

Oxford City Planning Committee

24th February 2026

Application number: 25/01053/FUL
Decision due by 21st August 2025
Extension of time 17th March 2026

Proposal Erection of a rooftop extension to create an additional floor and roof plant area with balcony, to enable research and development and office use with ancillary facilities (Use class E). Relocation of building entrance to the southern elevation and insertion of a colonnade. Alterations to fenestration, insertion of louvres and cladding. Installation of a goods lift to the northern elevation. Provision of external plant compounds and enclosures. Alterations to landscaping and associated infrastructure, provision of bin and cycle storage. (Amended description).

Site address Oxfam, 2700 John Smith Drive, Oxford, Oxfordshire – see **Appendix 1** for site plan

Ward Temple Cowley Ward

Case officer Nia Baldwin

Agent: Miss Francesca Opoku-Gyamfi **Applicant:** N/A

Reason at Committee Major development

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1. Oxford City 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; and subject to:

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

1.1.2. **agree to delegate authority** to the Director of Planning and Regulation to:

- finalise the recommended conditions as set out in this report including such refinements, amendments, additions and/or deletions as the Director of

Planning and Regulation considers reasonably necessary; and

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

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1. This report considers the proposed erection of a rooftop extension to create an additional floor and roof plant area with balcony, to enable research and development and office use with ancillary facilities (Use Class E) at 2700 John Smith Drive. Permission is also sought for the relocation of the building entrance to the southern elevation and insertion of a colonnade alongside alterations to the fenestration, the insertion of louvres and cladding, installation of a goods lift to the northern elevation, the provision of external plant compounds and enclosures, as well as alterations to landscaping and associated infrastructure, and the provision of bin and cycle storage.
- 2.2. The application site comprises of a large three storey building on the Oxford Business Park which is located in the south of Oxford in the Temple Cowley area. The site is accessed from John Smith Drive which links to Garsington Road and is situated to the west of the Eastern By-Pass. The application site has a central position within the Business Park with the closest residential dwellings being located to the south and west approximately over 200m away from the site.
- 2.3. Officers consider that the proposed development would respond appropriately to the existing and emerging site context and would result in a high-quality scheme whilst reusing the existing building. The sustainably led design and approach to the redevelopment of the site would include enhanced pedestrian connectivity and legibility on the site and wider Business Park, along with a reduction in car parking, increase in bicycle parking provision, and increased tree canopy cover. There would be no detrimental impacts arising from the scheme in relation to residential amenity, drainage, biodiversity, highways safety, health and safety, air quality, land quality, and utilities.
- 2.4. Subject to conditions and a Section 106 legal agreement, the development accords with the relevant Policies of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 and the NPPF.

3. LEGAL AGREEMENT

3.1. This application is subject to a legal agreement to secure:

- £58,911 contribution towards Eastern Arc public transport services.
- £94,398 contribution towards Cowley Branch Line public transport

infrastructure.

- £3,347 contribution towards travel plan monitoring.
- S278 agreement to provide a controlled crossing (zebra crossing or signalised crossing) over Barns Road
- Removal of 24 car parking spaces once the Cowley Branch Line passenger service is in operation.
- £3,222 contribution towards biodiversity net gain monitoring
- Onsite delivery of biodiversity net gain

4. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

4.1. The proposal is liable for CIL; an amount of £89,886.94.

5. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

5.1. The application site comprises of a three-storey building with associated car parking on the Oxford Business Park. The site is located on the western side of John Smith Drive with Plot 5000 to the north, Plot 2600 to the south, and Plot 5700 (Spires House) and Plot 5520 to the west. The Oxford Business Park is located to the north-west of the Eastern By-Pass Road and is located to the south-east of Cowley District Centre.

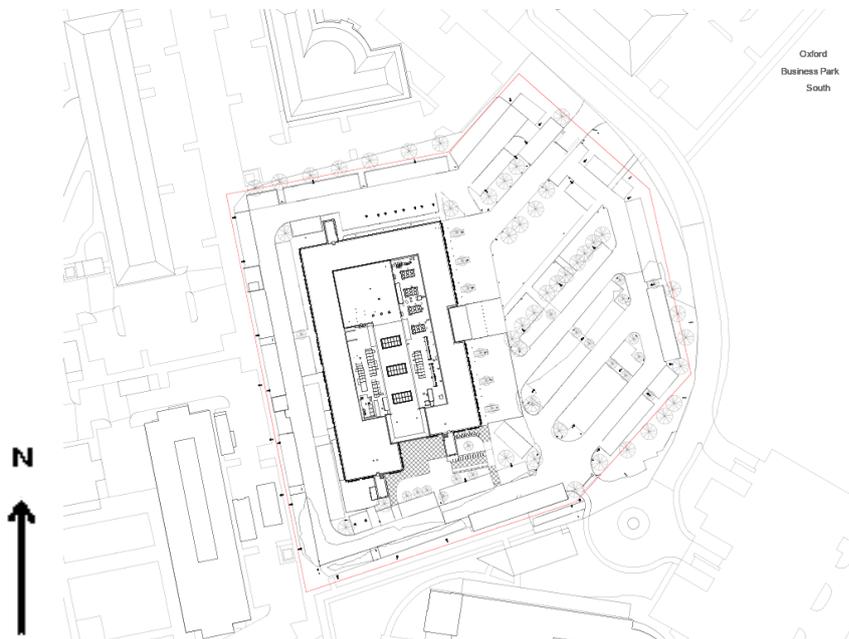
5.2. The existing building on site is in use as an office and has a lawful use under Use Class E of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). The three storey office building has a plant room on its roof and within its extensive parking grounds there is existing bicycle storage facilities as well as plant.

5.3. Vehicle access to the site is via two entrances on John Smith Drive; one from the roundabout to the south of the plot and one via a junction to the east of the plot. Pedestrians can access the site via a footpath to the east on John Smith Drive, and via a path to the south of the site. To the south of the plot there is shared cycle route and footpath which runs across the whole of the southern boundary and provides access further south to the tunnel underneath the Eastern By-Pass Road, as well as to the west linking up with John Smith Drive and plots to the south of the Business Park.

5.4. To the south of the application site beyond the Eastern By-Pass lies the Cowley Branch Line which is to be opened up for passenger services linking to Oxford Station. One of the two stations proposed to open is located to the south of the Oxford Business Park. In anticipation of this new station improvements are proposed on the Business Park to the existing cycle routes and footpaths. This includes the provision of the 'Connector' which is a cycle route and footpath running from the north of John Smith Drive down to the south of the Business Park where it meets the Eastern By-Pass. Under application reference 24/01302/FUL at 5000 John Smith Drive which is the plot to the north of the application site, planning permission has been granted for the Connector to run

alongside the western boundary of Plot 5000 as well as approximately half of the western boundary of the application site at its northern section.

5.5. See site plan below:



6. PROPOSAL

- 6.1. The application proposes the erection of a rooftop extension to create an additional floor and roof plant area with balcony, to enable research and development and office use with ancillary facilities (Use Class E). Permission is also sought for the relocation of the building entrance to the southern elevation and insertion of a colonnade. Permission is sought for alterations to the fenestration, the insertion of louvres and cladding, installation of a goods lift to the northern elevation, the provision of external plant compounds and enclosures, as well as alterations to landscaping and associated infrastructure, and the provision of bin and cycle storage.
- 6.2. An additional storey is proposed on the building which would span the full footprint of the existing building; including the staircases which sit on the north and south ends of the building. Above this a roof top plant enclosure is proposed centrally on the building, with photovoltaic panels also proposed on the roof. The additional storey would measure approximately 5.3m in height and the plant enclosure would extend for a further approximately 2.6m in height.
- 6.3. The roof top extension would be finished in a brushed bronze metal cladding, and the windows would be finished in a dark grey powder coated aluminium with louvred panels at the top. The extension would have a brushed bronze powder coated aluminium coping and on the western side of the extension there would be a balcony which would have a metal balustrade with glazed infill. The roof top plant would be enclosed by a louvred plant screen and there would be a fixed perimeter handrail.

- 6.4. The existing staircases on the north and south ends of the building would be overclad with metal cladding and perforated metal panels which would match the finish proposed to the new storey on the top of the building. On the north end of the building an extension is proposed alongside the existing staircase to accommodate a goods lift. This would match the existing depth of the staircase and would span for approximately 5.8m in width. The goods lift extension would also be finished in metal cladding to match the staircase.
- 6.5. The existing entrance to the building would be relocated from the east façade to the south, and above this a perforated metal panel would hang in front of the existing glazing on the upper floors. A perforated metal panel would also hang in front of the central glazing on the east façade on the upper floors. Outside of the new south entrance a covered colonnade finished in galvanised steel is proposed which would span approximately 3m in width, 51.2m in length, and would have a flat roof with a height of approximately 3.2m.
- 6.6. The existing glazing on the building would be replaced with a high performance double glazing, and the existing cladding would be cleaned and retained with the brise soleil also proposed to be refitted on the building after window replacement.
- 6.7. Outside the south of the building some of the existing parking spaces would be removed to accommodate a new arrival 'plaza' with improved public realm. This would consist of the colonnade as well as an outdoor seating courtyard, recreational lawn, visitor cycle parking, and additional trees and landscaping.
- 6.8. A new pedestrian access point is proposed to the west of the building to join up to the Connector, and covered cycle storage is proposed along the western boundary. The stores would be flat roofed timber clad structures with a height of approximately 3m, depth of approximately 4.3m and a length of approximately 16.3m. The existing pedestrian access point to the south of the building would be widened and external improvements are proposed to the eastern section of the site including additional informal seating and outdoor meeting areas, as well as improvements to the hard and soft landscaping with additional wildflower planting. To the north west of the building it is also proposed to erect external stores and enclosures along the boundaries. These would accommodate bin storage, a secure store, a generator and condensers. The stores would be finished in timber cladding with flat roofs at a height of approximately 3m. The condenser enclosure would measure approximately 10.3m wide with a depth of approximately 3.7m; the generator enclosure approximately 4.7m deep and 14.8m wide; the bin store approximately 4.6m deep and 14.3m wide; and the secure store approximately 6.9m wide with a depth approximately 4.3m.

7. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

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

| |
|---|
| 91/01303/NO - Demolition of all buildings. Construction of buildings for B1 business use (125,023 square metres) & a hotel (10,451 square metres) incl. |
|---|

new roads, car parking, infrastructure & landscaping (Amended Plans) (Oxford Business Park, Garsington Road). Approved 27th November 1992.

93/00706/NR - Details of access and landscaping on Garsington Road and some internal site roads. Details of landscaping on Eastern By-pass (part reserved matters of outline approval NO/1303/91). Approved 2nd February 1994.

03/01620/RES - Three storey office building (9,293 sq m) plus plant room on roof (Class B1 Business Use) including 306 car parking spaces, parking for 135 bicycles, bin store, substation. Extension to business park estate access road and footpath/cycle path links to Garsington Road (Details of siting, design, access, external appearance and landscaping reserved as part of outline permission NO/01303/91.). Approved 6th November 2003.

05/00141/ADV - OXFAM: Proposed wall mounted entrance sign and two freestanding signs. Approved 24th March 2005.

12/01424/EXT - Extension to the outline planning permission 91/01303/NO for Class B1 business use, hotel, associated roads, car parking, infrastructure and landscaping. Approved 13th December 2012.

8. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

8.1. The following policies are relevant to the application:

| Topic | National Planning Policy Framework | Local Plan | Other planning documents | Emerging Local Plan |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|
| Design | 96-108, 124-130, 131-141 | DH1 - High quality design and placemaking DH2 - Views and building heights DH7 - External servicing features and stores RE2 - Efficient use of land | High Buildings TAN | HD1 - Principles of High-Quality Design HD2 - Making Efficient Use of Land HD6 - Views and Building Heights HD12 - Bin and Bike Stores and External Servicing Features S2 - High Quality Design |
| Conservation/Heritage | 202-221 | DH3 - Designated heritage assets | | HD3 - Designated Heritage Assets |

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|---------|--|-----------------------|---|
| Housing | 61-84 | H14 - Privacy, daylight, and sunlight | | |
| Commercial | 85-89 | E1 - Employment Sites | Employment Skills TAN | E1 - Employment Strategy E4 - Affordable Workspaces |
| Natural environment | 187-201 | RE3 - Flood risk management RE4 - Sustainable and foul drainage, surface and groundwater flow RE9 - Land quality G2 - Protection of biodiversity geo-diversity G7 - Protection of existing Green Infrastructure features G8 - New and enhanced Green and Blue Infrastructure Network Features | | G3 - Provision of New Green and Blue Features – Urban Greening Factor G4 - Delivering Mandatory Net Gains in Biodiversity G5 - Delivering Onsite Ecological Enhancements G6 - Protecting Oxford's Biodiversity Including the Ecological Network G7 - Flood Risk and Flood Risk Assessments (FRAS) G8 - Sustainable Drainage Systems R5 - Water Resources and Quality R6 - Soil Quality R7 - Land Contamination |
| Transport | 109-118 | 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 | Parking Standards SPD | C6 - Transport Assessments, Travel Plan and Service and Delivery Plans C7 - Cycle and Powered Two Wheelers Parking Design Standards C8 - Motor Vehicle Parking Design |

| | | | | Standards |
|----------------------|-----------------|--|----------------------|---|
| Environmental | 96-108, 124-130 | RE1 - Sustainable design and construction RE5 - Health, wellbeing, and Health Impact Assessments RE6 - Air quality RE7 - Managing the impact of development RE8 - Noise and vibration | Energy Statement TAN | G9 - Resilient Design and Construction R1 - Net Zero Buildings in Operation R2 - Embodied Carbon in Construction R3 - Retro-Fitting Existing Buildings R4 - Air Quality Assessment and Standards R8 - Amenity Impacts of Development HD7 - Health Impact Assessment HD8 - Privacy, Daylight and Sunlight |
| Miscellaneous | 7-14 | SP10 - Oxford Business Park V8 - Utilities S1 - Sustainable development | | I1 - Digital Infrastructure to Support New Development CBLAOF - Cowley Branch Line Area of Focus SPS2 - ARC Oxford S1 - Spatial Strategy and Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development S3 - Infrastructure Delivery in New Development S4 - Plan Viability |

8.2. The NPPF gives guidance on when weight can be attached to policies in emerging Local Plans. At paragraph 49 the NPPF states that local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);

- b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)

8.3. The emerging Oxford Local Plan 2045 commenced Regulation 19 consultation beginning 30th January 2026. The policies are a material consideration and align with the NPPF however, these policies have very limited weight at this stage of the process whereby objections to the policies are not yet fully known.

8.4. Other relevant documents:

- Town and Country Planning Act 1990
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- Planning Practice Guidance
- Historic England's Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2

9. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

9.1. Site notices were displayed around the application site on 3rd June 2025 and an advertisement was published in The Oxford Times newspaper on 5th June 2025.

Statutory and non-statutory consultees

9.2. Consultee comments are summarised as follows:

Oxfordshire County Council (Highways)

9.3. No objection, subject to contributions to the Cowley Branch Line, Eastern Arc services and travel plan monitoring, obligations to reduce car parking and provide a crossing on Barns Road, well as conditions.

Oxfordshire County Council (Lead Local Flood Authority)

9.4. No objection subject to conditions requiring further drainage information to be submitted relating to permeable paving.

Thames Water

9.5. No objection with regards to the sewer network, foul water sewerage nor surface water network.

Environment Agency

9.6. No objection, subject to conditions regarding a remediation strategy and piling/investigation boreholes.

Historic England

9.7. Do not wish to offer comments.

Designing Out Crime Officer

9.8. Objection; requested further information relating to floor plans, building security, parking, bin and cycle stores, vehicle mitigation, postal deliveries and lighting.

Public representations

9.9. No representations were received.

Officer response

9.10. Comments from the designing out crime officer are noted and Officers consider that additional information relating to security could be secured via condition to overcome these concerns. Floor plans for the third floor of the building have subsequently been provided following the receipt of these comments. These comments have been addressed in full within the health, wellbeing and safety section of this report.

10. PLANNING MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

10.1. Officers consider the determining issues to be:

- Principle of development
- Design
- Neighbouring amenity
- Highways, vehicle parking and bicycle storage
- Flooding and drainage
- Biodiversity
- Health, wellbeing and safety
- Air quality
- Sustainable design and construction
- Trees and landscaping
- Utilities
- Land quality

a. Principle of development

10.2. Policy S1 states that when considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will work proactively with applicants to find solutions jointly which mean that applications for sustainable development can be approved where possible, and to secure

development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

- 10.3. Policy E1 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.
- 10.4. The proposal would include the intensification and modernisation of an existing employment site. The proposal would be considered to make efficient use of the land; extending above the existing building to create a denser land use. This is subject to the intensification not causing any unacceptable environmental impacts and effects which is discussed within the relevant sections of this report.
- 10.5. The Oxford Business Park is a Category 1 employment site as confirmed within Appendix 2 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.
- 10.6. Policy E1 states that planning permission will not be granted for development that results in any loss of employment floorspace on Category 1 sites. It notes that no other non-employment uses will be permitted on Category 1 sites except:
- a) residential development for staff linked to the employer (where this is permitted under Policy H3); or
 - b) other complementary uses that support the successful economic function of the site.
 - c) Start-up or incubator businesses will also be supported, if it can be demonstrated that they will not cause any negative impact on the main economic function of the site.
- 10.7. The proposal would not result in any loss of employment floorspace and would retain its existing use, and as such would be compliant with Policy E1.
- 10.8. Oxford Business Park site allocation Policy SP10 states that planning permission will be granted for E(g) (formerly B1 and B2) employment uses at Oxford Business Park and that other complementary uses will be considered on their merits.
- 10.9. Policy SP10 also states that opportunities should be sought to enhance and promote more sustainable travel modes to the business park.
- 10.10. No change of use is proposed as part of this application and the proposal would include improved bicycle storage which would help promote more sustainable travel modes. In addition, a new entrance to the site is proposed along the western boundary where the 'Connector' is proposed to come forward. The Connector is an enhancement of and extension to the existing cycle and pedestrian link from the southern boundary of the Business Park to the Oxford Retail Park; providing a gateway from the future Cowley Branch Line station. Phase 1 of the Connector runs approximately halfway along the western

boundary of the site, and it is anticipated that Phase 2 would extend across the full length of the western boundary. Officers also note that the bicycle storage is proposed to be located to the west of the site which would relate well to the location of the Connector too.

- 10.11. Policy RE2 states that planning permission will only be granted where development proposals make efficient use of land.
- 10.12. The proposal would seek to utilise the existing building and extend above to make efficient use of land and as such would be compliant with Policy RE2.
- 10.13. As such the proposals accord with Policies S1, SP10, E1 and RE2 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

b. Design, views and impact upon heritage assets

10.14. Policy DH1 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 states that planning permission will only be granted for development of high quality design that creates or enhances local distinctiveness, and where proposals are designed to meet the key design objectives and principles for delivering high quality development as set out in Appendix 6.1.

10.15. Policy DH2 states that planning permission will be granted for developments of appropriate height or massing, as demonstrated by the following criteria, all of which should be met:

a) design choices regarding height and massing have a clear design rationale and the impacts will be positive; and

b) any design choice to design buildings to a height that would impact on character should be fully explained, and regard should be had to the guidance on design of higher buildings set out in the High Buildings Study TAN. In particular, the impacts in terms of the four visual tests of obstruction, impact on the skyline, competition and change of character should be explained; and

c) it should be demonstrated how proposals have been designed to have a positive impact through their massing, orientation, the relation of the building to the street, and the potential impact on important views including both into the historic skyline and out towards Oxford's green setting.

10.15.1. Policy DH3 states that planning permission or listed building consent 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.

10.16. Policy DH7 states that bike and bin stores and external servicing features should be considered from the start of the design process. Planning permission will be granted where it can be demonstrated that:

a) bin and bike storage is provided in a way that does not detract from the overall design of the scheme or the surrounding area, whilst meeting

practical needs including the provision of electric charging points where appropriate; and

- b) external servicing features have been designed as an integrated part of the overall design, or are positioned to minimise their impact; and
- c) materials used for detailed elements such as for stores or rainwater goods are of high quality so they enhance the overall design and will not degrade in a way that detracts from the overall design

10.17. Policy RE2 states that planning permission will only be granted where development proposals make efficient use of land. It also notes that development proposals must make best use of site capacity, in a manner compatible with the site itself, the surrounding area and broader considerations of the needs of Oxford, as well as addressing the following criteria:

- a) the density must be appropriate for the use proposed;
- b) the scale of development, including building heights and massing, should conform to other policies in the plan. It is expected that sites at transportation hubs and within the city and district centres in particular will be capable of accommodating development at an increased scale and density, although this will also be encouraged in all other appropriate locations where the impact of so doing is shown to be acceptable;
- c) opportunities for developing at the maximum appropriate density must be fully explored; and
- d) built form and site layout must be appropriate for the capacity of the site

10.18. Policy M1 states that planning permission will only be granted for development that minimises the need to travel and is laid out and designed in a way that prioritises access by walking, cycling and public transport.

10.19. Paragraph 212 of the NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (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.

10.20. Paragraph 215 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

10.21. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, which it is accepted is a higher duty.

- 10.22. The Business Park will see a significant change in the near future and the site is part of a new, emerging context, with neighbouring parcels Trinity House, Plots 2000, 4200, 5000 all achieving planning permission for redevelopment, with construction underway on Trinity House and Plot 4200.
- 10.23. A new north-south pedestrian route (the 'Connector') is proposed through the wider campus. This route will create more legible pedestrian movement through the campus and better connectivity between the individual plots, breaking down the traditional isolated spatial quality of business/retail park typologies. The application site is adjacent to the southern end of this proposed route.
- 10.24. The proposal looks to retain the existing building footprint and overall scale through adaptive reuse. Officers acknowledge that the reuse of the building limits the opportunity for a holistic reimagining of the site in response to both the existing context and the new emerging context of the wider campus. The reuse of the building however is applauded in regards of sustainability and embodied carbon. Officers consider that the proposals strike an appropriate balance between reusing the existing built form on the site whilst adapting the building so it responds to the emerging context of the Business Park.
- 10.25. It is considered that the roof top extension proposed would provide an appropriate visual transition from the original building at its lower levels to the new addition at the top level. Whilst the footprint of the extension would almost mirror the lower floors, the use of contrasting materials between the new floor and the lower level coupled with the detailed design of the extension would ensure that the building does not appear top heavy or bulky. The fenestration placement on the new floor would mirror those below, however the height of the windows would be shorter which helps balance the proportions of the building and gives a sense of window hierarchy. In addition, the metal clad areas beneath the windows as well as the openings themselves would be recessed and the lack of brise soleil on the upper floor provides a clear contrast to the openings below.
- 10.26. The rooftop extension due to its almost identical footprint to the lower levels would result in a long flat roof design; similar to the existing building. This is especially experienced from the long east and west facades. Officers note however that the centre of the eastern façade is recessed and the height of the external perforated screen located centrally on the east façade is lower than the top of the extension; reducing the perceived mass of the building. Similarly on the western façade the massing is broken up in the centre by the presence of the roof top balcony. The roof top plant area also sits centrally on the building and does not extend the full width or depth of the building. As such the rooftop plant would not be visible in close proximity to the building and would only be appreciated in longer range views. On the north and south facades the existing staircases break up the massing of the building which are proposed to be retained, and on the south where the new entrance is proposed, similar to the east a lower perforated metal panel is proposed centrally. Overall Officers consider that these detailed design features help create visual breaks in the massing of the building and as such would be acceptable in design terms.
- 10.27. The proposed goods lift would increase the footprint of the building at its northern end. This extension would be situated however immediately next to the

existing staircase at the north of the building and as such result in an extension to this existing feature of the building. As a result Officers consider that the extension would have a sensitive siting; simply extending the width of the existing feature to the north of the building. The use of brushed bronze metal cladding and perforated metal panels on the staircases and goods lift would also provide a cohesive design; tying together the rooftop extension and the metal panels above the south entrance and eastern glazing which is finished in the same material.

- 10.28. The alterations proposed to the existing lower levels of the building would be minor in scale being the cleaning of the existing cladding, the replacement of the windows, and the refurbishment of the brise soleil. Officers consider that these minor alterations would be positive to the overall appearance of the building, helping to tie the new elements with the existing.
- 10.29. The proposed development recognises the importance of the future Cowley Branch Line and associated new Oxford-Cowley station in transforming this site and the wider Business Parks' access to sustainable transport. This would help in enabling a significant shift away from car-use if the associated connections and routes to the station are safe, accessible, legible and convenient.
- 10.30. The move to relocate the building entrance from the east to the south of the building is positive as this moves the entrance away from the car dominated access points to the east, towards the future pedestrian and cycle links to the south and west. Officers note that the Business Park is at present a challenging pedestrian and cyclist environment and that improvements including the Connector are still yet to be delivered on site. The Connector would be located along the western boundary of the site and would link to the future train station to the south of the Business Park. Therefore Officers consider the positioning of the entrance to the south of the building responds to both the existing and emerging context on the Business Park where currently occupiers would typically travel by car from the east, whereas in the future occupiers would predominantly travel via pedestrian and cycle routes to the south and west.
- 10.31. The proposed colonnade across the full width of the building to the south would provide a focal point towards the new entrance point and its finish in galvanised steel would overall provide a complementary feature to the building itself; shown in Figure 1. Together with the additional trees and landscaping outside the entrance of the building, the external improvements would create an enhanced public realm and high-quality focal entrance point.



Figure 1: Visual of proposed rooftop extension and alterations (Design & Access Statement: oberlanders)

- 10.32. There are social areas of the Business Park including the outdoor events area to the west (the Market Place), Oxford Works and Oxford Factory to the North. The proposals include the introduction of a new pedestrian link to the building from the west of the site where the Connector is proposed, and as such the proposals would help improve journeys to and from these areas. This new opening on the site perimeter would help provide greater visual and physical permeability to important places in the campus.
- 10.33. The reduction in car parking numbers is positive and it is hoped will drive down car usage in favour of more sustainable modes of transport. In addition an obligation has been recommended for parking spaces to be removed from the site once the Cowley Branch Line is in operation to help further transition away from the car dominated Business Park of present. This reduction in spaces has enabled the creation of landscaped public space along the southern façade and around the new entrance. This includes the colonnade which spans the full width of the south of the building to mark the new entrance to the site.
- 10.34. Timber clad stores and enclosures are proposed to the north and west of the building to store bins and bicycles and enclose condensers and a generator. These would all be of an ancillary scale to the building and would have a cohesive design approach with the use of matching heights and materials. These would be fully covered and enclosed structures which would ensure that plant is screened and that bin and bicycle storage would be secure. The siting of the bicycle stores along the western boundary also provides a convenient location

next to the proposed access to the Connector as well as close to the existing pedestrian and cycle access to the south of the site.

- 10.35. To the east of the site improvements are proposed to the hard and soft landscaping and informal seating and outdoor meeting spaces are proposed. Whilst it is appreciated that the east of the site would still have a large expanse of vehicle parking, the landscape enhancements are welcomed and would soften the appearance of the site when approaching from the east.
- 10.36. Officers note the materiality of the extension and the new additions is important to ensure a successful palette between the proposed materials and the cleaned/refurbished existing elements. As such a condition has been recommended for material samples to be provided to the Local Planning Authority for approval prior to installation on site.
- 10.37. Overall Officers consider that the proposed development would result in a high quality design which would comply with Policy DH1.

Significance of the heritage asset(s)

- 10.38. The application site is not located within a Conservation Area and sits to the south east of Oxford city centre. Part of the significance of the city's Central Conservation Area is the intrinsic connection of Oxford's city core and outer development with its landscape setting, which can be appreciated from a number of views, both from viewpoints outside of the city looking in (i.e. view cones) and from high level viewpoints within the city looking out.
- 10.39. At the southern edge of the city, the east and west containing hills fall away to a much lower ridge/hill line with the backdrop of the Chiltern Hills beyond, which signals the river route and is where the areas of twentieth century expansion have taken place below and beyond the lower ridge line. The ability to visually appreciate the location, extent and forms of the hills and ridgelines that surround the city is essential to understanding its historic development and heritage significance.
- 10.40. New tall building development that extends above the ridgeline along the southern edge has the potential to disrupt and detract from the setting of Oxford's historic built environment and its Central Conservation Area, as well as affect the setting of other heritage assets, including the setting of several of the spires and towers of which the southern ridgeline forms their landscape backdrop.
- 10.41. The Oxford Stadium Conservation Area which is located to the south of the application site consists of the stadium itself and its associated outdoor area. The site has historic significance associated with its use for greyhound racing and Speedway.
- 10.42. The Temple Cowley Conservation Area is located to the north-east of the application site. The Conservation Area is characterised by its collection of institutional buildings including the Nuffield Press and its attached former school house. These manufacturing and educational institutional buildings of stone and

brick mark as reminders of 19th and 20th Century expansion and enterprise, and are all linked by boundary walls, predominantly of stone which unify the area.

Impact upon heritage assets

10.43. A protective views study has been submitted with this application which shows the proposals in relation to existing and proposed views from the following locations: Carfax Tower, St George's Tower, St Mary's Tower, St Michael's Tower, Oxford Stadium Conservation Area, and Temple Cowley Conservation Area. The views study also incorporates other approved developments within the Business Park to assess the cumulative visual impact of these with the proposal. These developments include 5000 John Smith Drive, 2000 John Smith Drive, Trinity House and 4200 Nash Court. The plan in Figure 2 shows the location of these developments in relation to the application site. In red/pink is the application site, in blue are consented proposals under construction, and in yellow are consented proposals.



Figure 2: Visual of consented proposals in context to the application site (Protected Views Study: oberlanders)

10.44. From Carfax Tower the western end of both the existing and proposed building are partially screened by intervening buildings. The existing building is mostly screened behind Plot 4200, however the roof of the existing building is slightly taller and the eastern part of the building is fully visible. As proposed the building would still mostly be screened behind Plot 4200 and the eastern part still visible and taller, with the overall height being taller too. Officers note that the

massing of the proposed building would still result in a flat and long roofscape alike the existing building and although slightly taller would be lower than Trinity House and Plot 5000 to the east.

- 10.45. Similarly at St George's Tower the existing building is visible to the left of Plot 4200 with its height being taller and the eastern end being visible. As proposed this relationship would be similar with the eastern end of the building still being visible and the height would still be taller than Plot 4200. Alike from Carfax Tower, Officers note that the massing would still have a flat and long roofscape similar to the existing scenario.
- 10.46. From St Mary's Tower a greater proportion of the eastern element of the existing building is visible and the height of the existing building is taller than Plot 4200. As proposed the eastern element would still be visible as well as the top of the roof. Officers note that the height of the plant at the centre of the roof would be more noticeable in this view, however the raised central rooftop area would help to break up the existing long and flat roofscape of the site.
- 10.47. From the Oxford Stadium Conservation Area the existing building is visible to the left of Plot 2000 and is lower in height than the surrounding buildings. The existing building has a rectangular shaped massing with a taller element located centrally on the building. As proposed the building would still be lower in height when compared to the surrounding buildings, the massing would still be relatively rectangular in shape, and there would still be a taller element in the centre of the building.
- 10.48. From St Michael's Tower and the Temple Cowley Conservation Area both the existing and proposed buildings would be screened by intervening buildings.
- 10.49. Having reviewed the views from the city centre out to the Business Park Officers note that the eastern end of the existing building is visible in these views and the height of the existing building is already taller than Plot 4200 which has been consented and is under construction. Whilst the proposed extension would result in the eastern end of the building being greater in scale and the height of the building would be taller and more noticeable, overall the flat and rectangular roofscape of the existing building would still prevail. There would still be taller development in these views to the left of the application site at Trinity House and Plot 5000, with a long and flat roofscape in the centre where Plot 4200 and the application site sit, with taller development visible to the right at Plot 2000. Overall Officers consider that the increase in height of the existing long and flat roofed building would be a modest addition to the Central Conservation Area's wider setting to the south and would result in a very low level of less than substantial harm.
- 10.50. The increase in height of the building would be most noticeably appreciated at the Oxford Stadium Conservation Area due to the closer proximity to the application site. Officers note from comparing the existing and proposed views however that the overall shape and massing of the building with a taller centre point would be similar and that it would still be lower than Plot 2000. Overall it is considered that the proposals would not result in harm upon the setting or significance of the Oxford Stadium Conservation Area.

10.51. In addition, Officers consider that the proposals would not result in harm upon the setting or significance of the Temple Cowley Conservation Area.

10.52. In accordance with the NPPF, the public benefits of the scheme must be weighed against the harm caused to designated heritage assets. It is also a requirement that there is clear and convincing justification for the harm.

10.53. In relation to clear and convincing justification, Officers note that the proposed extension to the footprint of the building would allow a goods lift to facilitate the intended use of the building. In addition, the development would enable laboratory space to be accommodated on each of the floors and the rooftop extension allows for additional floor space whilst retaining the existing built form of the building; avoiding its demolition which is beneficial with regards to embodied carbon. It is considered that the development has been clearly and convincingly justified in this case.

10.54. In relation to the public benefits of the scheme, Officers consider these to be those listed below and have attributed weight to each:

- The proposals would increase the provision of research and development and life science/office facilities within the city which sits in the Golden Triangle; known for being a research and development cluster.
 - Officers give moderate weight to this.
- The proposals would result in an estimated 906 additional jobs and 32 jobs during the construction period.
 - Officers give low weight to this.
- The proposals would improve landscaping, connectivity and legibility by pedestrians and cyclists around the Business Park by the inclusion of a path to the Connector.
 - Officers give low weight to this.
- The development would result in a reduction in on-site car parking spaces.
 - Officers give low weight to this.
- The proposals would increase cycle parking provision.
 - Officers give low weight to this.

10.55. Overall it is considered that individually and cumulatively the public benefits identified would outweigh the very low level of less than substantial harm which would be caused to the setting of the Central Conservation Area.

10.56. Subject to conditions it is considered that the proposals accord with Policies DH1, DH2, DH3, DH7, RE2, and M1 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036, and the NPPF and Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

c. Neighbouring amenity

10.57. Policy H14 states that planning permission will only be granted for new development that provides reasonable privacy, daylight and sunlight for

occupants of both existing and new homes, and does not have an overbearing effect on existing homes.

- 10.58. Policy RE7 states that planning permission will only be granted for development that ensures that the amenity of communities, occupiers and neighbours is protected.
- 10.59. Policy RE8 states that planning permission will not be granted for development proposals that will generate unacceptable noise and vibration impacts.
- 10.60. The closest dwellings to the application site are located to the south-west and north-west of the Business Park approximately over 200m away from the application site.
- 10.61. The existing building has a maximum height of approximately 16.6m and the proposed building with the rooftop extension would have a height of 20.4m. Whilst the building would increase considerably in its height, Officers note that there are other sizeable buildings at the Business Park which would act as intervening features between the application site and the nearest dwellings. It is considered that when taking into account the significant distance that the application site would be located away from any dwellings coupled with the intervening buildings, that as a result the proposals would not result in any detrimental impacts with regards to outlook, daylight access, and would not be overbearing.
- 10.62. It is noted that an additional floor and a new roof terrace is proposed to the west of the building which would be located at a significant height. Nevertheless, given the considerable distance of approximately 200m which the building would be located away from the dwellings, coupled with the presence of other intervening buildings on the Business Park, it is considered that these elements would not cause any actual overlooking or the perception of overlooking.
- 10.63. As part of the scheme, new plant is proposed to be installed and an acoustic note has been submitted for the proposed mechanical plant installation with the application.
- 10.64. The report establishes the existing ambient noise levels at the nearest noise sensitive receivers (NSR) and calculates the likely 'Rating Level' of the new mechanical plant installation and determines the likely noise impact resulting from the operation of the new plant.
- 10.65. In relation to all plant and equipment design and selection, appropriate noise guidelines have been followed including the Noise Policy Statement for England, NPPF, Planning Practice Guidance on Noise, British Standard 8233: 2014 "Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings and British Standard 4142:2014 +A1:2019 "Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound".

10.66. All plant noise level criteria have been adequately predicted at suitably identified receptors taking into consideration distance losses, surface acoustic reflections and, where applicable, screening provided by any building.

10.67. Officers are satisfied that the scheme would be acceptable given the appropriate design choice of plant and specified acoustic mitigation design. Conditions have been recommended to ensure that the proposed installations shall not exceed background noise levels and that the proposals meet the relevant British Standards.

10.68. Subject to conditions the proposals comply with Policies H14, RE7 and RE8 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

d. Highways, vehicle parking and bicycle storage

10.69. Policy M1 states that planning permission will only be granted for development that minimises the need to travel and is laid out and designed in a way that prioritises access by walking, cycling and public transport.

10.70. Policy SP10 states that opportunities should be sought to enhance and promote more sustainable travel modes to the business park.

10.71. Policy M2 states that a Transport Assessment must be submitted for development that is likely to generate significant amounts of movement, in accordance with the requirements as defined in Appendix 7.1. Transport Assessments must assess the multi-modal impacts of development proposals and demonstrate the transport measures which would be used to mitigate the development impact to ensure:

- a) there is no unacceptable impact on highway safety;
- b) there is no severe residual cumulative impact on the road network;
- c) pedestrian and cycle movements are prioritised, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas;
- d) access to high quality public transport is facilitated, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;
- e) the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport are addressed;
- f) the development helps to create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;
- g) the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles is allowed for; and
- h) charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles is enabled in safe, accessible and convenient locations

10.72. Appendix 7.1 states that proposals for B1 use including offices (now E(g)) over 2,500m² will require a detailed Transport Assessment.

- 10.73. A Travel Plan, which has clear objectives, targets and a monitoring and review procedure, must be submitted for development that is likely to generate significant amounts of movement in accordance with the requirements in Appendix 7.2. Travel Plans must help to support outcomes (a) to (h) set out above.
- 10.74. Appendix 7.2 states that proposals for B1 use including offices (now E(g)) over 2,500m² will require a Travel Plan.
- 10.75. The policy also states that where a Travel Plan is required under this policy and a substantial amount of the movement is likely to be in the form of delivery, service and dispatch vehicles, a Delivery and Service Management Plan will be required. Where a Delivery and Service Management Plan is provided this should set out how deliveries will be managed and demonstrate how impacts will be minimised including congestion, safety noise and how zero or ultra-low emission and last mile opportunities will be considered.
- 10.76. Policy M2 also states that a Construction Management Plan must be provided for developments of 500m² or more of non-residential floorspace. It goes on to outline what the Construction Management Plan should include.
- 10.77. Policy M3 states that the parking requirements for all non-residential development will be determined in light of the submitted Transport Assessment or Travel Plan, and that the presumption will be that vehicle parking will be kept to the minimum necessary to ensure the successful functioning of the development. It states that for the redevelopment of existing sites there should be no net increase in car parking.
- 10.78. Policy RE7 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 also states that planning permission will only be granted for development that does not have unacceptable transport impacts.
- 10.79. Policy M4 states that where additional parking is to be provided in accordance with Policy M3, planning permission will only be granted for new residential developments if:
- a) provision is made for electric charging points for each residential unit with an allocated parking space; and
 - b) non-allocated spaces are provided with at least 25% (with a minimum of 2) having electric charging points installed.
- 10.80. Policy M4 also states that planning permission will only be granted for non-residential development that includes parking spaces if a minimum of 25% of the spaces are provided with electric charging points.
- 10.81. Policy M5 states that planning permission will only be granted for development that complies with or exceeds the minimum bicycle parking provision as set out in Appendix 7.4. It also states that bicycle parking should be, well designed and well-located, convenient, secure, covered (where possible enclosed) and provide level, unobstructed external access to the street. Appendix 7.4 states that for

businesses that 1 space per 90m² or 1 space per 5 staff or other people is the minimum requirement.

10.82. A Transport Statement (TS) and a draft Travel Plan have been submitted with the application. The Local Highways Authority (LHA) Oxfordshire County Council were consulted on the application and they outlined the following comments:

Review of existing situation

10.83. Collision data from Oxfordshire County Council has been obtained in which this data shows a clear cluster of collisions on Barns Road and Boswell Road near the bus stops north and south of the junction with Boswell Road. A total of 5 collisions have been recorded here, including one resulting in serious injuries.

Vehicular access arrangement

10.84. Vehicular access will remain unaltered. Access will be from John Smith Drive, a private road. There will be a one-way system, with vehicles entering from the northeast and exiting onto the mini roundabout at the southwest of the development site. These accesses are controlled by barriers.

Active transport access and connectivity

10.85. Pedestrian and cycle access will be via the vehicular access points as well as two additional pedestrian and cycle accesses only. There is one 5m wide pedestrian and cycle access in the southwestern corner of the site. It is considered that a bollard will be required here to avoid vehicles using this access, and the applicant has confirmed that this would be provided.

10.86. In addition, there is a 3m wide access proposed approximately 15m south of the vehicular entrance in the north east corner.

10.87. The Connector, a major north south active travel link through the ARC business park, is situated immediately west of the application site. A 3m wide connection to The Connector is proposed.

10.88. The nearest bus stops to the site are located on Garsington Road, which is approximately 250m from the site and served by services to and from the City Centre, Blackbird Leys and the new 600 service to Redbridge and Thornhill P & R.

10.89. The County Council requires a contribution towards improved bus services along Oxford's "Eastern Arc" from developments that will benefit from them, as well as a contribution towards the Cowley Branch Line passenger service.

10.90. In addition, bus service 1 travels along Barns Road and provides a connection to Oxford Railway Station, with bus stops approximately 500m from the site. This is a 7 minutes' walk via the improved link through Plot 4200 and would therefore be an attractive connection to the railway Station for future employees.

10.91. The proposed research and development/office development is expected to attract skilled employees. It can therefore be expected that some of them will be

arriving by train and continue to travel to the site by bus. The proposed crossing would also improve pedestrian access from the Cowley and Rose Hill residential areas to the site. It is therefore considered that a zebra crossing is required to assist pedestrians crossing Barns Road. This will need to be delivered by the applicant as a S278 Agreement, and this will be included in the S106 Agreement.

Site Layout

10.92. The proposed site layout remains unchanged, with the building to the west, most of the car parking in the east and the main site road on the outside of the building.

Car parking

10.93. The proposed development would see a reduction of 78 car parking spaces from 305 to 227 spaces, which is welcomed and accords with Policy M1.

10.94. A Technical Note was submitted with the application to demonstrate that the proposed level of parking would be appropriate in line with Policy M3; in which 227 spaces are proposed. The Technical Note includes indicative mode shares based on the Census data and targets. Based on the census data 39% is anticipated to drive to the site with a target to reduce this by 5% to 34%. The planning statement states that "Based on an employment density of 11 positions per sqm NIA the proposed operation would generate 874 Full Time Equivalent employment positions". If it has been assumed that 75% of employees would be on-site at any one time, this would be 656 employees. If 39% of these drive to the site, this would be 256 employees. Based on this assumption 227 spaces would be acceptable.

10.95. It is now standard practice with planning applications for sites in the vicinity of the Cowley Branch Line stations to reduce the vehicle parking once the Cowley Branch Line passenger service opens. This is in line with OCC Decide and Provide policy as set out in the OCC Local Transport and Connectivity Plan.

10.96. An obligation to reduce the car parking once the Cowley Branch Line passenger service is in operation will therefore be required in the S106. In line with other plots at the ARC Business Park a reduction to 31% of employees is required. This would be a reduction of 24 spaces. This is in line with the applicant's proposed target of a 5% reduction.

10.97. Policy M4 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 requires that 25% of all car parking spaces are fitted with electric charging points. If 227 spaces are provided, the applicant is required to provide 57 spaces with electric charging points. The applicant proposes 13 electric charging points which is not sufficient. A condition has therefore been recommended to ensure that the applicant provides electric charging points in line with the Oxford Local Plan requirements.

Cycle parking

10.98. The applicant is proposing two cycle stores with 54 standard cycle spaces and two cargo bike parking spaces, which include Sheffield stands with two tier spaces above. In addition, the TS states that they will provide 20 non-enclosed

Sheffield stands, 40 spaces near the entrance. A total of 152 spaces are therefore proposed which exceeds the guidance of 1 space per 90 sqm which would require 134 spaces. The proposed cycle parking is considered to be suitable for the proposed development.

Refuse collection

10.99. The proposed bin store is located in the north of the site. A swept path analysis has been undertaken demonstrating that a 12m rigid truck can manoeuvre safely within the site.

Traffic impact

10.100. The applicant has conducted a TRICS analysis to calculate the increase the number of vehicles trips based on the increased floor area. Mode share information has also been provided based on the Census data.

Travel Plan

10.101. The proposed rooftop extension will increase the size of the site to 12,0121sqm GIA. Therefore, based on OCC travel plans thresholds guidance, a B1 E(g)ii research and development facility of this size will require a full travel plan to be produced prior to first occupation.

10.102. The Travel Plan should meet the criteria contained within appendix 5 of the OCC guidance document 'Transport for New Developments – Transport Assessments and Travel Plans March 2014 and be updated within 3 months of occupation.

10.103. A Framework Travel Plan has been submitted with this application, but a Full Travel Plan is required. The submitted document is missing the information required to meet the criteria for a full travel plan. For example – information about the number of occupants, shift patterns, information about initiatives aimed at reducing the need to travel, type of cycle parking to be provided, micromobility, information about any pool vehicles etc.

10.104. In addition to this, as the site is currently operational, information about the current onsite community should be included within the document, for example, postcode and mode of travel data and information about any current barriers to the promotion of sustainable, active travel modes.

10.105. A condition has therefore been recommended for a full travel plan to be provided prior to first occupation of the building.

Contributions and S278 Highways Works

10.106. £58,911 has been requested as a Public Transport Service Contribution towards improved bus services along Oxford's 'Eastern Arc'. The LHA have justified this contribution noting that this development would benefit from the new Eastern Arc bus connections to/from places including Witney, Eynsham Park & Ride, Oxford North, Kidlington, Oxford Parkway, Thornhill Park & Ride, Cowley, Grenoble Road, Oxford Science Park and Redbridge Park & Ride. The LHA

noted that a contribution of £22.58 per sqm, index linked to Dec 2021 using RPIX, will be required towards these improvements. The £22.58 is based on the operational costs for the improved bus services. For this application with an additional 2,609 sqm floor area, a contribution of £58,911 is therefore required.

- 10.107. £94,398 has been requested as a Public Transport Infrastructure Contribution towards the Cowley Branch Line passenger service. The LHA have justified this contribution noting that this development would benefit significantly from the proposed railway connection to Oxford and London Marylebone Station. A contribution to the Cowley Branch Line passenger service is in line with other planning applications in this area is therefore required. The LHA noted that the Cowley Branch Line scheme proposes to open the existing Cowley Branch Line to passengers through the introduction of two new railway stations at Oxford Littlemore and Oxford Cowley, south of the ring road. The target is for 25% of the funding to be obtained locally, including via developer contributions. A methodology has been developed to calculate developer contributions based on the additional 2,609 sqm floor area. A contribution of £94,398 has been calculated for this development Baxter index linked.
- 10.108. £3,347 has been requested as a Travel Plan Monitoring Fee. The Travel Plan aims to encourage and promote more sustainable modes of transport with the objective of reducing dependence upon private motor car travel and so reducing the environmental impact and traffic congestion. A Travel Plan is required to make this development acceptable in planning terms.
- 10.109. The LHA have also noted that an obligation to enter into a S278 Agreement would be required to secure mitigation/improvement works, including a zebra crossing over Barns Road at the location of the existing pedestrian refuge south of Boswell Road. This could be secured by a S106.
- 10.110. Overall officers consider that the proposals would accord with the aims of Policies M1 and SP10 as the proposed connection to the Connector, the increase in cycle parking provision, and the obligation to provide a crossing on Barns Road would help prioritise sustainable forms of movement; walking, cycling and public transport.
- 10.111. A Transport Statement, Travel Plan and a Construction Management Plan have all been submitted with this application meeting the requirements of Policy M2. Officers are satisfied that the development would be acceptable upon the local highways network and that the construction phase of the development and the travel plan would be appropriately managed and monitored subject to conditions and contributions.
- 10.112. The proposals would see the removal of vehicle parking spaces which is encouraged by Policy M3, and further vehicle parking spaces would be removed once the Cowley Branch Line is in operation which would be secured through the S106 agreement.
- 10.113. The development only proposes 13 electric vehicle charging points on the site and as such fails to provide charging points for 25% of the overall number of spaces of 227. As such in order to ensure compliance with this Policy

a condition has been recommended for further details of electric vehicle charging to be provided to meet the 25% target.

10.114. In relation to bicycle parking a total of 152 spaces are proposed which exceeds the minimum requirement of 1 space per 90 sqm stipulated under Appendix 7.3. In addition, the parking would be in secure and enclosed storage along the western boundary providing level and convenient access to the Connector, and as such accords with the requirements of Policy M5.

10.115. Officers note that the LHA have recommended contributions as well as obligations including a S278 agreement. The applicant has confirmed their agreement to these and the contributions and obligations would be secured through a S106 agreement.

10.116. Subject to the recommended conditions, contributions and S278 Agreement, the LHA raise no objection to the scheme.

10.117. As such the proposals comply with Policies M1, M2, M3, M4, M5, SP10 and RE7 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

e. Flooding and drainage

10.118. Policy RE3 states that planning applications for development within Flood Zone 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 proposed 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

10.119. Policy RE4 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. Surface water runoff should be managed as close to its source as possible, in line with the following drainage hierarchy:

- a) store rainwater for later use; then:
- b) discharge into the ground (infiltration); then:
- c) discharge to a surface water body; then:

d) discharge to a surface water sewer, highway drain or other drainage system; and finally:

e) discharge to a combined sewer

10.120. The policy also stipulates that applicants must demonstrate that they have had regard to the SuDS Design and Evaluation Guide SPD/ TAN for minor development and Oxfordshire County Council guidance for major development.

10.121. A Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted with the application that concludes that the site is located within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore not at risk of fluvial flooding. It further concludes that there is no risk of flooding from surface water.

10.122. In relation to drainage, a Sustainable Drainage Statement has been submitted in which the proposed drainage strategy is to utilise the existing surface water network on site, with some area of permeable paving. The landscape plan submitted shows the permeable paving, however it is not shown on the drainage strategy drawing. All proposed SuDS features and drainage infrastructure must be clearly identified and construction details for the permeable paving provided, however Officers consider that this information could be secured via a condition as the drainage strategy in principle is acceptable.

10.123. Subject to conditions, the proposals accord with Policies RE3 and RE4 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

f. Biodiversity

10.124. Policy G2 states that development that results in a net loss of sites and species of ecological value will not be permitted. Compensation and mitigation measures must offset any loss and achieve an overall net gain for biodiversity. For all major developments proposed on greenfield sites or brownfield sites that have become vegetated, this should be measured through use of a recognised biodiversity calculator. To demonstrate an overall net gain for biodiversity, the biodiversity calculator should demonstrate an improvement of 5% or more from the existing situation. Offsetting measures are likely to include identification of appropriate off-site locations/projects for improvement, which should be within the relevant Conservation Target Area if appropriate, or within the locality of the site. When assessing whether a site is suitable for compensation, consideration will be given to the access, enjoyment and connection to nature that the biodiversity site to be lost has brought to a locality. A management and monitoring plan might be required for larger sites. The calculation should be applied to the whole site.

10.125. All species of bats and their roosts are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). All wild birds, their nests and young are protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

10.126. Paragraph 187 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising

impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species.

10.127. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). Developers of major developments must deliver a BNG of 10%. This means a development will result in more or better quality natural habitat than there was before development.

10.128. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment were submitted with the application in which the existing buildings were assessed to be of negligible suitability for roosting bats and no further surveys were recommended. Officers are satisfied that a robust assessment was undertaken and the potential presence of protected habitats and species has been given due regard. A condition has been recommended however which places a time limit on development before further surveys are required to ensure bats are protected.

10.129. During the surveys on site evidence of nesting birds was found on the building. As such a condition has been recommended which restricts the timescale as to when any removal of trees, hedges, shrubs, buildings or structures can take place unless a nesting bird activity survey is undertaken.

10.130. The Local Planning Authority, in exercising any of its functions, has a legal duty to have regard to the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, which identifies four main offences for development affecting European Protected Species (EPS):

1. Deliberate capture, injuring or killing of an EPS
2. Deliberate disturbance of an EPS, including in particular any disturbance which is likely
 - a) to impair their ability –
 - i) to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young; or
 - ii) in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or
 - b) to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.
3. Deliberate taking or destroying the eggs of an EPS
4. Damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place of an EPS.

10.131. Officers are satisfied that European Protected Species are unlikely to be harmed as a result of the proposals.

10.132. In relation to BNG, a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has been undertaken which has identified an existing base-line of 4.95 habitat units and 0.13 hedgerow units. A total of 5.44 habitat units and 0.15 hedgerow units will be required on site post-development to deliver a 10% net gain. In order to secure the onsite delivery of biodiversity net gain an obligation is recommended via a S106 agreement as well as a contribution towards monitoring costs which would cover the LPAs role in reviewing monitoring reports over a 30 year period. The applicant has agreed to this obligation and contribution.

10.133. To ensure that the development would deliver ecological enhancements as required under the NPPF, a condition has been recommended for details of ecological enhancement measures to be provided to the Local Planning Authority.

10.134. Subject to conditions and informatives the proposals accord with Policy G2 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036, the NPPF, The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021).

g. Health, wellbeing and safety

10.135. Policy RE5 states that Oxford City Council will seek to promote strong, vibrant and healthy communities and reduce health inequalities. Proposals will be supported which help to deliver these aims through the development of environments which encourage healthier day-to-day behaviours and are supported by local services and community networks to sustain health, social and cultural wellbeing. Measures that will help contribute to healthier communities and reduce health inequalities must be incorporated in a development. For major development proposals, the Council will require a Health Impact Assessment to be submitted, which should include details of implementation and monitoring.

10.136. Paragraph 96 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:

a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;

b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and

c) enable and support healthy lives, through both promoting good health and preventing ill-health, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs and reduce health inequalities between the most and least

deprived communities – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.

10.137. Paragraph 135 (f) of the NPPF also states that planning decisions should ensure that developments 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; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

10.138. A health impact assessment has been submitted with the application which aligns with the requirement for major developments as stipulated in Policy RE5. Overall the assessment concludes there would be positive health impacts arising for the development and as such no mitigation implementation nor monitoring is proposed. Officers are satisfied that the proposals would help promote social interaction, would be safe and accessible, and enable and support healthy lives, and as such the development would have a positive health impact.

10.139. The Thames Valley Police Designing Out Crime Officer (DOCO) was consulted on the application and they noted that they were unable to locate the floor plans for the third floor of the building. The third-floor plans have since been provided and uploaded to the application file. The plans show four units are proposed alongside a breakout area, balcony, plant rooms, as well as W.C.s.

10.140. The DOCO also requested that a Security Needs Assessment is completed; a detailed security and access strategy is provided; that lighting plans are submitted; and that information is submitted relating to CCTV, security doors, access points, postal deliveries, vehicle mitigation measures, fire safety and landscaping. Officers consider that given the details requested are dependent upon the future tenant of the building and that as such are details not known at this stage, that the above details could be requested via condition for further consultation with the DOCO.

10.141. Subject to conditions, the proposals comply with Policy RE5 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 and paragraphs 96 and 135 of the NPPF.

h. Air quality

10.142. Policy RE6 states that planning permission will only be granted where the impact of new development on air quality is mitigated and where exposure to poor air quality is minimised or reduced.

10.143. It states that the exposure of both current and new occupants to air pollution during the development's operational and construction phases, and the overall negative impact that proposals may cause to the city's air quality, will be considered in determining planning applications. Where additional negative air quality impacts from a new development are identified, mitigation measures will be required to ameliorate these impacts.

- 10.144. It also notes that planning applications for major proposals (10 or more dwellings or 1000 square metres) which would carry a risk of exposing individuals to unacceptable levels of air pollution must be accompanied by an Air Quality Assessment (AQA).
- 10.145. The application site is located within the Oxford city-wide Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), declared by Oxford City Council (OCC) for exceedances of the annual mean NO₂ air quality objective (AQO).
- 10.146. The air quality baseline desk assessment shows that current air quality levels at the application site are well below relevant air quality objectives for NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} concentrations. Therefore, the location of the application site is considered suitable for its intended use without mitigation.
- 10.147. As part of the proposed development, new solar PV panels would be installed on the roof of the building. The proposed energy system would change from gas boiler/chiller to an all-electric system, with heating and cooling provided by Air Handling Units with heating coils via integral heat pumps or integral DX heating and cooling coil. Heating to common areas would be provided by electric panel heaters. Finally, a centralised electric hot water cylinder would be provided in the 3rd floor plant room. This is confirmed within the Stage 2 MEP Design Report. As such, modelling of emissions from the energy system is not required.
- 10.148. The impacts of demolition and construction work on dust soiling and ambient fine particulate matter concentrations have been assessed within the Air Quality Assessment submitted. This identified that there is a high risk of dust soiling impacts. However, through good site practice and the implementation of suitable mitigation measures, the effect of dust and PM₁₀ releases would be significantly reduced, and can be controlled through condition.
- 10.149. As set out in the Transport Statement accompanying the planning application, the proposed development would generate a total of 29 two-way vehicle trips in the weekday morning peak and 24 two-way vehicle trips in the weekday evening peak. Due to the nature of the proposed development, it is unlikely that vehicle trips would occur outside of these peak hours. The Transport Statement concludes that additional trips generated as a result of the building extension are minimal and the volume of new trips would be negligible. As such, it is not expected that trip generation would exceed 100 annual average daily traffic (AADT) for LDVs, or more than 25 AADT for HDVs. As such, in accordance with the EPUK and IAQM Planning Guidance, the proposed development would not cause a significant change in vehicle traffic flows and a detailed assessment is not required.
- 10.150. The proposed development would see a reduction of 78 car parking spaces from 305 to 227 spaces, which is welcomed and accords with Policy M1. Policy M4 requires at least 25% of parking spaces to be provided with charging points on non-residential developments (with a minimum of 2), and adequate ducting should be provided to all spaces to enable additional charging points in the future as demand requires. Compliance with this requirement is recommended via condition.

10.151. Overall it is considered that pollutant concentrations at the site are predicted to be below the relevant AQOs and as such additional mitigation is not required for the operational phase. Officers therefore raise no objection to the scheme in relation to air quality.

10.152. Subject to conditions the proposals accord with Policy RE6 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

i. Sustainable design and construction

10.153. Policy RE1 says planning permission will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that the following sustainable design and construction principles have been incorporated, where relevant:

- a) Maximising energy efficiency and the use of low carbon energy;
- b) Conserving water and maximising water efficiency;
- c) Using recycled and recyclable materials and sourcing them responsibly;
- d) Minimising waste and maximising recycling during construction and operation;
- e) Minimising flood risk including flood resilient construction;
- f) Being flexible and adaptable to future occupier needs; and
- g) Incorporating measures to enhance biodiversity value

10.154. It notes that an Energy Statement will be submitted to demonstrate compliance with this policy for new-build residential developments (other than householder applications) and new-build non-residential schemes over 1,000m². The Energy Statement will include details as to how the policy will be complied with and monitored.

10.155. It also notes 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.

10.156. It states that planning permission will only be granted for development proposals of 1,000m² or more which achieve at least a 40% reduction in the carbon emissions compared with a 2013 Building Regulations (or future equivalent legislation) compliant base case. This reduction is to be secured through on-site renewables and other low carbon technologies and/ or energy efficiency measures. The requirement will increase from 31 March 2026 to at least a 50% reduction in carbon emissions.

10.157. It also states that proposals for non-residential development are to meet the minimum standard of four credits under the BREEAM assessment.

- 10.158. Given that the proposal would utilise and extend the existing building and would not be a new-build non-residential development, the proposals do not need to meet the BREEAM or carbon emission reduction targets outlined for new-build non-residential development.
- 10.159. Nevertheless the proposals must outline how the principles of Policy RE1 have been considered where relevant within the proposals.
- 10.160. Within section 5 of the design and access statement submitted it outlines that a project driver is the reuse and extension of the building which typically results in an embodied carbon reduction of around 30-50%. Although the building does not need to meet the BREEAM targets stipulated under Policy RE1 due to not being a new build development, nevertheless the project is targeting a very good BREEAM rating. The sustainable measures proposed to help meet this target include using photovoltaic panels, water-saving appliances, and the provision of electric vehicle charging points. In addition the existing external façade and brise soleil on the building would be retained and cleaned; improving the external appearance whilst reusing the existing materials.
- 10.161. As such the proposals accord with Policy RE1 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

j. Trees and landscaping

- 10.162. Policy G7 states that planning permission will not be granted for development that results in the loss of green infrastructure such as hedgerows, trees or woodland where this would have a significant adverse impact upon public amenity or ecological interest. It must be demonstrated that their retention is not feasible and that their loss will be mitigated.
- 10.163. Policy G8 states that development proposals affecting existing Green Infrastructure features should demonstrate how these have been incorporated within the design of the new development where appropriate. This applies to protected and unprotected Green Infrastructure features, such as hedgerows, trees and small public green spaces.
- 10.164. Policy DH1 seeks to ensure that development is of a high quality design that creates or enhances local distinctiveness.
- 10.165. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) and a simple Tree Canopy Cover Assessment have been provided with the application.
- 10.166. The proposal would lead to the removal of 16 trees, a group of trees (7-8 Horse chestnut trees) and a hedge. Due to their limited amenity, condition and small size, their removal is considered acceptable subject to adequate replacement planting to meet Technical Advice Note (TAN) 9 guidance on canopy cover. According to the simple canopy cover assessment included in the AIA, the site currently benefits from a canopy cover of 1914.1m² (11.8%). Tree removals amount to 596.6m² and trees to be planted amount to 1210.9m² (on Illustrative Landscape Plan) or 1343.3m² (on the Canopy Cover assessment on the AIA) (from 51 new trees). The Canopy Cover assessment demonstrates that

the total number of proposed trees, their locations and the expected canopy cover they create would successfully mitigate the tree canopy lost.

10.167. In relation to landscaping, a landscape plan has been submitted which shows the enhanced public realm area to the south of the building which would include additional trees and planting, as well as a recreational lawn; resulting in a defined and welcoming space. Additional planting is proposed surrounding the east of the building too including the introduction of semi-mature trees to create a tree lined avenue, and wildflower grassland is proposed to replace the existing ground level planting on site. On the southern and western boundaries of the site native hedgerow planting is also proposed. In relation to hard landscaping the majority of the existing surface would be retained with existing block paving proposed to be reused where possible. Overall Officers consider that the landscaping proposals involving the additional trees and planting would enhance the visual quality and appearance of the exterior of the site and as such would result in a high quality design.

10.168. Subject to conditions the proposals accord with Policies DH1, G7 and G8 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

k. Utilities

10.169. Policy V8 states that planning applications (except householder applications) must be supported by information demonstrating that the proposed developer has explored existing capacity (and opportunities for extending it) with the appropriate utilities providers. Planning permission will not be granted where there is insufficient evidence on utilities capacity to support the development and that the capacity will be delivered to meet the needs of the development.

10.170. Policy V8 also notes the siting and appearance of utilities infrastructure should be designed to minimise impacts on amenity and to be as unobtrusive as possible.

10.171. A Utilities Infrastructure Report has been submitted with the application which concludes that utilities would not create a barrier for the proposed alterations. It highlights that capacity specifically electricity for an all-electric development may indicate a period of waiting whilst the network undergoes reinforcement works. Reinforcement works planned in the area are expected to be completed in 2029 and therefore the report advises that if planning permission is granted that the Applicant should obtain up to date asset records.

10.172. Thames Water (TW) has raised no objections in relation to the foul water sewerage network infrastructure capacity nor the surface water network infrastructure capacity. TW also raised no objection with regards to water network and water treatments infrastructure capacity. TW has however recommended an informative to be placed on any permission advising of minimum pressure.

10.173. The Environment Agency (EA) advised that they have provided advice to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) about current capacity issues at the Oxford Sewage Treatment Works (STWs), the risk to water quality, and the need to be

confident it will not worsen because of development. In recent months, Thames Water has presented a programme of work, providing certainty it can provide capacity for planned growth and greater confidence in delivery, so water quality will be protected, and communities in the area can have the water services they need, while allowing projected growth to come forward. As such the EA offered technical advice for the LPAs consideration within the planning balance when considering applications for development in the Oxford area connecting to the Oxford STWs.

10.174. Having reviewed the technical advice provided Officers note that in this case the application proposes the extension, alteration and reuse of an existing building with no additional buildings being proposed. The proposals include a rooftop extension to create an additional floor and as such it is considered that the development would only contribute a small overall increase in discharges to the Oxford STW. Given the improvements to the STW which have been committed to TW, Officers consider in the planning balance that the risk of affected development would be adequately mitigated in this case by the TW proposed programme of work.

10.175. Overall Officers are satisfied that there is capacity for the utilities in the local area to support the development.

10.176. As such the proposals accord with Policy V8 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

I. Land quality

10.177. Policy RE9 sets out the requirements for applications where proposals would be affected by contamination or where contamination may present a risk to the surrounding environment. These include details of investigations carried out to assess the nature and extent of contamination and possible impacts on the development and future users, biodiversity, and the natural and built environment; and detailed mitigation measures.

10.178. Officers have reviewed the information submitted with the application including the contaminated land questionnaire and historical mapping of the site and surrounding area. It is considered that due to the previous use of the site as an automotive manufacturing works that there is the possibility that residual contamination risks may be present within made ground at the site.

10.179. The EA noted that Historic Ordnance Survey mapping dated 1945-1965 indicates that the site was historically used as the Cowley Motor Works, a potentially contaminating land use. The EA therefore do not agree with the Applicant's conclusion that land contamination is not likely to be present.

10.180. The previous use of the proposed development site and surrounding area for industrial use presents a moderate risk of contamination that could be mobilised during construction to pollute controlled waters. Controlled waters are particularly sensitive in this location because the proposed development site is located upon a Secondary A aquifer (Beckley Sand Member).

10.181. The EA recognise that that the continued use of the site following the proposed development activities is unlikely to pose an increased risk of impact to the underlying aquifer. Although it is unlikely that the proposed redevelopment activities would require significant breaking of ground, the EA recognise that some soil disturbance may take place relating to construction activities, particularly the construction of piled foundations and lift pits should these be required. This could potentially encounter existing contamination associated with historic use of the site and cause its mobilisation into the underlying Secondary A aquifer. As such the EA advised that development would only be acceptable if conditions are included on any permission relating to contamination and piling/investigation boreholes.

10.182. Due to the proposed works involving modifications to the external landscaping and construction of external plant compounds and enclosures, there would be some ground excavation involved. Therefore there is the possibility that made ground could be encountered that contains residual contamination that could present a risk to future occupiers or construction workers. For this reason a condition has been recommended for a watching brief condition to be maintained during all external works to ensure that any potential contamination risks are dealt with appropriately.

10.183. Subject to conditions the development accords with Policy RE9 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

11. CONCLUSION

11.1. On the basis of the matters discussed in the report, officers would make members aware that the starting point for the determination of this application is in accordance with Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 which makes it clear that proposals should be assessed in accordance with the development plan unless material consideration indicate otherwise.

11.2. In the context of all proposals paragraph 11 of the NPPF requires that planning decision apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means approving development that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless: the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reasons for refusing the development proposed; or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

11.3. Therefore 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.

Compliance with development plan policies

11.4. In summary the proposed development would respond appropriately to the site context, would accord with the Oxford Business Park site allocation, and would be considered of a high quality design whilst sustainability reusing the existing built form. Whilst the height and massing of the proposals would cause a low level of less than substantial harm to the setting of the Central Conservation Area, Officers consider that cumulatively the public benefits of the scheme would outweigh this harm. The proposals would not cause any detrimental impacts upon the amenity of any neighbouring occupiers, and nor would the proposals cause any impacts in relation to highways, nor health and safety. The proposals would reduce car parking, increase bicycle storage, and would provide improvements to connectivity and legibility across the Business Park. In addition, the proposal would not cause any detrimental impacts with regards to drainage, biodiversity, trees, air quality, utilities nor land quality. Subject to the recommended S106 agreement, conditions and informatives, the proposals are considered to comply with the relevant policies of the Oxford Local Plan, and the NPPF.

11.5. Therefore officers considered that the proposals would accord with the development plan as a whole.

Material considerations

11.6. The principal material considerations which arise are addressed above, and follow the analysis set out in earlier sections of this report.

11.7. Officers consider that the proposal would accord with the overall aims and objectives of the NPPF for the reasons set out in the report. Therefore in such circumstances, paragraph 11 is clear that planning permission should be approved without delay. This is a significant material consideration in favour of the proposal.

11.8. Officers would advise members that, having considered the application carefully, including all representations made with respect to the application, the proposal are considered to be acceptable in terms of the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework, and relevant policies of the Oxford Local Plan 2036, and that there are no material considerations that would outweigh these policies.

11.9. It is recommended that the Committee resolve to grant planning permission for the development proposed subject to the satisfactory completion (under authority delegated to the Director of Planning and Regulation) of a legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

12. CONDITIONS

Time limit

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

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

Development in accordance with approved plans

2. The development permitted shall be constructed in complete accordance with the specifications in the application and approved plans listed below, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To avoid doubt and to ensure an acceptable development as indicated on the submitted drawings and to comply with Policy DH1 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Materials

3. Prior to installation, a large scale (minimum of 1m x 1m) sample panel of the following shall be erected on site and, where feasible, shall remain on site for the duration of the development works. Samples including details of manufacturer specifications shall be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the relevant parts of the work are commenced:

- All new facing materials.
- Refurbished/cleaned existing materials.
- External store materials.
- Hard landscape materials.

Prior to installation, detailed design proposals for the perforated metal panels to include perforation design, structure and fixing details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The development shall be completed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure high quality development and in the interests of the visual appearance in accordance with Policy DH1 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Watching brief

4. Throughout the course of the development, a watching brief for the identification of unexpected contamination shall be undertaken. Any unexpected contamination that is found during the course of construction of the approved development shall be reported immediately to the local planning authority. Development on that part of the site affected shall be suspended and a risk assessment carried out by a competent person and submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Where unacceptable risks are found remediation and verification schemes shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These approved schemes shall be carried out before the development (or relevant phase of development) is resumed or continued.

Reason: To ensure that any soil and water contamination is identified and adequately addressed to ensure the site is suitable for the proposed use in accordance with the

requirements of Policy RE9 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Remediation strategy

5. If during development contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site, then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority) shall be carried out until a remediation strategy detailing how this contamination will be dealt with has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The remediation strategy shall be implemented as approved.

Reason: To ensure that the development does not contribute to, and is not put at unacceptable risk from or adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of water pollution from previously unidentified contamination sources at the development site. This is in line with paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Piling/investigation boreholes

6. Piling/investigation boreholes using penetrative methods shall not be carried out other than with the written consent of the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development does not harm groundwater resources in line with paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Position Statement J5 and J6 of the 'The Environment Agency's approach to groundwater protection'.

Nesting Birds

7. No removal of trees, hedges, shrubs, buildings or structures shall take place between 1st March and 31st August inclusive unless a survey to assess the nesting bird activity on the site during this period and a scheme to protect the nesting birds has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No trees, hedges, shrubs, buildings or structures shall be removed between 1st March and 31st August inclusive other than in accordance with the approved bird nesting protection scheme."

Reason: For the protection of birds under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Time limit on development before further surveys are required

8. If the development hereby approved does not commence by August 2026, further ecological survey(s) shall be commissioned to establish if there have been any changes in the presence of roosting bats, and identify any likely new ecological impacts that might arise from any changes. The results of the survey(s) shall be submitted to the local planning authority.

Where the survey results indicate that changes have occurred that will result in impacts not previously addressed in the approved scheme, a mitigation and compensation scheme will be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local

Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development. Works shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme, under licence from Natural England.

Reason: To ensure bats are protected in accordance with The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Ecological Enhancements

9. Prior to first occupation, details of ecological enhancement measures including at least one bat roosting device, one bee brick and one bird nesting device shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Details must include the proposed specifications, locations, and arrangements for any required maintenance. The approved devices shall be fully constructed under the oversight of a suitably qualified ecologist prior to occupation of the approved development Any new fencing will include holes suitable for the safe passage of hedgehogs. The approved devices and fencing holes shall be maintained and retained in perpetuity unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To enhance biodiversity in Oxford City in accordance with paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Construction Ecological Management Plan

10. Prior to commencement of development, including any site preparation works and/or vegetation clearance, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be produced by a suitably qualified ecologist, to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP shall outline all sensitive working methodologies and protective measures required to ensure no direct or indirect harm to species encountered onsite before, during and after the development; and ensure no adverse impacts to any retained habitats. The CEMP shall include the below minimum mandatory requirements:

- Protective measures to ensure no adverse indirect impact to habitats or species (dust suppression, noise and runoff).
- Precautionary measures to ensure no adverse impact to transient or unanticipated fauna that may be present onsite (ecological walkover, pre-mobilisation checks and/or fingertip searches, supervision or Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) appointment, covering of open trenches and excavations).
- Confirmation of retained habitats (including all onsite trees to be retained and the ornamental ponds), and any measures that may be required (such as protective fencing) to ensure no harm to these habitats.
- A sensitive lighting plan for bats, in compliance with 'Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK' Guidance Note GN 08 / 23.

Once approved in writing, the CEMP must be strictly adhered to throughout the lifespan of the development.

Reason: To comply with The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended) and to protect wildlife and habitats in Oxford City in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

EV charging

11. Prior to the commencement of development, details of the Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include the following provision:

- Location of EV charging points;
- The amount of electric car charging points should cover at least 25% of the amount of permitted parking of the commercial development;
- Appropriate cable provision to prepare for increased demand in future years.

The electric vehicle infrastructure shall be formed and laid out in accordance with these details before the development is first in operation and shall remain in place thereafter.

Reason: To contribute to improving local air quality in accordance with Policy M4 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 and enable the provision of low emission vehicle infrastructure.

Landscape Plan:

12. A landscape plan shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority prior to first occupation or first use of the development hereby approved. The plan shall show:

- details of treatment of paved areas,
- areas to be grassed or finished in a similar manner,
- existing retained trees and proposed new tree, shrub and hedge planting,
- details of bollards,
- details of the enhanced public realm
- access connection into the 'Connector' route,
- planting of the terrace
- a schedule detailing plant numbers, sizes and nursery stock types.

The approved landscape plan shall then be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

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

Landscape Proposals: Implementation

13. The landscaping proposals as approved by the Local Planning Authority 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

Landscape Proposals: Reinstatement

13. Any existing retained trees, or new trees or plants planted in accordance with the details of the approved landscape proposals that fail to establish, are removed, die or become seriously damaged or defective within a period of five years after first occupation or first use of the development hereby approved shall be replaced. They shall be replaced with others of a species, size and number as originally approved during the first available planting season unless otherwise agreed in writing 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 2036.

Landscape Surface Design - Tree Roots

14. No development shall take place until details of the design of all new hard surfaces and a method statement for their construction shall first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the hard surfaces shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing beforehand by the Local Planning Authority.

Details shall take into account the need to avoid any excavation within the Root Protection Area of any retained tree and where appropriate the Local Planning Authority will expect "nodig" techniques to be used, which require hard surfaces to be constructed on top of existing soil levels in accordance with the current British Standard 5837: "Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations".

Reason: To avoid damage to the roots of retained trees in accordance with Policies G7, G8 and DH1 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Tree Protection Plan (TPP) & Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS)

15. No development, including demolition or enabling works, shall take place until a Tree Protection Plan (TPP) and Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS), produced in accordance with the current BS. 5837: "Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations", has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.

The TPP and AMS shall include such details as are appropriate to the circumstances, for the protection during development of retained tree, and any areas of ground identified for new tree planting (the areas to be equal to the calculated Root Protection Area of proposed trees at their eventual state of maturity (i.e. 25 years). The TPP&AMS shall detail any physical protective measures such as barrier fencing and/or ground protection materials, and any access pruning or other tree surgery proposals. Methods of any workings or other forms of ingress into the Root Protection Areas (RPAs) or Construction Exclusion Zones (CEZs) of retained trees shall be set out and described. Such details shall take account of the need to avoid damage to the branches, stems and roots of retained trees, through impacts, excavations, ground skimming, vehicle compaction and chemical spillages including lime and cement. The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with of the approved TPP and AMS unless otherwise agreed in writing beforehand by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect retained trees during construction in accordance with Policies G7, G8 and DH1 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Background noise

16. The noise emitted from the proposed installations located at the site shall not exceed the existing background level at any noise sensitive premises when measured and corrected in accordance with BS4142:2014 +A1:2019 “Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound,” with all machinery operating together at maximum capacity.

Reason: To ensure that the amenity of occupiers of surrounding premises is not adversely affected by noise from plant/mechanical installations/ equipment in accordance with Policy RE8 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Noise level

17. The noise level in rooms/offices at the development hereby approved shall meet the noise standard specified in BS8233:2014 for internal rooms/offices.

Reason: To ensure that the amenity of occupiers of the development site and surrounding premises is not adversely affected by noise in accordance with Policy RE8 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Car Park Management Plan

18. Prior to first occupation a Car Park Management Plan shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall stipulate the number of spaces and areas available on site for both staff and visitors and how parking will be allocated, monitored and enforced.

The approved car park management plan shall then be complied with in accordance with the approved details upon first occupation and maintained in perpetuity.

Reason: To ensure adequate car parking provision is made, but that does not cause an increase in the trip rate approved as part of the planning permission in accordance with Policies M1, M3 and RE7 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Construction Traffic Management Plan

19. Prior to the commencement of works a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall identify and incorporate;

- The CTMP must be appropriately titled, include the site and planning permission number.
- Routing of construction traffic and delivery vehicles is required to be shown and signed appropriately to the necessary standards/requirements. This includes means of access into the site.
- Details of and approval of any road closures needed during construction.
- Details of and approval of any traffic management needed during construction.
- Details of wheel cleaning/wash facilities – to prevent mud etc, in vehicle tyres/wheels, from migrating onto adjacent highway.
- Details of appropriate signing, to accord with the necessary standards/requirements, for pedestrians during construction works, including any footpath diversions.
- The erection and maintenance of security hoarding / scaffolding if required.
- A regime to inspect and maintain all signing, barriers etc.
- Contact details of the Project Manager and Site Supervisor responsible for onsite works to be provided.
- The use of appropriately trained qualified and certificated banksmen for guiding vehicles/unloading etc.
- No unnecessary parking of site related vehicles (worker transport etc) in the vicinity – details of where these will be parked and occupiers transported to/from site to be submitted for consideration and approval. Areas to be shown on a plan not less than 1:500.
- Layout plan of the site that shows structures, roads, site storage, compound, pedestrian routes etc.
- Local residents to be kept informed of significant deliveries and liaised with through the project. Contact details for person to whom issues should be raised with in first instance to be provided and a record kept of these and subsequent resolution.
- Any temporary access arrangements to be agreed with and approved by Highways Depot.
- Details of times for construction traffic and delivery vehicles, which must be outside network peak hours.

- The complete list of site-specific dust mitigation measures and recommendations within Appendix A (pages 3-7) of the Air Quality Assessment.

The approved CTMP shall then be complied with in accordance with the approved details throughout the construction of the development.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to mitigate the impact of construction vehicles on the surrounding highway network, road infrastructure and local residents, particularly at morning and afternoon peak traffic times, and to ensure that the overall dust impacts during the construction phase of the proposed development will remain as “not significant” in accordance with Policies RE6 and RE7 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Travel Plan

20. Prior to first occupation, a full Travel Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The approved Travel Plan shall then be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To promote sustainable modes of transport in accordance with Policy M2 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Security and Access Strategy

21. Prior to first occupation, a Security and Access Strategy shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved in writing. Approved measures shall be implemented prior to the first use of the development and maintained permanently thereafter.

The strategy shall include the following:

- Details of secure lines and access control points including postal deliveries.
 - Specifications of doors and windows and how these would protect secure areas of the development and external enclosures.
 - Details of proposed alarms, lighting and CCTV systems to be implemented across the site.
 - Vehicle mitigation measures against the risk of vehicular incursion.
- 13.** Reason: In the interests of public safety, to ensure a satisfactory standard of development and in the interests of security and the prevention of crime, in accordance with paragraphs 96 and 135 of the NPPF and Policy DH1 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Landscape Management Plan

Prior to first occupation a Landscape Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include long term design objections, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules and timing for all landscape areas.

The approved Landscape Management Plan shall be carried out as approved by the Local Planning Authority thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the area, public safety and the prevention of crime, in accordance with paragraphs 96 and 135 of the NPPF and Policies DH1, G7 and G8 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Drainage Strategy

22. Notwithstanding the submitted Sustainable Drainage Statement dated 05.11.2025, prior to commencement an updated Sustainable Drainage Statement showing all of the proposed SuDS features and drainage infrastructure as well as construction details for the permeable paving shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The Sustainable Drainage Statement shall then be implemented prior to first occupation in full accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to manage surface water through Sustainable Drainage Systems in accordance with Policy RE4 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036

Bicycle storage

23. The development shall not be brought into use until the cycle parking areas and means of enclosure have been provided within the site in accordance with the approved details and thereafter the areas shall be retained solely for the purpose of the parking of cycles.

Reason: To encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport in accordance with Policy M5 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Bin storage

24. The development shall not be brought into use until the bin storage areas and means of enclosure have been provided within the site in accordance with the approved details and thereafter the areas shall be retained solely for the purpose of bin storage.

Reason: To ensure adequate provision of bin storage in accordance with Policy DH7 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Informatives:-

- 1 In accordance with guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, the Council tries to work positively and proactively with applicants

towards achieving sustainable development that accords with the Development Plan and national planning policy objectives. This includes the offer of pre-application advice and, where reasonable and appropriate, the opportunity to submit amended proposals as well as time for constructive discussions during the course of the determination of an application. However, development that is not sustainable and that fails to accord with the requirements of the Development Plan and/or relevant national policy guidance will normally be refused. The Council expects applicants and their agents to adopt a similarly proactive approach in pursuit of sustainable development.

- 2 The development hereby permitted is liable to pay the Community Infrastructure Levy. The Liability Notice issued by Oxford City Council will state the current chargeable amount. A revised Liability Notice will be issued if this amount changes. Anyone can formally assume liability to pay, but if no one does so then liability will rest with the landowner. There are certain legal requirements that must be complied with. For instance, whoever will pay the levy must submit an Assumption of Liability form and a Commencement Notice to Oxford City Council prior to commencement of development. For more information see: www.oxford.gov.uk/CIL
- 3 Important: the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain objective of 10% applies to this planning permission and development cannot commence until a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted (as a condition compliance application) to and approved by Oxford City Council.

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition “(the biodiversity gain condition”) that development may not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

- 4 All species of bats and their roosts are protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Please note that, among other activities, it is a criminal offence to deliberately kill, injure or capture a bat; to damage, destroy or obstruct access to a breeding or resting place; and to intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while in a structure or place of shelter or protection. Occasionally bats can be found during the course of development even when the site appears unlikely to support them. In the event that this occurs, work should stop immediately and advice should be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist. A European Protected Species Mitigation Licence (EPSML) may be required before works can commence.
- 5 Thames Water will aim to provide customers with a minimum pressure of 10m head (approx 1 bar) and a flow rate of 9 litres/minute at the point where it

leaves Thames Waters pipes. The developer should take account of this minimum pressure in the design of the proposed development.

14. APPENDICES

- **Appendix 1** – Site location plan

15. HUMAN RIGHTS ACT 1998

15.1. 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.

16. SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

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