

EAST AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

3rd March 2021

Application number:	19/02003/FUL		
Decision due by	24th October 2019		
Extension of time	12 th March 2021		
Proposal	Proposed erection of two linked Class B1 office buildings with associated landscaping, car parking, infrastructure and related works		
Site address	Plot 16, Oxford Science Park, Robert Robinson Avenue, Oxford – see Appendix 1 for site plan		
Ward	Littlemore		
Case officer	Michael Kemp		
Agent:	Mrs Emma Andrews	Applicant:	Mr Piers Scrimshaw-Wright
Reason at Committee	The proposals are for a major development which was previously considered by the East Area Planning Committee on the 4 th December 2019, when the Committee resolved to delegate the approval of the application to the Head of Planning Services subject to the prior completion of a legal agreement. Material amendments to the approved plans have subsequently been proposed, namely the phased construction of the development to prioritise the development of Building A. The application has been brought back before the committee to consider these changes.		

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1. The East Area Planning Committee is recommended to:

1.1.1. **Approve the application** for the reasons given in the report and subject to the required planning conditions set out in section 12 of this report and grant planning permission subject to:

- The satisfactory completion of a legal agreement under section.106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and other enabling powers to secure the planning obligations set out in the recommended heads of terms which are set out in this report; and

1.1.2. **Agree to delegate authority** to the Head of Planning Services to:

- Finalise the recommended conditions as set out in this report including such refinements, amendments, additions and/or deletions as the Head of Planning Services considers reasonably necessary; and
- Finalise the recommended legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and other enabling powers as set out in this report, including refining, adding to, amending and/or deleting the obligations detailed in the heads of terms set out in this report (including to dovetail with and where appropriate, reinforce the final conditions and informatives to be attached to the planning permission) as the Head of Planning Services considers reasonably necessary; and
- Complete the section 106 legal agreement referred to above and issue the planning permission.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1. This report considers a planning application relating to the development of 19,823sqm of Class B1 office space split across two four storey buildings each with undercroft podium parking alongside hard and soft landscaping and access improvements to the site. The development would be located on a plot of land which lies within the north east corner of the Oxford Science Park. The Committee resolved in December 2019 to delegate authority to the Head of Planning Services to approve the application subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 agreement.

2.2. The applicants have since advised that it is their intention to phase construction of the two buildings to enable Building A, the westernmost of the two buildings on the site plan, to be constructed ahead of Building B. Building B is located on the site of a pumping station currently used by Thames Water. Thames Water have confirmed support for the planning application in a previous letter to officers. It is anticipated that a land deal will be concluded by Easter 2021 between the applicants and Thames Water, with vacant possession 16 months thereafter in autumn 2022. It is possible that development will commence on Building B in autumn 2022, though current economic circumstances and market conditions mean that it would be difficult for the applicants to commit to a definitive programme. A delay of approximately 12-18 months between the construction of phases 1 and 2 is possible, therefore the indicative building programme includes a long stop date of 12-18 months.

2.3. Phase 1 of the development will involve the erection of Building A and all development on the western part of the site, outside of the pumping station. This includes ground level parking and the development of the central raised plaza. The implications of proposed phasing of the development means that there will be an intervening period between the completion of Building A and the commencement of works on Building B and development on the eastern part of the site. For design and accessibility reasons a series of temporary works will be required, this includes:

- Temporary (silver) mesh cladding panels/railings to secure the east end of the podium.

- Small area of temporary pavement at the east end of the podium.
- Trees to temporarily screen the east of the plaza and podium will be planted in root balls to enable relocation to a permanent position.
- Formation of a temporary turning area for emergency vehicles on North Road.

2.4. Since the application was last presented to members, the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036 has been adopted. In accordance with the NPPF, the development was assessed in accordance with the then adopted local development framework, including the Core Strategy; Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 and the Sites and Housing Plan. The Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036 had yet to undergo examination at that time and could therefore only be afforded limited weight at the time that the application was determined. This report provides a re-appraisal of the key planning matters in line with the now adopted Local Plan, accounting for the fact that these policies are now afforded full weight and the previous development framework is no longer afforded any weight. When reappraised in line with the now adopted Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036, giving full weight to these policies, officers conclude that the development remains acceptable in planning terms and the adoption of the new local plan would not affect officers' previous recommendations to the committee.

2.5. The principle of phasing the development is considered to be justified as this will allow for the completion and occupation of Building A which may otherwise be unnecessarily delayed due to the requirement for Thames Water to vacate the pumping station site. The proposals involve substantial development on a key Category 1 employment site, which would deliver significant economic benefits. Officers consider that a flexible approach should be afforded to enable development to proceed on the site allowing one of the buildings and 10,237sqm of employment space to be provided, thereby ensuring that the economic benefits of the development are at least in part realised.

2.6. In design terms, the impact of phasing the development would mean that for a temporary period the development would have an incomplete appearance as the development is designed as a pair of interlinked buildings separated by the central raised plaza. Nevertheless this is anticipated to be a temporary impact. The presence of existing dense Leylandii trees along the western boundary of the pumping station means that views of the eastern end of the plaza will be fully screened in views from Minchery Lane to the east. Officers conclude that the phased construction of the site would not be harmful in visual terms and the incomplete appearance of the design would only be for a short time period between the completion of Building A and Building B.

2.7. Phasing the development in the short term would not have any significant impacts in terms of connectivity and transport impacts. Parking would be provided for Building A within the structure. The enhancements to pedestrian and cycle access from Minchery Lane and improvements to Minchery Lane required through the Section 106 agreement would still be implemented on completion of phase 1 of the development. The financial contribution of £400,000 towards public transport improvements which would be directed towards the delivery of a new bus service in the Eastern Arc would still be provided and the timescales for this would not be affected.

2.8. Officers for the reasons expressed in the report recommend that approval be granted subject to the completion of a Section 106 agreement.

3. LEGAL AGREEMENT

3.1. This application would be subject to a legal agreement to cover the following matters:

- A financial contribution of £400,000 towards public transport improvements which would be directed towards the delivery of a new bus service in the Eastern Arc.
- Travel Plan monitoring fee of £2,040.
- Financial contribution of £2000 towards replacement of a vehicle restraint gate on Minchery Lane.
- Financial contribution of £25,000 towards improvements of street lighting on Minchery Lane.
- Re-provision of nursery facility, as approved under planning application 19/02116/FUL.

4. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

4.1. The proposal is liable for a CIL contribution of £985,586.42.

5. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

5.1. The application site comprises a 1.92 hectare area of land located on the northern edge of the Oxford Science Park. The Oxford Science Park is a 30 hectare site comprising Class B1 uses which lies on the south eastern edge of Oxford. The Oxford Science Park opened in 1991 and consists of individual plots with buildings of varying architectural appearance and scale typically ranging between 2 and 4 storeys.

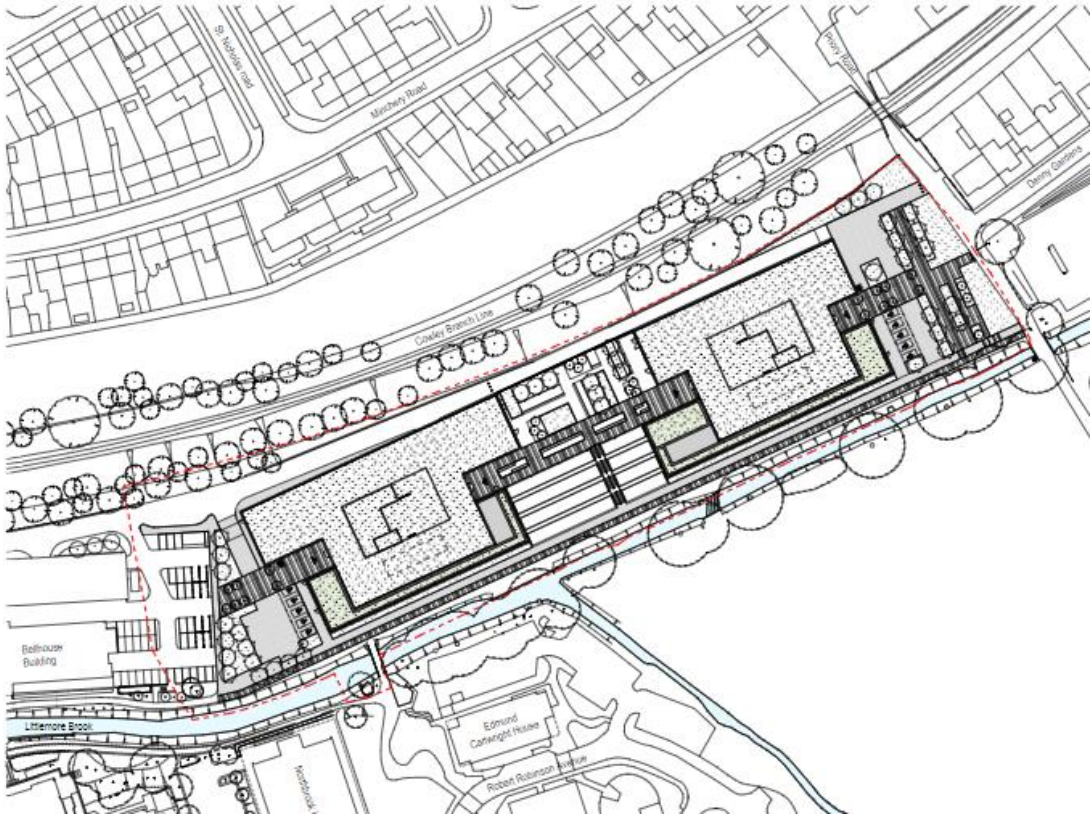
5.2. The application site, referred to as Plot 16 encompasses areas of undeveloped and previously developed land. The eastern area of the site comprises a single storey building currently used as a nursery. A temporary surface level car park has recently been formed on the site, which is linked to the development of the Bellhouse Building to the west of the site. The central area of the site currently comprises undeveloped landscaped grassland. The eastern section of the site is currently used by Thames Water as a pumping station. This area is fenced off and is surrounded by a number of large trees which provide screening of the site. There is a single storey building on the Thames Water site, whilst the remainder of the site consists of areas of hardstanding and infrastructure associated with the site's use as a pumping station.

5.3. Vehicular access to the site would be obtained from the existing access road to the north east of the site which passes through the Science Park. Vehicular access to the wider area is obtained from Grenoble Road to the south of the site. A pedestrian and cycle path runs across the southern edge of the site adjacent to Littlemore Brook, which is a small watercourse separating the site from existing development in the Science Park to the south. This is an important

access which links the Science Park to Minchery Lane, a small access lane to the East which provides a principal means of access for cyclists and pedestrians to Littlemore and wider East Oxford. Adjacent to the pedestrian and cycle path there is an existing pedestrian access bridge crossing the watercourse to the south of the site.

- 5.4. The Magdalen Centre is located to the south east of the site, which is a large Class B1 building. Permission was granted in 2017 (17/03419/FUL) for the development of a three storey building (Bellhouse Building) to the north of the Magdalen Centre with undercroft parking, this permission has been implemented and the development is close to completion.
- 5.5. To the east of the application site is Minchery Lane, a pedestrian and cycle route which extends from Grenoble Road to Priory Road and existing residential development on the edge of Littlemore. To the north east of the application site is a small cul-de-sac serving the Minchery Farm Cottages which are a row of outlying two storey residential dwellings. Vehicular access along Minchery Lane is currently limited to the existing residential occupiers of Denny Gardens and service access to the Thames Water pumping station. Vehicular access is highly restricted by the existing narrow and low railway bridge to the north.
- 5.6. To the south east of the site is a complex of large buildings used principally for leisure uses. The land beyond Minchery Lane to the east of the site comprises surface level car parking associated with the Kassam Stadium and adjoining leisure uses.
- 5.7. The land to the south of the site consists of an undeveloped grass plot containing a number of mature trees. Part of this site forms an allocation within the Oxford Local Plan (Policy SP9) for use as Class B1 employment purposes related to existing employment sectors on the Oxford Science Park. Beyond this is the Grade II* listed Priory which was last used as a pub and is currently vacant.
- 5.8. To the north of the application site is a railway embankment containing trees and thick vegetation cover, which separates the site from the Cowley Branch Line. The Cowley Branch Line is currently used for goods transport associated with the nearby BMW factory, however there are proposals to reopen the line for passenger use; this remains a key aspiration of the City Council and Oxfordshire County Council though there is not a precise timescale for this at present. The proposals for the reopening of the Cowley Branch Line include the potential siting of a new passenger station to the north of the application site which would serve the Oxford Science Park along with the surrounding residential area and other nearby amenities such as the Kassam Stadium.
- 5.9. The land to the north of the railway is used as allotments. Beyond this is existing residential development consisting of two storey houses and three storey flats, which form the southern edge of Littlemore, this includes a recent development of three storey dwellings accessed from Priory Road.

5.10. The site block plan is pictured below:



6. PROPOSAL

6.1. The development proposed would consist of two, four storey office buildings falling under a Class B1 use. The buildings would comprise upper floor office space across three levels with undercroft and lower ground floor parking. In total 19,823sqm of Class B1 office space is proposed. The south west and north east entrances to the site would include soft landscaping and external surface level disabled parking. A centralised square between the buildings would be created which would function as an external area of outdoor seating for users of the proposed buildings. This would include a mix of hard and soft landscaping. The site and proposed buildings would be split across varying levels. A terraced embankment would be created between the central amenity space and the Littlemore Brook to the south. It is intended that the embankment area would also function as an area of outdoor amenity space.

6.2. The existing footpath and cycle route would be retained along the southern boundary of the site. This route would be repositioned slightly and enlarged. An area of space would be retained between the path and the brook. A strip of land would be retained to the north of the site adjacent to the railway embankment. Restricted vehicular access would be provided along this route which would be limited only to service and emergency vehicles. It is proposed that this area of the site would be principally unchanged; so as to allow for the future development of a rail station/halt on the site should the proposals for the reopening of the Cowley Branch line be brought forward in the future.

- 6.3. In total parking provision on the site would comprise 540 spaces, which would mainly be provided within the lower podium areas of the building with a further 28 disabled parking bays provided externally. Cycle parking would be provided within the podium area adjacent to the car parking.
- 6.4. This planning application was considered by the East Area Planning Committee in December 2019 when the committee resolved to approve the application subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 agreement, the details of which are in the process of being concluded with the determination of the application being delegated to the Head of Planning Services.. This application has been brought back for further consideration as the applicants have proposed material changes to the scheme, namely that the development would be phased to allow the initial development of building A and the central podium and plaza prior to the completion of building B.
- 6.5. Building B is located on the site of a pumping station used by Thames Water. Thames Water have confirmed support for the planning application and it is anticipated that a land deal will be concluded by Easter 2021 with vacant possession 16 months thereafter, which is likely to be autumn 2022. It is possible that development will commence on Building B in autumn 2022, though current economic circumstances and market conditions mean that it would be difficult for the applicants to commit to a definitive programme. A delay of approximately 12-18 months between the construction of phases 1 and 2 is possible, therefore the indicative building programme includes a long stop date of 12-18 months.
- 6.6. Phase 1 of the development will involve the erection of Building A and all development on the western part of the site, outside of the pumping station. This includes ground level parking and the development of the central raised plaza. The implications of proposed phasing of the development means that there will be an intervening period between the completion of Building A and the commencement of works on Building B and development on the western part of the site. For design and accessibility reasons a series of temporary works will be required, these include:
- Temporary (silver) mesh cladding panels/railings to secure the east end of the podium.
 - Small area of temporary pavement at the east end of the podium.
 - Trees to temporarily screen the east of the plaza and podium, which will be planted in root balls to enable relocation to a permanent position.
 - Formation of a temporary turning area for emergency vehicles on North Road.
- 6.7. Since the application was last presented to the committee, the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036 has been adopted. In accordance with the NPPF, the development was assessed in accordance with the then adopted local development framework, including the Core Strategy; Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 and the Sites and Housing Plan. The Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036 had yet to undergo examination and could therefore only be afforded limited weight at the time that the application was determined. This report provides a re-appraisal of the key planning matters in relation to the policy provisions of the now adopted Local Plan, accounting for the fact that these policies are now afforded full weight, whilst the previous development framework is no longer afforded any weight.

7. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

7.1. The table below sets out the relevant planning history for the application site:

<p>96/01416/NO - Outline application for extension to Science Park (Phase 2 & 2a) including scheme of structural landscaping with mounding adjacent to Grenoble Road roundabout (Amended plans) – Approved</p>
<p>98/01835/VK - Phase 2 Oxford Science Park Grenoble Road - Variation of conditions 4 and 5 on permission P90/W0627/0 to allow a further 12 months for the submission of reserved matters application & commencement of development – Approved</p>
<p>99/00257/NF - Phased infrastructure works, roads, road and foot-bridges, lakes footpaths, earth works, bunding and planting, for phases 2 and 2a of the Oxford Science Park – Approved</p>
<p>17/03419/FUL - Erection of a 3-storey office building (Use Class B1) and laboratory space above an undercroft parking and arrival space. Formation of car parking spaces and cycle storage. The building will have a ground floor entry pavilion including entrance lobby, changing facilities at back of house. External car parking will be provided at grade and in the undercroft, including 9 accessible spaces and bicycle parking. Additional parking to be provided at Plot B – Approved</p>

8. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

8.1. The following policies are relevant to the application:

Topic	National Planning Policy Framework	Local Plan
Design	117-123, 124-132	DH1 - High quality design and placemaking DH2 - Views and building heights
Conservation/Heritage	184-202	DH4 - Archaeological remains DH3 - Designated heritage assets
Commercial	170-183	E1 - Employment sites - intensify of uses SP9 - The Oxford Science Park (Littlemore and Minchery Farm)
Natural environment	91-101	G1 - Protection of Green/Blue Infrastructure G2 - Protection of biodiversity geo-diversity

Transport	117-123	M1 - Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport M2 - Assessing and managing development M3 - Motor vehicle parking M4 - Provision of electric charging points M5 - Bicycle Parking
Environmental	117-121, 148-165, 170-183	RE1 - Sustainable design and construction RE2 - Efficient use of Land RE3 - Flood risk management RE4 - Sustainable and foul drainage, surface RE6 - Air Quality RE7 - Managing the impact of development RE8 - Noise and vibration RE9 - Land Quality
Miscellaneous	7-12	

9. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

9.1. Site notices were originally displayed around the application site on 8th August 2019 and an advertisement was published in The Oxford Times newspaper on 8th August 2019.

9.2. Following amendments to the planning application and description of development the application was re-advertised by site notice on 15th January 2021 and in The Oxford Times newspaper on 13th January 2021.

9.3. Re-consultation was carried out with relevant statutory consultees. Consultee comments on the original proposals presented to the committee in December 2019 are included in the copy of the committee report attached at **Appendix 2** of this report. For clarity the comments listed below are those solely received following re-consultation of the application.

Statutory and non-statutory consultees

Oxfordshire County Council (Highways and Drainage)

9.4. No additional comments further to comments and conditions previously submitted.

Natural England

9.5. No objections to the amendments.

Thames Valley Police

9.6. No objection.

Historic England

9.7. Do not wish to comment.

Network Rail

9.8. Raised no objection to the development subject to the construction operations having no adverse impact on the adjacent railway and access arrangements for Network Rail.

9.9. The response notes that the prior authority of network rail will be required in respect of building operations on the site. In response to this the applicants have noted that an Asset Protection Agreement is in place between Network Rail and the Oxford Science Park which covers the works proposed within this planning application. In follow up dialogue with officers Network Rail have confirmed that no planning conditions will be required in respect of the building operations and potential impact on the railway as these matters are addressed in the Asset Protection Agreement.

Public representations

9.10. Following re-advertisement of the application in January 2021, 1 public comment has been received in objection to the planning application from an occupier in Minchery Road.

9.11. In summary, the main points of objection were:

- Concern about the impact of the proposed building in relation to the residential amenity of occupiers to the north of the site particularly in relation to the scale of the building, impact of artificial lighting and screening.

9.12. A further comment has been received from an occupier of Minchery Farm Cottages. An overall objection to the development is not raised, however there were concerns that the phasing of development will mean that development occurs over a longer period of time. Concerns are also expressed regarding noise, dust and vehicle movements in addition to hours of construction works. It was requested that access to Minchery Lane remains available for Minchery Farm Cottages and that the developer make improvements to the road adjacent to Minchery Farm Cottages.

Officer response to public comments

9.13. In response to the objectors comments, matters relating to the impact of the development on the residential amenity of adjacent occupiers, including the properties in Minchery Road were addressed in the report to members of the East Area Planning Committee (December 2019) attached at **Appendix 2** this specifically addresses the impact of overlooking, scale and lighting. At the time that the application was presented to the committee in December 2019 no public representations had been received.

9.14. These matters are also duly addressed in this report in the relevant sections relating to neighbour amenity. Specifically the amendments to the planning permission, namely the phasing of the development would have no additional

impact on neighbour amenity compared with the scheme previously presented to the committee.

9.15. In response to the comments raised by the occupier of Minchery Farm cottages it is worth noting that the works to construct building A in the first phase of development would have significantly less impact on these properties compared with the works to construct Building B given the relative distance of building A to these properties. Matters including dust and noise disturbance, hours of working and construction management are either dealt with in the recommended conditions including the CEMP or CEMP or will be dictated by other legislation including environmental health requirements. Construction traffic will not use Minchery Lane and would access the site through the Oxford Science Park.

9.16. Works to Minchery Lane will be carried out by the County Council funded by Section 106 contributions from the developer and include new lighting in addition to the replacement vehicle restraint. It is envisaged that access to Minchery Lane for larger vehicles would be controlled by the County Council and existing access rights would remain. The improvement works covered within the legal agreement extend to lighting along Minchery Lane, as improvements within this area are directly related to the development as this is a principle access point used by pedestrians and cyclists. This does not extend to the road adjacent to the front of Minchery Farm Cottages.

10. PLANNING MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

10.1. Officers consider the determining issues to be:

- Principle of development
- Design and Heritage Impacts
- Neighbouring amenity
- Highways, access and parking
- Ecology
- Flooding
- Sustainability
- Air Quality
- Trees
- Noise
- Contamination
- Archaeology

Principle of development

Provision of Employment Space

- 10.2. The development involves the creation of Class B1 employment space. Economic development forms one of the three overarching objectives in the NPPF (Paragraph 8) for achieving sustainable development. This includes placing significant weight on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- 10.3. The Oxford Science Park is one of the largest dedicated employment sites within the city and is listed as a Category 1 (highest tier) employment site within the Oxford Local Plan. The majority of the application site, with the exception of the Thames Water pumping station lies within land designated for employment use under Policy SP9 of the Oxford Local Plan for Class B1 employment use.
- 10.4. The proposed development would provide Class B1 employment space consistent with the provisions of Policies E1 and SP9 of the Oxford Local Plan. The proposals include development on land which falls outside of the boundaries of the Science Park as defined on the policies map, this being the development on the pumping station site. Notwithstanding this, officers consider that development of the adjacent pumping station would be acceptable in principle, as the site is immediately adjacent to the Science Park site and existing employment uses. In addition to this the development on the Thames Water site would be focussed on previously developed land which is consistent with the Paragraphs 117 and 118 of the NPPF. With respect to the loss of the Thames Water pumping station it is noted that Thames Water has agreed to the re-provision of this facility and have indicated their support for the proposals.
- 10.5. It is considered that there would be significant economic benefits arising from the provision of 19,823sqm of dedicated employment space on this site. The Oxford Science Park is a vitally important site for delivering research based employment which contributes significantly to the local economy and the proposals are estimated to create approximately 1200 jobs. The proposals are considered to comply fully with Policies E1 and SP9 of the Oxford Local Plan.

Loss of Nursery Facility

- 10.6. The proposals would result in the loss of the existing nursery building which is located on the site. This building falls under a Class D1 use and should be treated in policy terms as a community facility. Policy V7 of the Oxford Local Plan specifies that planning permission will not be granted for development which results in the loss of such facilities unless equivalent new or improved facilities can be provided at a location equally or more accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.
- 10.7. The nursery is well used and is open not just to those working on the Science Park site, but also the wider community. It is proposed that the nursery would be re-provided within the Sadler Building, a mixed use hub building located at the centre of the Oxford Science Park, 450 metres to the south west of the existing building. A planning application (19/02116/FUL) has already been approved for the re-siting of the nursery building and partial change of use of the Sadler building to a Class D1 use. The nursery use as approved within this application would be split across the ground floor and first floor of the Sadler Building and

there would be a new area of outside space provided to the north east of the building. The approved proposals would, in officers' view justify an enhancement in terms of the quality of the space, when compared with the existing nursery building, which is small and constrained. The existing building is not of a high design standard as the building lacks windows and natural light to the internal spaces is somewhat limited. An equivalent level of external space would be provided at the Sadler Building. In terms of accessibility the Sadler Building is only 450 metres away from the existing nursery and would be in a more central location on the Science Park site which is arguably more accessible, particularly in terms of public transport access.

- 10.8. Taking these factors into account it is considered that the loss of the nursery building would be justified on the basis that the nursery space would be re-provided within the Sadler Building as approved under planning application 19/02116/FUL. The development would therefore comply with the requirements of Policy V7 of the Oxford Local Plan. The requirement to implement planning permission 19/02116/FUL in order to ensure the re-provision of a nursery facility would be controlled through the Section 106 agreement.

Design and Heritage Impacts

Design

- 10.9. In terms of design the NPPF requires high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. It suggests that opportunities should be taken through the design of new development to improve the character and quality of an area and the way it functions. Policy DH1 of the Oxford Local Plan specifies that planning permission will only be granted for development of high quality design that creates or enhances local distinctiveness.
- 10.10. The site lies on the periphery of the Oxford Science Park. The site comprises buildings of varying architectural design which reflects the somewhat piecemeal development of separate plots on the site since its formation in the early 1990's. Typically existing buildings are relatively large in footprint and vary between three and four storeys. There is relatively extensive landscaping throughout the wider site with a significant number of trees, though there is also a large amount of surface level car parking. Within some of the more recent developments, including the extension to the Magdalen Centre, car parking provision has been incorporated as undercroft parking; this is partly driven by existing flood risk and a subsequent requirement to avoid the provision of office accommodation at lower levels.
- 10.11. The design element of the proposals has been developed in consultation with officers and has been subject of a design review with the Oxford Design Review Panel. The comments of the Oxford Design Review Panel are included in **Appendix 3** to this report.
- 10.12. In response to the linearity of the site the design sets out a pair of narrow, orthogonal buildings connected via a central route, in part enclosed within buildings and in part open where it runs through the separating, central open

space between the two buildings. In response to the existing flood risk the buildings have been designed to sit on a podium (two storeys) of car parking, the footprint of which essentially covers the area of the site with the exception of landscaped arrival points at the west and east ends of the site. To address the future potential of a working railway connection the lowest floor of occupied building is aligned with the height of the top of the existing railway embankment.

10.13. Reflecting that the site and new buildings will become a new gateway into the Science Park, the eastern end of the buildings together with the open frontage has been designed as a distinctive frontage to herald the Park and to adapt to changing uses, for example the future reopening of the Cowley Branch Line.

10.14. In response to the desire to ensure that activity along the edge of the Brook is limited to prevent disturbance of protected species and other, important ecology, the active building frontage has been raised two floors above the marginal.

10.15. The building masses are split into a northern and southern mass split by a central west-east route that runs through each building and connects across the open space at the centre of the site. This split reduces the effective depth of plan facilitating natural daylighting and potentially facilitates a simple separation of laboratory and office space.

10.16. The external skin of the building facades are designed on a repeating grid which sets up strong, vertical rhythms to break up what will be long facades on an unrelentingly orthogonal building mass and enables the different facades to respond to their orientation. The ends of each upper building is held or enclosed in a crafted “outer skin” adding interest to the overall appearance of the building and adding architectural interest. The external façade of the buildings would be clad with aluminium cladding panels. The lower section of the building would be clad with perforated metal panels. A green wall would be established along the south elevation of the building facing the Littlemore Brook. Green roofs are proposed on each of the buildings.

10.17. It is noted that the lower elevations of the building are somewhat lacking in activity, with the exception of the ground floor entrances to the building on the east and west elevations of the building. Typically blank elevations at ground floor level particularly facing accesses and public rights of way would not be encouraged in design terms. In this instance as the site is located within Flood Zones 2 and 3 and as there is a corresponding high risk of flooding, office space cannot be provided at ground floor level which greatly restricts the possibility of providing windows and more active frontages at this level. Furthermore, there would be a potentially adverse impact on biodiversity were windows to be provided along the access corridor adjacent to Littlemore Brook.

10.18. The space at the eastern and western ends of the building – in particular that at the east end has been carefully designed to herald entrances into the building. The eastern one being connected to existing public realm and therefore offering a new place on existing public routes. The design of the space is such that it should be able to perform all these functions well.

- 10.19. The applicant has provided within their design and access statement a series of visual representations as a means of demonstrating the extent to which the development would be visible in key views within the Science Park site and from outside the Science Park. Owing to the location of the site to the rear of the Science Park, in addition to the siting of existing development and dense tree cover, the proposed development is unlikely to be visible in views from Grenoble Road to the south of the site.
- 10.20. The site is visible from Robert Robinson Avenue to the south of the site between the existing buildings. The proposed visuals indicate that due to the proposed levels and site topography, the scale of development would not be excessive and is broadly comparable to the scale of surrounding buildings. Similarly in views from the west, notably in views from the road access bridge adjacent to the Magdalen Centre, the scale of the building when perceived from this viewpoint would not be dissimilar to that of the Magdalen Centre and other surrounding buildings.
- 10.21. The upper floors of the proposed buildings would be visible above the existing railway embankment in views from the north, including from Minchery Lane and St Nicholas Road where the building would be seen in glimpsed views between the houses and most notably the existing blocks of flats. The upper floors would be relatively prominent when viewed from the allotments to the rear of the properties in Minchery Lane, though this is not considered to be harmful or overbearing and is not inappropriate for what would be a gateway site to the Science Park.
- 10.22. The front (east) elevation of building B would be clearly visible from Minchery Lane to the east of the development site. The proposed buildings would be large, particularly in relation to the modest scale of the neighbouring two storey properties opposite (Minchery Lane Cottages). There would however be a separation distance of 45 metres between building B and the side elevation of No.1 Minchery Farm Cottages. The significant separation distance between the larger scale buildings at Plot 16 and the cottages would ensure that there is clear differentiation between the varying scale of the existing and proposed built form. The various landscaping works and the provision of additional lighting, alongside the removal of the pumping station and vegetation, which currently form a dead frontage to Priory Lane would be an enhancement in terms of the visual aspect along Minchery Lane.
- 10.23. Turning to the matter of the phasing of the development it should be noted that the proposed buildings are very much designed as an interlinked pair of buildings. This is most notable in the design of the central raised plaza and undercroft parking areas. Nevertheless building A and the raised plaza, which would be constructed in the first phase are capable of functioning on their own in the intervening period between the time that the pumping station is vacated and work commences on the adjacent building. The design implications of the proposed phasing is that during the intervening period the development would have a somewhat incomplete appearance given that the raised plaza is designed to connect the two buildings would end somewhat abruptly.

- 10.24. As the end of the plaza would not adjoin building B in this intervening period, when the building is under construction, there is a need to amend the design to include temporary (silver) mesh cladding panels/railings to secure the east end of the podium. The somewhat incomplete appearance of the building would only be significantly discernible in views from the south adjoining Littlemore Brook. From the east views towards the end of the plaza are largely screened by the dense trees and vegetation surrounding the pumping station and from the north and north west, views of the plaza are hidden as these sit below the railway embankment and row of trees adjoining the embankment. In either of these views the phased nature of the development would not appear unusual as the development would merely appear as a single building. Trees to temporarily screen the east of the plaza and podium, will also be provided.
- 10.25. The applicants note that the intervening period between completion of phase 1 (Building A and Plaza) and Phase 2 (Building B) would be relatively short. The phasing plan suggests this would be a maximum of 12 to 18 months. The phasing plan suggests that completion of Building A is likely by the end of 2022. It is anticipated that Thames Water would vacate the pumping station by autumn 2022, allowing construction to potentially commence at a similar time, though market conditions could impact on the programme, hence a long stop date of early 2024 is listed in the development phasing programme. This would be a relatively short intervening period and in design terms it is considered that the partial construction of the scheme would not be harmful visually. This is also considered to be justified as this would facilitate the construction of Building A which even in the temporary absence of Building B would provide 10,237sqm of employment space which would provide significant economic benefits on what is a key employment site within the city.
- 10.26. Officers consider that in design terms the development, including the phased nature of the construction would comply with Policy DH1 of the Oxford Local Plan.

Heritage Impacts

- 10.27. The site lies within 165 metres of the Grade II* listed Priory which is a detached stone building, which originally formed part of a nunnery, but was last used as a pub. The building would have sat previously in an area of relatively open countryside, though the setting has been altered considerably by surrounding development including the adjacent hotel and leisure uses.
- 10.28. The proposed development would be considered to lie within the wider setting of this heritage asset. In accordance with Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, special regard should be given to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that when considering the impact of new development on the significance of a listed building, great weight should be given to its conservation.
- 10.29. The proposed buildings would be spatially distant from the Grade II* listed Priory and are unlikely to appear prominent, or be perceived to any significant

degree within the setting of the Grade II* listed building. The buildings would be set against the backdrop of similar large scale office buildings. The proposals in officers' view would have no significant impact on the setting of the Grade II* listed building and the proposals would not result in harm to the significance of this heritage asset. The subsequent amendments associated with the phasing of the development would have no impact on the setting of this listed building.

10.30. The development is therefore considered to comply with the requirements of Policy HE7 of the Oxford Local Plan and Paragraph 192 of the NPPF. The design of the development responds positively to the character, scale and massing of the surrounding built form and complies with Policies DH1 and DH3 of the Oxford Local Plan.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

10.31. To be acceptable, new development must demonstrate that it can be developed in a manner that will safeguard the residential amenities of the adjoining properties in terms of loss of amenity, light, outlook, sense of enclosure, and loss of privacy in accordance with Policies H14 and RE7 of the Oxford Local Plan.

10.32. The majority of the surrounding land uses fall under similar Class B1 uses. There is however existing residential development to the north of the site along Minchery Road and Minchery Farm Cottages to the north east that lie adjacent to the entrance to the pumping station. In terms of the properties to the north of the site there would be a minimum separation distance of 60 metres between the rear elevation of buildings A and B and the rear gardens of the neighbouring properties fronting Minchery Road which directly face the site (Nos.104 to 50) and 70 metres to the windows of the rear elevation of the houses and flats. Other dwellings to the west including Nos.48 to 40 would be offset in terms of their siting in relation to the new building. Between the rear windows of the office building and the residential properties is a railway embankment with relatively dense tree cover which assists in limiting visibility of the development and subsequent overlooking. The separation distances would be substantial between the facing rear windows of the two office buildings and the rear amenity spaces and facing windows of the neighbouring properties in Minchery Road. Consequently officers consider that the development would not result in an undue loss of privacy to existing occupiers.

10.33. The buildings would be large in scale, though the size of the buildings would be broadly comparable to the surrounding buildings on the Oxford Science Park site, which consist of similarly large office and research buildings. The height of the building would be similar to that of the adjacent, recently constructed Bellhouse Building to the west of the site. As noted the proposed building would be sited at least 60 metres from the rear gardens of the nearest properties to the north in Minchery Road and 70 metres from the houses. A raised railway embankment, tree screening and allotments separate the proposed buildings from the adjoining properties. The visuals and section drawings provided within the design and access statement indicate that the buildings would be seen from the properties to the north, as is the case with the adjoining Bellhouse Building. Though visible officers consider that the buildings would not be overbearing

given the relative separation distance to the residential properties to the north and the site specific context. The site is allocated for employment development and it would therefore be expected that the site would be developed on a scale commensurate with the surrounding development on the Science Park site and the commercial needs of future tenants.

10.34. The applicants design and access provides an assessment of the impact of the height of the building in relation to potential overshadowing of any adjoining properties to the north in Minchery Road. The plans indicate that the extent of overshadowing would be highly limited. The shadowing studies of 12pm during the winter and summer solstice indicate that overshadowing would be limited to the space immediately to the north of the building and a section of the railway track. When assessed at 3pm during winter solstice overshadowing would be limited to an area of the allotment and would in the worst case result in a small proportion of the end of the gardens of the properties in Minchery Road (Nos. 80 to 104) being overshadowed for a limited time. Officers conclude that the development would not result in an undue loss of light to the rear gardens of these properties which would otherwise compromise the amenity of the occupiers.

10.35. To the north-east directly adjacent to the pumping station lies a group of cottages which are referred on the submitted plans as Denny Gardens, whereas in actual fact they are addressed as Minchery Farm Cottages. There is a run of 6 cottages in this location all of which do not face directly onto the site. The side elevation of 1 Minchery Farm Cottages, which is the closest of the cottages to the site has a return frontage onto the lane, and the proposed development would be on the opposite side of the lane.

10.36. There would be a separation distance of 45 metres between the east facing elevation of building B and the side elevation of No.1 Minchery Farm Cottages. This property has been extended to the side and rear, though there is only a single side facing window in this property which serves a bathroom. In addition to this the majority of the windows are orientated at an angle, which does not directly face Nos.1 to 6 Minchery Farm Cottages, further limiting the extent to which any of the new windows may overlook these existing properties. Accounting for this it is considered that the development would not result in a loss of privacy to the occupiers of Nos. 1 to 6 Minchery Farm Cottages. The intended phasing of the development and the subsequent design changes intended to facilitate the phasing would have no additional impact on the amenity of any surrounding residential properties.

10.37. The proposed buildings would be large in scale, however accounting for the separation distance of 45 metres between the east facing elevation of building B and the side elevation of No.1 Minchery Farm Cottages and the even greater separation distance to Nos.2 to 6, officers consider that the development would not have an overbearing impact on these properties by reason of the scale of the proposed built form. A mainly landscaped area will be formed to the front of building B to create a buffer between the development at Plot 16 and the existing properties. When assessing the orientation and position of the proposed buildings in relation to Minchery Farm Cottages, including the orientation and position of the rear amenity spaces of the cottages and windows serving

habitable rooms, officers consider that the proposed development would not result in overshadowing or undue loss of light to these properties.

10.38. The development would lead to increased activity along Minchery Lane, which would have a transformative impact in terms of the character of the lane and would impact to some extent on the amenity of the occupiers of the adjacent cottages. Notwithstanding this, there are notable benefits which are provided through an increase in activity, not least in terms of security and public safety which will benefit local residents as well as general users of this right of way. At present the siting of the pumping station ensures that there is no natural surveillance along the lane and the lane is poorly lit and in places overgrown with vegetation. The siting of the development would provide natural surveillance along the lane, whilst also providing the opportunity for new lighting, both within the site and along Minchery Lane itself.

10.39. Policy RE7 of the Oxford Local Plan aims to avoid unacceptable levels of light pollution or spillage. The applicant's design and access statement provides an indicative lighting strategy, which includes an approach designed to reduce potential light spillage reducing the potential impact on adjacent residential occupiers, particularly those closest to the site at Minchery Farm Cottages. In terms of the properties to the north it is reasonable to consider that given their relative distance to the building and given the presence of the railway embankment that these properties would not be duly affected by light spill. Further details of the lighting strategy will be required by condition in order to ensure that the specification of the lighting and siting of the lighting does not impact negatively on the amenity of adjacent occupiers, in addition to having a potentially negative impact on site ecology.

10.40. A noise assessment has been prepared which sets out details of expected noise sources from the proposed development, setting these against measured current background noise levels and proposing noise criteria for the new development. The design criteria are in line with the Council's expected noise limits for new development and the development and officers consider that likely noise generation would not have an adverse impact on the amenity of adjacent residential occupiers, including those at Minchery Farm Cottages to the east of the site and the residents to the north at Minchery Road. Consequently officers consider that the development would not conflict with the requirements of policy RE7 of the Oxford Local Plan. A condition is attached requiring that noise emitted from operations on the premises shall not exceed the specified sound pressure levels.

10.41. Overall it is considered that the proposed development would not compromise the residential amenity of neighbouring properties by reason of overlooking, loss of light, noise disturbance or by reason of the scale of the built form. The development is therefore considered to be compliant with Policies H14 and RE1 of the Oxford Local Plan.

Transport

Transport Sustainability

- 10.42. The application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment, as required under the provisions of Policy M2 of the Oxford Local Plan. Parking for employment based uses is identified under Policy M3 of the Oxford Local Plan. Policy M3 outlines that the parking requirements for all non-residential development, whether expansions of floorspace on existing sites, the redevelopment of existing or cleared sites, or new non-residential development on new sites, will be determined in the light of the submitted Transport Assessment or Travel Plan, which must take into account the objectives of this Plan to promote and achieve a shift towards sustainable modes of travel. The presumption will be that vehicle parking will be kept to the minimum necessary to ensure the successful functioning of the development. In total 540 parking spaces are proposed across the site, 24 of these would be accessible parking bays.
- 10.43. The Oxford Science Park is located on the edge of the city in what would be considered a somewhat peripheral location. Currently the Science Park is served by a single bus service (3A) which runs to the City Centre every 30 minutes via Littlemore, Rose Hill and the Iffley Road. The nearest bus stop is located south of the Magdalen Centre, approximately 400 metres from the site.
- 10.44. Policy M1 of the Oxford Local Plan outlines that sustainable modes of transport should be prioritised in terms of accessing new developments to achieve a reduction in the use of the private car as a principal means of transport and achieve a modal shift towards more sustainable means of transport. This includes improving existing pedestrian and cycle routes. In order to safeguard and promote the provision of public transport in Oxford development that will add to demands on public transport should contribute towards improvements to bus network infrastructure including pedestrian and cycle routes to bus stops, shelters, passenger seating, waiting areas, signage, timetable information and infrastructure relating to zero emissions. Financial contributions fairly and reasonably related to the development will be sought towards the cost of new or improved bus services where the direct impact of development would make such measures necessary.
- 10.45. The two main pedestrian and cycle routes into the site are from Grenoble Road to the south and Minchery Lane to the north. The latter of these two routes provides a more direct route into Littlemore, East Oxford and the City Centre. The existing pedestrian route from Minchery Lane leading from Priory Road to Grenoble Road is currently considered to be of a poor standard as this is poorly lit and feels generally unsafe. Pedestrian access into and through the site is not of a high standard at present.
- 10.46. Site Policy SP9 in the Oxford Local Plan states that opportunities should be sought to enhance and promote more sustainable travel to and from the science park. Opportunities to enhance transport links to the site to provide an alternative from the private car will be encouraged. This will include ensuring that any opportunities to re-open the Cowley Branch Line are pursued and supports appropriate measures, as agreed by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highways Authority to improve bus services to the Eastern Arc. These alternative transport opportunities will increase sustainability and reduce need for cars use as the dominant mode of travel.

- 10.47. The retention and widening of the pedestrian and cycle access along the southern edge of the site is welcomed and the removal of the pumping station and opening up of the eastern edge of the site provides an opportunity to improve the existing access route along Minchery Lane. It is noted that new lighting is proposed along Minchery Lane, together with the addition of the new building which would provide natural surveillance, it is considered that this would improve safety and the general experience for users of this public right of way.
- 10.48. The report to the December 2019 East Area Planning Committee indicated that the applicants would carry out the lighting works through a Section 278 agreement. It has since been agreed that a financial contribution of £25,000 would instead be sought through the Section 106 agreement and the works would be carried out by the County Council. The report also included a condition requiring details of a replacement vehicle restraint system on Minchery Lane to be provided by the applicants. Again a financial contribution of £2000 would be sought and the works would be carried out by the County Council. As the Section 106 agreement would secure a financial contribution towards the replacement of the vehicle restraint system on Minchery Lane a condition is no longer required in relation to this. The package of improvements works to Minchery Lane are considered beneficial in enhancing the public realm along this well used and important public right of way.
- 10.49. The site's location would not generally be considered to be sustainable in terms of wider accessibility and access to public transport, this is reflected in the fact that the majority of journeys to the site are made by car, with 24.1% of users in the applicant's travel survey stating that they used active means of travel to access the site (i.e. walking and cycling) and 12.9% stating that they used public transport.
- 10.50. The proposed reopening of the Cowley Branch Line would considerably alter the situation assuming that a station were to be delivered at the Oxford Science Park site. This would allow for direct access to the site from Oxford Railway Station and beyond. Policy M1 of the Oxford Local Plan outlines support for the delivery of the Cowley Branch Line and safeguards sites for stations; this includes the area of land to the north of the Plot 16 site. The applicant's design and access statement outlines how this station may be delivered. This includes two separate entrances to the station one of which would be located to the north east of the site, which would serve as the main station entrance and would be adjacent to Minchery Lane allowing for ease of access for nearby residents as well and supporters during match days at the Kassam Stadium. A central access is shown which would be used mainly by those accessing the Science Park.
- 10.51. Network Rail has raised no objections to the proposed development and considers that the proposed development would be compatible with the type of station which would serve the Oxford Science Park. This is likely to be a platform halt with minimal facilities. Officers are therefore satisfied that the proposed development at Plot 16 is compatible with the delivery of a future station at the Science Park.
- 10.52. In the absence of certainty surrounding timescales for the reopening of the Cowley Branch Line and accounting for the existing lack of public transport

access to the site, there would be a requirement to demonstrate how a large scale development which has the potential to create a significant number of jobs can reduce dependency on the private car and achieve a modal shift towards more sustainable means of transport.

- 10.53. Oxford Local Plan Policy M1 (Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport) indicates that financial contributions will be sought towards the cost of new or improved bus services where existing services are not considered adequate. This includes promoting bus/rapid transit access to and between major employers in the Eastern Arc. The Oxford Science Park and the proposed development at Plot 16 would fall into this category as the proposed development would deliver a significant additional quantity of employment space and therefore a significant number of employees who will be accessing the site. As existing bus services to the site are infrequent and are limited to the 3A service which operates between the city centre and the Science Park, there is a need to increase the range and frequency of bus services, so as to encourage a modal shift in the uptake of public transport.
- 10.54. Oxfordshire County Council has requested a financial contribution of £400,000 towards the funding of additional services within the Eastern Arc area. Officers consider this to be reasonable request as this aligns with Policies M1 and SP9 of the Oxford Local Plan. Oxfordshire County Council has indicated that there are a significant number of journeys to and from the sub area of Littlemore, which includes the Science Park site, which originate from Cowley, Headington and North Oxford, areas which do not currently benefit from direct public transport access to the site. The financial contribution of £400,000 would fund the provision of one bus per hour between the park and Headington. Further contributions are intended to be sought from other larger sites in the area to increase the number of services to allow a viable service to operate.
- 10.55. The Oxford Transport Strategy and Connecting Oxford plan, both set out the need and level of ambition to better connect major employment sites across the Eastern Arc to the county towns, Park & Ride and other areas in the city. The County Council has requested funding towards the delivery of 4 buses per hour to Headington as part of the proposed development at Oxford North. Funding towards the Eastern Arc from the proposed development at the Oxford Science Park alongside other sites would enable the implementation of a wider transit arc between North Oxford, Headington, East Oxford and the Science Park. This has the ability to capture not just a large number of commuters living in Oxford itself, but also through the park and ride sites, places further afield such as Kidlington, Witney and Bicester where data indicates a high number of journeys to the Science Park originate. Furthermore the range of the Eastern Arc route would capture commuters not currently covered by the 3A bus service and areas which would not benefit from access to the Cowley Branch Line should this be brought forward.
- 10.56. The applicant has confirmed they are committed to providing the contribution requested by the County Council. This is welcomed and will contribute towards achieving a modal shift away from dependency on the private car as a means of accessing the site and will encourage an uptake in public transport, through improvements to the range and frequency of public transport links to the site.

The applicant currently voluntarily funds the 3A bus service between the site, Littlemore and the City Centre and has indicated that it will continue to do so, though this would not form the basis of the legal agreement relating to development on the site and, as such, this is not a material consideration that should be taken into account in the determination of the application.

10.57. Overall subject to a legal agreement required to secure the £400,000 towards bus service improvements in the Eastern Arc, the development would comply with Policies M1 and SP9 of the Oxford Local Plan.

Cumulative Highways Impacts

10.58. The applicant's Transport Assessment provides an analysis of the likely impact of the development on the surrounding road network. Owing to the number of parking spaces which would be provided and accounting for the number of persons likely to travel by private car to the site there would be an additional impact on the surrounding road network including Grenoble Road, the A4074 and Eastern Bypass Road.

10.59. The applicant has undertaken a TRICs assessment to assess the trip generation impact to the site, this shows a peak hour increase of 360 cars in the AM peak and 321 cars in the PM peak. The assessment undertaken to determine these trip rates is deemed acceptable.

10.60. The applicant has then assessed the distribution of these trips using 2015 survey data which naturally shows the junctions closer to the site having a larger percentage of the vehicles. The applicant has also undertaken junction impact assessments for a number of junctions requested by Oxfordshire County Council, these have been assessed either using ARCADY software or by traffic flows provided by the county council.

10.61. These show that the junctions closer to the site which will be taking a larger proportion of traffic are operating under capacity with the development not causing a severe impact. The assessment of Littlemore roundabout which was highlighted as a potential concern shows that the development will increase traffic in the AM peak by 54 vehicles and in the PM peak by 48 vehicles, this is the equivalent of 1.1% percent of the vehicles using the junction at those times and it is therefore not considered that the scheme will materially affect the operation of this junction.

10.62. When considering the development proposals, Paragraph 109 of the NPPF specifies that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. It is the view of officers and the Highway Authority that the cumulative residual impact of the proposed development on the local highway network would not be severe and consequently there would be no conflict with Paragraph 109 of the NPPF.

Car and Cycle Parking

- 10.63. The applicant states that a total of 540 car parking bays are to be provided plus 28 disabled bays and spaces for 22 motorcycles. Policy M3 of the Oxford Local Plan does not set specific standards for non-residential developments, instead requiring that assessments are made on a case by case basis, in light of the applicants Transport Assessment or Travel Plan, which must take into account the objectives of this Plan to promote and achieve a shift towards sustainable modes of travel. The presumption will be that vehicle parking will be kept to the minimum necessary to ensure the successful functioning of the development.
- 10.64. It is recognised that the parking provision proposed would be high in this instance. Notwithstanding this, it is recognised that the Science Park is in a peripheral location on the edge of the city and it is accepted that there is a requirement for higher levels of car parking than would be typically expected or would otherwise be considered acceptable elsewhere in the city. The applicant's Transport Statement suggests that the number of staff could be between 1288 and 1791 employees.
- 10.65. The applicant's Transport Assessment states that there is a requirement to provide visitor and car sharing bays which is correct, but it is not clear whether this is meant to be included within the car parking numbers provided. A condition requiring the provision of a car park management plan outlining the location of the car sharing and visitor bays is required.
- 10.66. It is proposed that 220 cycle parking spaces would be provided; the majority of these spaces (202) would be within the podium car park. Shower and changing facilities would also be provided. This provision is considered to be broadly in line with the requirements of Policy TR4 of the Oxford Local Plan.
- 10.67. Accounting for the size of the development and likely levels of traffic generation, a full travel plan will be required in accordance with the requirements of Paragraph 111 of the NPPF and Policy M1 of the Oxford Local Plan. A monitoring fee for the travel plan will be secured through the Section 106 agreement. The travel plan should cover the new development, but should also address means of improving the transport sustainability of the wider Science Park site.

Phasing of Development and Access and Parking Implications

- 10.68. The intended phasing of the development would not have any implications in terms of the financial contributions sought within the Section 106 agreement in respect of bus provision in the Eastern Arc and improvements to the pedestrian and cycle infrastructure on Minchery Lane. This is because the trigger points for these obligations are either related to first occupation of the development or implementation of the planning permission both of which would be unaffected were the development to be phased. The improvements to the pedestrian and cycle path to the south of the site along Littlemore Brook within the Science Park site would also be unaffected and would be delivered as part of the first phase of the development.

10.69. Vehicle and cycle parking would be provided for Building A (312 car parking spaces and 116 cycle spaces) with the remainder of the cycle and car parking delivered for Building B as proposed when this element of the second phase of the scheme is completed.

10.70. The phasing of the development following the completion of Building A will require the formation of a temporary turning area for emergency vehicles along the northern access road to the north east of the plaza, which will be required. A temporary footpath along the east of the plaza will also be provided which again would be expected to ensure that there is continued permeability through the site in the intervening period between the completion of Phase 1 and the commencement of Phase 2 of the development.

Ecology

10.71. Policy G2 of the Oxford Local Plan states that development that results in a net loss of sites and species of ecological value will not be permitted.

10.72. Habitats within and adjacent to the site are identified as being of local importance, this includes the Littlemore Brook and the railway embankment corridor area. The application is supported by an ecology survey. Whilst no evidence was found of bats or badgers the survey recorded 52 reptiles including slow worm and grass snake. The Littlemore Brook is identified within the applicant's ecology survey as having a high potential to support Otters and Water Vole.

10.73. An initial objection was raised by the Environment Agency on the basis that an inadequate assessment has been made of the risks to protected species and their habitats, including water vole and otters. There are records of water vole and otter in the vicinity of the site and Littlemore Brook, which has implications for development. On this basis and following feedback from the Environment Agency; the applicants have provided a water vole and otter survey. The applicant's further surveys indicate no records of otter or water vole within 250 metres of the site either side of the site boundary. The Environment Agency has stated that they consider the survey to be adequate and have removed their previous objection to the development on the basis that the development may result in harm to protected species.

10.74. A series of ecological mitigations will be required; this will include the submission of a Landscape Management Plan, the maintenance of an ecological buffer zone between the development and the Littlemore Brook. A strategy is required for the translocation of reptiles and a scheme for ecological enhancements is required.

10.75. Overall officers are satisfied that the development would not result in harm to protected species and site biodiversity and the development is considered to comply with the provisions of Policy G2 of the Oxford Local Plan.

Flooding

- 10.76. The majority of the application site falls within Flood Zone 2 and is classified as being at a high risk of flooding. A small section of the site adjacent to Littlemore Brook falls within Flood Zone 3 and is at the highest risk of flooding. The north eastern section of the site adjacent to Minchery Lane lies within Flood Zone 1 and is considered to be a low risk of flooding.
- 10.77. The application has been accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment in accordance with the requirements of Paragraph 163 of the NPPF. The Environment Agency previously raised objections to the provision of a new pedestrian bridge to the south of the site, which crosses Littlemore Brook and is located within land falling within Flood Zone 3 in the approximate position of the existing pedestrian footbridge. The objections were raised on the basis that insufficient detail had been provided as to the design of the proposed bridge. A precise design for the bridge has yet to be developed, although this would be a small structure, similar to the existing bridge. As the design for the bridge has yet to be developed the bridge has been excluded from the development plans. As there is an existing bridge, which is in an acceptable condition the exclusion of the proposed bridge from the plans would not affect general access and connections from Plot 16 to the wider park. It is envisaged that a standalone separate planning application for a new bridge would be made at a later date, once the design of this structure has been further developed.
- 10.78. The office space and more vulnerable uses will be located above ground floor level, where parking provision is proposed and will therefore be safeguarded in the event of flooding.
- 10.79. The Flood Risk Assessment and drainage plan, which outlines a series of SUD's measures has been assessed by the Environment Agency and is adjudged to be acceptable. An addendum has been provided to the submitted drainage statement confirming that the phasing of the development can be carried out without fundamentally affecting the drainage strategy, which will also be phased in accordance with the build out of the east and west sections of the development. Officers are therefore satisfied that the development complies with the requirements of Policies RE3 and RE4 of the Oxford Local Plan.

Sustainability

- 10.80. The applicants have provided an Energy Statement which outlines a range of sustainability measures. Policy RE1 of the Oxford Local Plan requires the incorporation of sustainable design and construction principles in all developments. Policy RE1 states that planning permission will only be granted for non-residential development proposals that meet BREEAM excellent standard (or recognised equivalent assessment methodology) in addition to the following reductions in carbon emissions which are also required. Planning permission will only be granted for development proposals of 1,000m² or more which achieve at least a 40% reduction in the carbon emissions compared with a 2013 Building Regulations (or future equivalent legislation) compliant base case. This reduction is to be secured through on-site renewables and other low carbon technologies and/ or energy efficiency measures.

10.81. It is intended that the design of the buildings would incorporate a combination of passive and active design measures including air source heat pumps, alongside the possible addition of solar PV panels to the roof of the building to provide reductions in carbon emissions and energy consumption reductions. The submitted Energy Statement complied with the previous sustainability standards outlined within the Core Strategy, which was the adopted policy at the time that the planning application was submitted and when the application was last presented to the committee. The adoption of new local plan requires higher standards of sustainability within new buildings, officers therefore consider that it is appropriate to condition that an updated Energy Statement is provided before first occupation of the new building, confirming compliance with the requirements of Policy RE1. It will be required that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Air Quality

10.82. Paragraph 110 of the NPPF states that developments should be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

10.83. Policy M4 of the Emerging Local Plan specifies that a minimum of 25% of parking spaces should be served by EV charging points in non-residential developments. The applicants have proposed that 10% of all car parking spaces would be provided with electric vehicle charging points, with the ducting provided to enable additional spaces to be provided with charging points in the future when demand requires. The figure of 10% was based on guidelines in the now superseded Sites and Housing Plan for residential developments as standards were not set for EV charging points in non-residential developments within the Sites and Housing Plan. Following the adoption of the Council's Local Plan provision of EV charging points should be 25% as stated under Policy M4 of the Oxford Local Plan. Officers recommend a condition requiring details to be submitted outlining the location and specification of the EV charging points.

10.84. The baseline assessment has shown that the air quality to the south of Oxford city centre is good at locations away from major roads. The annual mean NO₂ objective is not exceeded and concentrations have gradually been reducing over the five-year period 2013 to 2017. The 1-hour NO₂ objective is unlikely to be exceeded at the development site based on automatic monitoring at the urban background site and nearby diffusion tube data. The air quality objectives are achieved at the automatic urban background monitoring site and using Defra's modelled urban background data. On that basis, both current area and future occupants of the proposed development will be exposed to acceptable baseline levels of air quality and the site is deemed suitable for its proposed future use in this respect.

10.85. A detailed assessment of road traffic emissions associated with the operation of the proposed development has been undertaken and the impact of additional traffic on local air quality will be not significant.

10.86. The proposed energy centre will not use any gas-fired combustion plant and there will therefore be no emissions associated with the proposed energy centre.

Energy demand will be met by electrically driven air source heat pumps (ASHP), which are emission free.

10.87. A qualitative assessment of the potential local air quality impacts associated with the construction phase activities has identified that the proposed development is considered to be a Medium Risk Site with respect to dust deposition and Low Risk with regard to changes to local PM1 concentrations. However, through good site practice and the implementation of suitable mitigation measures (identified on the reviewed AQA), the effect of dust and PM10 releases would be further reduced and the impact on air quality considered to be negligible. It is therefore mandatory that the outcomes of the dust assessment, (which allowed the identification of site specific dust mitigation measures) are incorporated in the site's Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). This will be required by condition.

Trees

10.88. Policy G7 of the Oxford Local Plan specifies that planning permission will not be granted for development proposals which include the removal of trees, hedgerows and other valuable landscape features that form part of a development site, where this would have a significant adverse impact upon public amenity or ecological interest. Replacement soft landscaping, including tree planting, being undertaken whenever appropriate.

10.89. The site contains a number of trees which are mainly concentrated within the eastern section of the site and have been planted to provide screening of the pumping station. It is proposed that the trees surrounding the pumping station would be removed. In design terms it is considered that it would not be practical to retain the trees shown to be removed and their loss will be mitigated through proposed planting.

10.90. The application includes an Arboricultural Method Statement which includes a Tree Protection Plan which would ensure that retained trees are not damaged during the construction phase of the development.

10.91. New planting proposed, combined with the presence of older, larger trees that are to be retained adjacent to the northern and southern boundaries of the site, will ensure that the removal of the proposed trees will not have a significant detrimental impact on public amenity in the area and the development would not conflict with Policy G7 of the Oxford Local Plan. The additional planting proposed within the phasing scheme is considered to represent an appropriate temporary solution in providing screening of the side elements of the plaza.

Contamination

10.92. The application is accompanied by a geotechnical and geo-environmental desk top study report. This has been reviewed by the Council's Land Contamination Officer, it is considered that the risk of significant contamination being present on the site is low to moderate based on previous historical uses including potential deposition of made ground from railway construction and spreading of sewage sludge. Overall it is considered that the proposed

development is acceptable in line with the requirements of Policy RE7 of the Oxford Local Plan. A phased risk assessment is required by condition alongside a requirement to carry out approved remedial works prior to first use of the building.

Archaeology

10.93. The applicant's consultant archaeologist has confirmed that substantive engineering works were carried out on the site of Plot 16 in 1999 which resulted in the excavation of the site and removal of topsoil and peat deposits. Accounting for this, the Council's Archaeologist has confirmed that no further archaeological work is required in relation to this application.

11. CONCLUSION

- 11.1. On the basis of the matters discussed in the report, officers would make members aware that the starting point for the determination of this application is in accordance with Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 which makes clear that proposals should be assessed in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 11.2. In the context of all proposals Paragraph 11 of the NPPF requires that planning decisions apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development, this means approving development that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless: the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.
- 11.3. This application has been brought before the committee to consider the amendments sought to phase the development. This report also considers all relevant planning matters in light of the adoption of the Oxford Local Plan and the fact that full weight is now afforded to the policies of the new Local Plan which was not the case when the application was last considered by the committee. As clarified in the above sections the adoption of the Oxford Local Plan would not affect the officers' recommendation to the committee as the development remains acceptable when assessed against all relevant policies in the new local plan.
- 11.4. The phasing of the development would not have any adverse implications in terms of accessibility/transport, amenity or any other practical or environmental implications. The design amendments resulting from the phased construction of the development would be temporary and there would be a relatively short intervening period between the completion of Building A and the commencement of works to construct Building B following Thames Water's vacation of the pumping station site. Officers consider that this would

not have an adverse visual impact and the phasing of the development would facilitate the timely delivery of Building A which would provide 10,237sqm of employment space on a key employment site in the city, which would deliver significant economic benefits.

- 11.5. Officers subsequently recommend approval of the planning application subject to the prior completion of a legal agreement to secure the matters outlined under section 3 of this report.

12. CONDITIONS

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development referred to shall be constructed strictly in complete accordance with the specifications in the application and the submitted plans. The phased construction of the development shall be carried out in accordance with the revised plans relating to the phasing of the development, specifically the following drawing numbers:

OSP PWA ZZ ZZ DR A 0101 P2
OSP PWA ZZ ZZ DR A 0102 P3
OSP PWA A 00 DR A 0110 P3
OSP PWA A 04 DR A 0112 P3
OSP PWA A DR A 0113 P3
OSP PWA A 00 DR A 0120 P3
OSP PWA A 01 DR A 0121 P3
OSP PWA A 02 DR A 0122 P3
OSP PWA A 03 DR A 0123 P3
OSP PWA A 04 DR A 0124 P2
OSP PWA A 05 DR A 0125 P3
OSP PWA A 06 DR A 0126 P2
OSP PWA A ZZ DR A 0150 P2
OSP PWA A ZZ DR A 0155 P3
OSP PWA A ZZ DR A 0156 P3

Reason: To avoid doubt as no objection is raised only in respect of the deemed consent application as submitted and to ensure an acceptable development as indicated on the submitted drawings.

3. Samples of the exterior materials to be used shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority before the start of above ground works on the site and only the approved materials shall be used.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with policy DH1 of the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036.

4. A Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of works. The approved CTMP shall be adhered to during the construction phase of development. The CTMP shall follow Oxfordshire County Council's template if possible. This should identify;
- The routing of construction vehicles and management of their movement into and out of the site by a qualified and certificated banksman,
 - Access arrangements and times of movement of construction vehicles (to minimise the impact on the surrounding highway network),
 - Details of wheel cleaning / wash facilities to prevent mud, etc from migrating on to the adjacent highway,
 - Contact details for the Site Supervisor responsible for on-site works,
 - Travel initiatives for site related worker vehicles,
 - Parking provision for site related worker vehicles,
 - Details of times for construction traffic and delivery vehicles, which must be outside network peak and school peak hours,
 - Engagement with local residents.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to mitigate the impact of construction vehicles on the surrounding network, road infrastructure and local residents, particularly at peak traffic times.

5. Prior to first occupation a Full Travel Plan shall be submitted to and be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved Travel Plan shall be implemented upon first occupation of the development and shall then be updated within 6 months of first occupation. An updated copy of the Travel Plan shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing within nine months of first occupation. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the updated travel plan thereafter.

Reason: To promote sustainable modes of transport.

6. A Car Park Management Plan shall be submitted for consideration and the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority prior to occupation. This shall set out the allocation of bays between the different uses of the development. The approved Car Park Management Plan shall be implemented upon first occupation and shall be adhered to in perpetuity with the spaces retained solely for the agreed uses.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety and to encourage sustainable transport use.

7. A street lighting design shall be submitted to and be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to occupation. The development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved plan.

Reason: To promote sustainable transport and improve movement in the area.

8. No development shall take place until an Air Quality Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), containing the site specific dust

mitigation measures identified for this development, has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The specific dust mitigation measures that need to be included and adopted in the referred plan can be found in Table 11 (page 27) of the reviewed Air Quality Assessment that was submitted with this application (Air Quality Assessment: Revision 2 – 19th July 2019). The measures in the approved CEMP shall be implemented during the construction phase of the development.

Reason: to ensure that the overall dust impacts during the construction phase of the proposed development will remain as “not significant”, in accordance with the results of the dust assessment, and with Policy RE6 of the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036

9. Prior to first occupation of the buildings hereby approved, details of the Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure shall be submitted to and be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The electric vehicle infrastructure shall be formed, and laid out in accordance with these approved details before the development is first in operation and shall remain in place thereafter.

Reason: To contribute to improving local air quality in accordance with Policy M4 of the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036.

10. Prior to commencement of development, an application shall be made for Secured by Design (SBD) accreditation on the development hereby approved. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details, and shall not be occupied or used until written confirmation of SBD accreditation has been received by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To create a safe environment for existing and future occupiers which reduces opportunities for crime in accordance with Policy DH1 of the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036.

11. Prior to the start of any work on site including site clearance, details of the design of all new hard surfaces and a method statement for their construction shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall take into account the need to avoid any excavation within the rooting area of any retained tree and where appropriate the Local Planning Authority will expect "no-dig" techniques to be used, which might require hard surfaces to be constructed on top of existing soil levels using treated timber edging and pegs to retain the built up material. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To avoid damage to the roots of retained trees. In accordance with Policy G7 of the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036.

12. Prior to the commencement of above ground works, details of the location of all underground services and soakaways shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (LPA). The location of underground services and soakaways shall take account of the need to avoid excavation within the Root Protection Areas (RPA) of retained trees as defined in the British Standard 5837:2012- 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and

construction-Recommendations'. Works shall only be carried in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To avoid damage to the roots of retained trees; in accordance with Policy G7 of the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036.

13. The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved methods of working and tree protection measures contained within the planning application details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect retained trees during construction in accordance with Policy G7 of the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036.

14. The development shall not be occupied until written confirmation has been provided to the Local Planning Authority that all water network upgrades required to accommodate the additional flows from the development have been completed.

Reason: The development may lead to no / low water pressure and network reinforcement works are anticipated to be necessary to ensure that sufficient capacity is made available to accommodate additional demand anticipated from the new development

15. No development shall take place until a scheme for the provision and management of an 8 metre wide ecological buffer zone alongside the Littlemore Brook (measured from bank top) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Environment Agency. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme. Any subsequent variations shall be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in which case the development shall be carried out in accordance with the amended scheme. The scheme shall include:

- Plans showing the extent and layout of the buffer zone
- Details of any proposed planting scheme (all species should be native and of UK provenance)
- A detailed management plan demonstrating how the buffer zone will be protected during development and managed over the longer term including adequate financial provision and named body responsible for management.
- Details of any proposed footpaths, fencing, lighting, information boards etc., including how people can access

Reason: To safeguard biodiversity and protected species in accordance with Paragraphs 170 and 175 of the NPPF and Policy G2 of the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036.

16. No above ground works shall take place until a Landscape Management Plan (LMP), including long- term design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all landscaped areas shall be submitted to and

approved in writing by the local planning authority in consultation with the Environment Agency. The LMP shall be carried out as approved prior to first occupation of the buildings and any subsequent variations shall be approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The scheme shall include the following elements:

- detail extent and type of new planting (NB planting to be of native species);
- details of maintenance regimes;
- details of any new habitat created on site and how it will be protected;
- details of treatment of site boundaries and buffers around water bodies;
- details of paths, lighting and access for people for health and wellbeing;
- details of management responsibilities; and
- details of how the scheme will achieve ecological improvements and biodiversity net gain.

Reason: To ensure the landscape provides a maximum benefit to wildlife, people and the environment.

17. Noise emitted from use of the premises shall not exceed the following sound pressure levels, as measured 1 metre from the façade of the residential properties to the north on Minchery Road as expressed as dBLAeq,T.

- Daytime – LAeq 1hour 37dB
- Night – LAeq 15 minutes 32 dB

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of nearby properties in accordance with policy RE8 of the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036.

18. Prior to the commencement of the development, other than that required to carry out a site investigation, a phased risk assessment shall be carried out by a competent person in accordance with relevant British Standards and the Environment Agency's Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination (CLR11) (or equivalent British Standards and Model Procedures if replaced). Each phase shall be submitted in writing and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Phase 1 has been completed.

Phase 2 shall include a comprehensive intrusive investigation in order to characterise the type, nature and extent of contamination present, the risks to receptors and to inform the remediation strategy proposals.

Phase 3 requires that a remediation strategy, validation plan, and/or monitoring plan be submitted to and be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to ensure the site will be suitable for its proposed use.

Reason- To ensure that any ground and water contamination is identified and adequately addressed to ensure the site is suitable for the proposed use in accordance with policy RE9 of the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036.

19. The development shall not be occupied until any approved remedial works have been carried out and a full validation report has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that any ground and water contamination is identified and adequately addressed to ensure the site is suitable for the proposed use in accordance with policy RE9 of the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036.

20. Any contamination that is found during the course of construction of the approved development that was not previously identified shall be reported immediately to the Local Planning Authority. Development on that part of the site affected shall be suspended and a risk assessment carried out by a competent person and submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Where unacceptable risks are found remediation and verification schemes shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These approved schemes shall be carried out before the development (or relevant phase of development) is resumed or continued.

Reason: To ensure that any soil and water contamination is identified and adequately addressed to ensure the site is suitable for the proposed use in accordance with policy RE9 of the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036.

21. Prior to the commencement of above ground works, large scale details of the external façade shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority, which should include details at 1:5 scale to show junctions between each of the different types of façade panels including solid/glazed panels; all edge details between soffit of overhangs and vertical face, at edge of building and outside surface, at openings/entrances into buildings, corners; and façades of basement/lower parking floors. The details as approved shall be implemented within the development.

Reason: In order to ensure that the finished appearance will demonstrate a suitably high quality design in accordance with Policy DH1 of the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036.

22. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, 13140-CRH-XX-XX-RP-C-0001, for Plot 16, The Oxford Science Park, Project Number: 13140, dated September 2019 and the Phased Drainage Technical Note, 13454-CRH-XX-XX-RP-C-0010 by Campbell Reith Hill LLP and the following mitigation measures it details:

The use of Flood Resilient Construction proposed in Section 6.8 Fluvial Flooding, up to a level of 59.30m AOD.

These mitigation measures shall be fully implemented prior to occupation and subsequently in accordance with the scheme's timing/phasing arrangements.

The measures detailed above shall be retained and maintained thereafter throughout the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants. This condition is supported in accordance with Policies RE3 and RE4 of the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036 and paragraph 163 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

23. The development shall not be occupied until details of a scheme of lighting plus the means to control excessive light spillage and glare from both internal and external light sources within the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and implemented on site. There shall be no variation to the approved details without the further prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority. The agreed details shall be implemented prior to first occupation of the development.

Reason: In the interests of the visual and residential amenities of neighbouring occupiers, in accordance with policy RE7 of the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036.

24. No works of site clearance or development shall proceed until an Ecological Mitigation, Compensation and Management Plan (EMCMP) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The plan will include the following:

- a) Detailed reptile mitigation strategy, including location of suitable receptor site (with all details of full site surveys provided), translocation protocols and long-term receptor site management (minimum 25 years).
- b) Details of pre-commencement badger surveys.
- c) Details of site clearance protocols.
- d) Protection measures of retained flora.
- e) Full details of new landscape planting of known benefit to wildlife, including native species of local provenance where practicable. Details of long-term management will be provided and a measurable net gain in biodiversity demonstrated.
- f) Provision of a lighting design strategy to ensure minimum disturbance to light-sensitive wildlife on and adjacent to the site.
- g) Locations and specifications of ecological enhancements, including bat and bird boxes, a minimum of 10 dedicated swift boxes and other features of value to wildlife, such as insect hotels, hedgehog domes and habitat piles.

The approved measures shall be implemented before first occupation of the development and shall be retained thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: The prevention of harm to species and habitats within and outside the site and enhancement of biodiversity in accordance with Policy G2 of the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036.

25. No development shall take place (including demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance) until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP (Biodiversity) shall include the following.

- a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.
- b) Identification of “biodiversity protection zones” including off-site receptors such as the Littlemore Brook.
- c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements).
- d) Working methods to protect fauna, as detailed in the ecological survey reports (including badger, otter, water vole, bats and nesting birds).
- e) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.
- f) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.
- g) Responsible persons and lines of communication.
- h) The role and responsibilities on site of an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.
- i) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: The prevention of harm to species and habitats within and outside the site during construction in accordance with Policy G2 of the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036.

26. Prior to the first occupation of the development an updated Energy Statement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Energy Statement shall include confirmation that the development achieves a BREEAM excellent standard (or recognised equivalent assessment). The updated Energy Statement shall include details on renewable energy and other low carbon technologies in order to achieve further reductions in carbon emissions in line with Policy RE1 of the Oxford Local Plan. The approved measures shall be implemented before first occupation of the development and shall be retained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure the incorporation of sustainable design and construction with the approved scheme and to ensure carbon reduction in line with Policy RE1 of the Oxford Local Plan.

INFORMATIVES :-

- 1 The proposed development is located within 15m of a Thames Water Sewage Pumping Station and this is contrary to best practice set out in Sewers for Adoption (7th edition). Future occupiers of the development should be made aware that they could periodically experience adverse amenity impacts from the pumping station in the form of odour; light; vibration and/or noise."
- 2 The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 require a permit to be obtained for any activities which will take place:
 - on or within 8 metres of a main river (16 metres if tidal)
 - on or within 8 metres of a flood defence structure or culvert (16 metres if tidal)
 - on or within 16 metres of a sea defence
 - involving quarrying or excavation within 16 metres of any main river, flood defence (including a remote defence) or culvert
 - in a floodplain more than 8 metres from the river bank, culvert or flood defence structure (16 metres if it's a tidal main river) and you don't already have planning permission

For further guidance please visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-activities-environmental-permits> or contact our National Contact Centre on 03702 422 549. The applicant should not assume that a permit will be automatically forthcoming once planning permission has been granted, and we advise them to consult with the Environment Agency at the earliest opportunity.

- 3 If the applicant decides to include the bridge as a separate application later, they will also need to consider an Environmental Permit. For this, the method of construction will be important, particularly its effect on the banks of the Littlemore Brook and whether the method impedes the flow in the channel or floodplain. The other issues such as the built development/proposed buildings, any other proposed works within 8m of the Littlemore Brook and the two proposed substations will still need to be considered for Environmental Permits. For all development within 8m of the Littlemore Brook, the method of construction will be important, particularly its effect on the banks of the Littlemore Brook and whether the method impedes the flow in the channel or floodplain.
- 4 By implementing a buffer zone around the watercourse the development can safeguard this valuable habitat from harm during construction. Similarly, by developing a management plan for the area the development provides opportunity for enhancement of the watercourse habitat and biodiversity. Natural vegetation should be allowed to establish at least 2 metres from the bank top and managed to promote biodiversity. This provides increased habitat and secures a wildlife corridor along the length of the development. Trees should be managed to enable light to enter the brook and support in-channel vegetation. Habitat that will support water vole population expansion should be provided.
- 5 The development hereby permitted is liable to pay the Community

Infrastructure Levy. The Liability Notice issued by Oxford City Council will state the current chargeable amount. A revised Liability Notice will be issued if this amount changes. Anyone can formally assume liability to pay, but if no one does so then liability will rest with the landowner. There are certain legal requirements that must be complied with. For instance, whoever will pay the levy must submit an Assumption of Liability form and a Commencement Notice to Oxford City Council prior to commencement of development. For more information see: www.oxford.gov.uk/CIL

13. APPENDICES

- **Appendix 1** – Site location plan
- **Appendix 2** – Officers Report to 4th December East Area Planning Committee.
- **Appendix 3** – Letter from ODRP

14. HUMAN RIGHTS ACT 1998

14.1. Officers have considered the implications of the Human Rights Act 1998 in reaching a recommendation to approve this application. They consider that the interference with the human rights of the applicant under Article 8/Article 1 of Protocol 1 is justifiable and proportionate for the protection of the rights and freedom of others or the control of his/her property in this way is in accordance with the general interest.

15. SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

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

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