PLANNING

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

GENESIS II

HARWELL CAMPUS

FOR

HARWELL SCIENCE AND INNOVATION CAMPUS GP LTD

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

AJA Architects have been appointed by Harwell Science and Innovation Campus GP Ltd to act as Architects for Genesis II at Harwell Campus.

1.2 Design Proposals

The design and access proposals as shown on the accompanying drawings have been produced to meet the client brief, following a study of the site and its setting.

This statement provides a summary of the considerations taken into account in the design and access of this development.

2.0 EXISTING SITE

2.1 General

The application site comprises 1.26 hectares and sits within the Harwell Campus some 400m west of the A4185 (see Fig.1).

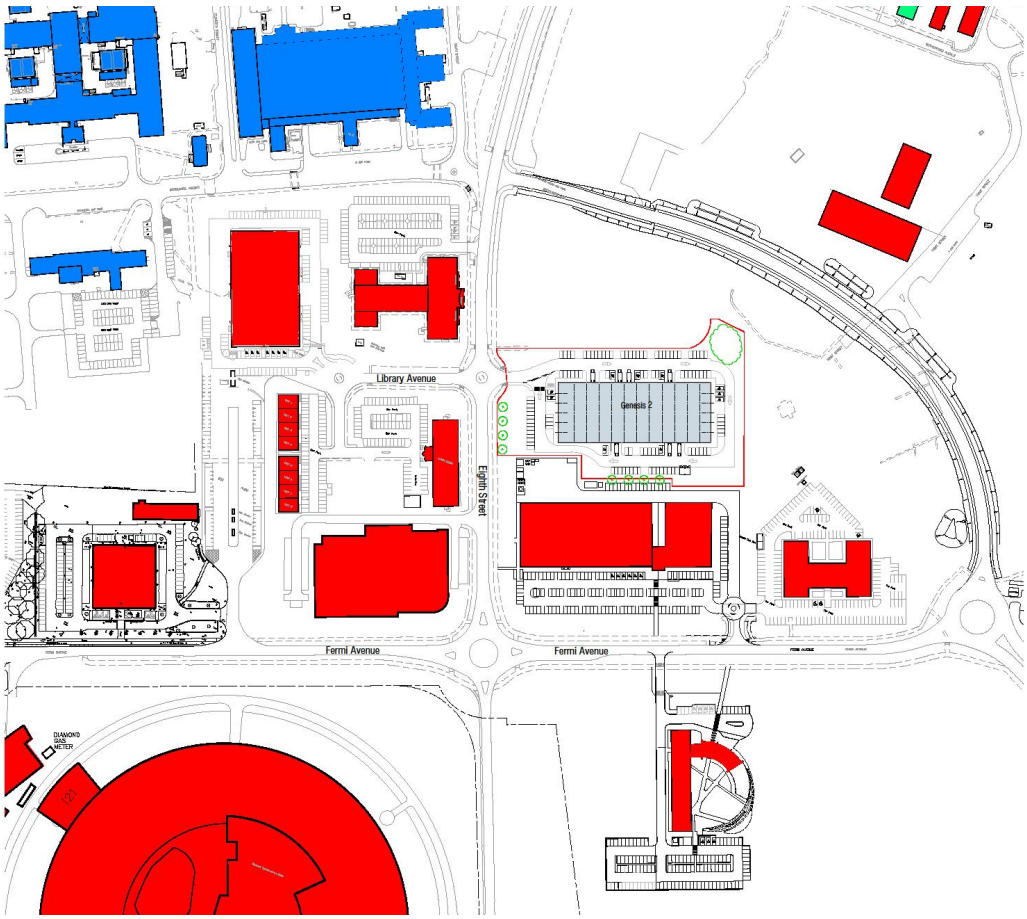

Fig.1

2.2 Extent

The site is bounded to the north and east by the future development sites.

To the south of the site is the service yard and rear of the Element 6 building.

To the west the site is bounded by Eighth Street.

2.3 Existing Uses

The majority of the site has not previously been developed. However, crossing part of the site was an old runway and a tower structure, both associated with the historic airfield.

2.4 Existing Access

Access to the site is from Eighth Street which connects to the A4185 via Fermi Avenue.

Vehicular access into the site is via the mini-roundabout on Eighth Street, providing shared service and staff car parking access to the service area and car parking which is arranged around all four sides of the building.

Eighth Street provides pedestrian access via the adjacent footpath, which links into the wider pedestrian network with access to the nearby bus stops.

Eighth Street also provides combined cycleway/footways. Cyclists have easy and direct access to the designated covered staff cycle parking area adjacent to the building, which is in a highly visible and readily serviceable location.

The nearest rail station is Didcot Parkway, which is 5 miles away, providing frequent direct services to London Paddington (40 mins), Reading, Oxford and the West.

3.0 CONTEXT

3.1 Use and Character of Surrounding Area.

The site lies within the context of the much wider Harwell Campus development and in particular, the central area which is now well established with a series of similar uses.

The character of this area is somewhat varied, with buildings that are largely typical examples of their use and age in terms of form and materials.

One of the closest neighbours, across Eighth Street to the north-west, is The Library (see Fig.2), a 1950's library building, refurbished into offices in 2003. This follows the 'Festival of Britain' aesthetic, with a combination of concrete, brickwork and glass.

The Janet (UK) Network Operations Centre (see Fig.3) sits on the opposite side of Eighth Street to the west. This building was completed in 2007 and is much simpler and more restrained in its form. The facade presented to Eighth

Street comprises buff brickwork, with grey framed vertical bands of glazing and panels of silver composite cladding, topped with a simple pitched roof with gables at either end. Solar shading in the form of simple brise-soleil has been employed as necessary.

Fig.2

Fig.3

To the south-west is a terrace of multi-occupancy offices (see Fig.4). This building was completed in 2007 and comprises buff brickwork, with grey framed vertical bands of glazing and panels of silver composite cladding, topped with a simple pitched roof with gables at either end. Solar shading in the form of simple brise-soleil has been employed as necessary.

Beyond this the recently constructed RAL Space Technology Centre (see Fig. 5). This is a substantial three storey building comprising silver and grey metal cladding and large areas of glazing addressing Fermi Avenue.

Fig.4

Fig.5

To the immediate south is the Global Synthetic Diamond Innovation Centre for Element 6 (see Fig.6) completed in 2014. This building comprises a combination of grey and silver cladding with ribbon windows and larger areas of glazing adjacent to the main entrance.

Other buildings of note slightly further away to the south, include the imposing structure of the Diamond Light Source Building (see Fig.7), the UK's national synchrotron facility, together with associated administration functions housed within the adjacent Diamond House (see Fig.8).

Fig.6

Fig.7

The over-riding character of each of these buildings is of crisp, modern structures, comprising a range of carefully detailed silver metal cladding types, interspersed with functionally regular glazed openings. Solar shading is provided via a combination of horizontally and vertically fixed external louvres. Diamond House also includes a simple entrance canopy.

Fig.8

4.0 DESIGN AND ACCESS

It is recognised that design is of fundamental importance, as set out by the Government in NPPF in paragraphs 56-68 and it is this policy that has informed the general approach to this development.

4.1 Use

This Reserved Matters Application proposes the development of a building intended to provide a series of flexible work spaces, falling within Class B1 of the Use Class Order, together with vehicle and pedestrian access, servicing, staff and visitor car parking all in a soft landscaped setting (see Fig. 9).

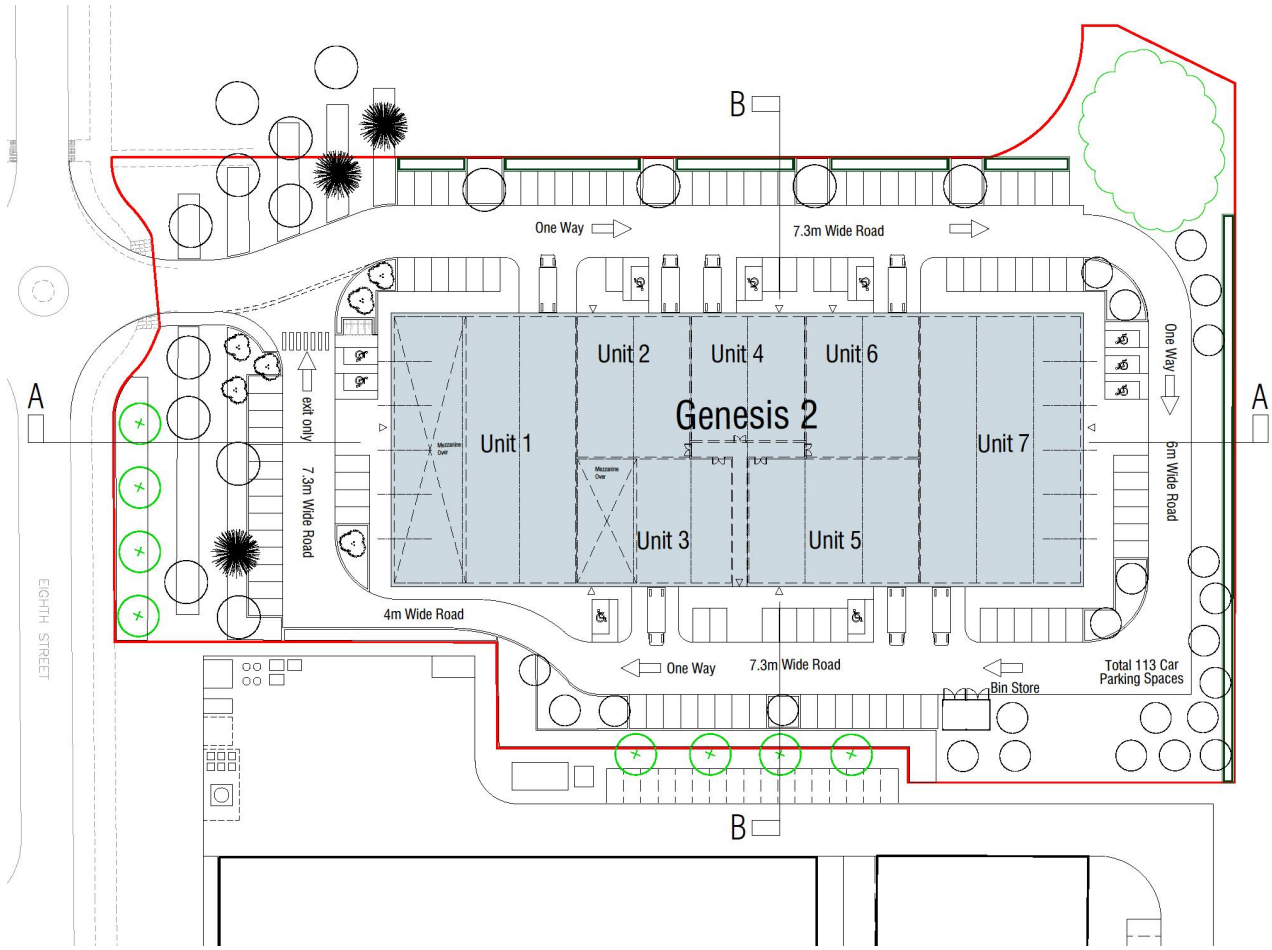

Fig.9

4.2 Amount

The Site Layout Plan indicates the following gross internal areas:

Unit 1 Ground	946 sq.m. (10,182 sq.ft.)
Unit 1 Mezzanine	370 sq.m. (3,982 sq.ft.)
Unit 2	309 sq.m. (3,325 sq.ft.)
Unit 3 Ground	372 sq.m. (4,000 sq.ft.)
Unit 3 Mezzanine	140 sq.m. (1,507 sq.ft.)
Unit 4	274 sq.m. (2,950 sq.ft.)
Unit 5	413 sq.m. (4,445 sq.ft.)
Unit 6	309 sq.m. (3,325 sq.ft.)
Unit 7	834 sq.m. (8,977 sq.ft.)
Total Ground Floor Area	3,457 sq.m. (37,210 sq.ft.)
Total Mezzanine Area	510 sq.m. (5,490 sq.ft.)
Total Building Area	3,967 sq.m. (42,700 sq.ft.)

4.3 Layout

The layout of the site is influenced both by the immediate context and operational factors.

The building is positioned centrally within the site, with the main frontage entrance feature addressing the access from Eighth Street. The general layout of the building comprises a series of flexible work spaces, positioned 'back to back' within the same envelope and each with their own frontage.

This layout provides the opportunity for each of the units to be serviced via level access doors within the side elevations. Therefore, servicing access is required to each long elevation of the building, with staff and visitor car parking distributed around four sides.

Genesis II has been designed so that the larger units 'book end' the building, with their own entrance façade, visibly addressing the approach from the west and the adjacent land to the east. By virtue of their increased size, these units will provide the most flexibility in terms of their use. This is further enhanced in Unit 1, which is 3m higher internally than the rest of the building. Units 2 to 6 provide a range of smaller units, again for occupiers requiring flexible work space. Units 3 and 5, which front on to the rear of the Element 6 building, are intended for occupiers with less public facing requirements, more appropriate to this more 'back of house' location.

4.4 Scale

The footprint of the building measures approximately 97m long x 38.5m deep and 7m to underside of internal haunch generally and 10m to underside of internal haunch to Unit 1. In each case the building extends a further 3.5m to the top of the parapet.

The scale, proportion and clear internal height of the building has been designed to accommodate the flexibility required of a building of this nature.

4.5 Landscaping

4.5.1 Hard Landscaping

The hard landscape palette is underpinned by a silver grey rectilinear paving unit, laid stretcher bond, which floods around the building. The form (and colour) complements the proposed cladding material on the building.

4.5.2 Soft Landscaping

The landscape strategy proposes a simple scheme with bands of 'prairie' style planting fronting Eighth Street. Moving eastwards, the planting morphs into a more naturalistic grassland landscape culminating in blocks of tree planting in meadow grass along the eastern edge where it reinforces the parkland character of the retained trees and establishes the landscape strategy for the wider area.

The layout of the planting at the front responds, in part, to the strong linear planting along Eighth Street but also provides a means of migrating

northwards into the future development plots, where a more parkland character dominates.

Beech hedging is proposed throughout, continuing the character established on the Element 6 site and in the wider campus.

The ‘prairie’ planting includes herbaceous, grasses and shrubs to provide seasonal interest with a proportion of evergreen to provide a backbone throughout the year.

Tree planting is dominated by large deciduous tree species reflecting the parkland character of the campus whilst the inclusion of a small number of pine trees provide year round structure and interest.

4.5.3 Ecology

Ecological considerations have been identified and addressed as part of the scheme design and landscape strategy. Refer to separate Landscape and Ecology Management Plan.

4.6 Appearance

The following measures have been taken to ensure that the proposed building form provides a development of particularly high visual quality that will enhance the character of the area.

Fundamental to this objective, is to ensure that the building form is carefully detailed and articulated, so as to provide interesting and attractive views from both the immediate and more distant surroundings. Working alongside this approach, and as mentioned above, soft landscaping areas are being provided to soften these views and assist in harmonising the new proposals with their immediate context.

The predominant external wall treatment comprises a carefully selected palette of complementary metallic panels in subtle shades of amber and silver (see Fig.10). These will reflect the constant changes in the light to create an ever-changing and dynamic façade. This multi-shading effect has been composed alongside vertical strips of glazing to create a clearly articulated rhythm around the building. The apparent random glazing distribution to the wider elevations, is contrasted with a strong symmetry within the entrance areas. This is reinforced by a change in material to a warm coloured, stained timber. This will create a softer feel to the entrance areas, whilst harmonising with the crisper, metallic panels. The parapet detail around the building is in keeping with the clean, contemporary appearance of the elevations as a whole.

The higher part of the building is appropriately located at the western end, providing increased presence at the entrance to the site and addressing Library Avenue beyond.

The subtle colour palette has been selected partly to reflect the colours used on adjacent buildings and to create a cohesive and refined appearance, which will sit comfortably within its surroundings and provide a sensitive backdrop to the perimeter landscaping.

The approach to the design of the main entrances is to create high quality features, using a combination of the glazing reinforced by a projecting glazed canopy, clearly emphasising the prominent entrance and providing a focal point clearly visible from the approach to the building.

The south elevation, whilst following the same aesthetic in terms of the fenestration, is clad in simpler vertically spanning trapezoidal panels in a soft, pale grey. Unlike the other three elevations, this will be largely hidden behind the existing Element 6 building immediately to the south, which it seeks to address by using the same elevational treatment.

Fig.10

4.7 External Lighting

The parking areas will be illuminated during the hours of darkness, to an appropriate lighting level, using a combination of column mounted and bollard type luminaires. The lighting design will utilise good quality, attractive ‘dark sky’ downward directional fittings with no light spillage above the horizontal to avoid light pollution.

The service areas will be similarly illuminated with a combination of building mounted fittings and column mounted lighting as required at the perimeter.

4.8 Access

4.8.1 Vehicle

All vehicle access to the site is from the existing mini roundabout on Eighth Street, which connects to the A4185 via Fermi Avenue.

Immediately inside the site, the one-way circulation provides combined access to the various car parking and servicing areas around the perimeter of the building. The circulation route wraps around the building, providing safe and efficient access and egress from all parts of the development.

The service yard is designed to provide adequate manoeuvring space to satisfy the servicing and unloading requirements of the delivery vans and occasional HGVs expected to use the site. The circulation will also accommodate emergency and refuse vehicles, which can safely access the bin store area. The gradients in these area will be carefully considered to allow for the safe movement and efficient use of both delivery vehicles and forklifts, should they be required by any of the occupiers.

In summary, the combined access solution will provide safe and efficient access and egress to the new development for all forms of traffic.

4.8.2 Pedestrian

Library Avenue provides pedestrian access via the adjacent footpath, which links into the wider pedestrian network with access to the nearby bus stops.

4.8.3 Cycle

Library Avenue also provides combined cycleway/footways. Cyclists have easy and direct access to the designated covered and lit staff cycle parking area adjacent to the building and conveniently located near the entrance into the site, in a highly visible and readily serviceable location.

4.8.4 Inclusive Access

Adjacent to the entrance of each unit, accessible DDA compliant parking for disabled staff is provided. Gradients in the parking areas will allow safe and convenient access to all.

4.8.5 Parking

Car Parking	103 spaces
Accessible Car Parking	10 spaces
Total Car Parking	113 spaces
Cycle Parking	10 spaces

4.9 Security

It is important that this development responds to security related issues, such as criminal and anti-social behaviour, by incorporating appropriate design features as follows:

- The car parking areas are laid out around the building in order to assist in natural surveillance.
- Cycle stands are provided to facilitate secure parking for cycles located in a highly visible and readily supervisable location.
- External lighting will be designed in accordance with BS5489 to achieve an appropriate level of illumination in all areas.
- Landscaping will be designed so as not to interfere with the natural surveillance of public areas.
- The building will comprise robust construction to all elevations.

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4.10 Sustainability

In order to address the aspirations of central Government policy in the National Planning Policy Framework, the following measures have been incorporated within the design:

- Using a balance of cut and fill in the design of the earthworks so as not to import or export material.
- Large areas of glazing to the area of each unit to increase natural daylighting.
- The use of 10% rooflights to increase the natural daylighting to the lettable parts of the building.
- Solar control glazing as required.
- The provision of covered cycle parking to promote an alternative means of transport.

4.11 Waste Management

This is primarily an issue for the main contractor to address during construction. It will also be for the occupier to deal with after construction works are complete.

Contractors will be required to submit details of the waste materials they expect to be generated by the works and the various trade sub-contractors. They should demonstrate how waste is to be collected, treated, stored and safely disposed of with a minimum of nuisance.

Within the rear service yard is located a recyclable refuse store, where suitable containers can be housed as required for the storage and collection of recyclable waste.

5.0 SUMMARY

The design proposals have been developed having due regard to the existing site and its immediate context, to create an appropriately sited development which will allow the best possible access by all available modes of transport, and giving high priority to pedestrian access.

The design of all the elements of the submission seeks to make a positive contribution to its surroundings, with attractive contemporary design, which functions well and is safe to use for everyone.

In particular the issues of form, scale, materials and colour have been considered, together with the landscape treatment and the relationship of the building within its environment.

Overall, these proposals offer a form of development and quality of design appropriate to its location and in accordance with the Policies within the Vale of the White Horse local plan, as set out in the covering letter which accompanies the application.

6043/10.1/spp 16th February 2017