



Mr Simon Payne  
Planning Services  
Environment Department  
PO Box 700  
Cambridge  
CB1 0JH

16<sup>th</sup> June 2016

Dear Mr Payne

I am pleased to submit to the City Council the University's application for the development of the West Cambridge site.

West Cambridge is a critical future site for the University, enabling it to establish the premier location for physical sciences in the country. Alongside well-established faculties and commercial partners we will be focusing on new opportunities for the Departments of Physics and Engineering, and creating an environment that fosters innovation and entrepreneurship.

#### **Creating the right mix of uses**

The University has been looking to West Cambridge for development options since the mid-twentieth century. The Department of Veterinary Medicine was established on site in the 1940s, when this part of Cambridge was a very different place than it is today. We have sought to meet academic needs gradually on the site, and with our current growth projections, alongside a review of the University's Estates Strategy, which we have discussed with the City and County Councils, there is a fresh opportunity for reconsidering how the West Cambridge site can support the research and teaching needs of the University.

The existing masterplan has little remaining capacity for academic growth, and we know we must seek change and expand. The government has announced its intention to support development of the new Cavendish Laboratory (Cavendish III) and, subject to approvals, will contribute £75m. Alongside the Cavendish, the Department of Engineering has set a vision of moving west, integrating its divisions onto the West Cambridge site on up to 100,000 sq.m. of development. The Department's move will be phased over a number of years and its first new building, the Civil Engineering building, is in line to receive £18m of government funding towards a new national Centre of Excellence for Infrastructure Sensing.

Alongside the academic growth planned for West Cambridge, we also see opportunities, and need, for collaboration with commercial partners and facilities to support innovation and entrepreneurship. This will enable us to continue to foster the Cambridge Phenomenon, bringing benefits to the local and regional economy and supporting employment growth.

We are not looking at West Cambridge in isolation. We will be supporting, and enabling, development of the University's North West Cambridge Development to the north of Madingley Road, where we are in the process of building 1,500 affordable homes for University and College staff, 2,000 rooms for postgraduates, and a local centre that will open in 2017 with facilities and amenities to support this part of the City. Our residential efforts are focused on North West

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Cambridge, so that West Cambridge can be positioned appropriately as a major employment site for the City.

### **Meeting the social needs of the community**

Alongside both academic and commercial research opportunities, we recognise that the environment at West Cambridge will be shaped by provision of places where people from different disciplines can come together. To support this, we have a policy for sharing of facilities that we will be implementing at West Cambridge. This will enable us to bring active uses to the fore on site, with catering and amenity spaces open to all, outside of secure lines, and activating the public realm.

The first major step towards an integrated and open facility will be the first Shared Facilities Hub, which we are planning for the next phase of development of West Cambridge. This will include a large format catering offer as well as library space and meeting rooms. A Project Board has been established and architects have been appointed to develop the brief for this important facility in further detail.

The West Cambridge Sports Centre has, since 2013, been a publicly accessible community resource with its extensive fitness suite and racquet sports courts. The masterplan makes provision for future phases of the Sports Centre, which my colleagues are discussing with Sport & Development officers at the City Council. Like our other major building projects, extensions to the Sports Centre are subject to our normal capital project planning and fundraising processes.

As part of the revised masterplan, we have also integrated a network of open spaces, including the substantial "Green" at the heart of the development. Over one quarter of the site will be retained or enhanced as open space, which will help to improve the quality of place and promote integration between academic colleagues and commercial partners.

### **Working with the City and County**

The histories of the University and the City are inextricably intertwined, and as the University grows we seek to work with the City to develop a joint understanding of the appropriate locations for employment growth. I am pleased that we both support the intensification of the West Cambridge site, to make best use of land, establish a critical mass to support facilities and amenity, enable the University to develop, and to create substantial jobs and opportunities for the people of Cambridge. The development and employment growth we have proposed for West Cambridge is supported by the Adopted Cambridge Local Plan and Cambridge Local Plan 2014: Proposed Submission. Through this development, West Cambridge will become a major asset not just for the University, but also for the City and the region.

Through the City Deal, the University is working with Central Government, local businesses and local Councils to deliver major infrastructure projects that support economic growth. The West Cambridge proposals included in this planning submission stand alone, and do not rely on delivery of any part of the City Deal. We have developed a suite of public transport, cycling and pedestrian-focused transport improvement measures, alongside an extensive, fully-funded travel plan, that will mitigate impact, and support sustainable modes of transport to and from West Cambridge. As a City Deal partner, we would seek to facilitate delivery of the City Deal by

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promoting use of existing infrastructure on the West Cambridge site to enable better bus and cycle routes to and around the City. If the City Deal preferred options, once determined, overlap or supersede our proposals, we would be open to discussions about how our defined measures may be redirected to support the emerging City Deal.

The plans we are submitting for approval reflect many years of experience working on the West Cambridge site, responses to the changing environment in the west and north west of the City, and considerable engagement with the City, County and wider community. It is in this context that, as the Chair of the West Cambridge Site Development Board and Senior Pro-Vice Chancellor (Planning & Resources), I am delighted to share with you our vision for this part of the City.

Yours sincerely

Duncan Maskell  
Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Planning and Resources)