

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee: Planning Committee **Ward:** Dringhouses And Woodthorpe
Date: 31 August 2006 **Parish:** Dringhouses/Woodthorpe Planning Panel

Reference: 06/01343/FUL
Application at: York Sixth Form College Sim Balk Lane York YO23 2UD
For: Amendments to elevations of new college building, formation of fourth floor roof extension and amendments to main college car park (alterations to scheme approved 4 March 2005 under reference 04/00376/FUL).
By: York College
Application Type: Full Application
Target Date: 10 August 2006

1.0 PROPOSAL

1.1 At the Planning Committee meeting on 24 June 2004 Members resolved to grant planning permission (ref: 04/00376/FUL) for the erection of a new college and nursery with associated car parking for York College subject to the prior completion of a legal agreement. The agreement was signed on 4 March 2005 and the permission issued on the same day.

1.2 A further planning application for the variation of condition 23 to change the hours of use of the car park on the northern boundary and to allow the use of car park for service and delivery vehicles was granted permission at the Committee on 13/12/2005.

1.3 The current application seeks permission for a number of alterations to the approved scheme, the principal changes are:

- An enlarged third floor level;
- An enlarged fourth floor level to the northern side of the building;
- An external storage area provided for the vehicle workshops;
- Amendments to the general window configuration which have been revised to co-ordinate with proposed room and furniture layouts;
- High level composite cladding panels have been introduced to eliminate light spillage;
- Roof overhang has been re-designed due to Health and Safety construction and maintenance issues; and
- Amendments to the design of the decked car park.

1.4 The applicant has submitted the following statement to explain the need for the amendments:

"As the process of consultation with key users groups developed, it was clear that some key user groups would have specific locational requirements and operational needs. The spatial requirements of each key user group have therefore necessitated some internal amendments to the layouts of some rooms/spaces. Internal changes have in turn required some minor changes to the external appearance of the building to enable both internal layout and external appearance to co-ordinate with one another. All proposed amendments are required in connection with the successful running of College and are needed to fulfil operational requirements".

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Development Plan Allocation:

City Boundary York City Boundary 0001

2.2 Policies:

CYGP1
Design

CYGP9
Landscaping

CYC1
Criteria for community facilities

3.0 CONSULTATIONS

INTERNAL

3.1 Highway Network Management

Any comments will be reported verbally.

3.2 Landscape Architect

I think the loss of trees proposed for the car park deck is regrettable and although the top deck of the car park has been reduced in size, the visual impact of this revised scheme results in a reduction in amenity. However given that the roof top trees have limited mitigation value, the change is probably not significant enough to refuse the application given the context and scale of the remainder of the development as seen in the broader landscape.

3.3 Environmental Protection Unit

No objections to this application. However the site is in close proximity to residential properties and concerns expressed regarding nearby residents being adversely affected by noise during any demolition, construction or refurbishment works.

EXTERNAL

3.4 Dringhouses and Woodthorpe Planning Panel

No objections

3.5 Bishopthorpe Parish Council

The Parish opposed the siting of the college in this location originally as they considered that it would be too prominent and spoil one of the entrances into York.

The fourth floor extension will add to its prominence.

3.6 Neighbouring owners/occupiers

One letter received concerning the impact of the proposals on overshadowing of 17 Chessingham Gardens and commenting that no sunpath diagrams have been produced.

Note: sunpath diagrams have now been prepared and the objector has been re-notified, any further comments will be reported verbally.

4.0 APPRAISAL

PLANNING POLICY

4.1 There are no policies of the North Yorkshire County Structure Plan that are of direct relevance to this proposal. The site lies outside of the York Green Belt and within the settlement limit of the City as defined on the Proposals Map of City of York Development Control Local Plan. Policy C1 'Community Facilities' of Draft Local Plan seeks that the proposed development is of a scale and design appropriate to the character and appearance of the locality.

4.2 Policy GP1 'Design' includes the expectation that development proposals will; respect or enhance the local environment; be of a density, layout, scale, mass and design that is compatible with neighbouring buildings and spaces, using materials appropriate to the area; incorporate appropriate landscaping and retain, enhance or create urban spaces, public views, skyline, landmarks and other features that make a significant contribution to the character of the area and ensure that residents living nearby are not unduly affected by noise, disturbance, overlooking, overshadowing or dominated by overbearing structures.

ALTERATIONS TO THE ELEVATIONS OF THE MAIN COLLEGE BUILDING

Amendments specific to the Northern Elevation

4.3 When the college application was originally considered neighbours, officers and the Members of the Committee raised concerns over the expanse of glazing that had been proposed on the northern elevation of the building. Particular concerns related to the potential for light spillage from the building as well as the potential for

overlooking of nearby residential properties. To address these issues, a condition requiring full details of the extent and positioning of opaque glazing as well as a condition requiring the submission of a lighting management plan was attached to the original grant of planning permission.

4.4 In working up their response to this condition the architect has made changes to the general window configuration of the northern elevation at all levels to ensure window heights and sizes have been reduced to minimise any overlooking of adjacent residential properties. At second and third floor levels the previously proposed large scale glazed areas have been reduced and partially replaced with cladding panels significantly reducing light spillage as well as the potential for overlooking.

4.5 In addition, the re-planning of the internal spaces and uses of the building have resulted in other changes to the elevation. Briefly, ground floor windows to the northern elevation of the building have been re-designed to co-ordinate with kitchens, kitchen stores and kitchen changing rooms. Other ground floor windows have been re-planned to co-ordinate with specialist rooms behind. For example windows to the dance studio have been re-designed to comprise high level windows to provide students with a greater degree of privacy; Louvres have been added to the kitchen vent system as well as to ground floor plant areas; Staircases have been re-planned again necessitating amendments to some windows.

Amendments general to all Elevations

4.6 Similar changes required of the re-planning of the internal areas of the building have taken place on all elevations of the building. Whilst these have materially altered its appearance from that originally approved, the materials - combinations of brickwork, render, cedar cladding and glazing, have been retained to help to break up the elevations and broadly the new proposals are considered to retain the spirit of the architect's original designs.

ALTERATIONS TO THE SIZE OF THE MAIN COLLEGE BUILDING

4.7 The fourth floor level of the building has been slightly reconfigured, Members may recall that this floor is a recessed storey of the building. The changes are chiefly towards the northern edge of the building where the footprint has increased by about 7m across the elevation and has encroached by between 1m and 3m further northwards towards the parapet. This change is to incorporate a plant room that has been extended in size to accommodate additional plant required to achieve a rating of 'Very Good' against the BREEAM checklist. This rating was required by the Section 106 agreement for the development.

4.8 The alternatives to extending the plant room are either:

1. Housing all plant internally resulting in the displacement of teaching space and tutorial rooms. This was regarded as unacceptable by the College because of the loss of teaching space and tutorial rooms.

2. Locate the plant externally. Locating the plant externally would mean that the plant could still be seen in elevation, the potential for seeing external plant was considered inappropriate.

4.9 The roof extension results in the plant being screened from view and also adds an additional safeguard in terms of any noise generated by the plant.

4.10 On the northern wing of the building the second and third floors are set back to reduce the impact of the elevation. The revised scheme has increased the length of these floor levels by about 2m across the elevation. This increases the bulk of the building but only very marginally. Similarly on the northern elevation the main stair tower has altered shape so that it is wider than originally proposed (8.5m compared to 5m) but projects 1m from the face of the building compared with the approved 3m projection.

4.11 The building remains in accordance with the height condition imposed on the original planning permission.

4.12 The additional bulk of the plant room at roof level and the changes at third and fourth floor levels are not considered to either harm the appearance of the building nor result in the college building appearing unduly overbearing when viewed from adjacent land and property. Sun path and shading diagrams have been produced to compare the impact of the scheme with and without the amendments (at date 21 June for Summer and 21 December for Winter). The diagrams show that there would be no material change to shading in the summer. In winter the diagrams show that shading increases marginally after Midday. The diagrams do not take account of the tree cover along the northern boundary of the site and it is considered that it could not be demonstrated that unacceptable harm would be caused to nearby residential property through loss of light.

OTHER ALTERATIONS TO THE MAIN BUILDING

4.13 Members will recall that the plan form of the building is in the form of a capital letter "H", with the long elevations facing north and south and courtyards facing east and west. The approved plan showed a vehicle turning head and a line of newly planted trees in the eastern courtyard between the vehicle workshops and the sports hall. In the proposed amended scheme the planting has been replaced with an outdoor storage area for the vehicle workshops. The storage area would be enclosed within walls and is on the opposite side of the building from the nearest residential property. It is considered that these alterations will not adversely affect the appearance of the building.

ALTERATIONS TO THE MAIN CAR PARK

4.14 The original permission gave approval for a double decked car park to the south of the main building. The amendment seeks approval to reduce the size of the top deck. The number of parking spaces would remain as approved.

4.15 The revised scheme results in the loss of four rows of trees across the car park deck and all of the perimeter trees around the entire car park deck. This is a considerable reduction in tree numbers. The trees within the car park were provided mitigation for impact of the car park on views from the south. Trees in roof top planters do not reach a considerable size due to root and water restrictions. To this end the car park trees had limited mitigation value, but the numbers, to a degree, compensated for this.

4.16 In the latest revision the top deck is reduced in length by over one quarter, thus reducing its impact, especially as this section comes closest to Sim Balk Lane. This has also allowed the row of semi-mature trees within the car park to be planted into the ground where they can be naturally open grown and thus provide greater mitigation effect.

4.17 The loss of tree numbers is regrettable although the top deck has been reduced in size. Given that the roof top trees would have had limited mitigation value, the change does not impact so significantly on appearance of the site given the context and scale of the remainder of the development as seen in the broader landscape.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The changes to the elevations and the fourth floor level appear to have been adequately justified by the applicants in terms of the future operation of the building and the as a response to planning conditions. The design changes are considered to preserve the spirit of the original design concept for the building and would not have a detrimental impact on the visual amenities of the area nor have an adverse impact on the residential amenity of adjacent occupiers. The alterations to the car park are considered to be largely neutral in their impact on the visual amenity of the area in this sensitive edge of city location. The proposal is considered to comply with policy C1, GP1 and GP9 of the Development Control Local Plan.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION: Approve

- 1 The materials to be used for the development shall accord with the details received 21 August 2006 and titled "York College - Proposed External Materials" unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: So as to achieve a visually cohesive appearance in accordance with policy GP1 of the Development Control Local Plan.

- 2 Details of the items listed below shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of that part of the development and the works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Boundary wall to the outdoor workshops.

Reason: So that the Local Planning Authority may be satisfied with these details.

- 3 The development shall be carried out subject to all the conditions imposed on planning permission 04/00376/Ful dated 4 March 2005.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as this planning permission relates solely to those parts of the development specifically outlined in the GVA Grimley letter dated 15 June 2006.

- 4 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the following plans:-

02-077-(80)-006 rev PC08 - GF furniture 1/1
02-077-(80)-007 rev PC08 - GF furniture 2/2
02-077-(80)-008 rev PC07 - FF furniture 1/2
02-077-(80)-009 rev PC07 - FF furniture 2/2
02-077-(80)-010 rev PC07 - 2F furniture 1/2
02-077-(80)-011 rev PC07 - 2F furniture 2/2
02-077-(80)-012 rev PC07 - 3F furniture 1/2
02-077-(80)-013 rev PC07 - 3F furniture 2/2
02-077-(80)-014 rev PC07 - 4F furniture 1/1
02-077-(90)-014 rev PL1
02-077-(06)-006 rev C01 - roof plan
02-077-(08)-060 rev PL4
02-077-(08)-061 rev PL4
02-077-(08)-062 rev PL2
02-077-(08)-011 rev PL3
02-077-(08)-009 rev PL4
02-077-(08)-014 rev PL1
WT789.L03
WT789.L01 rev H (in so far as it relates to the decked car park only)

or any plans or details subsequently agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority as 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.

7.0 INFORMATIVES:

Notes to Applicant

1. REASON FOR APPROVAL

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the proposal, subject to the conditions listed above, would not cause undue harm to interests of acknowledged importance, with particular reference to visual amenity and the living conditions of nearby residents. As such the proposal complies with Policies C1 and GP9 of the City of York Development Control Local Plan.

2. This planning permission only covers amendments to the main college building and the decked car park. Any alterations to the overall detailed layout of the site and

the landscaping masterplan which have been submitted with the drawings attached to this application must be progressed through the discharge of the conditions imposed on the original planning permission.

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