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North West Cambridge: Resolution to grant consent secured: Notice

The purpose of this Notice is to provide the University with information about progress with the North West Cambridge project.

Planning application

The University last summer gave authority (Grace 2 of 15 June 2011; see *Reporter*, 2010–11, p. 943) for the submission of a planning application for University land at North West Cambridge. The proposals were intended to make medium and long-term provision of sites which can be used for the University's academic development and to attract private research facilities which have University links, but also more urgently to make provision to support housing for University staff.

The Syndicate for the West and North West Cambridge Estates reported that the local authorities (the City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council) anticipated that the application would be determined at the August 2012 meeting of their Joint Development Control Committee (see *Reporter*, 2011–12, p. 465). At that meeting on 8 August, outline planning permission was approved for the whole 150-hectare site which will provide for 1,500 homes for key University and College employees, 1,500 homes for sale, accommodation for 2,000 students, 100,000 square metres of research facilities, including up to 40,000 square metres for research institutes and private research facilities linked to the University, and a wide range of community facilities. Around one third of the site will be used as public open space for sports, informal recreation, and ecological use.

Aerial view of the whole North West Cambridge site



There remain some formalities to be concluded, in particular a Section 106 Agreement which is expected to be signed in October 2012, but attention can now turn to decisions about how to take forward the development.

What next?

In its Notice of 24 October 2011 (see *Reporter*, 2011–12, p. 82), the Council reported on its decision to take forward detailed planning work on a Phase 1 of the development of the site (see Phase 1 plan on the next page). As that Notice indicated, proposals for a first phase of development have been worked up comprising around 530 homes for University staff, some 426 homes for sale, accommodation for 300 students, and the local centre to include a community centre, primary school, nursery, GP surgery, senior care home, supermarket and shops, hotel, and police office, along with much of the public open space. The intention is to create a strong and healthy community right from the start, and providing the infrastructure promptly is a key element.

Financial appraisals of this element (and the whole scheme) are being refreshed, and will be reported to the University's Finance Committee and Council in late September 2012. Subject to their approval it is anticipated that a Report will be submitted for consideration by Regent House in Michaelmas Term 2012.

Subject to the consideration of Finance Committee, Council, and Regent House, a physical start on site could be made in the second quarter of 2013, with delivery of the University housing and other elements of the first phase in mid-2015.

Phase 1 plan



To that end, architects have been selected for the various buildings that it is proposed would be developed by the University, design briefs have been developed, and processes have been initiated to select private sector partners for development of the market residential properties and other elements including the supermarket. The names of the appointed architects were reported at <http://www.nwcambridge.co.uk/preferred-architects-announced-for-first-phase-of-cambridge-university-s-north-west-cambridge-development-news-story-69.htm>.

Other issues

The homes will be built to high standards of design and sustainability. Houses and flats will be built to Sustainable Homes Level 5, equivalent to zero carbon. Non-residential buildings will be built to BREEAM Level Excellent, the equivalent sustainability level for other buildings. This will therefore be one of the most sustainable developments of this scale in the UK. Central to the University's planning application was its Transport Plan which will minimize car use. It is anticipated that many residents will work on site or in nearby University facilities. Dedicated cycle routes and facilities will be provided and priority given to cyclists and pedestrians. This, along with support for improved public transport services, will minimize car use at peak times. In addition, a programme of improvements in the local road network has been agreed with the Highways Agency to mitigate any adverse impact arising from the development.

A water management system has been developed for the entire site to ensure that the development does not add to flood risk and will actually improve the flood situation downstream in Girton.

For those interested in further information, considerable detail is available at <http://www.nwcambridge.co.uk>.

Notices for publication in the *Reporter* should be sent to the Editor, Cambridge University Reporter, Registry's Office, The Old Schools, Cambridge, CB2 1TN (tel. 01223 332305, fax 01223 332332, email reporter.editor@admin.cam.ac.uk). Copy should be sent as early as possible in the week before publication; short notices will be accepted up to **4 p.m. on Wednesday** for publication the following Wednesday. Inclusion is subject to availability of space.