

Cambridge City Council

**Planning - Pre-Application Developer Presentations**

**Date:** Thursday, 25 January 2024

**Time:** 4.00 pm

**Venue:** MS Teams


**Contact:** Alice.Young@greatercambridgeplanning.org, tel:01223 457000

**Agenda**

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Declarations of Interest
- 3 Pre-Application Briefing by the Developer - Westbrook Centre, Westbrook Drive, Cambridge CB4 1YG

Approx: 4:00 pm – 5:30 pm

<b>Members briefing summary information</b>	
Site address:	Westbrook Centre, Westbrook Drive Cambridge CB4 1YG
Application reference:	PPA/23/0021
Prepared by:	Alice Young
Briefing Date:	17/01/2024



**Purpose of Briefing:**

The purpose of this briefing note is to advise Members of a forthcoming full application that proposes to partially demolish the existing buildings on site, while retaining the basement level, and erect new life science office lab space (Class E(g)) above. The development will also include alterations to the site layout, access arrangements, parking provision and hard and soft landscaping.

**Site Context:**

The site is a brownfield employment site, comprising four three storey 1980s office blocks with an additional level of undercroft parking, arranged to create internal courtyards. The existing buildings are encircled by Westbrook Drive which serves as the sole access to the Lilywhite Drive residential development to the north-west. Mature trees partially screen the site along the southern, northern and part of the western and north-eastern boundaries. These are not protected but do fall within the application site.

The site falls within the Mitchams Corner Opportunity Area (LP policy 22) and adjacent to the Mitchams Corner District Centre. The Mitchams Corner SPD identifies the site as a redevelopment opportunity. To the east of the site fronting Milton Road within the District Centre, there are six BLIs (nos. 9-19 (odd) Milton Road) which are two storey semi-detached properties in a mix of residential and commercial uses.

The Castle and Victoria Conservation Area boundary skirts the southern site boundary so the site can be seen within and forms part of the setting of the conservation area, most notable views are from Corona Road to the south and from Victoria Road/ the Victoria Homes site to the south-west. Victoria Homes Almshouses, which are single storey in scale, are noted as important to the character and appearance of the conservation area with the green space surrounding these almshouses designated as protected open space (LP policy 67 – private amenity green space).

The site is located within close proximity bus stops along Milton Road (approx. 65m south-east).

*Key site constraints/ opportunities:*

- Identified as a potential future development site in the Mitchams Corner SPD
- Abuts the Castle and Victoria Conservation Area
- BLIs along Milton Road
- Surrounding residential units

**Proposal Description:**

The applicant is seeking to redevelop the existing employment site to create a life sciences campus with office/ lab space (estimated to be configured as a 40-60 split), co-working spaces, life science public exhibition space and a publicly accessible café while retaining the existing undercroft level car parking. The proposal comprises three buildings connected via a single storey podium housing the café and reception. Cycle and car parking would be located in the retained undercroft level with additional cycle parking also provided at surface level.

Net increase in area: 18, 533sqm or 199,487 sqft (GIA)

N.B. existing area is 13,696 sqm (GIA) and the proposed building currently measures is 32,229 sqm (GIA).

Elements to be retained:

- The existing building sub-structure and under-croft level slab (retained/ reused)
- The existing carriageway to Lilywhite Drive Housing
- The existing trees and planting to the perimeter of the site

Over 95% of waste from the development will be reused/recycled.

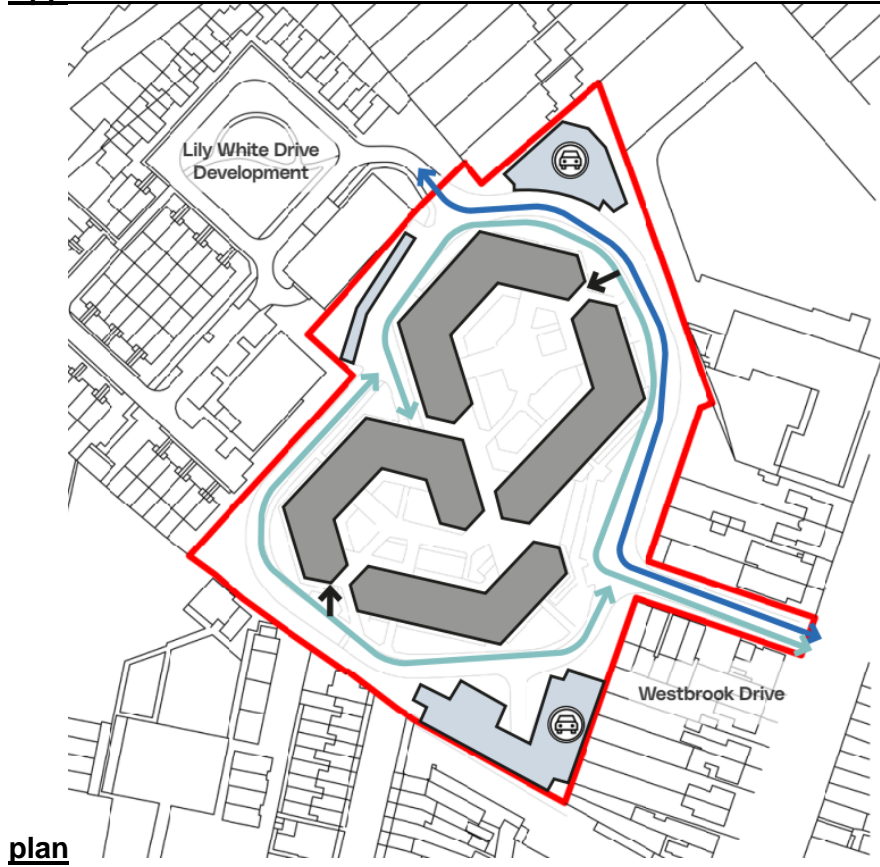
The applicant team will present the full details of the scheme including the proposed and existing floor plans.

**Background:**

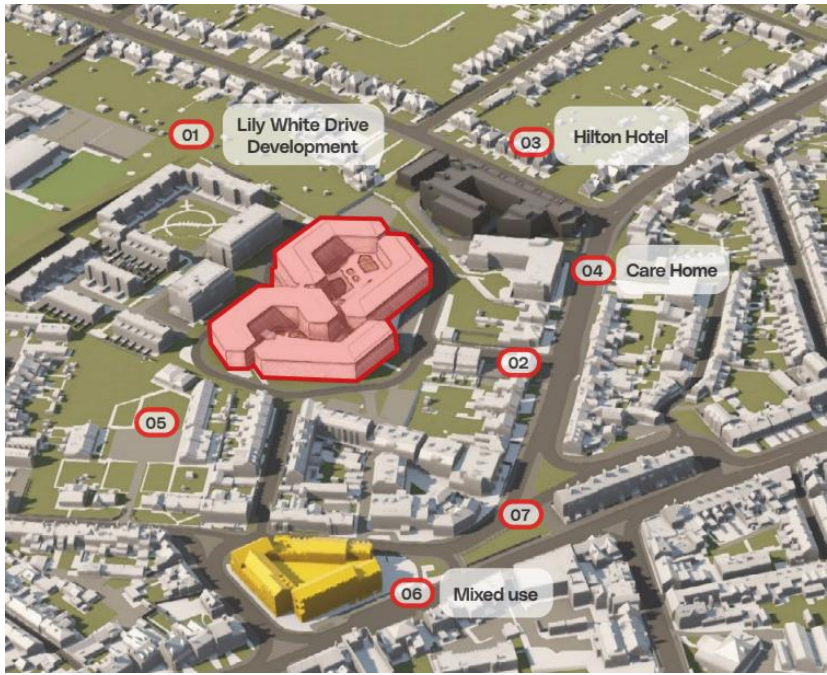
The proposals are at pre-application stage with a formal application submission planned imminently. A Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) was agreed between the applicants and GCSP in Spring 2023. So far, the proposal has been subject to 6 pre-apps

with the Council, several specialist workshops and a Design Review Panel. Public engagement has also been carried out with by the applicant.

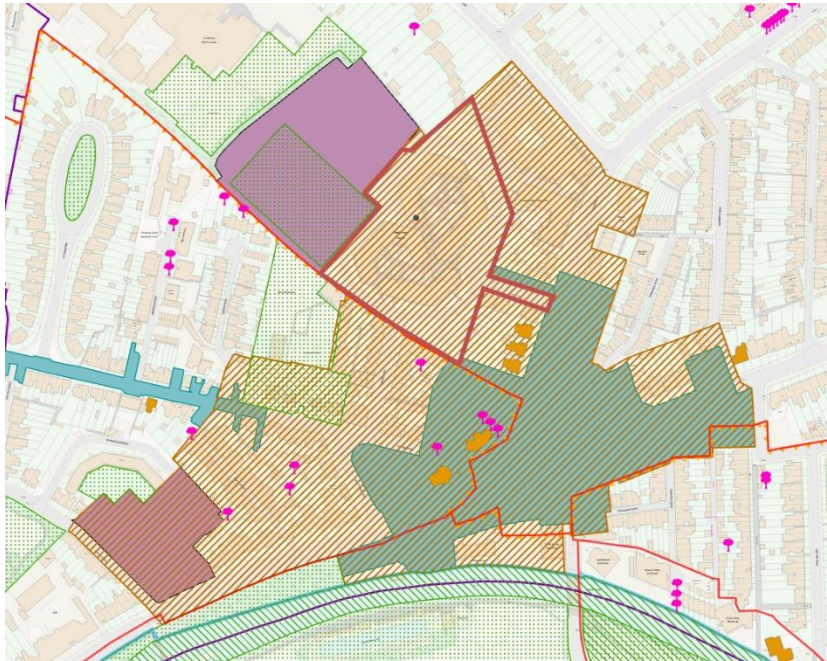
**Appendix 1 - Site location**



**plan**



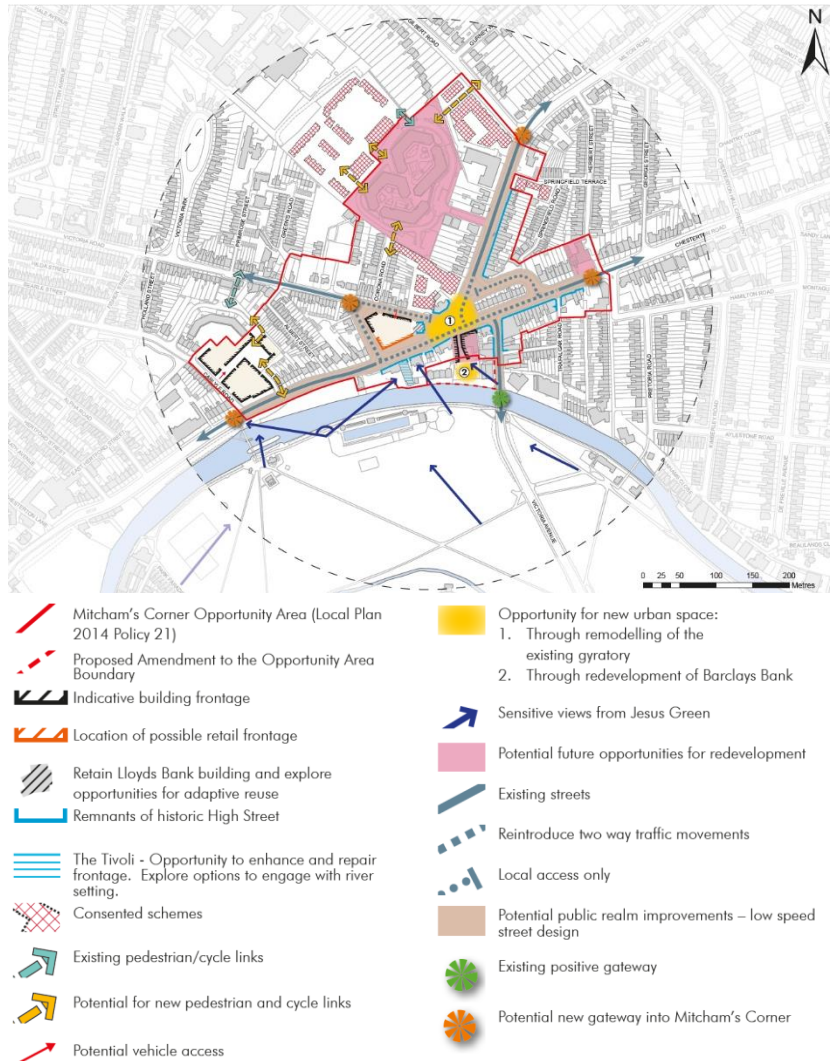
**Appendix 2 - Existing building**  
**Appendix 3 - Planning Constraints**



**Key**  
Brown striped: Mitchams Corner Opportunity Area  
Blue: Mitchams Corner District Centre  
Yellow buildings: Buildings of Local Interest

- Red line: Conservation Area Boundary
- Pink trees: Tree Protection Orders
- Green dots: Protected Open Space
- Purple: Allocated site

**Appendix 4: Extract from Mitchams Corner SPD**



**Councillor attendance**

Whilst any subsequent planning application relating to this site will be determined by the Planning Committee, all Councillors are invited to attend and take part in this pre-application developer presentation.

**Purpose of the meeting**

These meetings allow developers an early opportunity to present proposals for future planning applications to elected members of the Council.

The process allows Councillors to feed into the process at an early stage and raise any questions or concerns that can then be addressed by the developer prior to a formal planning application being submitted.

Whilst the meetings will be held in public, they do not form part of the formal decision making process. All planning applications will be determined in line with formal processes as adopted by Cambridge City Council.

### **Format of the Meeting**

For each Briefing:

- Introduction by the Head of Planning Services or a Senior Planning Officer – up to 10 minutes
- Presentation by the developer of the proposal – up to 30 minutes
- Opportunity for Members to ask questions, raise issues, seek clarification, comment on the apparent positive and less positive aspects of the proposal – up to 40 minutes

During this part of the meeting it is important that Councillors who may ultimately make the decision on any subsequent planning application do not feel unduly constrained by what they can ask or raise. However they should avoid expressing views that might give any appearance that they are approaching the proposal with a closed mind. The discussion should not be used for negotiations with the developer. These should take place with officers separately from the meeting. Members of the public must refrain from entering into the discussion at the meeting.

- Summing up – up to 10 minutes

A Planning Department representative will take notes of the meeting, which will be a summary of the proceedings. Nothing said by Councillors at the meeting will in any way be binding on the Committee that subsequently determines the application. The notes will be uploaded to the City Council's website upon completion.

## Planning - Pre-Application Developer Presentations Members and Ward Members

### Information for the public

If you are interested in observing the meeting, please contact [Alice.Young@greatercambridgeplanning.org](mailto:Alice.Young@greatercambridgeplanning.org) 2 working days in advance of the meeting so that joining details for the meeting can be sent to you. This meeting will be ran online but will not be livestreamed. The transcript and video of the meeting will be uploaded to the website after the event.