

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee: Main Planning **Ward:** Heslington
Date: 20 November 2008 **Parish:** Heslington Parish Council

Reference: 08/02167/FULM
Application at: Proposed University Campus Lying Between Field Lane
Common Lane A64 Trunk Road And Hull Road York
For: Realignment of arms of roundabout with associated pedestrian
and cycle access and landscaping, following previous approval
of outline application 04/01700/OUT
By: University Of York
Application Type: Major Full Application (13 weeks)
Target Date: 9 December 2008

1.0 PROPOSAL

1.1 This is a full application to amend the proposed central access roundabout that was approved by the Secretary of State as part of the outline consent for the new university campus at Heslington East (04/01700/OUT). The amended proposals include details of landscaping and footpaths/cycleways in the vicinity of the roundabout.

1.2 The proposals have been submitted as a full application because the main component of the works relates to access, which is not a reserved matter of the outline consent.

1.3 Approved plan F(i) of the outline consent shows the horizontal alignment of the roundabout, two approach roads from Field Lane to the north and one approach road from the new campus to the south. The plan also shows closure of that part of the existing Field Lane between the two northern approach roads. The plan does not show the vertical alignment of the works, nor landscaping or footpaths/cycleways. In the current application the horizontal alignment of the roundabout remains as approved but the alignment of the three approach roads is changed. The main difference is that the alignment of the approach road opposite Deramore Drive is located up to 14m closer to the nearest houses in Field Lane. Alterations to the horizontal alignment of the other two approach roads are minor. The application also includes the vertical alignment of the roundabout and the approach roads.

1.4 The alterations to the geometry are proposed mainly to avoid underground services to the north of the new roundabout and to improve the direction of approach for vehicles. The other movement proposals mainly comprise pedestrian/cycleways from the north side of the realigned Field Lane into the allocated area of the campus and east-west pedestrian/cycleways to the south of Field Lane.

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Development Plan Allocation:

City Boundary York City Boundary 0001

DC Area Teams East Area (1) 0003

2.2 Policies:

CYGP1
Design

CYGP4A
Sustainability

CYGP9
Landscaping

CGP15A
Development and Flood Risk

CYED9
University of York New Campus

CYT4
Cycle parking standards

CYNE1
Trees, woodlands, hedgerows

3.0 CONSULTATIONS

3.1 Internal

Environment, Conservation, Sustainable Development (Landscape) - No objections to the latest proposals subject to: submission of revised landscape proposals; submission of signage and lighting details; protection of existing trees; and compliance with the approved environmental management plan.

Environment Protection Unit - It would appear from the noise assessment submitted with the application that the realignment would have minimal impact on the likely noise levels so the proposals would seem to be acceptable.

Structures and Drainage - No objections. The Internal Drainage Board should be consulted as it may have additional comments and will need to agree discharge consent rates. No site works should start before the completion of the temporary detention lagoon at lake 2A, to the standard recommended by the IDB's consultant.

Highway Network Management - No objections. The proposals are in line with the principles of the outline consent. Nevertheless the applicant has not yet provided evidence to adequately support the stated reasons for moving the approach road closer to the dwellings on Field Lane. The detailed proposals for the works are in the process of being discussed and agreed with Highways officers in accordance with condition 25 of the outline consent.

Transport Planning - No objections subject to minor alterations to the design and location of the cycle/footways and the proximity of any thorn hedges in the vicinity. These issues can be dealt with by planning condition.

3.2 External

Heslington Forum including Heslington Parish Council - The university gave a presentation to the forum on 14 July 2008, prior to submission. Various comments on the proposals were made by forum members and were considered by the university. No formal representation on this application has been made to the council by Heslington Parish Council or by any other member organisation of the forum.

Environment Agency - No objections. Drainage officers of the council and the IDB should confirm that the drainage proposals are satisfactory

York Natural Environment Panel - The grassed areas should comprise native plant mixes to recreate diverse meadow habitats being lost in other parts of York, Low nutrient planting beds should be used as an alternative to high-maintenance planting. The woodland planting should be set back from paths/cycleways, so that it is less intimidating. The proposed hedges should not simply enclose woodland; they should have a purpose. The shrub planting should be more open and diverse including lower level planting to create an interesting mix. Permeable surfacing should be employed where possible.

Public Consultation - Consultation measures included letters to all occupiers fronting onto the site, an advertisement in the local press and site notices along the perimeter. Copies of the application were available for inspection at St Leonard's Place and the university. The consultation period expired on 3 October 2008.

Five objections have been received from local residents. They raise the following planning issues:

- The westernmost cycleway/footpath on the north side of Field Lane is unnecessary as it goes nowhere useful. It will encourage cycling along public footpaths and across the playing field at Badger Wood Walk, putting children at risk.
- The service road along Field lane will become a short cut/rat run for traffic entering badger Hill Estate.
- Traffic noise and pollution.
- The road crossings should not be via an underpass (which would attract noise, graffiti, etc) or bridge(which would cause overlooking). [Officers' response: All of the road crossings would be at grade].
- If the underground services have to be avoided the road should be moved further from the houses in Field Lane, not closer.
- The level of the roundabout will be higher than the existing ground. The roundabout should be lowered to reduce its visual impact on local residents.
- The additional traffic will add to congestion. Drivers from Badger Hill attempting to travel west along Field Lane will be blocked in by traffic on the roundabout and be unable to exit the estate.
- Trees that have to be removed should be replaced.

- The canopy of replacement trees will be too high to provide adequate screening/noise insulation so shrubs should be provided as well, particularly at the western end of the site.
- The proposed trees should be mature specimens to complete the vista as soon as possible.

4.0 APPRAISAL

4.1 Key Issues

Principle of the use

Reasons for altering the alignment

Movement and access

Impact on adjacent residents

Landscaping

Drainage

4.2 The Application Site

The application site lies along the northern edge of the Heslington East campus site, close to the junction of Field Lane and Deramore Drive. The site measures approximately 2.43ha and is currently open countryside bisected by a temporary haul road into the campus development. The site includes part of Field Lane carriageway and verge but not the service road immediately to the north. Whilst the land is undulating it slopes generally down to the south.

4.3 Policy Context

Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) sets out the government's overarching planning policies. It sets out the importance of good design in making places better for people and emphasises that development that is inappropriate in context or fails to take the opportunities available for improving an area should not be accepted.

PPS25 aims to: ensure that flood risk is taken into account in the planning process; avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding; and direct development away from areas at highest risk.

Local plan policy GP1 - Development proposals will be expected to respect or enhance the local environment and be of a density, layout, scale, mass and design that is compatible with neighbouring buildings, spaces and vegetation.

GP4a - Proposals for all development should have regard to the principles of sustainable development.

NE1 - Trees, woodlands and hedgerows, which are of landscape, amenity, nature conservation, or historic value will be protected by refusing proposals which would result in their loss or damage. When trees are to be removed, appropriate replacement planting should be proposed to mitigate any loss.

GP9 - Where appropriate, development proposals should incorporate a suitable landscaping scheme that is an integral part of the proposals; includes an appropriate range of species, reflects the character of the area; enhances the attractiveness of key transport corridors; and includes a planting specification where appropriate.

GP15a - Developers should ensure that the site can be developed, serviced and occupied safely and that discharges from new development should not exceed the capacity of existing/proposed sewers and watercourses.

ED9 - The scale, layout and design of the new campus at Heslington East should have regard to, inter alia, a comprehensive landscape scheme including publicly accessible public open space and a comprehensive network of pedestrian/cycle routes between campuses.

T4 - Seeks to promote cycling and states that all new development should provide storage for cycles in accordance with the standards in the local plan.

Principle of the Use

4.4 The principle of the use of the site as part of a new campus was accepted when the Secretary of State granted outline consent in 2007. Moreover, the location of the roundabout together with the principle of the access from Field Lane were approved as part of the outline consent and shown on approved plan F(i). The proposal accords with local plan policy ED9 for the development of the campus, the adopted development brief for site, the land use plan C(i) approved as part of the outline consent and the approved masterplan for the campus. The principle of the proposed use is therefore acceptable.

4.5 The works to be considered as part of the current application are, in essence: (a) the vertical alignment of the roundabout (b) the horizontal and vertical alignment of the approach roads (c) landscaping of the whole of the application site (d) cycle ways and footpaths.

Reasons for Altering the Alignment

4.6 The proposed northern approach to the roundabout has been realigned mainly to avoid the 'Kingston Communications Jointing Chamber', which is a telecom access chamber to the north of the roundabout. It is shown on submitted plan no. 30080-P-277. The applicant has stated that relocating the services in this area, to avoid the chamber, would cost in the region of £140,000. The alternatives available to the applicant are to move the roundabout's northern approach either to the north-west of its approved alignment or to the south-east.

4.7 The applicant has stated that relocating the approach road to the south-east of the chamber would create an odd road alignment and could create road safety problems as the approach would have to bend quite sharply in to the roundabout. The applicant's preference is therefore to take the road to the north-western side of the access chamber as proposed. The road does not bend south immediately after the access chamber thus enabling the ducts to be lowered to a suitable depth to enable them to pass under the new carriageway. Officers have asked the applicant to provide further information in support of their reasons for moving the approach road closer to the dwellings on Field Lane. Members will be updated at the meeting

Movement and Access

4.8 In terms of traffic movement and road safety the carriageway works are not materially different to those approved by the secretary of state. The works comply with the council's highway standards. Officers acknowledge residents' concern that, following construction of the new roundabout, drivers may use the service road as a

route to and from Hull Road, or to gain access to Deramore Drive. Nevertheless, officers share the view of the University's transport consultants that the amount of extra traffic delay caused by the diversion of Field Lane would be insignificant. This view is supported by calculations of the roundabout's theoretical capacity which show predicted levels of queuing as minimal. Officers conclude that motorists are likely to remain on the major road rather than divert to minor residential roads. Nevertheless officers will monitor driver behaviour following construction of the roundabout in order to be satisfied that this proves to be the case. Officers do not expect drivers from Badger Hill Estate to have difficulty joining the new roundabout. In terms of the risk of rat-running, the current proposal would be no different from the works approved by the secretary of state.

4.9 The works include pedestrian and cycle routes along the realigned Field lane and from Field Lane into the campus. Safe, at-grade crossings would be provided where the paths and cycleways cross Field Lane and the approaches to the roundabout. Details of the highway works, including the footpaths, cycleways, crossings and lighting are in the process of being discussed and agreed with Highways officers in accordance with condition 25 of the outline consent. Nevertheless, as this is a full application, the relevant parts of condition 25 should be made a condition of approval of the current application.

4.10 Residents are concerned that the westernmost cycleway/footpath on the north side of Field Lane is unnecessary as it would serve no useful purpose. They are concerned that it would encourage cycling along public footpaths and across the playing field at Badger Wood Walk, putting children at risk. This cycleway would link the eastbound carriageway of the realigned Field Lane with the access into the campus. The route would allow cyclists from the direction of Heslington village to approach the new roundabout via the existing service road, which would be lightly trafficked, and onto a new off-road cycleway across the landscaped verge of the realigned Field Lane. The works would provide a safe, convenient and attractive route for cyclists whilst having little impact on adjacent residents. Whilst there is a separate proposal for a new off-road cycle path to be provided on the south side of Field Lane, it would not benefit cyclists travelling on the eastbound carriageway of Field Lane, nor those from the western part of the Badger Hill estate.

Impact on Adjacent Residents

4.11 The only material difference between the currently-proposed highway works and the scheme approved by the Secretary of State is that the west-bound approach road is now up to 14m nearer to some of the houses on Field Lane. The re-routing of Field Lane further from the houses, as part of the outline application, was seen by residents as one of the mitigation measures for having the new campus built nearby. Objections have been received from local residents due to the road now being brought closer to their homes than initially approved. The most affected dwellings are those close to the junction of Field Lane and Deramore Drive. Nevertheless, the distance between the new road and the nearest dwelling (39 Deramore Drive) is still 33m, down from 36m. The dwelling probably most affected by the change (81 Field Lane) is still approximately 44m from the new road, down from 58m for the approved scheme. The reduced distance from the approved scheme to the current proposal is unlikely to have a significant visual impact on the residents, especially as the proposed landscaping would largely screen the works from the adjacent houses. Moreover, the increase in noise experienced by local residents (compared to the

approved scheme) would be less than 1dB(A) whilst some residents would experience a slight decrease. An increase of less than 1dB(A) is generally considered to be imperceptible. In all cases the predicted noise levels would be less than the baseline (2007) noise levels.

Landscaping

4.12 The landscaping proposals reflect the character of the Western Landscaping that was approved by members on 24 July 2008. The proposals are intended to provide an attractive semi-rural approach to the campus entrance and partial screening of the campus buildings. They mainly comprise meadow grassland, woodland, specimen trees and ground cover. Existing trees would be retained where possible. The scheme as currently submitted does not provide enough specimen trees, a sufficiently diverse range of species (including native species) or adequate screening at low level. Whilst revised proposals have not yet been submitted the university has confirmed that they will address the council's concerns. The planting should be protected, established, managed, and monitored in accordance with the Environmental Site Management Plan (ESMP). The comments made by YNEP can be addressed in a revised planting plan and as part of other Heslington East applications. Submission of details of footpaths, cycleways and lighting should be made a condition of approval. Consent for signage is dealt with under advert regulations.

Drainage

4.13 Surface water from the new campus will be drained by gravity to a proposed lake along the southern side of the campus site. The water will be stored in the lake and released at agricultural rates into local watercourses. These principles were accepted by the inspector at the public inquiry. In the interim, surface water will drain into a temporary detention lagoon, which is currently being designed. The drainage proposals for the roundabout and adjacent landscaping are acceptable. Nevertheless, no site works should start before the completion of the lagoon to the standard recommended by the drainage board's independent consultant. This should be made a condition of approval.

4.14 Whilst the internal drainage board has not been formally consulted on the proposals its officers are aware of the application. The board has not objected to the current application, which covers a relatively small area of the new campus. But it is concerned about the continuing uncertainty surrounding the details of the temporary detention lagoon. Officers of the IDB and the council are discussing these temporary proposals with the university with a view to them being settled before construction of the new roundabout begins. Officers will update members at the meeting.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The proposal conforms with policies of the draft local plan particularly ED9 (New campus at Heslington East). The proposal also conforms with the outline consent for the campus granted by the Secretary of State and with the approved masterplan. The works would provide an attractive setting for the central access into the campus and help to mitigate the visual impact of the campus development. Furthermore, the cycleways and footpaths would encourage sustainable transport. Whilst part of the highway works would be nearer to some of the houses on Field

Lane the impact is unlikely to be materially greater than the arrangement approved by the Secretary of State.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION: Approve

1 TIME2 Development start within three years

2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the approved plans numbered Figure 1/A, Figure 2/A, Figure 3/B and 30080-P-246 or any plans or details subsequently agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority as an amendment to the approved plans.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out only as approved by the Local Planning Authority.

3 No development shall take place before the completion of a temporary settlement/detention lagoon to the satisfaction of the local planning authority and to a standard recommended by an independent consultant of the Ouse & Derwent Internal drainage Board.

Reason: So that the local planning authority may be satisfied with the details for the proper drainage of the site.

4 The planting shall be protected, established, managed, and monitored in accordance with the Environmental Site Management Plan (ESMP) approved under condition 15 of outline consent 04/01700/OUT.

Reason: In the interests of ecology, bio-diversity and the landscape character of the area.

5 No development shall take place until there has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a detailed landscape scheme which shall include the species, density (spacing), and position of trees, shrubs and other plants; seeding mix, sowing rate and mowing regimes where applicable. Where required it will also include details of ground preparation. This scheme shall be implemented within a period of six months of the completion of the development. Any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority agrees alternatives in writing. This also applies to any existing trees that are shown to be retained within the approved landscape scheme. Any works to existing trees that are protected by a tree preservation order (TPO) or are in a conservation area are subject to local authority approval and notification respectively within and beyond this five year period.

Reason: So that the Local Planning Authority may be satisfied with the variety, suitability and disposition of species within the entire site, since the landscape scheme is integral to the amenity of the development.

6 Trees shown to be retained and/or subject to a tree preservation order (TPO) shall be protected during the development of the site by the following measures:

Prior to commencement of development, protective fencing to BS5837:2005 shall be erected around all existing trees shown to be retained. The protective fencing line shall be shown on a plan and agreed with the local authority and subsequently adhered to at all times during development to create exclusion zones. None of the following activities shall take place within the exclusion zone: excavation, raising of levels, storage of any materials or top soil, lighting of fires, parking or manoeuvring of vehicles, mechanical cultivation . Within the exclusion zone there shall be no site huts or other temporary rooms/offices/marketing suites et al, no mixing of cement, no disposing of washings, no stored fuel, no new trenches, pipe runs for services or drains. The fencing shall remain secured in position throughout the development process including the implementation of landscaping works. A notice stating 'tree protection zone - do not remove' shall be attached to each section of fencing.

Reason: To protect trees that are subject to a TPO and/or are considered to make a valuable contribution to the amenity of the area and/or development.

7 Notwithstanding the approved plans, construction details, including materials, of the following matters shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before being implemented on the application site in accordance with the approved details:

- Roads and junctions including signalling
- Footpaths
- Cycleways
- External lighting

Reason: In the interests of visual appearance and highway safety.

7.0 INFORMATIVES:

Contact details:

Author: Kevin O'Connell Development Control Officer
Tel No: 01904 552830