

Cambridge City Council

Planning - Pre-Application Developer Presentations

Date: Wednesday, 19 April 2023

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: via Microsoft Teams

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Agenda

- 1 Pre-Application Briefing by the Developer - Land at 104-112 Hills Road, Cambridge (to be known as Botanic Place)

Purpose of Briefing:

The purpose of this briefing note is to advise Members of a forthcoming revised application that proposes minor material changes (called a Section 73; "S.73") to the original scheme given planning permission on appeal in March 2022 for mixed office and retail development at the abovementioned site.

Members should note that the proposed S.73 application is not an opportunity to renegotiate the terms of the extant planning permission but mainly to focus on the merits of the revisions as set out below.

Site Context:

The site is currently comprised of 5 buildings; Betjemen House, Francis House, Ortona house, the Flying Pig Public House and a multi-storey car park. The site served by 3 vehicle access points; one along the southern boundary serving the multi-storey car park, one for the Flying Pig Public House and one to the ground level car park which is shared by Botanic House and Betjeman House.

The site lies within the New Town and Glisson Road Conservation Areas and adjacent to the Cambridge University Botanic Gardens which is a Grade II* registered park and garden.

The site is designated within an 'Area of Major Change' and

specifically indicated as 'Station Area West (2) – Site M44. Policy 21 of the Cambridge Local Plan applies to this location stipulating support for the "continued and complete regeneration of vibrant, mixed-use areas of the city, centred around and accessible to a high quality and improved transport interchange." This strategic policy designation is to be carried forward in the Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

Proposal Description:

The proposals would (broadly) comprise minor material amendments under S.73 of the Town and Country Planning Act (as amended) for the following:

1. A reduction in the extent of the basement area across Buildings B and C by removing the entire lower level only;
2. Revisions to the extent of internal cores and servicing requirements;
3. Creation of additional floorspace at the upper levels (fifth and seventh floors) following consolidation of building plant requirements.

Relevant pre-commencement planning conditions would also be addressed as part of the S.73 application submission.

The Applicant is Railpen (The Railways Pension Scheme) assisted by its development managers Socius, who purchased the site in late 2022. The site and new development will be called 'Botanic Place.' The Applicant's overarching vision for the site is to reinforce it as an exemplar of sustainable development in Cambridge. Members should note that the S.73 proposals excludes changes to the Flying Pig PH as agreed under the extant consent and which the Applicant commits to deliver in advance of the main office redevelopment.

Key Effects of S.73 Changes

The siting and height of Buildings B and C (as perceived above ground level) would remain the same as the extant permitted scheme. Minor changes to the massing have been noted although these appear to be negligible in their design impact.

As a result of plant consolidation and basement reconfiguration, the net internal area would increase to provide an additional c.1,123 sqm of office space. The mix/type of uses remain unchanged from the permitted scheme as does the amount of public open space to be provided onsite.

Access from Hills Road for vehicles and cycles would be segregated to reflect improved and safer movement into and out of the development.

Background:

The proposals are at pre-application stage. A Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) was agreed between the applicants and GCSP in February 2023. The PPA includes an estimated project timetable with pre-application discussions extending into March 2023 with final submission of a planning application in April 2023.