

The application is for full planning permission for the construction of a building to be used as an Innovation and Leadership Facility. The application site comprises approximately 0.7ha of land.

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 site lies outside of the Grade II Registered Parkland and Garden of Special Historic Interest at Keele Hall. It adjoins Home Farm which is on the Register of Locally Important Buildings and Structures.

The 13 week period for the determination of this application expires on the 8th June 2017.

RECOMMENDATION

A) Subject to the applicant then entering into a Section 106 obligation by 7th June 2017 to secure financial contributions towards travel plan monitoring (£2,200) (unless the applicant agrees to extend the statutory period for the determination of the application to 8th July 2017 in which case the date for the applicant to enter into the obligation would be 7th July 2017)

PERMIT subject to conditions relating to the following:-

- 1. Time limit.**
- 2. Approved drawings.**
- 3. Materials.**
- 4. Provision of parking, servicing and turning areas prior to the building being brought into use in accordance with the approved plans.**
- 5. Provision of cycle parking prior to the building being brought into use in accordance with the approved plans.**
- 6. Travel Plan**
- 7. Landscaping details.**
- 8. Prior approval and implementation of a surface water drainage scheme**
- 9. Prior approval and implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan**
- 10. Noise assessment for ventilation, extraction systems and other plant.**
- 11. Prior approval and implementation of appropriate ground gas mitigation measures**

B) Should the above Section 106 obligation not be secured within the above period, that the Head of Planning be given delegated authority to refuse the application on the grounds that without such matters being secured the development would fail to secure measures to ensure that the development achieves sustainable development outcomes, or, if he considers it appropriate, to extend the period of time within which the obligation can be secured.

Reason for Recommendation

The development is considered to be acceptable in principle and in accordance with the Development Plan. The design of the new building is considered to represent high quality attractive development which will be a focal point on the campus for scientific study and business development. Parking is to be managed by the University in a campus wide approach taking into account other agreed developments.

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

The proposal is considered to be a sustainable form of development in compliance with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework and no amendments were considered necessary.

Key Issues

1.1 Full planning permission is sought for the construction of a new building (the Mercia Centre for Innovation and Leadership MCIL) on a plot (known as Plot 2) forming part of a wider site (known as Phase 3) that was granted outline planning permission for buildings accommodating 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 proposed building is to have three main components:

- Keele Management School
- Incubator space for new businesses
- Entrepreneurial space for business interactions, engagement, knowledge transfer and collaboration.

1.3 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 site lies outside of the Grade II Registered Parkland and Garden of Special Historic Interest at Keele Hall. It adjoins Home Farm which is on the Register of Locally Important Buildings and Structures

1.4 The main issues for consideration in the determination of this application are:-

- Is the principle of the development acceptable?
- Is the location and design 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 and what planning obligations, if any, are considered necessary and lawful?

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

2.1 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. Saved 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).

2.2 The proposed development involves academic functions, the Management School, and employment uses which are complimentary to the Management School and as such it is considered that the proposal is in full accordance with saved policy E8. In addition 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. The proposal is consistent with that planning permission.

2.3 On the basis of all of the above, it is considered that the principle of the development should be supported.

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

3.1 Plot 2, the application site, is prominent in views from the main vehicular entrance into the University located to the south of the primary route into the site of 05/01146/OUT. The site is triangular in shape and has a significant level change across it of 5m. A split level building is proposed which has a maximum storey height of three storeys and as viewed from the main entrance to the University is two storeys in height. Details of the height of the building are provided below.

3.2 The building has been designed to be a gateway 'beacon' building on the approach to the University campus. There are two main entry points into the building, one on the North West corner that presents itself towards the first roundabout on the University's main entrance and towards the Home Farm Sustainability Hub building at the upper ground level. The second is on the southern corner at the lower ground level.

3.3 The building has been designed with an angular parapet roof to hide rooftop plant. The building is to be constructed primarily in Staffordshire Blue brick, with some timber cladding at the two entrances.

3.4 The outline planning permission 05/01146/OUT was supported by Design Guidance and a condition of the permission specified that any reserved matters shall comply with that Design Guidance. Whilst the permission, as already indicated, is no longer capable of being implemented it is considered such guidance remains applicable in the absence of any material change in site circumstances.

3.5 The Guidance states that development within Zone A, which is where the application site is located, should be a maximum of 9.5m to eaves height and 13.5m to roof apexes. It states that this guidance may be relaxed for unique situations such as responding to an important junction or activity node, but careful urban design justification and design response will be required. In addition it indicates that the development on plot 2 should have a clear relationship with the Home Farm setting while also creating a sense of arrival to the Phase 3 site.

3.6 As indicated above the proposed building has a parapet roof, and as such does not have eaves or a roof apex. The maximum height of the building as measured from the lower ground level is 16.3m but is approximately 11.5m where it faces the main vehicular entrance. The building height therefore exceeds that recommended in the Design Guide.

3.7 At the point where it is closest to the Home Farm building, the proposed building is two storeys and approximately 3.8-4m higher at the top of the parapet than the ridge height of that building. The taller, three storey, part of the building will be seen in views that also take in Home Farm, but the Home Farm building is situated on a higher ground level than the proposed building. At no point will the proposed building exceed the height of Home Farm by more than about 4m. This is considered to be acceptable and it is noted that objections have neither been received, to the height of the building and its relationship with Home Farm, from key consultees (the Conservation Officer and the Conservation Advisory Working Party) nor from the independent Design Review Panel that considered the proposal prior to the submission of the application to the height of the building and its relationship with Home Farm.

3.8 The three storey elevations of proposed building will also be seen in views that take in the recently constructed IC5 building. IC5 has a maximum height of 13.3m and as such the building proposed, at 16.3m, will exceed the height of IC5 to a similar extent as it does Home Farm and is again considered to be acceptable.

3.9 The site is in a key, gateway location and in accordance with Guidance is in a position where it indicates that the guidance on height may be relaxed. The height of the building as proposed is considered to be acceptable in this location and any objection to its height would be inconsistent with the Planning Inspector's decision to allow a six storey, 22.8m tall hotel building at its western extremity closest to the main access to the university on plot 1. In that case the Inspector considered

that the site did represent a unique gateway location sited directly next to the junction that accorded with the proviso in the Design Guide where the maximum height restriction of 13.5m could be relaxed and that the resultant development would be no more prominent in the landscape than the IC3 and IC4 buildings. The Inspector was satisfied that building would be no higher in profile than the Medical Research Facility Building or IC3 or 4. In this case the proposed building is considerably lower than IC4 the nearest of such buildings.

3.10 With regard to the appearance of the building, notwithstanding the Design Review Panel's recommendation that lighter external materials should be incorporated to reduce the heavy, stark appearance of the building to give it more vitality, it is considered that the use of Staffordshire Blue brick is appropriate in this location. Home Farm is constructed in red brick with blue brick diamond patterning and window reveals and as such the use of blue brick in the proposed building will complement Home Farm.

3.11 Whilst the orientation of the building is such that its main entrance is not facing towards the main vehicular access to the building position of the north west entrance to the building it is in a position that provides a clear relationship with Home Farm as required by the Design Guidance associated with the outline planning permission. The applicant's decision not to change the orientation of the building following the review of this as recommended by the Design Review Panel is supported.

3.12 The cantilevered structure facing the main entrance point into the Keele site is furthermore a striking feature. Overall the design of the new building is thought to be of high quality. It will provide a positive focal point to the appearance in a prominent position at the main vehicular entrance to the University.

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

4.1 A total of six car parking spaces will be provided on the application site with the intention that existing staff that are relocated to this site continuing to utilise their current parking arrangements and any additional demand for parking associated with the development being provided within existing parking provision within campus.

4.2 The University are seeking to actively manage estate car parking availability holistically in conjunction with other recently agreed development proposals for the replacement of campus accommodation buildings as to ensure there is no wider detriment to public roads. Members will recall the conditions subject to which they resolved to approve the Keele accommodation masterplan proposals at their meeting on the 22nd March. Taking that into consideration and bearing in mind that the Highway Authority has no objections to the development proceeding subject to planning conditions and a Travel Plan monitoring fee it is concluded that there are no highway safety concerns arising from this development that would warrant the refusal of planning permission. Such a monitoring fee could be secured by a Section 106 obligation which is considered to be in compliance with Section 122 of the CIL Regulations as being necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; directly related to the development; and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

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 SP1	Spatial Principles of Targeted Regeneration
Policy SP2	Spatial Principles of Economic Development
Policy SP3	Spatial Principles of Movement and Access
Policy ASP6	Rural Area Spatial Policy
Policy CSP1	Design Quality
Policy CSP2	Historic Environment
Policy CSP3	Sustainability and Climate Change
Policy CSP4	Natural Assets
Policy CSP10	Planning Obligations

Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan (NLP) 2011

Policy E8	Keele University and Keele Science Park
Policy N17	Landscape Character – General Considerations
Policy N19	Landscape Maintenance Areas
Policy T16	Development – General Parking Requirements
Policy B8	Other Buildings of Historic or Architectural Interest
Policy IM1	Provision of Essential Supporting Infrastructure and Community Facilities

Other Material Considerations include:

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012)

Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014)

Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations (2010) as amended and related statutory guidance

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

Developer contributions SPD (September 2007)

Space Around Dwellings SPG (SAD) (July 2004)

Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Urban Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (2010)

Planning for Landscape Change - SPG to the former Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan

Waste Management and Recycling Planning Practice Guidance Note approved in 2003 and last updated in February 2016

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

10/00631/REM The siting, design and external appearance of a conference, training, and leisure hotel (outline permission for which was granted under reference 05/01146/OUT), the means of access to its site from the road network and the internal landscaping of its site - refused and subsequently allowed on appeal

Views of Consultees

The **Conservation Advisory Working Party** considered that the proposed building was a good example of modern architecture that responds to the landscape and works on the site. The relationship of the proposed building to Home Farm, which is on the Register of Locally Important Buildings and Structures, is considered to be acceptable. The use of blue brick as proposed is fully endorsed by the Working Party.

The **Council's Conservation Officer** (CO) indicates that the site is adjacent to Home Farm, a historic asset, former farm to the estate and on the Council's Local Register of Important Buildings. The CO is impressed with the proposed building and its use of the topography of the site and its strong and positive connection with Home Farm. The proposal shows a high quality finish with an appropriate choice of materials which will work well within the context of the site.

The **Environmental Health Division** – no objections subject to conditions relating to a construction environmental management plan, plant noise limits and ground gas mitigation measures.

The **Highway Authority** has no objections to the proposal subject to the imposition of conditions requiring the provision of the parking, servicing and turning areas in accordance with the approved plans, full details of the cycle parking storage, and submission of a travel plan. Section 106 contributions are required towards travel plan monitoring.

The **Local Lead Flood Authority** indicates that the development will only be acceptable if the measures as detailed in the Flood Risk Assessment submitted with the application are incorporated in an acceptable surface water drainage scheme, to be secured by planning condition..

The **Environment Agency** has no objections.

The **Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor** has indicated the opportunity to engage in pre-application discussion with the architects regarding the design of this important gateway building is much appreciated. Given the important function this building will fulfil along with the physical gateway 'beacon' nature of the facility, it is fundamental that security considerations are imbedded into the proposals, the actual implementation of any successful application including the security of tools, plant etc. used in the construction of the building and the future operation of it once it is established.

Keele Parish Council have no comments.

The views of **Landscape Development Section**, and **Waste Management Section** have been sought, however as they have not responded by the due date it is assumed that they have no comments.

Representations

None received

Applicant's/Agent's submission

The application is accompanied by the following documents:

- Design and Access Statement
- Ground Investigation
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

- Flood Risk Assessment
- Transport Statement
- Acoustic Report.

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/17/00193/FUL>

Background papers

Planning files referred to
Planning Documents referred to

Date report prepared

4th May 2017