

West Area Planning Committee

8 June 2011

Application Numbers: (i): 10/03210/CAC
(ii): 10/03207/FUL

Decision Due by: 23 February 2011

Proposals: (i): 10/03210/CAC: Removal of existing ornamental gates and sections of railings fronting Lindemann building and to University parks.
(ii): 10/03207/FUL: Demolition of former lodge building and removal of temporary waste stores. Erection of new physics research building on 5 levels above ground plus 2 basement levels below with 3 level link to Lindemann building. Creation of landscaped courtyard to South of new building and cycle parking to North. Re-erection of Lindemann gates to repositioned entrance to University Parks and of University Park gates to new entrance further north opposite Dept of Materials. Re-alignment of boundary railings.

Site Address: Land adjacent to the Clarendon Laboratory, Parks Road, **Appendix 1.**

Ward: Holywell Ward

Agent: DPDS Consulting Group

Applicant: The University Of Oxford

Recommendations: Committee is recommended to grant conservation area consent and planning permission, subject to conditions.

Reasons for Approval.

1. The Council considers that the proposal accords with the policies of the development plan as summarised below. It has taken into consideration all other material matters, including matters raised in response to consultation and publicity. Any material harm that the development would otherwise give rise to can be offset by the conditions imposed.
2. The Council considers that the proposal, subject to the conditions imposed, would accord with the special character and appearance of the conservation areas it adjoins. It has taken into consideration all other material matters, including matters raised in response to consultation and publicity.
3. The planning application seeks to provide replacement and consolidated facilities for the University's Department of Physics on a site currently occupied by car

parking, temporary storage units and an undistinguished lodge building. The proposals are in line with planning policies to support new academic and research facilities for the University on its own landholdings at appropriate locations and delivers state of the art research facilities for the cutting edge research undertaken by the Department. The development is at a sustainable location and removes private car parking in order to create a paved and landscaped forecourt with seating. The distinctive contemporary styling and form of the building changes the relationships of buildings it adjoins including that to the Grade 1 Keble College chapel, but not such that planning permission should be withheld. A new entrance to University Parks is also provided with the potential to open up new routes. Officers conclude that the balance of advantage lies with supporting the proposals.

4. Many of the comments received from statutory agencies and third parties relate to the relationship of the proposed building to Keble College chapel in particular. However the proposals have emerged following a lengthy and detailed dialogue with City officers, English Heritage and others, and following a presentation to the South East Regional Design Panel (SERDP) which was supportive of the proposals. It is accepted by English Heritage that a building can be achieved at this location and that the University has made a strong case for its construction, but concerns are raised regarding its height and changed views in the locality. Officers do not conclude that reducing the height of the building in response is appropriate however as its proportions and form would be prejudiced as a consequence. Detailed matters relating to architectural detailing and precise choice of materials etc can be addressed by the imposition of appropriate conditions.

Conditions

(i): 10/03210/CAC:

- 1 Commencement of work
- 2 Approved plans

(ii): 10/03207/FUL:

- 1 Development begun within time limit
- 2 Develop in accordance with approved plans
- 3 Materials
- 4 Architectural details
- 5 PD rights
- 6 Student numbers
- 7 Landscape plan required
- 8 No felling lopping cutting
- 9 Landscape underground services - tree roots
- 10 Tree Protection Plan (TPP) 1
- 11 Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) 1
- 12 Landscape carry out after completion
- 13 Landscape management plan
- 14 Car parking numbers
- 15 Control of car parking
- 16 Works to highway / public realm
- 17 Cycle parking spaces

- 18 External lighting
- 19 Travel plan
- 20 Construction travel plan
- 21 Construction management plan
- 22 Ground source heat pumps
- 23 Groundwater drainage
- 24 Groundwater level monitoring
- 25 Plant noise attenuation
- 26 Sustainable drainage
- 27 Petrol / oil interceptors
- 28 Natural resource impact analysis
- 29 Archaeology
- 30 Public art
- 31 Habitat creation

Principal Planning Policies.

Oxford Local Plan 2001 to 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
- TR1 - Transport Assessment
- TR2 - Travel Plans
- TR3 - Car Parking Standards
- TR4 - Pedestrian & Cycle Facilities
- TR11 - City Centre Car Parking
- TR12 - Private Non-Residential Parking
- NE11 - Land Drainage & River Engineering Works
- NE14 - Water and Sewerage Infrastructure
- NE15 - Loss of Trees and Hedgerows
- HE1 - Nationally Important Monuments
- HE2 - Archaeology
- HE3 - Listed Buildings and Their Setting
- HE7 - Conservation Areas
- HE8 - Important Parks & Gardens
- HE9 - High Building Areas
- HE10 - View Cones of Oxford
- ED7 - Oxford University - Additional Development

Oxford Core Strategy 2026.

- CS2 - Previously developed and greenfield land
- CS4 - Green Belt
- CS9 - Energy and natural resources
- CS10 - Waste and recycling
- CS13 - Supporting access to new development

CS17 - Infrastructure and developer contributions
CS18 - Urban design, town character, historic environment
CS19 - Community safety
CS25 - Student accommodation
CS29 - The universities

Other Policy Considerations:

PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2005).
PPG2: Green Belts (2001).
PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment (2010).
PPG13: Transport (2001).
PPS22: Renewable Energy (2004).

Public Consultation.

Prior to the submission of the planning application the University held exhibitions of the emerging proposals at the Sir Martin Wood Lecture Theatre on 25th June and 11th October 2010, and at Oxford Town Hall on 1st November 2010. The first two were attended by councillors and invited interested parties whilst the latter was opened to a wider audience and advertised in the local press and media accordingly. In addition the South East Regional Design Panel (SERDP) received a presentation on the proposals on 18th October 2010 and subsequently commented that the scale was correct and the architectural approach stimulating, with the prospect of making a positive contribution to this part of Oxford. The group concluded that the overall impression was of a well mannered building which picked up some aspects of its surroundings such as the vertical rhythms of Keble College chapel without being derivative, the materials being thoughtfully chosen with colours complementing its neighbours. Some minor adjustments to the design were suggested however. Individual presentations were also made to Keble College as the nearest neighbour to the development. As a consequence of the feedback from these events the design of the proposed development was amended with adjustments to its overall shape and form; changes to the roofscape; modifications to the building relative to the Lindemann building; and alterations to the design of the entrances to University Parks.

On submission of the planning application normal consultation procedures were undertaken. The comments received may be summarised as follows.

Statutory Agencies & Interested Parties.

Environment Agency: No objections; suggest conditions relating to ground source heat pumps and groundwater drainage.

Thames Water: Waste - recommend non return valves; surface water drainage - recommend that storm water are attenuated or regulated into receiving public network through on or off site storage; basement – drainage to pump to ground level; informatives - main crossing site may need to be diverted at applicant's cost; developer to take account of water pressure levels.

Oxfordshire County Council, Highways (1): Recommend that soakaways be designed to provide sufficient capacity to deal with surface water drainage within development with overflow to surface water sewer only in extreme conditions.

Oxfordshire County Council, Highways (2): No objection of principle; content with amount of cycle parking – plan required indicating locations; SUDS drainage scheme to be agreed; highway / public realm works to be funded by University; Travel Plan and Construction Travel Plan to be secured by condition.

Natural England: Development unlikely to affect site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at New Marston; further bat survey before commencement; bat sensitive landscape scheme recommended; vegetation clearance should take place outside bird nesting season; measures to improve biodiversity should be considered.

Thames Valley Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor: No objection; security to be addressed by University's own security services; encourage liaison with TVP on terrorism and storage issues.

English Heritage: Scale of building such that it would have adverse impact on significance of Keble Chapel and views within the conservation area; University has made out a strong case for the development; no objection in principle to a new building here; would dominate views along Parks Road and Keble Road and some views from across University Parks; proposed building picks up the strong rhythm of the of Chapel opposite and colour of proposed materials would sit comfortably with the polychromatic brickwork of Keble; new building would be viewed as being in close proximity to Chapel, undermining its pre eminence and consequently its significance; harm to setting of Chapel could be mitigated by reduction in height; sufficient justification should be submitted to outweigh harm caused by proposed development; acknowledge that there are wider benefits in terms of creating facilities which are commensurate with international standing of University's Physics Department; recommend that potential for reducing height of building is investigated; if no alternative to height proposed local authority should be satisfied that benefits would outweigh harm

Victorian Group of OAHs: Detrimental impact on listed Keble College Chapel; need for new building not demonstrated; buildings to rear of Clarendon Laboratory should be rationalised first; façade of Lindemann Building should be retained; adversely effects views from University Parks; two level basement would have significant consequences for archaeology; extends the built up area of Science area; Science area already overdeveloped; University should transfer some of its activities elsewhere (eg Cowley, Begbroke); arguments for relocation of Parks gates inconsequential.

Oxford Preservation Trust: Not an obvious site on which to build; cannot support building which is too large and would dominate area; also too high, breaching Carfax height limits; adversely affects views of Keble College Chapel and tower of University Museum from street and from University Parks; more thought should be given to treatment of corner of building viewed from north; would want building kept away from Lindemann building by creating courtyard; application should be withdrawn or refused.

Keble College: Some early concerns addressed, but concerns about location, massing and detailing remain; impairs relationship between College chapel and University Parks; does not continue the established pattern of development along the east side of Parks Road; forward of general frontages of Lindemann and Townsend buildings, presenting its flank not frontage to the street; exceeds Carfax height limits, invading time honoured views; use of central atrium feature uses more space than a more straightforward design - same net floorspace could have been provided in a smaller building; arbitrary variety in the façade treatment - should be more ordered and restrained.

Oxford Green Belt Network: Adverse impact in views from University Parks which falls within Green Belt; building bulky and overbearing; impact on views of Grade 1 chapel at Keble College; question necessity to relocate gates to University Parks.

Following receipt of these comments including those of SERDP the applicant has made adjustments to the design of the proposed building in two respects. Firstly the treatment of the south elevation is amended to so that the cladding shown at second and third floors is extended down across the first floor, assisting in identifying the entrance to the building. The second change was to the roof over the central atrium which has been lowered at the western end by 2.5m to form a monopitch structure rather than a flat one, reducing the building's volume and overall bulk. A second round of consultation was undertaken on the amended application and the following additional comments received:

Victorian Group of OAHs: Building should not be erected at this site; design of roof less satisfactory than previously and still prominent in views from south and north.

Thames Valley Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor: No objection to amended plans; no further comments to make.

Oxford Preservation Trust: Changes do not address concerns; bulk, mass and height of building would dominate area and intrude into setting of adjacent buildings, parks and conservation area; would obscure tower of University Museum when viewed from north; would compete with chapel of Keble College.

English Heritage: Amended plans address previous concerns with limited success; scale of development not addressed or locating some uses elsewhere; would still cause harm to setting of Keble Chapel and conservation area; no additional information on wider public benefit.

In response to the comments raised and as further context to the proposals the University has produced a short statement which is attached as **Appendix 2** to this report.

Background to Proposals.

1. The planning application proposes the construction of a new Physics research building for the University at a site to the north - west corner of the University Science Area. **Appendix 1** refers. It is the latest in a series of major projects in the University Science Area which include the concurrent planning application for a further Chemistry research building at South Parks Road plus refurbishment of the Tinsley Building fronting Mansfield Road; the newly completed Earth Sciences and Oxford Molecular Pathology Institute (OMPI) buildings; extension to the Pitt Rivers Museum; and the Phase 1 completion of a new Biochemistry building. A Masterplan for the Science Area has also been prepared and will come to committee for its consideration at a future meeting.
2. The site for the new building is currently occupied by car parking which would be largely lost in these proposals and is located adjacent to but outside both the Central (City and University) and North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Areas. It is however sited at a sensitive location directly opposite Keble College with its Grade 1 listed Victorian Gothic chapel to the west side of Parks Road, and along the boundary of University Parks which falls within the Oxford Green

Belt and is listed in the Statutory Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. To the east of the application site are the University's Lindemann, Martin Wood and Townsend buildings, generically known as the Clarendon Laboratory. Of these the Townsend building is also listed, Grade II. The development also envisages the demolition of a former lodge building dating from the 1930s. This undistinguished building was originally built for residential use but has been occupied as a small office for many years. A further lodge building, Museum Lodge, listed Grade II exists further south adjacent to the Earth Sciences Building, but is not directly affected by these proposals other than its setting from the north being significantly improved by the removal of car parking. In addition to this and Keble, other important listed buildings exist nearby, most notably the Grade 1 listed University Museum.

3. In addition to the Clarendon Laboratory group of buildings the University's Physics Department also occupies the Atmospheric Physics Building to the east side of Parks Road plus the Denys Wilkinson Building and nos.1 to 4 Keble Road. The teaching and laboratory floorspace in these buildings is however outmoded and no longer suitable for the cutting edge research being undertaken in them. Moreover circulation and movement between buildings is tortuous leading to poor interaction between the different sections which make up the Physics Department. The University therefore seeks to address these shortcomings by concentrating Physics in a series of adjacent and better connected buildings.
4. Currently the Physics Department employs some 453 staff, with the new building intended to accommodate 235 of them. Of this figure of 235, 180 will be transferred from other buildings within the department, with the remaining 55 being new members of staff. Some of the accommodation vacated would be reassigned to other uses, but in the main the space vacated which is currently overcrowded and ill suited to modern requirements would be remodelled for remaining occupiers. The new building would also provide additional facilities for the 300 students studying Physics at the University.
5. The primary purpose of the new building would be to accommodate Theoretical Physics. In the longer term the poor quality Lindemann and other buildings at the Clarendon Laboratory could also be redeveloped, with the exception of the listed Townsend Building. This would ultimately result in the whole of the Physics Department being within the main Science Area in close proximity to Chemistry and to the major medical sciences buildings.
6. The principal determining issues in this case are assessed to be:
 - planning policy;
 - architecture and built forms;
 - trees and landscaping
 - historic context;
 - an assessment of the impacts of development;
 - highways, access and parking; and
 - sustainability.

Officers Assessment.

Planning Policy.

7. Although the application site is not specifically allocated for development within the Local Plan or recently adopted Core Strategy, the latter supports the development of additional academic buildings at appropriate University sites where they respect the character and setting of the City's historic core. As this application relates to accommodation for the University's Physics Department then committee is also reminded that newly adopted Core Strategy policy CS25 applies. This replaces Local Plan policy ED8 and requires that new teaching and academic floorspace for the University should be matched by new residential accommodation for its students and should only be permitted providing no more than 3,000 students live outside purpose built student accommodation.
8. Although figures can sometimes be difficult to interpret as many of the University's research fellows have both teaching and studying roles, as of 2010 that figure stood at 2,688. In addition major developments recently completed, under construction or at the planning stage at St. John's, Lady Margaret Hall, Keble, Pembroke, St. Hilda's and St Hugh's will further reduce that figure in the near future. Moreover the central University also holds an extant planning permission for 590 graduate student study rooms at its development at Castle Mill, Roger Dudman Way, of which only a first phase of 208 rooms has yet been built out and occupied. The planning application therefore complies with the terms of policy CS25 of the Core Strategy. A condition is suggested however requiring that the 3000 figure must continue to be met.
9. Whilst a range of more general policies relate to the proposed development, (listed at the head of this report), most relevant perhaps are those relating to the historic environment, even though the application site falls just outside the Central Conservation Area. These including HE9 of the Local Plan relating to high buildings plus HE3 and HE 7 relating to listed buildings and the Central Conservation Area respectively. Policy CS4 of the newly adopted Core Strategy relating to the Oxford Green Belt plus SR2 and SR 5 of the Local Plan relating to open spaces and sports facilities are also relevant, as are HE8 relating to historic parks and gardens, and transport policies for the central area TR3, TR 11 and RE12.
10. At a national level the revised Planning Policy Statement No. 5: "*Planning for the Historic Environment*" (PPS5) of March 2010 is of particular relevance. This re-affirms the government's commitment to the historic environment and requires that applicants and the local planning authority have sufficient information to understand the significance of heritage assets and to understand the impacts that any proposal would have on them. It advises in particular that local planning authorities should take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing significant heritage assets and acknowledging the positive role that their conservation can make to the establishment and maintenance of sustainable communities and economic viability. PPS 5 recognizes therefore that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be

maintained for the long term, but equally that it is desirable for new development to make a positive contribution.

11. The applications the subject of this report are supported by material that assesses the heritage value of historic buildings on or near the application site and also the significance of views of the site from a variety of locations. The supporting information shows how the proposals have been informed by this analysis and examines the impact of the proposed new buildings.
12. Apart from the new gates and access to University Parks opposite the Department of Materials, the application site falls outside both the Central and Victorian Suburb Conservation Areas, though lies immediately adjacent to both. Nevertheless its position at the north - west corner of the University Science Area overlooking the statutorily "registered" garden of University Parks within the Oxford Green Belt, and opposite the Keble College means the proposed new building would be situated at a highly prominent and sensitive location.

Architecture and Built Forms.

13. The eastern side of Parks Road between its junction with South Parks Road and University Parks is made up of an alternate series of buildings and spaces fronting the street. From the south these are the Radcliffe Science Library, green to the Science Museum, the (old) Earth Sciences building, and parking forecourt to the Clarendon Laboratory respectively. These proposals seek to provide a third pavilion building at this northern end near the entrance to University Parks for the Physics Department and convert what is a nondescript car parking area into a paved and landscaped, predominantly pedestrian space. The fine Atlantic Blue cedar tree situated to the front of the Martin Wood Lecture Theatre would remain within the new forecourt. In removing the car parking and temporary storage cabins located here and constructing in their place the new building and landscaped forecourt the intention would be to create a stronger rhythm of buildings and spaces to this side of Parks Road. It would also provide a clear "gateway" to the main part of the Science Area when approaching from the north, defined by the new building to the east side of Parks Road and Keble College Chapel to the west.
14. The new Physics building is essentially a rectangular structure of contemporary design on 5 floors above ground and two below providing some 5,773 sq m of new research accommodation. It would be physically attached to the Lindemann building by a 3 storey glazed link which would contain the main entrance point to the Clarendon Laboratory complex of buildings. With the bulk of the car parking removed, only essential operational car parking would remain. The southern part of the landscaped forecourt would however continue to act as a through route for the servicing of other buildings in the Science Area.
15. The bulk of the building is shown to be within Carfax height but parts of the façade in the south west corner, the roof plant, glazed atrium, and ventilation chimneys rise above. At parapet level the building will be at a similar height to the eaves of Keble Chapel. The building will be clad with vertical bronze fins over a glazed façade in response to the colour and tone of Keble College's brickwork

and as a response to the verticality and rhythm of the college's facades.

16. Since submission of the planning application, the design of the building has been adjusted in two respects. The treatment of the south elevation is amended so that the cladding shown at second and third floors is extended down across the first floor, assisting in identifying the entrance to the building, whilst the roof over the central atrium has been lowered at the western end by 2.5m to form a monopitch structure rather than a flat one, reducing the building's volume and overall bulk.
17. The principal entrance would be within the glazed link on the south side of the new structures facing the landscaped forecourt, providing a unified gateway into the extended Clarendon Laboratory complex for all disciplines within the Physics Department. A secondary access would also exist from Parks Road. In addition to circulation and break out spaces and shared facilities such as showers etc, the ground floor of the building is given over to seminar and teaching spaces to the south side, with the building's main plant room on the northern side above the experimental physics laboratories. These are located at basement levels in order to provide controlled environments for the work undertaken there, including controlling vibration. The bulk of the accommodation at first to fourth floor is arranged around a central atrium and is laid out largely in the form of single, paired and group offices for theoretical physics.
18. The proposals also include the repositioning of the south - west entrance to University Parks a little further to the south to a position just north of the new building. The new building has been splayed at its north - western corner to provide a better field of view to this repositioned entrance and improve the pedestrian approach to University Parks from the south. The existing nearby gated access fronting the Lindemann building would be closed and its gates re-erected at the repositioned entrance to University Parks. Further north along Parks Road, a wholly new entrance to the Parks would be created opposite the University Department of Materials where the existing University Parks gates would be relocated.

Trees and Landscaping.

19. A full tree survey accompanies the planning application together with an illustrative landscape plan. The survey extends beyond the application site to include the adjacent part of University Parks and the grass verge to Parks Road. Some 7 trees are required to be removed to facilitate the development, two on the footprint of the actual building, but others in the immediate vicinity. These are 2 limes, 1 yew, 1 silver birch, 1 maidenhair fern, 1 Lawson Cypress and 1 recently planted young beech. Of these 4 are assessed as of grade B moderate visual quality and 2 grade C low quality. The young beech is a small specimen recently planted which is not graded. It replaces a mature horse chestnut tree to the frontage of the Lindemann building protected by Tree Preservation Order but felled in recent times for public safety reasons as it was diseased. In addition low level shrubbery is indicated for removal along the line of the railings to the current car park, as well as at the site of the new gates to the Parks further north. No trees are required to be removed at this point however.

20. Within the surveyed area 9 trees are identified for retention: 4 London planes within the grass verge, 3 yews, 1 tulip and the Atlantic Blue cedar. Of these the fine Atlantic Blue cedar centrally located to the frontage of the Martin Wood Lecture Theatre is graded A, of high visual quality, whilst all others graded B, of moderate value. A full landscaping plan is not included at this stage, but would be the subject of a condition on approval of the development. It is intended however that the landscaping plan include 2 specimen trees to be planted at key locations: a Wellingtonia to be sited adjacent to the Atlantic blue cedar to form an eventual replacement for this mature specimen, and a maidenhair fern to be planted in the grass verge along the alignment with Keble Road. This would replace the young recently planted beech and horse chestnut previously seen in this view.
21. In terms of the car free forecourt area created to the frontage of the Sir Martin Wood Lecture Theatre and Townsend Building, the intention is to provide hard surfaces in natural stone and granite in a linear form aiding wayfinding and arrival to the Physics complex of buildings. This would be supported by lighting, seating and low level shrub planting. To the north and west of the building surfaces to the more private areas would be of resin bonded gravel, whilst areas to the south which would remain trafficked for servicing etc would be of asphalt with aggregate surface dressing. Seating is intended to be of simple robust construction with the use of bronze, consistent with the materials of the building. Bronze seams within the paving would similarly make such reference. These details would be secured by condition.

Historic Context.

22. Development of the University Science Area began with the Oxford University Museum, completed in 1859 and built on 8 acres at the corner of University Parks. Extensions to the museum and new buildings were added during the remainder of the C19th, the earliest being the Clarendon Laboratory just to the north of the Museum, subsequently replaced by what was the Earth Sciences building. In the north west corner of the Science Area the first building was a lodge constructed in 1888 to match an existing one at the southern end (now replaced by the Radcliffe Science Library). The Townsend Library (Grade II listed) was added in 1910 extending the Science Area further into the University Parks. With the acquisition of further land to the south east of the museum development continued ad hoc during the first part of the C20th. In 1934 a Masterplan for the Science Area was adopted which sought to rationalise and plan future development and define the limit of the northern boundary with the University Parks. The Lindemann Building was constructed in 1948 as a result of this Masterplan process but without the road frontage lodges shown in the Masterplan.
23. Today the notable buildings within this part of the Science Area are therefore the following:
- Lindemann Building (Lanchester and Lodge 1948);
 - Sir Martin Wood Lecture Theatre (Architects Design Partnership 2000);
 - Townsend Building (T.G. Jackson 1908 - 10, listed Grade II);

- Museum Lodge (T.N. Deane 1888, listed Grade II);
- Dept. of Earth Sciences (Lanchester and Lodge 1946 -48);
- University Museum (Deane and Woodward 1855 – 59, listed Grade 1);
- Old Chemistry Laboratory (1877 - 78, listed Grade II); and
- Radcliffe Science Library (T. G. Jackson 1901 - 03, 1933 - 34, listed Grade 2).

24. These are identified in the accompanying plan attached as **Appendix 3** to this report.

25. To the opposite side of Parks Road Keble College was founded in 1870 and today is one of the largest of the University's colleges. It was founded in the name of John Keble, a Victorian clergyman associated with the Oxford Movement, providing Keble with its theological traditions which marked it out from other colleges. William Butterfield (1814 -1900) was chosen as its architect as a leading exponent of the Gothic style. The combination of high Gothic architecture and the use of highly distinctive polychromatic brickwork instead of natural stone also marked Keble from its collegiate rivals. Butterworth reinterpreted college traditions in other ways too, for example by abandoning the tradition of student rooms accessed off staircases in favour of corridor access.

26. Undoubtedly the most striking element of Butterworth's masterpiece was the college chapel financed with a gift of £40,000 from William Gibbs. Situated directly at the junction of Keble Road with Parks Road, with its soaring Gothic buttresses, pointed arched windows, pinnacles and polychromatic brickwork this Grade 1 listed chapel dominates the college whilst various other buildings at Keble are now also listed either Grade 1 or 2. In the C20th the college was extended along Keble Road by Thomas Rayson in replica polychromatic brickwork whilst either side of the Millennium Rick Mather's Arco and Sloane Robinson buildings to the Keble Road and Blackhall Road sides of the college respectively have displayed their own distinctively playful use of brickwork in a more contemporary idiom.

27. In this context the significant conservation elements relating to the proposed development can be summarised as follows.

- The University Science Area is highly significant as part of the history of the university, the history of the development of research buildings. Some buildings at the Science Area are listed and have high significance. Many though, (particularly the later C20th buildings), are utilitarian and have limited interest.
- For its listed buildings and for its associations with history of religion in the C19th and the Oxford Movement Keble College has high significance.
- As statutorily registered gardens designed as an arboretum and recreational facility for the public, University Parks also has high significance.
- The urban and natural landscape of the City Centre overall has high significance for a variety of reasons – architectural, historic, aesthetic, artistic and archaeological. The site and its context is part of this wider landscape, though there are elements that detract from this overall quality.

- There are long distance views of the city skyline from identified viewing points around the city (Oxford's View Cones). The application site is not prominent in these views and currently does not make a contribution.
- The setting of the listed buildings within the context of the application site have changed and are no longer as originally laid out. The setting of Keble College Chapel has changed with the expansion of the Science Area northwards and the construction of the Townsend and Lindemann buildings. Its primary setting is in its relationship to the other college buildings, when experienced from within the main quadrangle. There is a fortuitous aesthetic in the chapel's presence as a tall building, in contrasting materials, on a corner site. In approaches along Parks Road and from University Parks there are views of the east and north elevations of the chapel. In closer views the chapel with its high windows has a formidable appearance announcing the college and the Science Area. Its scale and outline are framed by the trees (when in leaf) that line Parks Road.
- The Lindemann Building is a rational design with a modest aesthetic. The forecourt car parking and storage units in front of it and the Townsend Building detract from their setting and the character of the area, creating a disappointing first experience of the Science Area. The condition of the cycle path, pavement and safety barriers are also negative elements.

Assessment of Impacts of Development.

28. In line with PPS 5 advice, accompanying the planning application is a detailed Heritage Statement which seeks to assess the historical significance of the application site and its surroundings in order to gauge the impact of the new building. The various buildings, streets and spaces surrounding the proposed development are assessed for their architectural and conservation significance, and "verified" images produced of the building in situ. The analysis also assesses the importance of the research to be undertaken and the development's compliance with Local Plan and Core Strategy policy which are also material considerations in determining the application. There are 4 conservation and public realm impacts in particular which are addressed.

29. Long Distance Views Etc. The building size is a function of the identified needs and best practice in the design of research buildings. Reducing the level of accommodation will threaten to compromise fulfilling its academic requirements. The bulk of the building lies below Carfax height but elements above include the glazed atrium roof and plant and equipment. Elsewhere the façade rises above Carfax height, but as a device to articulate the parapet level and reduce the apparent bulk. In long distance views (View Cones) the building will be imperceptible and will not harm the spiky skyline or foreground views. Concern has been expressed about its height in relation to Keble Chapel. This is referred to below. A part of the challenge of integrating a new building into this context is to deliver a building that has a sense of proportion and scale in response to what already exists. Reducing the height as a device to reduce the impact can compromise the proportions of the building, making it appear awkward and thus more prominent. However, as a consequence of concerns raised through consultation the design of the roof

elements has been revisited and some changes made, pulling some of the height and mass away from the edges of the building

30. Setting of Keble College Chapel. The setting of the chapel is most significant in its relationship to the main quad and other college buildings. Its external setting is a changed one and it no longer sits opposite the park, but now opposite the Science Area. For many the experience of the chapel is at close quarters as it sits close to the public footway, where its scale, texture and detailing are very apparent. The Chapel plays a prominent role in the street and is visible from University Parks and at various points along Parks Road and Keble Road. It rises robustly above other buildings, its height and impact accentuated by its strong gothic architecture and patterned brickwork. Its relationship to Parks Road is abrupt and marred by the treatment and use of the open area opposite as a car park. Views of the chapel from the north unfold and are framed (or hidden) by the trees lining the road. The proposed Physics building will change some of these views. However, this does not mean that the impact would be harmful. The new building is designed to sit alongside the chapel, respecting its architecture and prominent role, providing a frame to the view, albeit different from the present frame. The proposal also has the benefit of improving the setting of the Townsend Building (Grade II), resolves the negative impact of the car park and provides a significantly improved entrance to the Science Area.
31. English Heritage has expressed concerns about the changed relationship with Keble College chapel, suggesting the building could be reduced in height to reduce the impact, and advised if that is not possible then the application should be supported by a justification for overriding that harm. Officers agree that the changes to the relationship with the chapel have to be sensitively handled and the building designed to eliminate or reduce any harmful impacts. The design has been amended to reduce the height of the building, but not sufficiently to satisfy English Heritage. Officers' concern is that further reduction in height will compromise the viability of the scheme and would not necessarily resolve the issues raised anyway. It is more likely to result in the building appearing awkward and poorly proportioned, arbitrarily truncated to reduce height. The opportunities for the University to provide modern research facilities in the city centre are limited. Given that both the University and the City Council are committed to retaining such facilities in the city centre there is a wider public benefit to be derived from allowing sites on the Science Area to be redeveloped, even though they may present a range of challenges. Officers consider that the changed setting to the chapel can be accommodated and that there is a public benefit that justifies any harm identified by English Heritage.
32. Views to and from University Parks. These too are views that have undergone change from the end of the C19th and throughout the C20th. The present view of the Science Area from the park presents a panorama of buildings of different ages and heights. The North elevation of Keble College Chapel provides a visual stop. The proposed building is another addition to this panorama and the Chapel still remains as the visual stop. From the south the view of the University Parks opens up in front of the Lindemann building with planting that softens the street edges. The view is marred by the car park and storage areas. This view will be more enclosed with the proposed new building, but it will result in a much

improved landscape in Parks Road on the approach to the Park, continuing the alternate sequence of spaces and buildings that is established further south in Parks Road. The new building as proposed is splayed to open up a different view into the park and to give space for the new entrance. The landscape will remain visible at the end of the view up Parks Road and the more coherent building forms on the east will provide a frame and an approach to the Parks.

33. Relationship to Lindemann and Townsend Buildings. The proposed building will sit in front of Lindemann building, changing the original design intent for the building. However, this design intent provided for two lodges framing the view of the central bay of Lindemann. These were never delivered and the setting for the building is compromised by its current use as a car park. The setting for the Townsend Building is similarly compromised. The new structure provides a new setting for the two buildings with a new 'public realm'. This has historical precedents elsewhere in the Science Area and also in the city centre and need not be harmful. The Lindemann Building has modest architectural quality and the loss of view of it is not harmful. The improvements to the setting of Townsend Building (Grade II listed) are beneficial.

34. In summary a new Physics building at this point clearly results in a range of separate but linked impacts. Whilst some of these could be assessed as being adverse, those have to be weighed in the balance with the gains. Moreover there are clear benefits in creating a coordinated research facility on the site of a current car park, reducing traffic generation, improving the public realm, enhancing the setting of the listed Museum Lodge and Townsend Building, and producing a more rational and coordinated series of buildings and spaces along the eastern side of Parks Road. The development is also firmly in line with Core Strategy policy to support new university academic floorspace and to contribute to local economic vitality and sustainability. The building itself is of a contemporary design, but as elsewhere in the Science Area of an architectural form and scale which reflects and complements its older neighbours. On balance officers have concluded that the building proposed for this location can be supported, as can the creation of a new access into University Parks opposite the department of Materials, and the relocation of existing gates accordingly.

Highways, Access and Parking.

35. The application site currently consists of a car park accessed from a point opposite Keble College just south of the junction of Keble Road with Parks Road. In these proposals that access is closed and car parking spaces lost. Currently 34 car parking spaces are present here, 22 allocated to staff members on a first come first served basis, plus 12 visitor spaces, 6 for the University Estates Directorate and 6 for visitors to the Physics Department. Of these 34 spaces 28 are lost with 6 spaces only to remain, 2 for disabled use located south of the Atlantic blue cedar tree, and 4 to the south side of the new forecourt created to serve the existing and proposed buildings of the Physics Department here. Whilst the new forecourt is intended essentially as a car free circulation space, it will continue to provide access via a southern gate to the frontage of the Townsend Building for servicing and parking for

other parts of the Science Area. At the moment servicing of the Clarendon Laboratory and refuse collection is from the rear and this arrangement will extend to the new building. Deliveries are normally undertaken on a Monday and Wednesday. A secondary delivery point for the new building is taken from Parks Road but would only be used for very occasional deliveries of new equipment for laboratories.

36. Currently there are 112 cycle parking spaces to serve the Clarendon Laboratory buildings. For the new building some 160 additional cycle parking spaces are provided to the northern and eastern sides of the building and to the southern side of the forecourt. As some 235 staff would be expected to be based at the new building plus 300 students, then 47 and 150 cycle stands respectively would be required to meet the full standard as expressed in the Local Plan. However as a research building not all staff and few students would be present at the same time, and other cycle parking facilities would continue to exist elsewhere in the locality. No objection is therefore raised to the intended level of provision. All cycle parking would be in covered, secure conditions with showers and changing facilities provided within the building.
37. In support of the gradual reduction of private car parking across the Science Area and support for other modes, the University has produced a comprehensive Travel Plan. Conditions to the planning permission if granted would require the submission of a revised Travel Plan accordingly. A Construction Travel Plan would also be secured by condition.
38. In addition to the proposal to create a new forecourt area to the combined Clarendon Laboratory, the University would contribute to public realm and highway works within Parks Road at this point. The details of such a proposal have yet to be fully worked up in detail but the University has agreed to works to the value of £112,000. The University would undertake the works on behalf of the Highway Authority which would be secured by planning condition.
39. Lastly, the proposals seek to provide an additional pedestrian access into University Parks from Parks Road opposite the Department of Materials and to relocate the ornamental gates accordingly. The creation of this new entrance to the Parks (which would not involve the felling of any trees) is supported and provides the potential to open up new routes in this part of the City. When the opportunity arises it is anticipated that a pedestrian route would be created from a point opposite the new Parks entrance via the Keble Road Triangle to Banbury Road and from there and the permissive route secured from Keble's redevelopment of the former Acland Hospital site to Woodstock Road and the redeveloped Radcliffe Infirmary site. From this point routes are further secured through the infirmary site to Walton Street, Jericho and Oxford Canal. The creation of this new entrance to the Parks therefore fulfils an important element in the creation of this longer pedestrian cross route from University Parks through to the north and west sides of the City centre.

Sustainability.

40. An Energy Strategy and Natural Resource Impact Analysis (NRIA) accompany the planning application with the intention of producing a sustainable and low energy building commensurate with its intended purpose. To achieve these aims a variety of specific passive design and energy efficiency features are proposed for inclusion in the development, including:
- air management control system;
 - heat recovery systems;
 - mechanical ventilation to laboratory areas, but natural ventilation elsewhere;
 - air tightness in excess of minimum building regulation requirements;
 - appliances with an energy rating of A or B;
 - high efficiency lighting systems and controls;
 - solar control glass, external louvres and internal blinds to strike balance between reducing solar gain where required but also reducing need for artificial lighting.
41. In terms of the development's reduced energy requirements, a mix of sources is envisaged with a proportion of renewable energy provided on site, primarily through the installation of ground source heat pumps, plus air source heat pumps, a mini gas fired combined heat and power system, and an amount of photovoltaics at roof level. These would provide approximately 19.4% of the building's energy requirements. The ground source heat pumps would be located under the footprint of the building in a closed loop system. (At the time of writing the University is also investigating the scope for extending the use of ground source heat pumps to serve the Science Area more generally).
42. On other matters a Materials Strategy based on the BRE Green Guide to Specification would be adopted with aggregates, timber, bricks, paving etc sourced from the UK wherever possible, and standard building materials from within a 30km radius. Recycled materials would be used wherever possible, with timber from renewable sources. Rainwater collection tanks would be installed for flushing toilets which would operate with 4.5 litre single flush systems. Sensor operated aerated taps would also be included. Contractors would be chosen from those registered with the Considerate Contractors Scheme
43. In combination these features a score of 8 out of a possible 11 is achieved on the NRIA checklist. The intention is also to achieve a BREEAM "excellent" rating for a higher education building.

Other Matters.

44. Archaeology. The application site is of archaeological interest for possible prehistoric, medieval and post medieval (including Civil war) remains at this location. A desk based archaeological assessment and evaluation accompanies the planning application. The evaluation indicates possible features including medieval pottery etc. Bearing in mind the limited results from the evaluation, then in line with PPS5: *Planning for the Historic*

Environment a condition is suggested if planning permission is granted requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation.

45. Flood Risk and Water Management. The application site is located approximately 1km from the River Thames to the west and 500m from the River Cherwell to its east. The site is essentially flat at a level of 63.2m to 63.4m AOD, and falls within Flood Zone 1 as identified by the Environment Agency, ie with a less than 0.1% of flooding in any given year. The site does not fall within any groundwater source protection zones as defined by the Environment Agency and it has not been affected by historic flood events in the city. Nor are there any records of sewer or groundwater flooding events. As the site falls within the lowest level of flood risk, no “Sequential Test” in site selection is required in this case.
46. Whilst the site is not at risk of flooding, over the potential lifetime of the building of 100 years or more an increase in rainfall intensity of 30% may be expected, and appropriate measures should be included in the design of surface water drainage systems, including sustainable drainage techniques, to reduce runoff. In response to public consultation on the application the Environment Agency raise no objections to the proposals but suggest conditions requiring further details of the ground source heat pumps, including their depth etc, and a groundwater drainage scheme to assess any impacts on groundwater conditions. A sustainable drainage scheme (SUDS) is proposed to accompany the proposals.
47. Ecology. An ecological assessment of the application site has been undertaken and confirms low ecological value for protected species, with no evidence of bat roosts and minimal opportunities for bat colonisation. However as there are large trees present on or near the site, including a row of limes to the street frontage and lower level shrubs and hedges, then post development the site presents significant opportunities to enhance local biodiversity. In addition to habitats within the enhanced landscaping, initiatives could include bird and bat boxes etc as part of a habitat management plan.
48. Public Art. The development qualifies for the provision of public art in some form, and a condition is suggested accordingly.

Conclusion.

49. The planning application proposes an important new addition to the stock of buildings within the University Science Area on a site currently occupied by a car park. It would provide state of the art facilities for the University’s Department of Physics which is currently split up on a number of different sites. Concerns have been raised in relation to the impact of the proposals on views of the Grade 1 Keble College Chapel in particular, including views from University Parks. Whilst these views and the relationship of buildings will certainly change, officers have concluded that the changes would not be harmful. In coming to that view Officers are also mindful that the South East Regional Design Panel are supportive of the development, and that English

Heritage does not oppose a building at this location. Although the latter would wish to see a more modest building lower in height, officers have concluded that to do so would undermine the scale and proportions of the proposed building, and therefore its integrity as a contemporary addition to the Science Area.

50. Committee is recommended to support the proposals accordingly.

Human Rights Act 1998

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

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

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

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

Background Papers: 10/03207/FUL, 10/03210/CAC.

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Date: 26 May 2011

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