

**Cambridge City Council
Design & Conservation Panel**

Notes of the meeting Wednesday 8th July 2015

Attendees:

Di Haigh	RIBA (Chair) – items 1&3
David Grech	Historic England – Chair item 2
Russell Davies	RTPI
Mart Barrass	RIBA
Ian Steen	Co-opted member
Jon Harris	Co-opted member
Helen Thompson	Landscape Institute
Carolyn Gohler	Cambridge PPF
Chris Davis	IHBC

Officers:

Catherine Linford	City Council (item 1)
Glen Richardson	City Council (item 1&2)
Matthew Paul	City Council (item 1)
Lisa Lamb	City Council (item 2)
Dinah Foley-Norman	City Council (item 2)
Jonathan Brookes	City Council (item 3)
Toby Williams	City Council (item 3)
Michael Hammond	City Council (item 3)
Bana Elzein	City Council (item 3)

Apologies – Terry Gilbert and Tony Nix

1. Presentation – minutes of a pre-application scheme not eligible for publication on the website.

2. Presentation – ARM/Expansion of Peterhouse Technology Park, Fulbourn Road. (15/0893/FUL)

The detailed planning application consisting of: the demolition of ARM2; the construction of new buildings for B1 use; two multi-storey car parking structures; additional temporary car parking spaces; new cycle parking spaces; hard and soft landscaping works; new internal roads, foot and cycle paths; ancillary and associated facilities and site infrastructure.

This follows the pre-application presentation in August 2014 (unanimous AMBER verdict). Presentation by Ed Hayden of Scott Brownrigg Architects.

The Panel's comments were as follows:

- **Southern landscape boundary treatment and views.**

As a key concern raised at the last presentation; the Panel felt strongly that with such a long, uninterrupted southern façade, a robust boundary treatment was needed to relieve its stark impact on views from the fields and Gog Magog hills. A native species hedge running the full length of the southern boundary and allowed to grow to a significant height together with a series of taller trees was therefore regarded as more appropriate than the low hedge proposed.

- **Phasing.**
The Panel welcomed the intention for early landscape procurement to secure its delivery as a single entity. As ARM are not the exclusive users of the Technology Park, the need for flexible floorspace is also understood.
- **Vertical perforated fins (main building).**
The Panel were not comfortable with the proposed detailing for the vertical fins for solar control and for minimising light pollution, as they appear dated. Also, the need to deter pigeons would result in the unfortunate inclusion of spikes along the horizontal elements of the fins. Further work on the detailing is recommended.
- **Parking.**
The Panel understands that the Highways Authority is currently examining the justification for the proposed parking ratio and will look forward to learning the outcome of this work.
- **Petrarch panels (cladding).**
Some concern was expressed regarding the use of this cladding along such a huge expanse and whether sufficient studies had been carried out as to its impact on the landscape. It is recommended that officers have the opportunity to review large samples of the cladding on site before the final colour and texture is agreed.
- **Public routes through to the Gog Magog Hills.**
The Panel would like to see future consideration given to the re-opening of historic public access through to the Gog Magog hills. (The designers are reminded that under current policy, the lack of public access to land to the south is not a consideration when evaluating the impact on views.)

Conclusion.

The Panel appreciated the opportunity to re-visit this scheme at the more developed, submission stage. The eastern boundary has now been continued to the SSSI which is welcomed. Some concerns remain however. These principally focus on the southern boundary as this will become the new long-term Green Belt boundary of the city. The importance of the southern boundary treatment cannot be underestimated, and every measure should be taken to mitigate the impact of the scheme's expansive southern façade as far as possible. As the neighbouring fields are also owned by Peterhouse College, the Panel would encourage any scope for off-site planting to be explored, so as to provide a more robust boundary treatment.

VERDICT – AMBER (5), GREEN (4) based on the treatment of the southern boundary (see conclusion above) and concerns relating to the detailing of the solar control fins and cladding material for the car parks.

3. Presentation – minutes of a pre-application scheme not eligible for publication on the website.

4. Date of next meeting – Wednesday 12th August 2015

**Reminder:
'traffic light' definitions:**

GREEN: a good scheme, or one that is acceptable subject to minor improvements.
AMBER: in need of significant improvements to make it acceptable, but not a matter of starting from scratch.
RED: the scheme is fundamentally flawed and a fresh start is needed.