

Agenda Item 3

West Area Planning Committee

13th June 2012

Application Number: 1. 12/00371/FUL
2. 12/00416/LBD

Decision Due by: 14th May 2012

Proposal:

1. Erection of office building on 3 floors plus basement, linked to existing buildings fronting Walton Street. Creation of landscaped courtyard.
2. Erection of office building on 3 floors plus basement linked to existing buildings fronting Walton Street, involving demolition of C wing workshop building dated 1895 and demolitions including rear of 35 Walton Street and link blocks.

Site Address: Oxford University Press, Great Clarendon Street
[Appendix1]

Ward: Jericho And Osney Ward

Agent: N/A

Applicant: Oxford University Press

Recommendation: West Area Planning Committee is recommended to support the proposals in principle but defer the applications to allow an accompanying legal agreement to be drawn up and to delegate to officers issuing of the notices of planning permission and listed building consent on its completion.

12/00371/FUL

Reasons for Approval

- 1 The proposal is considered to form an appropriate visual relationship with the existing building and the surrounding development and would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the two conservation areas in which the site lies. The proposal has evolved following pre-application discussions and would provide much needed additional office floorspace. The proposal complies with adopted policies contained in both the Oxford Local Plan 2001 - 2016 and the Core Strategy 2026.
- 2 Objections to the proposal have been received from English Heritage and the Georgian Group and the comments received have been carefully considered. However it is considered that the points raised, either individually or cumulatively, do not constitute sustainable reasons for refusing the application

and that the imposition of appropriate conditions on the planning permission will ensure a quality development that would appear appropriate to its setting.

- 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 Development begun within time limit
- 2 Develop in accordance with approved plans
- 3 Samples in Conservation Area
- 4 Sample panel
- 5 Public art – Scheme details and timetable
- 6 Archaeology - mitigation
- 7 Archaeology - Design & method statement
- 8 Landscape plan required
- 9 Landscape carry out by completion
- 10 Landscape hard surface design - tree roots
- 11 Landscape underground services - tree roots
- 12 Tree Protection Plan (TPP) 1
- 13 Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) 1
- 14 Drainage details
- 15 No surface water discharge onto highway
- 16 Sustainable drainage
- 17 Construction Travel Plan
- 18 Staff travel plan
- 19 Contaminated Land - Desktop study etc.
- 20 Details of solar arrays
- 21 Permeable paving
- 22 Sustainable construction measures

Planning Obligation

County

£40,000 towards the cost of improving access to the site by non-car modes

£720 towards the cost of monitoring the Travel Plan

City

£15,998 towards Public Art – the Council has agreed that the applicant can install a work of art at their own expense and condition 5 refers to this.

12/00416/LBD

Reasons for Approval

1. The proposals have evolved through informed analysis of the architectural and historic interest of the buildings and through pre-application discussions

with officers and English Heritage. Whilst there will be some impacts on the heritage assets and the demolition of the late Victorian industrial buildings, it is considered that these impacts have been minimised by design and mitigated by proposals for recording. Overall the benefits that will be delivered, ensuring the buildings' continual use and regeneration, allowing improved access and increased office space on the historic site, justify granting listed building consent.

2. The Council considers that the proposal accords with the policies of the Development Plan and Government advice on the management of the historic environment as summarised below. It has taken into consideration all other material matters, including matters raised and objections received in response to consultation and publicity. Any harm to the heritage that the works would otherwise give rise to can be justified and mitigated by detailed design which the conditions imposed would control.

Conditions

1. Commencement of works LB/CAC consent
2. LB consent – works as approved only
3. 7 days notice to LPA
4. LB notice of completion
5. Further works – buildings bounding site
6. Further works – fabric of LB – fire regulations
7. Repair of damage after works
8. Solar/photovoltaic panels and slates
9. Plant room and services tower
10. Preservation of features from demolition
11. Protection of buildings and structures
12. Further details –floodlighting/lighting
13. Preservation of unknown features
14. Materials – samples
15. South Annex reinstatement façade
16. Measured survey and photographic record including 35 Walton Street

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

TR3 - Car Parking Standards

TR4 - Pedestrian & Cycle Facilities

NE16 - Protected Trees

HE2 - Archaeology

HE3 - Listed Buildings and Their Setting

HE7 - Conservation Areas

EC1 - Sustainable Employment

Oxford Core Strategy 2026

CS2_ - Previously developed and greenfield land

CS9_ - Energy and natural resources

CS10_ - Waste and recycling

CS11_ - Flooding

CS12_ - Biodiversity

CS18_ - Urban design, town character, historic environment

CS27_ - Sustainable economy

CS28_ - Employment sites

Other Material Considerations:

National Planning Policy Framework March 2012

These applications are in or affecting the Jericho Conservation Area and the Central City and University Conservation Area. The development is affecting a Grade II* Listed Building.

Relevant Site History:

The site has an extensive planning history; however the most recent, relevant planning permissions and listed building consents are as follows:

06/00584/FUL and 06/00583/LBC

Demolition of entrance lobby and erection of new glazed extension. Approved

05/00645/FUL and 06/00644/LBC

Extension to K wing to form new meeting room and roof terrace. Approved

03/00033/FUL and 03/00032/LBC

External lighting to main façade. Approved

98/01001/NF

Glazed link to north wing. Approved

92/00016/NF and 92/00015/LBC

2 storey bridge link building containing meeting room and conference rooms. Approved.

Public Consultation:

Statutory Consultees

Highway Authority: No objection subject to the following conditions:

- Drainage details to be submitted and approved
- No surface water discharge from the development to the public highway
- Development to be SUDS compliant
- Construction Travel Plan to be submitted and approved
- Staff Travel Plan to be submitted and approved

The Local Highway Authority have also requested a developer contribution of £40,000 [index linked] towards the cost of improving access to the site by non-car modes and a further contribution of £720 towards the cost of monitoring the Travel Plan for a 5 year period.

Oxfordshire County Council: Drainage: No objections subject to the provision of permeable paving for all new hard surfaces and surface water to be dealt with on site with no runoff to the highway.

Natural England: No objection subject to the development having no impact on protected species or local wildlife sites. Biodiversity enhancements would be welcome.

Thames Valley Police: Consulted at pre-application stage and points raised have been taken on board. Would encourage the incorporation of physical security standards as set out in Secured by Design.

Thames Water: No objections on the grounds of water or sewerage infrastructure.

Environment Agency: Is satisfied that the proposal will not impact water resources or designated sites.

Third Party Comments:

English Heritage: Do not wish to comment in detail but offer the following, general observations:

- The Design and Access Statement does not properly assess the significance of the buildings proposed for demolition
- E.H's main concern is the impact of the solar arrays on the roofscape of this part of the conservation area and on the setting of the adjoining Grade II* listed building. Whilst they may not be prominent in current public views, they may well be prominent in the future, either from new buildings such as the Blavatnik School of Government to be built opposite or from existing buildings opening more to the public. EH considers that the roofscape of the conservation area is an important element in the historic core of the city, visible from within the city centre and from viewpoints outside the city and that it should be protected. Solar arrays are non-traditional in appearance and can be highly reflective, even in long distance views. This would introduce a discordant and jarring feature into the view
- The solar arrays should be omitted from the scheme

The Georgian Group: Objection for the following reasons:

- The proposal would be damaging to the setting of the historic Oxford University Press building and the character of the conservation area
- The proposal would further close the gap between the OUP building and its neighbours, thereby increasing the effect of 20th century infill in this part of the city
- The proposed building seeks to introduce a significant amount of glazed wall to the Walton Street elevation for which there is no precedent in the historic building. The effect of this large, glazed element, after dusk, would be

detrimental to the historically modest and suburban character of this part of Oxford

- The most notable effect on the 1820's fabric is the infill of the remaining gap between the façade of the GI building on Walton Street and the adjacent terrace of houses. This will detract from the impact of the main façade of the building to Walton Street which was intended to stand as a symmetrically balanced façade forming the dominant architectural note to this side of Walton Street as can clearly be seen in historic drawings. This balance was upset by the late 20th century to the south but the intended effect of the original composition is still very legible. The current proposals seek to add to the late 20th century extension thereby making its visual effect on the setting and architectural integrity of the 1820's building even more damaging.
- The applicants need to demonstrate that the need for additional office facilities cannot be accommodated within the existing building or on a less historically sensitive site
- The Group is very concerned by the deterioration of the Walton Street part of the Jericho and Walton Manor Conservation Areas in the past two years. The new Jericho Health Centre and the works to the former Radcliffe Infirmary site have damaged the historical character of this part of Oxford and have had a detrimental impact on the setting of listed and historic buildings. The current proposal would exacerbate this already serious problem and should be refused.

The Oxford Architectural and Historic Society Victorian Group: Deferred to the Georgian Group's response.

Officers Assessment:

Site Description

1. The application site lies on the west side of Walton Street at its junction with Great Clarendon Street. OUP occupies the largest single plot west of Walton Street which is otherwise almost exclusively residential except for the commercial premises on Walton Street and St. Barnabus Primary School opposite OUP's Great Clarendon Street entrance. The majority of the OUP site lies within the Jericho Conservation Area but number 35 Walton Street and Keith Thomas Court sit just within the Central City and University Conservation Area.
2. OUP moved to its purpose built premises on Walton Street in 1830 from The Clarendon Building in central Oxford. The original, neo-classical, collegiate style, Walton Street building has been extended and adapted numerous times over the years as the operations of OUP have expanded and their operations needs have changed. Throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, extensive printing development grew up around the original quad with the last phase of printing works taking place in the late 1960's.
3. In the late 1980's the decision was taken to terminate printing operations in Walton Street and to focus on the publishing side of the business. This required a major development plan to be drawn up, identifying how the

existing printing buildings might be altered and extended to provide offices and ancillary accommodation.

4. The additional space has quickly been taken up as OUP has continued to expand and a further development in 2007 converted the 'Old Mailing Shed', the only remaining, large undeveloped space, into a large open plan office creating 100 additional work stations. OUP is now the largest university press in the world.
5. The application site encompasses a number of interconnecting buildings the largest of which is D wing, a three storey steel and concrete framed office building constructed in the 1970's. This building also has links to the listed B wing to the north, the South Annex to the west and C wing to the south. The main D wing building has an elevation to Walton Street to the east and forms an enclosed landscaped courtyard with B and F wings and the South Annex. C wing is an ad hoc collection of buildings including a series of two storey 19th century brick workshops to the west, a 1980's extension to the north and number 35 Walton Street.
6. The south and east perimeter of the site is bounded generally by residential properties with ground floor retail use along Walton Street. These properties are all in the ownership of OUP. A row of two storey guest flats [Keith Thomas Court] was constructed by OUP in 1997 at the back of and parallel to the Walton Street properties and the vehicle access from Walton Crescent. The northern most of these flats impinge on the application site and are proposed to be removed.
7. The site has two, secure gated access points, one pedestrian access between 34 and 35 Walton Street and one vehicle access from Walton Crescent to the south. The area accessed by the Walton Crescent gate currently provides parking for approximately 13 cars.

Heritage Significance

8. The site area was not developed before OUP was constructed and is shown as 'Jericho Gardens' in 1769 on a plan of St. Giles. The industrial revolution brought about the creation of the working class of Jericho in the 1830's and 1840's as accommodation for the workers who served the new industries developing along the Oxford Canal.
9. Jericho Conservation Area was designated on 23 February 2011. Jericho represents the Georgian and Victorian industrial and residential expansion of Oxford into the surrounding countryside. It is an area of working class and artisan housing that has developed a unique character by virtue of its historical land ownership, relationship with the canal, the railway, three major employers and its unique position as a working class suburb in the midst of the middle and upper class estate that was developed by St. John the Baptist College. The area has a distinct architectural aesthetic and is interspersed with a number of outstanding examples of 18th and 19th century architecture. The contribution of OUP to the creation of the

character of the locality should not be underestimated.

10. OUP is grade II* listed [the screen is grade II] and its early 19th century cast iron railings and plinth wall are grade II. In 1825 OUP bought land in the water meadows north of Worcester College for its rapidly expanding print press that had outgrown its home at the Clarendon Building. OUP consists of two wings, north and south, joined by a screen to Walton Street and with a central monumental entrance way, all in the Corinthian order and reminiscent of triumphal arches in the Forum at Rome. The front and south wing was designed by Daniel Robertson and built from 1826 – 28. The north wing and west ranges were designed under the direction of Edward Blore and completed by 1830.
11. Daniel Robertson was an Irish architect with a colourful history. His date of birth is unknown but he died in 1849. He was possibly related to Robert Adam and came to London in 1800 as a protégé of Robert Adam's son, William, a builder and developer. Daniel was clearly conversant with the architecture of ancient Rome and between 1826 and 1829, he received a series of commissions in Oxford, the most important being the OUP building. He also designed St. Clement's Church in Marston Road.
12. OUP represents a grand architectural statement of its time, set on a Headington stone plinth with Bath stone facing and dressings behind cast iron railings. The building is set back some distance from the boundary line giving it a less dominant position in the streetscape. The design, materials and attention to detail are indicative of the success of the organisation and its importance to the University. The building has been subject to a number of extensions but has retained its integrity and grandeur. Its heritage significance includes substantial community value.
13. C wing, which is proposed to be demolished, lies to the south of D wing and was constructed by Symm and Company as a print room. It has been constructed using yellow stock brick with decorative brick moulding. The upper storeys at two of the sections of the workshops are built of different colour bricks, having been added later.
14. The south east elevation has segmental arched windows with darker brick details and the arches have been extended to ground level with cills that are probably later. The roof form is trussed rafter and the trusses are slender, cast iron, typical of workshops. There are also extensive dormers. Various unsympathetic alterations have been carried out, including D wing built in the 1970's to the south of the main quad and immediately abutting the north west edge of C wing. Internally the space has been altered and is currently used as offices. These various alterations have diminished the design/aesthetic value but the industrial and social history remains of interest.
15. D wing, which is proposed to be retained, was constructed in 1974 with additions dating back to the 1990's. The Walton Street, three storey projecting block has a strong presence and is flanked by link blocks set

well back. The mass and alignment of the main block follows the rhythm and massing of the listed building. It has a rusticated stone ground floor elevation which gives it a somewhat 'brutalist' character and the colour of the material is the same palette as the listed buildings. Although the alignment of the fenestration is more horizontal to the upper floors, it is more vertical to the ground floor. D wing is linked directly to the south wing of the listed quad buildings. This two storey link block was constructed in 1992 and is set well back from the listed building line. The proposals include converting this to a fully glazed elevation to Walton Street. The southern link of 1992 [not visible from the street] connects D wing with the South Annex that forms part of the listed building.

16. The application site includes number 35 Walton Street which is not listed but is part of the heritage asset. It was formerly The Clarendon Arms Public House and was used by OUP workers. The building has a strong presence on the streetscape with its prominent mansard roof with attic dormers. It first appears on the OS map in 1850 and by 1937 a curved bay was built to the rear. In 1962, change of use was granted for a canteen for OUP staff together with the lithographic department. In 1991 a large rear extension was built which doubled the footprint of the building.

The Proposal

17. The proposal, which has evolved as the preferred option of 4 possible schemes, involves the retention of D wing and number 35 Walton Street and the demolition of the remaining buildings that form C wing. In addition, the two existing end flats of the guest accommodation are to be demolished.
18. The proposal includes the construction of a new atrium space to provide natural light and ventilation which connects a new three storey building [with a basement] constructed to the south.
19. The configuration and detailing of the new buildings has been developed to address overlooking and amenity issues with adjoining properties and retains as much of the existing buildings as possible. Number 35 Walton Street is retained [this building was proposed for demolition in other scheme options] and would be refurbished to provide new meeting rooms, connected to the new building by way of a new glazed link.
20. The new building would have a contemporary form and would be erected using a combination of limestone cladding, zinc cladding, glazed curtain walling and perforated metal mesh. It would be flat roofed, heavily glazed and incorporate internal wooden louvres to prevent overlooking. The new building would be visible from Walton Street and Walton Crescent only and its height would not exceed the existing ridge height of 35 Walton Street.
21. The application is supported by reports that indicate that the proposals have been informed by analysis and an understanding of the heritage

assets. A number of pre-application meetings have been carried out to secure a number of changes to address the concerns raised by officers and consultees.

22. Officers consider the principle determining issues in these cases to be:

- Planning policy
- Impact on heritage assets
- Trees
- Archaeology
- Groundwater and flooding
- Sustainability
- Loss of flats
- Impact on neighbours

Planning Policy

23. Conservation principles, policy and practice seek to preserve the value of heritage assets. With the issuing of the National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF] in March of this year, the Government has re-affirmed its aim that the historic environment and its heritage assets should be conserved and enjoyed for the quality of life they bring to this and future generations. The NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development and explains that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of this. For development to be sustainable, it must, amongst other things, perform an environmental role, contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

24. The NPPF states in paragraph 131 – 132 that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation
- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic viability
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness

25. The NPPF is supported by a Practice Guide that gives advice on the application of the historic environment policies. Paragraph 78 of the guide explains the expected outcomes and states that there are a number of potential heritage benefits that could weigh in favour of a proposed scheme as follows:

- it sustains or enhances the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting

- it reduces or removes risks to a heritage asset
- it secures the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation
- it makes a positive contribution to economic vitality and sustainable communities
- it is an appropriate design for its context and makes a positive contribution to the appearance, character, quality and local distinctiveness of the historic environment
- it better reveals the significance of a heritage asset and therefore enhances our enjoyment of it and the sense of place.

26. In relation to development affecting a designated heritage asset, the NPPF 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. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.

Impact on Heritage Assets

27. Policy HE7 of the adopted Oxford Local Plan and policy CS18 of the adopted Core Strategy both seek to ensure that new development preserves or enhances the special character and appearance of conservation areas and their settings and that development proposals respect and draw inspiration from Oxford's unique historic environment by responding positively to the character and distinctiveness of the locality.

28. OUP have demonstrated that it requires on site expansion and officers consider that, on balance, the applicant has justified the demolition of C wing and the erection of a substantial extension to the existing buildings. C wing is not capable of being extended to its upper storeys without the loss of the roof and is a simple, utilitarian industrial block which befits its function. The loss of 35 Walton Street is not considered to be an acceptable option given the prominence and historic interest of this building in the streetscape.

29. The scale and height of the proposal is considered to be appropriate to that of the listed buildings and would not appear intrusive. As viewed from Walton Street, the walls of the new extension would have stone cladding in the same palette as the existing masonry and the same height as the adjacent modern block. Windows would be set and recessed individually on the elevation and the new glazed atrium would be three storeys high. The two storey link to the listed building would be re-built with full height glazing and the rusticated ground floor would be removed, thus reinforcing the rhythm of the listed blocks and improving the setting of the listed buildings. The proposal continues the rhythm of large blocks on the same alignment as the existing separated by glazed areas.

30. To the south side, the area between the listed buildings and the terrace of Victorian houses along Walton Crescent would be dominated by glass but it is not considered that this would damage the symmetrically balanced façade of OUP. The dominance of the listed buildings along the main elevations would remain paramount and glass would not harm its setting or diminish its heritage values. The use of significant amounts of glazing is appropriate for a modern office block and as the new extension is set a good way back from Walton Street, the views of it would be more glimpsed and not all of the elevations would be visible at the same time. Concerns have been raised by the Georgian Group regarding the large amount of glazing as a principle and specifically its impact after dusk; however glass has long proved to be an appropriate material for interventions and new build and the proposal includes fixed internal timber louvres which would reduce light emissions. The south elevation has four regular bays with stone clad projecting walls to reduce the perception of height and to break up the mass of glass. The top floor has zinc cladding.
31. The demolition of the 1992 south link that abuts the 1850-1876 extension to the listed building would positively improve the appearance of the building and would enable the repair of the north east elevation of the historic annex and the erection of a new fully glazed connection to the new extension.
32. The proposals also involve the removal of the later additions to 35 Walton Street and the construction of a new glazed link to the new extension. It is considered that the removal of the two guest flats at Keith Thomas Court will have a neutral impact on the conservation area and the listed buildings.
33. The proposal incorporates photovoltaic panels [arrays] on the roof of the new block and part of the roof of the retained building and these would be extensive and could be visible from wider views. English Heritage has recommended that these be omitted from the scheme and points to the potential impacts on views caused by their highly reflective character. Oxford's skyline is of high heritage significance and their concern is that the glare and shine from the solar arrays would cause harm.
34. The architects are confident however that the latest solar products can be sourced and that these would greatly reduce the impacts of the arrays. For the new block a thin material is proposed that would not project unduly from the roof slope and would be far less reflective than other products. For the retained block, the architects have sourced solar slates which have cells embedded into the fabric, thus rendering the cells flush with the slate surface and these are not unduly reflective. No details of the actual product form part of these applications and therefore a condition is recommended that would require full details of these products to be agreed with the planning authority. This issue has been discussed with English Heritage who is broadly content with this approach.
35. English Heritage cites the Blavatnik School of Government opposite the

site as a concern in respect of the current proposals. This is a proposal, not yet submitted as a formal application, for a multi-storey building fronting Walton Street within the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter that may have public access. English Heritage is concerned that views from that building could be harmed by the solar arrays causing glare. However it has been shown in the design and access statement that public views from the Observatory would not be harmed by the arrays because those on the retained roof are south facing and those on the new block would not be visible.

Trees

36. The proposals require the removal of an ornamental cherry tree [T8] that stands in the car park area and a purple leaved plum tree [T4] that stands in the garden of 52 Walton Crescent. These are attractive trees but they are small and their location is such that the contribution they make to public amenity is low. The effect that removing them will have on the character and appearance of the Jericho Conservation Area will be mitigated by the new planting that is proposed as part of the soft landscaping of the site.
37. Of greater concern is the potential for there to be harmful impacts on the retained trees [two sycamores, T2 and T3 and a whitebeam T1] that stand in the area next to Walton Street. Sycamore T3 will be particularly vulnerable during the demolition of the part of C wing that links D wing and 35 Walton Street and the construction of the new building in this area. In order to ensure that potential impacts are avoided or at least minimised, it is essential that the root protection areas of this and the other two trees are robustly protected during the demolition and construction phases of development. This will require construction activity to be excluded from the area between Walton Street and the new building and this places a considerable constraint on the contractors who build it. Also the construction of new underground services should be prohibited from the area. The agent has been made aware of these issues as regards to tree protection.
38. The application includes a Tree Protection Plan which is acceptable although further details are required in respect of ground protection and barrier fencing. Tree protection must be implemented before demolition commences. The tree report includes recommendations for working within the root protection areas of retained trees but these need to be taken forward into a more detailed Arboricultural Method Statement which should be approved prior to the start of demolitions.

Archaeology

39. The application site is of interest because it lies within an extensive landscape of Middle Neolithic-Early Bronze Age ritual and funerary monuments, it lies in the vicinity of the documented medieval settlement of Twentyacres, it is crossed by the projected line of the Royalist Civil War

defences and it is located within the grounds of the 19th century Oxford University Press. The Press was for a time the biggest employer in Oxford and is an important institution of national interest. The application involves the demolition of the 19th century workshops associated with the press and the remodelling of an adjacent former Victorian public house.

40. A desk based assessment has been submitted for the site by Oxford Archaeology. This summarises the available archaeological and map evidence and provides a level 1 assessment of the standing structures. A further study of the standing buildings has also been submitted and it is understood that the site of the press the subject of this application was associated with bible printing and that the structures may have had an industrial use from the 1890's until the conclusion of on site printing in 1989.
41. Conditions are recommended in respect of archaeological mitigation and foundation design and method statement. The archaeological recording should comprise of a level 3 building record of the workshops to be demolished and a programme of archaeological investigation, including provision for the full excavation of the basement footprint.

Groundwater and Flooding

42. The Environment Agency has commented on the application and raised concerns regarding groundwater flood risk posed by the proposed substantial basement which would be constructed below the water table and could act as a barrier to groundwater flows. The EA comment that the application contains no details in respect of the depth of the basement or the depth of the gravel aquifer which underlies the site and that further information should be requested.
43. The agent has subsequently submitted details relating to groundwater flow modelling for the site in order to assess the potential impact of the basement on the groundwater flow regime in the vicinity of the site. The results of the analysis suggest that the new basement may potentially generate a rise in groundwater levels of some 0.7 cm to 1.6 cm locally but that this comprises a negligible groundwater rise. Furthermore, the very large basement currently under construction in the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter close to the application site has been shown not to have a significant impact in the regional hydrology.
44. The Environment Agency has been consulted on this modelling exercise and has confirmed that it is satisfied that the proposal will not impact water resources or designated sites and have no objection on these grounds.

Sustainability

45. The application is accompanied by a Natural Resource Impact Analysis which indicates that the project will achieve an excellent BREEAM rating. The design and access statement refers to energy efficiency and

sustainability being 'core' to the development of the design. It states that through the upgrading of existing buildings and high performance of new building works, the scheme aims to be carbon neutral in terms of energy consumption when compared to the energy consumed by the existing building. It goes on to state that key features of the design which have been incorporated are:

- high levels of insulation in excess of building regulation requirements
- use of recycled materials and materials from sustainable and local sources
- establishment of a waste management plan to ensure minimum site construction wastage
- maximisation of the use of natural ventilation through passive air movement through the atrium space
- optimisation of solar gain through building orientation and solar shading
- use of renewable energy sources including ground source heating and cooling and photovoltaic cells for electricity generation
- rainwater harvesting for watering plants and flushing toilets
- maximisation of daylight to working spaces through good window design, atrium glazing and light reflecting internal surfaces
- provision of robust control systems on heating, ventilating and artificial lighting installations to prevent energy wastage
- use of high thermal mass structures to retain heat and assist in passive night time cooling
- use of low energy plant, equipment and fittings
- inclusion of low maintenance, long life materials
- flexible open plan design with a high level of adaptability to reduce building redundancy and obsolescence.

Loss of Flats

46. Policy HS10 of the Oxford Local Plan states that planning permission will not be granted for new development which results in the net loss of one or more self contained dwellings. The application proposals involve the loss of two OUP guest flats which were erected in 1997.

47. Keith Thomas Court was built by OUP specifically for the purpose of housing guests and visiting colleges [planning reference: 97/02020/NFH]. Condition 13 of that permission restricts the use of the flats as visitor accommodation for Oxford University Press only. In 2004 planning permission was granted to lift this occupancy restriction; however OUP have never taken up this unrestricted occupancy and the flats have remained accommodation solely for visitors. The flats have never been homes to families or offered up on the private rental market or for sale.

48. Given that the two flats to be lost have never contributed to the stock of available housing in Oxford in that they have only housed visitors to OUP, officers have concluded that, on balance, their loss can be justified in planning policy terms in the light of OUP's need to improve and expand

their office and meeting room space to provide modern working standards and to improve the energy efficiency profile of their Jericho complex.

Impact on neighbours

49. Policy HS19 of the Oxford Local Plan states that planning permission will only be granted for development that adequately provides both for the protection and/or creation of the privacy or amenity of the occupants of the proposed and existing neighbouring, residential properties.

50. The properties most directly affected by the proposals are numbers 29-34 Walton Street and numbers 51-54 Walton Crescent. All of these dwellings are owned by OUP and occupied by their employees.

51. The planning statement accompanying the application states that the scheme has been designed with the privacy and amenity needs of the occupants of neighbouring properties and the employees of OUP as key design drivers. It states that a number of specific measures have been taken to meet these goals as follows:

- physical screening of views out from the proposed office extension on the south elevation. This has been achieved by way of fixed, internal, timber louvres on all south facing office space windows which would be angled to prevent direct views over adjacent properties
- a carefully planned planting scheme to provide secondary screening and a separating garden between the new buildings and the neighbouring properties
- elevation treatment to reduce the apparent height of the proposed southern elevation giving the appearance of a two storey building with an occupied roof space
- removal of the parking spaces accessed from Walton Crescent will reduce vehicle noise and disturbance for residents.

52. Officers take the view that the proposed new building and associated landscaping will enhance the amenity and outlook for neighbouring residents as the existing ad hoc and unsightly collection of buildings would be replaced by a modern and innovative new building. No objections to the scheme have been received from local residents.

Conclusion:

53. The proposal is considered to form an appropriate visual relationship with the existing building and the surrounding development and would preserve and enhance the special character and appearance of the two conservation areas in which the site lies. The proposal has evolved following pre-application discussions and would provide much needed additional office floorspace. The proposal complies with adopted policies contained in the Oxford Local Plan 2001 – 2016 and the Oxford Core Strategy 2026.

54. The proposals form appropriate visual relationships with the existing listed buildings as the proposals have been designed to minimise the impact on the special historic or architectural significance of these. The proposals would also fit well with the Jericho Conservation Area and would appear as a well designed, respectful and modern intervention in the street scene.

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

Background Papers:

12/00371/FUL
12/00416/LBD

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Date: 28th May 2012

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