

OFFICER'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION (20/0284/FUL)

<u>APPLICATION NO:</u>	20/0284/FUL
<u>APPLICANT:</u>	University of Exeter
<u>LOCATION:</u>	Site of Existing Car Park D, East of Amory Building, Exeter
<u>PROPOSAL:</u>	Construction of six storey research and education building.
<u>REGISTRATION DATE:</u>	26 February 2020
<u>RELATED DOCUMENTS:</u>	http://publicaccess.exeter.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=Q6BGLAHBGKE00

DESCRIPTION OF SITE/PROPOSAL

The proposed development site is approximately 1.47 ha in area and located on the eastern side of the University of Exeter's Streatham Campus 1.4km north of the city centre.

The site is located on Car Park D of the Streatham Campus. The car park is bounded by North Park Road to the north, Rennes Drive to the east and south and the Amory Building to the west. Further to the west beyond Rennes Drive is the established arboretum running along the Hoopern and Taddiford valleys incorporating a series of ponds with a network of footpaths. A new purpose built student accommodation project known as East Park is currently being developed to the east of this established landscaped area. The site slopes moderately from north to south.

Vehicular access to the site is via Rennes Drive from Stocker Road and Prince of Wales Road to the south.

The closest buildings are the University's Amory Building approximately 35 metres to the west of the site. The East Park student accommodation development is located approximately 90 metres to the east. The closest residential properties are approximately 350 metres north east of the site in Hillcrest Park, leading to Higher Hoopern Lane and 375 metres to the east in Hoopern Avenue leading to Pennsylvania Road.

The proposed development is for the construction of a new faculty building (13,900 sq metre), suitable to accommodate institute research groups, teaching spaces and shared spaces. The research spaces are to include a 400 seat lecture/auditorium, general seminar rooms, computer teaching rooms, student workshops and study areas. The shared spaces are to include collaboration spaces, meeting rooms, visiting academy offices, restaurant, lobbies, as well as ancillary services such as IT, post room and stores. The supporting information indicates that it will accommodate 675 full time staff when completed.

The intention is for the building to be carbon neutral in operation. The architectural approach is to create a series of cellular steel elements termed by the architect elongated lozenges. The façade design will incorporate a curtain walling system with timber horizontal brise soleils. The concrete used will be high quality and light grey in colour. A series of set-backs will provide an opportunity for soft landscaping, including planted roof terraces. Hard and soft landscaping will be provided throughout and include practical break out spaces and artwork.

display. The overall building will achieve a maximum height of 6 storeys although due to the sloping nature of the site this varies across the site and is 4 storeys alongside North Park Road.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY THE APPLICANT

The application is supported by:

- Planning Statement
- Design and Access Statement
- Heritage Statement
- Transport Report
- Ecological Appraisal
- Arboricultural Method Statement
- Tree Constraints Plan and Tree Protection Plan

REPRESENTATIONS

No representations were received in connection with this application.

It is noted that the applicant public participation document indicated an overall positive response to the application prior to submission.

CONSULTATIONS

The County Head of Planning Transportation and Environment comments that the application is for the construction of a six-storey research and educational building with associated infrastructure and landscaping at the Existing Car Park D. The proposed works are on private roads which fall within the University estate.

Trip Generation/Vehicle Parking

The proposed development will provide a total of up to 13,900 sq metres of internal floorspace. From a highways view, the provision of a research building on campus represents a highly sustainable development that is unlikely to create any significant highway issues. The car parking spaces lost at Car Park D as a result of the proposal will be reallocated at Car Park B, to the north of the campus (ECC Planning Ref: 18/0487/FUL).

The proposal does not include any parking, apart from seven disabled parking spaces; minimal car parking is acceptable given the nature of the building. Notwithstanding this, it is noted that the proposal includes office space/research centre to which there will be trips that are to be attracted to the site that are not students/staff that are already based at the campus. The proposed footprint of the building is large and is thought that such a building will draw extra trips elsewhere, exacerbating the existing parking situation.

DCC have had numerous concerns that there is the continuation of parking from the University (albeit staff, students or visitors etc) on the surrounding adopted highway. The Highway Authority intends to review the parking arrangements in this area of the city, and the development proposals have potential to influence any strategy. Although management/travel plans may stipulate no cars for users of the site, it seems difficult to police and in all likelihood some students/workers/visitors would park on nearby residential streets, exacerbating existing issues. Therefore, to help address this, a contribution of £30,000 towards a review of the existing residential parking zones, making and implementing traffic orders is requested. The assessment on contribution is informed by recent residents parking schemes within the City and includes costs associated with

technical design, Traffic Regulation Orders, and physical road markings/signing. If the application is approved, this contribution should be secured prior to commencement.

Onsite Facilities

Drop off points have also been incorporated into the design to ensure that deliveries are catered for; it is noticed that the loading areas bays did appear to be small and no tracking diagrams have been provided in the submission – however these areas are not on the public highway.

The proposal also incorporates raised crossing tables on desire lines to allow pedestrians to cross Rennes Drive more safely and slow vehicle speeds. This is welcomed given the pedestrian nature of the campus.

It is essential that covered secure cycle parking, in accordance with the standards set out in the Exeter City Council Sustainable Transport Supplementary Planning Document, are achieved. The applicant suggests that 98 cycle spaces will be provided. However, from observing the site plan, some of the cycle parking appears to be located on the other side of the main entrance to the building. In addition to this, the applicant has stated that showers and lockers located within the building are to be provided; these should be in close proximity to any revised location of the cycle parking.

Travel Planning

The applicant has put together a Travel Plan addendum. However, the aims and objectives set out in the travel plan are not ambitious enough given the sustainable location, and all efforts should be made to promote sustainable transport. It is also noted that the addendum is reliant on the existing University Travel Plan which expires in 2020. It is thought that the building will not be occupied by the end of the year, to which the underpinning travel plan will be out of date. It is understood that the University is working on a site wide travel plan, but this has yet to be completed. In accordance with Paragraph 111 of the NPPF an updated travel plan for the entire site is required.

Summary

Subject to plans incorporating improvements to the private highway, contributions towards TRO's (resident parking review) and conditions relating to sustainable transport, no objection. A financial contribution in the sum of £30,000 towards traffic regulation orders in the vicinity of the site, to be secured by an appropriate agreement.

The Council's Environmental Health Officer comments that:

the CEMP that has been submitted with the application will need to be updated once contractors are appointed and the submitted contamination risk assessment concludes that further investigation is required. Conditions are required for these two issues. Further information has been received for an air quality assessment to include the impacts of travel to and from the development, emissions from building services plant, laboratory extraction systems etc. In addition an initial noise assessment has been received for this development in respect of noise from building services plant, external areas, events, deliveries/collections. Conditions have been recommended to address these issues.

Police Designing Out Crime Officer raises no objection to the proposed scheme but would like to make the following comments and recommendations for consideration.

Access and movement - dedicated routes should be supplemented with clear rule setting and way-finding signage. They should be clearly defined, well lit, with good lines of sight to promote safe use. Where possible, the potential for desire lines should be eliminated as

often such unofficial routes lack surveillance and can attract / enable crime and anti-social behaviour.

Lighting - It is supported that '*external lighting in the local vicinity is already of a high standard, but any new pedestrian footpaths will use high quality University standard lighting to provide safe access around the site*'.

Surveillance - On the whole, natural and passive surveillance across the development will be significant, particularly with the installation of an effective lighting scheme as risk of crime and anti-social behaviour is greater during the hours of darkness. Surveillance should be promoted by the maintenance of a 2.5m surveillance gap from the highest form of planting to the lowest tree canopy throughout the site. Trees should have reduced canopy width and heights to maximise CCTV coverage and reduce conflict with lighting. It is presumed that formal surveillance will be provided by on-site University Estate patrols and a CCTV system linked to the existing University Estate patrol system that is monitored 24/7.

Cycle stores should be lit at night using vandal resistant light fittings and energy efficient LED lights. As recommended, such areas should also be covered by CCTV as cycle theft is a significant risk on campus.

Devon County Lead Flood Authority raise no in-principle objection to the above planning application at this stage, the applicant must submit additional information, as outlined below, in order to demonstrate that all aspects of the proposed surface water drainage management system have been considered.

The applicant has described 3 potential outfall locations for surface water from this site. All 3 appear to discharge to the Taddiforde Brook. The applicant has discounted infiltration, but there does not seem to be any evidence to confirm that infiltration is not viable anywhere within this site. It is accepted made ground may preclude infiltration. The applicant should confirm the viability of infiltration at this site.

The applicant has used a soil factor of 0.400 within the calculations of the greenfield runoff rates. This is based on a previous planning application for buildings just east of this site. However, we no longer support the tweaking of soil factors which are based on decades of technical research and empirical data. This approach is consistent across neighbouring LLFAs. Therefore, the applicant should revise the soil factor for this site to the relevant factor given by the Wallingford Volume 3 Winter Rain Acceptance Potential map.

The applicant is currently proposing an underground tank to manage surface water with swales and ditches. The applicant should confirm whether any additional measures, such as a green roof or rainwater harvesting could be implemented.

The applicant's drainage consultants are currently in discussions with the Devon County Flood Team to address the points of technical detail raised.

Exeter Cycling Campaign comments that the provision of cycle parking in excess of current minimum standards is commended as is the provision of shower/locker facilities for active transport options. The aspiration of the university to increase the sustainable transport uptake of students and staff through its travel plan is noted and the suggested evidence that this is having an effect is encouraging. The application notes the proximity of key local cycling routes and the expectation that students will predominantly use sustainable/active transport options.

The campaign notes that there is an opportunity here for the university to consider introducing new cycle infrastructure especially the option of a route between the east/west sides of the campus that would avoid having to go out on the road. Considering this option would enable safer cycling across the campus and would make it easier to complete the E4 strategic cycle route if it could be linked.

RSPB comment that they are pleased to see that the developer's ecologists are to provide swift boxes which are shown to be installed on mature trees. These will need ongoing maintenance/replacement in the course of time and it is recommended that integral boxes which are more or less maintenance free and should be prioritised. They would like to see details of what is proposed reflecting the above and a formula for the number of boxes required. A condition is requested to address this matter.

PLANNING POLICIES/POLICY GUIDANCE

Central Government Guidance - National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019)

2. Achieving sustainable design
3. Plan making
4. Decision-making
8. Promoting healthy and safe communities
11. Making effective use of land
12. Achieving well-designed places
15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Exeter Local Development Framework Core Strategy (Adopted 21 February 2012)

- CP1 – Spatial approach
- CP9 – Strategic transport measures to accommodate development
- CP11 – Pollution and air quality
- CP14 – Renewable and low carbon energy
- CP15 – Sustainable design and construction
- CP17 – Design and local distinctiveness
- CP18 – Infrastructure requirements and developer contributions

Exeter Local Plan First Review 1995-2011 (Adopted 31 March 2005)

- AP1 – Design and location of development
- AP2 – Sequential approach
- T1 – Hierarchy of modes of transport
- T2 – Accessibility criteria
- T3 – Encouraging use of sustainable modes of transport
- EN2 – Contaminated land
- EN3 – Air and water quality
- EN5 – Noise
- DG1 – Objectives of urban design
- DG2 – Energy conservation
- DG7 – Crime prevention and safety

Development Delivery Development Plan Document (Publication Version)

This document represents a material consideration but has not been adopted and does not form part of the Development Plan.

DD1 Sustainable Development

DD20 Sustainable Movement

DD25 Design Principles

DD31 Biodiversity

DD33 Flood Risk

DD34 Pollution

Exeter City Council Supplementary Planning Documents

Sustainable Transport SPD 2013

Trees and Development SPD 2009

University of Exeter Masterplan - North Park

Objectives

The character of North Park is one of the defining images of the University of Exeter which is of large floor plate buildings set within a landscape that flows around the building groups. This overriding image should be retained. This area has the capacity for new development which should ensure that it reinforces the movement structure of the area by creating strong frontages and overlooking onto North Park and Rennes Drive. Some taller buildings would be appropriate in this location to reinforce the new public realm axis along North Park Road. Approximate additional floor space post 2012 c18,700 – 24,900 sq m based on 3 – 4 storeys, potentially greater if taller buildings are included in this area.

Building Form

- New development should reinforce the principal building grids and key streets.
- New development should complement the massing and scale of the existing buildings that provide a positive contribution to the townscape.
- Building materials do not need to be the same as existing but should be complimentary.
- New buildings should ensure that they have clear fronts and backs with entrances that overlook the key public spaces.
- Development to be orientated principally west-east.
- Small scale buildings that start to merge the outlines of the existing key buildings should be resisted to ensure that the surrounding edge landscape is retained.
- Development growth should be from west to east to ensure efficient use of land.
- Maximise views to the south by terracing building and the landscape.

Landscape & Public Realm

- New landscape to reinforce grid and geometry of area whilst also allowing a more informal natural landscape to continue to flow around the building groups
- Creation of strong public realm framework along North Park Road with potential to create south facing terraces.

OBSERVATIONS

The principle of the development is considered to be wholly acceptable as the site lies within land designated for academic use as part of the University campus in the Exeter Local Plan First Review and identified for development within the University of Exeter Streatham Campus Master Plan Framework December 2010. The masterplan states the criteria

against which any further development should be assessed, which are set out above. Consequently the application needs to be considered in terms of the site specific conditions of the site and in particular the impact of the scheme both in terms of the built form and impact of the use on the landscape character of the area.

This large building will have a significant impact on the built form character in this part of the campus. This building's design principles are created through a series of building blocks which the applicant describes as offering maximum flexibility of layout and future proofing and to promote diversity and interactivity. These blocks are arranged to take account of the relief of the site which slopes significantly from north to south. Towards the bottom of the slope the building is 6 storeys in height at its highest level but the creation of roof terraces and variation of building storeys to create visual interest results in the building being 4 storey alongside North Park Road. Consequently it is considered that the building responds in an appropriate way to topography of the site, which has the additional benefit of limiting the amount of cutting into the existing landscape and reducing soil removal from the site. Although overall size of the building will be significant occupying 13,900 sq metres of floor spaces its scale and massing would be comparable with nearby existing buildings (Amory Building to the west at 4 storeys) or those under construction (East Park student accommodation up to 8 storeys). The overall building has been designed to meet BREEAM 'Excellent' standards and incorporates the use of pv panels, ground source heat pumps in addition to the buildings layout and orientation to make the most efficient glazing strategy for the building. The resultant external appearance creates visual interest through the variation in the roof levels and also in the combination of materials which includes significant elements of glazing in addition to the use of concrete panelling, metal bronze coloured cladding and horizontal timber brise soleils. The combination of height, scale, massing and design will result in the appropriate incorporation of a substantial building within the campus for academic purpose and therefore is supported.

The majority of the site is currently a car park however the scheme does involve the removal of existing trees highlighted in the arboricultural report as in good condition. Whilst this is regrettable it is recognised that the need to improve academic facilities within the campus is of primary importance. Accordingly a planning balance needs to be made between the proposed improved teaching spaces for the university and the loss of these six trees. The University do have a good reputation for trees planting within the campus and although it is unlikely that replacement trees could be accommodated within the application site, the applicant has indicated a willingness to provide additional tree planting within the campus to compensate for the loss.

The visual impact of the building in this part of the campus will be substantial and assessment has been made in terms of the proposed buildings impact on middle and long distance views. The existing buildings, topography and trees on the campus result in the site being visible from limited parts of the south eastern part of the campus. The site is also partially visible from nearby and middle distance views within the context of the campus and neighbouring residential development. For more distance views the site is seen within the context of the built up area of Exeter and is not readily perceived. It is considered that the design of the scheme has taken account of the relief of the land and benefits from existing mature vegetation particularly to the east with the Taddiforde valley. Given the evidence

shown within the visual assessments reports submitted which highlight the relief of the land, existing tree cover and the building being set down from the ridgeline of the overall campus it is not considered that the views towards the proposed building from outside the campus will be detrimental of the overall visual character of the area and therefore would be acceptable.

The scheme provides no parking for the site other than for operational and disabled use. The University have already compensated for the spaces lost anticipating the development of this site with the construction of a two tier car park to the north of the campus.

Construction traffic will utilise existing vehicular access through the campus. During the construction phase, vehicles will approach the site via specific routes to be agreed with Devon County Council as Highway Authority. The application proposed a total of 98 cycle stands within the site is appropriate for this development, as accepted by the highway officer and commended by the Exeter Cycle Campaign. Servicing and delivery is proposed to the south east corner of the site and away from the main outside terraced area to the west of the building.

The highway officer has raised no objection to scheme in principle but has highlighted the potential for additional vehicles to be attracted to the site as result this new facility. It is recognised that the loss of the existing car park has already been compensated by the new decked car park to the north of the campus in anticipation of this development. However the highway officer is mindful of the potential for overspill parking to occur in the surrounding residential roads. It is therefore considered a financial contribution of £30,000 is warranted towards a review of the existing residential parking zones, making and implementing of traffic orders as informed by recent residents parking schemes within the City and includes costs associated with technical design, traffic regulation orders, and physical road markings/signing.

In conclusion, it is recommended that the scheme is approved as it will provide significant additional academic space within the Streatham campus as supported by the University masterplan within a sustainable building of a size of building appropriate within campus setting and when seen from wider views. The financial contribution will address the potential impact of off-site on nearby residential road through potential increases in vehicles attracted to the site as a result of this development.

DELEGATION BRIEFING

12 May 2020 - Members were advised that no objections had been received to this application. However considered that given the scale of the development the application it should be reported to Planning Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

Subject to the receipt of additional information in respect of drainage and the completion of a Section 106 agreement for a highway contribution of £30,000, APPROVE for the following reasons:

- 1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date on which this permission is granted.
Reason: To ensure compliance with sections 91 and 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2) Samples of the materials it is intended to use externally in the construction of the development shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority. No external finishing material shall be used until the Local Planning Authority has confirmed in writing that its use is acceptable. Thereafter the materials used in the construction of the development shall correspond with the approved samples in all respects.

Reason: To ensure that the materials conform with the visual amenity requirements of the area.

3) The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in strict accordance with the submitted details received by the Local Planning Authority on 8 January 2020 (dwg nos. UoE-ASL-IT-01-DR-A-1001 rev P09; 1002 rev P07; 1003 rev P03; UoE-ASL-IT-ZZ-DR-A-1050 rev P04; UoE-ASL-T-01-DR-A-1011 rev P03; UoE-ASL-IT-ZZ-DR-A-9905 rev P02; UoE-ASL-IT-ZZ-DR-A-1080 rev P04; 1081 rev P02 & 1082 rev P02) as modified by other conditions of this consent.

Reason: In order to ensure compliance with the approved drawings.

4. No development (including ground works) or vegetation clearance works shall take place until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Statement shall provide for:

- a) The site access point(s) of all vehicles to the site during the construction phase.
- b) The parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors.
- c) The areas for loading and unloading plant and materials.
- d) Storage areas of plant and materials used in constructing the development.
- e) The erection and maintenance of securing hoarding, if appropriate.
- f) Wheel washing facilities.
- g) Measures to monitor and control the emission of dust and dirt during construction.
- h) No burning on site during construction or site preparation works.
- i) Measures to monitor and minimise noise/vibration nuisance to neighbours from plant and machinery.
- j) Construction working hours and deliveries from 8:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday, 8:00 to 13:00 on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank Holidays.
- k) No driven piling without prior consent from the LPA.

The approved Statement shall be strictly adhered to throughout the construction period of the development.

Reason: Insufficient information has been submitted with the application and in the interests of future amenity.

5. No development shall take place on site until a full investigation of the site has taken place to determine the extent of, and risk posed by, any contamination of the land and the results, together with any remedial works necessary, have been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The building(s) shall not be occupied until the approved remedial works have been implemented and a remediation statement submitted to the Local Planning Authority detailing what contamination has been found and how it has been dealt with together with confirmation that no unacceptable risks remain.

Reason: Insufficient information has been submitted with the application and in the interests of future amenity

6. Prior to occupation of the building hereby approved place until details of provision for nesting swifts has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Upon written approval of the details, the scheme shall be fully implemented as part of the development and retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of preservation and enhancement of biodiversity in the locality.

Reason: Insufficient information has been submitted with the application and in the interests of future amenity

7. Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority the building hereby approved shall achieve a BREEAM excellent standard. A BREEAM design stage assessment report has been submitted confirming that the uses will achieve a BREEAM Excellent Standard. The building must now be completed fully in accordance with any approval given. A BREEAM post completion report of the building shall be carried out by a licensed BREEAM assessor within three months of substantial completion of the building and shall set out the BREEAM score achieved by the building and the equivalent BREEAM standard to which such score relates.

Reason: To ensure that the proposal complies with Policy CP15 of Council's Adopted Core Strategy and in the interests of delivering sustainable development. The design stage assessment must be completed prior to commencement of development because the findings may influence the design for all stages of construction.

8. Prior to commencement of the development, details shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority of sheltered secure covered cycle parking provision for the development. Development shall not be commenced until such details have been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and prior to occupation the cycle parking shall be provided in accordance with the submitted details

Reason: To ensure that adequate facilities are available for the traffic attracted to the site

9. Prior to commencement of the development, details shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority of changing facilities/lockers for the development. Development shall not be commenced until such details have been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and prior to occupation the changing facilities/lockers shall be provided in accordance with the submitted details.

Reason: To provide adequate facilities for sustainable transport

10. A comprehensive Travel Plan/Management Plan for the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in advance of occupation of the development. The approved travel plan measures will be implemented to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority. A review of travel patterns for the site shall be undertaken within 3 months of occupation of the development and updated on a basis as agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority thereafter.

Reason: To promote the use of sustainable transport modes, in accordance with paragraph 111 of the National Planning Policy Framework

11. Noise from mechanical building services plant shall not exceed a rating noise level (measured in accordance with BS4142:2014) of 28dB (07:00 to 23:00) and 37dB (23:00 to 07:00) at 1m from the façade of any residential receptor.

Reason: In the interest of amenity.

12. An operational noise impact assessment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to occupation of the development. Any noise mitigation required shall be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority and implemented in full prior to occupation and maintained thereafter.

Reason: In the interest of amenity.

13. Pre-commencement condition - No development shall commence until an air quality assessment based on the AECOM brief dated 7 May 2020 has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any mitigation measure required following the completion of the assessment shall be agreed in writing and implemented in full prior to occupation and maintained thereafter.

Reason: Insufficient information has been submitted with the application and in the interests of amenity.