

COMMITTEE REPORT

Date: 11 February 2020 **Ward:** Hull Road
Team: East Area **Parish:** Heslington Parish
Council

Reference: 19/02540/REMM
Application at: Proposed Research Centre Lakeside Way Heslington York
For: Reserved matters application for approval of siting, design, external appearance and landscaping of a research centre building with associated access, cycle parking and landscaping following outline permission 15/02923/OUT.
By: University of York
Application Type: Major Reserved Matters Application
Target Date: 28 February 2020
Recommendation: Delegated Authority to Approve

1.0 PROPOSAL

1.1 This application relates to the development of a new purpose-built research and laboratory space for the York Global Institute of Safe Autonomy at the University of York East Campus located to the east of Heslington Village. The development is in the 'Cluster 2' part of Campus East located to the north of Lakeside Way and east of the central vista. The Design Brief including Masterplan for Cluster 2 shows the cluster divided into two residential colleges, Langwith and Constantine with a central and southern area of academic, commercial and knowledge transfer activity.

1.2 East Campus was formerly agricultural fields with no special landscape quality. Following outline consent for the development of the site as a campus for the University, the East Campus has started to evolve; Cluster 1 to the west of the campus provides academic departments and teaching buildings along with Goodricke College, with Cluster 3 at the eastern edge of the campus provides sports village and pitches. Cluster 4 is the most westerly part of the campus is currently being developed to provide student accommodation.

1.3 In line with the outline consent and the approved design brief with masterplan, this is an application for reserved matters (siting, design, external appearance and landscaping) to provide a purpose-built research and laboratory space including office accommodation, seminar rooms, external storage building (for test vehicles) and external test area.

1.4 The research building is broadly rectangular and occupies the centre of the triangular site which is located to the east of the Piazza building and north of

Lakeside Way. There is an existing drainage swale running along the north eastern boundary of the site and an existing plant sub-station to the north eastern corner. There is an existing service road serving the Piazza Building, which provides vehicular access to the site and a new access route from the service route will be created leading to an external test area. The submitted plans also include cycle parking storage for 36 bikes with a visitors bike stand for the parking of 14 cycles.

1.5 This building will be the Institute of Safe Autonomy will be the UK's first research centre dedicated to the design, development, safety and communications for robotics and connected autonomous systems. The project is financed by a grant from the UK Research Partnership Investment Fund alongside funding from the University. The building will provide accommodation for existing staff and postgraduate students (up to 140) from existing departments (Computer Science, Electronic Engineering and Physics).

1.6 The building design has been driven by its requirement to be highly functional. A number of features this purpose built facility incorporates dictate the arrangement of spaces within and externally to the building. Laboratories and test spaces are provided on the ground floor with offices on the first floor. The building will also incorporate a double height test space, viewing terrace and control room. The building will be used to monitor water based research projects on the lake as well as the external test area. The second floor will provide a specific Quant Lab and hoist high altitude platforms (HAP). These require a clear line of sight above the building and direct access to the external test area on the roof top

1.7 Officers are satisfied that the environmental information already submitted in respect of the development of the Heslington East Campus is sufficient to assess the environmental effects of this development. As such no addendum to the Environmental Statement has been sought. Nor does the submission include further information or any other substantive information that would require further publicity under the Environmental Impact Regulations 2011.

Planning History

1.8 Substantial history relating to the development of the campus and other clusters, however the outline consents and other applications relevant to this application for reserved matters includes:

04/01700/OUT Outline application for development of a university campus; permitted 24 May 2007

08/00005/OUT increase building slab levels (building heights to remain unchanged); permitted 18 July 2008

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Publication Draft Local Plan 2018

| | |
|------|--|
| SS22 | University of York Expansion (ST27) |
| ED1 | University of York |
| ED3 | Campus East |
| D1 | Placemaking |
| D6 | Archaeology |
| CC2 | Sustainable Design and Construction of New Development |

2.2 Draft 2005 Development Control Local Plan (DCLP)

| | |
|------|--------------------------------------|
| ED6 | University of York Heslington Campus |
| ED9 | University of York New Campus |
| GP1 | Design |
| GP4A | Sustainability |

3.0 CONSULTATIONS

Design, Conservation and Sustainable Development (Archaeology)

3.1 The site would appear to be within the area defined in the Archaeological Remains Management Plan (ARMP, Ver_01 June 2007) as Area B3. Areas with the prefix B were defined as areas of secondary archaeological importance. It is not considered that there is any requirement for any further archaeological work in advance of the construction of Safe Autonomy Building although the heritage statement addresses archaeology in this location and no further archaeological work is required in respect to this particular application.

Design, Conservation and Sustainable Development (Ecology)

3.2 The site is predominately bare ground and rough grassland and do not consider that a preliminary Ecological Appraisal would be required in respect to the siting of the building. However reference is made in the application documents that the Lake may be used for testing. There is no detail in respect to what the testing of the Lake may comprise of, including frequency and duration, types of vehicles and other robotic equipment which could disturb the aquatic environment, and how the Lake would be accessed to carry this out.

Public Protection (PP)

3.3 Land contamination – request reports referred to by applicant.

3.4 Construction noise and dust- recommend a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for minimising the creation of noise, vibration and dust during site preparation and construction phases of the development.

Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)

3.5 Verbally confirmed that there are no objections to the proposal; during the process of the development of the central lake attenuation storage and discharge rates were agreed for the University campus.

Yorkshire Water

3.6 No objection. It is noted that a public sewer appears to be unaffected although it is strongly advised that the developer surveys the site to obtain its exact position.

Ouse and Derwent Internal Drainage Board

3.7 The Drainage Strategy Statement date November 2019 indicates the applicant proposed to discharge into the lake which then ultimately discharged in to two Board maintained watercourses. The development site appears to fall within the 'catchment area' previously agreed planning permission (08/02543/REMM) relating to the construction of central lake and raising of Kimberlow Hill where the attenuation storage for the main feature lake and the discharge rates were agreed into the Board maintained watercourse for a total of 116 hectare of the University campus. On this basis the Board has no objection to the drainage proposal.

Heslington Parish Council

3.8 Objection; the overall height exceeds the previous agreed limits and the University has not engaged with the community as required by the S106 of the outline permission.

4.0 REPRESENTATIONS

4.1 The application was advertised by site and press notice. No letters of representation have been received.

5.0 APPRAISAL

5.1 Key Issues:

- Principle of a research facility
- Siting, Design and Scale
- Landscape
- Accessibility and Parking

- Sustainability
- Archaeology
- Ecology
- Drainage
- Construction Impacts
- Land Contamination
- Community Engagement

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF) 2019

5.2 The revised NPPF (2019) sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

5.3 The planning system should contribute to the achievement of sustainable development (Paragraph 7). To achieve sustainable development, the planning system has three overarching objectives; economic, social and environmental objectives. In the absence of a formally adopted Local Plan the most up-to date representation of key relevant policy issues is the NPPF and it is against this policy Framework that the proposal should principally be addressed. The NPPF sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

5.4 Section 12 sets out that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.

PUBLICATION DRAFT LOCAL PLAN (2018)

5.5 The Publication Draft City of York Local Plan 2018 ('2018 Draft Plan') was submitted for examination on 25 May 2018. In accordance with paragraph 48 of the NPPF the Draft Plan policies can be afforded weight according to:

- The stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the previous NPPF published in March 2012. (NB: Under transitional arrangements plans submitted for examination before 24 January 2019 will be assessed against the 2012 NPPF).

5.6 The evidence base underpinning the 2018 Draft Plan is capable of being a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL LOCAL PLAN (2005)

5.7 The Development Control Local Plan (DCLP) was approved for development management purposes in April 2005. Whilst the DCLP does not form part of the

statutory development plan, its policies are considered to be capable of being material considerations and can be afforded very little weight in the determination of planning applications where policies relevant to the application are consistent with those in the NPPF.

ASSESSMENT

Principle

5.8 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 (and subsequently amended). This research facility is classified as a University use complying with condition 5 of the outline consent that restricted development on the site to university uses.

5.9 The development would be wholly situated within the allocated area in accordance with Plan C (i). The outline consent identified an allocated area of 65ha, with a condition (no.4) restricting the developed footprint (to include buildings, car parks and access roads) within this allocated area to 23% of the total area, which is approximately 14.94ha. The University have confirmed that the consented development within the allocated area to date totals 9.12ha.

5.10 The development proposed, the research facility building and storage building will collectively provide a footprint of 1787sqm. The overall development within the allocated area would rise to 9.30ha, which is 14.3% of the total area conforming to the requirements of condition 4 of the outline consent.

5.11 The development has been considered against the design principles agreed under the Cluster 2 Design Brief including Masterplan and Landscape Design Brief. The site is identified as one of four development plots identified for academic/commercial uses alongside Lakeside Way. There is a vacant development plot remaining to the east of the site and follows the sequence of development from the Piazza Building. There remains an opportunity to provide a 'T-shape' of academic buildings running through the southern and central elements of the cluster and dissecting the college blocks on either side of it. The building has frontages on all four sides. It is considered that the proposed development would not compromise the design principles outlined in the approved Cluster 2 Design Brief including Masterplan and Landscape Design Brief.

Siting, Design and Scale

5.12 The siting and scale of the proposed development is guided by the conditions imposed on the outline consent. This includes zoning to distinguish areas of higher density with areas of lower density; the area of higher density is positioned to the north of the existing position of Lakeside Way and the lower density to the south.

This is to achieve stepped development, from undeveloped land to the south increasing the height and density of the development as it moves northwards. Building heights are limited to 3 or 4 storeys, depending on the zone, which is set out in plan C (ii) Rev A of the outline consent.

5.13 The proposed research facility building is located within Zone J, where the maximum building height is 21.538 AOD. The elevation plans illustrate that the building would be 3.1m above the AOD level for Zone J. The additional increase in height arises from the second floor level of the building, which it is noted occupies only part of the building's footprint (350 sqm approx.). The applicant has stated that the building will be dedicated to the design, development safety and communication for robotics and connected autonomous systems, and in order for the building to function appropriately, there are certain requirements the building should provide. These have been discussed above in Section 1 of this report, but in terms of the building's scale, the main catalyst for the height increase above the building heights plan is the specific second floor uses such as the Quant Lab and high altitude platforms (HAP) lab, which are located such that they provide a clear line of sight and access to external testing areas (including the Lake).

5.15 The existing development on the campus has generally complied with the building heights zoning as per plan C (ii) Rev A. The conditions on the outline such as those requiring design briefs and masterplans do allow the design principles of the built development on the campus to adapt and evolve overtime. Moreover, the alignment of the main lake has been altered from its position on the building heights plan and has the effect of dragging the built development further south towards the lake. There is an intention to update the building height plan so it is more closely aligned to development that has already taken place. The building's position within the building heights plan is that whilst it is within Zone J, it is on the boundary with zone I, which allows a maximum building height of 25.850 AOD (the second floor of the proposed building would fall within these parameters (excluding any external plant or stairwell)). The building is also positioned adjacent to the Piazza Learning Centre, which straddles Zone I and the eastern vista, and as a distinctive feature with its domed roof would remain a landmark building.

5.16 Heslington Parish Council has raised an objection in respect to the non-conformity to the building heights plan of the outline consent. However, there are limitations of this plan and how it should be applied given that it does not currently reflect existing built development and the alignment of the Lake. Additionally, it was the intention of the outline consent that buildings do not exceed 3 or 4 storeys, which is achieved. The building is set back from the Lakeside edge and the setting to the lake will be retained. Given the specific function of the building and the requirement of a second floor for the reasons stated, on balance, the non-compliance with the outline building height plan is considered acceptable in this regards. Exception on this specific application does not preclude any other

development that may be brought forward in the future from conforming to the height parameters set out in the outline consent.

5.17 In other respects, the building is designed as a multi-faced building, addressing Lakeside Way to the south, the Piazza learning Centre to the west, the centroid cluster to the north and further academic buildings to the east. This follows the general principles set out in the Cluster 2 Masterplan.

5.18 The building will be constructed primarily in facing buff brick with bronze standing stem cladding to the stairwells, ventilation stacks and control rooms. It is considered that the building would reflect the existing palette of colours. Details in respect to the full palette of external materials can be developed through condition. However, the building is considered to result in a high quality design, reflect the activity inside and is in accordance with the principles established in the masterplan as part of the design brief and in line with the outline consent.

5.19 The smaller storage building will be a flat roof single storey building constructed in facing brick to match the main building. It will have a fairly industrial appearance by the use of four roller shutter doors on the elevation facing into the site. The building will be reflective of other smaller scale structures within the campus, such as the sub-station located to the northern corner.

Landscape

5.20 The existing area of land that the building will be sited is bare ground and rough grassland and there is limited landscaping in this area already. The land comprising the campus was formerly agricultural fields with no special landscape quality. There will be significant hardscaping associated with this development in order to provide external testing area. As such, there are limited opportunities to introduce additional landscaping around the building to complement the wider planting and landscape strategy, however the applicants have set out that they will focus new planting on the peripheries of the site such as the large swath of grassland on the southern side of Lakeside Way. In order to take these opportunities to improve landscaping on this part of the campus, a condition shall require a landscaping plan.

Accessibility and Parking

5.21 Access to East Campus is as existing; bus service, pedestrian and cycle routes via Lakeside Way, accessed from Field Lane to the west as well as vehicular access and bus service, pedestrian and cycle routes from Kimberlow Lane to the east of the campus. From these main routes, there are smaller inter-connecting roads and paths into the site, leading to Piazza Learning Centre and other nearby academic and residential buildings.

5.22 The development itself, as agreed at outline stage, is a car free development. The reserved matters application reinforces this. Further, the building will be occupied by staff and students from existing departments on the University campus. It is therefore anticipated that the increase in vehicular traffic directly attributed to this specific development will be from service and delivery vehicles and visitors.

5.23 The outline consent requires an ongoing undertaking of annual traffic surveys by the University of York. Condition 7 of the outline consent requires reserved matters applications for development in excess of 500 sqm floorspace to be accompanied by a comparison of the predicted traffic flows incorporating the proposed development with the volumes derived from the baseline survey of traffic flows established in the outline condition 6. The applicant advises that compliance with condition 6 is an ongoing requirement with any mitigation measures implemented via the University travel plan. The site is highly accessible for sustainable modes of transport and given that staff and students intending to use the building, it is agreed that the increase in vehicular traffic attributed to this specific building would be limited and any requirement for additional information related to predicted traffic flows would be onerous for this specific development.

5.24 Vehicular access is restricted to servicing and delivery vehicles, with three accessible spaces to be provided for users of the building accessed off Deramore Lane. The submitted plans also include cycle parking storage for 36 bikes with a visitors bike stand for the parking of 14 cycles.

Sustainability

5.25 In line with condition 29 of the outline consent, the application is accompanied by a sustainability statement. This statement demonstrates conformity with the approved sustainability strategy. The strategy states that the University will need to provide a minimum of 10% of energy needs of the campus from renewable energy resources and to achieve a minimum BREEAM rating of 'very good' for all new buildings. I

5.26 In addition, the sustainability statement advise that the detailed design and specification of the building will seek to maximise energy efficiency, incorporating passive design and best practice measures in order to exceed the requirements of Part L of the Building regulations (2013) in line with draft policies CC1 and CC2 of the 2018 Draft Plan.

Archaeology

5.27 An archaeological assessment of the east campus was undertaken as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment for the outline permission. Along with three areas of high archaeological significance (A1-3) there were seven areas of medium significance (B1-7) identified; the building that is the subject of this application lies

largely within one of the medium significant areas, Area B3. As such, the archaeological features and deposits on the application site are undesignated heritage assets. Paragraph 197 of the NPPF requires the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset to be taken into account in determining an application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

5.28 The site is set back from the line of Lawrence Street and has seen a degree of disturbance with the construction of the extant buildings. A watching brief and archaeological monitoring of all ground works and grubbing up of foundations is recommended in order that any archaeological deposits are recorded during the construction programme.

5.29 The Heritage Statement submitted in support of the application addresses archaeology in this location and details that no further work is required in respect to this particular application. The Council's Archaeologist agrees with this assessment and in view of NPPF paragraph 197 it is not considered that there would be any harm to non-designated heritage assets (archaeological features and deposits).

Ecology

5.30 As already referenced, the site comprises of bare ground and rough grassland. It is not considered that there would be any undue impact upon biodiversity habitat arising from the siting of the building and external test areas.

5.31 Concern however is raised as to the proposed use of the Lake for testing of robotics and autonomous systems. The Lake whist man-made has been established for over 10 years and the management practices employed by the University have result in a successful habitat for biodiversity. Its primary purpose is a surface water management, acting as balancing ponds and providing attenuation.

5.32 There are however no conditions on the outline consent restricting the use of the Lake, and as it falls within the allocated area (Plan C (i)) for the Campus the use of the Lake for research purposes would not conflict with condition 5 of the outline consent. However, the University of York's Landscape Management Plan 2013/18 details that angling is not permitted on the lake at Heslington East as well as recreational activities are not permitted on the lake.

5.33 The most westerly part of the Lake provides more significant habitat and biodiversity with the Lake area adjacent to the application site, however any water based activities could have a detrimental impact if not properly managed and controlled. There is no information provided explain how the Lake could be used for testing in connection with this research building and further information has been

requested from the University in this aspect. Members will be updated at the meeting.

Drainage

5.34 There is an existing drainage strategy for the campus, with surface water discharging to the Lake. The Lake was constructed to provide sufficient capacity for Campus East, as developed, and therefore an increase to the attenuation volume of the Lake is not required. A separate foul drainage system, will serve the building which will discharge to the existing foul pumping station to the south of Constantine College. No objections have been raised from the Lead Local Flood Authority, nor Yorkshire Water or the Ouse and Derwent Internal Drainage Board.

Construction Impacts

5.35 The Council's Public Protection officer has requested a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) in order to minimise construction impacts. Conditions imposed on the outline consent require a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). Additionally, conditions at outline stage secured monitoring and the control of noise from specific locations as well as noise from plant/machinery. It is considered that the users of the surrounding academic buildings and residential college's would be adequately protected via these conditions.

Land Contamination

5.36 A condition secured at outline stage requires the developer to report any ground contamination detected during site works and to agree a programme of remediation, if necessary. The applicants during other development work on the campus advise that there is a low potential of encountering previously unidentified contamination, however this will be monitored during the construction process. The conditions imposed on the outline consent are considered adequate in order to ensure that ground conditions are appropriate for the proposed use.

Community Engagement

Heslington parish Council has raised an objection that the University has not engaged with the community as required by the S106 of the outline permission. The S106 agreement requires the University to use all reasonable endeavours to engage with the Community Forum. The University have engaged with the Community Forum via email with a view of presenting the proposals and providing feedback. It is considered that the minimum requirements of engagement with the Community Forum have been met.

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 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 (and subsequently amended). The application will comply with the requirement for the developed footprint not to exceed 23% of the total area. The outline consent also imposed a number of conditions, relating to construction noise, plant and machinery, sustainability requirements whilst also establishing highways and drainage strategies, which this application will conform to.

6.2 There is however conflict with the proposed main safe autonomy building by virtue of the second floor not conforming to the height parameters set out in plan C (ii) of the outline consent. The building has a specific function and this has directed its design. There is general compliance with the design briefs and masterplan that set out the design principles of built development on the campus and further it is noted that the alignment of the main lake has been altered from its position on the building heights approved plan. Taking these into consideration, and that the resultant building would be of high quality design and reflect the activity inside, on balance, the building is of appropriate design and scale in this location and the exceeding of the height parameters is considered acceptable in this respect.

6.3 The application indicates that there will be some water based testing/activities associated with the work undertaken within this research building, however the information has not been provided to ascertain whether this could have a harmful impact upon aquatic and lake edge and habitat and biodiversity. Officers consider that further discussion relating to this could be addressed through appropriate management and the applicant has agreed to address this issue.

6.4 Notwithstanding the above, the overall quality of the proposal and compliance with the outline consent and subsequent design briefs and masterplans, the proposals represent an acceptable form of development.

COMMITTEE TO VISIT

7.0 RECOMMENDATION: Delegated Authority be given to the Assistant Director responsible for Planning and Public Protection to:

- (1) agree and accept such information relating to protecting the biodiversity and habitat of the Lake and Lake's edge as the Assistant Director responsible for Planning and Public Protection considers reasonably necessary and thereafter to approve the application as amended and grant conditional planning permission;
- (2) finalise the recommended conditions as set out in this report including such refinements, amendments, additions and/or deletions as the Assistant

Director responsible for Planning and Public Protection considers reasonably necessary.

1 Notwithstanding what is shown on the approved plans, prior to the construction above foundation level of either the safe autonomy building or the storage building, a detailed landscape scheme shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include the species, density (spacing), and position of trees, shrubs and other plants, seeding mix, sowing rate, ground levels and swales, hard landscaping materials, lighting, litter/recycling bins and street furniture. The proposals shall also include the species mix for the green roof to the building and cycle stands, and the swale planting and wildflower areas. Where appropriate reference shall be made to the relevant sections of the Environmental Site Management Plan and/or the Landscape Management Plan. 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.

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 in accordance with Policy D2 and GI2 of the Publication draft Local Plan 2018 and the NPPF.

2 Notwithstanding the approved plan, prior to the construction above foundation level of either the safe autonomy building or the storage building details and sample panels of the external materials to be used shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved materials.

Reason: In the interest of achieving a visually cohesive appearance to accord with Policy D1 of the Publication draft Local Plan 2018 and the NPPF.

3 The building shall not be occupied until the cycle parking areas and means of enclosure shown on the submitted plans have been provided within the site, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The facilities shall not be used for any purpose other than the parking of cycles.

Reason: To promote use of cycles thereby reducing congestion on the adjacent roads and in the interests of the amenity of neighbours.

8.0 INFORMATIVES:

Notes to Applicant

1. In considering the application, the Local Planning Authority has implemented the requirements set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 38) in seeking solutions to problems identified during the processing of the application. The Local Planning Authority took the following steps in order to achieve a positive outcome:

- negotiation and discussion regarding the use of the Lake for research purposes

Contact details:

Case Officer: Lindsay Jenkins

Tel No: 01904 554575