

SB 22 LOCKSBROOK CREATIVE INDUSTRY HUB

Context

- 167a. The NPPF (2021) encourages planning policies and decisions to help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt and significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The objectives of the B&NES Economic Strategy (2014-2030) includes:
- maintaining an appropriate supply of land in Bath for industrial processes and services to ensure the city retains a mixed economy
 - capitalising on innovation opportunities arising from higher education institutions, improving educational facilities to help provide the skills that support knowledge based sectors and retaining those skills and talents in the city and wider area
- 167b. The Locksbrook Creative Industry Hub is located within the Bath Enterprise Zone which plays a leading role in delivering the economic priorities for the City and B&NES. The priorities include ‘addressing the need for new workspace’ and ‘expanding innovation and incubation provision’. It is also located within the Newbridge Riverside Strategic Industrial Estate where Policy ED2A encourages the provision of new industrial land and a strong presumption in favour of retaining industrial floorspace.
- 167c. In Bath, monitoring shows that significant net loss of and limited supply of industrial spaces. Therefore maintaining land for industrial purposes in this location has strategic importance.

Bath Spa University’s strategy

- 167d. Bath Spa University (BSU) is a successful, modern university in the south-west of England with a particular focus on fostering creative industries and creating a synergy with Bath’s growing creative economy as well as teacher training for the wider south-west region. BSU has grown in recent years and currently occupies multiple sites across Bath (also satellite sites in Corsham and Bristol), however many are not purpose built and the University considers that they are inefficient and geographically dispersed. This is the major outstanding issue for the University in moving to net zero carbon in terms of transport.
- 167e. The new University’s Estate Strategy focuses development into two campuses; Newton Park and a new campus area around Locksbrook Road with sustainable travel links between the two campuses. Consolidation of its creative facilities around the Locksbrook area will help to create ‘walkable’ campuses as it is close to purpose built student accommodation.
- The expansion of the Locksbrook Campus will enable opening the facilities for use beyond the academic timetable and enrolled students within a wider creative zone. This will provide a great opportunity and play an important role in helping the City

recover from the pandemic and its effects on employment, skills and will encourage new businesses.

- 167f. Therefore, the strategy is for the University to enable additional teaching space in the Locksbrook Creative Industry Hub. The teaching space would also be used as studio space with access to specialist equipment and facilities for start-up businesses and workspace for local people, academics and students. This would have a direct connection to the emerging creative and digital industry within B&NES supporting start-ups within this field. It would also maintain the industrial and creative legacy of the Locksbrook Area. This reflects the aim set out in the West of England Industrial Strategy and the West of England Business Plan, including improved partnerships with the University, encouraging research, development and innovation and increasing graduate retention.
- 167g. The allocation land includes the building (north of the Locksbrook campus) which has an extant planning permission for mixed use development including 72 rooms in cluster flats. (Planning Reference 20/00023/FUL). Purpose built student accommodation is subject to Policy B5 and it is not considered acceptable within the Enterprise Zone where this would adversely affect the realisation of the other aspects of the vision and spatial strategy for the city. Taking into account that the site has an extant permission for student accommodation it is considered acceptable but the priority should be given to floorspace which contributes towards the aims of the Locksbrook Creative Hub and therefore the scale of the student accommodation should not exceed the permitted level of accommodation.

Vision

- 167h. This is the area allocated for a Creative Industry Hub where Bath Spa University and businesses will work together to increase local growth and innovation. The Hub aims to:
- Encourage universities to develop and strengthen their roles as strategic partners in local growth
 - Stimulate development of employment space for small businesses in locations that encourage businesses to interact with universities and to innovate, as well as some higher education teaching space.
 - Provide a focal point where universities and businesses work together in a business friendly environment
 - Implement Bath Spa University walkable campus approach reducing the carbon emissions and responding to the climate emergency

POLICY SB 22: LOCKSBROOK CREATIVE INDUSTRY HUB DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Development proposals will:

1. Provide a mixed use development comprised of employment space and higher education teaching space associated with Bath Spa University which can also be used as studio space with access to specialist equipment and facilities for start-up businesses and workspaces for local people, academics and students.

2. Ensure that the size of the Purpose Built Student Accommodation is no more than the extant planning permission allows (up to 72 bedspaces cluster flat equivalent).
3. Contribute to delivery of the Sustainable Transport Route from west of Station Road to the disused former railway bridge over the river. This route would be required to:
 - a) be designed to a high quality in accordance with Cycle Infrastructure Design Guidance LTN 1/20, with cycle routes segregated from pedestrians.
 - b) integrate high quality green infrastructure, as part of the Biodiversity Net Gain requirements.
 - c) Modelling will be required to demonstrate the effects of interaction between the existing highway, crossings and adjacent junctions.
4. Deliver biodiversity net gain of at least 10% in accordance with Policy NE3a. Opportunities to deliver 10% biodiversity net gain within the site curtilage should be fully explored and tested before any off-site measures are proposed. If any off-site provision of biodiversity net gain is required, this could be provided along the Sustainable Transport Route, if practicable.
5. Provide integrated bird and bat boxes within new buildings, and/or as standalone features within the public realm, such as bat walls and swift towers. Additional features such as log piles, insect hotels, bee bricks, hedgehog connectivity measures and green and brown roofs / walls are also required.
6. Provide a positive relationship with Station Road and Locksbrook Road.
7. Provide an architectural response that helps to reinforce the identity of this area as a Creative Hub, whilst responding to its sensitive context.
8. Respond positively to short and long distance views having regard to its location within the World Heritage Site and its Outstanding Universal Values including the green setting of the city, the Conservation Area, and respond to the surrounding Listed Buildings and structures. An analysis is required to enable an appropriate response, and to influence the height, massing and design of buildings. The Bath Building Heights Strategy should be used as part of the evidence base and the starting point for this analysis. This identifies this site as being within zone 3 – the Valley Floor, and recommends that for new development ‘building shoulder height should be 4 storeys. One additional setback storey within the roofscape is likely to be acceptable’. Note that this is a recommendation for the general height only and is subject to modifiers.
9. Retain and enhance green infrastructure and habitats along the riverside edge, providing a biodiversity led approach towards the treatment of this area. This area of green infrastructure could be used for informal public open space but must retain a habitat function, a light shielding function, and improved access to the river for maintenance purposes. Built form must respond appropriately to this habitat buffer.