

**DEVELOPMENT CONTROL FORUM**

3 June 2014  
10.00 - 11.30 am

**Present:** Councillors Austin, Avery, Blencowe, Dryden, Hipkin & Tunnacliffe

**Officers:**

Head of Planning Services: Patsy Dell  
Principal Planning Officer: Toby Williams  
Committee Manager: Claire Tunnicliffe

**For Applicant:**

Applicant Representative: Colin Brown (Januarys)  
Applicant Representative: John Hicks (WSP Group)

**For Petitioners (in objection):**

Lead Petitioner: Robert Lowson  
Resident: Shelia Stuart  
Resident: Paul Drew

**Other Officers Present:**

Transport Assessment Manager: Mike Slater

**FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL**

**10 Declarations of Interest**

None were declared.

**11 Introduction by the Chair**

The Chair outlined the role and purpose of the Development Control Forum. Those present were informed that no decisions would be taken at the meeting.

**12 14/0492/OUT: The Edinburgh Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge, CB2 8RU**

Committee: Planning Committee  
Date: 3 June 2014  
Application No: 14/0492/OUT

Site Address: The Edinburgh Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge, CB2 8RU

Description: Demolition of Edinburgh Building, warehouse and associated buildings and erection of office development of up to 41,750 sq. m. gross external area with development generally being of between 4 and 5 storeys (with limited areas of screened rooftop plant), a single tower element with two further storeys of accommodation, up to 189 car parking spaces (+/- 10%), up to 1325 cycle parking spaces (+/- 20%), up to 26 motorcycle spaces, hard and soft landscaping and ancillary facilities including staff canteens, meeting rooms, refuse enclosures, plant rooms, social break-out spaces etc. all to serve as the new office campus headquarters for Cambridge Assessment.

Applicant: TBC

Agent: Colin Brown, Januarys Consultant Surveyors

Address: York House 7 Dukes Court 54-62 Newmarket Road, Cambridge CB5 8DZ

Lead Petitioner: Nicholas Avery

Address: 28 Aberdeen Avenue, Cambridge, CB2 8DP

Case Officer: Sarah Dyer, City Development Manager

Text of Petition:

The petitioners in principle welcome the proposed development but have the following objections and request a Development Control Forum to explore these concerns and consider mitigation matters.

There is deep concern amongst residents at the lack of a plan for the managements of the demolition and construction phase. The fact that it is proposed to deal with such matters at the detailed planning stage does not alleviate residents' concerns now. Primary concerns turn on the current inability of the surrounding infrastructure to accommodate the anticipated traffic movements with a feeling that this will result in at least

- displaced parking caused by contractors' vehicles
- heavy plant/ lorries on Brooklands Avenue and Hills Road, generally and in rush hour traffic (which already is largely at standstill) with resultant unacceptably high pollution levels (including when children are on their way to and from school).

The post occupation Travel Plan is considered to be flawed because (a) it is based on an over ambitious assumption of the likely achievable change in travel habits of employees and (b) the surrounding infrastructure is unable

currently to accommodate the anticipated number of new traffic movements implied by the Travel Plan targets. The main concerns expressed so far are in respect of

- displaced parking issues
- existing vehicular traffic flow along Brooklands Avenue and at junctions with Hills Road and Trumpington Road (which already is largely at standstill at rush hour)
- Inadequate existing infrastructure to carry the hoped-for increased movements by bicycle, bus and on foot.

The petitioners object to the absence of a full Environment impact Assessment given the scale of the development and the geographical location of the site.

**Do you think there are changes that could be made to overcome your concerns?**

**Yes / No**

**If Yes, please explain:**

Mitigation measures for the demolition and construction phase need to include at least

- use of Park & Ride and dedicated contractor buses
- incentive scheme to encourage use of buses and Guided Busway for contractor staff.

Mitigation measures post occupation need to include at least

- parking controls to extend to all surrounding residential streets (particularly an issue in Accordia) with a proper penalty and enforcement scheme in place
- radical improvements in cycling provision along Brooklands Avenue (particularly on the south side) and particularly at the junctions with Shaftesbury Road and Hills Road
- radical improvements to bus stops on Brooklands Avenue
- much better use of Guided Busway viz. construction of a dedicated stop for the new building, lighting provision for the associated cycle path
- use of Park & Ride and dedicated staff buses
- footbridge from Clifton Way NCP car park.

**Case by Applicants:**

1. Petition received in objection highlights transport issues and construction impact which will be addressed in this presentation.

2. Expressed gratitude to the petitioners who in principle welcomed the proposed development and accept the proposed use of the site by the applicant, Cambridge Assessment.
3. Recognise that there will be long term communication between the applicant and the surrounding neighbours.
4. The application is for outline planning application with matters reserved for approval.
5. The proposed development is for a new office headquarters for Cambridge Assessment, which currently operates from twelve locations around the City, which is inefficient and unsustainable.
6. The Company is experiencing rapid growth and requires a centralised location for economic and social reasons. This would ensure better working relationships between departments.
7. Cambridge University Press will remain on the site.
8. The site is off Shaftesbury Avenue which runs alongside to the West, close to the Guided Bus and the Railway Station to the East, Brooklands Avenue running East / West and Accordia Development to the North.
9. The site would consist of a north block and south block which would vary in height from three to five stories; plus a proposed single tower, the height of which would be agreed as a reserved matter at a later stage.
10. The ground floor of the proposed development could house 189 vehicles and parking for 1300 cycles, 26 motor cycles, with an opportunity to increase or decrease this number.
11. The parking areas would be hidden under landscaped podia.
12. There should be no issue with massing or the design of the development.
13. The location of the development is key to getting the transport solution right. This location allows the business to be in a position where it can be serviced by other transport modes. The majority of Cambridge can also be covered by cycle in a reasonable time from the site.
14. Once the location is correct the focus is then on the development of the transport strategy.
15. It is recognised there is an issue with congestion in the area but the transport strategy has been developed to limit traffic to the site to the current levels, minimise traffic generation and the impact on the surrounding traffic infrastructure
16. As the business grows and the number of people increases (from the current 1600 employees to 2300 employees by the year 2018 and 3000 employees by 2025) regardless if they move to the proposed

- location, people need to be encouraged to use other modes of transport rather than the car through the Travel Plan promotion.
17. To develop the Transport Assessment, a Transport Strategy was first undertaken to look at how Cambridge Assessment staff travel to work, where they travel from and how they expect to travel to the new site to compare mode shift.
  18. County Council Highways Officers were asked to express their views and the public through the public consultation process.
  19. Cambridge Cycling Campaign, Network Rail and the County's Travel to Work Partnership also provided feedback.
  20. The Transport Strategy has been described as ambitious but achievable, forward looking, consistent with policy.
  21. Looking at the home location of potential cyclists and their current cycling route to the existing site it can predict what routes might be used via Hills Road, Brooklands Avenue and the Guided Bus from the North and South to the proposed site.
    - It is estimated that 90% from the guided bus route and 10% from Shaftesbury Road.
    - The target will be 7% of car users arriving to site, this will include those arriving by Park and Ride and the Guided Bus.
  22. The applicant is proposing a contribution to a link from Hills Road/ Railway Bridge and to the Guided Bus Way.
  23. The Transport Assessment would be continually monitored and evaluated annually both by Cambridge Assessment and the County Council.
  24. Proposals to mitigate the traffic:
    - No additional parking on site (will make a contribution to a resident scheme to mitigate any increase in off street parking if this proven that the problem is caused by Cambridge Assessment staff)
    - Could offer a contribution to traffic regulation parking
    - Improve bus stops on Brooklands Avenue with improved real time.
    - Improve footways on Brooklands Avenue
    - County Council will be improving the Guided Bus lighting scheme in area
    - Cambridgeshire County Council will not permit a guided bus stop outside the site so this is not possible. However the closest stop is a five minute walk as is the Park & Ride stop.
    - Car sharing schemes.
    - Offer a personalised travel plans for individual.
    - Cycling facilities will be provided.
    - Explore discounted bus tickets.

- Explore a possible shuttle bus service from Newmarket Road Park & Ride site as this does not lead well into the proposed location.
25. Aware of the construction impact and have addressed these issues in the Environmental Construction Plan. Contractors would be asked to put forward ways to minimise the construction impact and how they can be adhered to.

**Case by Petitioners:**

26. Do not object to the principle of the development but is concerned that the proposal fail to respond to the impacts of the development on the surrounding area. The proposal should be rejected unless major improvements can be made.
27. Communication from Cambridge Assessment has been good but has not elevated any fears.
28. Real dialogue is required on all sides City Council (Planning Authority), County Councils (Highways) and Cambridge University (owner of Cambridge Assessment).
29. The impacts, and responses, need to be properly thought through before work starts, and not under reserved matters.
30. The impact of the development would be felt first in the demolition/construction phase (of which there is no formal Travel Plan for this phase). But the main concerns are after occupation with impact from motor traffic, congestion, noise, air pollution, the safety of cyclists and pedestrians, pressure on parking, and loss of amenity.
31. The project is unbalanced. All the benefit goes to the applicant. All the risk associated with its adverse impacts falls on the neighbouring community and on the city more generally.
32. Without a guarantee that the impacts will be mitigated, the site is not suitable for the development proposed.
33. A well-thought out package of mitigation needs to be developed and implemented for buses, cyclists and pedestrians. The City and County Councils have to lead this in line with the policies set out in the Local Plan and their own Environmental and Transport policies.
34. The County Councillor for Trumpington, Barbara Ashwood, agrees that the traffic impact could be serious. The applicant's expectation that employees will move from car use is optimistic and believes the County Council should be involved with the City Council in finding ways to fully offset the impacts.
- The County Council Transport Assessment Team has voiced doubt on the applicant's data and the assumptions expressed. They have raised a

- number of points concerning the application. The target for car use reduction is described as “very ambitious;” and evidence from a nearby scheme suggests that it is unlikely to be fulfilled
35. This is not likely to be the last development proposal in this area.
  36. The proposed development is in a neighbourhood facing rapid growth, and requires a serious assessment and re-thinking of the local infrastructure.
  37. No Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out.
  38. The EIA Screening Opinion describes the project as a “typical redevelopment project.” This is not “typical” if only on the basis of its size.
  39. The proposal also implies a major change of scale in the numbers of people working on the site, in the number of visitors, and in the nature of the business being carried out there.
  40. Any increase in traffic arising from the site will make the current situation unacceptably worse, unless firm action is taken. The traffic situation in the area has already reached a tipping point.
  41. A much more ambitious mitigation package is required. This would in the long run be cost-effective, taking account of the huge potential cost to the community, to the environment, and to the business itself of not facing up to these issues now.
  42. Sections 8/2 – 8/5 Cambridge Local Plan 2006 make clear commitments about the approach to the transport impacts of development and this application has not done that.
  43. There is no formal Travel Plan for the demolition & construction phase to minimise impact. These impacts are well known on Accordia with nuisance parking by sub-contractors working on nearby building sites
  44. The applicant has submitted a Travel Plan for the post occupancy period; this will not effectively tackle visitor numbers to the site. It only sets targets for reduction in car usage by its employees. The scheme as presented requires this proportion to reduce to about 7% of the 3000 headcount. This requires over 600 cars to be removed from the current travel movements of its employees.
  45. The site will use land currently used for parking. These vehicles which park on site will be moved increasing the pressure on the local infrastructure.
  46. To be effective, a shared programme needs to include:
    - Firm obligations on Cambridge Assessment staff not to use private cars.
    - A dedicated park and ride scheme and shuttle bus service;
    - More improvements in local infrastructure than are currently proposed. Such improvements, should include

- Upgrading the whole of Brooklands Avenue (cycle tracks, bus stops and pedestrian access) to make it safer and more attractive to non-car users.
  - Better provision at the Hills Road/Bus Way junction than simply allowing cyclists to push their bikes up a ramp or flight of steps;
  - Better access to the Bus Way from the site, including a dedicated bus stop; and
  - Direct walking access from the multi-story car park on Clifton Way
  - Exploration of the scope to introduce a new access route for motor traffic to the site from Long Road. This need not increase the volume of traffic overall, as long as it is used in a controlled way.
47. All of the above need to be among the first elements of the development.

### **Case Officers Comments:**

48. The application is for the demolition of Edinburgh Building, warehouse and associated buildings and erection of office development of up to 41,750 sq. m. gross external area with development generally being of between 4 and 5 storeys (with limited areas of screened rooftop plant), a single tower element with two further storeys of accommodation, up to 189 car parking spaces (+/- 10%), up to 1325 cycle parking spaces (+/- 20%), up to 26 motorcycle spaces, hard and soft landscaping and ancillary facilities including staff canteens, meeting rooms, refuse enclosures, plant rooms, social break-out spaces etc. The application is outlined with matters reserved, four parameter plans which are submitted which are:
- The application site plans with existing levels
  - Build form with proposed levels
  - Site access plan
  - Landscape parameter plan.
49. There has been extensive pre-application discussion including the consideration of screening opinion under EIA regulations and concludes an Environmental Statement is not required.
50. Third Party Representations are as follows:
51. Has been received from around forty residents around the site
52. Thirty people have signed the petition to request the Development Control Forum and the concerns outlined in the text of the petition, including scale of the development and lack of Environmental Impact Assessment
53. Consultation response is as follows:
- Cambridgeshire County Council: Further information and clarification has been sought and currently object to the application until information has been provided



- County Guided Bus Way Team: Recommend conditions
- Head of Refuse & Environment: Recommend conditions
- Planning Policy Team: Support the application, in compliance with policy on future occupation and loss of storage space and the general approach to sustainable development and construction
- Urban Design & Consultation Team and Landscaping Team: Support the scheme in design term but further work is needed to the skyline assessment and height of proposed tower and recommends conditions.
- The Cycling & Walking Officer: Access to the site should be available to all and not just those to using the site.
- Environment Agency: Recommend conditions
- Anglia Water: Recommend conditions
- Design and Consultation Panel: Support the scheme
- English Heritage: The development would not harm the conservation but expressed concern at the height of the tower.

#### **Questions and Comments to the Applicant:**

54. The current parking on site is not used to its full capacity.
55. Why is a guided bus stop not permitted outside the site?
56. Could the area around Accordia be made a no parking zone?
57. What is the number of existing parking spaces on site and could this be extended?
58. Can you demonstrate that you are not going to make the parking in the surrounding areas worse than it is as the infrastructure is near breaking point?
59. The description of travel plans as “ambitious but achievable” but what is the evidence for this?
60. Could the potential shuttle bus from Newmarket Road Park & Ride be extended?
61. Could the Park and Rides sites be extended?
62. Suggest local neighbourhoods may suffer; are there possible schemes which could limit the amount of traffic into the city?
63. Do the Accordia residents want resident parking?
64. What process exists to see if these schemes can be tested?

#### **Response to Questions:**

65. Agreed that the parking on site is not fully utilised but there are conditions in the Travel Plan to ensure that that this happens and parking will be controlled.
66. In a wider context there is a long term plan for traffic infrastructure in Cambridge. The County Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council are working together on how best to accommodate further traffic

- growth. The City Deal would bring up to £500,000,000 from Central Government for transport infrastructure which would allow some mitigation not just in the area being discussed but City wide.
67. The County Council Policy is not to encourage traffic growth, providing a higher level of parking on site would exacerbate growth. The key is how to manage the offsite impacts.
  68. Mark Webb, Development Manager at Travel for Work Partnership, Cambridgeshire County Council, described the travel plans as “ambitious but achievable”.
  69. The road on which the proposed bus stop would sit is on a major significant route which could impact the traffic on that route with additional stops. However would be happy to take this back to the relevant County Officers to discuss the matter further.
  70. It is not within the applicant’s gift to expand the Park and Ride Service. This service is analysed by County Council who determine if the supply is meeting a demand. A contribution could be made southern corridor area plan which could go towards funding the project should County Council decide that funding should be allocated there.
  71. Improvements to the infrastructure and access from car parks would encourage car travel into the area and it would be down to the County Council to determine where and if work should be undertaken.
  72. Overwhelming support from Accordia residents to protect the access the development with controlled parking and resident parking on the Accordia site.
  73. A total of 210 parking spaces are on site that would be redeveloped. The applicant is proposing 189 parking spaces plus or minus 10%. There are 400 spaces on the wider site which belong to Cambridge University Press.

#### **Summing up by the Applicant:**

74. Welcomed the opportunity that the Development Control Forum offered but acknowledges ongoing dialogue was at the heart of the proposal.
75. The location held lots of positives and is sustainable but there were difficulties which the applicant would and have addressed.
76. The site is central good access from the guided bus way, parallel to a cycle path close to the Railway Station, the Guided Bus and to the CB1 development.
77. The Travel Plan outlined is ambitious but the applicant believes the transport plan is achievable.
78. The applicant recognises that there are parts of the City which experiences congestion particularly at peak times and is working

- towards to generate any additional traffic over the base rate figure given.
79. The applicant believes the traffic plan will limit the traffic impact that the development will bring to neighbouring areas.
  80. Reducing the size of the development and increasing parking on site would not meet the applicant's growth requirements and would increase traffic.
  81. The applicant has the benefit of time to educate employees to change the way they travel to work and education.
  82. New employees will be inducted from the start on the Travel Plan and how they need to travel to work.
  83. There will be s106 money allocated to improve appropriate traffic infrastructure. But this must be done proportionally by looking at the applicant's impact on the area and how to mitigate that impact.
  84. The applicant cannot be responsible to find a resolution to the traffic issues and infrastructure already experienced in the area.
  85. The Transport Assessment would be monitored and evaluated annually both by Cambridge Assessment and the County Council and continue to work with the local community.

#### **Summing up the Petitioners:**

86. The project is an exciting one with many advantages; but it will bring only disadvantages to the neighbourhood as currently conceived.
87. It could potentially have very severe impacts on an already stressed infrastructure and will bring additional traffic to the area.
88. Acknowledged that the Planning Committee had limited powers but joint commitment by the City and County Councils, the developer, and Cambridge University is required to ensure that the development meets the needs of the wider community in line with policies.
89. Encourage the Applicant and Officers to listen to the comments made by County Council's Transport Assessment Team that the target of 7% of e is very ambitious and look at similar schemes near to the site how they work in practice.
90. Visitor transport to the site has not been considered and it has not been demonstrated that no additional car trips will be generated.
91. The issues raised are ones that are faced on a daily basis by residents. The capacity of construction traffic on neighbouring developments is already a safety hazard for residents and the emergency services.
92. The issues raised need to be addressed sooner rather than later.

93. The development is for 3000 people on a land locked side arriving by various modes of transport and it is about maintaining the character of a residential street rather than a major through route.

**Final Comments of the Chair:**

94. The Chair confirmed that the notes of the Development Control Forum would be made available to relevant parties and would be reported to the Planning Committee when the application are reported to them.

95. The Chair then encouraged ongoing dialogue between the applicant and the wider community.

The meeting ended at 11.30 am

**CHAIR**