

<b>Application number:</b>	23/00708/RES		
<b>Decision due by</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> July 2023		
<b>Extension of time</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> September 2023		
<b>Proposal</b>	Reserved matters approval of scale, layout, landscaping and appearance for the erection of commercial building, erection freestanding service pavilion for storage of associated waste and gas bottle storage and provision of landscaping (Plot B). The original application was EIA development. (Amended plans)		
<b>Site address</b>	Oxford North Northern Gateway Land Adjacent A44 A40 A34 And Wolvercote Roundabout, A40 Section From Cherwell District Council Boundary To Wolvercote Roundabout, Oxford, Oxfordshire – see <b>Appendix 1</b> for site plan		
<b>Ward</b>	Wolvercote Ward		
<b>Case officer</b>	Michael Kemp		
<b>Agent:</b>	Rob Linnell	<b>Applicant:</b>	Oxford North Ventures GP LLP
<b>Reason at Committee</b>	The proposals are for major development.		

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## 1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1. The Oxford 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.

1.1.2. **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 issue the reserved matters approval.
- Respond to any comments received by Oxfordshire County Council (Lead Local Flood Authority) to resolve any concerns or objections and to finalise any recommended conditions relating to site drainage.

## **2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 2.1. The application proposes the development of a four storey life science building comprising 16,561sqm of flexible laboratory and office space, associated cycle storage, refuse stores and specialist waste and gas bottle stores. A total of 188 cycle storage spaces are proposed, 140 of which would be located within a detached pavilion building, sited to the west of the main building with 36 spaces proposed externally within the plot, alongside 8 larger cycle parking spaces. No car parking is proposed within this planning application. The building is based around two converged rectilinear blocks, which respond to the site geometry, this consists of two wings which extend along the A40 frontage to the south and the adjacent secondary road to the north. The building is one of several reserved matters applications submitted at a similar time under 'Phase 2' of the Oxford North development and is referred to as 'Plot B'.
- 2.2. Outline planning permission is in place on the site for 87,300 m<sup>2</sup> (GIA) of employment space (Use Class B1). The provision of 16,561sqm of flexible laboratory and office space would fall within the scope of the outline planning permission. The proposed use would be consistent with Policy E1 of the Oxford Local Plan which promotes the expansion of employment uses on existing sites and specifically Policy NG3 of the Northern Gateway Area Action, which permits specifically uses that would enhance the knowledge economy of Oxford, including life science uses.
- 2.3. The proposed design is of a high standard in terms of the elevational treatment, of the building, proposed use of materials and the responsiveness of the building to the site context and adjoining public realm and would comply with Policy DH1 of the Oxford Local Plan and Policy NG7 of the Northern Gateway Area Action Plan. A small section of the building would extend above the heights parameter plan accompanying the hybrid application, however it is considered that this incursion above the height parameters would not have an adverse visual impact in short and longer range views and would not impact negatively on the openness of the green belt and how this is experienced within key views and there is considered to be no conflict with Policies DH2 and G3 of the Oxford Local Plan. The application is accompanied by an Energy Statement which includes adequate sustainable design measures and the incorporation of low carbon technology meeting the requirements of Policy RE1 of the Oxford Local Plan.
- 2.4. No car parking is proposed under this reserved matters application. It is proposed that parking for each of the plots proposed under Phase 2 of the development would be provided within a multi-storey car park. Proposals for parking have been submitted under reserved matters application 23/01592/RES which will be determined at a later date. The site wide masterplan for Oxford North included provision for parking within multi-storey car parks to serve multiple development plots as opposed to each plot benefitting from individual parking. A car parking strategy should be included as a planning condition setting out the location and phasing of car parking serving the building proposed under this reserved matters application as on plot parking is not proposed.
- 2.5. Cycle parking is proposed on plot which would exceed the requirements of Policy M5 of the Oxford Local Plan; however, this would be below requirements outlined

under Policy NG5 of the Northern Gateway Area Action Plan. Officers however consider that there is clear justification in this instance to depart from Policy NH4 of the NGAAP based on the objectively assessed existing and future demand for cycle parking which corresponds with the modal share of cyclists identified in applicants Travel Plan, even where accounting for a future increased modal share in those cycling to the site as a mode of travel.

- 2.6. The application is accompanied by an updated surface water drainage strategy, covering the site the subject of this reserved matters application, in addition to the other parcels of land forming Phase 2 of the development. The Phase 2 surface water drainage strategy is consistent with the consented surface water drainage strategy for the central parcel of the site. Oxfordshire County Council as Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) have submitted an objection based on the level of detail provided by the applicants, which included a request for further information to be provided. The applicants have submitted a revised drainage strategy in response to the LLFA's comments, which is currently subject of review by the LLFA. Delegated authority is therefore sought for officers to resolve any remaining technical matters relating to surface water drainage and to respond to any further comments submitted by the LLFA.
- 2.7. A biodiversity net gain strategy has been submitted covering Phase 2 of Oxford North, outlining target delivery of net gain proposed for each of the reserved matters applications submitted under Phase 2, which will contribute towards delivering net gain across the Oxford North site across the duration of the development in accordance with Policy G2 of the Oxford Local Plan and Policy GBS5 of the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.8. For the reasons outlined in the report, officers recommend that the application is approved subject to the planning conditions set out in section 12 of this report.

### **3. LEGAL AGREEMENT**

- 3.1. This application would not require a new legal agreement or any variation to the original agreement relating to planning application 18/02065/OUTFUL.

### **4. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)**

- 4.1. The original planning agreement was the subject of a detailed CIL agreement, no additional CIL would be payable based on the proposals submitted under this reserved matters application.

### **5. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

- 5.1. The application site comprises a 7319sqm section of the wider 26-hectare area Oxford North site. Planning approval was granted on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2021 for hybrid planning application 18/02065/OUTFUL. The description of development for the approved hybrid planning application is as follows:

*Hybrid planning application comprising: (i) Outline application (with all matters reserved save for "access"), for the erection of up to 87,300 m<sup>2</sup> (GIA) of employment space (Use Class B1), up to 550 m<sup>2</sup> (GIA) of community space (Use Class D1), up to 2,500 m<sup>2</sup> (GIA) of Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5 floorspace,*

*up to a 180 bedroom hotel (Use Class C1) and up to 480 residential units (Use Class C3), installation of an energy sharing loop, main vehicle access points from A40 and A44, link road between A40 and A44 through the site, pedestrian and cycle access points and routes, car and cycle parking, open space, landscaping and associated infrastructure works. Works to the A40 and A44 in the vicinity of the site. (ii) Full application for part of Phase 1A comprising 15,850 m2 (GIA) of employment space (Use Class B1), installation of an energy sharing loop, access junctions from the A40 and A44 (temporary junction design on A44), construction of a link road between the A40 and A44, open space, landscaping, temporary car parking (for limited period), installation of cycle parking (some temporary for limited period), foul and surface water drainage, pedestrian and cycle links (some temporary for limited period) along with associated infrastructure works. Works to the A40 and A44 in the vicinity of the site. (Amended plans and additional information received 19.06.2019)*

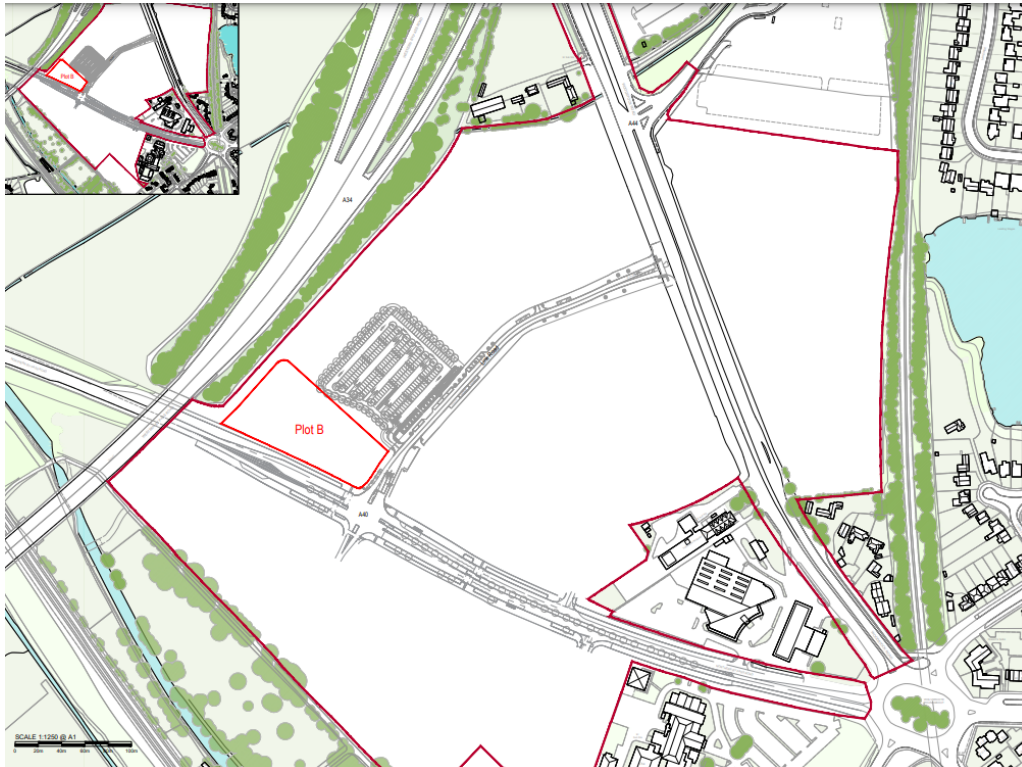
5.2. The application site to which planning application 18/02065/OUTFUL relates falls into three, fan-shaped parcels of land which run adjacent to the A44 and A40 trunk roads, converging at Wolvercote roundabout. The northern boundary of the site is formed by a raised section of the A34 road. The eastern boundary of the site is formed by a section of railway line. The south-western boundary is formed by Joe White's Lane bridleway (National Cycle Route 5) and the fields to the west that lead down to the Oxford canal and separate the site from much of the settlement of Wolvercote.

5.3. The masterplan for planning application 18/02065/OUTFUL refers to three parcels of land as the following:

- East: the parcel to the east of the A44, south of the Peartree Park and Ride and west of the railway line
- Central: the largest parcel, to the west of the A44 and to the north-east of the A40
- Canalside: the parcel to the south-west of the A40 and the north-east of Joe White's Lane

5.4. This application relates to development in the south west corner of the central parcel of the Oxford North site. The site consists of cleared land which has been levelled following a process of cut and fill permitted under planning permission 21/01053/RES which allowed for earthworks to form the development platforms for future buildings on the site. The application site lies to the north west of two employment buildings approved under the detailed element of the hybrid planning permission (Phase 1a). The site is adjacent to the A40 and newly constructed link road between the A40 and A44, which forms the primary street through the central parcel of the Oxford North site. A temporary car park has been created to the north east of the site. To the west of the site is a raised section of the A34. The application site extends close to the western edge of the Oxford North site, extending up to the far limit of the Oxford City Authority boundary, no part of the development site falls within the Cherwell District parameters.

5.5. The site of Plot B in relation to the Oxford North site and surrounding area is shown on the location plan below:



## 6. PROPOSAL

- 6.1. The application proposes a four-storey life science building comprising 16,561sqm of flexible laboratory and office space, alongside associated cycle storage, refuse stores and specialist waste and gas bottle stores. A total of 188 cycle storage spaces are proposed, 140 of which would be located within a detached pavilion building, sited to the west of the main building with 36 spaces proposed externally within the plot, alongside 8 larger cycle parking spaces. No car parking is proposed within this planning application, it is proposed that all parking to be provided for this plot, the buildings on the site that already benefit from planning and future buildings that are proposed under the next phase of development would be provided within a single multi-level car park. A separate reserved matters planning application has been submitted for the car park.
- 6.2. The building is based around two converged rectilinear blocks, which respond to the site geometry, this consists of two wings which extend along the A40 frontage to the south and the adjacent secondary road to the north. The main entrance faces a landscaped courtyard that is located in the north east corner of the site and faces the primary 'link' road through the Oxford North site. The alignment of the building creates a splay towards the A34 and western edge of the site. A landscaped area and pavilion building incorporating cycle parking, utilities and waste storage would be located to the west of the main building. The building layout features a central core and flexible lab/office space at all levels, with reception and collaborative working space at ground floor level. The top floor of the building includes 500sqm of workspace, which opens to an external terrace that faces the centre of the Oxford North site. The remainder of the upper floor contains plant housing. Angled flues are included within the building design. The external façade of the building would be a combination of brickwork cladding along

the lower sections of the building and metal cladding on the upper sections. A green roof is proposed above the third-floor sections of the building. The upper floor sections of roof would include a combination of photovoltaic panels and sedum roof.

6.3. Minor revisions have been made to the building since the submission of the original plans, which included the provision of 253sqm additional floorspace which would infill an area between south west and north east projecting wings of the building. The purpose of the revisions was primarily to provide a loading bay at ground floor level. Additional space for laboratory/office use would be provided above this space.

6.4. The building is one of several reserved matters applications submitted at a similar time under 'Phase 2' of the Oxford North development and is referred to as 'Plot B, the following applications form part of Phase 2 of the Oxford North development and are presently under consideration:

- 23/00707/RES – Plot A – Life Science Building (11,065sqm)
- 23/01412/RES – Plot C – Life Science Building (15,290sqm)
- 23/01509/RES – Provision of new park, public open space, access road, landscaping, and public realm, including revisions to the previously consented area of public open space.
- 23/01562/RES and 23/01569/RES – Provision of landscaping and access roads to the north and south of the site, including cycle parking and on-street operational car parking and service bays.
- 23/01592/RES – Erection of multi-storey car park
- 23/01648/RES – Erection of cycle storage pavilion

6.5. An infill building has also been approved between the two employment buildings consented under 'Phase 1A' of the detailed element of the hybrid planning permission. This is referred to as the Central Utilities Building (CUB).

6.6. A plan showing the proposed development in relation to the above-mentioned developments is included at Appendix 2.

## **7. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

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

<p>18/02065/OUTFUL - Hybrid planning application comprising: (i) Outline application (with all matters reserved save for "access"), for the erection of up to 87,300 sqm (GIA) of employment space (Use Class B1), up to 550 sqm (GIA) of community space (Use Class D1), up to 2,500 sqm (GIA) of Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5 floorspace, up to a 180 bedroom hotel (Use Class C1) and up to 480 residential units (Use Class C3), installation of an energy sharing loop, main vehicle access points from A40 and A44, link road between A40 and A44 through the site, pedestrian and cycle access points and routes, car and cycle parking, open space, landscaping and associated infrastructure works. Works to the A40 and A44 in the vicinity of the site.</p>
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(ii) Full application for part of Phase 1A comprising 15,850 sqm (GIA) of employment space (Use Class B1), installation of an energy sharing loop, access junctions from the A40 and A44 (temporary junction design on A44), construction of a link road between the A40 and A44, open space, landscaping, temporary car parking (for limited period), installation of cycle parking (some temporary for limited period), foul and surface water drainage, pedestrian and cycle links (some temporary for limited period) along with associated infrastructure works. Works to the A40 and A44 in the vicinity of the site. (Amended plans and additional information received 19.06.2019). Permitted 23rd March 2021.

22/00081/NMA - Non-Material amendment to planning permission 22/00081/RES to allow change in surface materials and update to drainage strategy.. Permitted 6th December 2022.

22/03042/RES - Erection of commercial building (revised design of approved Red Hall) and immediate hard landscaping.. Permitted 31st March 2023.

18/02065/NMA2 - Amendments to the extent of land covered by the detailed and outline elements of hybrid planning permission 18/02065/OUTFUL and reserved matters approvals related to this consent.. Permitted 31st March 2023.

18/02065/NMA3 - Non-material amendment to planning permission 18/02065/OUTFUL to allow the removal of the area of the central landscaping and the removal of the temporary car park. Removal of a central parcel of land located between buildings 1 and 2, along with minor amendments to the external elevations of Buildings 1 and 2 and minor amendments to the footpath and lay by to spaces along the link road.. Permitted 27th July 2023.

23/00707/RES - Reserved matters approval of scale, layout, landscaping and appearance for the erection of commercial building, erection freestanding service pavilion for storage of associated waste and gas bottle storage and provision of landscaping (Plot A). The original application was EIA development.. Pending consideration.

23/00708/RES - Reserved matters approval of scale, layout, landscaping and appearance for the erection of commercial building, erection freestanding service pavilion for storage of associated waste and gas bottle storage and provision of landscaping (Plot B). The original application was EIA development. (Amended plans). Pending consideration.

23/01191/FUL - Provision of temporary car parking and cycle storage. Associated alterations to landscaping (Retrospective). Permitted 28th July 2023.

23/01224/RES - Reserved matters approval of scale, layout, landscaping and appearance for the erection of a utilities building located between buildings 1 and 2. The original application was EIA development.. Permitted 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2023.

23/01412/RES - Reserved matters for the approval of scale, layout, landscaping and appearance for the erection of commercial building, erection freestanding

service pavilion for storage of associated waste and gas bottle storage and provision of landscaping (Plot C). The original application was EIA development.. Pending consideration.

23/01509/RES - Reserved matters approval of scale, layout, landscaping and appearance for the central landscaping area to include provision of a pond, woodland area and play area. The original application was EIA development.. Pending consideration.

23/01562/RES - Reserved matters approval of scale, layout, landscaping and appearance for the provision of the southern roads and spurs to adjacent plots and connection to the link road including pavements, street tree landscaping and sustainable drainage features. The original application was EIA development. Pending consideration.

23/01569/RES - Reserved matters approval of scale, layout, landscaping and appearance for the provision of the northern loop road and spurs to adjacent plots including pavements, street tree landscaping and sustainable drainage features. The original application was EIA development.. Pending consideration.

23/01592/RES - Reserved matters approval of scale, layout, landscaping and appearance for the multi-storey split decked car park including immediate landscaping. The original application was EIA development.. Pending consideration.

## 8. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

8.1. The following policies are relevant to the application:

Topic	National Planning Policy Framework	Local Plan	Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan:	Northern Gateway AAP
Design	126-136	DH1 - High quality design and placemaking DH2 - Views and building heights DH7 - External servicing features and stores		NG7 – Design and Amenity
Conservation/ Heritage	189-208	DH3 - Designated heritage assets DH4 - Archaeological remains		
Commercial	81-83	E1 - Employment sites - intensify of uses	COS1 – Employment Use	



<b>Natural environment</b>	174-182	G2 - Protection of biodiversity geo-diversity G3 - Green Belt G7 - Protection of existing Green Infrastructure	GBS5 – Biodiversity	NG8 – Oxford Meadows SAC
<b>Transport</b>	104-113	M1 - Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport M2 - Assessing and managing development M3 - Motor vehicle parking M4 - Provision of electric charging points M5 - Bicycle Parking	CSH2 – EV charging Points CSH3 – Safe Access Routes CSH4 – Travel Plans	NG4 – Sustainable Travel NG5 – Highway Access NG6 – Car Parking
<b>Environmental</b>	119-125; 137-151; 153-169; 183-188	RE1 - Sustainable design and construction RE3 - Flood risk management RE4 - Sustainable and foul drainage, surface RE5 - Health, wellbeing, and Health Impact Assessment RE6 - Air Quality RE7 - Managing the impact of development RE8 - Noise and vibration RE9 - Land Quality	BES2 – Air Pollution BES3 – Noise Pollution BES4 – Drainage and Flooding	NG9 – Energy and Resources
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	7-11	S1 - Sustainable development S2 - Developer contributions V8 - Utilities		NG2 – Mix of Uses NG3 – Employment NG11 – Delivery of Infrastructure

## 9. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

9.1. Site notices were displayed around the application site on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2023 and an advertisement was published in the Oxford Times newspaper on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

9.2. Following receipt of revised plans, the application was re-advertised by site notice on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023 and an advertisement was published in the Oxford Times newspaper on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

9.3. The application was further re-advertised as a departure from the development plan by site notice on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2023 and an advertisement was published in the Oxford Times newspaper on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2023. Officers would make members aware that the expiry date for public comments based on the most recent consultation is the 18<sup>th</sup> September, which is after the publication of the report, but prior to the date of the planning committee. Any comments received after the date of the report publication will be afforded due consideration by officers and officers will update members verbally should any comments be received between publication of this report and the date of the committee.

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

### Oxfordshire County Council

- 9.4. The County Council initially objected to the planning application within their response dated 12th May 2023 as the proposed cycle parking was not in accordance with Policy NG4 of the Northern Gateway AAP and the proposals include the provision of double tier cycle parking.
- 9.5. Following the initial consultation, based on further information provided by the applicants, the County Council issued a revised response stating that the applicant has provided additional information regarding the number of jobs on site and the ability to reach target mode shares in the Framework Travel Plan.
- 9.6. If the AAP figures are not to be applied, then the Highway Authority would want to make sure that the targets set in the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) and forthcoming Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan could still be met as these documents supersede the North Oxford Transport Strategy (2014) on which the Framework Travel Plan targets for the site have been based.
- 9.7. The LTCP targets a reduction in car trips of approximately 50% by 2040 which would mean lowering the base mode share for car trips from 62% to 31% for the employment land use.
- 9.8. The current target mode share for cars set out in the Transport Assessment/Framework Travel Plan supporting the hybrid application is 49.6% which would need to be reduced by a further 18.6% to reach the LTCP target. Assuming this reduction is split equally between cycle and bus (there will likely be uptake of other modes at lower levels) then the required cycle mode share would be 23%.
- 9.9. Based on the number of person trips arriving at the site (from the TA) and a cycle mode share of 23% would require 171 spaces for Plot B which would be achieved with a very small amount of spare capacity. It should be noted that the LTCP targets are Countywide and so locations with good accessibility such as this would be expected to have a lower car mode share still in order to achieve this. The County Council also request that a condition requiring that two-tier racks shall be of a design that provides assisted lifting/lowering of the upper tier.

### Drainage

- 9.10. Request that further information is provided in respect of the following matters prior to determination:
- Details of private management company maintaining SuDS
  - Further detail to be provided on drainage drawings including Invert and cover levels to be shown for all infrastructure and SuDS. Pipe numbering and pipe gradients to be shown.
  - Applicants to clarify the flow control that will be implemented.
  - Provide surface water catchment plan.
  - Provide SuDS construction details drawing.

- Provide the ground investigation report that has been conducted.
- Calculations to be shown for each reserved matter application.

Thames Water Utilities Limited

9.11. Do not intend to comment.

Cherwell District Council

9.12. In respect of the submission the Council wishes to raise no comment to the submission as it considers that there are no new strategic cross-boundary issues raised by the submission to the administrative area of Cherwell District Council.

Natural England

9.13. Do not wish to comment.

Environment Agency

9.14. Do not wish to comment.

Historic England

9.15. Do not wish to comment.

Thames Valley Police

9.16. Do not wish to object, the following comments have been made:

- Recommend a condition requiring that an application is made for secure by design accreditation.
- Recommend a condition requiring the submission of a lighting plan.
- Cycle parking stores are too large and should be compartmentalised. Double lead doors should be replaced by single leaf doors and cycle storage covered by CCTV.
- Recommend a further Security Needs Assessment (SNA) is completed by a competent Suitably Qualified Security Specialist (SQSS). It is important that the cycle and gas storage building is provided with enhanced levels of security, with all doors are secured to a minimum LPS 1175 SR2.
- Vehicle mitigation measures such as bollards should be provided around the entire perimeter where it abuts the road, this is particularly important on the North Eastern elevation where a long straight section of road leads directly to the envelope of the building. The service yard should have barriers or bollards installed to prevent unauthorised vehicular access alongside the service yard and pedestrian/cyclist circulation areas adjacent to the service building.
- It is unclear from plans how post deliveries will be managed outside of the building opening hours. The building should facilitate postal deliveries either via secure external post boxes certificated to DHF TS009, or via through-the-wall post boxes into a container also rated to protect against arson attacks.

- Lighting throughout the development should meet the general standards of BS5489-1:2020. Bollard lighting used in isolation is not an appropriate lighting method and should be avoided.
- Consider that the revisions to the proposed plans do not address the concerns referenced above.

### **Public representations**

9.17. No members of the public have commented on the application.

## **10. PLANNING MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

10.1. Officers consider the determining issues to be:

- Principle of development
- Design, visual and heritage impact
- Sustainability
- Neighbouring amenity
- Transport
- Drainage and flood risk
- Ecology

### **Principle of development**

#### Land Uses and Siting of Development

10.2. The application site benefits from a combination of detailed and outline planning permission for 87,300sqm of Class B1 floor space; 2500sqm of Class A floorspace; and 550sqm of Class D1 floorspace, as approved under the hybrid planning permission for Oxford North, this was in accordance with the version of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 in effect at the time that the application was assessed and presented to members of the planning committee, prior to the Order being amended in September 2020.

10.3. This planning application would provide 16,561sqm of floorspace falling under Class E (formerly Class B1). The quantum of Class E employment floorspace, in combination with already permitted employment floorspace and further employment floorspace proposed on Plots A and C would not exceed the maximum quantum of 87,300sqm of employment floorspace permitted under the original hybrid permission.

10.4. The hybrid permission is accompanied by a Land Use Parameter Plan, which outlines the permitted spatial distribution of the relevant land uses across the site area covered by the planning permission. The application site falls within two defined areas under the land uses parameter plan. Part of the application site is shown in amber, with red diagonal lines, indicating that Class B1 Employment (now Class E(g)); C3 Residential; C1 Hotel; D1 Non-residential institutions (now F1); and A1 to A5 Retail (now E (a, b and c)) would be appropriate. For the remainder of the

site, shown as red on the parameter plan, all these uses would be acceptable, apart from Class C3 residential use. The proposed life science use aligns with the permitted uses set out within the Land Uses Parameter plans and is acceptable.

10.5. The hybrid permission was accompanied by an illustrative masterplan, which was included in the list of approved plans accompanying the hybrid permission and is intended to guide elements of the site, including the siting of buildings, land uses and landscaping/public realm. The illustrative masterplan shows the provision of a building on this part of the site, albeit that this occupies a smaller footprint. A landscaped area, including tree planting was shown to the west of the building to provide a softer approach to the site from the A40 to the west as the site transitions from a rural to urban character. The landscaped area would be reduced from what was shown on the original masterplan, however openness would still be retained owing to the proposed building layout and landscape design. The siting of the proposed building is in substantive accordance with the approved Oxford North masterplan and is considered acceptable in principle.

10.6. Policy E1 of the Oxford Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted for the intensification, modernisation, and regeneration for employment purposes of any employment site, if it can be demonstrated that the development makes the best and most efficient use of land and does not cause unacceptable environmental impacts and effects. Oxford North is not specifically included as an employment site in the existing Local Plan, however there is extant planning permission for 87,300sqm of Class B1 floor space and construction has commenced on the employment buildings that would be provided as part of Phase 1A of the hybrid planning permission and it is relevant that Oxford North should be treated as an employment site in relation to Policy E1 of the Local Plan. Furthermore, the Northern Gateway Area Action Plan (NGAAP) remains part of the local development framework. Policy NG3 of the NGAPP states that planning permission will be supported for employment development where the intended uses directly relate to the knowledge economy of Oxford: science and technology, research, biotechnology, spin-off companies from the universities and hospitals or other intended uses that make a measurable contribution to these sectors. The proposed building, which is specifically designed for life science and laboratory uses would align with these principles.

10.7. Paragraph 81 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand, and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. Emphasis is placed under Paragraph 83 on making provision for clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative, or high technology industries. The provision of life science and research and development uses, as proposed within this planning application would fall into this category. The delivery of high-quality space for life science and research and development use on the site would meet local and national demand for this form of employment space, providing new jobs and contributing to local economic growth and aligns with Policy E1 of the Oxford Local Plan, Policy NG3 of the NGAPP and the NPPF, in particular Paragraphs 81 and 83.

10.8. An Environmental Statement (ES) was prepared as part of hybrid planning application 18/02065/OUTFUL, which covered in outline all development across the Oxford North site. This reserved matters application would constitute a 'subsequent application' under Regulation 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. As such, the likely significant effects of the proposed development need to be considered.

10.9. The proposals submitted under this reserved matters application do not deviate substantially from the parameters of the hybrid planning permission and the fundamental details outlined within the previously submitted Environmental Statement, in terms of the scope of development and overall scale and layout. Officers conclude that the development would not give rise to any new or different significant effects to those identified and assessed previously within the ES prepared under application 18/02065/OUTFUL.

## **Design. Visual and Heritage Impact**

### Design Approach

10.10. Policy DH1 of the Oxford Local Plan states that planning permission will only be granted for development of high-quality design that creates or enhances local distinctiveness.

10.11. Paragraph 126 of the NPPF states that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Paragraph 130 of the NPPF sets out that planning decisions should ensure that all developments:

- a) Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- b) Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- f) Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users<sup>49</sup>; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.*

10.12. Paragraph 134 of the NPPF also sets out that development should take into account the principles set out within the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code.

- 10.13. Policy NG7 of the Northern Gateway Area Action Plan states that planning applications will be required to demonstrate that new development has been designed with an understanding of the area's heritage, setting and views. Applications will be required to demonstrate how the Wolvercote with Godstow Conservation Area and how views of, into and out of the site have influenced proposals. Planning permission will only be granted for developments that demonstrate compliance with the Northern Gateway Design Code.
- 10.14. Site B, occupies a prominent position in the Oxford North site, occupying a key corner plot, where the primary link road through the site meets the A40. The plot occupies an extensive frontage along the A40 and the proposed building would be the first building visible on the site from the A40 when approaching the site from the west and would be visible from the raised section of the A34. As noted in the above section of this report, the development masterplan for Oxford North included a building in the position of proposed Plot B, albeit that this occupied a smaller footprint with more landscaping proposed to the west of the building than the design option. This was indicative, and the land uses parameter plan does not specify that any of the space on which the building would sit should be retained as a landscaped edge or buffer.
- 10.15. The building is based around two converged rectilinear blocks, which respond to the site geometry, this consists of two wings which extend along the A40 frontage to the south and the adjacent secondary road to the north. The layout and positioning of the building ensures that a degree of openness is retained when approaching the site from the west. A landscaped garden is proposed, which includes substantial planting, with level access for pedestrians and cyclists negotiating the change in levels between the building, the western entrance and the A40. A single storey pavilion building is also proposed, which would provide cycle parking, gas bottle stores, a substation and waste storage. The principle of housing cycle parking and storage, waste and other services in this detached building is considered acceptable. Whilst this increases the developed footprint of development on the site, it ensures that these uses would not need to be incorporated into the ground floor of the building thereby creating inactive frontages and reducing usable floorspace.
- 10.16. The proposed building layout features a central core and flexible lab/office space at all levels, with reception and collaborative working space at ground floor level. The main entrance faces a landscaped courtyard located in the north east corner of the site facing the primary 'link' road through the Oxford North site. The internal layout of the building provides active frontages along all elevations, including the A40 and adjoining service road to the north west of the building. The siting of the entrances, landscaping and internal layouts are responsive to the adjoining spaces and streets, in the current and emerging context of the Oxford North site.
- 10.17. The building would consist of three to four storeys of useable floorspace, with plant provided across much of the upper floor of the building, which would be screened by metal louvres. The external façade of the building would be a combination of brickwork cladding along the lower sections of the building and metal cladding on the upper sections. A green roof is proposed above the sections of the building where plant and servicing are not proposed. The upper floor

sections of roof would include a combination of photovoltaic panels and sedum roof. The top floor of the building includes 500sqm of workspace, which opens to an external terrace facing the centre of the Oxford North site. The remainder of the upper floor contains plant housing. Angled flues are included within the building design.

- 10.18. Minor revisions have been made to the building since the submission of the original plans, which included the provision of 253sqm additional floorspace which would infill an area between south west and north east projecting wings of the building. The purpose of the revisions was primarily to provide a loading bay at ground floor level. Additional space for laboratory/office uses would be provided above.
- 10.19. Officers would note that the design has been subject of detailed design review at the pre-application stage. The overall design approach was received positively by the design review panel and a copy of the report prepared by the panel is included at Appendix 3 of this report.
- 10.20. Officers consider that the proposed design is of a high standard in terms of the elevational treatment, use of materials and the responsiveness of the building to the site context and adjoining public realm and would comply with Policy DH1 of the Oxford Local Plan and NG7 of the NGAAP.
- 10.21. Officers note that Thames Valley Police have commented on the planning application. Whilst Thames Valley Police do not object to the development, they have commented on several aspects of the design and have requested two conditions relating to the requirement to provide a lighting plan and a requirement to obtain secure by design accreditation.
- 10.22. Condition 37 of the hybrid planning permission sets out the requirement that an application must be made to achieve secured by design accreditation for each phase or sub phase of the development. Confirmation that secured by design accreditation has been obtained is required prior to the first use of any development approved under a phase, or sub phase of development. Condition 38 of the hybrid permission requires the provision of a lighting strategy prior to the installation of external lighting within the application site. As the conditions on the hybrid permission are applicable to development that would be brought forward under any reserved matters applications, officers consider that it would not be necessary to duplicate these conditions as part of any reserved matters approval.
- 10.23. Other comments, including those relating to access and security measures are detailed design matters that would not typically be addressed at planning stage, particularly as the building tenants are not known at this time. An Estate Management Strategy is required under Condition 51 of the outline planning permission, whilst Condition 63 requires details of any CCTV and other physical security measures proposed in the public realm or on external elevations of the development. Officers note the request from TVP to provide bollards around the perimeter of the building as a means of preventing vehicles colliding with pedestrians. The County Council as Local Highways Authority have not noted this as a concern within their consultation response. Officers consider that this would not be a necessary measure due to a combination of low vehicle speeds



surrounding the site and other obstructions including hard and soft landscaping features.

- 10.24. Policy DH2 of the Oxford Local Plan sets parameters, where considering the height of new development within the city and provides guidance applicable to higher buildings within the city. In relation to the Oxford North site, the hybrid planning permission was accompanied by a building heights parameter plan, which formed part of the approved set of drawings accompanying the planning application. The purpose of the parameter plan is to set height limits across the site for subsequent reserved matters applications. The heights set out in the parameter plan have been tested as part of the LVIA and are accounted for in the assessment of the impact of the development in the Environmental Statement, where this relates to the landscape impact and impact on the setting of heritage assets. The height parameters are defined in metres as Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), which relates to height measured above mean sea level.
- 10.25. The height parameter plan has been used to inform the approach to the height and massing of the building, with the vast majority of the building falling within the AOD parameters. A 4.25 metre section of the western edge of the building sits above the 72 metre AOD height parameter. The applicants have submitted an LVIA, which includes a 3D rendered model of the proposed building to guide assessing the impact of the development in significant views. It is noted that in several of the views provided, the building is unlikely to be seen given the presence of existing landscape features, or buildings in the foreground that are under construction, or future development that is anticipated to be delivered on the Oxford North site.
- 10.26. Considered in the context of the scope of the outline permission and the anticipated visual impact of the Oxford North development as a whole, and in the context of the specific proposals for Plot B, the minor incursion above the AOD parameters would not have a significant impact in itself in landscape and visual terms, where assessed within the key views from the west and from Port Meadow. This part of the building, which consists of plant screening would not be particularly prominent or intrusive visually and would read as a logical continuation of the upper section of the building. The proposed flues would also encroach above the AOD parameters; however, this is specifically permitted under the parameter plan and the flues are appropriately designed and would not be harmful in visual terms. Notwithstanding the relatively minor incursion beyond the AOD parameter limit, officers consider that the scale of the building would be appropriate in visual terms. The impact of the building, where assessed in mid and longer-range views where the building would be visible would not be significantly harmful, particularly, where considered within the scope of what was deemed to be appropriate under the hybrid planning permission. Overall officers consider that the proposals would be acceptable where assessed against Policy DH2 of the Oxford Local Plan.
- 10.27. The application site was removed from the Oxford Green Belt prior to the adoption of the Northern Gateway Area Action Plan and no part of the proposed development lies within land falling within the Green Belt. Although no development is proposed within the Green Belt there is a requirement to consider whether the proposals would preserve the openness of the Green Belt in accordance with Paragraph 137 of the NPPF and Policy G3 of the Oxford Local

Plan, which is relevant given that the site is adjacent to land remaining within the Green Belt.

- 10.28. The impact of the proposals submitted under this reserved matters application on the openness of the Green Belt must however be considered in the context of the hybrid planning application, which outlines parameters for building heights, the likely quantum of development on the Central Site, as well as the site masterplan. Officers in their analysis of the landscape and visual impact of the hybrid proposals concluded that there would be an impact in visual terms, given the scale and height of development proposed on the site, in turn this would impact on the openness of the green belt in spatial and visual terms given the urbanising impact of what is a substantial edge of city urban development.
- 10.29. Likewise, the development proposed within this application would impact on the openness of the green belt in spatial and visual terms, given the scale and siting of the built form and the site's visual presence experienced from the surrounding land to the west which remains within the Green Belt. Nevertheless, it is considered that the development would not have a significantly greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than what is accounted for within the scope of the hybrid permission, accounting for the approved height parameters, whilst the siting of the built form and overall vision for this part of the site also remains consistent with the hybrid permission. It is considered that the proposals would accord with Policy G3 of the Oxford Local Plan or Paragraph 137 of the NPPF

#### Heritage Impact

- 10.30. The Wolvercote with Godstow Conservation Area extends to a point approximately 150 metres to the south east of the application site and the development would fall within the wider setting of the Conservation Area. The building also falls within the peripheral setting of the Oxford Canal Conservation Area that lies within Cherwell District to the west and south west of the site.
- 10.31. In line with Paragraph 199 of the NPPF consideration must be given to the impact of a proposed development on the significance of this designated heritage asset and great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
- 10.32. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 outlines that in the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any functions under or by virtue of any of the provisions mentioned, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.
- 10.33. The application site falls within the wider setting of the Grade II listed Manor Farm (26 Godstow Road a large former farmhouse originally dating to the 17<sup>th</sup> Century but which has been the subject of a number of later additions) as well as the Grade II listed Church Farmhouse, which was historically linked to surrounding agricultural land which includes the land which forms the site. Both buildings are located to the south of the Leonardo Royal Hotel (Formerly Jury's Inn) and are

surrounded by housing constructed in the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century which has greatly altered the original setting of the listed buildings. There are also two late 18<sup>th</sup> Century Grade II listed tilting canal bridges which are located to the south west and west of the site, these bridges provide a connection from Joe Whites Lane onto the Canal towpath.

- 10.34. Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) states that in considering applications for development which affect a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
- 10.35. Policy DH3 of the Oxford Local Plan specifies that planning permission will be granted for development that respects and draws inspiration from Oxford's unique historic environment (above and below ground), responding positively to the significance, character and distinctiveness of the heritage asset and locality. When considering development proposals affecting the significance of designated heritage assets (including Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas), great weight will be given to the conservation of that asset and to the setting of the asset where it contributes to that significance or appreciation of that significance).
- 10.36. The wider impact of the redevelopment of the land at Oxford North in respect of the Wolvercote with Godstow Conservation Area and the aforementioned listed buildings was considered in depth by officers at the time application 18/02065/OUTFUL was determined. This was informed by an Environmental Statement accompanying the hybrid planning application which included an assessment of the impact on the Conservation Area, the Grade II listed Manor Farm, Church Farmhouse; Grade II listed canal bridges, St Peter's Church and Port Meadow, which is a scheduled ancient monument. There was also an assessment of the impact of the development on the setting and significance of the Oxford Canal Conservation Area in Cherwell District, which concluded that there would be no harm to the setting and significance of this Conservation Area due to the site's peripheral setting in relation to the Conservation Area.
- 10.37. Officers' assessment of the hybrid application considered the relative harm to the setting and significance of the Wolvercote with Godstow Conservation Area, which was deemed to be a moderate level of less than substantial harm. This was as a result of an overtly urban development replacing surviving, historically agricultural land which currently provides a green gap and permits uninterrupted views from these assets to the rural hillside backdrop beyond the city to the north west and north-east. The introduction of buildings to the south-west of the A40 resulting in built development encroaching closer to the settlement of Wolvercote than at present which would harm the surviving character and appearance of a rural settlement. The impact of the development proposed under this reserved matters application would not result in harm to the setting of the Oxford Canal Conservation Area, given the site's peripheral location in relation to the Conservation Area and the impact of the proposed development is assessed to not be significantly greater than the scope of the development permitted under the hybrid permission.

- 10.38. In terms of the setting of the Grade II listed Manor Farm and Church Farmhouses it was considered that whilst the setting of the farmhouses had been eroded by residential development and non-residential development including the Leonardo Royal hotel, there would be further harm arising from the loss of agricultural land on the Oxford North site which forms part of the wider setting which contributes to the significance of these buildings, furthermore the approved development would also be of a significant scale. This harm to the setting of the Grade II listed buildings was identified as less than substantial and at the low end of this classification.
- 10.39. The identified harm to these designated heritage assets was balanced against the significant package of public benefits delivered by the proposed development, including the provision of 480 homes and significant economic benefits deriving from the provision of 87,300sqm of employment space. A conclusion was reached that the benefits arising from the development would outweigh the respective moderate and low level of less than substantial harm to the Wolvercote with Godstow Conservation Area and the Grade II listed Manor Farm and Church Farmhouse.
- 10.40. The proposals for an employment building are in substantial accordance with the parameters of the outline planning permission in terms of the scale and siting of the building, with the exception of the small section of the western corner of south west wing of the building which would exceed the height parameters, identified in the parameter plan accompanying the hybrid planning application. The Canalside housing site to the south of the A40 sits between the edge of the Conservation Area and the development site and the building is of a lower height than other buildings benefitting from planning permission and the permissible heights of other development plots allowed for within the height's parameter plan. The submitted LVIA indicates that Plot B is unlikely to be significantly prominent in visual terms where assessed in views from within the Wolvercote with Godstow Conservation Area. The building would be in views from Port Meadow and from the West into the Conservation Area and within more distant views, however the proposals are broadly within the scope of what was deemed to be appropriate under the hybrid permission and the additional volume of the building proposed above the parameter plan height would not have a significant impact in the assessed views and in the context of any of the identified heritage assets.
- 10.41. In the context of the development already approved on the Oxford North site, officers consider that there would be no additional harm to the setting of any surrounding listed buildings, or the setting of the Conservation Area as a result of the proposed development. There would still be a moderate level of less than substantial harm associated with the proposals, which was the case with the wider proposals approved under the hybrid permission.
- 10.42. In the context of Paragraph 202 of the NPPF, where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The proposals must also be considered in the context of the wider public benefits which would be delivered as part of the hybrid application, including the provision of 87,300sqm of employment space, transport, and connectivity improvements; and the provision of the further 480 dwellings, which are substantial in social and

economic terms. The specific proposals contained within this planning application would bring forward the delivery of 16,561sqm of high-quality laboratory and office accommodation, which would provide significant economic benefits, given the local and national value of life sciences industries and the proposals would facilitate delivery of new life science and research and development uses on the site.

10.43. Taking the public benefits of the Oxford North development as a whole; and the benefits of the development proposed within this reserved matters application, officers consider that the benefits would outweigh the less than substantial harm that would be caused to the setting and significance of the Wolvercote with Godstow Conservation Area and the setting of the Grade II listed Manor and Church Farmhouses.

10.44. As such it is considered that the development accords with Policy DH3 of the Oxford Local Plan and the NPPF. In coming to this conclusion great weight and due regard has been given to the requirements of Sections 66 and 72 of the of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

## **Sustainability**

10.45. Policy RE1 of the Oxford Local Plan requires that planning permission will only be granted for non-residential development proposals that meet BREEAM excellent standard (or recognised equivalent assessment methodology) in addition to the following reductions in carbon emissions which are also required. Planning permission will only be granted for development proposals of 1,000m<sup>2</sup> or more which achieve at least a 40% reduction in the carbon emissions compared with a 2013 Building Regulations (or future equivalent legislation) compliant base case.

10.46. The following measures have been incorporated into the building to reduce overall energy demand and carbon consumption:

- Air tightness and high standard of fabric performance.
- Mechanical ventilation with heat recovery.
- Low energy lighting.
- Incorporation of solar photovoltaics and air source heat pumps.

10.47. There is an existing energy sharing loop on the site, however analysis based on the proposals within this application (and the other buildings in Phase 2) suggests that an extension of the energy sharing loop would not be an appropriate option, given the high degree of cooling requirements for science buildings and the absence of the buildings requiring the rejected heat. Connection to the loop would compromise the efficiency of the existing consented energy sharing loop by altering its energy balance profile.

10.48. The Energy Statement sets out that the incorporation of the proposed measures to reduce overall energy demand and carbon consumption would achieve a 40% reduction in carbon emissions compared with a 2021 Building Regulations compliant base case. The pre-assessment current anticipated baseline score for BREEAM is 77.89%, equivalent to a BREEAM 'Excellent' rating. Subject to

compliance with the Energy Statement which will be the subject of a condition, the development would comply with Policy RE1 of the Oxford Local Plan.

## **Amenity Impact**

10.49. There are no existing residential uses adjoining, or in close proximity to the development site which would be significantly impacted by the development. There are future residential dwellings currently under construction to the south east of the development site on the Canalside part of the Oxford North site. This arrangement was accounted for in the indicative site masterplan and land use parameter plan approved under the hybrid application and the sites are separated by a dual carriageway section of the A40. The nearest dwellings would be immediately opposite the site, comprising an apartment block. There is significant separation between the two buildings and the development would not compromise the amenity of any future occupiers by reason of the scale of the building, overbearingness, loss of light or loss of privacy. The surrounding buildings on the central parcel, either under construction, or the subject of future planning applications would be under a similar use to the proposed building and there is mutual compatibility and no adverse implications in amenity terms. The proposals are therefore considered to comply with Policies RE7 and H14 of the Oxford Local Plan.

10.50. The nearest noise sensitive uses to the site would be the buildings presently under construction on the Canalside parcel of the Oxford North site, which are separated from the proposed building by a dual carriageway section of the A40. The position of a commercial building on this part of the site, including buildings that would be used for life science uses that would be typically dependent on plant and machinery was accounted for within the development masterplan approved under the hybrid planning application. Appropriate mitigation measures are required under conditions 60 and 61 of the hybrid planning permission to secure a scheme for protecting the proposed noise sensitive uses; and details of the proposed mechanical plant including anticipated sound attenuation measures. It is considered that subject to the submission of these details by those conditions, that the proposals would not conflict with Policy RE8 of the Oxford Local Plan and Policy BES3 of the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan.

## **Transport**

### Highways Impact and Car Parking

10.51. The transport impact of the Oxford North development was assessed under the hybrid planning application in the Transport Assessment and Environmental Statement accompanying this application. In terms of employment uses, the impact of a development of up to 87,300sqm was assessed as not having a severe cumulative residual impact on the highway network, or an unacceptable impact on highway safety or amenity. The proposed development would fall within the quantum of employment floorspace already assessed under the hybrid permission. The road access into the central site, including the link road and signal controlled junction access junction to the A40 has been completed.

- 10.52. The transport impact of the development was assessed against a low level of parking. No car parking is proposed as part of this reserved matters application. A temporary car park has been completed to the north of the development site, which was approved under the detailed element of the hybrid planning permission and provides 253 car parking spaces. This car park was intended to serve the Red Hall and the two employment buildings to the south east of the development site until such time that a permanent car park is provided on the site to serve the buildings provided in Phase 1a and the later phases of the development. An application has been submitted for another employment building on the site of the temporary car park (Plot C). The provision of a building on this site is in line with the site masterplan which indicated that a building would be located on the car park once this was no longer required. An application for a permanent decked car park has been submitted under reserved matters application 23/01592/RES. This application is under consideration and will be brought before members at a subsequent committee meeting.
- 10.53. The car park proposed under this application would provide 1120 car parking spaces. The Section 106 agreement accompanying the hybrid planning permission sets the target parking threshold for employment uses at Oxford North at a maximum of 20% below the Northern Gateway AAP standards (1 parking space per 50sqm), this equates to a target ratio of 1 space per 62sqm for employment uses. Where applying these ratios, the proposed car park would provide parking capacity for up to 70,000sqm of employment space. It is also proposed that 100 of the car parking spaces would be allocated for a future hotel use, which is permitted under the scope of the hybrid permission.
- 10.54. As it is proposed that car parking for all the buildings in Phase 2 and car parking for later phases of the development would be provided within a car park that would be provided through a separate reserved matters application, whether the application which has currently been received, or an alternative scheme, there is a need to phase the timing at which any parking is delivered and is made available for use. This is to promote the use of sustainable modes of travel, rather than private car use as the default mode of travel, which could occur if car parking were overprovided for buildings delivered under the earlier phases at Oxford North. It is likely that this would involve the closure of parts of the car park, until such time as individual plots are completed, with floors/sections opened in a phased manner. To ensure that adequate operational parking is provided it is considered that the applicants should submit to the Council a car parking strategy, showing the location, timing of delivery and management measures relating to the provision of car parking. Applying the maximum parking standards of 20% below the Northern Gateway AAP standards (1 space per 62.5sqm), based on a floor area of 16,561sqm a maximum of 264 parking spaces may be provided for the building. This will be controlled by condition to ensure compliance with the maximum parking standards set out in the Section 106 agreement accompanying the hybrid permission.
- 10.55. The developer is required under the Section 106 agreement accompanying the hybrid planning permission to submit a travel plan before the occupation of each commercial building, which relates to the workspace, this is to encourage occupiers to promote a model shift towards sustainable modes of travel, in accordance with Policy M1 of the Oxford Local Plan.

10.56. Servicing for the building would be provided to the rear of the building, with an area dedicated for servicing and deliveries, which would be between the cycle pavilion and the northern wing of the building. A service road would be provided to the west of the northern wing of the building. These proposed arrangements are considered to be acceptable.

### Cycle Parking

10.57. 188 cycle parking spaces are proposed. The majority of the cycle parking would be located in a detached secure pavilion building located to the west of the main building, four spaces for cargo bikes would also be provided within this building. It is intended that this would be long stay cycle parking for staff. 36 of the cycle parking spaces would be externally located, with the majority of these spaces provided close to the front entrance to the building and to the north adjoining the adjacent secondary access road. This would include 4 cargo bike spaces. A new direct, level access route would be provided onto the A40 cycle path from the pavilion building.

10.58. Policy NG4 of the Northern Gateway Area Action Plan states that cycle parking shall be provided to a minimum of 1 space per 50m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace. This is notably much higher than the requirements of Policy M5 of the Oxford Local Plan, which requires that cycle parking is provided at a minimum of 90m<sup>2</sup> or 1 space per 5 non-resident staff (Appendix 7.4). The minimum requirements within the Local Plan for cycle parking based on the proposed floor area of the building would be 184 spaces, whilst meeting the AAP standards would require 331 spaces to be provided.

10.59. The proposed cycle parking provision would be below the requirements of Policy NG4 of the Northern Gateway Area Action Plan and would therefore represent a departure from development plan policy and if approving the development, in accordance with Paragraph 12 of the NPPF, the Council must set out why material considerations justify a decision to depart from the provisions of the development plan. In this instance it is considered that the departure from Policy NG4 is justified

10.60. It was indicated within the hybrid planning application that the quantity of floorspace that would be provided within the hybrid permission would create approximately 4500 new jobs based on the provision of 87,300sqm of employment space, equating to an average employee ratio of approximately 1 employee per 19sm of floorspace. The reserved matters proposals for Plots A, B and C would provide 49% of the permitted employment floorspace provision for Oxford North, which would equate to a total of 2200 employees. Applying the 13.7% modal share for cycling indicated within the Travel Plan for Oxford North to Plots A, B and C would mean that approximately 300 staff would be cycling to work (not accounting for flexible and home working patterns). The application of the adopted Local Plan Policy M3 standards across the reserved matters applications for Plots A, B and C as proposed by the applicant would provide 479 cycle parking spaces, this would exceed the requirement for cycle parking identified within the Travel Plan.

10.61. Oxfordshire County Council note within their updated response that the Oxford North Framework Travel Plan was based upon the North Oxford Transport



Strategy (2014) and target provision of cycle parking would be expected to meet the targets set in the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan, which supersedes the North Oxford Transport Strategy (2014). The LTCP targets a reduction in car trips of approximately 50% by 2040 which would mean lowering the base mode share for car trips from 62% to 31% for the employment land use. The current target mode share for cars set out in the Transport Assessment/Framework Travel Plan supporting the hybrid application is 49.6% which would need to be reduced by a further 18.6% to reach the LTCP target. Assuming this reduction is split equally between cycle and bus (there will likely be uptake of other modes at lower levels) then the required cycle mode share would be 23%. The County Council note that the higher target modal share for cycling can be met based on the proposed provision of cycle parking.

10.62. It is important in line with Policy M1 of the Oxford Local Plan that adequate provision is made within the development to achieve a modal shift away from private car use, towards more sustainable modes of travel, including cycling. It is important therefore that the cycle parking provided is adequate to meet future demand, which Oxfordshire County Council have indicated would be the case. It is pertinent to consider the quantum of cycle parking objectively based on existing and future need/demand and there are consequential design implications associated with providing large quantities of cycle parking. Were the AAP requirement for cycle parking to be met in full, this would require the provision of additional cycle parking stores within either the landscaped spaces surrounding the building, or at ground floor level, resulting in the loss of active frontages along one, or more elevations of the building. There is a strong argument that providing cycle parking to the AAP standards outlined under Policy NG4 would represent overprovision based on existing and future need, as assessed at the present time and whilst spare capacity for cycle parking has benefits, the impact is not inconsequential in design terms. 42 cycle parking spaces have also been proposed adjacent to the northern loop road, which adjoins Plot B under reserved matters application 23/01569/RES. It should also be noted that should future demand increase for cycle parking, opportunity exists within the wider Oxford North site to provide additional cycle parking capacity.

10.63. Officers note the County Council's initial comments in relation to the provision of double stacked cycle parking and the useability of the upper tiered stores for some cyclists. The proposals however include the requirement to provide a large number of cycle parking spaces and a requirement to provide cycle parking as single tier spaces would negatively impact on the design of the building and surrounding spaces and would be an inefficient use of space. Officers support attaching a condition suggested by Oxfordshire County Council requiring two-tier racks to be of a design that provides assisted lifting/lowering of the upper tier of the cycle parking.

10.64. Officers consider that there is clear justification in this instance to depart from Policy NG4 of the NGAAP based on objectively assessed existing and future demand for cycle parking set out within the applicant's Travel Plan. The County Council have furthermore indicated that capacity for cycle parking exists that would meet the objectives of the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan, in terms of encouraging an increased modal share of persons cycling to work. Furthermore,

the development would comply fully with the adopted Local Plan cycle parking standards for commercial developments outlined under Policy M5.

### **Drainage/Flood Risk**

10.65. Policy RE3 of the Oxford Local Plan states that planning applications for development within Flood Zones 2, 3, on sites larger than 1 ha in Flood Zone 1 and, in areas identified as Critical Drainage Areas, must be accompanied by a Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) to align with National Policy. The FRA must be undertaken in accordance with up to date flood data, national and local guidance on flooding and consider flooding from all sources. The suitability of developments will be assessed according to the sequential approach and exceptions test as set out in Planning Practice Guidance. Planning permission will only be granted where the FRA demonstrates that:

- e) the proposed development will not increase flood risk on site or off site; and*
- f) safe access and egress in the event of a flood can be provided; and*
- g) details of the necessary mitigation measures to be implemented have been provided.*

10.66. Policy RE4 of the Oxford Local Plan states that all development proposals will be required to manage surface water through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) or techniques to limit run-off and reduce the existing rate of run-off on previously developed sites.

10.67. The above provisions are similarly accounted for under Policy BES4 of the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan.

10.68. A detailed surface water drainage scheme was approved for the Oxford North site under discharge of conditions application 18/02065/CND. Reserved matters approval (21/01053/RES) was granted for attenuation ponds on the central parcel of the Oxford North site, which form an integral part of the SuDS strategy for the central parcel of Oxford North. Works to form the ponds have recently been completed.

10.69. A drainage strategy has been submitted in support of this reserved matters application to demonstrate how the proposed development and the other buildings proposed under Phase 2 of the development would relate to the approved, overarching surface water drainage strategy for the Oxford North site. This is in line with Condition 44 of the hybrid planning permission which requires a surface water drainage strategy to be submitted for each phase of the development.

10.70. The surface water drainage strategy submitted as part of Phase 2 of the development also includes the provision of a permanently wet attenuation pond, which would be provided within the area adjoining the park and landscaped areas that would be provided under reserved matters application 23/01509/RES. This would complement the consented drainage strategy and would provide additional attenuation volume for the eastern part of the site, which would improve the previously consented drainage strategy. The underground storage that was included in the previously consented strategy would be retained. Swales are also

proposed to the side of the access roads submitted under reserved matters applications 23/01562/RES, 23/01509/RES, and 23/01569/RES.

- 10.71. The strategy to deal with surface water drainage would align with the principles outlined within the surface water drainage strategy for the central parcel of the Oxford North site as approved under discharge of conditions application 18/02065/CND and reserved matters approval 21/01053/RES. Specific sustainable drainage measures that would be incorporated within the section of the site containing Building B, include the provision of green and brown roofs and permeable paving, as well as raingardens within landscaped areas, which are appropriate measures.
- 10.72. Oxfordshire County Council as Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) have submitted an objection based on the level of detail provided by the applicants, which included a request for further information to be provided. The applicants have submitted a revised drainage strategy in response to the LLFA's comments, which is currently subject of review by the LLFA. Delegated authority is therefore sought for officers to resolve any remaining technical matters relating to surface water drainage and to respond to any further comments submitted by the LLFA, given that the submitted drainage strategy is in substantial accordance with the approved surface water drainage strategy for the Oxford North site.
- 10.73. In principle the drainage strategy is consistent with Policies RE3 and RE4 of the Oxford Local Plan and Policy BES4 of the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan.

## **Ecology**

- 10.74. It is a requirement of the planning permission that a minimum of 5% biodiversity net gain is delivered across the whole of the Oxford North site, this is accounting for the baseline condition of the site prior to the start of any works, this is set out within the accompanying Section 106 agreement and condition 52 of the hybrid permission. For clarity, this does not relate to a requirement to deliver 5% net gain as part of each application, moreover that 5% net gain should be delivered across the duration of the project preferably on site.
- 10.75. The application is accompanied by a biodiversity strategy which is related to all works proposed under Phase 2 of the Oxford North development, this has been submitted to meet the requirements set out under condition 52 of the hybrid permission.
- 10.76. In total it is proposed that 5.7 biodiversity units will be delivered within Phase 2 of the development. The reserved matters application for the proposed park and area of public open space will deliver the highest number of units (3.5 units). It is proposed that Plot B would result in a contribution of 1.14 biodiversity units, through a combination of providing ornamental planting, scrub woodland and green roofs. Ecological enhancement measures, namely the provision of 4 bat boxes/tubes and 5 house sparrow and 5 open fronted bird boxes are also proposed.
- 10.77. Officers are satisfied that the development proposals maximise the opportunity to deliver biodiversity net gain as a means of contributing towards the delivery of

5% biodiversity net gain across the Oxford North site. The proposals are considered to comply with Policy G2 of the Oxford Local Plan and Policy GBS5 of the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan.

## **11. CONCLUSION**

- 11.1. Having regards to 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. The NPPF recognises the need to take decisions in accordance with Section 38 (6) but also makes clear that it is a material consideration in the determination of any planning application (paragraph 2). The main aim of the NPPF is to deliver sustainable development, with paragraph 11 the key principle for achieving this aim. The NPPF also goes on to state that development plan policies should be given due weight depending on their consistency with the aims and objectives of the Framework. The relevant development plan policies are considered to be consistent with the NPPF.
- 11.3. Therefore, in conclusion it would be necessary to consider the degree to which the proposal complies with the policies of the development plan as a whole and whether there are any material considerations, such as the NPPF, which are inconsistent with the result of the application of the development plan as a whole.
- 11.4. The proposed design is of a high standard in terms of the elevational treatment, proposed use of materials and the responsiveness of the building to the site context and adjoining public realm and would comply with Policy DH1 of the Oxford Local Plan and Policy NG7 of the Northern Gateway Area Action Plan. A small section of the building would extend above the heights parameter plan accompanying the hybrid application, however it is considered that this would not have an adverse visual impact, in short and longer range views and would not impact negatively the openness of the green belt and how this is experienced within key views including from the west of the site and there is considered to be no conflict with Policies DH2 and G3 of the Oxford Local Plan. The application is accompanied by an Energy Statement which includes sustainable design measures, meeting the requirements of Policy RE1 of the Oxford Local Plan.
- 11.5. No car parking is proposed under this reserved matters application. It is proposed that parking for each of the plots proposed under Phase 2 of the development would be provided within a multi-storey car park. Proposals for parking have been submitted under reserved matters application 23/01592/RES which will be determined at a later date. The site wide masterplan for Oxford North included provision for parking within multi-storey car parks to serve multiple development plots as opposed to each plot benefitting from individual parking. A car parking strategy should be included as a planning condition setting out the location and phasing of car parking serving the building proposed under this reserved matters application as on plot parking is not proposed.

- 11.6. Cycle parking is proposed on plot which would exceed the requirements of Policy M5 of the Oxford Local Plan; however, this would be below requirements outlined under Policy NG5 of the Northern Gateway Area Action Plan. Officers however consider that there is clear justification in this instance to depart from Policy NH4 of the NGAAP based on the objectively assessed existing and future demand for cycle parking which corresponds with the modal share of cyclists identified in the applicant's Travel Plan, even where accounting for a future increase modal in the modal share of those cycling to the site as a mode of travel.
- 11.7. The application is accompanied by an updated surface water drainage strategy, covering the site the subject of this reserved matters application, in addition to the other parcels of land forming Phase 2 of the development. The Phase 2 surface water drainage strategy is consistent with the consented surface water drainage strategy for the central parcel of the site. Oxfordshire County Council as Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) have submitted an objection based on the level of detail provided by the applicants, which included a request for further information to be provided. The applicants have submitted a revised drainage strategy in response to the LLFA's comments, which is currently subject of review by the LLFA. Delegated authority is therefore sought for officers to resolve any remaining technical matters relating to surface water drainage and to respond to any further comments submitted by the LLFA.
- 11.8. A biodiversity net gain strategy has been submitted covering Phase 2 of Oxford North, outlining target delivery of net gain proposed for each of the reserved matters applications submitted under Phase 2, which will contribute towards delivering net gain across the Oxford North site across the duration of the development in accordance with Policy G2 of the Oxford Local Plan and Policy GBS5 of the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan.
- 11.9. It is recommended that the Committee resolve to grant planning permission for the development proposed subject to the conditions set out in section 12 of this report..

## **12. CONDITIONS**

### Approved Plans

1. 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.

### Material Samples

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

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

#### Energy Statement Compliance

3. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations outlined in the submitted Plot B Energy Strategy – Phase 1A modifications and Phase 2 proposals prepared by Hoare Lea reference REP-2324753-SS-05-20230221-ONPH2B Rev 03.

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

#### Biodiversity Net Gain and Enhancements

4. The ecological enhancements and biodiversity net gain provided by this phase of development shall be delivered in accordance with the details contained in 'Discharge of Condition 52 for Reserved Matters Applications Central Landscape, Development Plots A, B and C and Central External Works North and South produced by BSG Ecology V3 dated 16<sup>th</sup> August 2023 as submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination. The approved scheme shall be implemented in full prior to first occupation of the development and the enhancement measures shall be retained thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of the NPPF, The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Policy G2 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

#### Cycle Parking Provision

5. Prior to the first occupation of the building, details of the proposed cycle parking shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing. The approved cycle parking shall be installed prior to the first occupation of the building and shall be retained as cycle parking thereafter.

Reason: To ensure that the opportunities for sustainable travel modes are taken up in accordance with Policy M1 and M5 of the Oxford Local Plan and Paragraph 110 of the NPPF.

#### Cycle Parking Design

6. Cycle parking provided by two-tier racks shall be of a design that provides assisted lifting/lowering of the upper tier unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the opportunities for sustainable travel modes are taken up in accordance with Policy M1 and M5 of the Oxford Local Plan and Paragraph 110 of the NPPF.

### Car Parking

7. Prior to the first occupation of the development, details of a car parking strategy to serve the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The car parking strategy shall outline the location where the car parking will be provided within the Oxford North Site and the timing and phasing of how the parking will be delivered. The number of parking spaces provided shall be no greater than a ratio of 1 parking space per 62.5sqm of employment floorspace as delivered under this reserved matters approval.

All car parking shall be provided and made available prior to the first occupation of the building hereby approved and shall be retained thereafter, unless previously agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure the phased delivery of car parking to serve the proposed development up to a maximum permitted level in the interests of highway safety and amenity and ensuring a modal shift to more sustainable modes of travel in accordance with Policies M1, M2 and M3 of the Oxford Local Plan and Policy NG6 of the Northern Gateway Area Action Plan.

### Landscaping

8. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the landscaping proposals submitted alongside this application. The landscaping shall be carried out no later than the first planting season after first occupation or first use of the development hereby approved unless otherwise agreed in writing beforehand by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with policies G7, G8 and DH1 of the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036.

### Tree Planting Pits

9. Details of tree pit designs for each of the public realm tree planting types specified in approved landscaping plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing prior to the commencement of landscaping works.

The landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed beforehand in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure newly planted trees are established, to provide visual interest in accordance with policies G7, G8 and DH1 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

### **13. APPENDICES**

- **Appendix 1** – Site location plan
- **Appendix 2** – Phase 2 Development Plan
- **Appendix 3** – ODRP Report

### **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 reserved matters approval, officers consider that the proposal will not undermine crime prevention or the promotion of community.