

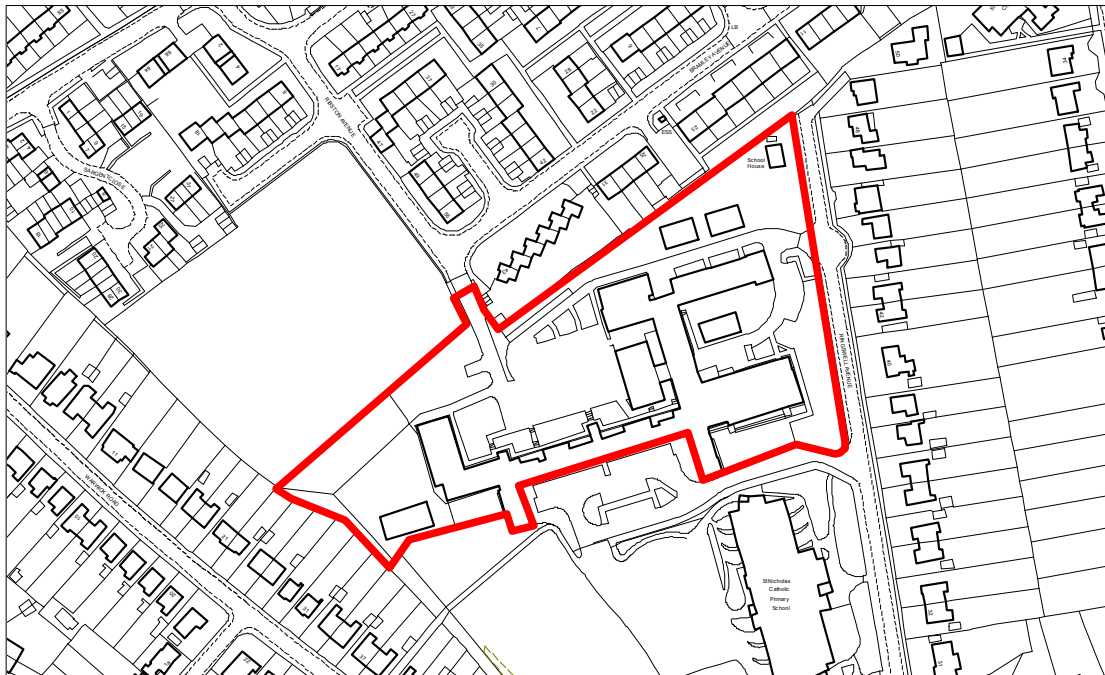
ITEM NO. 7

COMMITTEE DATE: 25/06/2012

APPLICATION NO: 12/0584/01 **OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION**
APPLICANT: Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education
PROPOSAL: Demolition of former school buildings, erection of Academy for Deaf Education with associated residential accommodation, open space, car parking and landscaping (All matters reserved for future consideration apart from access)

LOCATION: Land between Ringswell Avenue and Ribston Avenue, Exeter, EX1 3EG

REGISTRATION DATE: 23/04/2012
EXPIRY DATE: 23/07/2012



Scale 1:3000

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DESCRIPTION OF SITE/PROPOSAL

The site is part of the land formerly occupied by St Luke's School.

Outline planning permission is sought for:

- An Academy building for the education of deaf children and young adults.
- Multi-use games area and other external breakout spaces.
- Residential accommodation for children and young adults attending the Academy with associated internal and external communal and recreational spaces.
- Associated car parking, landscaping and ancillary works.

The existing buildings on the site would be demolished

All matters of detail are reserved apart from means of access. Development parameters are specified as follows:

Development parameters	Academy Student Accommodation	
Minimum floorspace (Gross External Area - sq.m.)	7420	3820
Maximum floorspace (Gross External Area - sq.m.)	11250	5050
Maximum height (m)	16.4	15.4

An indicative site layout plan is included for illustrative purposes. This shows:

- A main vehicular entrance from Ribston Avenue
- Emergency vehicular access only from Ringswell Avenue.
- The Academy building fronting Ringswell Avenue to the east of the site.
- The residential care building to the west of the site close to the rear gardens of houses in Warwick Avenue.
- A proposed games area in the centre of the site.
- A car park along the northern site boundary (to the rear of dwellings in Bramley Avenue).
- An area for cycle parking to comply with BREEAM standards.

The Planning Statement explains that the Academy's existing site and buildings are no longer fit for purpose. It also explains that the proposal incorporates accommodation for a range of related disciplines and services, which could include offices for various organisations for deaf people, sign language courses and hearing dogs training classes. It is also an aspiration of the Academy that the site could be used by the wider community, and provide opportunities for integration of the students into the community.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY THE APPLICANT

- Planning Statement
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Transport Statement
- Design and Access Statement
- Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Outline Method Statement & Tree Protection Plan
- Outline Site Waste Management Plan

SUSTAINABILITY

The applicants have advised that the buildings will achieve a BREEAM rating of at least 'very good'.

REPRESENTATIONS

Objections: 5. The letters generally welcome the proposed development but express some concerns:

- Even if access to the proposed site from Ringswell Avenue is for emergencies only, the traffic will be too much for such a narrow road, and will cause congestion, parking problems and noise. Visitors will park in Ringswell Avenue and enter the site on foot.
- The proposed height of the main Academy building will have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of occupants of dwellings in Ringswell Avenue.
- The proposal includes a new residential building on the Ringswell Avenue frontage, to replace the existing caretaker's house. This would be intrusive and out of character in this location.

CONSULTATIONS

Environment Agency - no objections.

Police Architectural Liaison Officer - no objections in principle; since this is an outline application more comments will be made at the detailed stage.

Network Rail - no objections.

Highways Agency - no objections.

Sport England - no objections.

RSPB - the demolition should not disturb nesting birds. Biodiversity enhancements should include provision for nesting birds.

County Director of Environment, Economy and Culture - comments awaited.

Assistant Director Environment - no objections subject to conditions relating to construction and demolition hours, submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan, contaminated land, kitchen extraction and plant noise.

PLANNING POLICIES/POLICY GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy Framework

Exeter Local Development Framework Core Strategy

CP9 - Transport

CP10 - Meeting Community Needs

CP15 - Sustainable Construction

CP17 - Design and Local Distinctiveness

Devon County Structure Plan 2001-2016

CO6 - Quality of New Development

Exeter Local Plan First Review 1995-2011

AP1 - Design and Location of Development

AP2 - Sequential Approach

H5 - Diversity of Housing

T1 - Hierarchy of Modes

T3 - Encouraging Use of Sustainable Modes

L5 - Loss of Playing Fields

DG1 - Objectives of Urban Design

DG2 - Energy Conservation

OBSERVATIONS

Principle of educational development

The site has a long-standing educational use and the principle of continued use for this purpose is acceptable.

Traffic and parking

The Highways Agency has not raised an objection to the proposal on the basis that the likely impact of the development on the strategic road network will be neutral. The detailed comments of the County Director of Environment, Economy and Culture are awaited. However, given that the site formerly accommodated St Luke's school, it would be difficult to argue that the traffic generation from the development would be unacceptable. The impact of traffic on Ringswell Avenue is likely to be less than St Luke's school because the main vehicular access is from Ribston Avenue. It is still possible that Ringswell Avenue could be used by visitors for parking or drop off/pick-up, and the County Director's views on this will be sought.

If Members are minded to approve this application, it would be appropriate to impose conditions relating to a travel plan, facilities for cyclists, and footpath access.

Impact on street scene

The street scene on the west side of Ringswell Avenue is currently characterised by a tree-lined frontage, behind which lie St Nicholas school, which is primarily single storey with an element of two storey building, and the former St Luke's school building, which is single and two storey. The east side of the road is characterised by two storey detached and semi-detached dwellings.

The National Planning Policy Framework states that planning decisions should aim to ensure that developments establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and building to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit. They should respond to local character. Whilst design policies should not be overly prescriptive, they should guide overall scale, massing and height in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally.

The Exeter Local Development Framework Core Strategy states that design should complement or enhance Exeter's character and local identity. Development should pay attention to ensuring the creation of a high quality townscape.

Exeter Local Plan First Review states that development should be of a height which is appropriate to the surrounding townscape and ensure that the height of constituent parts of buildings relates well to adjoining buildings, spaces and human scale. The volume and shape of structures should relate to the character and appearance of adjoining buildings and the surrounding townscape.

The indicative plans show that the proposed Academy building could have a similar building line to St Nicholas school, but could be taller than the existing buildings in the area. St Nicholas School is typically around 3.5m high with a 7.3m element. The former St Luke's is typically around 10.7m high near to Ringswell Avenue, and lower elsewhere. Following discussions with the applicant, it has been agreed that the maximum proposed height will be reduced by 3.4m to 16.4m. This height reduction, together with retained trees on the Ringswell Avenue frontage, will help to minimise any impact on the street scene, and addresses the concerns raised by local residents.

Amenity of neighbours

Exeter Local Plan First Review states that development should ensure a quality of amenity which allows residents to feel at ease within their homes. The illustrative plans show the proposed Academy building at around 34m away from dwellings on the other side of Ringswell Avenue, 30m from single storey dwellings in Bramley Avenue, and 24m from dwellings in Warwick Avenue. This distance is unlikely to cause problems of overshadowing or overlooking. In the case of Warwick Avenue, overlooking could be avoided by careful positioning of windows at the detailed design stage. The reduction in the maximum proposed height which has been secured through negotiation will ensure that the development is not overbearing.

The applicants have acknowledged the concerns raised by neighbours in respect of the proposed residential building on the Ringswell Avenue frontage. They have therefore withdrawn this from their plans. As an alternative, the existing caretaker's house is proposed to be retained and refurbished for use as a transitional house for students preparing to live independently. Subject to the building being occupied by no more than six people living together and sharing facilities, this would not require planning permission. This is a welcome revision to the application which addresses concerns raised by local residents.

Sustainability

Exeter Local Development Framework Core Strategy requires that new development with a floorspace of at least 1,000 sq.m. will be required to use decentralised and renewable or low

carbon energy sources to cut predicted CO² emissions by at least 10% over and above those required to meet the Building Regulations. A condition will be imposed on any permission requiring details of how this will be met.

Conclusion

The principle of the development is acceptable. Conclusions relating to traffic and parking issues are subject to the views of the County Director of Environment, Economy and Culture. The height parameters specified in the application have been reduced to a level which will be acceptable in relation to the street scene and the amenity of neighbours.

NORTHERN AREA WORKING PARTY

Members noted the details of the proposal and the concerns of local residents, and that the application would be reported to the Planning Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

Subject to receipt and consideration of the views of the County Director of Environment, Economy and Culture in respect of traffic generation and parking,
APPROVE subject to the following conditions:

- 1) C01 - Standard Outline
- 2) C04 - Outline - Exclude Details
- 3) C07 - Time Limit - Outline
- 4) C15 - Compliance with Drawings
- 5) C17 - Submission of Materials
- 6) C34 - Landscape Scheme - Outline
- 7) C36 - No Trees to be Felled
- 8) C37 - Replacement Planting
- 9) C38 - Trees - Temporary Fencing
- 10) C70 - Contaminated Land
- 11) No development shall take place until a Wildlife Plan has been produced by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority.
Reason: To demonstrate how the proposed development will be managed in perpetuity to enhance wildlife.
- 12) Before the commencement of development, a Construction Environmental Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Construction Environmental Management Plan shall identify the steps and procedures that will be implemented to minimise the creation and impact of noise, vibration, dust and waste disposal resulting from the site preparation, groundwork and construction phases of the development and manage Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) access to the site. It shall include details of measures to be employed to prevent the egress of mud, water and other detritus onto the public highway. It shall include for the provision of a dilapidation survey of the highways adjoining the site. Once approved, the Construction Environmental Management Plan shall be adhered to at all times, unless otherwise first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of minimising the impact of construction works.

- 13) Details of all building services plant, including sound power levels and predicted sound pressure levels at a specified location outside the building envelope, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The predicted noise levels shall be submitted prior to commencement of the development and shall be demonstrated by measurement prior to occupation of the development.

Reason: In the interests of local amenity.

- 14) Prior to occupation of the development hereby permitted, secure cycle parking, lockers, showers and changing facilities accessible to all occupants of the premises shall be provided in accordance with details previously submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and the cycle parking and other facilities shall be maintained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure that cycle parking and other facilities are provided, to encourage travel by sustainable means in accordance with Local Plan policy T3.

- 15) Prior to occupation of the development, access to Ringswell Avenue for pedestrians and cyclists shall be provided in accordance with details previously submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and maintained at all times thereafter.

Reason: To encourage travel by sustainable means in accordance with Local Plan policy T3.

- 16) Any individual building to be developed pursuant to this planning permission shall achieve a BREEAM 'very good' standard as a minimum, increasing to 'excellent' for buildings for which application for approval of reserved matters is made on or after 31st January 2013, and shall achieve 'zero carbon' for buildings commenced on or after 1st January 2019. Prior to the commencement of construction the developer shall submit to the Local Planning Authority a BREEAM design stage assessment report to be prepared by a licensed BREEAM assessor confirming the score expected to be achieved and the BREEAM rating to which this corresponds. Where the score does not meet the minimum standard the developer must provide details of what changes will be made to the development to achieve the minimum standard, and shall thereafter implement those changes. A post completion BREEAM report shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority within 6 months of the substantial completion of the development hereby approved.

Reason: In the interests of sustainable development.

- 17) Construction and demolition hours

- 18) Kitchen extraction details

- 19) Travel plan

Local Government (Access to Information) 1985 (as amended).
Background papers used in compiling the report:

Files of planning applications available for inspection from the Customer Service Centre, Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter: Telephone 01392 265223