

PLANNING - PRE-APPLICATION DEVELOPER PRESENTATIONS

27 September 2019
10.00 am - 12.30 pm

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

19/4/Plan Apologies

None.

19/5/Plan Declarations of Interest

None.

**19/6/Plan Pre-Application Briefing by the Developer - Whittle II
Laboratory, University Site, West Cambridge**

Key Points from the Developer Presentation

Future challenges for aerospace – zero carbon emissions by 2050 is the huge challenge which the Whittle Laboratory is being directed to meet.

Decarbonising propulsion – electrification is moving into aviation to meet carbon targets.

Electricity in aviation – 70 companies globally are currently planning first electric flight in the early 2020's.

New high-speed laboratory – government funding will facilitate a new cutting-edge research space.

Noise emissions – the new building will emit less noise than the existing building.

BREEAM excellent – is being targeted for the building.

East Green Link – importance of the emerging landscape strategy for the masterplan was explained.

Cycle trips – there will be approximately 44 additional trips, the majority of which are likely to be from the east of the site.

North east range – the north side of the building is still in design development stage.

Member questions/comments

The impact of the building on the local area, in the context of its hi-tech commercial use must be carefully considered. The contribution to the local employment market was queried and its relationship with local quality of life considerations.

Developer comments

The Whittle has traditionally worked with large companies. As the market changes over time there is likely to be many new entrants. This is likely to generate new technical jobs through future modelling work. These new jobs will have a positive impact on the local labour market.

The number of proposed cycle trips was queried in terms of the research underpinning the assumptions and their level of reliability.

Developer comments

The developer team set out that the Transport Assessment will be based on actual evidence of trip numbers from the existing Whittle Laboratory. The developer team has also examined data from the Chemical Engineering Building, which has a similar occupancy profile. 130 cycle parking spaces will be provided which is based on the amount of staff. Pooled and cargo cycles will also be provided for secondary trips for employees who do arrive by car.

The level of accessibility to the internal amphitheatre area was queried and whether the building was fully accessible to all.

Developer comments

It is the intention that the building was fully accessible. The internal design of the amphitheatre will be looked at further in the design development. The scheme has been presented to Disability Panel and the University's internal access officer.

Future clarity was sought on the provision for and integration of disabled car parking spaces serving the development.

Developer comments

Provision for blue badge spaces was still under review. There may be potential to provide two spaces on plot. In future, technology square will also provide for Blue Badge car parking.

Members questioned the developer team as to whether a stark, contrasting architectural response to the northern range of the building was the best approach in context.

Developer comments

The developer team reflected that the design of the northern range was still evolving and has not reached an end point. The northern range will not be an 'active frontage', but it should nevertheless be a high-quality design in context. Further development of the landscape strategy and detailed design, including the bay window feature, will be carried out in the coming weeks.

Members suggested the landscape component was important to develop in relation to the emerging designs for the building. The landscape design could offset the building without impacting on the quality of the architecture. The landscape design should be part of the emerging composition of the northern range and could reflect the style of architecture.

Developer comments

The developer team agreed that the landscape strategy required further development and integration with the architectural approach. This reflects feedback also given by Cambridgeshire Quality Panel.

With regard to sustainability, Members queried why the building did not seek BREEAM outstanding given the nature of the research surrounding carbon reduction. They also queried whether the orientation of the building was informed by energy efficiency or the constraints of the building plot.

Developer comments

The developer team noted that BREEAM is not the only measure of efficiency and that the building has also been scrutinised by the Department of Engineering for energy efficiency. The developer team considered that BREEAM outstanding was not possible because of the site location. It was considered to be very important the building is low energy and that it has been modelled for internal heating, particularly the south elevation.

The position of PV panels on the roof top was queried in the discussions.

Developer comments

The developer team noted that the layout of the proposed building needed to respond to the constraints of the site. The location of the roof top PV panels were considered to optimise efficiency, but there was potential for further integration across other roofs on the existing Whittle Laboratory.

Members commented that the building access strategy, and supporting analysis, should focus on walking and cycling rather than motor vehicles.

Developer comments

The developer team provided assurance that cars are a secondary focus and that the development seeks to prioritise active travel.

The application should include floorplans identifying any parts of the building which are not fully accessible and set out the specifics of heating and cooling for the building.

Developer comments

This was noted.

The meeting ended at 12.30 pm

CHAIR

