

East Area Planning Committee

4<sup>th</sup> December 2019

<b>Application number:</b>	19/02003/FUL		
<b>Decision due by</b>	24th October 2019		
<b>Extension of time</b>	TBC		
<b>Proposal</b>	Proposed erection of two linked Class B1 office buildings with associated landscaping, car parking, infrastructure and related works		
<b>Site address</b>	Plot 16, Oxford Science Park, Robert Robinson Avenue, Oxford – see <b>Appendix 1</b> for site plan		
<b>Ward</b>	Littlemore Ward		
<b>Case officer</b>	Michael Kemp		
<b>Agent:</b>	Mrs Emma Andrews	<b>Applicant:</b>	Mr Piers Scrimshaw-Wright
<b>Reason at Committee</b>	This is a major application		

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## 1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1. 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:

- Officer's consideration of any comments received following additional consultation which expires on the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019 intended to allow the residents of the adjacent Minchery Farm Cottages to comment on the application.
- 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

- Decide whether to refer the application back to the planning committee in light of any consultation comments received following the committee.
- 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 the proposed development of 19,823sqm of Class B1 office space split across two four storey buildings each with undercroft podium parking. The scheme would also provide 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 application has been the subject of a minor amendment during the submission to exclude a small replacement access bridge, as detailed designs for the replacement bridge have not yet been finalised and would otherwise be required as part of the assessment of flood risk on the site.
- 2.2. Most of the development would be located on an area of land allocated within the Sites and Housing Plan (Policy SP43) and the Emerging Local Plan (Policy SP10) for Class B1 employment use. A section of the new development would also be located on an area of land currently used as a pumping station by Thames Water, nevertheless this land is adjacent to the Science Park and redevelopment of this part of the site for Class B1 employment purposes is logical given the spatial relationship between this part of the site and the Science Park. The principle of development is accepted and complies with the relevant site specific policies relating to development on the Science Park site, as well as the wider employment policies of the Council's Existing and Emerging and Local Plan.
- 2.3. The removal of the pumping station and opening up of the existing aspect along Minchery Lane provides the opportunity to deliver public realm enhancements along Minchery Lane and access improvements along an important access route for pedestrians and cyclists. Improvements to this route, including the addition of new lighting are sought by the County Council and the applicants are in agreement to deliver these improvements, which would be carried out through a Section 278 agreement between the applicants and the County Council. The site specific provisions relating to the wider Science Park site recognise the need to improve pedestrian and cycle links into and throughout the site, the proposed development would deliver access enhancements to the site through the enhancement of the existing pedestrian and cycle routes adjacent to Plot 16.
- 2.4. The site specific policy provisions also recognise the need to facilitate a modal shift in how people access the Science Park through reducing dependency on the private car and through increased uptake in use of public transport as well as

walking and cycling. The proposals are to provide 540 car parking spaces, including 28 disabled spaces as well as 22 motorcycle parking spaces. This is a relatively high number of spaces, though this would be in line with the maximum parking standards outlined under Policy TR3 of the Oxford Local Plan and accounting for the numbers of staff which may be working in the buildings, this provision would not be excessive. The parking provision should account for the overall sustainability of the site and it is accepted that the site is in a somewhat peripheral location which limits access by walking or cycling and public transport links to the site are currently limited.

- 2.5. Following negotiation with Oxfordshire County Council the applicants have committed to a financial contribution of £400,000 towards the delivery of bus services within Oxford's Eastern Arc which forms part of the City Council and the County Council's proposals to improve citywide public transport provision. The proposed contribution would provide funding equivalent to the cost of delivering one bus per hour between the Science Park, East Oxford and Headington. It is intended that further contributions would be sought on other large sites within the vicinity to enable the delivery of a regular service between the Science Park and Oxford's Eastern Arc. The committed contribution is supported by officers as this would assist in providing and increasing the regularity and reliability of public transport access to the site, enhancing the overall sustainability of the site and would assist in delivering an increase in modal shift away from private car use as the principal means of accessing the Science Park.
- 2.6. It is important that the layout and design of the scheme accounts for the future provision of a railway station to the north of the development site, as delivery of a station in this location is envisaged should the proposals to reopen the Cowley Branch Line come forward which remains a strategic priority. The proposed design and layout of the scheme accounts for the future delivery of a station to the north of the site, in terms of access and the relationship of the built form to the station. Network Rail has advised that the proposed development would not obstruct delivery of a station in this location, therefore the development would be considered to be compatible with the delivery of this key infrastructure project.
- 2.7. In terms of the overall scale of development the proposed buildings would be large, though this is not incomparable to the general scale of the existing buildings on the site which generally consist of large plan office buildings generally ranging between 3 and 4 storeys in height. The scale of the office buildings are driven by functional and operational needs. Wider views of the development would be limited, with the exception of views from Minchery Road to the north where the upper floors of the development would be visible above the existing railway embankment. When considering these external views officers consider the impact of development would not be unduly harmful.
- 2.8. The application site mainly comprises land falling within Flood Zones 2 and 3 and is considered to be at high risk of flooding. The application is accompanied by an FRA which assesses the relative flood risk on the site. The design of the scheme accounts for the relative flood risk on the site as the useable employment space would be located above ground level, with parking accommodation and lower risk uses concentrated at ground level. The design of the scheme and intended mitigation, which can be managed by condition will ensure that the development

does not impact detrimentally on biodiversity or protected species which may be present on the site, or adjacent land.

2.9. For the reasons expressed within this report, officers consider that the development as proposed is acceptable in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Oxford Local Plan; Oxford Core Strategy; Sites and Housing Plan; Emerging Local Plan and the NPPF and recommend that approval should be granted subject to the planning conditions outlined in this report and a section 106 agreement covering the matters in section 3 of this report.

### **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
- To secure that a section 278 agreement is entered into to provide improvements to access and 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**

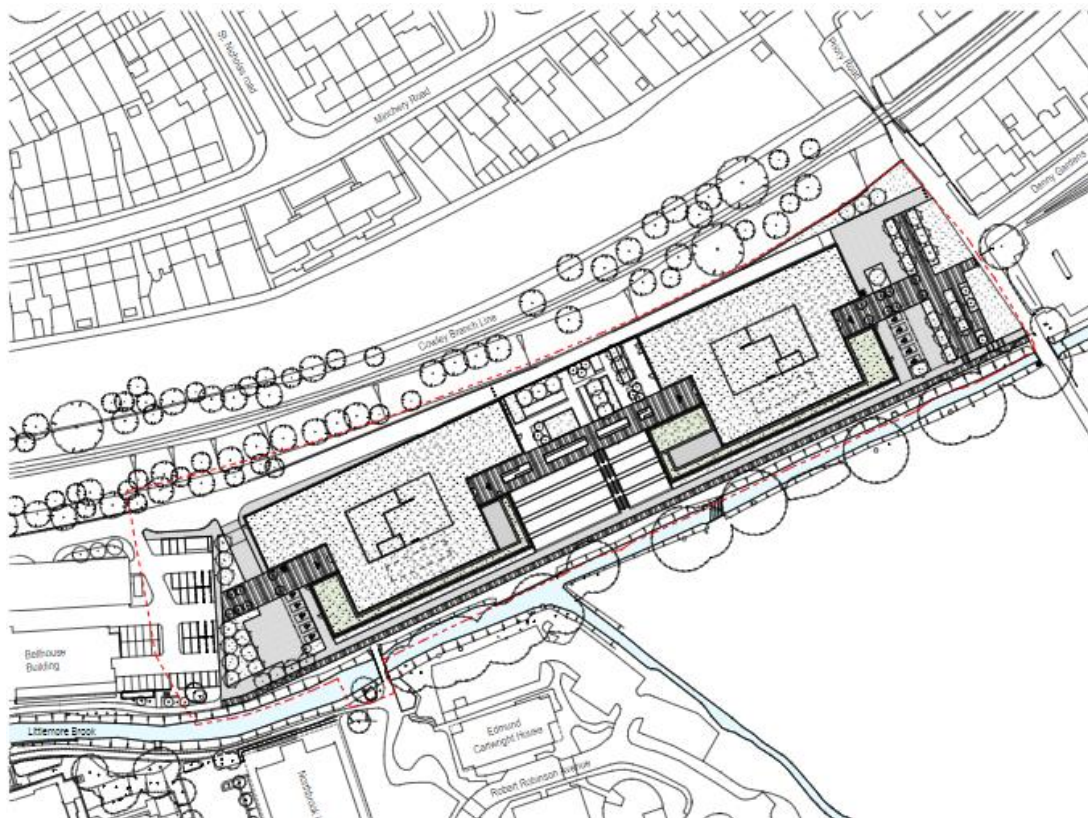
5.1. The application site comprises a 1.92 hectare area of land located on the northern edge of the Oxford Science Park. The Oxford Science Park is a 30 hectare site comprising Class B1 uses which lies on the south eastern edge of Oxford. The Oxford Science Park opened in 1991 and consists of individual 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 ongoing 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 consisting of areas of hardstanding and infrastructure associated with the sites 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. This site forms an allocation within the Sites and Housing Plan (SP24b) and is identified as being suitable for residential development.
- 5.7. The land to the south of the site comprises an undeveloped grass plot containing a number of mature trees. This site forms part of an allocation within the Council's Sites and Housing Plan (Policy SP44) 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:



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ent proposed comprises 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.

## 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 &amp; 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 &amp; 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>
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## 8. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

8.1. The following policies are relevant to the application:

Topic	National Planning Policy Framework	Local Plan	Core Strategy	Sites and Housing Plan	Emerging Local Plan
Design	12	CP1 CP6 CP8 CP9 CP10 CP11 CP13	CS18		DH1 DH2
Conservation/Heritage	16	HE2 HE3			DH3 DH4
Commercial	6	EC1	CS27 CS28	SP43	E1 SP10



Natural environment	15	NE15 NE20 NE21 NE23	CS11 CS12 CS2		G1 G2
Transport	9	TR1 TR2 TR3 TR4 TR5 TR6 SR9	CS13 CS14		M1 M2 M3 M4 M5
Environmental	15	CP19 CP20 CP21 CP22 CP23	CS9 CS10		RE1 RE2 RE3 RE4 RE6 RE7 RE8 RE9
Miscellaneous		CP.13 CP.24 CP.25			

## 9. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

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

9.2. To ensure that the residents of the nearest adjoining dwellings (Nos. 1 to 6 Minchery Farm Cottages) were aware of the application, direct neighbour notifications were sent by post to these addresses prior to this committee meeting. As the consultation period outlined on the neighbour notification letters expires after the date of the East Area Planning Committee, the recommendation to members is subject to officers giving due consideration to any comments which may be received prior to the East Area committee meeting and following this meeting, up until the consultation expiry date of the 9<sup>th</sup> December. The recommendation includes the delegation of authority to the Head of Planning to refer the application back to the planning committee in light of any consultation comments received following the committee, if considered necessary to do so.

### **Statutory and non-statutory consultees**

#### Oxfordshire County Council (Highways)

9.3. No objections are raised subject to conditions.

#### Traffic Generation

9.4. 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 are deemed acceptable.



- 9.5. 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.
- 9.6. 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.
- 9.7. In summary, it is not considered that the impact of this development will have a severe impact on the operation of the local highway network.

#### Car Parking and Cycle Parking

- 9.8. The applicant states that 540 car parking bays are to be provided plus 28 disabled bays and 22 motorcycles. Oxford's car parking standards for commercial developments states that a maximum of 1 space per 35m<sup>2</sup> should be provided for B1(a) use class and that 5% of these should be allocated for disabled users. As the development is to be 19,823m<sup>2</sup> the total number of parking bays provided should be maximum 566 including 28 disabled bays.
- 9.9. The 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 or if this is to be on top. Furthermore, no figures for these have been included. For clarification, car sharing and visitor bays should be included within the parking standards so the site should be providing a maximum of 566 bays. A condition requesting further information has therefore been included
- 9.10. The Transport Assessment states that 220 covered and secure cycle spaces are to be provided within the podium car park underneath the buildings. This is to be located close to the cycle route and is in line with local standards. 4 cycle spaces will also be located to the front of each building for visitors, this is welcomed.

#### Access

- 9.11. The Oxford Science Park and Magdalen College have a legal obligation to provide a link between the Science Park and Littlemore Park as does the Littlemore Park application from their land in application 14/02940/OUT. Littlemore Park have left land available and prepared their site for an access but cannot fulfil the obligation without the science park also doing this, so far this has not been provided as per the legal requirement in the agreement for application 16/01945/FUL.

- 9.12. This is an important link to the employment zone from the local residential areas which may be working on the site and there are wider connectivity issues for pedestrians and cyclists with limited and substandard provision across the area which is made worse by severance caused by the railway line and built-form of residential areas. This means cycling and walking distances are much longer and therefore less attractive. Some of this would be resolved by creating a new pedestrian and cycle link through to 'Littlemore Park' which would mean a new and larger residential catchment would be within walking and cycling distance of the application site and wider Oxford Science Park area. It would also provide a more direct route for cyclists using Sandford Road and Oxford Road. To increase permeability and sustainable access to the site this needs to be provided.
- 9.13. The Oxford Science Park and Magdalen College are therefore in breach of a legal obligation, action may be taken by Oxford City Council's enforcement team if this link is not provided..
- 9.14. Initial discussions with the applicant's transport consultant included potential enhancements to the existing path that runs parallel with the application site and connects it with St Nicolas Road to the north and Grenoble Road to the south, and whilst this route is surfaced and lit in some places some modest enhancements could be made to improve the attractiveness and make it more cycle (and pedestrian) friendly throughout the year. It is noted that the current modal share for walking and cycling to the Oxford Science Park is relatively modest for Oxford at 24.1%.
- 9.15. The applicant states that improvements to footpath 281/1/40 will be paid for through CIL contributions, however, public right of way improvements are not on the CIL 123 list and therefore this is not possible. The county council therefore requires the applicant to submit a street lighting design to the county council which brings the street lighting along the footpath up to current standards and deliver the work. The county council also requires the applicant to replace the gate approximately 50 metres from the railway bridge with a new system that allows easier movement for cyclists and pedestrians.

#### Public Transport

- 9.16. The site will reserve an area as a 'pocket park' which can potentially be used as a station for the Cowley Branch Line should this become open to pedestrians in the future, this is considered beneficial but at this stage there is no certainty that this will come forward.
- 9.17. Bus services to the Oxford Science Park are limited; with the 3A service providing a half-hourly service connecting the site to Oxford city centre via Iffley Road.
- 9.18. The County Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP4) contains an explicit proposal for an 'eastern arc' rapid transit route around Oxford, providing much improved public transport access to the wider Cowley employment area from the Headington area, also from the Oxford North development area and from further afield, through access to Park and Ride sites. The 'Connecting Oxford' paper recently jointly published by Oxford City and Oxford County Councils also stresses the importance of an Eastern Arc bus route. It is planned to request financial contributions from

other developers towards the delivery of this rapid transit route. Contributions have already been requested from the 'Oxford North' site for example and will also be requested from the residential sites provisionally allocated in the South Oxfordshire Local Plan (reference; the South Oxfordshire IDP).

- 9.19. The applicants for the development at Oxford North have committed an amount for an operational bus service which will create the start of the Eastern Arc bus route from their site running to Headington. The financial contribution sought from this site will be towards a twice hourly bus service from Headington until the Eastern Arc route is fully operational at which time will form part of that route. 2011 census data shows that a large number of people working in the area are arriving from Headington and East Oxford, so it is considered that a bus service from this area to the science park will be well used. An index linked contribution of £400,000 is sought from the development. Oxfordshire County Council (Drainage)

#### Drainage

- 9.20. The updated surface water drainage plan 13140 CRH XX 00 DR C 5050 P8 is acceptable. Document titled "Second Response to LLFA Drainage Comments" is acceptable. Evidence is required that proves EA objection has been satisfied and released.

#### Thames Water Utilities Limited

- 9.21. A letter has been received from the Head of Property at Thames Water confirming that the principle of the relocation of the pumping station has been agreed and a technical design for the new pumping station is currently being considered by Thames Water.
- 9.22. Thames Water has indicated their support for the inclusion of the site, including the pumping station within the allocation of the site in Policy SP10 of the Emerging Local Plan.
- 9.23. No objections are raised, subject to a condition requiring that confirmation has been provided confirming that network upgrades required to accommodate the additional flows from the development have been completed or an infrastructure delivery plan has been agreed with Thames Water.

#### Network Rail

- 9.24. Based on Network Rail's current proposed station location, we have no objection to Oxford Science Park's planning application for their Plot 16 development. The intention of the new station is to serve Oxford Science Park, so Plot 16 should be compatible to the station design. It should be stressed that Network Rail's proposal is at the earliest possible stage of development, with no outline or detailed designs, and should be considered at this stage as 'concept only.'
- 9.25. Network Rail and its contractor(s) may require access to land owned by Oxford Science Park during design & construction.

#### Thames Valley Police

9.26. Do not object – recommend condition requiring application for Secured by Design Accreditation.

Environment Agency

9.27. The previous objection regarding the potential impact of the bridge on flood risk and lack of detail in respect of the design of the bridge is withdrawn following amendments to exclude the bridge from the proposed plans. Conditions are recommended in respect of safeguarding ecology.

Natural England

9.28. No comments to make

Historic England

9.29. Do not wish to comment

Littlemore Parish Council

9.30. Littlemore Parish Council would like to make the following points in response to this application.

- We welcome the provision of more jobs in our area.
- We strongly support Oxfordshire County Council's comment that the 3A bus service is limited. There is no service after 20:00 on this route, and no bus at all on Sundays and bank holidays. As well as inconveniencing employees at the Science Park, the poor provision greatly disadvantages residents in the southern end of Littlemore and Sandford-on-Thames, especially those without access to cars.
- We are disturbed at the confusion and lack of transparency relating to a previous permission at Edmund Halley Road and a contribution to the bus service. It must surely be possible for the County Council to ensure that funding for buses is made according to a condition imposed by the planning department.
- We are also greatly concerned that no progress has been made towards the provision of a pedestrian and cycle path through to Littlemore Park (Armstrong Road). The County Council has previously stated that cycle access via Sandford is unsafe, and it is a long walk from Littlemore to the Science Park.
- We believe that at present the footpath which runs along the southern edge of this site is closed at the Priory end at night and over weekends. We wonder whether this will change with the construction of a shared cycle/pedestrian path, and especially when the station opens.
- We are uncertain whether any calculations have been made as to the number of parking spaces which will be required when the railway line opens for use. It seems, understandably, that the large number of spaces under the new building are intended for employees and not the general public. We anticipate that people from south of Oxford will want to drive to the Science Park in order to access Oxford and points beyond by train, and wonder where the car parking provision will be.

- At present the brook is a haven for wildlife along most of its length. We would ask that the greatest care is taken to protect this wildlife corridor from damage during building work and thereafter.

### **Public representations**

9.31. No members of the public have made representations in relation to the proposals.

## **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 Class B1 Uses**

10.2. The development principally involves the creation of Class B1 employment space. Policy EC1 of the Oxford Local Plan and Policy CS27 of the Core Strategy supports the provision of new employment space with a view to promoting sustainable economic development in the city. 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 Key Employment site within the existing local development framework and under the provisions of the Emerging Local Plan, in which the site is listed as a Category 1 (highest tier) Employment Site. Policy CS28 of the Core Strategy allows for development on key employment sites where this:

*Secures or creates employment important to Oxford's local workforce; and allows for higher-density development that seeks to make the best and most efficient use of land; and does not cause unacceptable environmental intrusion or nuisance.*

- 10.4. The provisions of Policy E1 of the Emerging Local Plan is similarly reflective of these requirements and affords protection to employment uses on Category 1 sites.
- 10.5. The majority of the application site, with the exception of the Thames Water pumping station lies within land designated for employment uses associated with the Oxford Science Park and is allocated under Policy SP43 of the Sites and Housing Plan and Policy SP10 of the Emerging Local Plan for Class B1 employment use.
- 10.6. The intended use of the site for the development of Class B1 employment space is clearly consistent with the Local Existing and Emerging Policy aims relating to development on protected employment sites and is consistent with the site specific provisions relating to the Oxford Science Park. 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 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 Policy requirements of Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy and 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.
- 10.7. It is considered that there would be significant economic benefits arising from the provision of 19,823sqm of dedicated employment space. 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 in principle to be compliant with Policies CS27 and CS28 of the Core Strategy; Policy E1 of the Oxford Local Plan; Policy SP43 of the Sites and Housing Plan; and Policies E1 and SP10 of the Emerging Local Plan.

#### Loss of Nursery Facility

- 10.8. 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 CS20 of the Oxford Core Strategy specifies that planning permission will not be granted for development which results in the loss of such facilities unless equivalent new or improved facilities, where foreseeable need justifies this, can be provided at a location equally or more accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.
- 10.9. 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.

- 10.10. Taking these factors into account it is considered that the loss of the nursery building would be justified on the basis that the Class D1 space which would be lost in the existing building would be adequately replaced within the Sadler Building as approved under planning application 19/02116/FUL. The development would therefore comply with the requirements of Policy CS20 of the Oxford Core Strategy. 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**

- 10.11. 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. Policies CP1, CP6 and CP8 of the Oxford Local Plan, together with Policy CS18 of the Core Strategy require that development proposals incorporate high standards of design and respect local character. This is also reflected within Policy DH1 of the Emerging Local Plan, which specifies that planning permission will only be granted for development of high quality design that creates or enhances local distinctiveness.

- 10.12. 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.

- 10.13. 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 2** to this report.



- 10.14. 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.
- 10.15. 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.
- 10.16. 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
- 10.17. 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.
- 10.18. 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.
- 10.19. 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.
- 10.20. 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.

- 10.21. 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.
- 10.22. 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.
- 10.23. 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.
- 10.24. 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 Priors Lane would be an enhancement in terms of the visual aspect along Minchery Lane.
- 10.25. 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.
- 10.26. 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 (the Framework) states that when considering the impact of new development on the significance of a listed building, great weight should be given to its conservation.

- 10.27. 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.
- 10.28. 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 CP1, CP8 and CP9 of the Oxford Local Plan; Policy CS18 of the Core Strategy and Policy of the DH1 of the Emerging Local Plan.

### **Impact on neighbouring amenity**

- 10.29. 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 Policy CP10 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016.
- 10.30. 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 to the north east, this being Minchery Farm Cottages 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 (Nos.104 to 50) and 70 metres to the windows of the rear elevation of the houses and flats. Between the rear windows of the office building and residential properties is a railway embankment with thick tree cover which limits visibility of the development and any subsequent overlooking.
- 10.31. Officers consider the separation distances to 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. The overall separation distance between the proposed buildings on Plot 16 and these existing properties in Minchery Lane is significant enough to ensure that there would also not be a loss of light or overbearing impact on the occupiers of these properties with respect to the scale of the proposed built form.
- 10.32. 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.
- 10.33. 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.

10.34. 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.

10.35. 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. This has been requested by the County Council and would be carried out through a Section 278 agreement and is supported by Thames Valley Police.

10.36. Policy CP20 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. 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.

10.37. 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 policies CP9, CP19 and CP21 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001 – 2016. A condition is attached requiring that noise emitted from operations on the premises shall not exceed the specified sound pressure levels.

10.38. It should also be noted that the character of the immediate area is likely to be the subject of significant change in the future given the allocation of various adjacent sites within the existing and draft development framework. The site at Plot 16 exists already as an allocation for employment development within the Sites and Housing Plan (SP43) and is scheduled for inclusion within the draft local plan (SP10). Furthermore the undeveloped site to the south is also included as an employment allocation within the Sites and Housing Plan (SP44), whilst the overflow parking serving the Kassam Stadium is allocated for residential development within the Sites and Housing Plan (SP24b) and draft local plan (SP15). Furthermore the proposed siting of a new railway station as part of the proposed reopening of the Cowley Branch Line will further increase activity along Minchery Lane. The scale of development on plot 16 is therefore commensurate with the anticipated level of development, likely to come forwards in the future within the vicinity of the site.

10.39. Overall it is considered that the proposed development would not compromise the residential amenity of neighbouring properties by reason of overlooking, loss of light or by reason of the scale of the built form. The development is therefore considered to be compliant with Policy CP10 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016.

## **Transport**

### Transport Sustainability

10.40. The application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment, as required under the provisions of Policy TR1 of the Oxford Local Plan. Parking for employment based uses are identified under Policy TR3 of the Oxford Local Plan, this sets maximum parking standards. When considering applications for development the overall sustainability of the location should be given due consideration. In the case of employment based development this includes access to public transport. In total 540 parking spaces are proposed, 24 of these would be accessible parking bays.

10.41. 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.

10.42. Policy CS13 of the Core Strategy outlines that planning permission will only be granted for development that prioritises access by walking, cycling and public transport. Policy CS14 outlines the need to improve the ease and quality of access between the city and district centres and key destinations. Policy TR3 of the Existing Local Plan, which relates to car parking provisions, specifies that where appropriate, the City Council will seek a planning obligation for contribution towards or provision of improved accessibility to the site, proportionate to the scale of development and potential trip generation. This reflects the need to achieve a

reduction in the use of the private car as a principal means of transport, in order to achieve a modal shift towards more sustainable means of transport.

- 10.43. 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.
- 10.44. The site specific policy requirements outlined within Policy SP43 of the Sites and Housing Plan state a requirement to minimise car parking spaces and minimise traffic impacts by improving access by alternative means of transport, this is similarly reflected within the requirements of Policy SP10 of the Emerging Local Plan. The most recent, updated modifications to Policy SP10 promote opportunities to enhance and promote more sustainable travel to and from the park.
- 10.45. 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. Oxfordshire County Council have requested that the applicant enter into a Section 278 agreement to provide improvements to Minchery Lane, including new lighting, this is supported by officers as there is a need to improve this important access route and doing so would enhance connectivity from the park to the surrounding areas. The requirement for the applicants to enter into a Section 278 agreement would be required within the applicants Section 106 agreement.
- 10.46. 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.
- 10.47. 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 CS14 of the Core Strategy and Policy M1 of the Emerging 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.

- 10.48. 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.
- 10.49. 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.
- 10.50. It is noted that the Oxford Science Park currently fund the Pickmeup service, an app based demand responsive service providing shared minibus transport throughout the city. It is understood that this has been successful since its introduction, particularly in terms of providing a means of accessing the Science Park site from areas of the city not currently covered by public transport access to the site; this includes most of East Oxford, Headington and North Oxford. The value provided by such demand response services is noted in terms of flexibility and the range of the service.
- 10.51. It is noted that the applicant's initial offer in terms of a public transport contribution was to direct funding towards Pickmeup. Officers are supportive of such demand response services in terms of their contribution in reducing individual car journeys to the site. Officers are however of the view that demand responsive services would not form an effective means of achieving the much wider modal shift away from private car use that is sought by the allocation policy. The limited capacity and availability of vehicles and the reliability of demand responsive services limit the effectiveness to capture significant numbers of persons travelling to the site, particularly at busy peak times in the morning and afternoon where the need to reduce private car use is greatest given traffic congestion.
- 10.52. Emerging 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.
- 10.53. 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 CS13 and CS14 of the Core Strategy; Policy SP43 of the Sites and Housing Plan; and Policies M1 and SP10 of the Emerging 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.

10.54. The Oxford Transport Strategy, including the more recent 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.

10.55. The applicant has confirmed that he is prepared to provide the contribution requested by the County Council. This is welcomed and will contribute to 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 have indicated that they 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.

10.56. 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 CS13 and CS14 of the Core Strategy; Policy SP43 of the Sites and Housing Plan; and Policies M1 and SP10 of the Emerging Local Plan.

#### Cumulative Highways Impacts

10.57. 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.

10.58. 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 are deemed acceptable.

- 10.59. 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.
- 10.60. 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.
- 10.61. 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

- 10.62. The applicant states that 540 car parking bays are to be provided plus 28 disabled bays and spaces for 22 motorcycles. Oxford's car parking standards for commercial developments states that a maximum of 1 space per 35m<sup>2</sup> should be provided for B1(a) use class or 1 space per two staff and that 5% of these should be allocated for disabled users. As the development would comprise 19,823m<sup>2</sup> of Class B1 space, the total number of parking bays provided should be a maximum of 566 including 28 disabled bays.
- 10.63. It is recognised that parking provision on the site is high, as this is close to the Council's maximum parking standards. 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. It is also noted that the applicant's Transport Statement suggests that the number of staff could be between 1288 and 1791 employees. The maximum parking standards in line with Policy TR3 of the Oxford Local Plan for this number of employees would be in the range of 644 to 896, in which case provision would be relatively low and therefore emphasises the importance of enhancing public transport access to the site.
- 10.64. 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.

10.65. 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.

10.66. 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 TR2 of the Oxford Local Plan. The travel plan should cover the new development, but should also address means of improving the transport sustainability of the wider Science Park site.

### **Ecology**

10.67. Policy CS13 of the Core Strategy specifies that Development will not be permitted which results in a net loss of sites and species of ecological value. Where there is opportunity, development will be expected to enhance Oxford's biodiversity.

10.68. 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.

10.69. 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.

10.70. 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.

10.71. 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 CS12 of the Core Strategy.

### **Flooding**

- 10.72. 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.
- 10.73. 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.
- 10.74. 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.
- 10.75. 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. Officers are therefore satisfied that the development complies with the requirements of Policy CS11 of the Core Strategy.

### **Sustainability**

- 10.76. Policy CS9 of the Core Strategy requires that all developments should seek to minimise their carbon emissions. Proposals for development are expected to demonstrate how sustainable design and construction methods will be incorporated. All development must optimise energy efficiency by minimising the use of energy through design, layout, orientation, landscaping and materials, and by utilising technologies that help achieve Zero Carbon Developments.
- 10.77. The applicants have provided a Natural Resource Impact Assessment which outlines a range of sustainability measures. The scheme achieves a BREEAM rating of very good, however the scheme targets reaching a BREEAM standard of excellent.
- 10.78. 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. Overall it is considered that the development complies with the requirements of Policy CS9 of the Core Strategy.

## Air Quality

- 10.79. 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. The Existing Local Plan does not set specific standards for EV charging points within new developments, though on recent applications in non-residential developments, a figure of 10% is specified in the Sites and Housing Plan for residential developments under Policy HP16.
- 10.80. 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.
- 10.81. Given the limited weight attributed to the provisions of the Emerging Local Plan at the present time but equally accounting for future growth in the uptake of electric vehicles, officers consider that it would be reasonable to attach a condition requiring that at least 10% of the spaces are provided with EV charging points, alongside cabling to enable increased provision up to 25%.
- 10.82. 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 NO<sub>2</sub> objective is not exceeded and concentrations have gradually been reducing over the five-year period 2013 to 2017. The 1-hour NO<sub>2</sub> 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.
- 10.83. 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.
- 10.84. 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.
- 10.85. 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 PM<sub>10</sub> concentrations. However, through good site practice and the implementation of suitable mitigation measures (identified on the reviewed AQA), the effect of dust and PM<sub>10</sub> 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**

- 10.86. Policy NE15 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. Planning permission will be granted subject to soft landscaping, including tree planting, being undertaken whenever appropriate.
- 10.87. 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.
- 10.88. 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.
- 10.89. 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 Local Plan Policies CP1, CP11 and NE15.

### **Contamination**

- 10.90. 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 CS22 of the Core Strategy. 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**

- 10.91. 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; 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. The proposals would deliver 19,823sqm of dedicated Class B1 employment space on land falling within and on the edge of the Oxford Science Park, a key protected employment site within Oxford. The proposals are considered to be highly beneficial in economic terms and would provide within the region of 1200 new jobs. The principle of development would be in line with the employment policies and site specific policies relating to development on the Oxford Science Park, as identified within the existing and draft local development framework and would constitute sustainable economic development in line with the provisions of the NPPF.
- 11.4. The proposed buildings are considered to be of an appropriate design and the scale of the buildings, although large would be broadly commensurate with the surrounding built form on the Science Park site which generally comprises large office buildings. The scale of the buildings is considered to be broadly justified in line with the functional requirements for this type of office space. The siting, location and scale of the development is considered to safeguard the amenity of existing residents within close proximity to the site.
- 11.5. The application includes parking provision for 540 parking spaces, in addition to 28 disabled parking bays. Whilst this provision is relatively high, it is nevertheless in line with the Council's maximum parking standards and given the peripheral location of the site this is considered justifiable. The policy requirements relating to the Science Park site, in addition to the wider provisions of the Existing Local Plan; Core Strategy and Sites and Housing Plan specify the requirement to achieve a modal shift away from private car use, towards more sustainable means of transport such as walking, cycling and use of public transport. The proposals provide an appropriate level of cycle parking provision and include access improvements to walking and cycling routes within the Science Park and improvements to the adjacent Minchery Lane.
- 11.6. Public transport access to the site is poor at present and there would be a requirement to improve the frequency and range of bus links to the site. The applicant has confirmed that he is in agreement with the County Council's requested financial contribution of £400,000, which would be put towards the delivery of a new bus service within the Eastern Arc linking the site with East



Oxford and Headington. This contribution, which would be secured through a Section 106 legal agreement, would assist in achieving a modal shift in the uptake of public transport as a means of accessing the site. The proposed site layout would leave adequate space and is futureproofed to enable the potential delivery of a railway station to the north of the site should this come forward as anticipated as part of the reopening of the Cowley Branch Line.

- 11.7. For the reasons expressed within this report, it is recommended that the Committee resolve to grant planning permission for the development proposed subject to conditions and the satisfactory completion (under authority delegated to the Head of Planning Services) of a legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

## 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.

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 policies CP1 and CP8 of the Adopted Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016.

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.

The construction phase of development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

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. This should then be updated within 6 months of first occupation.

Reason: To promote sustainable modes of transport.

6. A Car Park Management Plan shall be submitted for consideration and 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.

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 line with the approved plan.

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

8. Prior to occupation details of a replacement vehicle restraint system along Public Right of Way 281/1/40 shall be submitted to and be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The agreed vehicle restraint system shall be implemented prior to first occupation of the buildings and retained thereafter.

Reason: To allow ease of access to the development site by sustainable modes of transport.

9. No development shall take place until a 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 Core Policy 23 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001- 2016

10. Prior to first occupation of the building's hereby approved, details of the Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure shall be submitted to and be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include the following provision:

- The amount of electric car charging points to be installed prior to first occupation should cover at least 10% of the amount of non-allocated permitted parking of the development.

- Appropriate cable provision should also be installed to increase provision up to 25% electric charging points for increased EV demand in future years.

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 CP23 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001- 2016 and future planning policy M4 and enable the provision of low emission vehicle infrastructure.

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 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 Policies CP1 and CP9 of the Oxford Local Plan.

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. 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 policies CP1, CP11 and NE16 of the Adopted Local Plan 2001-2016.

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 support of Adopted Local Plan Policies CP1,CP11 and NE15.

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 policies CP1, CP11 and NE16 of the Adopted Local Plan 2001-2016.

14. First occupation of the development shall not commence 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 and in consultation with the Environment Agency. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme. Any subsequent variations shall be agreed 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; Policy NE6 of the Oxford Local Plan and Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy.

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 (except privately owned domestic gardens), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and 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 agreed 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 policies CP9, CP19 and CP21 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001 – 2016.

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 the requirements of policy CP22 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016.

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 the requirements of policy CP22 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016.

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 the requirements of policy CP22 of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016.

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 CS18 of the Oxford Core Strategy.

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, 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 by Local Plan policy CS11 'Flooding' of the Oxford Core Strategy 2026 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 CP20 of the adopted Oxford Local Plan 2001 - 2016.

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.

Reason: The prevention of harm to species and habitats within and outside the site and enhancement of biodiversity in accordance with Core Policy CS12: Biodiversity of the Core Strategy for Oxford City.

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 Core Policy CS12: Biodiversity of the Core Strategy for Oxford City.

### **13. APPENDICES**

- **Appendix 1** – Site location plan
- **Appendix 2** – Letter to 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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