

Agenda Item	A6
Application Number	25/00593/OUT
Proposal	Outline application for development of a knowledge and research Innovation Campus comprising Use Class E(g) with associated car parking and primary access with all other matters reserved.
Application site	Land to the West of Health Innovation One Sir John Fisher Drive Lancaster University
Applicant	Lancaster University
Agent	Hannah Blunstone
Case Officer	Mr Andrew Clement
Departure	None
Summary of Recommendation	Approve subject to conditions and completion of Section 106 Agreement. Delegate back to Chief Planning Officer to finalise legal agreement.

1.0 Application Site and Setting

- 1.1 The application site is located between the southern periphery of Lancaster city (Collingham Park) and the northern boundaries of Lancaster University, immediately south of Bailrigg Lane. There is an existing (9,313sq.m floorspace) office/research building constructed circa 2020 through earlier consents at the site for the wider health innovation campus. This building sits just beyond the development area of this application. A small electricity sub-station towards the corner of Bailrigg Lane and the A6 is just beyond the site, with the red edge development area drawn around this building. There is a significant private access road (Sir John Fisher Drive) onto the A6, already serving the existing 'Phase One' Health Innovation Building, with an existing circa 156 space parking area serving the existing building within the development area.
- 1.2 Bailrigg Lane to the north is bordered by a mix of hedgerows and trees. It is narrow and has a rural character. No motor vehicular access to the site would be provided from this road. However, pedestrian and cycle trips through the site already cross Bailrigg Lane at an existing junction point, continuing beyond and linking to the wider Lancaster University Campus. The A6 is a well-served bus corridor and has regular services linking the University with the city's bus and railway stations. Services also operate at least once an hour to Galgate, Garstang, Preston and Blackpool.
- 1.3 The eastern boundary is now defined by recently planted trees and vegetation, providing a divide to an existing agricultural field, and Bailrigg hamlet beyond. The southern boundary of the site consists of a mature landscaping belt, which forms an effective visual screen to the University's sporting pitches and broader University Campus. The site has been regraded and is gently undulating, sloping upwards towards the south-east, with the land draining to a small stream known as Ou Beck. The Grade II Listed Building of Bailrigg House overlooks the site, located on elevated land circa 250 metres east of the site.
- 1.4 The site is an allocated Strategic Employment Site and is located within the wider Lancaster South Broad Location for Growth designation. The employment allocation, titled 'Lancaster University

Health Innovation Campus', provides policy support for development of a campus delivering a range of knowledge-based and research businesses at the site, given the proximity and position in relation to Lancaster University. This is similarly incorporated into the Broad Location for Growth allocation, which established high-quality design, open space, health impact assessment, transport and infrastructure delivery for development in this broader area.

- 1.5 There are protected trees within the site. These are primarily located along the northern boundary to Bailrigg Lane, and a couple of trees adjacent to the existing 'Phase One' Health Innovation Building'. The site is within a smoke control area. Ou Beck is designated as Flood Zone 3b, with pockets of 1 in 30 to 1 in 1000 surface water flood risk areas within the site, and Flood Zones 2 and 3 in similar areas to surface water risks. Flood risk is projected to be slightly extended and exacerbated within the site when factoring in climate change. There is no identified groundwater risk at the site.

2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 The application seeks outline planning permission for the development of a knowledge and research Innovation Campus comprising Use Class E(g) buildings, associated car parking and primary access. The proposal seeks to deliver up to 25,000 square metres of floorspace to be used for research and development and similar uses, with a maximum of 384 car parking spaces. A landscape buffer area at least 30 metres within the site along the western boundary to the A6 is proposed. All other matters (appearance, landscaping, scale, layout and access) are reserved.

3.0 Site History

- 3.1 A number of relevant applications relating to this site have previously been received by the Local Planning Authority. These include:

Application Number	Proposal	Decision
24/00628/PRFORU	Pre application advice for proposed Innovation Campus	Advice provided
19/00942/FUL	Partially retrospective application for the re-grading and re-profiling of land to facilitate the retention of spoil within the site excavated in association with the Health Innovation Park	Permitted
16/01308/REM	Reserved Matters application for the erection of a 5 storey research and development building (B1) with ancillary facilities, new internal road, car parking and landscaping	Permitted
16/00117/VCN	Renewal of application 09/00330/DPA for the outline application for a science park (approx 34,000 sq.m of B1 use floorspace) and full application for a new access off the A6, construction of an internal spine road and provision of landscaping (pursuant to the variation and removal of conditions 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 27 on the full planning permission 12/00626/RENU to enable phased implementation and remove duplicated requirements)	Permitted
09/00330/DPA	Outline application for a Science Park (approx 34,000 sq m of B1 use floorspace) and full application for a new access off the A6, construction of an internal spine road and provision of landscaping	Permitted

4.0 Consultation Responses

- 4.1 The following responses have been received from statutory and internal consultees:

Consultee	Response
Scotforth Parish Council	Objection. Requests to plant semi-mature trees and hedges along Bailrigg Lane and eastern boundary and around existing parking to provide early screening, keeping the site free of invasive species, development use for research, teaching and health-related activity only, enhancement to Bailrigg Lane cycleway junction, maximum development heights and scale, with green walls/roof designed to blend into rural landscape, avoid light pollution and any adverse drainage/flooding impacts.
Bailrigg Village Residents Association	Objection. Overdevelopment and visual impact are key concerns. Requests to plant semi-mature trees and hedges along Bailrigg Lane and eastern boundary and around existing parking to provide early screening, keeping the site free of invasive species, development use for research, teaching and health-related activity only, enhancement to Bailrigg Lane cycleway junction, maximum development heights and scale, with green walls/roof designed to blend into rural landscape, and avoid light pollution.
County Highways	Comments - The impacts of this development, with developer funded and supported change, can be accommodated within the highway and transport network both locally and strategically, with support of the Gravity Model approach, with payments (20.99/sq.m GIA) made prior to any construction (above ground) of that phase. These funds will be used to deliver highway changes that mitigate against this development's impacts. Car parking provision must satisfy demand managed at each phase, having regard to the demands of the previous phase, with the initial phase over-providing.
National Highways	No objection. It is acknowledged that the information set out within the Transport Assessment (TA) is in line with that agreed with National Highways. The development, with the included bus stop relocation mitigation scheme within Galgate village, is predicted to operate without detrimental impact to the strategic road network.
Environmental Health	No observation received
Lead Local Flood Authority	No objection to the revised Flood Risk Assessment (FRA), subject to the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a final surface water sustainable drainage scheme. • construction surface water management plan. • an operation and maintenance manual for the approved drainage scheme. • verification report of constructed and approved sustainable drainage scheme. An informative relating to ordinary watercourse consent is also required.
Engineering Team	No observation received
County Archaeology	No adverse comment , low potential for the site to contain significant remains, no requirement for further survey works on-site.
Environment Agency	No objection to the revised Flood Risk Assessment (FRA), subject to a condition for a scheme for compensatory flood water storage on-site.
Natural England	No adverse comment
Planning Policy	No adverse comment , subject to commitment to deliver active travel projects (£13.86/sq.m GIA) and improved pedestrian/cycling permeability and placemaking through the site.
Biodiversity Officer	Comments – indicates a 10% gain or more is likely, due to the area available for habitat creation and enhancement on site. Some concerns raised in relation to the baseline but acknowledged disturbance from previous development may explain habitat types claimed. Acknowledges the extent of hedgerow removal and impacts on the watercourses is unclear at this stage and notes hedgerow on Bailrigg Lane is likely an Important hedgerow.
Active Travel England	No objection - ATE recommends approval of the application, subject to the agreement and implementation of planning conditions and/or obligations, including infrastructure improvements identified in the Pedestrian and Cycling Audit, strategic infrastructure and on-site facilities, including cycle storage.

United Utilities	Comments - Request detailed drainage plan prior to determination, recommend planning condition for sustainable surface water drainage, and scheme for protection of a water main within the site.
Electricity North West	No observations received
Arboricultural Officer	Comments - the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment identifies the felling of 5 trees, including 2 mature (Category B) oak trees, and paths within the root protection area of a Category A tree. These Category A and B trees should be considered a constraint to development, and influence the design/layout of development. Landscape masterplan is extensive, but only indicative at this stage.
Lancaster Civic Vision	Comments - Welcomes outline proposal, and the employment opportunities which this development could create. The draft illustrations look acceptable, which will help the local economy. Would seek 'state of the art' innovative design and high-quality building in prominent location from the A6 (in-keeping with existing building on-site), and ensure scale does not dwarf Bailrigg, at later reserved matters. Planning conditions should seek to minimise traffic impact on A6, ensure high quality innovative and sustainable design and activities, with assurances over local construction employment.
Policy Group Mineral	No observation received
County Active Travel	No observation received
Waste And Recycling	No observation received
Sustainable Growth	No adverse comment , subject to high-level indication that affirms their commitment to deliver an Employment Skills Plan (ESP), and full details controlled through planning condition

4.2 The following responses have been received from members of the public:

- Two objections, due to adverse impact upon local employment, lack of demand, and omission of some existing drainage infrastructure from submitted plans.

5.0 Analysis

5.1 The key considerations in the assessment of this application are:

- Principle of employment development.
- Landscape and heritage impacts.
- Sustainable transport, highways impacts, parking and air quality.
- Flooding, drainage and infrastructure.
- Biodiversity, landscaping and trees.
- Sustainable design, contamination and mineral safeguarding; and
- Residential amenity, light and noise.

5.2 **Principle of employment development** Development Management (DM) DPD policies DM14 (Proposals involving Employment Land and Premises), DM28 (Employment and Skills Plans), Strategic Policies and Land Allocations (SPLA) DPD policies SO1 (Strategic Objectives for the Local Plan – Delivery of a thriving local economic), SP1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development), SP3 (Development Strategy for Lancaster District), SP4 (Priorities for Sustainable Economic Prosperity), SP5 (The Delivery of New Jobs), SG1 (Lancaster South Broad Location for Growth (Including Bailrigg Garden Village)), SG2 (Lancaster University Health Innovation Campus), SG3 (Infrastructure Delivery for Growth in South Lancaster); EC2 (Future Employment Growth), Employment and Skills SPD and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 2 (Achieving sustainable development), Section 4 (Decision-making), Section 6 (Building a strong, competitive economy) and Section 11 (Making effective use of land).

5.2.1 The application site relates to the future employment growth area EC2, and South Lancaster Broad Location for Growth allocation SG2, for the allocation titled 'Lancaster University Health Innovation

Campus'. These allocations seek to deliver opportunities for technology research-based industries. This allocation is a key element of employment growth as part of the South Lancaster Broad Location for Growth SPLA policy SG1. In September 2023, the Council resolved to cease work on the Lancaster South Area Action Plan (AAP) and to commence a full review of the Local Plan in accordance with SPLA DPD policy LPRM1. The reasons for doing so related to the June 2023 announcement by Lancashire County Council for its decision to suspend further work on the proposed South Lancaster to M6 transport project, and to return the Housing Infrastructure Funding (HIF) to central government due to rising costs. However, the site still forms part of this wider designation and should be assessed against the Key Growth Principles and infrastructure requirements of these policies, despite the fact that the delivery of the broader Bailrigg Garden Village (BGV) no longer forms a commitment of the currently adopted Local Plan. Notwithstanding the continued applicability of these broader area policies, the proposed development does not prejudice these wider allocations, and the site benefits from the narrower future employment growth area allocation specifically to deliver opportunities for technology- and research-based industries within this site area.

- 5.2.2 The allocation of this site is envisaged to deliver regionally important employment development to generate in the region of 2,000 jobs within the knowledge-based industries, with the close links and proximity to Lancaster University being a key driver for the location of this allocation. This is identified as a key driver of the strategic objectives of the Local Plan in SPLA policy SO1, and within the priorities for sustainable economic prosperity and delivery of new jobs as part of policies SP4 and SP5. Delivery of the Innovation Campus has been a long-standing aspiration of the Council, not just within the South Lancaster Broad Location for Growth, but the knowledge/research-based employment aspirations for sustainable economic development of the district.
- 5.2.3 Planning permissions have been granted and implemented for the existing site access (Sir John Fisher Drive), the existing 'Phase One' Health Innovation Building, and regarding the land levels of the site. Unfortunately, previous permissions of a similar scale and use to those sought through this application have since lapsed, resulting in this current application for outline permission for development of a knowledge and research Innovation Campus comprising Use Class E(g), with the key parameters seeking a maximum gross internal area (enclosed floorspace) of 25,000sq.m across the whole development.
- 5.2.4 Whilst in outline form, it is noteworthy that the proposal is largely aligned with the previous permission, and current Local Plan allocations and aspirations for this site. Use Class E(g) is a subset of Class E, but remains quite broad, incorporating offices and administration functions within E(g)(i), and any industrial process which can be carried out within a residential area within E(g)(iii), which may be inappropriate uses within the specific allocation. Further subset Use Class E(g)(ii) for the research and development of products or processes would more comfortably deliver the allocation requirements of this site, however other uses within Class E(g), or outside of a Use Class (Sui Generis), would need closer control. To ensure development aligns with the policy aspirations, a suitably worded planning condition can be imposed to control the uses of development (Use Class E(g)(ii)). and requiring specific details of intended uses that fall outside of (ii) of Use Class E(g).
- 5.2.5 The outline nature of the proposal, combined with the regional scale of this employment allocation and proposal, is considered to justify flexibility regarding the commencement of development. Historically, similar permissions at this site have been for 5 years for commencement or first reserved matters, and before expiration of 2 years from reserved matters approval. This extended 5 year duration (ordinarily 3 years), remains within the plan period for the Local Plan. Given the scale and history of this site, a longer commencement timeframe is justified in this instance. Given that reserved matters may progress as phases of development, the submission and agreement of phasing, either before or alongside the first reserved matters application, could be controlled through discharge of conditions though a suitably worded planning condition to include the option for phasing. At this point, there will hopefully be greater detail regarding how the development will likely come forward.
- 5.2.6 This proposed development meets the threshold for requiring production of an Employment and Skills Plan (ESP). The ESP details how opportunities for, access to and up-skilling local people through the construction phase of the development proposal will be provided. As such and given

mitigation would likely be met during construction phase of the development itself, this should be controlled through pre-commencement planning condition, incorporating potential phasing of development, to ensure any consents granted delivers the full ESP requirements, in accordance with policy requirements to employ and up-skill local workforces.

5.2.7 Subject to planning conditions, the proposal is considered an important step towards realisation of the 'Lancaster University Health Innovation Campus', as planned development providing an opportunity to deliver economic, social and employment aspirations from across the Local Plan. These benefits are attributed substantial weight in favour of development, in accordance with allocations SO1, EC2, SG2, SP4, SP5 of the SPLA DPD, DM DPD policies DM14 and DM28, and Section 6 of the NPPF, all seeking to deliver a strong and competitive local economy through development to facilitate knowledge/research employment at this key strategic site.

5.3 **Landscape and heritage impact** Development Management (DM) DPD policies DM29 (Key Design Principles), DM39 (The Setting of Designated Heritage Assets), DM42 (Archaeology), DM46 (Development and Landscape Impact), Strategic Policies and Land Allocations (SPLA) DPD policies SP7 (Maintaining Lancaster District's Unique Heritage), SP8 (Protecting the Natural Environment), SG1 (Lancaster South Broad Location for Growth (Including Bailrigg Garden Village)), SG2 (Lancaster University Health Innovation Campus) and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 11 (Making effective use of land), Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places), Section 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment) and Section 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) and Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act 1990

5.3.1 Matters relating to appearance, landscaping, scale, and layout of the development are reserved under this application and will therefore be considered in subsequent applications if outline permission is granted. However, the key parameters that can be controlled at this stage are the floor space (maximum of 25,000sq.m GIA), the landscape buffer (no proposed buildings within 30 metres of the western boundary to the site along the A6), and a maximum parking threshold (no more than 384 parking spaces). These measures can be controlled as precise parameters through planning condition. Indicative plans on maximum heights, sections, design codes and plot areas have been suggested; however, these are indicative only to inform future reserved matters (if approved) and not controlled through this outline application.

5.3.2 Whilst there is limited control over precise details and impacts at this stage, this scale of development will undoubtedly result in some adverse visual/landscape harm. In place of the current grassland (albeit separated by significant highway/access through the site) and views of boundary trees would become less prominent should large scale employment buildings be developed on this site, which is elevated above the A6. The submitted Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) identifies moderate adverse impacts from surrounding perpetual viewpoints of footpaths and Burrow Heights opposite to the west, and from the existing Health Innovation One building. More transient moderate adverse impacts are also reported from Bailrigg Lane, given the rural nature of this road, whilst other transient viewpoints around the site result in minor adverse impact. There are no national or local landscape designations at the site, and therefore such impacts are not amplified by such designations or sensitivity of the site.

5.3.3 At reserved matters stage, minimising impacts upon Bailrigg Lane and perpetual viewpoints in particular will be key considerations of layout, scale, appearance and landscaping, seeking to achieve high-quality, proportionately scaled development. The 30 metres minimum setback of proposed buildings from the A6 can be controlled through planning condition and will provide some softening of the development on the southern gateway into the city. It will be necessary to assess appropriate setbacks and building heights along the northern section of the site at reserved matters stage.

5.3.4 The nearest Listed Building, Bailrigg House, is a Grade II Listed Building circa 325 metres east of the site. Due to the elevated position of this national heritage asset, the development would be visible from Bailrigg House and its grounds. However, the setting of Bailrigg House is already now formed by Lancaster University, and the intervening existing Health Innovation Campus Phase One building. Given this visual context and the separation distance, the proposed development is considered to have no undue adverse impact on the setting of Listed Buildings at this outline stage, with the potential to provide mitigation through embedded design measures at the reserved matters

stage. There is low potential for the site to contain significant archaeological remains, with no requirement for further survey works on-site, as concluded by the consultation response from County Archaeology.

- 5.3.5 Within the above parameters, with appearance, scale, layout and landscaping (and access) matters being reserved, the outline proposal is considered appropriate in quantum and location in this area allocated for such development. These matters would be assessed in full at reserved matters stage (if outline permission is granted). In terms of elements that are not reserved, and therefore must be controlled at outline stage, external lighting of such development can have profound landscape/visual impact, and ecological impacts given trees and waterways in and around the site. External lighting should be controlled through a pre-installation and pre-occupation planning condition. Similar to other recommended planning conditions, these will allow for phased development for development parcels coming forwards through subsequent reserved matters applications, if granted.
- 5.3.6 The moderate adverse impacts, from northern viewpoints in particular, should be minimised and mitigated by sympathetic scale, layout, appearance and landscaping in this location parallel to Bailrigg Lane. However, given that these reserved matters cannot be considered at this outline stage, the overall moderate visual and landscape impact of development is considered to form an anticipated degree of impact from such a development allocation, albeit one that will need to be weighed in planning balance. Subject to the proposal progressing in a congruent form, compatible with its surroundings, though sympathetic reserved matters to mitigate harm to the visual setting and the setting of the listed building, on the whole the scheme is considered acceptable with these regards. At this stage, and subject to well-designed reserved matters, it is considered that the proposal is capable of according with the allocation for the site, and relevant policies controlling design, visual and heritage impact.
- 5.4 **Sustainable transport, highways impacts, parking and air quality** Development Management (DM) DPD policies DM31 (Air Quality Management and Pollution), DM57 (Health and Wellbeing), DM60 (Enhancing Accessibility and Transport Linkages), DM61 (Prioritising Walking and Cycling), DM62 (Vehicle Parking Provision and Electric Vehicle Charging Points), DM63 (Transport Efficiency and Travel Plans), DM64 (Lancaster District Transport and Highways Masterplan), Appendix E (Vehicle Parking Standards), Strategic Policies and Land Allocations (SPLA) DPD policies SG1 (Lancaster South Broad Location for Growth (Including Bailrigg Garden Village)), SG2 (Lancaster University Health Innovation Campus), SG3 (Infrastructure Delivery for Growth in South Lancaster), SP10 (Improving Transport Connectivity), T2 (Developing the Cycling and Walking Network), T4 (Public Transport Corridors) and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 9 (Promoting sustainable transport)
- 5.4.1 The site is located beyond the southern edge of the existing built-up area of Lancaster, benefitting from good access to sustainable transport, including walking, cycling and the use of public transport. The A6 forms a key transport corridor and public transport route, and serves as the primary route between the city centre and the Lancaster University campus. The closest bus stops to the application site is along Sir John Fisher Drive, and at the junction of this road to the A6. The application site sits between the foot- and cycle-way linking Collingham Park to Bailrigg Lane north of the site, with existing cycle facilities within the site linking to routes beyond up to Lancaster University.
- 5.4.2 The district's development strategy, which is set out within policies SP2 and SP3, aim to manage growth in a sustainable manner. To achieve this, policy directs development to the main urban areas, therefore maximising opportunities for existing centres and sustainable travel options to be utilised. Sustainable transport modes should be prioritised, along with safe access and mitigating transport network and highway safety to an acceptable degree.
- 5.4.3 Following initial concerns regarding active travel and highway impact, additional information, modelling, junction analysis and proposed s106 mitigation measures have followed extensive discussions with stakeholders and the applicant. In line with national policy requirements and the allocations for the site, sustainable travel projects have been identified to encourage a modal shift in transportation, from private car use to accessible active travel and sustainable transport.

- 5.4.4 Proportionate contributions have been agreed to secure funding for active travel improvements along Ashford Road, Cinder Lane, Uggle Lane, Collingham Park, and through to Bailrigg Lane, forming a key commuter route for future employees. These measures, detailed in the Planning Obligations section of this report, will be secured through a legal agreement. Contributions will be proportionate to each future reserved matters application (based on GIA floorspace) and will mitigate the development's active travel impacts while promoting walking and cycling as the primary mode of transport from South Lancaster. Sustainable links to Lancaster University are considered appropriate. The existing cycle-friendly route via Chapel Lane and provision on Chapel Street are deemed suitable, given the anticipated level of movements from this direction, in the absence of immediately deliverable cycle improvements along the A6.
- 5.4.5 In addition to the off-site contributions, active travel must be prioritised within the site itself to encourage modal shift. Active travel through the site itself, and prioritising cycle and pedestrian movements across roads and parking areas through crossings, surfacing and level changes, should all be controlled through planning condition. This should control the delivery of footways and cycle routes following desire lines to entry points around and through the site, and to bus stops. For such employment use, showering, changing and secure bicycle storage should be provided to make cycling a viable option for future employees at the site. These facilities within the site should be controlled through planning condition.
- 5.4.6 Whilst finer details of accesses within the site is a reserved matter, the primary access from the A6 via Sir John Fisher Drive already exists and is considered suitable to serve the development proposals. Beyond this access, there are clearly greater constraints and challenges with the highway network, with existing capacity issues and several junctions above capacity both in the AM and PM peaks. The development of a significant employment area, particularly in south Lancaster, would undoubtedly exacerbate these existing highway issues through greater demand at peak times. Even small increases in traffic could have significant adverse effects, given that parts of the network are already saturated, and that the effect of additional traffic would exponentially add onto the existing delays experienced. The cumulative impacts of detrimental effects on movement around the city includes adverse consequences on economic development and health relating to air quality.
- 5.4.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) seeks transport solutions that deliver well designed, sustainable and popular places, and development that creates places that are safe, secure and attractive. Whilst some concern has been raised regarding the analysis of junctions submitted as part of this application, further information has been provided and aided further discussions and mitigation. An agreeable position has been reached regarding contributions through the gravity model approach, to determine the level of contributions to Lancaster Travel and Transport Infrastructure Strategy (LTTIS) projects to mitigate the impacts of the development. These contributions are considered sufficient and proportionate (again tied to GIA floorspace at reserved matters stage) to enable County Highways to fund and deliver essential mitigation projects along Lancaster city centre gyratory, Pointer Roundabout, Galgate signalised junction, and the A6 corridor. These are detailed within the Planning Obligations section of this report, and would be secured through legal agreement. In light of this, both County Highways and National Highways have no objection to the proposal. Whilst the development will unavoidably generate additional vehicle movements, the mitigation measures to be delivered through the agreed contributions will, in time, ensure peak traffic impacts are minimised and spread, mitigating transport network and highway safety to an acceptable degree.
- 5.4.8 Finally, in terms of car parking demand, this has been calculated on the basis of existing demand at the existing Health Innovation Campus Phase One building. This has calculated a maximum of 384 parking spaces to be considered as part of this proposal, which can be controlled through planning conditions as a maximum figure. The control over parking as part of this development will need to be multifaceted, to address competing pressures to encourage active travel as a primary means of accessing the site, whilst also ensuring sufficient provision of car parking to avoid on-street parking pressures. The existing parking area within the site is part of the red edge development area, and this quantum of existing parking will need to be protected from development to ensure suitable provision for the existing Health Innovation Campus Phase One building.
- 5.4.9 Any new parking will need to be proportionate to the level of floorspace brought forward at reserved matters stage, and should be secured for the uses delivered on-site only (no public or University

use of this parking). There will need to be a suitable proportion and location of disabled parking and EV charging spaces. Finally, delivery of earlier development of the site should inform subsequent phases of development through updated Travel Plan information, demonstrating the proportion of parking spaces to floor spaces is appropriate for the development coming forward, to inform whether either the parking or floorspace limits require reduction to avoid adverse impacts. Subject to such details being controlled through planning condition, and informed position can be made ensuring the proportionate delivery of a maximum of 25,000sq.m and/or 384 parking spaces, with reductions from these maximum figures if either provides a limiting factor.

5.5 **Flooding, drainage and infrastructure Development Management (DM) DPD policies DM33 (Development and Flood Risk), DM34 (Surface Water Runoff and Sustainable Drainage), DM35 (Water Supply and Wastewater), DM36 (Protecting Water Resources, Water Quality and Infrastructure), DM43 (Green and Blue Infrastructure), Strategic Policies and Land Allocations (SPLA) DPD policies SG2 (Lancaster University Health Innovation Campus), SP8 (Protecting the Natural Environment), EN7 (Environmentally Important Areas) and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 14 (Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change)**

5.5.1 Strategic policy seeks to ensure new growth within the district is directed to areas at least risk of flooding, does not create new or exacerbate existing flooding issues and aims to reduce flood risk overall. The site contains areas of functional floodplain from Ou Beck, with broader areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3 from this source, and similar areas of surface water flooding along the eastern and western edges of the site, and the route of Ou Beck. There is no known groundwater flood risk at the site, a position derived from the latest Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).

5.5.2 This omission of groundwater flood risk is important at this allocated site, as NPPF paragraph 180 clarifies that *‘where planning applications come forward on sites allocated in the development plan through the sequential test, applicants need not apply the sequential test again.’* The 2017 Local Plan Sites Assessment considered flood zones and surface water flooding in the sequential test, but did not consider groundwater flooding or future risk due to climate change. Nevertheless, Planning Practice Guidance on flood risk and coastal change advises: *“avoiding, so far as possible, development in current and future medium and high flood risk areas”* (para. 023) (emphasis added). Given there is no risk identified through groundwater, and other sources were assessed through the local plan allocation, it is considered that the need for a sequential test as part of this development proposal is not triggered. The submitted Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) does include a sequential test, as the site presented a groundwater flood risk prior to the publication of the SFRA.

5.5.3 An updated site-specific FRA was submitted to reflect the current calculated existing and future flood risks, addressing concerns from both the Lead Local Flood Authority and the Environment Agency, both of whom now return no objection, subject to planning conditions. The mitigation within the submitted FRA includes specified finished floor levels and the provision of flood storage, which can be controlled through planning condition. Accordingly, the proposal can provide suitable mitigation for future users of the site to minimise the risks and impacts of flooding upon the proposed development, whilst ensuring flood risk is not exacerbated beyond the site. In this regard the development is considered to accord with the requirements of DM DPD policies DM33, DM34, DM36, DM43, SPLA policies SP8, EN7 and the requirements of the allocation SG2, and NPPF policy within Section 14.

5.5.4 With regard to the proposed drainage strategy, the submitted FRA provides indicative information based on the extent of impermeable areas across the site and the intention to support sustainable surface water drainage systems. The FRA sets an intention which aligns with the SuDS hierarchy of prioritising infiltration, swales, detention basins and blue/green roofs. Whilst these are positive indications, a full sustainable surface water drainage strategy, and arrangements for foul drainage, will need to be provided, alongside maintenance/verification details of SuDS and construction drainage details. This can all be controlled through planning conditions. Subject to such planning conditions, given there is potential for infiltration at this site (based on reports submitted as part of previously applications at the site) with a watercourse outfall, and sufficient space within the site for attenuation, it is considered that an acceptable drainage scheme is capable of being provided on site.

- 5.5.5 From the Utilities Statement submitted and consultation responses received, there appear to be subterranean drainage and water supply infrastructure across the site, primarily along Sir John Fisher Drive and adjacent to the A6 within the site, but other infrastructure crosses the site. With layout being reserved, and not for consideration at this stage, it is unclear what impact there would be upon such infrastructure. The layout of the development would need to ensure any necessary easements are protected at reserved matters stage. In addition, a planning condition is recommended for a scheme for the protection of existing infrastructure prior to commencement of development, as suggested within the United Utilities consultation response. Subject to such a planning condition, the development of the site can adequately protect existing drainage infrastructure and provide adequate drainage facilities and flood mitigation to serve the development and is considered acceptable with these regards.
- 5.6 **Biodiversity, landscaping and trees** Development Management (DM) DPD policies DM44 (The Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity), DM45 (Protection of Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland), DM46 (Development and Landscape Impact), Strategic Policies and Land Allocations (SPLA) DPD policies SG2 (Lancaster University Health Innovation Campus), SP8 (Protecting the Natural Environment), EN7 (Environmentally Important Areas) and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment)
- 5.6.1 The proposal includes a pre-development biodiversity metric, identifying the majority of the site as modified grassland, albeit from winter surveys only. Given the vast majority of the site has been regraded and reprofiled circa 8 years ago, this recent upheaval undoubtedly impacts the ecological value of the site, corroborating the conclusions of the pre-development biodiversity metric, in the absence of summer survey works. Additional updated summer surveys should form part of submission of phasing biodiversity gain plans, which should establish how each phase will contribute to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), and maintain progress towards BNG overall across the development. Subject to such details through legal agreement, the submission is considered to meet the pre-determination requirements with regards to BNG.
- 5.6.2 Post-development information has been submitted, and whilst this falls short of a fully evidenced and maintainable scheme, the indicative layouts and landscaping suggest that ample provision (and 68.8% gain) should be achievable on-site, notwithstanding the requirement for gain to hedgerow and watercourse units, which should be included in addition for an acceptable proposed BNG plan, or recompensed through the purchase of relevant BNG credits. The submitted information shows positive intention to deliver net gain on-site, the full details of which can be sought post-determination, but prior to commencement.
- 5.6.3 Given the scale of the proposed BNG enhancements on-site and medium distinctiveness features, this is considered significant on-site enhancement requiring a habitat management and monitoring plan (HMMP), and for biodiversity net gain to be controlled through legal agreement. Furthermore, given the likely extent of monitoring for such on-site biodiversity area, the costs of the authority's obligation to monitor this should be controlled through legal agreement. Subject to such obligations, the proposal is considered to meet the pre-determination requirements for BNG, with the phasing, delivery, 30-year maintenance and monitoring of required net gain to be fully detailed and controlled through such obligations.
- 5.6.4 The Ecological Impact Assessment has been submitted as part of this application, concluding that the effect of the development on protected species will be minimised through the retention and enhancement of the high value habitats, in addition to construction management measures controlling timing/checks during construction, with dust and lighting restrictions. These mitigation measures can be controlled through planning conditions. A scheme for species specific enhancements, including native planting watercourse enhancements and provision of bat/bird boxes, will similar be controlled through planning condition to ensure adequate mitigation proportionate to the impacts of development. Natural England have returned no adverse comment, or substantive assessment, of the proposal. A separate Habitats Regulation Assessment screens out adverse impacts upon designated sites due to separation distances involved regarding construction pollution, and given that previous survey works for the allocation of Bailrigg Garden village concluded low priority of the site to be functionally linked land based on wintering bird surveys 2021/22.

5.6.5 The majority of trees on-site are to be retained as part of the development of the site. The submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) details the removal of a Category B tree, although justification for this is based on indicative layout only. Several small recently planted Category C trees are also sought for removal, and incursion/impact upon a protected Category A tree root protection area is suggested from the submitted AIA, again based on indicative layouts. Whilst it is anticipated that the reserved matter of landscaping will provide ample compensation for losses, the submitted AIA does not make the higher category trees a constraint to development, and the loss of Category B trees and incursion into the root protection area of a protected Category A tree in particular weight moderately against this proposal. A condition requiring an arboricultural method statement and tree protection plan will need to detail and justify reasonable avoidance of root protection areas of trees within the site. Whilst the precise details of landscaping remain indicative and reserved, the legal agreement for the development should include a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan, to ensure the longevity and mitigation of landscaping and ecology delivered at the site. This is particularly necessary given the development will likely involve multiple owners/tenants of knowledge/research buildings, therefore the responsibilities and ongoing maintenance of the broader landscaping and ecological areas will need to be adequately controlled.

5.7 **Sustainable design, contamination and mineral safeguarding** Development Management (DM) DPD policies DM30a (Sustainable Design and Construction), DM30b (Sustainable Design and Construction – Water Efficiency), DM30c (Sustainable Design and Construction – Materials, Waste and Construction), DM32 (Contaminated Land), DM53 (Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation) Strategic Policies and Land Allocations (SPLA) DPD policies CC1 (Responding To Climate Change and Creating Environmental Sustainability), SG2 (Lancaster University Health Innovation Campus), and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment) and Section 17 (Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals), and Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Policy M2 (Safeguarding Minerals) and Guidance Note December 2014

5.7.1 **Sustainable Design**
Similar to some other documentation submitted as part of this proposal, the Energy & Sustainability Statement outlines intentions and recognition of requirements, but given the outline nature of the proposal, this lacks details of built form at this stage. This outlines policy position that BREEAM 'Excellent' should be targeted, with appropriate evidence and certification of this through planning conditions, in addition to sustainable construction practices and water efficiency. At this stage, the information submitted is considered to be sufficient for an outline proposal. However, full details should be controlled through planning condition for a Sustainable Design Statement before or alongside reserved matters applications, when precise mitigation and achievement of standards should be designed and submitted for assessment. No details have been submitted, nor consultation response provided, regarding waste and recycling arrangement for the proposed development during operational phase. Such details can be controlled through planning condition.

5.7.2 **Land Contamination**
This application is supported by a Phase 1 Contaminated Land Assessment, which identifies potential on-site sources of contamination, including Made Ground and former agricultural use, with off-site sources of contamination from the railway, A6 road and substation to the west of the site. The survey ultimately concludes moderate risk classification, recommending intrusive investigation to be undertaken to establish geotechnical parameters for the design of the development, an assessment of groundwater and ground gas to confirm whether there are any potential risks requiring site specific mitigation. A condition to secure appropriate assessment and contamination remediation is recommended. There is no information at this stage that indicates that the site is unsuitable for the proposed development with respect to land contamination, with suitable investigation and mitigation to be controlled through planning condition to ensure that contamination (if present) can be adequately dealt with.

5.7.3 **Mineral Safeguarding**
A Minerals Assessment has been submitted, demonstrating that mineral interest is only a small slither of the western edge of the site, parallel to the A6. No buildings are proposed within this location (mineral interest entirely within the 30 metres buffer proposed), and as such the proposal is unlikely to prejudice extraction. However, the conclusion of the submitted assessment indicates that is not economically nor environmentally viable to extract the sand and gravel minerals prior to or during the proposed development works. Officers concur with the assessment and are satisfied

the development would not conflict with Policy M2 of the Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

5.8 Residential amenity, light and noise Development Management (DM) DPD policies DM29 (Key Design Principles), DM57 (Health and Wellbeing), Strategic Policies and Land Allocations (SPLA) DPD policies SG2 (Lancaster University Health Innovation Campus) and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 8 (Promoting healthy and safe communities) and Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places)

5.8.1 The northern edge of the application site is located between Bailrigg Student Living (former Filter House) to the northwest, and the residential hamlet of Bailrigg to the northeast. The proposal for Use Class E(g) development is considered appropriate in a residential setting, and such uses should be able to coexist without harming residential amenity standards. As detailed within the submitted Health Impact Assessment, the provision of additional open space and active travel connections may benefit nearby residents. Given this proximity to residential receptors, construction management details protecting neighbouring residential amenity during this phase should be controlled through planning condition, such as working hours.

5.8.2 Daylight survey based on indicative layout and scale demonstrates that the development should comfortably avoid undue adverse impacts with regard to overshadowing, largely through separation distance of suggested built form to the nearby residential receptors. Whilst no further information or mitigation is required, this will be a consideration of layout and scale at reserved matters stage. However, the submitted information provides comfort that development is capable of being delivered on the site, whilst being capable of maintaining acceptable standards of amenity for existing residents. With regard to noise following construction, subject to controls/limits of plant noise on proposed buildings, controllable through planning condition, no adverse impacts of noise are anticipated. External artificial lighting can also be controlled through planning condition. Subject to such conditions and careful consideration of layout and scale at reserved matter stage, the effects of the development on residential amenity are capable of being minimised through mitigation and made acceptable as part of the detailed design stage. At this stage, the development is considered to accord with DM DPD policies DM29, DM57 and the allocation for the site, and NPPF Sections 8 and 12 to achieve well-designed places and promote healthy communities.

6.0 Planning Obligations

- 6.1 In order for the development to be considered acceptable, the following contributions are required:
- £13.86/sq.m of GIA floorspace to active travel projects detailed in section 5.4.4 of this report.
 - £20.99/sq.m of GIA floorspace to Lancaster Travel and Transport Infrastructure Strategy (LTTIS) projects details in section 5.4.7 of this report
 - Biodiversity Net Gain Plan and Phasing Plan
 - Biodiversity Net Gain monitoring report assessment fee of £6,078
 - Landscape and Ecological Management Plan

With Committee's support, Officers seek delegation to secure a Section 106 Agreement to secure these requirements.

7.0 Conclusion and Planning Balance

7.1 The principle of the development is established through the plan-making process, subject to controls over maximum floorspace and tight controls over use of the site, to ensure this delivers the knowledge/research development justifying the allocation of the site. The proposal has the potential to deliver regionally important employment development, working symbiotically with the adjacent Lancaster University to deliver substantial economic and social benefits of such employment provision.

7.2 It is expected that the appearance, landscaping and layout will be befitting of such a knowledge/research development, although such matters are reserved for consideration at this outline stage. The submission includes positive intentions with these regards, and on matters relating to sustainable design and sustainable surface water drainage, the details of which should be controlled through planning condition before or alongside reserved matters applications.

- 7.3 It is anticipated that the development will be delivered in phases. This should be reflected in the recommended planning conditions to ensure proportionate delivery of mitigation measures for travel and biodiversity net gain (BNG), linked to the floorspace delivered at each stage. Subject to the details secured through the legal agreement, the development is considered compliant with policy in terms of promoting sustainable travel and mitigating impacts on the transport network and highway safety.
- 7.4 Parking provision within the site will need to be carefully managed and phased appropriately to ensure compliance with agreed standards. Significant on-site BNG has been indicated and will need to be secured and implemented through the legal mechanism.
- 7.5 Matters relating to sustainable travel within the site, local employment, construction impacts, lighting, noise, flood mitigation and contamination can all be addressed through planning conditions. These measures will mitigate potential impacts and ensure they remain neutral in the overall planning balance.
- 7.6 As with any development of this scale on a site predominantly characterised by grassland and tree boundaries, the construction of large employment buildings will inevitably result in adverse visual impacts. These are assessed as moderate adverse from certain viewpoints around the site, with additional moderate harm arising from tree loss. It is therefore essential that this prominent gateway into Lancaster delivers the high-quality design, layout and landscaping intentions at the reserved matters stage in order to minimise the localised landscape impacts.
- 7.7 On the basis of the outline submission and information available at this stage, the moderate visual and tree impacts are considered to be outweighed by the substantial economic and social benefits the development will deliver. Overall, subject to mitigation, the proposal is considered to accord with the Development Plan and will help realise a long-standing aspiration of the Council.

Recommendation

That Outline Planning Permission **BE GRANTED** following the satisfactory completion of a Legal Agreement within 3 months of the date of this Committee meeting, securing the requirements set out in paragraph 6.1 above. In the event that a satisfactory Section 106 Agreement is not concluded within the timescale above, or other agreed extension of time, delegate authority to the Chief Officer – Planning and Climate Change to refuse planning permission on the grounds that the obligations which make the development acceptable have not been legally secured. The approval is also to be subject to the following planning conditions:

Condition no.	Description	Type
1	5yr timescale and phasing	Control
2	Phasing plan	Concurrent with Reserved Matters Stage (REM)
3	Tree protection plan and arboricultural method statement	Concurrent with REM
4	Protection scheme for existing infrastructure	Concurrent with REM
5	Ecological protection/enhance scheme	Concurrent with REM
6	Compensatory flood water storage scheme	Concurrent with REM
7	Flood mitigation and floor levels	Before or alongside REM
8	Sustainable surface water drainage scheme (SuDS)	Concurrent with REM
9	Full Sustainable Design Statement based on Energy & Sustainability Statement principals	Concurrent with REM
10	Scheme for walking/cycle provision within the site	Concurrent with REM
11	Scheme for parking quantum proportion and limit, disabled and EV spaces for each phase	Concurrent with REM
12	Contamination investigation and gas assessment	Pre-commencement
13	Employment Skills Plan (ESP)	Pre-commencement
14	Construction surface water drainage scheme	Pre-commencement

15	Construction Management Plan, including no external illumination, dust management plan and air quality mitigation measures and delivery/working hours	Pre-commencement
16	Highway conditions and defects surveys	Pre-commencement
17	External artificial lighting	Pre-installation and pre-occupation/use
18	Cycle storage, changing and showering provision for each phase	Pre-installation and pre-occupation/use
19	Use Eg(ii), or broader E(g) subject to agreement of use criteria	Pre-occupation/use
20	Scheme for refuse/waste/bins provision for each phase	Pre-occupation/use
21	Operation and maintenance of SuDS for each phase	Pre-occupation/use
22	Verification of implemented SuDS for each phase	Pre-occupation/use
23	Car Park Management Strategy (CPMS)	Pre-occupation/use
24	Travel Plan for site and each phase, including monitoring	Pre-occupation/use
25	Travel plan reporting and floorspace	Before or alongside subsequent REM
26	Maximum 25,000sq.m GIA	Control
27	Ecology mitigation	Control
28	Noise limits and mitigation	Control
29	30m landscape buffer	Control

Article 35, Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

In accordance with the above legislation, Lancaster City Council has made the recommendation in a positive and proactive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development, working proactively with the applicant to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. The recommendation has been made having had regard to the impact of development, and in particular to the relevant policies contained in the Development Plan, as presented in full in the officer report, and to all relevant material planning considerations, including the National Planning Policy Framework, National Planning Practice Guidance and relevant Supplementary Planning Documents/ Guidance.

Background Papers

None