

The application is for the creation of a temporary car park for up to 400 vehicles related to the wider accommodation and improvement project that is the subject of the three applications earlier on this agenda relating to Barnes, Horwood and Lindsay Halls (16/01014/FUL, 16/01016/FUL and 16/01015/FUL).

The site lies within an area which on the Local Development Framework Proposals Map is excluded from the Green Belt but lies within an Area of Landscape Maintenance. The site is covered by Policy area E8 (on development at Keele University and Keele Science Park).

The 13 week period for the determination of this application expires on the 13th April 2017.

RECOMMENDATION

Subject to clarification being received as to the specific proposal to be considered PERMIT, subject to conditions relating to the following matters

- **Approved plans**
- **Five year temporary period linked to construction programme for Horwood, Barnes and Lindsay Hall schemes**
- **Lighting scheme to be in accordance with submitted details.**
- **Provision of access, parking, and turning areas, with parking spaces delineated, prior to car park being brought into use.**
- **Prior approval and implementation of a planting scheme**
- **Measures to protect the existing shrub planting on the eastern side of the site during construction in accordance with details to be agreed.**
- **Implementation of the ecological measures as recommended in the Ecological Statement**

Reason for Recommendation

Whilst the proposal will result in the loss of land that has been identified for the Science Park development, its use is associated with the University and as such there is broad policy support for the granting of planning permission on a temporary basis. No adverse impacts of the development have been identified.

Statement as to how the Local Planning Authority has worked in a positive and proactive manner in dealing with the planning application

The development is considered to be a sustainable form of development and complies with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Key Issues

- 1.1 Full planning permission is sought for the formation of a temporary car park for up to 400 vehicles – three different parking arrangements having been shown on the submitted plans with the lowest number being 330) on a plot forming part of the site that was granted outline planning permission for buildings academic functions; staff and student residences; and employment uses directly related to or complementary to the University's core activities (05/01146/OUT). That same permission granted full planning permission for various engineering works that include the creation by cut and fill of levelled plots, some hard and soft landscaping and the creation of the road network serving these plots. Those works were all undertaken, although the outline planning permission is no longer capable of being enjoyed, the period of time within which applications for the approval of the reserved matters of the outline planning permission having now expired.

- 1.2 The site lies within an area which on the Local Development Framework Proposals Map is excluded from the Green Belt, and lies within an Area of Landscape Maintenance. The site is covered by Policy E8 (on development at Keele University and Keele Science Park).
- 1.3 Whilst the site lies close to a number of ponds the site has been assessed as providing very limited foraging/terrestrial habitat for Great Crested Newts with far richer and more suitable habitats present around the ponds and in the immediate local area. Additionally no Great Crested Newts were recorded in any of the ponds over the course of the surveys that were undertaken. In the absence of any other identified and notable flora and fauna, and subject to the implementation of the mitigation measures identified in the submitted Ecological Statement, including measures to prevent pollution from effecting the ponds during construction and the removal of suitable nesting habitat being completed outside of the nesting period (March to July inclusive), the proposal does not give rise to any ecological concerns.
- 1.4 The main issues for consideration in the determination of this application are therefore:-
- Is the principle of the development acceptable?
 - Is the location and appearance of the proposed development acceptable, including in the wider landscape context?
 - Is the proposal acceptable in terms of its impact on highway safety and the level of car parking proposed?

2. Is the principle of the development on the site acceptable?

- 2.1 The proposal involves the formation of a temporary car park for use by both staff and students for a period of five years. The parking proposed will replace the existing parking that will be lost or become unavailable during the period of time that the developments at Barnes, Horwood and Lindsay Halls are being carried out. Reference to the provision of this car park is set out in the Parking Plan that has been submitted in support of the planning applications relating to those developments.
- 2.2 The application site lies within the University campus which is excluded from the Green Belt within the rural area. Core Spatial Strategy (CSS) Policy ASP6 states that investment in Keele University and Science Park will be fostered to help strengthen the local knowledge and skills base and facilitate the growth and competitiveness of high value business development, thereby increasing local job opportunities in these sectors. Policy E8 of the Local Plan identifies the site as forming part of an area where development at Keele University and Keele Science Park will be permitted so long as it is limited to one or more of the following uses;
- i) Academic functions
 - ii) Staff and student residences
 - iii) Employment uses directly related to or complementary to the University's core activities.
 - iv) Class B1 uses directly related to the university's functional activities (excluding manufacturing or storage of large tonnages or mass production of goods).
- 2.4 The proposed car park is not, in itself, development relating to any of the uses identified within Policy E8. In addition it can't be said that it will help to strengthen the local knowledge and skills base and facilitate the growth and competitiveness of high value business development at Keele University and Science Park that is supported by policy ASP6. The proposed car parking is however, as indicated above, associated with the developments at Barnes, Horwood, and Lindsay Halls primarily involving the provision of modern student accommodation to replace the existing, and increase the supply of, accommodation on these sites. It is therefore considered that the proposal is broadly supported by the Development Plan.
- 2.5 The plot was identified for development as part of the Science Park in the outline planning permission granted under reference 05/01146/OUT and whilst that development is no longer capable of being implemented such a development remains acceptable in principle and in accordance with the current Development Plan. Whilst it has to be acknowledged that the proposal would prevent such development taking place on this plot it also needs to be recognised that the application seeks only a temporary, five year, permission and as such the

site would become available at a later date. In addition it should be noted that there remains a number of undeveloped plots on the Home Farm site that could accommodate development and as such would not give rise to any shortfall in such land in the short to medium term. Overall it is considered that the loss of an employment site as would arise from this development would not be unacceptable for the temporary period proposed and as indicated above benefits from some policy support in the Development Plan as it is associated with Keele University.

- 2.6 On the basis of all of the above, it is considered that the principle of the development should be supported, although the issue of the amount of parking on the University campus also needs to be addressed and is below.

3. Is the location and design of the proposed development acceptable, including in the wider landscape context?

- 3.1 The site is within an Area of Landscape Maintenance as designated on the Local Development Framework Proposals Map and Policy N19 of the Local Plan states that within these areas it will be necessary to demonstrate that development will not erode the character or harm the quality of the landscape. This policy is considered to be consistent with the NPPF which states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes.
- 3.2 The application site is an already formed plot associated with the Home Farm development. It does not contain any landscape features that would be lost as a result of the development and the proposed car park would be seen in the context of the development that has/is taking place on the Home Farm wider site and amongst other undeveloped plots. In this context the introduction of a car park is not considered to be visually unacceptable.
- 3.3 Given the intention that the car park will be on site for a five year period it is appropriate that suitable landscaping is undertaken around its periphery to soften its appearance particularly as towards the southern end it is somewhat elevated above the level of the adjoining roads. The submitted plans do show the intention to undertake shrub planting around all sides and subject to the approval of a suitable detailed planting proposals it is considered that such landscaping as proposed is acceptable. Maintaining as much as possible of the area available for landscaping will mean that the total number of spaces is unlikely to exceed 387.
- 3.4 There is existing shrub planting on the eastern boundary of the plot shown to be retained. This should be protected during construction and this can be secured through a condition of planning permission.
- 3.5 Overall it is not considered that there would be any significant adverse impact on the character and appearance of the wider campus, or on the even wider landscape impact of the University.

4. Is the proposal acceptable in terms of its impact on highway safety and the level of car parking proposed?

- 4.1 As indicated above the site forms part of the Home Farm development and the highway infrastructure has already been implemented following the consideration and conclusion that it is acceptable in highway safety terms for the permitted development on the Home Farm site. The proposed use of the plot as car park is unlikely to result in additional vehicular movements, taken into consideration with those expected to arise from the permitted Home Farm development, and as such it can be concluded that the existing highway network to and from the site is acceptable.
- 4.2 The total number of existing number of car parking spaces within application sites for the three student accommodation proposals is 567. The phased car parking strategy that has been submitted in support of the applications for the student accommodation sets out, during the entire construction phase, the number of car parking spaces that would be lost and those that would be re-provided during the course of those developments. Members' attention is drawn to your Officer's conclusion (in paragraph 5.9 of the Barnes report (16/01014/FUL) that a temporary car park of 387 spaces would provide sufficient car parking provision during this construction period.

- 4.3 The Highway Authority in its response to this application has requested the imposition of a condition requiring that this car park should be brought into use prior to the commencement of the student accommodation developments. Given that the car park proposal is to provide parking temporarily lost during the construction of such developments it is considered that such a requirement is justified, however it would be more appropriate that such a condition is imposed on any planning permission for the student accommodation.
- 4.4 Given the lack of any substantive evidence that there is significant underprovision of spaces at the University, there is a risk that provision of these additional spaces other than as temporary spaces during the construction project could undermine the positive approach of the University towards the encouragement of other more sustainable modes of travel than the private motor car, which has significant implications not only in terms of parking provision but also in terms of traffic generation affecting the local highway network as members will no doubt themselves have noted during term time. On this basis, and taking into account that in the long term there could be an issue of a loss of land that would otherwise be available for employment development, it is considered that, at this stage, any permission for the car park should only be on a temporary basis.

APPENDIX

Policies and proposals in the approved development plan relevant to this decision:-

[Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy \(CSS\) 2006-2026](#)

Policy ASP6	Rural Area Spatial Policy
Policy CSP1	Design Quality
Policy CSP3	Sustainability and Climate Change
Policy CSP4	Natural Assets

[Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan \(NLP\) 2011](#)

Policy E8	Keele University and Keele Science Park
Policy N3	Development and Nature Conservation – Protection and Enhancement Measures
Policy N4	Development and Nature Conservation – Use of Local Species
Policy N17	Landscape Character – General Considerations
Policy N19	Landscape Maintenance Areas
Policy T16	Development – General Parking Requirements

Other Material Considerations include:

National Planning Policy

[National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\) \(2012\)](#)

[Planning Practice Guidance \(March 2014\)](#)

Relevant Planning History

- 05/01146/OUT (A) Full planning permission for engineering operations including plateau formation, earthworks, layout of road network, cyclepaths and footpaths, drainage works and other ancillary works
(B) Outline planning permission for development for (a) academic function's; (b) staff and student residences; (c) employment uses directly related to or complementary to the University's core activities including conference, training, retail and leisure – for use of students, staff conference delegates and their visitors and in the case of leisure facilities for the wider community; (d) Class B1 uses directly related to the University's functional activities but excluding manufacturing or storage of large tonnages or mass production of goods - Approved

Views of Consultees

The **Environmental Health Division** has no objections subject to the lighting scheme being in accordance with the submitted details.

The **Landscape Development Section** has no objections subject to the existing planting on the eastern boundary being protected for the duration of the construction works and submission of detailed planting proposals due to concerns that the proposed planting appears to be insufficient to adequately fill the planting beds.

The **Local Lead Flood Authority** has no objections.

The **Highway Authority** has no objections to the proposal subject to the imposition of conditions requiring that the car park is not brought into use until the access, parking and turning areas have been provided, with car parking spaces clearly delineated, and that the car park is fully completed prior to the commencement of the redevelopment of the Barnes, Horwood and Lindsay Hall redevelopment proposals.

Keele Parish Council supports the proposal.

Representations

None received

Applicant's/Agent's submission

The application is accompanied by the following documents:

- Ecological Statement
- SuDS Drainage Operations and Maintenance Manual
- Details of Porous Paving and Timber Sleepers
- External Lighting Report
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy

All of these documents are available for inspection at the Guildhall and as associated documents to the application in the Planning Section of the Council's website via the following link <http://publicaccess.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/online-applications/PLAN/17/00012/FUL>

Background papers

Planning files referred to

Planning Documents referred to

Date report prepared

7th March 2017