

REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR – PLACE

GEDLING DISTRICT REF. NO.: 7/2022/0050NCC

PROPOSAL: CONSTRUCTION OF AN OFFICE BUILDING (USE CLASS E (g)(i)) WITH CAR PARKING, LANDSCAPING AND ASSOCIATED WORKS. ACCESS AND DRAINAGE INFRASTRUCTURE INCLUDING NEW HIGHWAY FROM A611 SIGNALISED JUNCTION.

LOCATION: TOP WIGHAY FARM, LAND EAST OF A611, NEAR HUCKNALL

APPLICANT: NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Purpose of Report

1. To consider a planning application for the erection of a County Council office building, drainage and access infrastructure including new highway on land to the east of the A611 at Top Wighay Farm north of Hucknall. The key issues relate to the provision of sustainable travel/transport links and the scale, siting, design and impact of the development. The recommendation is to grant planning permission subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 1.

The Site and Surroundings

2. The application relates to a development site of 1.3ha to the north of a recently constructed signalised junction on the A611 Annesley Road, 2.1km to the north-west of Hucknall town centre. Land required to provide highway infrastructure between the signalised junction and proposed entrance to the site is included in the site red line of the application site, along with a 10m wide linear strip of land south of the development site running parallel to the A611 to carry drainage and other service infrastructure, an area for a surface water attenuation pond adjacent to a recently constructed fourth arm to a roundabout on the A611, and linear areas to carry surface water east to the head of an existing watercourse and foul drainage south to a connection in Wighay Road (B6011). In addition, the site for development north of the signalised junction is off-set from the A611 highway boundary by a 10m strip of land which is also included in the planning application site (Plan 1).
3. The application site is formerly agricultural land, but is part of a wider strategic allocation for development. The only feature of note on the proposed

development site is a 2.5m high species rich hedge that runs east-west across the site but, with regard to relevant criteria in the Hedgerow Regulations (1997), is not classified as 'ecologically important'.

4. The application site slopes with gentle falls to the south and east. However, the linear arm of the application area red line to the east of a proposed balancing pond, on the likely alignment of the future highway into the wider site from the fourth arm of the A611 roundabout, crosses an elevated track that runs north from the junction of Annesley Road and Wighay Road to Top Wighay Farm. Top Wighay Farm can also be accessed from King's Walk to the north. Top Wighay Farm Drive Local Wildlife Site, a linear site noted as a rich limestone grassland, lies to the immediate east of the raised track and is crossed by the application site. Land falls to the east of the track to a watercourse headwater, at closest 160m from recently built development on the north side of the A6011 (Strata Homes development).
5. The site of proposed built development is at closest approximately 350m to the east of the Sherwood possible potential Special Protection Area (ppSPA) for breeding populations of nightjar and woodlark at Wighay Wood within Park Forest. (Plan 2).
6. A recently constructed signalised junction on the A611 is provided with a Toucan (pedestrian and cyclist) light-controlled crossing. As part of the junction development a 3.0m wide shared pedestrian and cycle path has been relocated and re-provided on the east side of the A611 carriageway. It was intended that an existing ditch was to be re-provided on a new alignment with a hedge planted on the highway side of a fence, to define the extent of the widened A611 adopted highway, and the site boundary of this application. However, the re-aligned ditch initially provided has subsequently been modified to create a highway drainage swale. A fence has been erected between the shared pedestrian cycle path and swale in a location not approved in the grant of permission, and the hedge has not yet been planted.
7. A north-bound bus stop is located 420m to the north-west of the centre of the signalised junction on the west side of the A611. The closest southbound bus stops are on Hucknall Road (leading from Newstead) 760m to the north-west or on Annesley Road 950m to the south-east near The National School (Plan 1).
8. The site lies 1.6km to the south-west of Linby Quarry SSSI which is a designated broadleaved mixed and yew woodland.
9. Grade II listed Annesley Hall lies 2.2km to the north-west within a Grade II* Registered Park and Garden at closest 540m to the north-west (Plan 1). The north and southbound carriageways of the A611 split to pass through the Registered Park and Garden to the north of the site. Wighay Wood lies on the west side of the A611 to the east and adjoining the Registered Park and Garden.

Background and Planning history

10. The proposed development forms part of a wider strategic allocation for growth identified in the Greater Nottingham Broxtowe Borough Gedling Borough Nottingham City Aligned Core Strategies Part 1 Local Plan 2014 (ACS) (Plan 3) which identifies that a Sustainable Urban Extension at Top Wighay Farm (and another area North of Papplewick Lane to the north-east of Hucknall) will support the regeneration of the Hucknall Sub-Regional Centre. The ACS identifies Top Wighay Farm as a site for 1,000 homes and significant new employment.
11. Gedling Borough Council Part 2 Local Plan (GLP Pt2) identifies the area of the strategic allocation and within it an area for employment-led mixed-use development, allocating 8.5ha. for business, storage and distribution, and general industrial uses (Policy LPD 71 *Employment Allocations*). The principal part of the site for this application that would accommodate the proposed office building is outside of the area shown as the employment allocation. Land to the north of the strategic allocation has been released from the Green Belt and is identified as Safeguarded Land (Policy LPD 16 *Safeguarded Plan*) (Plan 4).
12. Supplementary Planning Document - Top Wighay Farm Development Brief (2017) has been prepared by Gedling Borough Council (GBC), and although not showing the site of the proposed office development for employment use, identifies sites to either side of the now-constructed signalised junction on the A611 as 'Landmark Sites to allow for corner landmarks to enhance site legibility and sense of place'. *In visual terms, the frontage with Annesley Road, with the development forming the entry point to Hucknall from the north, will be particularly important (7.4 – Form, Massing and Layout – Northern Character Area). The western side of the allocated land fronts onto the A611, a main route from the north into Hucknall and the main route to Junction 27 of the M1. The design of buildings along the frontage should reflect the high visual impact they will have and should be of sufficient design quality to form an attractive gateway to the northern approach to Hucknall (7.2 Quality).*
13. GBC reference 2020/0050 – Outline planning permission for mixed-use development comprising; 805 homes, land for employment purposes (up to 49,500m² of B1/B8 uses), a Local Centre comprising A1-A5, B1(a) and D1 uses (up to 2,800m²), a 1.5 form entry Primary School and associated infrastructure, open space and landscaping – was granted in March 2022 subject to a s106 agreement including, amongst other matters, the payment of a total of £500,000 in annual payments of £100,000 commencing on the first occupation of the 200th dwelling as a Bus Contribution for the provision of a public bus service. There is no requirement for any payment triggered by employment development. The application includes an approved *Illustrative Masterplan* which identifies the area of the proposed office development within a zone for employment (Plan 5). The plan also shows pedestrian/cyclist connectivity along the northern and western boundaries of the office site proposed in this application, pedestrian/cyclist connectivity within the wider development site between the A611 signalised junction and a drainage attenuation area running parallel to the

A611, with the sustainable drainage area being connected to an area of green space to the east.

14. Condition 4 of outline permission GBC 2020/0050 requires the prior approval of a phasing plan before the submission of reserved matters applications. A phasing plan has not yet been submitted to satisfy the condition.
15. Condition 6 of outline permission GBC 2020/0050 requires highway improvement works comprising a 2m wide footway on the north side of Wighay Road, and a pedestrian crossing on Wighay Road, to be provided prior to the commencement of any above ground works.
16. Condition 12 of outline permission GBC 2020/0050 requires any business employing more than 20 people to commission a detailed Travel Plan that sets out targets with respect to the number of vehicles using the site and the adoption of measures to reduce single occupancy car travel.
17. The development subject of this application is for office development and related infrastructure by the County Council and is submitted as a full planning application within the site area of the wider outline grant of planning permission. It is not an application seeking approval of reserved matters pursuant to outline permission GBC 2020/0050, although that permission is a material planning consideration.
18. Whilst the site of the office development is mainly outside the area identified for employment development, having regard to the recent grant of planning permission and approved *Illustrative Masterplan* identifying the site for employment, it is concluded that the proposal does not need to be considered as a Departure from the Development Plan.
19. 7/2019/1000NCC - Construction of two highway junctions with associated infrastructure to access development site for: a) A611/Annesley Road - fourth arm to roundabout; and b) A611 - new three-arm signal-controlled junction. Construction of a 3m wide shared use footway/cycleway along the northern side of the A611 (Granted January 2020). The highway works have been completed although at variance from the approved drainage works, with hedge replanting on the boundary of the current office development application site outstanding. An application to regularise this matter has recently been submitted (our reference V/4434 – awaiting an application number from Gedling Borough Council).

Proposed Development

Office Site

20. Planning permission is sought to erect a three-storey office building on the north side of the recently installed signalised junction and would be prominently sited in relation to the A611. The building would have a broadly 'L'-shaped footprint

presenting an elevation of 54.8m to the A611 and a partially recessed elevation to the south-east of 31.6m (Plan 6).

21. The building would have a height of 12.5m above finished floor level (FFL) (0.55m above the building slab level) with rooftop guardrail set back 1.4m from the roof edge projecting 0.4m above the parapet when viewed in true elevation. Plant installed on the roof located at closest 4.2m from the roof parapet would be installed at a maximum height of 14.7m above FFL (15.0m above the adjacent finished ground level). The building finished floor level would be approximately 1.0m below the level of the adjacent A611 carriageway at its northern end and approximately 1.7m above the level of the footway on the northern side of the new road at a point south-east of the building.
22. The building external elevation facing the A611 would be a mixed palette of brown and light grey panels above a red brick ground floor. Brise soleil would be provided outside windows of the upper floors facing the south-west (A611) framed by a vertical and horizontal fascia of copper patina standing seam metal cladding. A feature window surround at the northern end of the A611 frontage would be framed with a white coloured panel (Plan 7).
23. The elevation facing south-east would be principally faced with copper patina standing seam metal cladding, with a projecting wing of the building faced of grey panelling, with brown panelling and brise soleil to the two upper floors.
24. The elevation facing north-east would include the main entrance to the building, but not visible from the A611, and would be faced with brown panelling on the upper floors above red brickwork, with white panel fascia at the entrance reflecting the form of the entrance, reflecting the proposed use of copper patina standing seam metal cladding to define the end elevation of the building (Plan 8).
25. A recessed upper floor element of the building framed by brown panelling with white panel recess would be provided above ground floor red brickwork on the north-west facing elevation.
26. The roof-top guardrail 1m in height and set back from the roof edge would be in part screened by the 0.6m high building parapet. The guardrail would not be visible when viewed from a point close to the building, but would be seen when viewed from distance or an elevated position. Photovoltaics would be installed on the roof on all areas except those required for plant or service access.
27. The building internal footprint of 1,142m² on each floor would provide in addition to circulation space and toilets etc.:
 - Ground floor – entrance and reception with controlled building access point with lift and stair access to upper floors on the public side of a controlled access point; 150m² shared seating area; 133m² of meeting rooms; and 329m² of open plan office.
 - First floor – 725m² open plan office space; 92m² meeting rooms.

- Second floor – 1,010m² open plan office space.
28. The proposed development would be used for purposes within planning Use Class E(g)(i). Class E(g) allows uses that can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity while within that class E(g)(i) is for the use of offices to carry out any operational or administrative functions.
 29. The building would primarily serve as office space for Nottinghamshire County Council, together with ancillary accommodation meeting rooms. The building is proposed to not be primarily public-facing, with only one department (the Adult Access Service) providing services to the public, with only one client attending at any one time. One dedicated meeting room is proposed for this purpose adjacent to the building reception.
 30. The applicant has explained that the proposed office would consolidate a number of existing satellite offices around the county. *As the organisation transitions out of the home working practices established during the Covid 19 pandemic, a review is being undertaken as to utilise the efficiencies home working can bring to productivity as well as reducing the carbon emissions arising from commuting.*
 31. *Nottinghamshire County Council has produced the "Smarter Working - Hybrid Working Strategy" which sets out the principles of how the flexible working arrangement will operate in practice. The vision states: "The workplaces of the future will be environments designed, built, and adapted to drive Nottinghamshire County Council forward with a shared sense of purpose within a culture of collaboration aiming to improve outcomes for local people. Our approach to hybrid working sets out to achieve dynamic work settings and environments and create more responsive, efficient and effective ways of working. We believe this will improve performance, knowledge sharing and autonomy leading to enhanced employee and service user satisfaction."*
 32. *In terms of the buildings and equipment used to deliver this goal, the Strategy states that "Workspaces will be inclusive and accessible and designed to promote user wellbeing including considering ergonomics, acoustics, and the green environment. Office space will be team focussed promoting a creative and collaborative culture with appropriate spaces made available at Top Wighay Farm Office Development for individual focus, meetings with colleagues and local people. We will work to an average seat ratio of 4:10 where this meets service needs."*
 33. *The design ethos for the proposed office building fully embraces the flexible working aspirations contained within the Strategy, including the required break out and collaborative working spaces, meeting spaces and the suggested 4:10 seat ratio for personnel. Furthermore, in terms of the third floor occupancy, the current intention is for this space to be possibly let to small to medium enterprise businesses.*
 34. *The number of carparking spaces has been calculated in line with our hybrid working principles and the Nottinghamshire County Council's Highways Design*

Guide requirements for office buildings. Furthermore, Nottinghamshire County Council's experience of hybrid working across its estate has seen less pressure on the overall use of its car parks, even though there are many more Members of staff who use those buildings as a base.

35. A Framework Travel Plan has been submitted in support of the application proposing the appointment of a Travel Plan Manager and Co-ordinator, Travel Plan Working Group, implementation of the Travel Plan within 3 months of first occupation and its maintenance and operation for 5 years, the provision of travel welcome packs and the promotion of Travel Plan awareness. Facilities are proposed for cycling with access to the County Council's cycle to work scheme. Car sharing is to be promoted. A Car Parking Management Plan is proposed to help manage the operation of the car park to avoid overspill parking on surrounding roads. There is no intention to introduce parking charges at the site.
36. No operational hours or limitation to the hours of use are proposed in the application.
37. 119 car parking spaces would be provided in total. 13 visitor car parking spaces, including six disability parking spaces for staff and visitors, would be provided immediately adjacent to the building entrance. Three of the spaces including one disability space would be provided with an electric vehicle charging point.
38. 106 staff parking spaces, accessed through separate entrance and exit lifting-arm barriers would be provided. 10 of the spaces, at a convenient point close to the path linking the carpark to the office building would provide electric vehicle charging. The walk distance from the parking spaces within the main car park to the building entrance would be between approximately 65m-120m.
39. Access to a service yard to the north-west of the building would accommodate a combined bin storage, motorcycle (14 spaces with secure locking points) and cycle store (40 cycles with card access control) within a building 15.6m x 10.8m, as well as an electricity substation and switchroom. 2.4m high close boarded fencing would be provided to screen views into the service area and around the electricity substation and switchroom.
40. An area of open landscape and paved outdoor amenity area would be provided to the east of the building. Although immediately adjacent to the proposed vehicular entrance, a dedicated pedestrian access gate would be provided. Paths would be provided within the site to direct pedestrian flows along movement desire lines. A pedestrian access gate, open during office hours and card controlled outside of office hours, would be provided on the southern office site boundary, with an access compliant path (35m walk distance within the office site) provided between the adjacent highway proposed in this application and the building entrance.
41. Provision of the staff car park would require the partial removal of an existing hedge. The retained length of the hedge would be enhanced and the area to the north, to the west of the car park, developed as a wildflower meadow. Tree planting is proposed within the wildflower meadow adjacent to a 10m linear strip

separating the office site from the A611. A submitted landscape plan indicates linear tree planting in groups within the 10m service strip either side of the services along the whole frontage to the A611. An informal mown 2m wide grass path would be provided along the centre of the service strip.

42. The proposed office site would be enclosed by 2.4m high weldmesh fence. A hedgerow would be planted inside the weldmesh fence on the northern boundary and highway frontages to the north-east and south-east. With reference to the *Illustrative Masterplan* a pedestrian route would run parallel to the northern boundary separating the proposed office site from a phase of housing development.
43. The drainage strategy for the office site proposes surface water from impermeable areas discharging into the adjacent permeable surfaced car parking spaces and rain gardens, with rain gardens providing primary filtration of surface water. Drainage from the main car park is to pass through an oil interceptor with drainage from footpaths directed to rain gardens. Roof drainage is to discharge to rain gardens adjacent to the building.

Infrastructure

44. It is proposed to build a length of adoptable highway and roundabout, with adjacent 3m wide cycleway segregated from the carriageway by a 2m verge, designed to accommodate vehicular traffic associated with the wider development approved by permission GBC 2020/0050, as an extension of the highway stub left after the construction of the A611 signalised junction. The length of highway between the signalised junction and the new roundabout would accommodate two lanes of traffic travelling in each direction separated by a splitter along the whole of its length. A bus layby and shelter would be provided on the southern, west-bound side of the new road (Plan 9).
45. The northern arm of the proposed four-arm roundabout would be 57m in length, extending approximately 15.7m past the centreline of the proposed vehicular entrance to the office site to form a turning head. A footway would be provided across the end of the turning head (temporary in advance of future development by others). Tactile crossing points would be provided at the vehicular access point to the office site and on all arms of the roundabout, except the arm closest to the signalised junction. The pedestrian entrances to the office site would be provided immediately to the south and adjacent to the vehicular entrance and also in the southern site boundary (Paragraph 40).
46. The north-bound bus stop on the A611 is to be relocated to a point 177m north of the signalised junction and provided with a bus shelter with real-time service display. The walk distance from the entrance to the proposed building to the north-bound bus stop would be 310m. A stop with bus pole and real-time display, shelter, raised kerb and related hardstanding would be provided on the southbound carriageway opposite, slightly further to the north (walk distance 300m). *Bus Clearway* highway markings may be required.

47. The office site is not currently serviced. Services would be provided in a 10m strip between the south-western perimeter fence of the office development and the highway boundary with the A611. A detailed landscaping scheme shows proposed tree planting to either side of the service strip and indicates the provision of a mown grass strip path. There are no detailed proposals for how soils will be made up in that area following the installation of services. However, a fence to delineate the highway boundary (as currently approved) with a hedge on the highway side needs to be planted, as approved by planning permission 7/2019/1000NCC. An application has been submitted which proposes the planting of a hedge with a post and wire fence on its original approved alignment, with the currently installed fence adjacent to the shared use cycle/pedestrian path to be removed after 5 years. This application has yet to be determined.
48. The site needs to be provided with foul and surface water drainage which would be provided in a 10m wide strip parallel to the A611 south of the signalised junction along with other services. There are no detailed proposals of finished surfaces following the installation of services. Surface water from the office development would discharge into an attenuation pond that has been suitably sized to also accommodate surface water discharge from other employment land immediately to the north (Plan 10). The attenuation pond would be located to the north of the recently constructed fourth arm to the large roundabout of the A611. The basin depth from the outfall (water level) to the top of the bank would be 1.4m. The pond has been designed to provide areas that would be permanently wet (below the level of the pond outfall) and other than channels to direct flow would have a constant fall across its floor creating areas at different levels that would flood at different frequency and depth, and would be planted to create varied ecological habitats. In a two-year storm event it is calculated that the attenuation basin would flood to a depth of 7cm.
49. The foul water drain and drainage from the surface water outfall would continue in a north easterly direction along the route of the proposed highway extension off the roundabout fourth arm (the new highway is not part of this application), passing across the raised track that serves Top Wighay Farm and through the Local Wildlife Site. It is not proposed to reinstate the excavated cut through the bank other than to cover the drainage pending future anticipated development.
50. To the east of the Local Wildlife Site the foul drainage would turn south running adjacent to the eastern toe of the bank before turning east on the field side of a hedge on the boundary with Wighay Road, before finally breaking through the hedge to connect to a foul water sewer in the carriageway.
51. The surface water drain would continue in a north-easterly direction before an outfall into the headwater of a watercourse.

Construction

52. A submitted Site Context plan indicates that the site for the purpose of construction would be accessed from the A611 roundabout with a temporary

access road leading to site offices, compound and material storage area formed parallel to the A611.

Consultations

53. **Gedling Borough Council** – No objection in principle subject to a full assessment of relevant policy guidance and material planning considerations, and conditions to encourage and enhance the use of public transport, as identified in the submitted Framework Travel Plan; air quality and emissions mitigation plan; provision of 13 electric vehicle charging points with ducting and infrastructure provided to facilitate future increased provision; construction management plan including emissions to air and a site specific dust risk assessment; contaminated land remediation scheme and verification report; watching brief for unexpected contamination; submission of a radon gas management strategy; imported soils certificated as appropriate for their intended use; and to submit full sectional drawings of the drainage basin along with details of landscaping. *The drainage feature will serve a functional use but it would also have some amenity value and this should be enhanced given it falls adjacent to the main public open space. The drainage feature should be suitably sized to serve the wider employment site.*
54. *The larger site is allocated for a mixed used development, as identified in Policy 2 of the Aligned Core Strategy. The application site is allocated for employment development under the Part 2 Local Plan under Policy LPD71, as well as development being guided by the Top Wighay Farm Development Brief. Outline planning permission (2020/0050) has now been granted for development on the larger site, following the completion of the S106 Legal Agreement. The proposed use complies with the allocation.*
55. *There is a need to consider matters such as whether or not the design and scale of the proposed development is acceptable and respects the character of the area, which it broadly appears to do.*
56. *Radon gas protection measures should be included in the design. Soils to be removed from site will require classification to ensure correct disposal.*
57. *The proposed development constitutes a Medium development for the purpose of the Air Quality and Emissions Mitigation - Guidance for Developers document which relates to Policy LPD11 of the Local Development Plan 2018. All medium developments require a detailed Travel Plan to be provided. This should demonstrate how car-based trips to and from the site will be minimised by encouraging the use of more sustainable transport.*
58. *'Mode 3' smart electric vehicle charging capability is encouraged as this will help future proof the development and improve its sustainability.*
59. **Ashfield District Council** - Objects to the application.

60. *Whilst the office is in Gedling Borough, Ashfield District Council believes that it will have a detrimental impact on the infrastructure of Hucknall. The council therefore resolves to formally object to the application.*
61. Previous comments provided by officers supported the installation of features to encourage more sustainable modes of transport, with 40 space secure cycle storage and electric vehicle charging proposed. Contributions towards extending the Nottingham Express Transit tram network to serve this development and the wider residential site was encouraged. An appropriate scheme of landscaping and boundary treatments should be secured. Enhancement of the retained hedge is welcomed and should be protected during construction.
62. **Linby Parish Council** – [The Parish Council has been notified of changes to the submitted application that proposes the relocated and new bus stops on the A611 and the provision of an access gate in the office southern boundary that seeks to address some of the following matters raised. Further comments had not been received at the time that this report was prepared and any received will be reported orally.]
63. The application must be supported by further evidence to confirm:
- a) details of an appropriate public transport access strategy that will exist from the outset, including the suitability of any bus infrastructure and confirmation that the maximum walking distance between the bus stops and building entrance is no more than 400 metres. This must include a firm commitment from any bus operator that they are willing to divert existing services as required.
 - b) further consideration should be given to delivering a more direct pedestrian and cyclist access from the A611, which is deemed essential to reducing travel distances for non-car modes.
 - c) how the proposed modal split figures would in practice be achieved from the outset, given there is currently poor access to public transport services and only limited development within a comfortable walking distance, should be justified. Without this, consideration should be given to revisiting the trip rates and parking provision.
 - d) confirmation should be provided that the proposed on-site cycle parking provision will be delivered in accordance with the requirements of *Department for Transport Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20* [cycle infrastructure design guidance to local authorities on delivering high quality cycle infrastructure], with a full independent site audit and design review of the access arrangements.
 - e) evidence submitted to justify why the current proposed parking strategy would satisfactorily serve the development, with further details regarding on-street parking controls for implementation within the immediate surrounding highway network to ensure overspill parking does not take place detrimental to highway safety.

64. *Paragraph 110 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that schemes are designed to deliver safe and suitable access for all users, with appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes being taken up, and that the internal layout meets with standard design requirements. The proposed scheme does not fully satisfy any of these requirements and the application should be refused unless clear evidence can be provided to address these key principles.*
65. *The following summary of comments relate to public transport:*
- a) *it is imperative that convenient access to public transport services is delivered from day one of any occupied scheme. Plans for new bus stops and service improvements must be detailed within the Transport Statement for delivery as part of this application. Failure to secure these essential improvements at the start of the development will lead to severe parking problems within the site that could overspill into the surrounding roads, creating a further barrier to sustainable travel.*
 - b) *the application cannot rely on bus service provision to be delivered as part of the wider development. It is suggested that bus passengers would access southbound bus services from the layby at the southern edge of the proposed internal carriageway whilst the overall development is being completed. There are no assurances that local bus operators will even be willing to divert services into the site.*
 - c) *the desire line between the bus stop and the building access will cross the main access road, without any designated crossing facilities.*
 - d) *the distance to current bus stops exceeds the Highway Authority's maximum requirement of 400m.*
 - e) *the walking route to bus stops takes users a significant distance along a 50mph road and a narrow footway, which is not going to encourage future bus travel.*
 - f) *the location of new (A611) bus stops may impact on the modelled operation of the signalised junction.*
 - g) *providing a direct pedestrian access off the A611 would reduce walking and cycling distances by circa 50m which could be critical in decision making between travel modes.*
66. *Cycling provision should comply with Department for Transport Local Transport Note 1/20 (cycle infrastructure design guidance) including review of the proposed internal layout with cyclists to be within 30m of their destination.*
67. *The size of the refuse vehicle used for tracking manoeuvring on site is incorrect and should be between 11.5m-12.0m. A condition should be imposed to limit the size of vehicle.*
68. *The following summary of comments relates to car parking:*

- a) *vehicle trip-rates rely on a good level of access to sustainable transport modes in order to accurately represent the likely conditions.*
 - b) *a minimalist approach is being taken to car parking. The ratio of 1 car parking space per 30m² is a standard approach to delivering parking at offices in urban locations that benefit from high levels of public transport, opportunities for walking and cycling, and local housing/amenities.*
 - c) *the Transport Statement and Framework Travel Plan documents aim to deliver a high-quality scheme with good levels of accessibility, but evidence is not provided that this will be realised for this initial development scheme.*
 - d) *home working should not be confused with reduced occupancy levels within offices. Occupation of the offices at higher density could result in the proposed offices generating up to 244 people working within the building at full occupancy. Applying the 82% modal split for car drivers in the Transport Statement would equate to a potential demand for 200 car parking spaces. This would almost certainly create significant accessibility issues with on street parking blocking turning movements, creating hazards for pedestrians and cyclists, and obstructing visibility splays at junctions.*
69. *A strong and robust Travel Plan must be in place that connects to high levels of supporting infrastructure.*
70. **NCC Highways Development Control** – No objection subject to: relocation and provision of proposed bus stops on the A611; Travel Plan; Travel Packs to incentivise use of public transport; and car parking post-occupation monitoring.
71. *Access to Bus Service Provision - The applicant has agreed to provide new bus shelters including real-time displays in both directions on the A611. The revised location of these shelters is such that they will significantly reduce the walking distance to the nearest bus stops and provide access to the Trent Barton Three services. This should enable access to an express bus service which on average passes the site approximately every 15 minutes. The location of the proposed stops has been reviewed by our technical advisors in Via East Midlands and are considered to be acceptable from a Highway Safety standpoint. It is our understanding this matter has been the subject of separate discussions between the applicant and colleagues in public transport and who are now satisfied with the proposal.*
72. *Once the housing allocations on the wider site progress, this infrastructure will be further supplemented by an internal bus service which is intended to specifically serve the Top Wighay allocation. This provision has already been secured by the Borough Council, through S106 funding and will serve to further enhance the public bus service provision on site. These measures are considered to offer a suitable bus service to serve the proposed development.*
73. *Pedestrian and cycle provision - Previous comments raised concern regarding the lack of connectivity between the site and pedestrian/cycle facilities on the A611. The applicant has now provided a direct pedestrian/cycle link to the A611*

from the development site. This link greatly reduces the distance cyclists and pedestrians need to travel to access the A611 and facilities therein. It will offer a far more convenient and direct route to the proposed bus facilities than previously proposed, which will help to encourage uptake of bus travel and discourage car use.

74. *The Highways Authority has been asked to comment [by the County Planning Authority] on the need to bring forward the delivery of a proposed puffin crossing on Wighay Road, which has been secured as part of the outline application for the wider Top Wighay allocation. Whilst we consider the puffin crossing will be necessary once the wider development is built out and the housing occupied, it is not considered that the footfall generated by the proposed offices alone would be enough to generate enough demand for a puffin crossing. As an interim feature, we consider the tactile paved crossings on the adjacent roundabout should be suitable to cater for the demand generated by this development.*
75. *Travel Plan and Travel Packs - It is understood that the applicant has agreed to offer 2 months travel passes to employees on site to incentivise the use of public transport and is considered to be satisfactory.*
76. *Car and Cycle Parking - Highways Development Control is mindful that queries have been raised with regard to staffing levels on site and the potential impacts this may have about parking demand on site. Documentation provided in support of the application suggests that a total of 119 spaces are being provided on site to serve the development. The Highways Design Guide recommends that for an Office in an out-of-town location, parking should be provided at a rate of 1 space per 30m² of Gross Floor Area (GFA). Based on a proposed GFA of circa 3400m², this would suggest a minimum required parking provision of 113 spaces. Consequently, in terms of the requirements of our Highway Design Guide the provision would be considered adequate and provides a level of parking equivalent to that which we would expect to be achieved on any office development in Nottinghamshire, public or private.*
77. *Notwithstanding the preceding paragraph, in view of queries raised over parking levels on site and how they relate to the total number of employees stated on the application form associated with the application, further clarification has been sought from the applicant. The applicant has confirmed that whilst the total number of staff stated on the application form (320) may seem high when compared to the number of spaces being provided, the proposed building has been designed in line with the Council's Smarter Working-Hybrid Strategy. Under the Strategy, office spaces across the Council estate have been redesigned to work on an average desk ratio of 4:10. Applying this ratio to the stated number of employees would suggest a need for around 128 seats at any one time. Whilst this is higher than the 119 spaces proposed, it is unlikely all staff will arrive by car and need to park on site. Census data within the Transport Statement associated with the development suggests that for similar developments in the local area circa 82% of employees currently arrive by car. In this context 119 spaces, for 128 seats does not seem unreasonable.*

78. *To further mitigate any concerns about overspill parking, it is our understanding that the applicant has agreed to a planning condition which would require them to monitor parking post occupation and implement further mitigation measures should issues arise. Whilst implementation of Traffic Regulation Orders within the Highway to dissuade errant parking should be achievable, we would note that the provision of additional parking may require a further planning application and more land to be available for parking. To this end the applicant has indicated that there is space available on the site and locally within their control which could be considered for such a use should the need arise. It is noted that this would however be subject to a separate planning application if required.*
79. *In terms of cycle parking, it is understood that 40 spaces are to be provided in a secure compound on the site. This level of provision is more than double that recommended within in our own highway design guide and national guidance contained within LTN1/20.*
80. *Given the above, as well as the fact the development will be supported by a Travel Plan, is well served in terms of public transport, and will introduce additional measures to encourage increased bus use by employees including new bus stops in close proximity and free travel passes, the Highway Authority does not consider the proposed level of parking will result in a severe impact on the local highway network or an unacceptable risk to highway safety. Consequently, the Highway Authority does not consider the level of parking provision as reason to recommend refusal of the development on highway/transportation grounds.*
81. Highways Development Control has confirmed, with reference to the comment from Linby Parish Council (Paragraph 66), that with 1m added to the rear of the vehicle to allow for the bin lift mechanism, the overall length of a refuse vehicle to be tracked for on-site manoeuvring is 11.29m and is marginally smaller than that which has been satisfactorily tracked in the submitted application.
82. **NCC Transport and Travel Services** – No objection subject to the provision of the proposed relocated and new bus stops; and all employees on occupation to be offered a 2-month smartcard bus pass, or equivalent, for use on the local public transport network covering either the Greater Nottingham travel to work area or Mansfield and Ashfield.
83. *The proposed relocated A611 bus stop northbound, new A611 southbound stop opposite and new bus stop lay-by on the site access road opposite the proposed office has been agreed to provide an acceptable standard of bus access. Safe and direct walk access from the office building entrance is provided to the lay-by bus stop and the closest bus stops on the A611 meeting NCC Highway Design Guide walk distance criteria.*
84. *The Framework Travel Plan should include a specific target for public transport modal share which should reflect the target ambition that numbers of car driver trips will be reduced by 10% for this to be a sustainable development. NCC Transport and Travel Services would expect all employees to have free introductory bus travel made available to them. A 2-month bus pass, or*

equivalent, for use on the local public transport network should be provided to each employee on occupation to encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel and help to achieve the Travel Plan modal share targets.

85. *Outline planning permission GBC 2020/0050 includes a Bus Service Contribution of £500,000 (indexed) to be used by Nottinghamshire County Council towards bus service provision. This will be triggered by the housing build-out and would support additional public transport access within the site. This could include a local service between the development and the Hucknall tram stop, 'Connect' facilities from the development to interchange points for onward connections or the diversion of existing commercial services to serve the site. The bus service contribution would not be triggered by this development.*
86. **Energy and Carbon Management Team** – *From an energy perspective the high insulation levels and mechanical ventilation with heat recovery are particularly to be welcomed (avoiding the need for air conditioning), along with PV panels and other features, such as enhancing the use of natural light through the window design and use of low energy lighting.*
87. *BREEAM assesses embodied carbon and encourages the construction of assets with lower embodied carbon and lower whole life carbon. In terms of our changing climate, solar shading and some rainwater attenuation features are proposed.*
88. *The office, consolidating existing satellite offices around the County (Paragraph 30), would replace the use of leased/other properties that are likely to be less energy efficient.*
89. **NCC Archaeology** – *No objection subject to a condition requiring a programme of archaeological investigation and mitigation prior to the commencement of development. The site is in an area which is substantially underrepresented on the Nottinghamshire Historic Environment Record. A recent increase in the number of archaeological investigations in the area have revealed that there is far more potential in the area than it was previously possible to demonstrate. Improvements in geophysical survey techniques have assisted greatly in this and was undertaken on an adjacent site. The exercise should be repeated on this site by a registered specialist and further advice can be provided once the results are submitted.*
90. **Historic England** – *No comment. The advice of NCC conservation and archaeological specialists should be sought.*
91. **The Gardens Trust** – *Landscape Visual Impact Assessment information has been reviewed and it is clear that the proposed new building and other eventual development will alter the surrounding countryside considerably, changing the way in which views to and from the Grade II* registered park and garden of Annesley Hall will be experienced. This response is entirely based on a desk assessment and The Gardens Trust is happy to concur with the comments made by NCC Built Heritage.*

92. Subsequent to the above comments, amended landscaping proposals have been submitted. The Gardens Trust states that *as long as the woodland on the perimeter of Annesley Hall is well managed, there will be sufficient density of tree cover to maintain the registered park and garden's sense of privacy and isolation from the application site. The inclusion of Wych Elm is queried as it is very prone to Dutch Elm disease. A hybrid elm cultivar (Ulmus RESISTA New Horizon) is recommended as it is completely resistant to Dutch Elm disease.*
93. **NCC Built Heritage** - Updated landscape proposals contain much more information about proposed tree planting to the roadside and north of the office building and defer to Via Landscape to comment on the suitability of this planting, in the short to longer term. It is key to the final assessment of impact on the heritage setting of Annesley Hall registered parkland that there is clear evidence that tree planting can successfully reduce the urbanising impact of the office development in the views provided in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.
94. Subject to the County Planning Authority being satisfied that the proposals do indeed provide a substantial landscaping scheme that would achieve a sustainable visual screening solution, it is fair to judge the impacts in accordance with section 16 of the NPPF as 'less than substantial harm', and that the level of harm to the heritage significance of Annesley Hall registered parkland should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals.
95. *Previous comments provided with regards to impacts on the built heritage in the vicinity of the proposals identified that the scale and positioning of the proposed building in relation to the registered parkland of Annesley Hall was a concern to the potential for harmful effects on the setting of this designated heritage asset. A rural view in the submitted Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment shows a rural view containing a large portion of registered parkland and farmland with occasional farm buildings, suggesting that the impact of the proposal would be of 'moderate adverse' significance. The present open views of wider landscape will be radically changed to one of a modern built urban development that changes the present views of the wider rural landscape.*
96. *The submitted Heritage Impact Assessment identifies that there is a change to the setting of the Grade II* registered parkland of Annesley Hall that equates to 'less than substantial harm' and no harm to the setting of the Church of St Mary's and Linby Conservation Area. It is agreed that the office development proposal will not cause harm to St Mary's or Linby village heritage assets. The level of harmful impact on the setting of Annesley Hall that will be caused by the proposed office would be 'less than substantial harm' when considered alongside careful tree planting as part of the landscape proposal.*
97. **Via Landscape** - *The size of the proposed building and prominence will be considerable during construction and through early operational years while landscape mitigation planting establishes. 10m high street-lighting columns are taken as a reference. Taking the approved wider development into account, Via Landscape evaluate this independent building as having Magnitude – Medium, Significance of effect – Moderate Adverse when viewed from the north-west.*

98. *Intervening layers of vegetation will effectively screen views from the south-west. Appropriate significant mitigation planting in keeping with the Landscape Character Area recommendations should be installed ahead of construction along the western and northern boundaries. Multiple layering of trees proposed in the north-western corner of the site and along the A611 should, in time, provide considerable and effective screening of the proposed building. Species selection in these locations should be native and reflective of the approved local Landscape Character Area list. Some proposed species may not be on this list. Some additional tree planting or replacement of those specified to include some faster growing species is recommended to ensure that screening mitigation is established as early as possible. A few additional semi-mature specimens would give initial height to the scheme.*
99. *The attenuation basin looks as though it should work in terms of flood storage and drain down. The inclusion of permanent wetland feature is good. All the planting within the basin should be wildlife focussed. Most planting is appropriate (with exceptions requiring further consideration).*
100. Subsequent to the above comments, amended landscaping proposals have been submitted. Via Landscape can confirm that all previous comments and recommendations have been incorporated or addressed in the revised scheme.
101. **NCC Flood Risk** – No objection subject to approval of a scheme of surface water drainage based on the principles set out in the submitted Flood Risk Assessment.
102. **NCC Nature Conservation** – No objection subject to: works proceeding in accordance with details set out in the submitted Construction and Ecological Management Plan (RammSanderson, 2021) overseen by an Ecological Clerk of Works, with appropriate ecological mitigation put in place including in relation to protected species and notable habitats such as those within the Local Wildlife Site; and submission of a detailed landscaping creation and management scheme, to include species mixes, establishment methods and maintenance regimes.
103. *The site of the proposed office building is of low ecological value. After giving pre-application advice, it is unfortunate that the site car park layout has not been amended to allow retention of the existing hedgerow to a greater extent. It appears that this would have been achievable.*
104. *Operational impacts on the potential prospective Sherwood SPA have been considered. Additional information submitted highlights that night-time work is limited only to traffic alignment works and is considered to be low impact. The mitigation measures outlined in the Noise Mitigation Plan Section 4 must be adhered to.*
105. *Drainage works will result in the loss of a relatively small section of the Top Wighay Farm Drive Local Wildlife Site.*

106. *As an exemplar development, biodiversity enhancements through the provision of integrated bat and bird (swift, house sparrow and starling) boxes should be incorporated and a 'biosolar roof', whereby the PhotoVoltaic (PV) panels on the roof (as proposed) are combined with a green roof was recommended at pre-application stage, (noting that such an approach actually increases the efficiency of PV panels by reducing ambient temperatures.*
107. Subsequent to the above comments, amended landscaping proposals have been submitted. NCC Nature Conservation *can confirm that the comments previously provided have now been addressed.*
108. **Via Noise Engineer** – No objection subject to conditions to: limit the noise impact of construction to 60dB(A) during the daytime at the closest boundary to Wighay Wood; and prescribing the maximum day (43 dB(A) - 07:00-23:00 hours) and night time (31 dB(A) - 23:00-07:00 hours) noise rating for office plant and associated services.
109. **Via Land Reclamation** – No objection subject to conditions requiring submission of an environment management plan including segregation of wastes and a testing and screening strategy for potential contaminants in any imported fill materials; a watching brief for unexpected contamination; remediation strategy identifying appropriate radon protection measures; and validation of an absence of contaminants and radon risk.
110. *Submitted reports have not identified any significant contamination risks. The Phase 2 report identifies potential risks from radon gas. There is also potential for unexpected contamination to be encountered during construction of the development.*
111. **Trent Barton Buses, NCC Access Officer, Police Force Architectural Liaison Officer, Severn Trent Water Limited, Western Power and Cadent Gas** – No responses received. Any responses received shall be orally reported.

Publicity

112. The application has been publicised by means of site notices, press notice and neighbour notification letters sent to the nearest occupiers in accordance with the County Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement.
113. Councillor John Wilmott and Councillor Chris Barnfather have been notified of the application.
114. Councillor John Wilmott, Councillor Dave Shaw and Councillor Lee Waters have written objecting to the proposal on the following grounds:
- a) *The highway impact cannot be assessed due to uncertainty over the number of staff and the services which will be moving there. The proposals are contrary to Nottinghamshire's Hybrid Working Strategy as agreed by NCC Policy Committee on 15 July 2021.*

- b) *The NPPF (Paragraph 113) sets out that all developments that generate significant amounts of transport movement should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment. Local planning authorities must make a judgement as to whether a development proposal would generate significant amounts of movement on a case-by-case basis (i.e. significance may be a lower threshold where road capacity is already stretched or a higher threshold for a development in an area of high public transport accessibility). It is our belief that this Council simply has no idea of the potential traffic movements generated by this development despite guesswork contained within the documents.*
- c) *A formal pedestrian crossing point on the access road dual carriageway is not proposed between the bus layby and the roundabout. This area is currently gridlocked at peak and other times and this will exacerbate the problem.*
- d) *The application is contrary to the Local Transport Plan (LTP) 3 which details the transport strategy for the whole of the county of Nottinghamshire for the 15-year period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2026 to "...provide a reliable, resilient transport system which supports a thriving economy and growth whilst encouraging sustainable and healthy travel." We believe that this application with its predicted transport movements will make the transport system worse.*
- e) *Whilst the site is served well by bus services when they run, Hucknall train/tram station is located approximately 2.5 kilometres southeast of the site and is an unacceptable walking distance away. The road infrastructure means that it would be extremely dangerous for cyclists to access the site. This is contrary to the Council's ambition to go net zero by 2030 and pursuing the proposal breaks the stated Council policy of actions in a 'Climate Change Emergency.'*

Observations

Principle of Development

- 115. Gedling Borough Council has prepared and adopted a Development Brief Supplementary Planning Document for the Top Wighay Farm, setting out a series of development principles, including key land uses and design principles to inform the development proposals, against which outline planning permission GBC 2020/0050 has been considered.
- 116. The principle of the use and location of the development has been approved through the grant of outline planning permission GBC 2020/0050. In other circumstances development of this site could be taken forward through an approval of Reserved Matters application, but where development is being funded, commissioned and delivered by and for the benefit of the County Council, the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 as

amended state, other than when called in for determination by the Secretary of State, that the application *shall* be determined by the County Council. The application is a *Full* application and although all matters can be reconsidered, the proposed development accords with the outline permission that has been granted. The grant of outline planning permission for development for the wider site, which includes reference to the *Illustrative Masterplan* on Plan 5 of this report, is a material planning consideration. Unless appropriately addressed, it is important that a grant of planning permission does not have a prejudicial impact on the ability to implement the extant permission for the wider site. There are elements of the wider permission granted that will need to be delivered through the reserved matters applications to be submitted to Gedling Borough Council and where necessary secured through planning conditions.

117. Although Condition 4 of outline permission GBC 2020/0050 requires the prior approval of a phasing plan before the submission of reserved matters applications but has not yet been submitted, development of the proposed office adjacent to the signalised junction including an initial length of the proposed highway network and related infrastructure to support the office development, and in part other planned development (through the sizing of the drainage attenuation basin), subject to the provision of suitable sustainable travel connectivity, the proposed development is a logical first phase and would facilitate delivery on the wider site.

Design and Sustainability

118. The Non-Technical Summary supporting the outline permission for the wider site identifies a range of built development parameters including a three-storey building height of up to 13.5m in employment areas. ACS *The Delivery Strategy* Section A: *Sustainable Growth* Policy A sets out that a positive approach is to be taken when considering development proposals reflecting the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. ACS Policy 1: *Climate Change* seeks to ensure that all development proposals will be expected to mitigate against and adapt to climate change. ACS Policy 10: *Design and Enhancing Local Identity* states (amongst other criteria) that new development should be designed to make a positive contribution to the public realm and sense of place, and be adaptable to meet the changing needs of occupiers and reflect the need to reduce the dominance of motor vehicles. ACS Policy 10: *Design and Enhancing Local Identity* also sets out a number of elements against which development will be assessed, including: massing, scale and proportion; materials, architectural style and detailing; and potential to create new views, as well as wider landscape and heritage impacts.
119. GLP(Pt2) Policy LPD32: *Amenity* sets out that permission will be granted for development proposals that do not have a significant adverse impact on the amenity of nearby residents or occupiers, for example in relation to issues such as overshadowing, overbearing, noise, activity on site, visual amenity and amenity space. GLP(Pt2) Policy LPD 35c) – *Safe, Accessible and Inclusive Development* requires a consideration of the massing, scale and proportion of

development, consideration of materials, architectural style and detailing, the setting, public function and/or importance of the proposed development and its location within its street scene context.

120. Linby Neighbourhood Plan (LNP) Policy DES1: *Design* is broadly reflective of the Gedling Local Plan *Amenity* policy and includes a requirement to provide for a balanced range of transport options, including convenient and safe pedestrian and cycling links, and links to surrounding public transport services. LNP Policy EMP2: *Employment* expects employment development to: cause no significant adverse impact on the amenities of nearby residents by reason of noise, disturbance, vibration, dust, pollution or other environmental impacts; locate loading and service areas away from road frontages and residential properties; and provide suitable screening and landscaping to parking and servicing areas within the site.
121. GLP(Pt2) Policy LPD62: *Comprehensive Development* sets out that planning permission will not be granted which would prejudice the comprehensive development of any allocated site for the purpose for which it has been allocated, and proposals should take account of the delivery of the whole site including supporting infrastructure.
122. The proposed office building has been located to create a highly visible landmark to traffic passing on the A611. The building is of a modern design but contains elements that are reflective of County Hall through the use of a green copper patina seen on civic buildings throughout Nottinghamshire. The three-storey building would create visual presence at the signalised junction and a gateway to development to the east, complemented by the use of quality external finishes. Although a parapet will screen the roof-top guardrail set back from the building edge, it will be visible from distance or elevated locations and the detail of the material to be used can be controlled, along with other proposed finishes (Condition 16).
123. The building design is targeting Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) *Excellent*. BREEAM is an established method of assessing, rating, and certifying the sustainability of buildings using a range of metrics, not just those of the construction itself, that evaluate energy and water use, health and wellbeing, pollution, transport, materials, waste, ecology and management processes. Features incorporated in the design include a building fabric that exceeds Building Regulations in terms insulation; efficient ventilation strategy; taller windows allowing greater penetration by natural daylight; internal space flexibility; solar shading; roof-top PVs; monitoring of energy and water consumption; facilities to promote cycling; ecological enhancement; and sustainable drainage techniques. Gedling Borough Council draws attention to the need to provide 13 electric vehicle charging points, and it is recommended that further expansion for electric vehicle charging is future-proofed through the provision of ducting infrastructure to all car parking spaces as part of the initial construction (Condition 24).
124. Although it has been suggested at pre-application stage that a roof garden could be incorporated in the design, it is not part of the application presented for

determination. The whole roof area is taken up by roof-top structures, service access areas or panels for PV energy generation. Alternative features with ecological benefit are incorporated in the overall design.

125. BREEAM certification or its equivalent would be possible only when the building has become operational. However, the sustainable characteristics of the development are considered to be acceptable in a proposal that can overall be highly regarded for its sustainable design.
126. The addition of a pedestrian gate in the office site southern perimeter fence is a relatively late change to the application and notwithstanding already submitted details of site levels, levels to accommodate a disability gradient and finished surface compliant path between the building entrance, entrance gate, and footway on the new highway will be required (Condition 17).

New Highway

127. The proposed construction of highway between the signalised junction and the entrance to the office, including the roundabout and bus stop lay-by, is over-large in terms of what is required to serve the proposed development alone, but has been designed to accommodate traffic from other employment land to the south (E2), and traffic from principally residential development to the east and future development to the north. The highway will need to be constructed to an adoptable standard (Condition 10).
128. Tactile crossing points are proposed to be provided on all arms of the new roundabout except on the arm approached from the signalised junction. Concern has been raised by Linby Parish Council (Paragraph 64c)) that there would not be a convenient crossing point on a pedestrian desire line between the office entrance and the bus stop lay-by. However, the applicant has sought to address this representation through the addition of a gate in the southern office site boundary, providing a more direct and convenient route to a safe crossing point at the signalised junction for those using the shared pedestrian/cycle route running alongside the A611, or for persons walking to the bus stop lay-by opposite.
129. Although not for consideration as part of this application, it is noted that a path shown on the wider site masterplan is to run along the northern and western boundaries of the office development site. This would provide a convenient route segregated from traffic for future residents living to the north to get to the bus stop via the signalised crossing, rather than needing to negotiate the crossing of, by that time, a busy roundabout. Pedestrians approaching from the north-east would be able to circulate around the roundabout using the tactile crossing points provided by this application. Via East Midlands, as the highway designer, is satisfied that the proposed crossing points and highway layout is of an acceptable highway design. The need for any modification to the highway design, if required, can be considered by Gedling Borough Council in the determination of reserved matters applications for the phased residential development or development on the remaining allocated employment land.

Car Parking

130. The forecast modal split for travel to the office applied to this application is the same as that used in the determination of the wider site permission GBC 2020/0050. It is anticipated that 82% of journeys would be by car, and 5% as a car passenger. The County Council's adopted parking standard (2021) requires the provision of one parking space/30m² of gross floor area. With a building floorspace of 3,426m² over three floors there is a parking requirement for 115 spaces. 119 parking spaces are proposed.
131. Linby Parish Council has raised concern (Paragraph 67) that the proposed car park will be too small and that a more intensive occupation of the building could lead to much greater parking demand. The size of the car park, derived through the application of the County Council's adopted parking standard, is considered to be suitably sized, and would be compliant with GBC(Pt2) Policy LPD57 *Parking Standards* as updated by Gedling Supplementary Planning Document *Parking Provision for Residential and Non-Residential Developments* (February 2022). There is a presumption that development which is in accordance with the development plan should be granted unless material circumstances dictate otherwise. The proposal, in planning terms, is for the erection of a generic office development and does not give rise to circumstances that a different assessment of car parking should be made.
132. NCC Highways Development Control has not raised concern over the geometry of the proposed on-site service vehicle turning area for the expected refuse vehicle.
133. Although not part of the application, and while over-provision of car parking would not be sustainable or an efficient use of land, and would potentially have an impact on created habitat without mitigation, the applicant has indicated that there could be potential to provide an additional 56 parking spaces on the site of the area of wildflower meadow to the west of the car park, but would need to be subject of a separate grant of planning permission. Alternatively, or in addition, should overspill parking on the highway cause a highway safety issue, parking restrictions can be introduced through a Traffic Regulation Order. In advance of further development taking place on the wider site, limited parking on the proposed carriageway is unlikely to give rise to a highway safety issue. Parking associated with use of the office in operation can be reviewed, and it is recommended that a post-occupation survey is undertaken in accordance with an approved methodology (Condition 26) shortly before a year after the office has been brought in to use with any required mitigation measures to be implemented (Condition 27). Members are advised that it would not be possible to condition an expansion of the car park in determining this proposal as it is not part of the submitted planning application. To seek to do so would pre-judge the acceptability of such development in advance of the consideration of a planning application and would be *ultra vires* (beyond legal power or authority). Should parking issues be identified, options to address overspill parking can be addressed through a Traffic Regulation Order, increasing car parking on the site or in another location (both subject to a separate grant of planning permission) and the County Council can also adjust its office management practices through

the Car Parking Management Plan proposed in the Framework Travel Plan (Condition 28).

Bus Service

134. The proposed relocation of the current north-bound service to a location 177m north of the signalised junction and provision of a southbound stop 200m north of the A611 signalised junction would bring the bus stops to within 300-310m of the office building entrance (via the gate in the southern office boundary), and within the acceptable maximum walking distance of 400m set out in Nottinghamshire Highways Design Guide (Section 3.1). Access to an express bus service will offer a frequent sustainable option for staff to travel to and from work and the relocation of the northbound bus stop and provision of a southbound stop is welcomed. Works to provide the new and relocated bus stops will need to have been carried out by the time the office is first brought into use (Condition 25).
135. Employees can be encouraged to make sustainable travel options and it is recommended that as part of a Travel Plan that all employees on first occupation, or first being appointed with the proposed office as their office base, are offered a 2-month bus pass allowing free use of the local public transport network covering either the Greater Nottingham travel to work area or within Mansfield and Ashfield (Condition 28).
136. As part of the wider planned development, the eastern arm of the roundabout will form a spine road through the approved wider development connecting to the fourth arm of the roundabout on the A611 to the south. Although not part of this proposal it is anticipated that a bus stop would be provided on the north side of the spine loop road in proximity to the proposed office for an east/south bound service running through the wider development. Employees will also benefit from access to the additional bus service that is to be provided as part of the wider planned development.
137. The bus stop with lay-by on the south side of the road proposed in this application has potential in the short term to serve both a north and southbound bus service on the A611 stopping closer to the office. This is a matter for discussion with bus operators although initial feedback from discussion between NCC Transport and Travel Services and Trent Barton Buses, the current operator of the bus service on the A611, indicates that any deviation from the A611 route would result in potential delay to the service.

Cycling and Pedestrians

138. Although the planned wider development includes the provision of a perimeter path that could connect the office development with Hucknall to the south, and could be provided when reinstating land following the installation of drainage parallel to the A611 to the south of the signalised junction, it is not proposed in this application.

139. A 3m wide shared cycle and pedestrian route, realigned as part of the signalised junction works, already runs adjacent to the A611 carriageway and provides suitable connectivity and opportunity for journeys to the office development by non-motorised modes of travel. While there is a requirement to undertake highway improvements on Wighay Road as a pre-development requirement of the outline permission (GBC 2020/0050 Condition 6) it is considered that pedestrian travel to/from the office development alone can be accommodated using the existing tactile crossing at the roundabout junction of Wighay Road and Annesley Road, with eastbound journeys continuing on the south side of the road. The improved footway and crossing point on Wighay Road may well be in place in advance of the proposed office first opening as a pre-development infrastructure requirement of GBC 2020/0050.
140. It is concluded on sustainable travel that the proposed development, subject to the provision of the relocated and new bus stop closer to the office, and close proximity and easy access to existing routes for cycling and walking to/from the development, offers good connectivity and alternatives to travel other than by car and is considered to be acceptable in compliance with ACS Policy 14 *Managing Travel Demand* and would minimise as far as possible impacts on the local road network. It is also considered that the proposed development reduces impacts on air quality in compliance with GBC Pt2 Policy LPD11 *Air Quality*. A Travel Plan will be required and would be consistent with Condition 12 of the outline permission of the wider site development (Condition 28).

Drainage

141. The proposed office drainage will provide primary treatment to surface water before being discharged from the site. Beyond the office site boundary the proposed surface water drainage is proposed to accept drainage from the new areas of highway. The acceptability of the proposed highway drainage arrangement will depend on whether the point beyond the shared connection will be adopted by Severn Trent Water, otherwise a separate highway drainage system will be required. The proposal to connect to a Severn Trent Water sewer would not usually be an issue, but it is not yet known if this will be acceptable as the adoption or maintenance of the proposed attenuation pond needs to be clarified (Condition 11). A consultation response has not been received from Severn Trent Water and a highway drainage condition is recommended (Condition 10).
142. In compliance with GBC(Pt2) Policy LPD4 *Surface Water Management*, details of the surface water drainage scheme as a whole, in accordance with the submitted Flood Risk Assessment will need to be submitted, guided by advice provided by NCC Flood Risk Management (Condition 11 and Note 2). It is the applicant's intention that the surface water attenuation pond is sized to accommodate surface water from development on the future employment site to the immediate north, so the detailed design submitted for approval should be oversized to accommodate surface water that will be generated by the development proposed in this application. Headwall design details at various

points on the drainage route, if not to be adopted, will need to be submitted (Condition 12).

143. The proposals for foul drainage are considered to be satisfactory for the purpose of this planning application, although a separate adoption/connection agreement will be required from Severn Trent Water Limited (Note 3). Where piped foul and surface water drainage is to be installed, and around the margin of the attenuation pond, it is not proposed to provide final finished surfaces pending further development. The finished surfaces to deliver the perimeter path and amenity area around the edge of the pond, indicated on the masterplan, a potential improvement and alternative footway allowing a hedge along Wighay Road to be retained, and the construction of the new highway off the fourth arm of the A611 roundabout will need to be considered by Gedling Borough Council as part of housing reserved matters applications or compliance with Condition 6 of permission GBC 20/0050 (Paragraph 15). In the event that the reserved matters applications do not come forward or there are no approved detailed plans in place secured through a grant of planning permission by Gedling Borough Council after a period of 5 years, it is recommended that a scheme to provide a satisfactory finish to the surface of disturbed ground impacted by drainage or attenuation pond works is submitted, implemented and any landscaping provided subject to a period of maintenance and replacement (Condition 13 and Condition 14).

Ecology, Landscaping and Heritage Impact

144. Proposed drainage works would pass through a Local Wildlife Site noted for its flora not fauna. Neither detailed mitigation works or details of how the site is to be left once the works have been completed pending the construction of the loop road have been submitted. A detailed scheme of mitigation and timescale for delivery will need to be approved in consultation with NCC Nature Conservation. Typically, this may involve the relocation of grasses for a temporary period depending on the location identified. In the event that the reserved matters applications for the wider site do not come forward or there are no approved detailed plans in place secured through a grant of planning permission by Gedling Borough Council within 5 years of the drainage works being completed, it is recommended that a scheme to provide a satisfactory restoration of disturbed ground and ecology is submitted, implemented and any landscaping/restoration provided subject to a period of maintenance and replacement (Condition 14).
145. The development offers the opportunity to provide boxes for bats and nesting birds integrated into the building structure at lower level. Although the proposed use of cladding on upper floors of the building would not be suitable to incorporate integrated boxes for swift which need to be at high level, externally mounted boxes can be installed in ground floor brickwork (Condition 15a)). NCC Nature Conservation has identified a missed opportunity for ecological enhancement through the provision of a roof garden. Ecological benefit can be provided in different ways and would be assessed in compliance with recommended Condition 15c). The provision of a wildflower meadow within the

site is welcome and will need to be appropriately managed (Condition 19). The provision of mammal gates in the north and west perimeter fencing allow species to access and cross the site from the adjacent linear pedestrian routes (Condition 15b)).

146. An acceptable noise assessment was carried out for the construction of the signalised junction of the A611 in terms of impact on the ppSPA to the west. Natural England did not object to that application, noting that the proposed highway works would not have significant adverse impacts on designated sites. Attention was drawn to the need to consider acoustic disturbance to breeding nightjar and woodlark arising from construction. Noise from construction of the office, limited to day-time construction hours of 08:00-18:00 and subject to best practice techniques to minimise noise impacts of construction to the lowest practicable levels, is unlikely to exceed that previously identified, and would be separated from the ppSPA by traffic passing along the A611. An appropriate condition to limit noise generated by construction during the breeding season for woodlark (February-August inclusive) and the presence of nightjar (mid-May-August inclusive) is recommended (Condition 6). Operational noise would generate much lower noise levels that would not give rise to an adverse impact on the ppSPA (Condition 29).
147. The proposed office development is subject to GBC(Pt2) Plan Policy LPD 29 - *Historic Landscapes, Parks and Gardens*, albeit that the impacted Registered Park and Garden lies within the administrative area of Ashfield District Council. The policy seeks to conserve and/or enhance features which form part of the significance of the asset and to ensure that development does not detract from the character, appearance or setting, including key views.
148. Although it is the applicant's intention that the path network shown on the *Illustrative Masterplan* is to be provided as part of the delivery of housing phased development, submitted landscape proposals showing tree planting to either side of the service strip between the office site boundary and A611 would enhance the setting of the proposed office building and mitigate impact on the Grade II* Registered Park and Garden to the north. How Gedling Borough Council may want the perimeter path serving residential phases of the wider development is not yet known and may, for example, require a bound surface and lighting, or may wish to create a more informal path network. However, it can be anticipated that the route could offer a future convenient route to the bus stop and A611 shared use path/cycleway. The submitted landscape works between the office fenced perimeter and A611 are considered to be necessary in terms of the scale of tree planting and visual impact when viewed from the adjacent highway, and any additional works required to provide an upgrade to the proposed mown grass path can be secured by Gedling Borough Council when considering applications for the approval of reserved matters for phased housing development. Proposed tree planting that would mitigate impact on the Registered Park and Garden can be delivered early and in advance of the office building first opening (Condition 20 and Condition 21).
149. The Gardens Trust has identified that the proposed new building and other eventual development will alter the surrounding countryside considerably,

change the way in which views to and from the Grade II* registered park and garden of Annesley Hall will be experienced, but defer to the views of NCC Built Heritage.

150. NCC Built Heritage stress the importance of the proposed tree planting successfully reducing the urbanising impact of the office development. As the first development on the strategic allocation at Top Wighay, the building will stand out in the landscape, but the proposal needs to be considered in the context of the approved wider development, and it is acknowledged that the character of the area will change as the site is built out. Gedling Borough Council will have opportunity to secure additional mitigation of visual impact when considering reserved matters for frontage development adjacent to the A611, particularly that to the north closer to the Registered Park and Garden.
151. Taking into consideration the observations in the consultation response received from Via Landscape, it is considered that the proposed landscaping proposals would provide a substantial landscaping scheme that would achieve the sustainable visual screening solution raised as a concern by NCC Built Heritage. It is concluded that with the appropriate mitigation in place, the office development would result in less than substantial harm to heritage assets and as part of a wider development would be part of a sustainable urban extension, and is considered acceptable with reference to National Planning Policy Framework Paragraph 202.
152. Although detailed landscaping proposals have been submitted in support of the application and are generally acceptable the suitability of some proposed species require further consideration, as does the design and accompanying landscaping of the surface water attenuation basin to enhance ecological benefit and is the subject of ongoing discussion (Condition 19). Trees to the north-west of the building in the service strip and wildflower meadow, in locations required to mitigate the visual impact of the office building on the Grade II* Registered Park and Garden, can be planted at an early stage of construction following the installation of services and site works remote from the main areas of construction within the site (Condition 20 and Condition 21).
153. The office building and campus would be externally lit. The building is intended to be a landmark building and sited in proximity to the A611 which is lit by 10m high lighting columns. Institute of Lighting Professionals *Guidance for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light* identifies that lighting Environmental Zone E3 is appropriate to Suburban areas of Medium district brightness in urban settlements, while Environmental Zone E2 is appropriate to areas of Rural Low district brightness which are sparsely inhabited or relatively dark outer suburban locations. It is anticipated that the building would be externally lit at night and may be flood lit, but that areas of car parking and external areas, other than security lighting, would not need to be lit outside of operational hours. It may be unduly restrictive, having regard to the intended prominence of the office building and proximity to the A611 to limit external lighting to Zone E2, but the scheme that comes forward needs to take into account the proximity of future housing development to the north and impact on the Registered Park and Garden (Condition 18).

154. A scheme of archaeological evaluation to assess the archaeological potential of the site and mitigation if appropriate in compliance with GBC Pt2 Policy LPD30: *Archaeology* is recommended (Condition 5 and Note 1).

Other Issues

155. This proposal offers the opportunity to deliver elements of the wider development indicated on the GBC 2020/0050 *Illustrative Masterplan*: the provision of a perimeter footway parallel to the A611 between the attenuation pond and signalised junction; amenity features in the surface finish around the perimeter of the attenuation pond; and the opportunity to provide a wider alternative footway to the north of the hedge on the north side of Wighay Road as part of the surface reinstatement on the alignment of the foul water drain. However, the provision of these enhancements are not directly linked, or necessary, to make the proposed office development acceptable in planning terms. The provision of an internal path network and the public amenity value of the attenuation pond as a community asset is a matter to be considered by Gedling Borough Council and delivered through reserved matters applications for the housing elements of the wider approved development.
156. Ashfield District Council has requested contributions towards extending the Nottingham Express Transit tram network to serve this development and the wider residential site. The need for financial contributions covering not only the application site but also the wider Top Wighay site were considered as part of the grant of outline planning permission by Gedling Borough Council, reference 2020/0050. That decision identified the need for financial contributions towards affordable housing, education, highway improvements, health, public open space including management arrangements for the open space/drainage feature, and a local labour agreement. That decision does not require any contributions towards an extension to the tram network, although it does secure a safeguarded route for it by condition. Any extension of the tram would likely be financed through a combination of Central Government and local authority investment, as was the case with the first two phases of the network.

Other Options Considered

157. The report relates to the determination of a planning application. The County Council is under a duty to consider the planning application as submitted. Accordingly, no other options have been considered.

Statutory and Policy Implications

158. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, the safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, and sustainability and the environment, and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate

consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Crime and Disorder Implications

159. The office site would be enclosed by perimeter security fencing, with external lighting.

Data Protection and Information Governance

160. Given that no representations have been received from the public, it is considered that no data protection issues have been raised.

Financial Implications

161. Referenced in paragraph 46 above, the applicant would be expected to cover all reasonable legal costs incurred by the County Council providing *Bus Clearway* markings under Section 36 of the 1988 Road Traffic Act.

Human Resources Implications

162. There are no Human Resource implications arising from a grant of planning permission. Any staffing implications relating to occupation of the building would be an operational management matter for the County Council.

Human Rights Implications

163. Relevant issues arising out of consideration of the Human Rights Act have been assessed. Rights under Article 8 (Right to Respect for Private and Family Life), Article 1 of the First Protocol (Protection of Property) and Article 6 (Right to a Fair Trial) are those to be considered. In this case, however, there are no impacts of any substance on individuals and therefore no interference with rights safeguarded under these articles.

Public Sector Equality Duty Implications

164. Although a consultation response has not been received commenting on access issues, the topography of the site does not give rise to access issues that cannot be resolved through design at minimal cost. The proposed design would need to comply with access requirements of the Building Regulations.

Implications for Sustainability and the Environment

165. These have been considered in the Observations section above.

166. There are no Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk implications or implications for Service Users.

Statement of Positive and Proactive Engagement

167. In determining this application, the County Planning Authority has worked positively and proactively with the applicant by entering into pre-application discussions; scoping of the application; assessing the proposals against relevant Development Plan policies; the National Planning Policy Framework, including the accompanying technical guidance and European Regulations. The County Planning Authority has identified all material considerations; forwarding consultation responses that may have been received in a timely manner; considering any valid representations received; liaising with consultees to resolve issues and progressing towards a timely determination of the application. Issues of concern have been raised with the applicant, such as the provision of sustainable transport/travel options, drainage, heritage impact, design and landscape issues and have been addressed through negotiation and acceptable amendments to the proposals. The applicant has been given advance sight of the draft planning conditions. This approach has been in accordance with the requirement set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

RECOMMENDATIONS

168. It is RECOMMENDED that planning permission be granted for the purposes of Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 1. Members need to consider the issues set out in the report and resolve accordingly.

ADRIAN SMITH

Corporate Director – Place

Constitutional Comments [JL 12/07/2022]

The report seems to be legally sound I do not have any specific comments to add to it.

Financial Comments [RWK 13/07/2022]

There are no specific financial implications arising directly from the report.

Background Papers Available for Inspection

The application file is available for public inspection by virtue of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 and you can view them at:
www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/planningsearch/plandisp.aspx?AppNo=FR3/4371

Electoral Divisions and Members Affected

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