

Cambridge North One Milton Avenue 1&3 Station Row

Summary Proof of Evidence S4, S6&S7
APP/W0530/W/23/3315611

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make

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BA (Hons) Dip Arch (Cantab), RIBA ARB

Cambridge North

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Make Architects

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1.0 Qualifications and Experience

1.1

I am Greg Ivan Willis. I am a registered Architect with over 20 years experience. I studied at the Universities of Nottingham and Cambridge and joined Make in 2005.

1.2

My evidence relates to the design of building S4 (One Milton Avenue) and S6 and S7 (1&3 Station Row). Following the appointment of ACME as masterplanners, Make were subsequently asked to develop the initial design of Building S4 in response and collaboration with the emerging masterplan. Subsequently, Make were asked to develop the design for Buildings S6 and S7.

2.0 Scope of Evidence

2.1

In this evidence I first address the design development of building S4, One Milton Avenue and then buildings S6 and S7, 1&3 Station Row together.

Building S4

3.0 Brief

3.1

The client's brief for Building S4 is to provide a genuine mixed-use development set within an inclusive urban realm, incorporating a network of open public spaces. The design of an office led scheme is to build upon the setting of Cambridge North as a significant transport interchange.

4.0 Context

An introduction to the site

4.1

The site for One Milton Avenue lies within the Milton Ward at the edge of the East Chesterton Ward and within the wider North East Cambridge Area Action Plan (NEC AAP). It sits immediately north-west of the recent development around the Cambridge North Station, including the Novotel hotel and 1 Cambridge Square office development.

4.2

To the west of the Site is the Bramblefields Local Nature Reserve, Nuffield Road Allotments and Discovery Way, which comprises low density residential development of between one and three storeys.

An introduction to the building

4.3

One Milton Avenue is a proposed office building (GEA of 18,575 m²) including basement parking (cycles and vehicles) and ground floor retail, off Milton Avenue. The building is seven storeys above ground plus plant.

4.4

To the north-east corner, the building is set back at ground level along key pedestrian desire lines to encourage pedestrian movement through the masterplan into the residential area beyond. This is via a generous double height colonnade which mirrors the double height recess created for the office entrance.

4.5

The colonnade continues around the north, addressing the pedestrian and landscaped Milton Walk, with the entrance to the cycle amenities adjacent the new cycle route running east west. The landscaped Milton Walk also provides a suitable setting for additional activation space, ensuring active frontage adjacent all main pedestrian routes.

4.6

There are two terraces to levels 5 and 6. A brick parapet at level 5 ties the composition together. Wherever there is a step in the brick façade, for example to match the adjacent height of 1 Cambridge Square, a vertical metal and glass recess is exposed between the brick planes.

4.7

Above the brick parapet, the metal and glass facade continues to provide a more lightweight backdrop to the terraces, as well as continuing to include the rooftop plant screen within the overall building composition.

4.8

The terraces proposed are meaningful. They are legible, habitable, and capable of accommodating quality planting. The terraces also provide a stepped massing, which both visually relates to the residential blocks, as well as allowing more afternoon / evening light into Milton Walk.

5.0 Uses

5.1

In addition to the reception and office space on ground floor, several other facilities have been provided to contribute to a sustainable mix of uses, including retail, co-working space and cycle amenities.

6.0 Scale and Massing

6.1

One Milton Avenue provides a modern, sustainable office building that extends the existing commercial development of Cambridge Square, while supporting the wider masterplan as it develops to the north. To this end, several key principles were advanced as being significant design drivers. These included:

- The importance of the building as the gateway to the next development.
- The building as a mediator between the office cluster and the residential quarter.
- A strong sense of material identity to compliment the masterplan.

6.2

The total number of storeys matches the consented and partly constructed 1 Cambridge Square, the only minor difference in height being due to small incremental increases in floor-to-ceiling heights, (due to changes in national guidance – BCO Guide 2019) as well as the increased roof screen to conceal the advanced sustainable plant beyond.

6.3

The building mass is conceived as having a clear base, middle and top. The brick base is predominantly 5 storeys, wrapping around all four elevations. The middle section is defined by terraces to levels 5 and 6. The top is an extension of the middle, with the scale and rhythm of the window details continuing across the rooftop screen.

7.0 Access and Movement

7.1

An inclusive approach to access has been adopted throughout the design with the mixture of ground floor uses, pedestrian colonnades and clear division of pedestrian, cycle and vehicle routes providing a logical and permeable solution.

7.2

Cycle storage is either external at grade, internal at ground floor, or internal at basement level. All the cycle facilities are part of an 'end of trip' strategy where an increased level of fit out specification will be developed in detail design to ensure that the cycle entrances are a high-quality entrance for both user and building visitor.

7.3

The majority of the 400+cycle parking is delivered in a modern double stacked arrangement within the basement. This is to ensure as much of the ground floor as possible is preserved as active frontage.

8.0 Sense of Place and Identity

8.1

In accordance with the masterplan design principles, a complementary palette of limited materials enhance the character of the development and legibility of the building. Deep brickwork reveals increase natural shade whilst maintaining a strong identity. The concept has been to evoke a sense of craft and an appreciation for light and shade, through an articulated brick composition.

8.2

The transition in scale between the office cluster and the residential blocks is achieved in mass, detail and materiality. Terraces ensure the building reduces in size. Individual windows, rather than larger areas of glazing, provide a finer grain, and the transition from brick to metal offers a lighter touch to the upper storeys.

9.0 Resources and Lifespan

9.1

The environmental strategy has been developed in line with the Cambridge North Sustainability Strategy.

10.0 Conclusion

10.1

One Milton Avenue is of an exceptional design quality which is uniquely crafted to its specific setting. It will offer quality, flexible accommodation which serves both the modern workplace and the wider environment, whilst also providing a beautiful legacy for Cambridge North and its wider context.



Fig 01 Illustrative view of the entrance to One Milton Avenue looking south.

Buildings S6 and S7

11.0 Research and Development buildings

11.1

In February 2020, Make were asked to present a series of studies examining the strip of land adjacent the railway on the eastern edge. Following the appointment of ACME as masterplanners, Make were asked to develop the two remaining sites on the eastern edge for laboratory use.

11.2

1 and 3 Station Row are laboratory buildings facilitating life science research and development, and therefore, have been designed with specific design parameters. These include:

- Increased floor to floor heights.
- Increased horizontal planning grid.
- Increased services.
- Increased servicing provision.
- Increased technical specification including structural frame.
- A robust approach to flexibility and adaptability to cater for a range of sciences.

12.0 Brief

12.1

The client's brief is to provide commercial science space capable of accommodating life science research and development. The buildings have been suitably designed to be both flexible and adaptable, and to provide space for a range of tenants, from smaller scale incubator space through to more established users and possible head-quarter environments.

13.0 Context

An introduction to the site

13.1

The site sits north-east of the recent development around the Cambridge North Station, including the Novotel hotel, immediately adjacent the railway line and is currently accommodating a large surface car park.

13.2

The site is not located within the Cambridge Green Belt. However, the Cambridge Green Belt lies to the east of the site, to the east of the railway line, and further south-east and north-east of the site.

To the east of the site, the land between the railway lines and the River Cam is occupied by a low-density, low-rise development of caravan parks and low-grade industrial units accessed from Fen Road.

An introduction to the building

13.3

1 Station Row has a GEA of 11,407 m² and 3 Station Row has a GEA of 12,061 m². In addition, there is a combined basement for cycle and vehicle parking. Both buildings are four storeys above ground plus plant with step backs to levels 3 and 4 to the east and west elevations, offering amenity space for the building users.

13.4

The side passages contain pocket parks, and visitor cycle parking. The Eastern elevation contains colonnaded pedestrian links either side of an external delivery loading area. Locating the ground floor support services to the eastern edge adjacent the service area ensures the entire frontage of Station Row can have active frontage and remain pedestrian and cycle friendly, in accordance with the Station Row Character Area as defined in the masterplan.

13.5

The LCVIA states that the eastern edge is particularly sensitive due to the potential effects on views and landscape character. It suggests a number of design principles and how they could apply to development at the eastern edge of the site. It can be demonstrated that the buildings S6 and S7 have responded to these.

14.0 Uses

14.1

In addition to the reception and R&D space on ground floor, several other uses have been provided to contribute to a sustainable mix of accommodation, including retail, co-working space and cycle amenities.

15.0 Scale and Massing

15.1

Central to the massing strategy for 1&3 Station Row was the adoption of the masterplan approach to further divide the two buildings into a series of 'fingers' running east-west. This approach allows the laboratories to be considered as a row of smaller elements, providing a unified rhythm of building form.

15.2

Through detailed exploration, an articulated approach of the building form, behind a softened and landscape edge, has been adopted. This includes:

- Articulated fingers with multiple terracing to levels 3 and 4, heights corresponding to the laboratory MEP plant strategy.
- A stepping in plan between S6 and S7 and a step back from the railway, to enable significant and varied landscaping to soften the eastern edge.
- Greening of terraces to further break down the mass and material bulk of the buildings.
- A change in materials across the 'fingers' to further provide a visual contrast throughout the year, emphasising light and shade to avoid the appearance of a solid block of colour.

15.3

The eastern elevation is perceived as a continuation of the urban edge, established with the construction of the adjacent hotel and station. To that end, and alongside the detailed application of the Mobility Hub, the scale and massing of the buildings present a positive elevation towards the railway. Rather than a 'back', they address the eastern edge as a series of highly articulated and beautifully detailed terraces.

16.0 Access and Movement

16.1

An inclusive approach to access has been adopted throughout the design of 1&3 Station Row with the mixture of ground floor uses, integrated landscaping and clear division of pedestrian, cycle and vehicle routes providing a logical and permeable solution.

16.2

The majority of cycle spaces are at basement level with safe, legible access and welfare facilities clustered around the main building cores. All the cycle facilities are part of an 'end of trip' strategy where an increased level of fit out specification will be developed in detail design to ensure that the cycle entrances are a high-quality entrance for both user and building visitor.

17.0 Sense of Place and Identity

17.1

In accordance with the design principles established in the masterplan, the bulk of the building mass has been divided into a series of 'fingers', running east-west. These fingers are further expressed in form and materiality to create a unifying rhythm across the principal western and eastern elevations.

17.2

The design development of the facades centred around the introduction of two planning grids. These articulate the alternating fingers, provide legible ground floor entrances, and define the recessed terraces. The larger, more civic grid is composed of a precast composition, and is continuous from the ground to the screened plant level. The smaller, more vertical grid is composed of brick piers and contains the building cantilevers, marking the entrances and stepping back to reveal the level 03 amenity terrace and the level 04 plant room screen. A change in material and colour on the eastern terraces further provides a visual contrast throughout the year, regardless of the planting.

18.0 Resources and Lifespan

18.1

The environmental strategy has been developed in line with the Cambridge North Sustainability Strategy.

19.0 Conclusion

19.1

1&3 Station Row offer exceptional laboratory space in a sustainable and accessible environment. The buildings have a high level of detailing with each elevation responding to its immediate setting. The two laboratories, perceived as a beautiful row of terraces, provide a thoughtful frontage to the development and a well-considered, contextual response to the layered city edge.



Fig 02 Illustrative view of 3 Station Row from the railway, looking west.