

## COMMITTEE REPORT

**Date:** 15 May 2014  
**Team:** Major and Commercial Team  
**Ward:** Heslington  
**Parish:** Heslington Parish Council

**Reference:** 14/00633/REMM  
**Application at:** Proposed University Campus Lying Between Field Lane And Low Lane A64 Trunk Road And Hull Road York  
**For:** Reserved matters application for approval of a three-storey education, social and catering building (Piazza Learning Centre) following outline permissions 04/01700/OUT and 08/00005/OUT  
**By:** University Of York  
**Application Type:** Major Reserved Matters Application (13w)  
**Target Date:** 18 June 2014  
**Recommendation:** Approve

### 1.0 PROPOSAL

1.1 Reserved matters application for the erection of a 3-storey, detached, university building, to be known as the Piazza Learning Centre, at Heslington East campus. The campus was granted outline planning permission by the Secretary of State in June 2007 (04/01700/OUT) and varied in 2008 (08/00005/OUT). The proposals would provide teaching accommodation (including a 350-seat lecture theatre), library, study areas, 200-seat restaurant and social space. The building footprint would be 2450sqm and total floorspace would be 6238sqm. The matters submitted for consideration are appearance, landscaping, layout and scale.

1.2 The application is the result of pre-application discussions with officers. It was initially submitted as a teaching venture in partnership with a private provider. The University has since decided not to proceed with the venture on the precise model set out in the planning application. Nevertheless, the proposed works and the description of development have not changed.

1.3 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 Assessment Regulations 2011.

## **2.0 POLICY CONTEXT**

### 2.1 Development Plan Allocation:

City Boundary GMS Constraints: York City Boundary 0001

DC Area Teams GMS Constraints: 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

## **3.0 CONSULTATIONS**

### INTERNAL

#### Design, Conservation and Sustainable Development (Design)

3.1 Supports the site layout, building design and massing. There is a clear hierarchy of approach routes to which the ground floor functions respond well. The landscape terrace and swales in front of the building help buffer it from the very-public piazza. The elevational treatment is interesting and refined, all harmonised under a massive, gently undulating roof. The approved masterplan for Cluster 2 should be amended to show the narrowing of the southern end of the Central Vista.

#### Design, Conservation and Sustainable Development (Landscape)

3.2 The one mature Oak tree within the site boundary is attractive and its retention within the scheme is welcome. It is essential that it is adequately protected during construction. Whilst the building encroaches into the Central Vista the building acts as a focal point in itself and the retained width of the vista would be substantial. The central vista and the lake are very broad in scale, and to a degree exposed to the elements, therefore a reasonable closing-in of the central piazza provides a subtle contrast to this. The semi-intensive green roof to the cycle stands and main theatre is welcome. Whilst the central Oak is to be the large highlight tree, it would be appropriate to include occasional larger species trees around the courtyard given the scale of the building. Add conditions requiring submission of a landscape scheme, tree protection method statement and lighting.

### Flood Risk Management

3.3 No objections. Add standard drainage condition.

### Environmental Protection Unit

3.4 No objections. Environmental issues are covered by various conditions of the outline consent.

## EXTERNAL

### Heslington Forum including Heslington Parish Council

3.5 In accordance with the established protocol the proposals were presented to the community forum on 24 March 2014. No formal representations have been made by forum organisations.

### Police Architectural Liaison

3.6 No issues or concerns.

### Public Consultation

3.7 The consultation period expired on 22 April 2014. No representations have been received.

## **4.0 APPRAISAL**

### 4.1 KEY ISSUES

- Principle of the Use
- Scale and Appearance
- Landscape
- Movement and Access
- Sustainability
- Drainage
- Cumulative Development

## THE APPLICATION SITE

4.2 The site of the outline consent comprises 116ha of former 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. Most of the remainder of the site is being landscaped. The site slopes down gradually from north to south.

4.3 The site of the current proposal lies within Cluster 2 and is at the south-east corner of the Central Vista. To the north is Langwith College. To the west is the Central Vista with the Hub Building beyond. To the south is movement spine (Lakeside Way). The site is currently undeveloped and largely devoid of vegetation except for a mature Oak tree at its centre.

## POLICY CONTEXT

4.4 National planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The essence of the framework is the presumption in favour of sustainable development which, for decision-taking, means approving without delay development proposals that accord with the development plan. Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, planning permission should be granted unless: (1) any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the framework taken as a whole; or (2) specific policies in the framework indicate development should be restricted (paragraph 14). Local planning authorities should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible and work with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area (paragraph 187).

4.5 The National Planning Policy Framework states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people (paragraph 56). Planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative (paragraph 60). Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions (paragraph 64).

4.6 The City of York Development Control Local Plan was approved for development control purposes in April 2005. Its policies are material considerations although it is considered that their weight is limited except where in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework. Relevant local plan policies are listed in section 2.2 of the report.

## PRINCIPLE OF THE USE

4.7 The matters submitted for consideration here are the appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of the development. 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 proposal conforms with the land use plan C(i) approved as part of the outline consent. It also conforms with the approved masterplan for the campus, except that the building would project into the piazza at the southern end of the Central Vista (discussed below). The masterplan should be revised to incorporate the change. Such changes were expected to be needed from time to time when outline planning permission was granted by the Secretary of State in 2007.

## SCALE AND APPEARANCE

4.8 The building would occupy a landmark position at the heart of the campus. At an appropriate distance it would wrap around the mature Oak tree in the centre of the site, and have a curved roof. The main elevations would be to the south and west and project into the piazza at the southern end of the Central Vista. The lecture theatre would be oval-shaped and from the outside of the building would be a distinctive feature facing the Hub building on the opposite side of the piazza. Main materials would comprise large areas of glazing, copper or brass panelling, hardwood framing and brickwork.

4.9 The scale, design and appearance are in keeping with the adjacent buildings and the masterplan for the campus. Whilst the new building would encroach part-way into the original width of Central Vista, the scale of the nearby open spaces (vista, hub basin, piazza and lake) are such that the partial closing-in of views from the north would not be detrimental to the character of the area. A condition could be attached to prevent the attractive curve of the roof being diminished by rooftop plant and equipment. Samples of all external materials should be made a further condition of approval.

## LANDSCAPE

4.10 The building's main concourse would wrap around the south-west side of the building and be surfaced in hardwood decking. It would contain outdoor seating and incorporate a stepped lawn terrace. The piazza would be surfaced in resin bound gravel up to the boundary of the Hub building. The Oak tree at the rear of the building would be the central feature of a circular lawn with decking and a small feature garden. The garden would be surrounded by clusters of native woodland with ornamental and wildflower planting along the periphery. The proposals are in keeping with the building's surroundings and the approved landscape masterplan for the campus.

4.11 Due to the importance of the Oak tree to the building and courtyard design, protection measures should be made a condition of approval, including an instruction not to strip the soil within the root protection area.

4.12 In previous iterations of the master plan, the grand central vista broadens out towards the hub basin and lake, providing wide views of the lake and the landscape beyond. The current application pinches the end vista by bringing the proposed building forward, marked in particular by the oval theatre feature, which faces the Hub building. Whilst this reduces the expansive width at the end of the vista as viewed from further north, it acts as a focal point in itself and still retains a substantial width between the two buildings, which in effect frame the view towards the lake. Once in the lower piazza the view opens out again across the lake. The central vista and the lake are very broad in scale, and to a degree exposed to the elements, therefore a reasonable closing-in of the central piazza provides a subtle

contrast to this. The courtyard garden to the rear is a more intimate space, specific to the learning centre.

## MOVEMENT AND ACCESS

4.13 Vehicular access to the site would be restricted to service traffic, emergency vehicles and students with a disabled parking permit. Three disabled spaces would be provided, to the west of the building. Service traffic would access the building from the east. The building would be easily accessible by public transport along Lakeside Way and at the transport interchange. 136 secure cycle parking spaces would be provided in two cycle roundels to the east of the building. This equates to one space for every three members of staff and one space for every 10 students/visitors. Pedestrian and cycle routes would link to other routes already constructed on the campus.

## SUSTAINABILITY

4.14 As a minimum, developments of this scale are required to achieve at least a 'very good' BREEAM rating and for at least 10% of energy demand to come from renewable sources. The applicant has committed to achieving these requirements. Condition could be attached to secure the BREAMM rating.

## DRAINAGE

4.15 The surface water drainage routes and design follow the principles established for clusters 1 and 2. Water from the building would drain via swales into the wider drainage network for Heslington East before discharging into the lake to the south of the site. Details could be sought as a condition of approval.

## CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT

4.16 Condition 4 of the outline consent restricts the developed footprint (including buildings car parks and access roads) to 23% of the allocated area. The cumulative total to date, including the Learning Centre and previously-approved applications, is 10.98% of the allocated area.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The Learning Centre is intended to be one of the principal buildings of Cluster 2 on one of the most prominent sites of the campus. The proposal complies with the National Planning Policy Framework and policies of the local plan, particularly GP1 (Design)n GP4A (Sustainability) and ED9 (New campus at Heslington East).

## **6.0 RECOMMENDATION:** Approve

1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the approved plans numbered PL(00)AP\_001, PL(00)AP\_003, PL(00)AP\_004, PL(20)AP\_001, PL(20)AP\_002, PL(20)AP\_003, PL(20)AP\_004, PL(20)AE\_001, PL(20)AE\_002, PL(20)AE\_003, PL(20)AE\_004.

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

2 Notwithstanding the approved plans details and samples of external materials to be used shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority within three months of commencement of the development. The development shall be carried out using the approved materials.

Reason: So as to achieve a visually cohesive appearance.

3 Within 3 months of commencement plans showing detailed sections through external wall treatments shall be submitted for the written approval of the local planning authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted details.

Reason: In the interests of design and the external appearance of the building.

4 Within three months of the commencement of development, a detailed landscape scheme shall be submitted for the written approval of 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.

5 Before the commencement of development, including the importing of materials, excavations and or utility works, a method statement regarding protection

measures for the existing Oak tree shown to be retained on the approved drawings shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This statement shall include details and locations of protective fencing, phasing of works, site access during development operations, type of construction machinery/vehicles to be used, (including delivery and collection lorries and arrangements for loading/off-loading), parking arrangements for site vehicles and storage of materials, location of marketing cabin. It shall also include an instruction not to strip the soil within the root protection area of the tree.

Reason: To protect the existing Oak tree on the site as it is integral to the amenity of the development.

6 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. 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.

7 Within three months of commencement of the development details of foul and surface water drainage works shall be submitted for the written approval of the Local Planning Authority and carried out in accordance with these approved details.

Reason: So that the Local Planning Authority may be satisfied with these details for the proper drainage of the site.

8 No mechanical, electrical, telecommunications or other plant, equipment or apparatus shall be installed on the roof of the building hereby approved without the prior written consent of the local planning authority.

Reason: In the interests of the design and external appearance of the building.

9 The developer shall submit a BREEAM assessment after construction, at a time to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and a completion assessment when issued by the BRE. The assessments shall confirm a minimum rating of 'Very Good'.

Reason - To ensure the development complies with the principles of sustainable development

10 10% of the energy requirements of the development hereby approved shall be provided from renewable energy resources on land under the control of the applicant, in accordance with the Progress Report on the Renewables Strategy submitted with the application. The development shall not be occupied until works have been carried out in accordance with the submitted report, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Not later than 12 months after the



building has first been brought into use the applicant shall submit an Energy Statement to the Local Planning Authority, which details the percentage of the building's energy consumption that has been derived from renewable sources. Thereafter the Energy Statement shall be submitted on an annual basis unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority

Reason: In the interests of sustainable development.

## **7.0 INFORMATIVES:**

### **Notes to Applicant**

#### **1. STATEMENT OF THE COUNCIL'S POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE APPROACH**

In considering the application, the Local Planning Authority has implemented the requirements set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187) in seeking solutions to problems identified during the processing of the application. The Local Planning Authority took the following steps in order to achieve an acceptable outcome: Advised the applicant on the proposal prior to the application being submitted and attached appropriate conditions to the planning permission.

#### **Contact details:**

**Author:** Kevin O'Connell Development Management Officer

**Tel No:** 01904 552830