

RD/MC/160

**Evidence regarding land south of the
Cambridge Biomedical Campus**

Part 1 – Covering letter

6-8 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB2 1NH

T: 01223 368771
F: 01223 346627

Your ref:
Our ref: 3788006v1

Mr. David Roberts
Planning Policy Team
South Cambridgeshire District Council
South Cambridgeshire Hall
Cambourne Business Park
Cambourne
Cambridgeshire
CB23 6EA

25 October 2016

Dear David,

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE LOCAL PLAN – PROPOSED EXTENSION TO CBC

I write in respect of the above and the draft Proposed Modification (PM/SC/8/A) to the submission draft of the Local Plan that would provide for a Phase 3 expansion of the Cambridge Bio-Medical Campus onto land owned by Cambridgeshire County Council.

Supporting representations to the Proposed Modification were submitted by Carter Jonas on behalf of the County Council in January 2016. The representations were supplemented by a report on Flood Risk Constraints prepared by PBA (report reference 36873/4001 Rev A). Subsequently, following discussions with officers, it was agreed that further technical work should be undertaken to demonstrate the feasibility of the development of a Phase 3 expansion of the Cambridge Bio-Medical Campus as anticipated in the proposed modification.

Appended to this letter are the following documents and drawings:

1. Indicative Masterplan prepared by FPCR reference 7307-L-02 Rev D
2. Section A drawing prepared by FPCR reference 7307-L-03
3. Flood Modelling & Drainage Strategy Report by PBA reference 36873/2001 Rev D
4. Preliminary Site Access Study by PBA reference 36873/2001/001 Rev B
5. Landscape & Visual Appraisal by FPCR reference 7307/LVA Rev B
6. Ecological Appraisal by FPCR Rev B
7. Arboricultural Assessment by FPCR

Indicative Masterplan and Section A Drawing

The Indicative Masterplan (7307-L-02 Rev D) accompanying this note illustrates a site area of 8.91 Ha (22.02 acres) resulting in a developable area of 5.24 Ha (12.94 acres). The indicative layout has been guided by the recommendations of the landscape study and infrastructure requirements including sustainable drainage.

Carter Jonas commercial advice has recommended a development density per acre set at 15,000 square feet (35% site coverage). The Indicative Masterplan illustrates the provision of 330,300 square feet in total of laboratory / office space at a ratio of 65:35, i.e. 214,691 square feet of laboratory space, and 115,609 square feet of office space.

The layout illustrates buildings that have been designed on a 9m grid and are a maximum 18m in their width. As such, every floor of each building offers 6,975 square feet of gross internal floor area.

The Indicative Masterplan shows 16 laboratory / office units and assumes that all buildings are three storeys in height. The buildings that are located within the adjoining Phase 2 development are to be six storeys and to provide a gradation in building height as development progresses in a southerly direction.

As advised by the local highway authority, one car park space is advised per 40 square metres worth of gross floorspace and as such the proposed development makes provision for 768 car park spaces. With standard car park space and circulation sizes considered, circa 168,500 square feet of car park is required on site and this is illustrated on the Indicative Masterplan as being provided by two multi storey car parks of four storeys in height circa 21,000 square feet each in footprint. A four storey car park would be similar in height to a three storey laboratory / office building.

The Indicative Masterplan layout is landscape-driven and a suitable reflection of the Phase 2 extension development located to the north of the site. Wide buffers are provided to the boundaries and these areas will also include elements of the SuDS arrangements. The Section A drawing illustrates the disposition of development with on-site Green Infrastructure and the proposed SuDS arrangement at its closest point to the Nine Wells LNR.

Flood Modelling & Drainage Strategy

The flood modelling has shown that surface water run-off from adjacent areas is a source of potential flood risk at the site. Flooding was predicted to occur in the 30 year event and all more extreme flood events. Flood enters the site from the south and eastern boundaries, and flows in a south-westerly direction across the site.

However the modelling has also demonstrated that the flood risk can be mitigated by construction of a perimeter ditch to catch the surface water run-off and convey it to the main drainage network. Mitigation measures including flow control and an appropriate storage volume will be required to prevent any detrimental impact on water levels and flows downstream. Storage could be provided in the form of attenuation ponds, online weirs with widened ditches, or in combination with the on-site surface water drainage system. Off-site measure to contain overland flow might also be considered with the landowners landholdings.

Geotechnical desk study assessment indicates that the groundwater underlying the site does not contribute to the Nine Wells spring line. As the site is not connected to the Nine Wells aquifer, any minor residual impact on ground recharge rates from the site will not impact on the spring flows.

Additional surface water run-off will be generated by the impermeable surfaces of the proposed development. A maximum allowable discharge of 2 l/s/ha is suggested, in line with adjacent developments and consultation with Cambridge City Council. A management train of SuDS measures is strongly recommended to promote water quality as a primary driver and mitigate the impacts on water quality and quantity of the receptor watercourse from the Nine Wells Spring. A large storage pond in the lowest western corner of the site is suggested, with water conveyed to the pond via a conveyance ditch, swales, rills and rain gardens that further supplement the storage. This arrangement is reflected in the Indicative Masterplan.

Preliminary Site Access Study

The findings of Preliminary Site Access Study may be summarised as follows:

- The proposed development site can accommodate approximately 30,685 square metres of Laboratory and Office land use.
- Vehicular access to the proposed development can be provided via two priority T Junctions from Dame Mary Archer Way. Dame Mary Archer Way was constructed in 2013 to provide access to

future development in the area and is considered to be of a good quality and well aligned in the vicinity of the site.

- The existing cycle and pedestrian facilities in the vicinity of the site will ensure that the proposed development can be accessed sustainably and be well connected to existing and future developments adjacent to the site.
- Nearby bus stops at Addenbrooke's Hospital will ensure that the development will have excellent public transport access to Cambridge and the wider area, including access to the Cambridge Guided Busway that provides fast and frequent services around the city.
- Based on the multi modal analysis and the applied modal splits, the proposed development is forecast to generate 171 and 146 car driver trips during the AM and PM peak hours, and 931 car driver trips over the course of a typical day.
- The addition of vehicle trips associated with the proposed development on Dame Mary Archer Way is forecast to have a minimal impact on the operation of the east and west Phase 2 site access junctions as both are predicted to operate with a considerable amount of spare capacity in all scenarios assessed.

Taking into account the findings in the Preliminary Access Study it is concluded that the proposed site is considered to be suitable for development from a highway and transport perspective.

Landscape & Visual Appraisal

A Landscape and Visual Appraisal has assessed landscape character and visual amenity and the resulting landscape and visual effects of the proposed development on the receiving landscape and visual resource. The landscape and visual effects have been considered in relation to the scheme as illustrated on the Indicative Masterplan.

Whilst there would inevitably be some adverse landscape and visual effects at the outset (year of completion) it is judged that the effects of the proposed development and the consequential effects would, however, be localised and limited in their extent.

The proposed development will comprise of a number of office blocks/laboratories up to three storeys with associated parking and green infrastructure, including a 5 – 15m landscape buffer around the boundaries, tree planting and SUDS features. Existing hedgerows and trees of value will be retained where possible.

Overall, the effects of the proposed development on the landscape character and landscape features for the site and immediate context ranges from moderate adverse – negligible initially. However once the development and associated green infrastructure has become established the effects in general would have lessened as the new buildings would have become softened within the landscape. The introduction of SUDS and green infrastructure will initially have a minor adverse effect; however once established, they will provide minor beneficial effects for the site and proposed development. Due to the location on the edge of Cambridge, adjacent to an area of existing and permitted development, the proposed allocation site is influenced by the settlement edge and would appear in context. The overall effect on landscape character and landscape features is considered to be minor adverse.

The Visual Envelope for the site is well contained due to the flat topography combined with intervening tree cover and buildings, as a result there are no long range visual receptors and the majority of visual receptors are in relatively close proximity to the site.

Visual effects range from moderate adverse to minor adverse – negligible upon completion with the greatest effect of the proposed allocation upon those receptors immediately adjacent to the site including: users of footpaths and Public Right of Way 39/8 and residents of residential properties to the west of Babraham Road. The users of the roads, residents of properties off Babraham Road and Addenbrooke's Road and the users of the Cambridge Bio-Medical Campus and Addenbrooke's Hospital will have lesser effects due to distance, intervening buildings and filtered views.

Effects will reduce further by year 10 once the landscape buffer planting and green infrastructure around the development has become established assisting with filtering of views. Effects are likely to reduce to moderate – minor adverse for those receptors adjacent to the site with the remainder of receptors reducing to minor adverse to negligible, resulting in an overall minor adverse effect upon visual receptors.

In conclusion, it is assessed that the landscape character and visual amenity of the site has the ability in which to absorb change through the introduction of high quality development. The proposed allocation for a number of laboratories/office buildings up to three¹ storeys with associated green infrastructure would be appropriate within this landscape context and it is judged that the effects, as a result of the proposed allocation, would not give rise to any unacceptable landscape and visual harm.

Ecological Appraisal

An extended Phase 1 habitat survey and desk study has been undertaken. The desk study has confirmed there are two nationally valuable statutory designated sites and six non-statutory designated sites located within the local area. A number of local protected and notable species records were also returned from the local area, including bats, otter, water vole and bird species typical of urban edge and farmland habitats.

The majority of the site comprises arable habitat of generally low ecological value although it supports a number of farmland bird species through the year. The site is partially bounded by a damp ditch and established hedgerows and off-site woodland blocks that provided species and structural diversity. These features are hence considered to be of local ecological value and will be retained and buffered within a continuous broad corridor of shrub, tree and grassland planting, providing enhanced foraging and commuting opportunities for a range of local fauna at the site level including foraging and commuting bats, and tree/shrub nesting birds.

Precautionary mitigation measures are recommended to ensure site preparation and construction works minimise the risk of adverse impacts to nesting birds during the breeding season. Further recommendations are made to ensure that works proceed in line with best practice to minimise the risk of an adverse impact to local watercourses, including those associated with local non-statutory sites.

A minor adverse impact is predicted on local farmland birds of species that utilise open arable habitats, due to the loss of this habitat from the site. Given the size and location of the site and the continued availability of similar habitat within the wider landscape residual effects due to displacement are not considered to be significant. No other impacts on protected species are considered likely to occur as a result of the proposed scheme.

Recommendations are made for habitat enhancement at the site level, with suitable species for inclusion within the planting scheme provided. The scheme will additionally provide two permanent ponds, a balancing facility and areas of more formal planting to provide a net biodiversity gain across the site.

The scheme has been designed to provide a strong ecological buffer to the neighbouring offsite Nine Wells Local Nature Reserve that will simultaneously both deter pedestrian access from the site and provide alternative opportunities for recreation and amenity within the site boundary, including a network of pathways through landscaped areas, and features of interest including the ponds and more formal planted areas.

Given the generous green infrastructure proposed on site, careful scheme design and adherence to best practice construction methods, no impact is anticipated to the integrity of the neighbouring Nine Wells Local Nature Reserve or any other designated site.

¹ The proposed multi storey car parks at four storeys are assessed as the same height as three storey B1 R&D/Office buildings

Arboricultural Assessment

The Indicative Masterplan allows for existing tree cover to be retained, incorporated and enhanced through new planting that will complement the current vegetation and increase the net canopy cover considerably. The proposals should be considered a significant improvement on the current situation in terms of arboriculture which will not only increase tree cover but will also provide greater habitat biodiversity and landscape screening between the proposed development and surrounding landscape.

Summary and Conclusion

The County Council has commissioned further technical studies with a particular focus on matters of concern identified in the representations received commenting and objecting upon the proposed modification allocation site; namely drainage, landscape and visual impact, ecology, highways and trees. The technical studies have enabled the formulation of a scheme that would provide a meaningful quantum of new laboratory / office buildings, accommodating associated infrastructure including car parking and SuDS provision, within a substantial and high quality landscaped setting. The site's location will enable high quality sustainable transport connections to be made with the surrounding area and the City.

The technical studies demonstrate that with appropriate mitigation, the Indicative Masterplan represents the basis of a scheme that may be developed without unacceptable or significant adverse impacts. It is concluded that the work undertaken provides a suitable evidence base for the proposed modification of the submitted Local Plan to provide for an extension to the Bio-Medical Campus as envisaged in PM/SC/8/A.

I hope that you find this information of assistance. Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Mark Hyde MRTPI AIEMA
Partner

E: mark.hyde@carterjonas.co.uk
T: 01223 326825
M: 07738 878181