Illustrative Masterplan shows that the recorded cemetery is not being developed and is to be retained within the grounds of the forthcoming scheme. As such some consideration of long term tree management in the cemetery area would be warranted as the site is now heavily wooded. This should include archaeological input into the landscaping strategy for this area. A new cemetery was created in 1901 and this took 1,318 burials. These are located outside the area of the proposed site.
55. A desk based assessment has been produced by John Moore Heritage Services (2014). In addition to the above this notes that medieval activity is indicated by antiquarian maps and finds on the northern part of the site and that lynchets running in a northwest to southeast direction are shown on Davis of Lewknor's map of 1797. Furthermore demolished or overgrown features associated with the Oxfordshire County Asylum (constructed 1843-46) are noted, including paths and terracing, an engine house, gasworks and reservoir. The potential biodiversity constraints of the site also have had a bearing on the extent of pre-determination archaeological evaluation that has been carried out at this stage. A condition should be attached which requires a full archaeological evaluation of the site to be carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation that takes into consideration the potential biodiversity constraints, and secures a scheme of mitigation for any significant archaeological impact. The archaeological investigation should take the form a geophysical survey (post scrub clearance) followed by targeted trial trenching and be undertaken by a professionally qualified archaeologist working to a brief issued by ourselves.

Landscaping

56. A series of Area Tree Preservation Orders covers the site. These were made when the land was originally allocated for development to enable proper

assessment of the trees in the planning process. The L-shaped site falls away to the south where the A4074 marks the south-western boundary, and a stream marks the south-eastern boundary. These boundaries enjoy robust tree cover providing a buffer to the A4074 and a riparian corridor to the stream. These are important landscape features and likely to have ecological significance. The remaining boundary is Armstrong Road, which has an overgrown mixed hedge and semi-mature lime trees that have potential to add value as a degree of landscape maturity for the scheme providing they are retained. The wooded area at the west of the site contains some exotic specimen trees that strongly indicate being planted as part of the landscaping of the former Victorian asylum (1840s). The copse includes several excellent quality mature trees and the cumulative value of the copse is high given the group has relevance to the Grade II Listed St Georges Manor.

57. The Landscape Strategy for the development shows the western copse retained as public open space to some shrub clearance to create a woodland glade. A pedestrian route through the copse into the site has also been incorporated. The general layout of the site is configured so as to leave sufficient space between the south-western and south-eastern boundary vegetation buffers and buildings and gardens. This will avoid problem associated with shade, overbearing impact and general nuisance such as leaf litter, encroaching branches etc.
58. Having reviewed the landscape strategy, along with the recommendations of the Oxford Design Review Panel, officers consider that the following points should be addressed at reserved matters stage. The landscape design appears to indicate an informal treatment for the middle section of Armstrong Road. A more formal approach to the design here would better integrate the scheme with the soft landscape of St George's Manor to the north and help define the route through the scheme from west to east. If the semi-mature lime trees growing within the existing hedge are retained, they could be key features and the core element in a formal avenue, providing some instant landscape maturity.
59. The proposed public open space at the pinch point along Armstrong Road has merit, but the western end will be divided off and heavily shaded at times by the existing mature trees (T12, T13, T14). The best tree within this group is the lime (T13) but the remaining two trees could be removed which would make a specimen tree of the lime and integrate the western end with the rest of the public space. This would also create a suitable environment for appealing hard landscaping to be incorporated, including benches. Notwithstanding these comments the outline application is generally acceptable in landscape design terms in accordance with Oxford Local Plan Policies CS18, CP1, CP11 and NE16, subject to conditions requiring further development of the landscape strategy at reserved matters stage.

Biodiversity

60. The NPPF makes clear that new development should minimise biodiversity impacts and take the opportunity to incorporate biodiversity enhancements. There is also legislation and European directives to avoid harm to biodiversity interests and to have regard to conserving habitats. At a local level, Oxford Core

Strategy Policy CS12 requires no net loss of sites of ecological value, and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Sites of Local Importance to Nature Conservation (SLINC), and wildlife corridors to be protected from development that has an adverse impact. It also recognises that species and habitats of importance for biodiversity will be protected from harm, unless the harm can be properly mitigated.

61. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Biodiversity Offsetting Report, and Reptile Method Statement have been submitted. The appraisal identifies that the site is adjacent to the Littlemore Brook Site of Local Importance to Nature Conservation [SLINC] and in close proximity to the Iffley Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest [SSSI]. The site is principally formed from poor semi-improved grassland, hedgerow, woodland, tall ruderal vegetation, short perennial vegetation, amenity grassland and scrub. In terms of protected species the survey identifies that some of the trees have potential for bats; otters and water voles may be present in the Littlemore Brook SLINC; and there is suitable habitat for reptiles such as slow worms and invertebrates. As the application is made in outline form the appraisal recommends that further survey work will be required to assess the impact on protected species and habitats. It puts forward provisional mitigation measures to minimise biodiversity impacts but recognises that these will need to be made in more detail at reserved matters stage, and allows for opportunities to improve local habitat resource for protected species.
62. The Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust [BBOWT] have raised an objection to the proposal on the grounds that there is insufficient mitigation against the loss of legally protected species and their habitats in line with The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and the wildlife and Countryside Act 1981; insufficient measures to ensure that biodiversity interests are maintained, enhanced and restored in line with the NPPF; insufficient buffering of Littlemore Brook SLINC; and a lack of evidence of a net gain in biodiversity. Natural England has raised no objection to the proposal.
63. Having reviewed the submitted studies officers consider that the site has been shown to be of low ecological value. The surveys provide a good understanding of the ecological character of the site for outline stage and identify a number of constraints that will need to be addressed in any reserved matters application. In the event that there is a small residual risk from the development upon biodiversity interests then provided a mitigation plan is developed that addresses the worst case scenario further survey works should not necessarily be required. According to the information supplied to date, officers consider that there is a minimal risk of protected species being negatively impacted by the development. However, if appropriate protocols are carried out and approved through an Ecological Mitigation Compensation and Management Plan (EMCMP) and compensatory offsite habitat creation provided as detailed, before a reserved matters application is decided then officers are satisfied that any risk will be mitigated and potentially a net beneficial effect and a net gain to biodiversity achieved.

Protected Species

64. Bats: The survey identifies a tree on the boundary of the site (TN41) that has a medium to high possibility of harbouring bats and all other trees have a low to medium score. Officers are satisfied that bat roosts would not be adversely affected if certain protocols are implemented through the EMCMP. These would include locating bat roosts and movement corridors around the fringe of the site while also protecting this fringe during and after construction and avoiding light pollution to this area, along with providing roosting opportunities within the built environment. This will result in a net gain in roost sites for bats and not significantly compromise feeding opportunities.
65. Otters/Badgers: Officers consider there is no reasonable likelihood of Otters being disturbed by the development if protocols for lighting are produced through the EMCMP. It is not reasonable to suggest that Otter holts will be present on the site and the mitigation proposals for badgers would also protect Otters in the unlikely event they forage over the site at night.
66. The survey evidence suggests that Badgers do not forage extensively over the site. Although foraging opportunities exist these are highly unlikely to be of importance to the local population given the type of habitat. Badgers preferentially forage over short grassland because it is easier to locate their earthworm prey in this environment. There is a small risk that badgers may occasionally use a hole identified in the survey as an outlier or that badgers could move on to the site. However this small risk can be adequately addressed by the submission of a survey and mitigation plan at reserved matter stage.
67. Reptiles: The Reptile surveys have not been fully completed but worst case scenario mitigation has been proposed based on the presumed presence of Slow Worm, Common Lizard and Grass Snake. It is the reptiles that are protected and not their habitat, and on the basis that a suitable relocation strategy is developed then there should not be any impact on reptiles. This could be secured through the EMCMP which would offer assurance that the development could not take place until the reptiles have been trapped and relocated to a suitable site.
68. Water Voles: If the habitat likely to be used by Water Voles is conserved and not impacted by the development then it is not necessary to conduct a further survey. The watercourse does not provide the optimal habitat for Water Vole given it is wooded and shaded and the nature of this space will remain unchanged and a 10m (minimum) buffer from the water's edge provided. This provides sufficient assurance that these species will not be negatively impacted by the development.
69. Birds: It is highly unlikely that site is of significance for breeding birds. It is likely to hold a semi urban assemblage due to the nature of the habitats present and its location. The retention of the habitat around the edge of the site and clearance of bramble and scrub outside of the nesting bird season, along with bird box provision within the built environment would mitigate any impact.

Buffering of Littlemore Brook

70. The masterplan identifies that a minimum buffer of 11m would be provided to the Brook and considerably more in parts. Officers are satisfied that the development will not have a significant impact on the SLINC, or the species that currently utilise it. The Environment Agency has required an 8m buffer to the brook and so this would exceed their requirements. The current wooded buffer is to be enhanced and conserved and so further details will be required through the EMCMP.
71. BBOWT have raised concerns that the Littlemore Brook is vulnerable to the input of sewage and other forms of water pollution which could have an impact upon the ecology of the watercourse. Thames Water has indicated that a drainage strategy detailing on and off-site drainage works will be needed before development commences. Therefore this impact could be managed through any drainage scheme. Natural England has also recommended a Sustainable Drainage condition.

Biodiversity off-setting

72. The Biodiversity Offsetting Report has assessed the habitat impacts of the development and provided details of the off-site compensation and net gain in biodiversity in accordance with national best practice. Officers consider that the submitted scheme offers sufficient assurance that there will be a net gain in terms of ecological units. The BIA calculator represents the most robust system available of achieving this because it objectively assesses ecological value before and after development. In this instance it clearly demonstrates that the development will result in a net gain for biodiversity after the development and mitigation measures have been completed. It is accepted that the botanical survey was not conducted at the optimum time of year however given the habitats identified the risk of misidentification by a competent botanist is minimal. The pictures supplied are consistent with the habitats identified. The recommended condition will ensure that an offset scheme will be delivered before the development can proceed.
73. In order to adequately mitigate the biodiversity impacts in accordance with the aims of Oxford Core Strategy Policy CS12, an Ecological Mitigation Compensation and Management Plan should be provided before any reserved matters application, development or site clearance can proceed. This would include
- A biodiversity offset agreement resulting in a neutral or positive ecological unit score as outlined in Littlemore Park biodiversity offsetting report.
 - A legal agreement to ensure the offset area is retained and managed in perpetuity.
 - Monitoring and reporting mechanisms for the offset area including necessary remedial action identified by monitoring to achieve stated condition.
 - Details of habitat creation and management of onsite mitigation measures including mechanisms to ensure management in perpetuity.
 - Details of native species to be used in planting schemes.

- Timetable for reptile survey and relocation programme as outlined in Littlemore Park reptile method statement.
- Location and detailed description of reptile translocation site including management and monitoring regimes.
- Management of translocation site must be appropriate and guaranteed in perpetuity by legal agreement.
- Details of site clearance protocols.
- Details of protection measures for retained flora.
- Working methods including lighting regimes to ensure minimum disturbance of onsite fauna identified in reports.
- Details of pre development badger survey requirement.
- Location and details of make and model of 10 integrated bat and 10 integrated Swift boxes to be incorporated into the fabric of the development.

Flood Risk and Drainage

74. The main area of the site is located within Flood Zone 1 which has a low probability of flooding. The parts of the site alongside Littlemore Brook are within Flood Zones 2 and 3 which have a medium to high probability of flooding.

75. A Flood Risk Assessment and Addendum has been submitted with the application which assesses the impact upon flood risk and recommends the following mitigation measures to be addressed at reserved matters stage to ensure the development does not pose a flood risk.

- The site layout will be reviewed to assess whether the dwellings and infrastructure could be located entirely within Flood Zone 1, with encroachment into Flood Zone 2 minimised.
- No dwellings in Flood Zone 3.
- There will be no basements or below ground parking located within Flood Zone 2.
- The finished floor levels will be set no lower than 300mm above the climate change flood level
- A buffer zone of 8m from the Littlemore Brook will be kept free from development including sustainable urban drainage features.
- All above ground sustainable urban drainage features will be sited outside the 1 in 100 year plus climate change outline.
- Surface water and fluvial flood flow routes will be considered at reserved matters stage in conjunction with landscaping to ensure safe dry access and egress from the site can be provided
- The detailed design will incorporate floor resilient materials and construction methods
- A site specific flood evacuation plan will be produced, and include properties at risk being encouraged to sign up to the EA flood line.

76. The Environment Agency have raised no objection to the development subject to these mitigation measures being used to inform the detailed design of the development at reserved matters stage. These should be secured by condition.

77. The Flood Risk Assessment Addendum also recognises that a sustainable urban drainage scheme will need to be developed at reserved matters stage. Thames Water, Natural England, and the Environment Agency have all requested a condition be attached to secure such a scheme. Officers also recognise that BBOWT have raised concerns that the ecology of Littlemore Brook is vulnerable to water pollution. This could also be secured by condition.

Sustainability

78. Oxford Core Strategy Policy CS9 has a commitment to optimising energy efficiency through a series of measures including the utilisation of technologies that achieve zero carbon developments. The Sites and Housing Plan Policy HP11 then goes on to state that a development of this size will need to include at least 20% of its total energy needs from on-site renewables or low carbon technologies.

79. A full energy statement which demonstrates how the development would achieve the 20% target would only be possible at the reserved matters stage through the detailed design of the development. A condition should be attached to any permission which requires these details to be submitted at detailed design stage and incorporated into the design.

Community Infrastructure Levy / S106 Contributions

80. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a standard charge on new development. The reason that CIL has been introduced is to help fund the provision of infrastructure to support the growth of the city, for example transport improvements, additional school places and new or improved sports and leisure facilities.

81. The proposed development would be liable for a CIL charge but this would not come into effect until the reserved matters application is submitted. The Oxfordshire County Council have requested that CIL charges for this development be spent on non-transport infrastructure priorities such as extensions to the existing primary, secondary, and 6th form schools, special needs accommodation, and improvements to the capacity of the Westgate library, early intervention centres, children's centres and elderly day centres. They have also requested funds towards roundabout replacement or re-phasing of the traffic signals at Littlemore Roundabout (A4142). There are no longer any direct allocations towards specific infrastructure projects from applications. The CIL contribution from this application will go into a central fund and the Council will decide the spending priorities in consultation with the County Council through the infrastructure planning and budget setting process.

82. The site allocation policy recognises that there was a former playing field on site which should be re-provided within the scheme or a contribution made towards improving facilities elsewhere. The scheme does not make provision for a new playing field within its layout, and therefore it is envisaged that this will be dealt with by means of a contribution. There is currently no other suitable area within the locality whereby a new cricket pitch could be developed or replaced. As a

result it is considered that any contribution of should be linked in general to leisure and sport provision within the wider surrounding area.

Other Matters

83. Ground Conditions: A 'Preliminary Risk Assessment' has been submitted which includes a thorough preliminary risk assessment and identifies a number of potential contaminant linkages. The report recommends that an intrusive site investigation is undertaken prior to the commencement of development. Officers agree with the findings of the report and recommend that this is secured by an appropriately worded condition. The Environment Agency has also requested similar conditions to ensure that the development does not pose an unacceptable risk to ground water.
84. Noise: The Noise Assessment identifies that the primary source of noise at the development site is from the A4074. It goes on to state that the internal noise levels will meet British Standard (BS8233), and that appropriate noise mitigation measures could be incorporated at reserved matters stage to make this suitable for residential development
85. Officers would advise that any scheme will need to ensure that the internal noise levels meet the BS8233 standard and where this is not possible with opening windows that an adequate ventilation system is provided. With regards to noise levels in external recreational areas there are difficulties in reaching these values in busy urban environments. A condition should be attached which states that all residential accommodation should meet the agreed noise level of 30 dB LAeq in living rooms and bedrooms, with no single events to exceed 45 dB LAm_{ax}. In addition all windows need to be remain closed to achieve the agreed levels and acoustic ventilation provided to ensure suitable fresh air into the properties.
86. Air Quality: The Air Quality Assessment considers the potential impacts on air quality during both the construction and operational phases of the proposed development. The assessment identifies a medium risk of impacts on sensitive receptors from dust during the construction phase. It concludes that a number of mitigation measures have been adapted for the development site. These should be reviewed prior to the commencement of construction works and incorporated into a Construction Environmental Management Plan which should be secured by condition. The assessment concludes that existing air quality is such that the location is suitable for the proposed development and that impacts on pollutant levels as a result of operational phase vehicle exhaust emissions were not predicted to be significant at any sensitive location in the vicinity of the site.
87. A key theme of the NPPF is that development should enable future occupiers to make "green" vehicle choices and "incorporate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emissions vehicles". Oxford City Council's Air Quality Action Plan 2013 commits to seeking to ensure that new developments make appropriate provision for walking, cycling, public transport and low emission vehicle infrastructure. As a minimum requirement, new development schemes should include the provision of electric vehicle recharging provision and any mitigation

requirements arising from the exposure assessment, where applicable. To prepare for increased demand in future years, appropriate cable provision should be included in the scheme design and development. The recommended provision rate is 1 charging point per unit (house with dedicated parking) or 1 charging point per 10 spaces (unallocated parking, i.e. flat development). This should be secured by condition.

88. Construction Management: In the event that outline permission is granted for the proposed development, it should be subject to a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which would address issues such as working hours, signage, site hoardings, site security measures, piling methods, earthworks, routing arrangements, arrival and departure times for construction vehicles, control of dust and emissions, vibration, materials storage, waste management, and complies with the British Standard BS5228: Noise and Vibration. This should be secured by condition with the principal contractors and plot developers also registering with the considerate contractor's scheme.

Conclusion:

89. The proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of the relevant policies of the Oxford Core Strategy 2026, Sites and Housing Plan 2011-2026, and Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 and therefore officer's recommendation is to approve the development in principle, but defer the application for the completion of a legal agreement as set out above.

Human Rights Act 1998

Officers have considered the Human Rights Act 1998 in reaching a recommendation to grant outline 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 outline permission, officers consider that the proposal will not undermine crime prevention or the promotion of community safety.

Contact Officer: Andrew Murdoch

Extension: 2228

Date: 24th February 2015

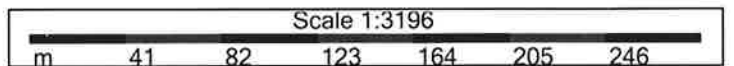
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Appendix 1

Littlemore Park, Armstrong Road (14/02940/OUT)



1:3195



Organisation	Oxford City Council
Department	City Development
Comments	Not Set
Date	19 February 2015
SLA Number	100019348

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Appendix 2: Summary of Public Consultation

Littlemore Park (14/02940/OUT)

The following comments from Statutory Organisations and Third Parties in relation to the application are summarised below

Public Consultation

Statutory Consultees

Littlemore Parish Council: Objection

The proposed development encroaches on consecrated ground (burial ground 1) that has yet to be deconsecrated. The proposed gardens of dwellings bordering the railway encroach on the burial grounds. The path linking the development to St Georges also encroaches (burial ground 2), the ownership of the pathway is private and not public and has been built on the graves of patients resident in Littlemore hospital. The archaeological report identifies this area as an “area of concern, and should not be built on”.

The proposal identifies 270 dwellings with 445 associated parking spaces, equating to 1.6 cars per dwelling. This ratio provides no provision for visitor parking. Armstrong Road will become under additional parking pressure from the development as it will be the only access for some 700+ people.

No open community space is planned, where pockets of space cannot be developed the developer has designated them green space. This diminishes the overall concept in terms quality living space. No provision has been given to the social and community needs of one of Britain’s largest cul-de-sacs.

Due to local shops being some 15 minutes away by car, there will be additional demands upon home owners to own and drive cars to their destinations. There are no doctor’s surgeries, dentist in Littlemore. Local schools (Nursery and Primary) in a recent report to Parish council stated they were full, and potential parents were on a waiting list. Concerns therefore in the area of residents assessing educational needs are a concern.

The T2/T3 provides no service on Sunday’s and no service after 6:39 weekdays. This service remains under pressure. Stagecoach currently, operates the 12C to Blackbird Leys and serves the residents of Littlemore and Sandford. This service will cease on the 30th May 2015. Placing more pressure on meeting the needs of potential residents

The proposed site is in a flood plain. Securing a 5m margin from the Littlemore Brook which is historically prone to flooding will put residents at risk.

The developer has adopted a ridge height to match the ridge height of adjacent properties of St Georges, regardless of topography. This is a wrong approach and merely a means of increasing the number of floors to a given building. If this rule is applied then it stands to reason that Littlemore hospital is the parent building,

therefore additional buildings should be subservient. The five floor flats would be detrimental to the skyline from the Sandford and Littlemore views, in what is a historical conservation area. The ridge heights should be no more than 3 floors to reflect the scale and visual amenity of other buildings in the area, and follow the topography and not challenge it.

Oxford Civic Society

The development of this site for housing is acceptable in principle, subject to the provision of a comparable accommodation for employment at the Churchill Hospital site. However many issues need to be resolved, including the following:

- Consideration of pedestrian access to the proposed new station at Oxford Science Park on the Cowley Branch railway line
- Routing of bus services and location of stops
- Pedestrian and cycle routes on and off-site, including on private land through the grounds of the former Littlemore Hospital
- Parking provision for cycles and cars
- Detailed design of buildings, and their disposition, with consideration of effects on views, overlooking and shading.
- The Society concur with the views expressed by Mr Roe of 32 St George's Manor

Environment Agency Thames Region

The Environment Agency have withdrawn their objection to the application following the submission of the addendum to the Flood Risk Assessment and subject to the following conditions, detailed under the headings below, to any subsequent planning permission granted.

- The development is carried out in accordance with the approved Flood Risk Assessment Addendum produced by JBA Consulting (dated, 11 February 2015) and the following mitigation measures detailed within:
- There will be no residential development in Flood Zone 3
- There will be no basements or below ground parking in Flood Zone 2 or 3
- Finished Floor Levels will be set no lower than 300mm above the climate change flood level.
- No development including SuDS features will be within the 8m buffer zone of the Littlemore Brook.
- All above ground SuDS storage features will be sited outside the 1 in 100 year plus climate change outline.
- A Surface Water Drainage scheme is submitted
- A phased contaminated land risk assessment
- A verification report for any remediation works
- A watching brief for future contamination
- A restriction on foundation design

Berkshire Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust [BBOWT]

The Trust object for the following reasons:

Protected species

The application includes a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (January 2014) which incorporates the results of a Phase 1 Ecological Survey. These surveys identify a

number of legally protected species as either being present on or adjacent to the site or there being a high likelihood of them being present. It also makes recommendations for additional surveys with respect to several of these species. There is no evidence of these additional surveys having been carried out. Without these additional surveys any necessary mitigation proposals for these species cannot be drawn up for assessment as a material consideration in the planning process. In the absence of these surveys and mitigation plans the application should not be approved.

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has recognised a reasonable likelihood of a number of protected species being present and affected by the development. Therefore surveys and mitigation statements should be provided prior to assessing the application for determination and approval. The fact that this is an Outline application makes no difference to the fact that surveys and mitigation details are needed prior to planning decision. This application is establishing whether or not it is appropriate for the site to be developed and as such this is the stage at which the detailed ecological assessment is required.

Species identified as being on site, or likely to be on site, include species protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. They also include species protected under the EC Habitats Directive and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and as such, are European Protected Species. Offences under this legislation include any activities that may kill, injure or disturb an individual or damages or destroys a breeding site or resting place of that individual. The current development proposals do not provide adequate assurance that the populations of legally protected species identified on the development site will not be adversely affected by the proposals submitted. Without appropriate survey information on European Protected Species then it is not possible to assess whether a licence would be obtained.

Protected species

Bats: BBOWT accepts the reassurances provided by the City Council ecologist regarding bats subject to all the relevant requests for Conditions in their letter being put in place.

Otters and Water Voles: BBOWT accepts to some extent the reassurances by the City Council ecologist with respect to otter and water vole (subject to all the relevant requests for conditions in their letter being put in place), but with the significant proviso that in the absence of any survey and mitigation plans, and with the likely presence of both species, then the proposed SLINC/watercourse buffer and measures to protect it and ensure it remains unlit and with minimal disturbance, becomes the mitigation.

Reptiles: BBOWT remain concerned with the approach being taken with respect to reptiles. As the site contains a significant amount of suitable habitat, we consider it possible that in the worst case scenario the site could support very significant reptile populations which would be severely impacted by the development. We do not consider it appropriate to determine the application without knowing the size of the

populations of any reptiles present, and without having fully identified the viability of any necessary receptor sites.

Breeding Birds: We maintain our previous position with respect to breeding birds. Whilst we appreciate the City Council ecologist's response on this matter, the habitats on site provide both significant nesting opportunities and food resources, the loss of which to land take would need to be compensated rather than mitigated.

Retention of on-site habitats

The far western part of the site includes a number of large mature trees within a woodland habitat. Several of these large mature trees have High Retention Value. The application has rightly recognised the value of these and other trees, and the habitat they are within by maintaining this area free of development. It is important that the area of habitat at the western end is retained as natural habitat in its current form, and that it does not become a "mown grass open space" below the mature trees, as the combined habitats of bramble/scrub, younger trees and mature trees have significant biodiversity value. In the event of a path being routed through this area then it is important that this is routed so as to be well away from the most significant mature trees so as to avoid any potential compression damage to their root systems. This area should also remain unlit to avoid adverse impact on wildlife, especially bats.

Waste water infrastructure

We have noted the response from Thames Water which draws attention to the possibility of adverse ecological impacts on surface water courses within, or in the locality of, the application site. The matters raised in the Thames Water response are a concern in relation to two matters:

1. Littlemore Brook is adjacent to the development and is therefore vulnerable to the input of sewage and other forms of water pollution which could have a significant adverse impact on the ecology of the watercourse;
2. as our main premises are on Armstrong Road, adjacent to the development, we are naturally concerned in relation to the possibility of sewer flooding;

Off-site compensation and net gain in biodiversity:

We welcome the reassurances provided by the ecologist response with respect to the proposed site for off-site compensation. We re-iterate that we welcome the approach taken by the developers by using an accepted metric for Biodiversity Impact Assessment. However we maintain our position that for a development of this size on a site of this nature, it is not acceptable that the only habitat surveys carried out by the developers took place in December, one of the least suitable months of the year for such assessments. The developers accepted this by stating, in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal in section 4.1: "*The timing of the phase 1 survey (10th December 2013) resulted in a survey constraint. The botanical survey season runs from April to October according to the Handbook for phase 1 habitat survey (JNCC, 2010). As the survey was undertaken outside the optimum season for botanical assessment, a full evaluation of the site was not possible.*" With respect to the survey and habitat assessment for the development site we maintain our previous objection.

More work is needed to show the existing ecological value of the existing site, before a net gain in biodiversity can be demonstrated. This should be completed prior to

determination of the planning application. The principle of the mitigation hierarchy is that off-site compensation is only considered as a last resort. By scaling back the number of units on the site there would be room to provide on-site habitat restoration that could provide for a net gain in biodiversity without the need for off-site compensation.

Buffering of Littlemore Brook SLINC

We welcome the proposed buffering of Littlemore Brook SLINC but the width falls well short of what is needed. The SLINC and the wildlife it supports are highly vulnerable to the impacts of development and it is important to provide significant buffers in order to avoid the “significant adverse impact”. Even if it was not designated it would be important to provide a significant buffer to the watercourse. However, in places the proposed buffer to the water course is less than 10m (and therefore even less to the SLINC – see below), whereas developments nowadays are typically providing much more, even for watercourses without any specific designation. A wider buffer is needed to protect the watercourse and provide an ecological corridor alongside the watercourse. The buffer for Boundary Brook for example should be more in the order of 15m either side. Section 8.1 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal offers a buffer of 7m between the SLINC and any development, which is not sufficient. The SLINC itself is about 14m wide some of which is made up of buffer either side so as an estimate the currently offered 7m SLINC buffer plus about 4m buffer within the SLINC means that even under the current proposal of 7m SLINC buffer there should be a minimum of 11m between all development and the Brook which, according to the Illustrative Masterplan is not being achieved. The development should be reduced in scale in terms of number of units to increase the buffer alongside Littlemore Brook SLINC to a minimum of 25m, which will typically provide a 30m buffer away from the actual Brook. This buffer should be managed as wildlife habitat and not as regularly mown amenity grassland. It should also be unlit so as to provide a dark corridor for commuting nocturnal protected species such as bats and otters. Such a buffer would also serve to take most / all of the development outside of the Flood Zone as indicated in 2.10 of the Design and Access Statement.

Parking / Traffic

BBOWT’s main offices are located at the western end of Armstrong Road. Armstrong Road currently serves part of the St George’s Manor residential area, and several businesses along Armstrong Road. Some of these businesses, including ourselves, rely on the unrestricted parking available on Armstrong Road to enable staff, volunteers and visitors to access our offices. We are extremely concerned about the implications for the functioning of our operations if this development goes ahead in its current form.

We have read the objection from the Local Highways Authority. We fully support the case that the Trip Generation figures are significant underestimates. In particular we stress the following issues from the County Council transport response:

- “1. *The site is not included as a residential site in the Oxford City Council Sites and Housing Plan 2011 – 2026 (Policy SP30).*
2. *The site has limited access and permeability to the wider area, by sustainable modes (Contrary to Policy SP30, *ibid.*).*

3. *The site is very much on the fringes of the Oxford City area and has accessibility characteristics more similar to that context than within the city. For example, the furthest part of site (the north-eastern corner) is very remote (up to 700 metres) from bus stops on the Sandford Road and the junction of Sandford Road and Armstrong Road is the only access to the site.*

4. *The predicted residential trip rates are considered to be low for a site in this location. As a consequence, it is considered that the proposals would be an over-development of the site for residential purposes”*

With respect to Parking, there are likely to be greater levels of car ownership + visiting cars than the current provision of 445 spaces, leading potentially to overflow parking on Armstrong Road, with implications for our operations. This is also likely to displace current business parking further into other residential areas of Littlemore, affecting the wider community. If the low levels of car ownership per dwelling that the developers are aspiring to are to be realised then at the very least there will be need for a greatly enhanced provision of public transport from the adjacent bus stop on Sandford Road, and improved provision for cycling.

Lack of open space within the development

The Oxford Green Space Study 2012 suggests that Littlemore is already under-resourced with respect to high quality open access green space. This development should be making significant provision of open access green space of a variety of types. The plans at present do not provide sufficient green space and we do not consider them in keeping with the Oxford Green Spaces Strategy 2013 – 2027. This is likely to result in significant recreational pressure on areas that should be a priority for biodiversity including the buffer alongside Littlemore Brook SLINC and the woodland copse at the western end.

The development proposals should be scaled back in terms of the number of units, with significantly increased provision for public access open space in addition to increased provision of open space prioritised for biodiversity conservation.

Oxfordshire County Council

Highways Authority: The County Council objected to this application on transport related grounds on 20th November 2014. A subsequent submission on behalf of the developer (Technical Note, 10 December 2014, Mode Transport Planning) has satisfactorily addressed all reasons for objection.

In relation to accessibility, the Oxford-Cowley railway line severs this development from nearby bus stops at Minchery Road, from the local primary school and from nearby shops at St Nicholas Road. The provision of a short pedestrian tunnel / underpass or a bridge would provide much improved connectivity for the new residents, not only to a more frequent bus service but also the school and shops. If such a link could not be provided then a contribution at the rate of £1000, per additional dwelling would be sought to boost bus services on the Oxford – Wallingford corridor. This would be used to procure additional daytime or evening journeys, to be operated in a commercial manner following a period of pump-priming support.

In this case of the Littlemore housing application, an additional bus would be required to procure an extra hourly bus service off-peak and an hourly service evenings and on

Sundays. The £1,000 per additional dwelling figure is benchmarked against requests for additional bus services in the adjacent part of South Oxfordshire (for example Benson and Wallingford). The calculations for Littlemore assume procurement of a single additional bus for the Oxford – Littlemore section of route only, probably extending to the Science Park area to turn around.

Should planning permission be granted then the following legal agreements are required to be entered into to provide for mitigation and developer gain:

- Contribution to the transport components of the CIL Regulation 123 list of Oxford City Council are appropriate for this area, and should include roundabout replacement or re-phasing of traffic signals at the Littlemore roundabout on the A4142.
- Should it not be possible to provide a pedestrian / cycle route from the development to Minchery Road then a contribution at the rate of £1000, per additional dwelling should be made to boost bus services on the Oxford – Wallingford corridor.
- Agreements will need to be entered into to contribute to the public realm to create pedestrian infrastructure, commensurate, with the proposed residential use. This includes footways across the site frontage and routes through to connect to other residential and employment areas.

Should permission be granted, the following conditions are recommended for this outline application:

- Additional pedestrian and cycle assess points, are required to ensure the site is accessible and, therefore, has a chance of meeting the sustainability objectives, outlined in the Transport Assessment and Travel Plan. This to be secured through the provision of drawings to the LA and the approved drawings implemented by the developer, through agreement.
- Prior to commencement, a detailed drainage design, for the management of surface water, should be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority.
- Prior to commencement, details of finished floor levels, surrounding ground levels and peak flood level should be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority.
- Access Design & Vision splay details.
- Turning Area & Car Parking.
- Cycle Parking Facilities.
- Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP).
- Travel Plan

County Council Infrastructure: If permitted, the proposal will impact upon various County Council related infrastructure and services. To address these, CIL revenue would be necessary towards the following non-transport infrastructure.

- Extensions to existing primary schools
- Extensions to existing secondary schools
- Extensions to special needs accommodation
- Extensions to existing 6th form schools
- Improved capacity and accessibility of Westgate library
- Improved capacity and accessibility of early intervention centres

- Improved capacity and accessibility of existing children's centres
- Older people day centre and learning disabilities day centre in West Oxford

Ecology: The District Council should be seeking the advice of their in-house ecologist who can advise them on this application.

Thames Water Utilities Limited

Thames Water has identified an inability of the existing waste water infrastructure to accommodate the needs of this application. Should the Local Planning Authority look to approve the application, Thames Water would like a 'Grampian Style' condition imposed which seeks the development of a drainage strategy detailing on and off-site drainage works.

Natural England

No objection subject to conditions. This application is in close proximity to the Iffley Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). However, given the nature and scale of this proposal, Natural England is satisfied that there is not likely to be an adverse effect on this site as a result of the proposal being carried out in strict accordance with the details of the application as submitted.

A detailed SUDS plan must be brought forward at the detailed design stage. This SUDS scheme must use a variety of techniques to ensure that the run-off from the site remains at Greenfield run-off rates. The SUDS must be installed early in the construction process.

This application may provide opportunities to incorporate features into the design which are beneficial to wildlife, such as the incorporation of roosting opportunities for bats or the installation of bird nest boxes. The authority should consider securing measures to enhance the biodiversity of the site from the applicant, if it is minded to grant permission for this application.

Third Parties

Letters have been received from the following addresses.

- 30 Dudgeon Drive; 7, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 19, 20, 22, 32, 38a, 39 49, 55a, 56, 64, 65, 66, 74, 77 St Georges Manor; 1 Mandelbrote Drive; 13, 18, 17, 19 (Radcliffe House), 75, 76, 78 (The Crescent); 57 (Newman House), 84 (The Old Gate Lodge) Mandelbrote Drive; 4, 20 Oxford Road; 19 Pheasant Walk; 11 Yeftly Drive

Individual Comments:

The main points raised were:

- Broadly welcome the development of houses and flats (particularly affordable housing) on this unused piece of land; although there are general concerns about the impact on local infrastructure such as schools, NHS services and Public Transport
- Strongly oppose the proposed development
- The development would not match the character or meet the needs of Littlemore
- The properties do not have normal driveways or places for parking cars and have to resort to a design of residences that sits close to the street line and uses the ground floor for parking. This is not in keeping with the rest of Littlemore.

- St Georges Park is private land and there is a general objection to the creation of an open accessed thoroughfare and public footpaths through this site
- There is inadequate infrastructure to support high density residential development of this type.
- The development will have a high car dependency including two or more vehicles for family accommodation
- The traffic on Armstrong Road, and Oxford Road is already overloaded as is the day time parking, and the proposal will increase congestion.
- The access and egress from the new development onto Armstrong Road cannot accommodate the existing housing.
- More detail is needed on improvements to public transportation in the area to ease increase in private transport
- There should be access through to Oxford Science Park as required by the Policy
- The area is a natural green skirt to Littlemore and should remain as such
- Residential accommodation next to the busy A4074 would not be desirable
- The local schools are unable to serve existing children and classroom sizes are already too large.
- The site extends into an area of flood plain.
- The proposal will impact on one of the few remaining natural wildlife areas in Oxford.
- The site would be better used for employment and specifically to make Littlemore a renowned medical research and specialised medical treatment community.
- The sewage system is currently at capacity
- The amount of open space seems inadequate for a development providing this number of dwellings
- There are slow worms on site
- The provision of 50% assisted housing seems excessive and above the national average and should be resisted
- The plans are the same as those shown at the public consultation and undermines any claim which the applicants may make to have meaningfully consulted local residents
- The proposal could increase the local crime rate and have an wholly negative effect on the houses and apartments
- The proposal will have an adverse impact on views from properties in St Georges Manor which have enjoyed the semi-rural nature of the area for the past 15 years
- The development will have an adverse impact upon the Grade II listed building in St Georges Manor

St Georges Park Residents Association

- *Objection 1: issues particular to St Georges Park*

St Georges Park is private estate comprising of Grade II listed buildings and new build homes. The residents pay for all facilities through a service charge to the management company. There appear to be two pedestrian paths and cycle ways through St. Georges Park. We will become the default public path to Sandford Road.

The proposed plan does not indicate clear provision for play areas and we would in effect become a public park and recreation ground for a very dense development.

There is pressure on parking on Armstrong Road. Double yellow lines were recently painted and each weekday all available space is taken. We would inevitably have a spill over from the development to our parking areas.

We currently have problems with fly tipping. This problem will be exacerbated.

We have a very low incidence of crime on the estate. Unfettered access through our grounds by densely packed 270 households is completely unacceptable.

We are preserving our local heritage and conserving the unique character of a former Paupers Asylum. We would ask that we are consulted about development within the former curtilage of this institution.

There are no indications that English Heritage has been consulted.

- *Objection 2: Infrastructure*

The assumptions and the consequences on the local road network have been queried. This could be mitigated by having a completely separate access to the development from A4074 and Grenoble Road end.

The public transport system is appalling. Some bus routes referred to in the plan have been withdrawn and Stagecoach have announced the closure of evening and Sunday services from mid-2015.

We note that section 106 funding is being used to build affordable housing. There appears to be no consideration to other elements that create a sustainable community with sufficient and accessible local services.

These houses will be served by a primary school that is already oversubscribed; no local primary health facilities or convenience stores.

They will be built on a flood plain and we note Thames Waters comments on lack of capacity to dispose of waste water and sewage. Some homes in St Georges have poor water pressure and other households make demands on the fresh water supply as they require booster pumps. We ask that Thames Water is consulted on this aspect.

- *Objection 3: wider impact*

Access to the eastern bypass is currently dangerous. Cars are parked on both sides of the road and there is no clear line of sight at the last stretch of Oxford Road. The transport plan refers to accidents caused by driver error. Traffic density and road design can reduce this risk. The proposal seems to suggest that 270 households, most of whom will require cars, will not add to the problems at this roundabout.

Given the floods in Oxford in recent years the disappearance of a flood plain does not augur well.

A highly dense residential development in an area of deprivation will have a negative social impact.

Finally, we understand the pressures for housing in Oxford but there seems to be little understanding and planning for an improved quality of life in the area as well as on the proposed development.

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Appendix 3: Oxford Design Review Panel Comments

CONFIDENTIAL

6 October 2014

Darren Sumeghy
Capita
71 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0XA

Our reference: DCC/0603

Oxford City Council: Littlemore Park

Dear Darren Sumeghy,

Thank you for submitting this scheme to us; we reviewed the proposal on 18 September 2014. For the purposes of the comments below, the parts of the site to the west and north-east of the pinchpoint on Armstrong Road adjacent to the principal green space along Littlemore Brook are referred to as the 'western' and 'north-eastern' areas respectively.

We are pleased to see an overall improvement to the design since the previous design workshop on 8 May 2014. The proposed tenure mix, quantum of housing and building heights across the site are sound. In the western area, we commend the distinct site layout of terraced houses and well-defined street pattern. In the north-east, the Home Zone principles are set to encourage residents of all ages to be more active and use the public space more. At present, the site and landscape strategies should be stronger and more aligned to help unify the west and north-eastern areas and make the overall scheme more cohesive. A landscape strategy for the entire site will help to clarify the purpose of each green space for residents and visitors, and determine how trees and planting define and characterise the streets and spaces in the development. We recommend the Home Zone principles should be expanded across the entire site to create a more appealing residential feel.

Streets and public spaces

The residential character of Littlemore Park as an attractive and safe place to live will be improved by strategically integrating Home Zones across the entire site. The Home Zone format successfully prioritises pedestrians and supports informal outdoor recreation and play. In the western area, Home Zones between the rows of terraced houses would help to achieve a pleasant environment for residents and visitors, and reduce vehicular traffic and noise. Focal points, such as strategically placed trees and visual connections, could help to contain and strengthen the character of the neighbourhood, and we question the positioning of the Home Zone to the north-east as it does not currently lead anywhere. We recommend that the street layout of the north-east should reflect the road pattern



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to the west, potentially increasing the housing density in the north-east, to help the scheme to feel more like a single neighbourhood, reduce the hard surfaces and ensure maximum benefit from sunlight.

The mixture of undercroft, street and private bay parking which helps to reduce the impact of cars across the scheme and make parking areas more legible for residents and visitors is to be commended. However, we recommend further improvements to the parking strategy across the site. The larger parking area along the A4074 on the western part of the site is concerning as it is likely to feel unsafe and unwelcoming both to visitors and residents, especially at night. It is a long distance for residents and visitors to walk between the car park and the houses closer to Armstrong Road. We suggest investigating how these parking spaces can be incorporated between the terraced houses and apartment blocks to ensure that the parking is overlooked and feels safe. More on-street parking could also be incorporated across the scheme to help make the streets feel more active and reduce the size of car parking areas in the neighbourhood. The pedestrian route connecting the principal green space at the junction of Armstrong Road and Sandford Road and the north-eastern part of the site feels unpleasant and unsafe where it crosses the car park, for example.

Landscape strategy

The efforts to make the scheme more appealing with parks and playspaces and trees to help buffer the vehicular noise along Armstrong Road and the A4074 are positive. The conceptual sketches of the green spaces are strong but inconsistencies between the different diagrams need to be resolved to give a clearer steer on the landscape strategy for the entire site. At this stage, it will be important to decide which trees to keep and which to remove to give more purpose and structure to the streets and open spaces.

Creating a public open space at the pinchpoint along Armstrong Road and retaining mature trees is positive. However, a stronger focus at the 'green heart' is needed to draw residents and visitors from either the north-east or west, by creating a defined public space with hard landscaping and seating surrounded by trees, for example. The existing public space to the west of the pinchpoint seems randomly placed and it will be overshadowed by the mature trees. Retaining more existing mature trees along Armstrong Road immediately west of the pinchpoint would better define the route to and view of the principal green space. We also suggest continuing to look for opportunities to make the open spaces feel more secure. The apartment blocks adjacent to the principal public space at the pinchpoint provide good passive surveillance. However, whilst the principle of a green space to the west is sound, this green space is less successful as it is currently much less overlooked increasing the risk of antisocial behavior. Opportunities to increase passive surveillance for this space, from housing for example, and enhancing the emphasis on the principal public space at the pinchpoint, as opposed to the western park, should be explored.

Homes

The housing arrangement could be refined to make the west and north-eastern areas feel more like a whole. To the west, the tight, defined layout of the terraced housing has the makings of a safe, inviting neighbourhood. We also

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welcome the taller apartment blocks in the west which create a suitable visual termination of the terraced housing rows, make use of the topography of the site and protect the terraces from the A4074. In the next design stages, noise attenuation can be designed for the apartment blocks to mitigate the impact of the A4074, supported by acoustic fencing along the boundary to the main road. To help maintain this strong urban configuration, the rows of terraced housing could be extended closer to Armstrong Road which could also help to provide more space to deliver the proposed quantum of houses. The three houses to the south of the nursery currently seem isolated and could be incorporated in the longer rows of terraces when readdressing their configuration. A stronger neighbourhood character could be created with a broader mix of tenures and apartment blocks and terraced housing designed by a range of architects.

Thank you for consulting us and please keep us informed of the progress of the scheme. If there is any point that requires clarification, please telephone us.

Yours sincerely



Victoria Lee
Cabe Advisor, Design Council
Email Victoria.Lee@designcouncil.org.uk
Tel +44(0)20 7420 5244

cc (by email only)

Beverley Letherby	Capita
Sheila Aldred	Capita
Kevin Ayrton	Carter Jonas
Andrew Murdoch	Oxford City Council

Review process

Following discussions with the design team and local authority and a pre-application review, the scheme was reviewed on 18 September 2014 by Joanna van Heyningen (chair), Deborah Nagan and Peter Studdert. These comments supersede any views we may have expressed previously.

Confidentiality

Since the scheme is not yet the subject of a planning application, the advice contained in this letter is offered in confidence, on condition that we are kept informed of the progress of the project, including when it becomes the subject of a planning application. We may share confidential letters with our affiliated panels only in cases where an affiliated panel is taking on a scheme that we have previously reviewed. We reserve the right to make our views known should the views contained in this letter be made public in whole or in part (either accurately or inaccurately). If you do not require our views to be kept confidential, please write to designreview@designcouncil.org.uk.



Littlemore Park, Oxford

Design Workshop

Notes from Thursday 08th May 2014

Thank you for attending Cabe's Design Workshop on Thursday 08th May 2014. We are delighted to comment on the scheme at this stage of the planning process and offer our advice as the proposal continues to develop. Littlemore Park is a fantastic site on which development should be of an exemplary standard to provide spaces and buildings that work with the site characteristics.

The site has a special landscape character and is located adjacent to historic buildings of St. George's Manor. The decision to facilitate access to Littlemore Brook and provide new public open spaces is a good starting point. Despite the limitations of flood risk, adjoining ownership, infrastructure and environmental designations, we encourage you to seize the opportunity that this site offers and develop a site strategy that responds sensitively to the context and creates a stronger identity.

Site context

- The site offers potential to enhance linkages to the Oxford Science Park, local amenities and across the railway line to the wider area. We encourage you to engage with the adjoining landowners early to establish the future access arrangements in principle. Such linkages would potentially impact on the site layout, location of the public open space and requires to be prioritised at the earliest.
- A site section will help to understand the site topography and how buildings could relate to the site landscape features and surrounding building context.
- Understanding what assets are available on the site and how they can enhance the quality of the scheme will help to determine the 'special characteristics' of the project. The site masterplan vision should set out the future of the site in terms of creating a distinctive identity that sets this scheme apart from other housing developments.

Development capacity

- We feel the current proposal requires further testing prior to deciding housing numbers. There is lack of a robust constraints and opportunities analysis in determining the site's development capacity. For example, the parking area as currently shown on the masterplan may not be sufficient to meet the projected need. It is essential to be realistic at this stage and review constraints carefully prior to finalising the proposed development quantum for the site.

Site layout

- A well-defined masterplan vision needs to demonstrate how the proposed design works with the context, builds on this character and develops around the site assets.
- The site access and street grid could be improved by anchoring them to the key site features and testing variations to the internal road layout, distribution of open spaces, density, housing typology, parking arrangements, building orientation and ways to reduce road noise.
- The location and distribution of open spaces will benefit from further work to make the most of the site potential. For example, we are not convinced with the proposed principal square location.
- A potential for a new public open space at the end of Armstrong Road between the Eastern and Western part of the site, could be explored to improve the relationship with SAE Institute. The proposed public open space would also be visible from the street with views towards Littlemore Brook. It could be treated as a home zone with potential public realm improvements along Armstrong Road signposting its new residential character.
- We liked the idea of a buffer zone along Littlemore Brook if its boundary is informed by technical evidence. There is an opportunity here to engage with the surrounding landscape and establish a positive relationship between building and landscape. Buildings proposed near Littlemore Brook should celebrate its presence rather than turning its back. If designed carefully and appropriately sited, five storey buildings are acceptable at this location. For example, Accordia housing in Cambridge could be an interesting precedent study for this site.

Landscape

- The existing tree survey including their root protection zone and proposed car parking requirements should be fully considered prior to identifying the development area. In particular, the edge condition and interface with Armstrong Road is challenging. Retaining mature trees, hedgerows along this road will help to maintain the distinctive site character.
- The landscape concept for the site should be informed by an overarching strategy, including wider green infrastructure and SUDs, flood management, ecology and play space provision.
- There is a scope to integrate parking within the landscape buffer by using the site topography to build apartments around or over the parking area.
- Future maintenance, management cost and responsibilities for green infrastructure should be considered at an early stage to inform quantum and location of the public open space.

Outline planning application

- A site masterplan should clearly communicate what driving factors are generating the design. The outline planning application should set the vision, development capacity, mix and design principles. These design principles will guide the outline planning stage, inform the detailed design and determine how the scheme is most likely to evolve in the future.
- If parameter plans are sufficiently developed and supported with a design and access statement, we feel the design code would not be required at the outline planning application stage. The key parameters for the application could be the layout, building height, development parcels and open spaces.
- The design and access statement should include typical housing layout and typology. It should also establish a quality threshold for the landscape design and public realm consolidated into a landscape strategy for the site.
- Armstrong Road determines the primary access and secondary road grid into the site. Provided that the design principles are fixed, the internal road layout can be determined at a later stage if it is consistent with the overall development strategy.

Attendees

Design Workshop Panel

Fred Manson (chair)
 Peter Studdert
 Deborah Nagan

Scheme Presenters

Tony Rackstraw	Capita Property and Infrastructure
Darren Sumeghy	Capita Property and Infrastructure

Project Team

Janette Findley	Urban Vision
Sheila Aldred	Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust

Oxford City Council

Andrew Murdoch
 Chris Leyland

Design Council Cabe staff

Mathieu Proctor
 Thomas Bender
 Mandar Puranik

This report dated 19th May 2014 replaces any previous report.

Planning Review Committee

29 April 2015

Application Number: 14/01348/FUL

Decision Due by: 8th September 2014

Proposal: Demolition of existing footbridge. Erection of replacement footbridge with ramped approaches and new stepped access. Provision of 12 car parking spaces and change of use of part of land adjacent to railway lines for educational purposes as part of SS Phillip and James School.
(Amended plans)

Site Address: Aristotle Lane Footbridge, Aristotle Lane, **Appendix 1.**

Ward: Jericho and Osney

Agent: N/A

Applicant: Network Rail

Called in by Cllr Price, Supported by: Cllrs Fry, Lygo, Tanner, Hollingsworth, Simm, Munkonge, Pressel, Clarkson, Malik, Van Nooijen, Lloyd-Shogbeson.

On the following grounds: Safeguards in relation to the landscape: impact of this structure and the security of the homes in the adjacent road are entirely inadequate at present and need to be secured by firm conditions.

Recommendation: Approve subject to conditions.

Reasons for Approval

- 1 The proposed bridge replacement is necessary to deliver strategic railway network improvements. The electrification of the railway between Oxford and Paddington delivers substantial public and economic benefits, and as part of the proposals it will also benefit the adjacent SS Philip and James School Primary School in relation to an extension of its school grounds. Safer access and parking arrangements for the allotment holder users is also provided. To address safety and access requirements necessitates design solutions that will affect the appearance of the area. These can be satisfactorily mitigated to minimise any adverse impacts by conditions to control such matters as the construction and design details, the use of materials and hard and soft landscaping proposals. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the requirements of the relevant policies in the Oxford Local Plan, Core Strategy and National Planning Policy Framework and Practice Guide.
- 2 The Council has considered responses raised in public consultation and by statutory consultees and the proposals have been amended to address the issues raised and as proposed to be controlled by the conditions imposed.

Any residual concerns do not constitute sustainable reasons sufficient to refuse planning permission and any harm that might result to interests of acknowledged importance are outweighed by the public benefits the proposal will deliver.

Conditions

- 1 Development begun within time limit
- 2 Develop in accordance with approved plans
- 3 Boundary and abutment details, including spur ramp, handrails, boundary walls and bridge parapet details
- 4 Flood plain storage
- 5 Contamination and remediation
- 6 Demolition and Construction Travel Plan
- 7 Sustainable drainage
- 8 Tree protection
- 9 Landscape plan required
- 10 Landscape carry out after completion
- 11 Landscape management plan
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- 15 Arboricultural method statement
- 16 Samples of materials
- 17 Sample panels
18. Biodiversity
- 19 Archaeology

Legal Agreement.

No CIL contributions or s106 agreement required

Principal Planning Policies:

Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016

- CP1 - Development Proposals
- CP8 - Design Development to relate to its context
- TR4 - Pedestrian & Cycle Facilities
- TR8 - Guided Bus/Local Rail Service
- HE1 - Nationally Important Monuments
- HE10 - View Cones of Oxford
- CP11 - Landscape Design
- CP13 - Accessibility
- NE15 - Loss of Trees and Hedgerows
- NE21 - Species Protection

Core Strategy

- CS11 - Flooding
- CS12 - Biodiversity
- CS18 - Urban design, town character, historic environment

Other Documents.

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Policy Guidance.

Statutory Designations

- The application site is partly within the Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which is a European site,
- This application is in close proximity to Port Meadow with Wolvercote Common and Green Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI),
- The site is in close proximity to Port Meadow Scheduled Ancient Monument,
- Common Land.

Public Consultation

Statutory Consultees.

- Thames Water Utilities Limited. No objections. Reminder that easement for access to sewers is required
- Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT). No objection subject to not raising the western ramp.
- Environment Agency Thames Region. No objection subject to conditions
- County Council and Highways Authority: No objection subject to conditions and clarification of details on parking
- English Heritage Commission. No objection to proposal in relation to the nearby scheduled ancient monument.
- Natural England. Requires clarity on the proposed levels for the western ramp and on the supports for the link bridge to the allotments to allow local planning authority to carry out Habitats Regulations Assessment, and to assess impact on habitats of Oxford Meadows SAC. On the basis of the above concerned that proposal is likely to damage or destroy the features of interest at Port Meadow with Wolvercote Common and Green SSSI.

Third Parties

- Oxford Waterside Residents' Association
- Oxford Waterside Management Company
- Oxford Civic Society
- Port Meadow Protection Group
- Friends of the Trap Grounds
- Oxford Fieldpaths Society
- St Margaret's Area Society
- One Voice Oxford
- Councillor Pressell

13 Individual Comments: 24 Lathbury Road, 7 Rawlinson Road, 71 Hayfield Road, 93 Kingston Road, 30, 47, 49 and 57 Plater Drive, 1 Osborne Close, 17 and 23 Chalfont Road, 8 St Aldate's, 14 Adelaide Street.

Following the 10th March WAPC meeting one further comment (24 Lathbury Road)

has been received.

The main points raised were:

- EIA screening opinion flawed, photomontages inaccurate,
- Questions the legal right to consent to the works and to carry out development or landscaping without Secretary of State consent because its common land,
- Closure of level crossing will allow train speeds to increase with consequent increase in noise and vibration,
- Replacement parking will be more visible and not secure,
- Parking spaces are too narrow and short, not compliant with highway standards. . No provision for low mobility parking and parking bays are substandard and as a result the safety of access compromised. No compensation for lost parking.
- Concerned about the direct and indirect effects on Oxford Meadows SAC,
- The increased height of the bridge and the supporting trusses and lattice work will be visually intrusive. The design is very poor and should be better.
- Appearance of barrier fencing from Port Meadow will be shocking and path will have engineered appearance. Generally concerned about effect on views from Port Meadow,
- Proposed hard surfaces will lead to conflict between potential users of the route. Concern about the proposed surface materials will look too urban. Ramp gradients may discriminate against less able.
- Concern about privacy and security for properties in Plater Drive that back onto east ramp,
- Proposed handrail should be deleted or free standing, not attached to wall. Wall height should be increased in brickwork to compensate for increased height of ramp,
- Southern footpath entrance to Trap Grounds should be retained, concern about effects of infilling ditch,
- Semi-rural character should be retained, new planting should be native species and not urban/suburban in character,
- Any soil contamination needs to be remediated,
- Western ramp should be raised to improve access, especially during flooding,
- Recommend condition on drainage strategy so that no significant effect on hydrological status,
- Construction work should avoid bird nesting season,
- Siting and access to construction site compound and storage of materials should be restricted to existing tracks and concrete areas to avoid adverse impacts on nature conservation interests,
- Concerned about effect of extension of school grounds on sparrow population,
- Suggestion of steps to allotments rather than spur ramp,
- Concerned about lack of ecological assessment,
- Suggestion that scheduled monument consent is required.
- Question accuracy and conclusions of arboricultural impact assessment. Revised drawings will result in the proposed bridge being more visible

The proposals have been subject to pre-application discussions with the City Council, involving lengthy consultation with stakeholders and public meetings.

Officers' Assessment:

Background to Proposals.

1. This application was reported to the West Area Planning Committee (WAPC) on 10th February and 10th March 2015 with a recommendation to approve the application. The WAPC at its 10th March meeting resolved to approve the application subject to conditions and it is this decision that has led to the application being called in to Planning Review Committee. The WAPC officer reports, which provide background information and assessment of the proposals, are attached as **Appendix 2** and **Appendix 3**. Minutes of 10th March WAPC meeting and the proposed conditions are attached as **Appendix 4**.
2. Since the call in to Planning Review Committee officers have sought to secure further details on the matters that formed the focus of the West Area Planning Committee's discussion.
3. The applicant is preparing further details on the ramped accesses, the boundary wall to Plater Drive, the bridge design and landscaping proposals. This report has been prepared to provide some clarity on these aspects of the proposals, but should be read together with the earlier reports, which provide a policy context and consideration of the issues (**Appendix 2 and 3**). The slide presentation to this committee will include the latest visual material and updated drawings.
4. Network Rail is delivering a number of infrastructure improvements in the Oxford area that will increase the frequency and number of trains using this section of railway line. Some of these separate projects include a gauge clearance project (reconstruction of over bridges) to facilitate electrification and the transportation of larger freight containers between Southampton and the Midlands, a re-instated passing loop to the north of Aristotle, electrification of the railway from Oxford Station (and sidings to the north of the station) to Paddington as part of Great Western Electrification Project and Phase 1 of East West Rail (previously known as Evergreen 3). Due to the increase in number of train movements along this stretch of the railway, for safety reasons Network Rail, DfT and the Office of Rail Regulation wish to see the closure of the Aristotle Lane pedestrian level crossing.

Details of the proposal

East Ramp

5. The works seek to improve accessibility, with the provision of platforms along the length of the ramp and a path width of 3.0m. The effect of this is to raise the height of the footpath, at its maximum by 750mm (approximately). The wall alongside forms the rear garden boundary to properties in Plater Drive. It is a stepped wall, which as a result of these works would be 0.85m high at its lowest point towards the top part of the ramp, increasing to 1.5m high (more or less as existing) towards the bottom of the ramp. For those properties towards the top of the ramp the resulting effective height of the wall would be insufficient to maintain privacy and security and additional screening would be required.

Officers consider that the proposed wall height increase should protect privacy and any perceptions of overlooking, but also should have an appearance that would not detract from the appearance of the area. Increasing the height with trellising (an option suggested by Network Rail) is not considered to be a sufficiently robust and long term solution, leaving responsibility for renewing the trellis in due course with the property owners. What is needed is a suitably durable and visually appropriate material and Network Rail are currently seeking agreement with residents on the height, design and materials and investigating any structural engineering solutions that may be required to deliver the agreed scheme. It is anticipated that these details will be resolved by the time of the Planning Review Committee meeting, but in the event that there may still be some outstanding matters a condition is proposed to secure agreement and delivery of the boundary wall improvements, to be implemented before the engineering works to raise the level of the footpath commence.

Bridge

6. The bridge will be single span supported by new brick buttresses on either side of the track. The height from track to the soffit of the bridge would be 4.78m (increased from 4.2m). The bridge structure will be taller than the existing with a maximum height from rail track to the top of the bridge (top chord) of just over 8.5 metres and 3.5 metres wide. The application proposed solid panels 1.8 metres high on either side of the bridge. Previously officers had sought to negotiate a reduced height to the balustrade and had asked the applicant to explore the use of a mesh (or other more transparent material) for the upper part. The advice at the time was that because the bridge served as a bridleway as well as a footpath the safety standards of both the County Highways Authority and Network Rail necessitated the use of solid panels. Following the 10th March West Area Committee meeting and the subsequent call in to Planning Review Committee officers have again explored alternative design details for securing the requisite safety measures. Highways design advice "Requirement for Road Restraint Systems" sets out the provision for 1.8m height for Bridleways (para 4.23, TD 19-06, August 2006). In addition The British Standard BS 6779-1:1998 in the section "Highway Parapets for Bridges and other Structures" shows the 1.5m minimum solid infill height where pedestrians may be present and where electrification is likely to occur.
7. The County Council has now confirmed that it is able to agree to the 1.5m solid infill height with a 0.3m zone above this in either wire mesh or perforated expanded metal. In agreeing this variation to their normal practice the County Council's Highway Engineer points out

I fully appreciate the nature of the aesthetic concerns that have been put forward, I should add that if, as seems likely, this section of line also gets electrified, we need to take on board the safety issue in that we shouldn't be encouraging people to have views "along the railway" since it could result in youngsters acting foolishly on the bridge and putting their lives at risk.

8. Network Rail has now also agreed to the changes suggested by the County Highways Authority and proposes to use mesh for the upper 0.3 metres of the balustrade. This allows the overall appearance of the bridge to be improved;

reducing the tunnel effect on the bridge caused by high solid balustrades and reduces its presence when seen from its surroundings. It is clear that safety issues have a high priority for the Highways Authority and Network Rail and the opportunities for views from the bridge will be limited in order to safeguard against *youngsters acting foolishly on the bridge and putting their lives at risk*. Amended details and visuals are being prepared at the time of writing this report, and will be circulated to members when available, but in the event that these matters are not finalised, a condition is recommended on any permission to provide appropriate levels of control over detail and implementation.

Trees and Landscaping

9. Following amended designs to the West Ramp, as reported to the WAPC meeting on the 10th March, Network Rail has confirmed that as a consequence of these revisions there will be a reduced impact to trees. The sycamore T3, which currently makes an important contribution, can be retained. The works will result in the loss of an Apple tree, T2, but other interventions can be limited to coppicing and pollarding to encourage regeneration and crown reduction. The allotment spur bridge will require removal of one or two willows along the boundary to the allotments.
10. On the East Ramp all the existing vegetation will need to be removed and a new planting scheme is proposed to mitigate this. The nature of engineering works to the east ramp, including the parking and access provisions for allotment holders mean that the area available for landscaping is substantially less than currently exists. The proposals show that best advantage would be taken to use all the area available for planting trees and shrubs. Conditions are proposed to secure delivery of the landscaping scheme and to make provision for ongoing management.
11. At the time of writing this report amended plans to show these revisions and to clearly mark tree removals and proposed landscaping details were being prepared and will be circulated before the Planning Review Committee meeting and will be included in the presentation at the meeting.

Conclusion.

The replacement of the bridge is necessary to enable the electrification of the railway, which is of strategic importance. The application also proposes additional works which will benefit the local community and address issues associated with the safety of the existing level crossing. During the application process the applicant has introduced a variety of amendments and supplied additional supporting information to address the concerns raised and has continued to do so after each WAPC meeting, prompted by officers. The precise detail of certain elements of the proposals and the extent of amendments has now been clarified and whilst there are still some details yet to be agreed, officers are satisfied that the application can be recommended for approval, with a recommended suite of conditions to control all matters of concern – detail, materiality and colour, deliverability, mitigation.

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, officers consider that the proposal will not undermine crime prevention or the promotion of community safety.

Background Papers: 14/01348/FUL

Contact Officer: Nick Worlledge

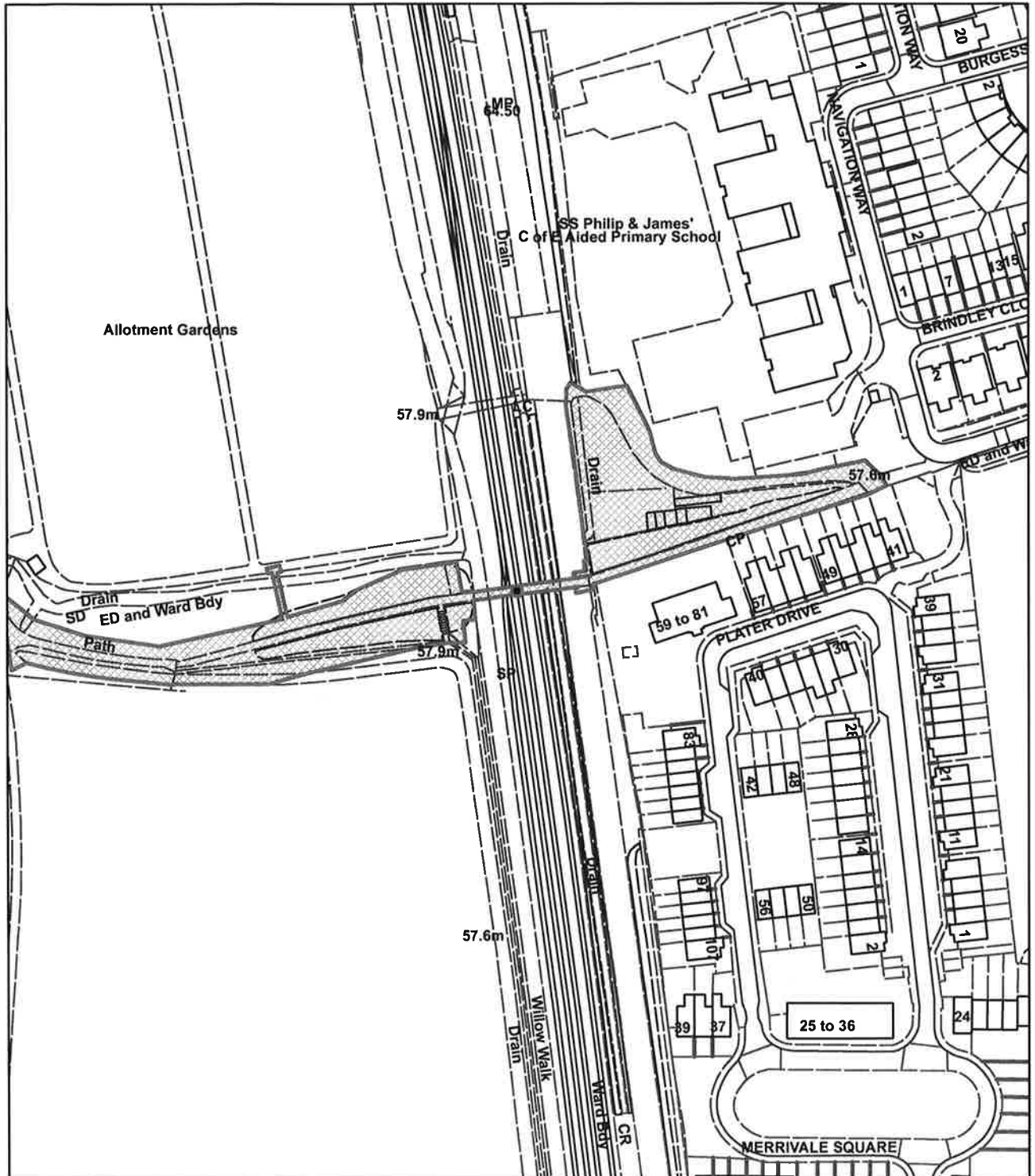
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Date: 17th April 2015

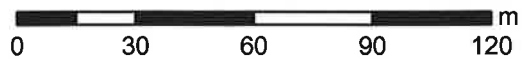
14/01348/FUL

Aristotle Lane Footbridge, Aristotle Lane

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Oxford City Council

Planning

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West Area Planning Committee

10 March 2015

Application Number: 14/01348/FUL

Decision Due by: 8th September 2014

Proposal: Demolition of existing footbridge. Erection of replacement footbridge with ramped approaches and new stepped access. Provision of 12 No car parking spaces and change of use of part of land adjacent to railway lines for educational purposes as part of SS Phillip and James School. (Amended plans)

Site Address: Aristotle Lane Footbridge, Aristotle Lane, **Appendix 1.**

Ward: Jericho and Osney

Agent: N/A

Applicant: Network Rail

Recommendation: Approve subject to conditions.

Reasons for Approval

- 1 The proposed bridge replacement is necessary to deliver strategic railway network improvements. The electrification of the railway between Oxford and Paddington delivers substantial public and economic benefits, and as part of the proposals it will also benefit the adjacent SS Philip and James School Primary School in relation to an extension of its school grounds. Safer access and parking arrangements for the allotment holder users is also provided. To address safety and access requirements necessitates design solutions that will affect the appearance of the area. These can be satisfactorily mitigated to minimise any adverse impacts by conditions to control such matters as the construction and design details, the use of materials and hard and soft landscaping proposals. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the requirements of the relevant policies in the Oxford Local Plan, Core Strategy and National Planning Policy Framework and Practice Guide.
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- 15 Arboricultural method statement
- 16 Samples of materials
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18. Biodiversity
- 19 Archaeology

Legal Agreement.

No CIL contributions or s106 agreement required

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- CP8 - Design Development to relate to its context
- TR4 - Pedestrian & Cycle Facilities
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- HE1 - Nationally Important Monuments
- HE10 - View Cones of Oxford
- CP11 - Landscape Design
- CP13 - Accessibility
- NE15 - Loss of Trees and Hedgerows
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Core Strategy

- CS11 - Flooding
- CS12 - Biodiversity
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Other Documents.

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- County Council and Highways Authority: No objection subject to conditions and clarification of details on parking
- English Heritage Commission. No objection to proposal in relation to the nearby scheduled ancient monument.
- Natural England. Requires clarity on the proposed levels for the western ramp and on the supports for the link bridge to the allotments to allow local planning authority to carry out Habitats Regulations Assessment, and to assess impact on habitats of Oxford Meadows SAC. On the basis of the above concerned that proposal is likely to damage or destroy the features of interest at Port Meadow with Wolvercote Common and Green SSSI.

Third Parties

- Oxford Waterside Residents' Association
- Oxford Waterside Management Company
- Oxford Civic Society
- Port Meadow Protection Group
- Friends of the Trap Grounds
- Oxford Fieldpaths Society
- St Margaret's Area Society
- One Voice Oxford
- Councillor Pressell

13 Individual Comments: 24 Lathbury Road, 7 Rawlinson Road, 71 Hayfield Road, 93 Kingston Road, 30, 47, 49 and 57 Plater Drive, 1 Osborne Close, 17 and 23 Chalfont Road, 8 St Aldate's, 14 Adelaide Street.

The main points raised were:

- EIA screening opinion flawed, photomontages inaccurate,
- Questions the legal right to consent to the works and to carry out development or landscaping without Secretary of State consent because its common land,
- Closure of level crossing will allow train speeds to increase with consequent

- increase in noise and vibration,
- Replacement parking will be more visible and not secure,
 - Parking spaces are too narrow and short, not compliant with highway standards
 - Concerned about the direct and indirect effects on Oxford Meadows SAC,
 - The increased height of the bridge and the supporting trusses and lattice work will be visually intrusive,
 - Appearance of barrier fencing from Port Meadow will be shocking and path will have engineered appearance. Generally concerned about effect on views from Port Meadow,
 - Proposed hard surfaces will lead to conflict between potential users of the route. Concern about the proposed surface materials will look too urban. Ramp gradients may discriminate against less able,
 - Concern about privacy and security for properties in Plater Drive that back onto east ramp,
 - Proposed handrail should be deleted or free standing, not attached to wall. Wall height should be increased in brickwork to compensate for increased height of ramp,
 - Southern footpath entrance to Trap Grounds should be retained, concern about effects of infilling ditch,
 - Semi-rural character should be retained, new planting should be native species and not urban/suburban in character,
 - Any soil contamination needs to be remediated,
 - Western ramp should be raised to improve access, especially during flooding,
 - Recommend condition on drainage strategy so that no significant effect on hydrological status,
 - Construction work should avoid bird nesting season,
 - Siting and access to construction site compound and storage of materials should be restricted to existing tracks and concrete areas to avoid adverse impacts on nature conservation interests,
 - Concerned about effect of extension of school grounds on sparrow population,
 - Suggestion of steps to allotments rather than spur ramp,
 - Concerned about lack of ecological assessment,
 - Suggestion that scheduled monument consent is required.

The proposals have been subject to pre-application discussions with the City Council, involving lengthy consultation with stakeholders and public meetings.

Officers' Assessment:

Background to Proposals

1. This application was reported to the West Area Planning Committee on 10th February with a recommendation to approve the application. The committee report, which provided background information and assessment of the proposals, is attached as **Appendix 2**. The committee resolved to defer determination and requested additional information so that the nature of the development as currently proposed and the impacts could be properly understood.

2. The applicant has now updated the application with further details of the proposed works. This report has been prepared to clarify detailed aspects of the scheme and should be read together with the earlier report (**Appendix 2**). The slide presentation to committee will include the latest visual material and updated drawings.
3. Network Rail is delivering a number of infrastructure improvements in the Oxford area that will increase the frequency and number of trains using this section of railway line. Some of these separate projects include a gauge clearance project (reconstruction of over bridges) to facilitate the transportation of larger freight containers between Southampton and the Midlands, a re-instated passing loop to the north of Aristotle, electrification of the railway from Oxford Station (and sidings to the north of the station) to Paddington as part of Great Western Electrification Project and Phase 1 of East West Rail (previously known as Evergreen 3). Due to the increase in number of train movements along this stretch of the railway, for safety reasons Network Rail, DfT and the Office of Rail Regulation wish to see the closure of the Aristotle Lane pedestrian level crossing.

Details of the proposal

East Ramp

4. The works seek to improve accessibility, with the provision of platforms along the length of the ramp and a path width of 3.0m. The effect of this is to raise the height of the footpath, at its maximum by 750mm (approximately). The boundary wall alongside forms the rear garden boundary to properties in Plater Drive. It is a stepped wall, which as a result of these works would be 0.85m high at its lowest point towards the top part of the ramp, increasing to 1.5m high (more or less as existing) towards the bottom of the ramp. For those properties towards the top of the ramp the effective resulting height of the wall would be insufficient to maintain privacy and security and additional screening would be required. Increasing the height of the existing brick boundary wall would be the logical solution, (this may require associated remedial works to ensure the structural integrity of the wall) or solid timber fencing, but would require agreement of the property owners, which it is understood has not yet been secured (there has been further discussion between a resident and Network Rail where solid fencing was under discussion). Increasing the height with trellising (which would have limited longevity) is not considered to be a sufficiently long term solution, leaving responsibility for renewing the trellis in due course with the property owners. A condition is proposed to secure agreement for and provision/installation of additional screening, in a suitably durable and visually appropriate material, before the engineering works to raise the level of the footpath commence.
5. It is proposed to provide a single handrail on the other side of the footpath fixed to a new railing. Normally the handrail should be a contrasting colour, but there will be scope for a contrast that would not be too strident. There will be no handrail fixed to the existing boundary wall. There are a number of options for the new railing that would represent an appropriate response to the location (as well as providing appropriate safety measures). At the time of writing the report

these railing details have yet to be fixed, so a condition is proposed to control these matters.

6. Sheet piling is proposed to the northern edge of the path, involving the excavation of the slope below the path, to allow space for the allotment parking, new steps up to the path and to facilitate the new raised footpath levels. This sheet piling will not be visible, being backfilled with soil and faced with brickwork, but involves the loss of trees and shrubs. New planting of native species is proposed in the back filled area, as appropriate to the location and growing conditions. The sheet piling and brick facing is shown to connect to the existing bridge brick abutment.
7. The adjoining area to the north, which is proposed to form part of the extension to the school grounds, will be enclosed with school railings and gates. The design and colour of this has yet to be agreed between the parties, as has any proposed landscaping. These matters can be controlled by condition, but require further detailed consideration to ensure they provide for the safety and security of pupils.
8. Alongside the school grounds the southern access to the Trap Grounds will be retained and resurfaced.
9. The works proposed to the east ramp area go beyond the operational requirements of Network Rail, seeking to
 - resolve existing footpath access issues for certain groups;
 - provide car parking for allotment holders;
 - extend the school grounds;
 - maintain access to the Trap Grounds.

Delivery of these elements will be a public benefit and would justify the proposed changes (subject to mitigation in planting and screening, as discussed above)

Bridge

10. The bridge will be single span supported by new brick buttresses on either side of the track. The height from track to the soffit of the bridge would be 4.78m (improved from 4.2m). The bridge structure will be taller than the existing with a maximum height from rail track to the top of the bridge (top chord) of just over 8.5 metres and 3.5 metres wide. Because the route is a bridleway there is a requirement for solid panels to a minimum height of 1.8 metres on either side of the bridge. Above that is the open latticework of the bridge structure. In other similar locations new bridges have been painted 'Holly Green' and this colour is proposed here. Red brickwork is shown for the new abutments and a condition is proposed to ensure that samples are submitted to agree an appropriate tone and texture. For comparison the applicant has submitted details of where this green colour has been used elsewhere. The examples will be included in the committee slide presentation.

West Ramp

11. The ramp has two sections, a length leading up from the Port Meadow concrete causeway to the gated entrance then a further section from the gate leading up to the bridge. Following concerns expressed by the Environment Agency and Natural England it is not now proposed to change the levels on the first section. However, as a requirement of the Highway Authority - to help ensure inclusive access, it is proposed to increase the height between gate and bridge to allow the incorporation of 'platforms' at regular intervals. An engineering solution has been devised that would ensure works to increase the height do not extend beyond the limits of the existing path, utilising a 'structural mattress' that can be shaped to fit, sown so that after a season it would blend with the existing grass banks. Within the first 14 metres of the ramp the height of the footpath would increase by a maximum of 300mm. Along the remaining length the height will increase by a maximum of 500mm.

Conclusion.

The replacement of the bridge is necessary to enable the electrification of the railway, which is of strategic importance. The application also proposes additional works which will benefit the local community and address issues associated with the safety of the existing level crossing. During the application process the applicant has introduced a variety of amendments and supplied additional supporting information to address the concerns raised. The precise detail of certain elements of the proposals and the extent of amendments has now been clarified and whilst there are still some details yet to be agreed, officers are satisfied that the application can be recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

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, officers consider that the proposal will not undermine crime prevention or the promotion of community safety.

Background Papers: 14/01348/FUL

Contact Officer: Nick Worledge

Extension: 2147

Date: 26th February 2015

West Area Planning Committee

10th February 2014

Application Number: 14/01348/FUL

Decision Due by: 8th September 2014

Proposal: Demolition of existing footbridge. Erection of replacement footbridge with ramped approaches and new stepped access. Provision of 12 No car parking spaces and change of use of part of land adjacent to railway lines for educational purposes as part of SS Phillip and James School. (Amended plans)

Site Address: Aristotle Lane Footbridge, Aristotle Lane, **Appendix 1.**

Ward: Jericho and Osney

Agent: N/A

Applicant: Network Rail

Recommendation: Approve subject to conditions.

Reasons for Approval

- 1 The proposed bridge replacement is necessary to deliver strategic railway network improvements. The electrification of the railway between Oxford and Paddington delivers substantial public and economic benefits, and as part of the proposals it will also benefit the adjacent SS Philip and James School Primary School in relation to an extension of its school grounds. Safer access and parking arrangements for the allotment holder users is also provided. To address safety and access requirements necessitates design solutions that will affect the appearance of the area. These can be satisfactorily mitigated to minimise any adverse impacts by conditions to control such matters as the construction and design details, the use of materials and hard and soft landscaping proposals. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the requirements of the relevant policies in the Oxford Local Plan, Core Strategy and National Planning Policy Framework and Practice Guide.
- 2 The Council has considered responses raised in public consultation and by statutory consultees and the proposals have been amended to address the issues raised and as proposed to be controlled by the conditions imposed. Any residual concerns do not constitute sustainable reasons sufficient to refuse planning permission and any harm that might result to interests of acknowledged importance are outweighed by the public benefits the proposal

will deliver.

Conditions

- 1 Development begun within time limit
- 2 Develop in accordance with approved plans
- 3 Boundary and abutment details, including spur ramp, handrails and boundary walls
- 4 Flood plain storage
- 5 Contamination and remediation
- 6 Demolition and Construction Travel Plan
- 7 Sustainable drainage
- 8 Tree protection
- 9 Landscape plan required
- 10 Landscape carry out after completion
- 11 Landscape management plan
- 12 Hard surface design.
- 13 Underground services
- 14 Tree protection plan
- 15 Arboricultural method statement
- 16 Samples of materials
- 17 Sample panels
18. Biodiversity
- 19 Archaeology

Legal Agreement

No CIL contributions or s106 agreement required

Principal Planning Policies:

Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016

- CP1 - Development Proposals
- CP8 - Design Development to relate to its context
- TR4 - Pedestrian & Cycle Facilities
- TR8 - Guided Bus/Local Rail Service
- HE1 - Nationally Important Monuments
- HE10 - View Cones of Oxford
- CP11 - Landscape Design
- CP13 - Accessibility
- NE15 - Loss of Trees and Hedgerows
- NE21 - Species Protection

Core Strategy

- CS11 - Flooding
- CS12 - Biodiversity
- CS18 - Urban design, town character, historic environment

Other Documents.

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- Planning Policy Guidance.

Statutory Designations

- The application site is partly within the Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which is a European site,
- This application is in close proximity to Port Meadow with Wolvercote Common and Green Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI),
- The site is in close proximity to Port Meadow Scheduled Ancient Monument,
- Common Land.

Public Consultation

Statutory Consultees.

- Thames Water Utilities Limited. No objections. Reminder that easement for access to sewers is required
- Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT). No objection subject to not raising the western ramp.
- Environment Agency Thames Region. No objection subject to conditions
- County Council and Highways Authority: No objection subject to conditions and clarification of details on parking
- English Heritage Commission. No objection to proposal in relation to the nearby scheduled ancient monument.
- Natural England. Requires clarity on the proposed levels for the western ramp and on the supports for the link bridge to the allotments to allow local planning authority to carry out Habitats Regulations Assessment, and to assess impact on habitats of Oxford Meadows SAC. On the basis of the above concerned that proposal is likely to damage or destroy the features of interest at Port Meadow with Wolvercote Common and Green SSSI.

Third Parties

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The main points raised were:

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 - Proposed handrail should be deleted or free standing, not attached to wall. Wall height should be increased in brickwork to compensate for increased height of ramp,
 - Southern footpath entrance to Trap Grounds should be retained, concern about effects of infilling ditch,
 - Semi-rural character should be retained, new planting should be native species and not urban/suburban in character,
 - Any soil contamination needs to be remediated,
 - Western ramp should be raised to improve access, especially during flooding,
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 - Siting and access to construction site compound and storage of materials should be restricted to existing tracks and concrete areas to avoid adverse impacts on nature conservation interests,
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 - Suggestion of steps to allotments rather than spur ramp,
 - Concerned about lack of ecological assessment,
 - Suggestion that scheduled monument consent is required.

The proposals have been subject to pre-application discussions with the City Council, involving lengthy consultation with stakeholders and public meetings.

Officers' Assessment:

Background to Proposals

12. Network Rail is delivering a number of infrastructure improvements in the Oxford area that will increase the frequency and number of trains using this section of railway line. Some of these separate projects include a gauge clearance project (reconstruction of over bridges) to facilitate the transportation of larger freight containers between Southampton and the Midlands, a re-instated passing loop to the north of Aristotle, electrification of

the railway from Oxford Station (and sidings to the north of the station) to Paddington as part of Great Western Electrification Project and Phase 1 of East West Rail (previously known as Evergreen 3). Due to the increase in number of train movements along this stretch of the railway, for safety reasons Network Rail, DfT and the Office of Rail Regulation wish to see the closure of the Aristotle Lane pedestrian level crossing.

13. The replacement of the Aristotle Lane footbridge is required to allow sufficient height over the main line tracks to accommodate overhead line equipment associated with the electrification. Part of the application also proposes a change of use of adjacent land to extend the school grounds of SS Philip and James Primary School with new boundary fencing to form a safe enclosure and a new route off the western ramp to give access to the allotments upgrading the southern access to the Trap Grounds
14. It is proposed to replace the existing three span bridge, along its existing alignment with a single span structure, removing the existing two piers and providing headroom of 4.78m (improved from 4.2m). The new bridge will be cambered with a maximum gradient along its length of 1:15 and with a clear width of 3.0m between handrails. The bridge is proposed to be painted green. The bridge structure will be taller than the existing with a maximum height from rail track to the top of the bridge (top chord) of just over 8.5 metres.

Site Description

15. The Aristotle Lane Bridge is an over-bridge of the railway to the north of Oxford Station. The existing footbridge forms part of the County Council's bridleway network (reference 320/12). The western part is the existing footpath/ bridleway from Port Meadow. An entrance to Council owned allotments exists just to the north of this western ramp. The ramp consists of a gravel path with timber post and rail fencing on its sides. The central part of the application site is the existing three span bridge with two concrete piers over the operational railway, incorporating brick abutments. The bridge is a metal structure 2.5m in width. The eastern part of the application site consists of an existing gravel pathway extending from Aristotle Lane with a brick wall on the southern boundary with residential properties at Plater Drive beyond and an embankment to the north with mixed planting. To the north of the embankment is an existing gravel access road leading to an informal parking area accommodating approximately eight parking spaces used by allotment holders and to the Aristotle Lane level crossing, which forms a private users crossing and second entrance to the allotment site. To the north east of the access road is SS Philip and James Primary School. There is also a footpath along the school grounds boundary to the Trap Grounds to the north.

Consent Regime

16. Network Rail benefits from the use of permitted development rights by virtue of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (GDPO) which grants consent for "*development by railway undertakers on their operational land required in connection with the movement of traffic on*

rail". The works to replace the bridge span and works to access ramps could ordinarily rely upon the use of these GDPO powers via the '*prior approval*' procedure but since the proposal includes works beyond the needs of the railway, (eg spur ramp to allotments, allotment holders car park and extension of school grounds), then Network Rail has submitted a single planning application for the whole project rather than discrete applications under separate consent regimes. Related proposals to facilitate the railway infrastructure works described above were submitted under the "*prior approval*" procedure at Hinksey Lake and White House Road and were granted planning permission on appeal.

17. Concern has been expressed through consultation responses about the legal issues associated with the Port Meadow Common, in determining this application and implementing any permission granted. Officers have taken legal advice on this matter and have been advised that in relation to the Common there is no impediment to the City Council determining this application.
18. The principle determining issues in this case are considered under the following headings:
 - planning policy;
 - design and built forms;
 - heritage;
 - highways and parking;
 - landscaping;
 - flood risk and drainage; and
 - biodiversity.

Planning Policy

19. Development plan policies recognise the importance of the rail transport infrastructure, with policies in the Core Strategy and Local Plan that safeguard the transport corridor to facilitate future investment and improvement. Policies CS17 and TR8 refer respectively.
20. The site is in a sensitive location, alongside and leading into Port Meadow, host to statutory designations that recognise its nature conservation and heritage interest. Core Strategy and Local Plan policies seek to ensure that the special interest the site holds is not harmed, policies CS21 and NER22. Considerable weight and importance needs to be paid to the objective of preservation and enhancement in considering any harm against other planning priorities.
21. The site is not in a conservation area but the policies in the Core Strategy and Local Plan seek to ensure that the positive characteristics and appearance of the local context are respected and that new development should be designed to take account of local character.
22. The site is within an area of flood risk and development will not be permitted if it will result in an increased risk of flooding

Design and Built Forms

23. The nature of the proposals will involve some change to the existing appearance of the area. The engineering requirements to provide the eastern ramp, car park and access stairs to it from the bridge will serve to 'formalise' what are currently slightly haphazard and informal areas. It is proposed that the effect of this is mitigated by soft landscaping and careful selection of hard surfacing and other external materials. Officers consider the overall benefits associated with the proposal justify the changes. The existing characteristics of the bridge and ramps have an association with the nature of the railway corridor and these proposals will retain that character. The bridge, as a larger structure than that existing, will have more prominence, but only in the immediate locality. From longer distances views its presence will be filtered by the retained and proposed landscaping; the colour (and tone) of the bridge structure; and the skeletal form of the upper parts which assist it to assimilate into its surroundings. The introduction of electrification of the railways and overhead gantries that will form part of that investment are likely to be more visible elements characterising the railway corridor as it passes alongside Port Meadow.
24. There are a variety of detailed design matters that are not finalised at this stage including railing details and the detailed design for the allotment bridge connection. It is considered that these matters can be satisfactorily controlled by condition.

Heritage

25. Port Meadow is a scheduled ancient monument (SAM) and provides a publicly accessible area that also allows views over Oxford's historic city centre skyline. The National Planning Policy Framework states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. In this case it is only the SAM which is a designated heritage asset however, due to its important below ground archaeology. The remainder of Port Meadow is a non designated asset. Nevertheless the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should still be taken into account in determining planning applications. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement is be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
26. Port Meadow is of interest as a SAM because of its location on the Northmoor Thames gravel terrace adjacent to an extensive prehistoric landscape of late Neolithic / Early Bronze Age barrows and Iron Age settlement remains. However none of the bridge works now proposed fall within the confines of the of the SAM, with the nearest archaeological feature being a possible stock enclosure located 150m from the western end of the existing bridge. Previously stray finds of worked flint and a Roman coin have been recovered from the area of allotments to the north

of the footbridge. An archaeological condition requiring a programme of work to be undertaken is suggested.

27. For its part English Heritage has confirmed that it does not consider the proposal will have any harmful impacts on the SAM or its setting. Officers concur with that view and concluded that there would be no adverse impact.

Highways and Parking

28. The proposals include the provision for a car park for allotment holders, to rationalise the existing informal parking area, organised to relate to the new access arrangements for allotment holders. It is designed to be SUDS compliant and a condition is proposed to secure this.
29. The demolition and construction methodology is complicated, designed to minimise interruption to rail traffic, to maintain public access across the bridge for as long as practicably possible and also to protect nature conservation interests. The site is also constrained in terms of access for plant and equipment and a demolition and construction travel plan has been recommended by the Highways Authority to ensure managed impacts on the road network and to safeguard residential amenity. A condition is proposed to secure this and should include details of compound and working areas.

Landscaping

30. As now proposed tree works on the western side of the railway line which include the removal of a mature sycamore and pollarding of a large willow would have a detrimental impact on the appearance of the landscape and reduce the softening and screening effect of existing trees of the footbridge and embankment. These impacts are required to be weighed in the balance against the important benefits to the strategic rail network, services to and from Oxford, and economic performance if the proposals were to be approved. Officers have concluded that in view of the importance of improvements to rail infrastructure that the balance of advantage in these terms lies with supporting the proposals.
31. Elsewhere within the application site, additional information has been submitted on existing trees and soft landscaping since submission of the original application. This confirms the extent of tree removal and replacement planting. The landscaping scheme submitted has therefore been amended to reflect the desirability of maintaining the informal character of the area, proposing native tree species such as hazel, hawthorn, field maple etc. A raft of conditions are proposed to secure protection of existing trees, delivery of the landscaping proposals to the north side of the eastern embankment and ongoing management.

Flood Risk and Drainage

32. The Environment Agency (and others) expressed concerns that the submitted proposals would have unacceptable impacts on flooding and flood storage capacity. The applicant subsequently submitted a Flood Risk Assessment and has been in ongoing negotiation with the Agency and officers to address the concerns raised. This has involved some minor changes to the proposals, but in particular in order to satisfy the Environment Agency's requirements the ramp from Port Meadow (western ramp) will no longer be raised, but will maintain its existing levels. Having considered the additional information supplied and the proposed amendments the Environment Agency has now withdrawn its objection, subject to the imposition of conditions (which have been included in the recommendation).

Biodiversity

33. Natural England objected to the planning application on the grounds that the application, as submitted, did not demonstrate that it would not damage interest features for which Port Meadow with Wolvercote Common and Green SSSI has been notified. It expressed concerns about the level of evidence and assessment that had been submitted with the original application. Officers have been in ongoing consultation with Natural England Network Rail and undertaken their own assessment.
34. As a competent authority the City Council must assess the impacts on the SAC in accordance with Regulations 61 and 62 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species regulations 2010. The applicant has supplied supplementary information which addresses concerns raised by consultees, including BWONT, the Environment Agency and Natural England. The latter would however wish to see further constructional details. After consideration of this information Officers have concluded that there would be no negative impact on the SAC. To ensure this is the case protective measures should be conditioned regarding details of the western ramp and construction details for the allotments spur ramp.

Other Matters

35. Through consultation responses a number of concerns have been raised about the nature and appearance of hard surfaces. The desirability is to ensure that they do not appear over engineered, reflect the informal character of the area and do not encourage misuse or anti-social behaviour. Officers have recommended a condition to review and control the execution of this element of the proposals. Concern has also been expressed about privacy and security for residents in Plater Drive, whose properties back onto the eastern ramp. The introduction of a handrail along the wall and the increase in height of the ramp are the concerns. Proposals have been suggested that could mitigate these concerns – namely excluding the handrail or installing separate posts and rail and increasing the height of the boundary wall. These matters are included in

the proposed conditions.

36. Conclusion

37. The replacement of the bridge is necessary to enable the electrification of the railway, which is of strategic importance. The application also proposes additional works which will benefit the local community and address issues associated with the safety of the existing level crossing. During the application process the applicant has introduced a variety of amendments and supplied additional supporting information to address the concerns raised and officers are satisfied that the application can be recommended for approval.

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, officers consider that the proposal will not undermine crime prevention or the promotion of community safety.

Background Papers: 14/01348/FUL

Contact Officer: Nick Worlledge

Extension: 2147

Date: 29th January 2015

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WEST AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

Tuesday 10 March 2015

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Gotch (Vice-Chair, in the Chair), Benjamin, Cook, Coulter, Gant, Henwood, Hollingsworth, Price and Tanner.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Michael Crofton-Briggs (Head of City Development), Murray Hancock (City Development), Michael Morgan (Law and Governance), Jennifer Thompson (Law and Governance) and Nick Worlledge (Chief Principal Planner)

122. ARISTOTLE LANE: 14/01348/FUL

The Head of City Development submitted a report setting out an application for planning permission for the demolition of the existing footbridge and erection of replacement footbridge with ramped approaches and new stepped access, provision of 12 car parking spaces and change of use of part of land adjacent to railway lines for educational purposes as part of SS Phillip and James School at Aristotle Lane Footbridge, Aristotle Lane.

This application was deferred from the meeting on 10 February to allow officers to present additional information.

Andrew Martin and Emma Dadson, local residents, spoke about their concerns about the application.

Colin Field, a representative of Network Rail, spoke in support of the application.

Members of the committee were concerned that the proposed solid barriers across the bridge had an adverse visual impact for those using and viewing the bridge, and may not be the only means of providing the required degree of safety for all users. They noted residents' concerns about the impact of the development on the structural soundness of existing walls but that this could not be secured by condition.

The Committee agreed that conditions should include reference to achieving the best balance between the requirements for the safety of all users of the bridge and reducing the visual impact of solid parapet walls.

The Committee resolved to approve application 14/01348/FUL for planning permission at Aristotle Lane Footbridge, Aristotle Lane subject to the following conditions:

- 1 Development begun within time limit.
- 2 Develop in accordance with approved plans.
- 3 Boundary and abutment details, including spur ramp, handrails and boundary walls and bridge parapet details.
- 4 Flood plain storage.
- 5 Contamination and remediation.
- 6 Demolition and Construction Travel Plan.
- 7 Sustainable drainage.
- 8 Tree protection.

- 9 Landscape plan required.
- 10 Landscape carry out after completion.
- 11 Landscape management plan.
- 12 Hard surface design.
- 13 Underground services.
- 14 Tree protection plan.
- 15 Arboricultural method statement.
- 16 Samples of materials.
- 17 Sample panels.
- 18 Biodiversity.
- 19 Archaeology.

PLANNING REVIEW COMMITTEE

Monday 26 January 2015

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Fry (Chair), Fooks (Vice-Chair), Cook, Goddard, Henwood, Hollick, Kennedy, Lygo and Sinclair.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Martin Armstrong (City Development), Michael Crofton-Briggs (Head of City Development), Niko Grigoropoulos (City Development), Michael Morgan (Law and Governance) and Jennifer Thompson (Law and Governance)

13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Ed Turner submitted his apologies. Councillor Colin Cook substituted.

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

15. MINUTES

The Committee agreed to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 29 October 2014 as a true and accurate record.

16. MATTERS EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION

The Committee resolved under S100 A(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public and press, with the exception of the those who had the data controller's permission to remain and the objector (who controlled the data) in the Data Protection Act.

A summary of business transacted by the Committee after passing the resolution is in Minute 17 below.

17. 33 WILLIAM STREET:14/01495/FUL

Councillors Mary Clarkson and Mike Gotch, who were not members of the committee, were given consent to remain.

The Head of City Development submitted a report which detailed the erection of a two storey side and single storey rear extension.

The Committee's legal adviser explained the special circumstances of this case relating to the issue that was the subject of the sensitive personal data, including the relevant requirements.

The planning officer explained the report elaborating upon and explaining further how the recommendation it contained had been arrived at.

Councillor Clarkson, on behalf of an objector living in the vicinity of the application site, and the objector, spoke against the application.

The applicant spoke in favour of the application.

The Committee asked questions as to considerations material to the decision before it.

The Committee resolved to REFUSE planning permission for application 14/01495/FUL, 33 William Street, for the following reason:

Having regard to its size, scale and siting and in compliance with the public sector equality duty (s149 Equality Act 2010), article 3(1) of The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 (in particular article 8 rights), the proposed extension would result in unacceptable harm to the amenities of the occupants of residential properties in the locality.

18. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Committee noted the dates of future meetings.

The meeting started at 5.30 pm and ended at 8.00 pm