

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee: Planning Committee **Ward:** Heslington
Date: 29 October 2009 **Parish:** Heslington Parish Council

Reference: 09/01574/REMM
Application at: Proposed University Campus Lying Between Field Lane And Low Lane A64 Trunk Road And Hull Road York
For: Landscaping to Kimberlow Hill, Central Lake and Eastern Mounding of Heslington East Campus
By: University Of York
Application Type: Major Reserved Matters Application (13w)
Target Date: 24 November 2009

1.0 PROPOSAL

1.1 This is a Reserved Matters application to landscape the eastern part of the campus, i.e. the area east of the recently constructed Field Lane roundabout. The planting works mainly comprise: (1) blocks of woodland along the flanks and crest of Kimberlow Hill; (2) woodland planting adjacent to the A64; (3) reed beds and marginal planting along the lake fringes; (4) wetland areas and screen planting along the boundary with Low Lane; and (5) hay meadow areas between the lake and the movement spine and adjacent to the woodland areas.

1.2 The boundaries of the site largely match the boundaries of planning application 08/02543/REMM for the construction of the central lake and the raising of Kimberlow Hill. On 25 June members resolved to approve the application subject to drainage details being delegated to officers.

1.3 In August 2008 reserved matters consent was granted for the landscaping of the western part of the site (08/01136/REMM).

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

CYNE7
Habitat protection and creation

CYED9
University of York New Campus

CYT4
Cycle parking standards

3.0 CONSULTATIONS

3.1 Internal

Highway Network Management - No highway implications.

Environment, Conservation, Sustainable Development (Landscape) - The design and arrangement of planting adheres to the principles of the landscape masterplan and landscape design guidelines. Minor queries about maintenance regimes will hopefully be answered in time for a committee update. They do not affect the layout of the scheme, nor the planting types that are specified, though there may be some alterations to the mix of species.

Structures and Drainage - The development is in low risk Flood Zone 1 and should not suffer from river flooding. No objections to the development but the scheme should not begin until the application for the construction of the central lake and raising of Kimberlow Hill (08/02543/REMM) has been formally approved.

3.2 External

Heslington Forum including Heslington Parish Council - The university gave a presentation to the forum on 4 February 2008. Various comments on the proposals were made by forum members and were considered by the university. Since then the forum has been kept updated on progress. No formal representation on the application has been made to the council by Heslington Parish Council or by any other member organisation of the forum.

Natural England - No comments.

Environment Agency - No objections.

York Natural Environment Panel (YNEP) - The choice of some species in the woodland mixes appear to be arbitrary e.g. sea buckthorn is more commonly a plant associated with sand dunes as opposed to wet woodland. A species such as Myrica gale (Bog myrtle) would be a suitable selection for this area. Greater effort should be made to study and replicate existing habitats around York (e.g. Askham Bog, Strensall Common) choosing the appropriate species based on the relevant ground conditions (soil type, moisture content, adjacent features, etc).

North Yorkshire Police - No comments.

Public Consultation - The consultation period expired on 9 October 2009. No responses have been received

4.0 APPRAISAL

4.1 Key Issues:-

- Principle of the Use
- Landscape Amenity
- Archaeology
- Drainage
- Movement and Access.

RELEVANT LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

4.2 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.

4.3 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.

4.4 The Draft Local Plan including the 4th set of changes was approved in April 2005. 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.

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

4.6 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.

4.7 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.

4.8 NE7 - Development proposals should retain and, where possible, enhance important natural habitats.

4.9 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.

4.10 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.

THE APPLICATION SITE

4.11 The site of the outline consent comprises 116ha of farmland between Field Lane/Hull Road and Low Lane. The site is being developed as a university campus. 65ha of the site is allocated for development, divided into 15 zones. Most of the remainder of the site will be landscaped. The site slopes down gradually from north to south.

4.12 The site of the current application comprises a swathe of land between the developable area of the new campus and the northern, eastern and southern boundaries of the site. The site abuts, to the east, Grimston Bar and the A64.

PRINCIPLE OF THE USE

4.13 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. The proposals accord 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. The principle of the proposed use is therefore acceptable.

LANDSCAPE AMENITY

4.14 The proposals include a variety of landscape types, which will provide an attractive setting for the campus. Tree planting along the boundaries will maintain, as far as possible, the rural character of the area and provide an attractive screen from outside the site. The lake and informal planting to the south will provide a gradual transition between the campus and the open countryside. Some details can be dealt with as conditions of approval.

4.15 The design and arrangement of the planting adheres to the principles of the landscape master plan and landscape design guidelines. Officers have some minor queries about the maintenance regimes, which hopefully will be answered in time for the committee to be updated at the meeting. The queries do not affect the layout of the scheme, nor the planting types that are specified, though there may be some alterations to the mix of species.

4.16 In response to YNEP's comments, the choice of species for the woodland blocks on Kimberlow Hill is aimed at ultimately creating an Oak woodland that will be similar to the type specified and agreed in the Environmental Site Management Plan. This is appropriate for the locality. The mix of species around the lake is considered to be suitable. The developing ground flora throughout the site will be monitored over the initial years of establishment. Additional field species may be introduced at a later date.

ECOLOGY AND BIO-DIVERSITY

4.17 The proposals will provide a range of habitats to encourage a suitable variety of flora and fauna. Existing trees and hedges will be kept where possible. Grassland and woodland planting will predominate. This will contrast with the mix of scrapes, wetland habitat and marginal planting around the lake.

4.18 The campus development is likely to result in some loss of species on the site. The inspector's report identifies this loss but accepts that there will be substantial habitat gains in the long term, implying that this is satisfactory compensation (which is acceptable in terms of PPS9). The approved environmental site management plan (ESMP) provides a basis for the implementation and management of measures to enhance species and habitats.

ARCHAEOLOGY

4.19 An archaeological investigation has identified part of the south flank of Kimberlow Hill as an area of archaeological significance, which will be excavated. In view of this the area has not been included in the planting proposals. A reserved matters application for the landscaping of this flank of Kimberlow Hill will be submitted when the context for the detailed design work has been resolved.

DRAINAGE

4.20 The site is in flood zone 1 and should not suffer from river flooding. Surface water from the campus will be drained by gravity via proprietary and open channels (swales) to the lake within the site of the current application. Surface water from the campus will be stored in the central part of the lake and released at agricultural rates into local watercourses. On 25th June members resolved to approve the Reserved Matters application for the central lake (08/02543/REMM) subject to drainage details being delegated to officers. However, sufficient details have still not been provided to show that surface water will be properly attenuated. This is despite the construction of the central lake being well underway. Nor have the temporary drainage arrangements been approved. Consequently the decision notice for the central lake has still not been issued. Officers are continuing to negotiate with the University to secure the last of the required details. Officers recommend that, if Members are minded to approve the current application, the landscape works should not begin until the application for the construction of the central lake and raising of Kimberlow Hill (08/02543/REMM) has been formally approved.

MOVEMENT AND ACCESS

4.21 The application includes the eastern section of a new recreational pedestrian/cycle route from Heslington Village to Grimston Bar. It will link to the western section, between Field Lane roundabout and Heslington village, approved as part of the western landscaping scheme. Further links will be provided between the movement spine and the lake. Construction details of all roads, footpaths and cycleways within the new campus will need to be approved under Condition 25 of the outline consent. Nevertheless, provision of the recreational route should be made a condition of the current application.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The application is for a large part of the landscaped setting of the new campus. 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 will provide an attractive setting for the eastern section of the campus and mitigate to a large extent the visual impact of the campus development.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION: Approve

1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the approved plans numbered DD110317.L.401/L, DD110317.P.231/E, DD110317.P.220/E, DD110317.P.221/E, DD110317.P.222/E, DD110317.P.223/E, DD110317.P.224/E, DD110317.P.225/E, DD110317.P.226/E, DD110317.P.227/E, DD110317.P.228/E, DD110317.P.229/E, DD110317.P.230/D, DD110317.P.232, DD110317.P.233 and DD110317.P.235 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.

2 No development shall take place until management details, specific to the application site, have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority as an addendum to the approved 'Environmental Site Management Plan'. The details shall include: species composition; timing of application of seed mixes; cutting regime and machinery to be used; and weed control.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed habitat types are properly implemented and maintained.

3 Within three months of commencement of development details (which shall be in accordance with the approved Landscape Design Guidelines and the Landscape Management Plan) of the items listed below shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details:

- a. Hard surface materials
- b. Street furniture (benches).

Reason: So that the Local Planning Authority may be satisfied with the finished appearance of the development.

4 Prior to the seeding of the hay meadow details of the recreational cycleway/footpath between Grimston Bar and the main access into the campus from Deramore Drive shall be submitted, approved, implemented and the cycleway/footpath made available for use to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of sustainable transport and the amenity of the parkland setting.

5 Development shall not begin until the planning application for the construction of the central lake and the raising of Kimberlow Hill (ref. 08/02543/REMM) has been formally approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the proper drainage of the site.

7.0 INFORMATIVES:

Notes to Applicant

1. 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 the principle of the use, landscape amenity, bio-diversity, sustainable transport and drainage. As such the proposal complies with policies ED9, GP1, GP9, NE7, T4, GP4a and GP15A of the City of York Local Plan Deposit Draft.

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