

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

5 November 2014

AUTHOR/S: Planning and New Communities Director

Application Number:	S/1676/14/OL
Parish(es):	Babraham
Proposal:	Outline application for development of up to 10,000 square metres of research and development floorspace, along with access and associated infrastructure
Site address:	Babraham Research Campus, Babraham
Applicant(s):	Babraham Bioscience Technologies Limited
Recommendation:	Delegated approval
Key material considerations:	Principle of development in the Green Belt, visual impact, impact on character of Conservation Area and setting of Listed Buildings, residential amenity, highway safety and travel plan, ecology, flood risk, archaeology, sustainability and public art.
Committee Site Visit:	Yes
Departure Application:	Yes
Presenting Officer:	Lorraine Casey
Application brought to Committee because:	The Officer recommendation is contrary to the response of Babraham Parish Council
Date by which decision due:	10 October 2014 (time extension agreed until 28 November 2014)

Planning History

1. S/0195/99/O – Outline planning permission granted for a two phase development of new research laboratories, facilities and infrastructure. The consent was subject to a Masterplan and to a Section 106 Agreement requiring the implementation of a Travel to Work Plan.
2. S/0003/03/F - Application for the renewal of the previous outline permission approved.

3. S/1402/06/F – Renewal of outline planning permission S/0003/03/F, together with a variation to the access road and roundabout works.
4. Under the above outline permissions, Reserved Matters Consents were granted for a number of new buildings and for the redevelopment of part of the site.
5. S/2016/11 – Outline planning permission granted for four research and development buildings and associated infrastructure, including details of the main access road, lighting, standby generator building and flood compensation works. The application was subsequently referred to the Secretary of State who determined it did not wish to call in the application.
6. S/0600/12/RM – Reserved matters consent granted for research and development building (Building 910).
7. S/0616/13/RM - Reserved matters consent granted for research and development building (Building 930).
8. S/2688/13/RM - Reserved matters consent granted for research and development building (Building 920).
9. S/2778/13/EI – EIA screening opinion request for proposed development comprising up to 10,000 square metres of research and development floorspace, including vehicular and pedestrian access and associated development. The Council determined that an EIA was not required.

Planning Policies

10. **National Planning Policy Framework 2012**
11. **Local Development Framework 2007**

DP/1: Sustainable Development
 DP/2: Design of New Development
 DP/3: Development Criteria
 DP/4: Infrastructure and New Developments
 DP/6: Construction Methods
 DP/7: Development Frameworks
 GB/1: Development in the Green Belt
 GB/2: Mitigating the Impact of Development in the Green Belt
 GB/4: Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt
 ET/2: Promotion of Clusters
 ET/5: Development for the Expansion of Forms
 SF/6: Public Art and New Development
 NE/1: Energy Efficiency
 NE/3: Renewable Energy Technologies in New Development
 NE/4: Landscape Character Areas
 NE/6: Biodiversity
 NE/10: Foul Drainage – Alternative Drainage Systems
 NE/11: Flood Risk
 NE/12: Water Conservation
 NE/14: Lighting Proposals
 NE/15: Noise Pollution
 NE/16: Emissions
 CH/2: Archaeological Sites

CH/4: Development Within the Curtilage or Setting of a Listed Building
CH/5: Conservation Areas
TR/1: Planning for More Sustainable Travel
TR/2: Car and Cycle Parking Standards
TR/3: Mitigating Travel Impact
Development Affecting Conservation Areas SPD – Adopted January 2009
Public Art SPD – Adopted January 2009
Trees and Development Sites SPD – Adopted January 2009
Biodiversity SPD – Adopted July 2009
Listed Buildings SPD – Adopted July 2009
Landscape in New Developments SPD – Adopted March 2010
District Design Guide SPD – Adopted March 2010
Health Impact Assessment SPD – Adopted March 2011

12. **Draft Local Plan 2013**

S/1: Vision
S/2: Objectives of the Local Plan
S/3: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
S/4: Cambridge Green Belt
S/7: Development Frameworks
CC/1: Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change
CC/3: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy in New Developments
CC/6: Construction Methods
CC/8: Sustainable Drainage Systems
CC/9: Managing Flood Risk
HQ/1: Design Principles
NH/4: Biodiversity
NH/8: Mitigating the Impact of Development in and adjoining the Green Belt
NH/14: Heritage Assets
E/9: Promotion of Clusters
E/16: Expansion of Existing Businesses in the Countryside
SC/10: Lighting Proposals
SC/11: Noise Pollution
SC/12: Contaminated Land
TI/2: Planning for Sustainable Travel
TI/3: Parking Provision

Consultations

13. ***Babraham Parish Council*** – Recommends refusal, stating that it does not approve of any development on Green Belt land.
14. ***The Landscape Design Officer*** – Raises no objections stating that, in principle, the proposed landscape works, particularly the use of parkland specimen trees creating broken views into the site, is welcomed. However, the proposed earth bund and dense woodland planting should be reduced to allow views through to the adjacent grass land. If attenuation ponds are to be included, their locations and design should be adjusted to be preferably lower down the site. Conditions should be added to any consent to require details of hard and soft landscaping (including 10 year maintenance and management schedule) and details of tree and hedge protection.
15. ***The Trees Officer*** – Raises no in-principle objections but requests the provision of a revised tree protection plan, drawn to an appropriate scale and incorporating measurements for barrier positions.

16. **The Ecology Officer** – The principle is acceptable but the design could be adapted as follows to give a better outcome:
- Parts of the site have been laid out in recent years as wildflower meadow habitats. Partial loss of some of the habitat is accepted but the remaining areas must be conserved, protected through the course of development and an agreed management arrangement put in place.
 - The tree belt to the north-west is very thick and will result in more of the established meadow habitat being lost. This should be replaced with a more permeable tree belt, possibly limes, where the meadow can still grow beneath the maturing trees.
 - The meadow habitat coming down to the edge of the floodplain should be re-seeded where necessary and positively managed.
 - The small copse on the south-west side of the site is not needed as this reduces the extent of meadow habitat. There could be a scattering of trees here to give a parkland feel in several years.
 - The River Granta County Wildlife Site is the most interesting feature of biodiversity interest. This is quite shaded in places. A scheme of ecological enhancement should be agreed with the applicant to further expand on successful works that have been completed at the Campus.
 - The replacement of failed trees to the south of the river is not considered necessary as woodland management would probably require their thinning out now the original tree belt has grown.
 - The SuDS appear to be on the higher land rather than at the bottom of the hill. The FRA states infiltration will be acceptable on the site. The location of the SuDS should therefore be questioned and a suitable planting scheme agreed from the outset, with the SuDS designed to look like areas of grassland rather than ponds.
17. **The Environmental Health Officer** – The site has an area of possible unknown filled ground. Due to the presence of on-site workers and workspace, any consent should be subject to a contamination investigation condition.
18. **The Local Highways Authority** – Raises no objections, stating no significant adverse effect on the highway should result from the proposal if planning permission is granted as the site is already accessed via acceptable arrangements.
19. **County Major Developments** – Initially raised a holding objection and requested the following further information in relation to the Transport Statement and Travel Plan:
- Up-to-date information on cycle links.
 - Peak period details.
 - Further details of level of occupation of current site at time of survey.
 - Person trip generation for new development required.
 - Clarification of trip distribution flows.
 - Revised junction modelling assessments.
 - Clarification of level of cycle parking to be provided.
 - Level of parking on site and how this will be managed.
 - Details of how staff will be encouraged to use alternative modes of transport.

Following the receipt of further details, the Major Developments Team has removed its holding objection subject to the following being secured by way of a S106 Agreement or planning condition:

- Submission of a revised Travel Plan prior to occupation of the development.
 - Measures set out in the Travel Plan to be secured including the commitment to provide the staff bus for a further 5-year period following first occupation of the development.
20. **The County Archaeologist** – The results of a recent archaeological evaluation demonstrates the continuation of archaeological remains of a Roman settlement (CAU report 1230), much of which has been previously investigated in advance of recent development to the east. There are no objections to the proposal but, in view of the presence of archaeological remains, it is recommended that a staged archaeological condition be placed on any planning consent to ensure that appropriate mitigation of the construction impacts upon the archaeological resource can occur prior to the commencement of development.
21. **The Environment Agency** – The FRA demonstrates a sequential approach has been taken in the design of the development and the build is located in FZ1. Some ground investigations indicate there is good infiltration potential and should ensure site will not increase risk of flooding. There is great potential for the site to fully incorporate SuDS into the development design, eg, through green roofs, storm water planters. The development will be acceptable subject to a surface-water drainage condition being added to any consent. The site is located above a Principal Aquifer and could present a potential pollutant linkage to controlled waters. Conditions requiring surface water disposal and pollution control schemes should therefore also be added to any consent.
22. **Anglian Water** – No objections providing a condition requiring a foul water strategy is added to any consent.

Representations

23. The owners of the nearest residential property, Cambridge Lodge, have raised the following concerns:
- Opposed to the development as the land is Green Belt.
 - If approved, impact on property should be minimised as Cambridge Lodge will become sandwiched between the A1307 and a large commercial site.
 - Visual screening – there should be sufficient planting to screen the house and garden from the development, and this screening should be effective during the winter. The existing deciduous planting is very exposed in the winter.
 - Noise screening and reduction – Noise levels should not increase perceptibly either during construction or once the buildings are in use. If noise is anticipated, appropriate screening should be put in place.
 - Light pollution – Lighting should be of a type that would not spill into the garden or house.
 - Noise and light pollution during construction. Can it be restricted to 8am-6pm during the week, and screening be put in place before work starts?

Planning Comments

Description and proposal

24. The Babraham Research Institute Campus is one of the UK's leading centres for bioscience innovation, and lies within the countryside and Green Belt to the south-

east of Cambridge and on the north-west side of the village of Babraham. The campus comprises a range of research and development buildings located on the north-west and south-east side of Babraham Hall, a 19th century Grade II Listed Building situated within a 450 acre parkland setting. At the south-western edge of the premises, is the Grade I Listed Church of St Peter, whilst the River Granta runs to the south-west of the Hall and Church. The southern part of the campus grounds lies within the village Conservation Area. Vehicular access to the Institute is obtained via the A1307 and a relatively recently constructed roundabout at the north-western edge of the campus grounds.

25. The application site extends to 8.174 hectares (with a proposed net developable area of 4.8 hectares) and is located on the north-western side of the existing built-up part of the campus. The land falls from east to west, sloping down towards the River Granta, whilst the site's eastern edge is bounded by the main access road from the A1307. A detached residential dwelling, Cambridge Lodge, lies on the east side of the site. The majority of the site falls within Flood Zone 1, whilst the western part closest to the river falls within Flood Zones 2-3.
26. The planning application seeks outline consent for the following:
 - Up to 10,000 square metres of research & development floorspace.
 - Vehicular and pedestrian access from the main Campus access road
 - Car parking
 - Service infrastructure
 - Drainage
 - Groundworks
 - Structural landscaping
27. The application has been accompanied by a number of supporting statements. These include: Design and Access Statement, Planning Statement, Heritage Statement, Archaeology Report, Ecological Appraisal, Tree Survey, Travel Plan, Transport Assessment, Flood Risk Assessment, Noise Survey and Waste Management Design.
28. An illustrative Masterplan has been submitted which indicates that the development would comprise 3-4 research and development buildings. These would be located within the eastern part of the site (Flood Zone 1), whilst the area that falls within the higher risk Flood Zones 2-3 would be set aside for habitat and landscape enhancements only.
29. There are currently over 800 jobs on the site and the proposed development is anticipated to create up to 450 additional jobs (up to 1250 jobs in total on the whole Campus).

Principle of development

30. The site lies outside the defined village framework for Babraham and within the countryside and Green Belt. The built-up part of the Campus is designated within LDF Policy GB/4 as a Major Developed Site in the Green Built. The proposed site does not fall within this area and there is also no proposal to replicate this policy within the emerging local plan.
31. Policy DP/7 of the 2007 Local Development Framework states that, outside village frameworks, only development for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other uses that need to be located in the countryside will be permitted.

LDF Policy GB/1 contains a presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt, as defined within PPG2, which has since been superseded by the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF). Paragraph 89 of the NPPF states that planning authorities should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt, with exceptions to this being:

- Buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- Provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- The extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- The replacement of a building, providing it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building, and providing the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- Limited infilling in villages and limited affordable housing to meet defined local needs;
- Limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use, which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.

32. The expansion of the existing Campus would be contrary to LDF Policy DP/7. In addition, the development would not fall within the aforementioned list of exceptions to the general presumption against the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt. As a result, the proposal would constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt and has therefore been advertised and treated as a Departure from the Development Plan.
33. The NPPF makes it clear that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. The onus is on the applicant to demonstrate why permission should be granted, and the NPPF makes it clear that 'very special circumstances' will not exist unless the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other material considerations. It is therefore next necessary to consider whether the development results in any further harm in addition to that caused by inappropriateness.

Countryside impact

34. Policy DP/7 of the 2007 LDF seeks to ensure the countryside is protected from gradual encroachment and to help guard against incremental growth in unsustainable locations. These key concerns are explored more fully below.

Visual impact and openness of the Green Belt

35. NPPF paragraph 79 states that openness is an essential characteristic of the Green Belt. As the site does not have any structures on it at present, the erection of buildings on the land would adversely affect the openness of the Green Belt.

36. A Landscape and visual assessment has been submitted with the application. This explains that the site is generally well-contained by the topography of the land and boundary screening/planting, but also acknowledges that the most significant visual effects would be on views from the roundabout on the A1307, and, to a lesser extent, from public footpaths and the Sawston to Babraham cycle route to the west. In recognition of these impacts, the submitted landscape strategy seeks to retain trees within and adjoining the site, and to enhance existing landscaping through the provision of new native tree and shrub planting together with a modest bund adjacent the existing vehicular access. There is a single oak tree within the eastern part of the site which, although relatively small, is in-keeping with the parkland character of the site and currently proposed for retention. (This tree has some stem bleed that may result in a requirement to fell it at a later date).
37. Further enhancements proposed outside the site edged red but within the wider campus grounds include: the strengthening of relatively recent planting near the A1307 roundabout; enhancement of the A1307 boundary extending southwards from the roundabout and further planting belts within the river corridor area.
38. The illustrative drawings indicate that the buildings would be set well back from the central spine road, and would also be well separated from the recent development to the south, thereby providing space for extensive landscaped buffers to the east (to include the retained oak tree) and south. This would help to break up the massing of the development itself, as well as between the site and the most recently developed north-west quadrant.
39. The Landscape Design Officer has welcomed the proposed landscape works in principle, particularly the use of parkland specimen trees. However, some concern has been raised that the size of the earth bund and dense woodland planting would prevent broken views through and across the site and conflict with its open parkland character. Revisions to the landscape strategy have been requested in order to achieve an appropriate balance between screening the development and respecting the landscaped character of the Campus. Discussions in respect of this are currently ongoing between the applicant's agent and Landscape Design Officer.
40. The concerns raised by the Trees Officer can be addressed through the imposition of a landscaping condition as part of which further details of the tree protection for each reserved matters site would need to be provided.
41. Subject to the receipt of revisions to the landscape strategy to satisfy these concerns, it is considered that the visual impacts of the development can be adequately mitigated against.

Impact on the character of the Conservation Area and upon the setting of adjacent Listed Buildings

42. The site area falls outside the Conservation Area and within the setting of the Grade II Listed Babraham Hall and the Grade I Listed St Peters Church. Under the 2003 outline consent for the Campus, a Masterplan was drawn up which provided a framework for the development of the site and defined clear sight lines required to be kept clear of buildings in order to protect the setting of these buildings and the Conservation Area.
43. The proposed development would follow the principles established in the previous Masterplan, namely to contain development behind the building line that provides key

views and sight lines of the Hall and Church. The site is located further away from the Hall, church and Conservation Area than the existing campus buildings and screened from the historic part of the site and village by modern research and development buildings within the campus grounds. As such, it is considered the proposal would preserve the setting of Hall and Church as well as the character and appearance of the adjacent Conservation Area.

Residential amenity

44. The owners of the nearest residential property, Cambridge Lodge, have raised some concerns regarding the impact of the development upon their amenities in relation to visual screening, noise impacts (both during construction and when the buildings are occupied) and light pollution. The boundary of Cambridge Lodge is sited approximately 55 metres from the edge of the proposed site and in excess of 120 metres away from the indicative positions of the proposed buildings. The landscape strategy includes some additional planting close to the neighbouring dwelling's rear/western boundary as well as an approximately 60 metre deep landscaped buffer behind which the buildings would be sited. It is considered that these measures, together with existing planting, would help to mitigate against the visual impacts of the development.
45. With regards to noise issues, noise surveys have been undertaken and conclude that a scheme for mechanical services plant noise emission can be drawn up to ensure there would be no noise disturbance to neighbours. A condition requiring details of any plant and machinery would need to be added to any consent. Noise impacts during the construction period can be controlled through the use of a planning condition to restrict the hours of use of power-operated machinery whilst works are ongoing.
46. No lighting details have been provided as part of the application, with the application stating that final details would be worked up in accordance with each reserved matters application. A condition requiring details of any lighting should be added to any planning consent.
47. In summary, it is considered that the impact of the development upon the amenities of occupiers of Cambridge Lodge can be satisfactorily mitigated through the imposition of planning conditions.

Highway safety and travel plan

48. The application has been accompanied by a Transport Statement and Travel Plan which have sought to consider the impact on the highways network in respect of all modes of travel. This has included traffic counts, junction assessments and a Travel Plan that is designed to achieve a 10% reduction in single occupancy car travel.
49. Previous permissions relating to the Campus required a roundabout and new access to be provided onto the A1307 as well as the closure of the former site access from Babraham High Street. This was implemented ahead of schedule, thereby providing a safe means of access directly off the A1307 and reducing traffic within the village itself. This new access was originally designed to cater for the development of the entire site and more employees than exist on site at present.
50. In addition to the new roundabout, the site is also well-positioned to encourage travel by alternative and sustainable modes of transport. There is a bus stop (with bus links to Cambridge and Haverhill) at the entrance to the site, whilst there is a good network

of footpaths and cycleways in the area. Recently, a cycle link between Babraham and Sawston has been completed and, earlier this year, a link between Whittlesford Station and Granta Park (along the A505) provided. Works to extend the cycle path between the Campus and Cambridge have also recently been approved and construction commenced earlier this year. There is already a high level of cycle usage amongst employees and the improvements to the cycle network in the area should only serve to enhance this usage. A staff shuttle bus service from Cambridge has also been trialled. To date, this has not proven viable but the applicants have indicated a commitment and willingness to continue this trial and it is hoped the extra employment the development would bring forward would help to make this a more viable proposition.

51. The Local Highways Authority considers the existing access arrangements to be adequate to cater for the proposed development.
52. The County Council's Major Developments Team initially raised a holding objection, stating that further and updated information were required in relation to the Transport Statement and Travel Plan. The requested information has since been provided and this has resolved the initial concerns subject to conditions requiring the submission and subsequent implementation of a Travel Plan.

Ecology issues

53. A Phase 1 Ecological Assessment has been undertaken which concludes that the site is of low ecological value but identifies the river and woodland areas around the site as having some ecological value. Within these areas, biodiversity enhancements include the retention of chalk grassland, new native tree and shrub planting and bird and bat boxes.
54. The Ecology Officer has raised no in-principle objections to the development, but has made a number of recommendations regarding how the scheme could be further developed in order to secure an improved level of biodiversity enhancement. Revisions are being carried out to the proposed landscape strategy to address these concerns. A condition requiring the provision of a site-wide ecological enhancement scheme would also be necessary should consent be granted.

Flood risk

55. The area upon which it is proposed to accommodate the new research and development buildings and associated car parking falls entirely within Flood Zone 1, with the areas closer to the river (designated as Flood Zones 2-3) being set aside for landscape and ecological enhancements.
56. The application has been accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment which states that surface-water can be adequately managed on site through a combination of soakaways and surface storage, thereby ensuring the proposals would not be at risk of flooding or increase flood risk elsewhere.
57. The Environment Agency has raised no objections to the application, advising that the surface-water drainage (and pollution control) implications of the development can be adequately mitigated against through appropriate planning conditions.

Archaeology

58. Archaeological remains have previously been found within the Campus and the application has therefore been accompanied by an Archaeological Evaluation. This states that trial trenching in the proposed development area has revealed the boundary to the Romano-British settlement identified in previous excavations of the Campus.
59. The County Council has considered the submitted details and is satisfied the impacts can be satisfactorily controlled through the imposition of condition requiring a phased scheme of investigation.

Sustainability issues

60. LDF Policy NE/3 requires all development proposals greater than 1000m² to include technology for renewable energy to provide at least 10% of their predicted energy requirements. The application proposes these requirements will be satisfied through a combination of air-source heat pump technology and photovoltaic panels, details of which would be submitted in conjunction with any future reserved matters applications.
61. Policy NE/12 requires all proposals for greater than 1000m² to provide a Water Conservation Strategy prior to commencement of development. The Planning Statement explains the development will aim to secure the highest BREEAM rating possible and that this will include the required water conservation measures. Details would be worked up as part of any subsequent reserved matters applications.

Infrastructure requirements

62. LDF Policy SF/6 encourages the provision of public art within all schemes proposing in excess of 1,000 square metres of new floor space. The Planning Statement includes a commitment towards the provision of public art, with the exact details to be agreed at a later date in consultation with the Council and local community.

Environmental Impact Assessment

63. Prior to the submission of this application, the Council was asked to give a screening opinion as to whether the development was development requiring the submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). After consideration of the issues relating to the proposed development, the Council issued a formal opinion confirming that the development was not considered to result in significant effects to the environment and that an EIA was not required.

Very special circumstances

64. In addition to the harm by reason of inappropriateness, the development is also considered to result in harm by virtue of the loss of openness of the Green Belt. Other impacts, as assessed above, could be satisfactorily mitigated against through the imposition of safeguarding conditions. It is therefore necessary to consider the justification put forward by the applicant's agent in support of the proposal and the extent to which these amount to 'very special circumstances'. This justification is set out and considered below:

65. *Economic Benefits*

- The NPPF states the Government is committed to sustainable growth and encourages planning authorities to plan positively for the expansion of clusters. This is reinforced within the Local Plan which seeks to support the development of high-tech clusters.
- A Ministerial Statement issued by Greg Clark MP in 2011 explains that planning has a clear role to play in rebuilding the economy and that proposals for development and growth should be encouraged unless they would compromise key sustainable development objectives.
- In last 10 years, over £90m of capital funding (the majority of which has come from Central Government) has been invested into the Campus to develop the underpinning infrastructure and research and development facilities.
- The Government has given a clear commitment to bio-tech and bio-science in Cambs which will further strengthen demand for floorspace going forward. In 2014, the Chancellor announced £6m towards improving infrastructure and facilities in Cambridge. This funding will go towards further expansion at the Campus following a previous £44m investment.
- The Campus has a distinct and unique, set of characteristics, not available anywhere else at other research facilities in the sub-region, that has created an environment where young and growing companies can function and develop. Cancer Research Technologies (the tech arm of Cancer Research UK) has established labs on the site, and many of the young companies nurtured by the Campus go on to create bigger operations on the Campus and elsewhere in the sub-region – eg – Cambridge Antibody Technologies, Horizon Discovery, Kymab and Gates Foundation. These distinct characteristics include:
 - Shared technology and facilities (eg – mass spectrometry and small animal facilities). Start-up and small-to-medium sized companies are able to use these facilities without having to make the prohibitively expensive investments that would be required to purchase. The Institute is therefore able to support companies with relatively limited budgets. This technology is required for and funded by the research activities at the Institute.
 - Flexible small-scale accommodation – much of the floorspace (both existing and proposed) is split into small lettable units providing a combination of office and laboratory space. There are no large commercial tenant buildings, an approach varying from other science parks in the District that tend to concentrate on larger single-occupancy units with less emphasis on lab space.
 - BBTL can support companies through flexible terms that helps align leases with funding cycles.
 - Babraham Institute is a world-leading centre for the understanding of basic bioscience underpinning health and ageing. The campus environment offers access to resources available within the Institute and research community itself through collaborative research.
- As a result of the defining characteristics of the Institute, there are a very high number of enquiries for any vacant units at the Campus, with demand

significantly outstripping supply. In the last 12 months, there have been enquiries relating to 2477m² of floorspace that couldn't be accommodated, enough to fill 25% of the development proposed in the current application. In addition to demand from new companies, there are also existing companies on the campus that would like to move to larger premises on site. Interest in locating at the Campus is expected to increase further with Astro Zeneca relocating to the area.

- Interest from companies wishing to locate to the campus has been consistently high for the past 5-10 years. When space becomes available, it is immediately filled and when new buildings are constructed, lets are agreed before floorspace is available. There is no reason to expect this trend won't continue, especially in a recovering economy. At the current rate of demand, the floorspace proposed within this application would be filled in 3-4 years.

66. *Job creation benefits*

- There are currently over 800 jobs on the site and the proposed development is anticipated to create up to 450 additional jobs. This would contribute to local employment and build on existing relationships between the educational institutions and the bio-technology sector within the Cambridge region.

67. *Community benefits*

- The proposals offer opportunities to provide public art and habitat enhancements that would benefit existing residents in the area.

68. *Environmental sustainability benefits*

- The proposal would be accompanied by an updated Travel Plan designed to encourage more sustainable travel modes. Many people already cycle and walk and significant investment has been made to integrate the campus into cycle and pedestrian routes in the area. The proposal may also help to make the trial shuttle bus service more viable.
- The buildings would be highly energy efficient, with an aspiration to achieve BREEAM Very Good rating as a minimum.
- The proposal would deliver biodiversity enhancements in the form of retention and protection of chalk grassland, new planting/habitat creation, and installation of bird and bat boxes.
- The above package of benefits would not be secured without expansion.

Officer assessment of the 'very special circumstances'

69. The proposal constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt by definition. However, it is consistent with Government objectives, as set out within the NPPF Ministerial statements, to ensure that the planning system encourages and helps to deliver sustainable economic growth. A particular emphasis on the importance of delivering this growth within the Cambridge area was evidenced through the £6m of additional funding announced by the Chancellor in the budget speech earlier this year and this has followed on from £44m of Government-backed investment that has been carried out at Babraham over the last few years. The proposal would also be consistent with national and local plan policies that seek to encourage and support

the development of clusters, including within the biotechnology and biomedical sector.

70. During pre-application discussions, the Planning Policy Team advised that there is presently a surplus of research and development floorspace within the District, with capacity at Granta Park, Wellcome Trust, North-West Cambridge and Northstowe. It was therefore made clear that any application for the further expansion of the Babraham Campus into the Green Belt would need to clearly set out what is unique about Babraham that means that companies need to locate here rather than elsewhere where there is vacant land/space.
71. These arguments have been explained in length within the Planning Statement. In particular, the section relating to the 'economic benefits' the proposal would bring forward makes it clear that the unique characteristics of the Campus are the catalyst for the required growth, and that the demand can only be met here rather than elsewhere within the sub-region. This justification, as well as the job creation benefits the development would bring forward (as summarised in paragraphs 64 and 65 above), are considered by Officers to represent a compelling argument in support of the development and to clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and loss of openness.
72. The application has been accompanied by a range of technical reports that have demonstrated the development can be satisfactorily accommodated on the site and any adverse impacts appropriately mitigated against through the imposition of planning conditions. The justification provided by the applicant's agent suggests, as summarised within paragraphs 64 and 65, that a range of community and environmental benefits would be secured that would not otherwise be secured without expansion of the Campus and that these also contribute to the required 'very special circumstances'. However, the range of measures referred to are standard requirements that are necessitated by the development proposal and are not therefore considered to carry sufficient weight to override Green Belt policy in their own right. As stressed in the preceding paragraph, however, the application is considered to be acceptable on the basis of the economic and job creation benefits it would bring forward.
73. Should Members be minded to support the application, it would need to be referred to the Secretary of State in accordance with the Consultation Direction 2009.

Recommendation

74. Subject to the receipt of an amended landscape strategy (to address concerns raised by the Landscape and Ecology Officers) and to the Secretary of State raising no objections to the proposal, delegated powers are sought to approve the application subject to the following conditions:
 1. Before the commencement of each building on the site, details of the scale and appearance of each building, its immediate site layout and the landscaping (hereinafter called the "reserved matters") shall be obtained from the Local Planning Authority in writing before any development relating to each building is commenced.
(Reason – This application is in outline only.)
 2. Application for the approval of the first reserved matters application shall be made to the Local Planning Authority before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission. Applications for approval of the remainder of the

reserved matters applications shall be made to the Local Planning Authority before the expiration of six years from the date of this permission.
(Reason – The application is in outline only).

3. The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than the expiration of two years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved.
(Reason – The application is in outline only.)
4. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: [...]
(Reason - To facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.)
5. Commensurate with each reserved matters application, the illustrative masterplan/layout details that have been provided with this outline application shall be updated to demonstrate how the remaining plots are likely to be accommodated on the site.
(Reason – To ensure the development of each plot would not compromise the ability to bring forward an appropriate scheme on the outstanding development sites)
6. Commensurate with each reserved matters application, details of hard and soft landscape works, together with a 10 year management and maintenance strategy, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development. The details shall also include specification of all proposed trees, hedges and shrub planting, which shall include details of species, density and size of stock.
(Reason - To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area and enhances biodiversity in accordance with Policies DP/2 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
7. All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details for each phase of the development. The works for each phase shall be carried out prior to the occupation of the building to which the details relate or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. If within a period of five years from the date of the planting, or replacement planting, any tree or plant is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, another tree or plant of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.
(Reason - To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area and enhances biodiversity in accordance with Policies DP/2 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
8. No development shall begin until an ecological strategy and management plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
(Reason - To achieve biodiversity enhancement on the site in accordance with adopted Policies DP/1, DP/3 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)
9. Prior to the commencement of development of each building, a scheme for the provision and implementation of renewable energy technologies, to provide at

least 10% of the predicted energy requirements through renewable energy technology, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

(Reason – To ensure that the scheme generates at least 10% of its energy from renewable sources in accordance with Policy NE/3 of the Local Development Framework 2007.)

10. Prior to the commencement of development of each building, a water conservation strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

(Reason – To ensure that the development incorporates all practicable water conservation measures, in accordance with Policy NE/12 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

11. No development shall take place until a surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of the hydrological and hydro geological context of the development, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The drainage strategy should demonstrate the surface water run-off generated up to and including 100 year critical storm will not exceed the run-off from the undeveloped site following the corresponding rainfall event. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed. The scheme shall also include:

- Details of the infiltration test methodology and results to confirm that appropriate infiltration rates have been utilised within the detailed design.
- Detailed drainage calculations that demonstrate that the drainage scheme has been designed so that there is no increase in the risk of flooding on or off site, for the life time of the development.
- Detailed drainage plan showing all the conveyance and attenuation facilities.
- Demonstration that SuDS have been incorporated into the development where deemed feasible.
- Details of how the scheme shall be maintained and managed after completion

(Reason - To prevent the increased risk of flooding, both on and off site, in accordance with Policies DP/1 and NE/11 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

12. Prior to the commencement of development, a scheme for surface water disposal shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Infiltration systems shall only be used where it can be demonstrated that they will not pose a risk to groundwater quality. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approval details. Infiltration systems shall only be used where it can be demonstrated that they will not pose a risk to groundwater quality.

(Reason - To protect and prevent the pollution of controlled waters from potential pollutants associated with current and previous land uses, in accordance with Policies DP/1 and NE/11 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

13. Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of pollution control of the water environment shall be submitted and agreed in writing with the Local Authority. The works/scheme shall be constructed and completed in accordance with the approved plans.

(Reason - To prevent the increased risk of pollution to the water environment, in accordance with Policy DP/1 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

14. Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of foul water drainage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be constructed and completed in accordance with the approved plans prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with the implementation programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

(Reason - To reduce the risk of pollution to the water environment and to ensure a satisfactory method of foul water drainage in accordance with Policy NE/10 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

15. No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until:

- a) The application site has been subject to a detailed scheme for the investigation and recording of contamination and remediation objectives have been determined through risk assessment and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- b) Detailed proposals for the removal, containment or otherwise rendering harmless any contamination (the Remediation method statement) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- c) The works specified in the remediation method statement have been completed, and a validation report submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in accordance with the approved scheme.
- d) If, during remediation works, any contamination is identified that has not been considered in the remediation method statement, then remediation proposals for this contamination should be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

(Reason - To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors in accordance with Policy DP/1 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007).

16. No external lighting shall be provided or installed within each building plot other than in accordance with a scheme which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

(Reason -To minimise the effects of light pollution on the surrounding area in accordance with Policy NE/14 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

17. During the period of construction, no power operated machinery shall be operated on the site before 0800 hours and after 1800 hours on weekdays and 1300 hours on Saturdays, nor at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays, unless otherwise previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

(Reason – To minimise noise disturbance to adjoining residents in accordance with Policy NE/15 of the Local Development Framework 2007.)

18. Commensurate with each reserved matters application, details of the location and type of any power driven plant or equipment, including equipment for heating, ventilation and for the control or extraction of any odour, dust or fumes from the building(s) but excluding office equipment and vehicles and the location of the outlet from the building(s) of such plant or equipment, shall be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority before such plant or equipment is installed; the said plant or equipment shall be installed in accordance with the approved details and with any agreed noise restrictions. (Reason - To protect the occupiers of adjoining buildings (dwellings) from the effect of odour, dust or fumes in accordance with Policy NE/16 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

19. No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority. This written scheme will include the following components, completion of each of which will trigger the phased discharging of the condition:
 - (a) Approval of a Written Scheme of Investigation;
 - (b) Fieldwork in accordance with the agreed Written Scheme of Investigation;
 - (c) Completion of a Post-Excavation Assessment report and approval of an approved Updated Project Design: to be submitted within six months of the completion of fieldwork, unless otherwise agreed in advance with the Planning Authority;
 - (d) Completion of analysis, preparation of site archive ready for deposition at a store approved by the Planning Authority, production of an archive report, and submission of a publication report: to be completed within two years of the completion of fieldwork, unless otherwise agreed in advance with the Planning Authority.(Reason - To secure the provision of archaeological excavation and the subsequent recording of the remains in accordance with Policy CH/2 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

20. No development shall begin until details of a scheme for the provision of public art to meet the needs of the development in accordance with adopted Local Development Framework Policy SF/6 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include a timetable for the provision to be made and shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. (Reason - To ensure the provision of a scheme of public art in accordance with Policy SF/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007)

21. No buildings shall be occupied until an updated Travel Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details. (Reason - To reduce car dependency and to promote alternative modes of travel in accordance with Policy TR/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

Background Papers

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The following list contains links to the documents on the Council's website and / or an indication as to where hard copies can be inspected.

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy DPD 2007
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD 2007
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Supplementary Planning Documents
- Draft Local Plan 2013
- National Planning Policy Framework 2012
- Planning File Ref: S/1676/14/OL

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