

Agenda Item	Committee Date	Application Number
A6	14 October 2019	19/00996/VCN

Application Site	Proposal
Site Of Former Filter House Scotforth Road Lancaster Lancashire	Erection of two 4-storey student accommodation buildings comprising of 12 7-Bed cluster flats (sui generis) and 14 6-bed cluster flats (C4) with associated car parking and bin and cycle stores (pursuant to the variation of condition 6 on planning permission 18/00637/VCN to allow for a phased programme of offsite highway works).

Name of Applicant	Name of Agent
Mr Vivian Watts	Mr Barry Singleton

Decision Target Date	Reason For Delay
1 November 2019	N/A

Case Officer	Mrs Petra Williams
Departure	Yes
Summary of Recommendation	Approval

(i) **Procedural Matters**

The application would ordinarily be determined under delegated powers, but the scheme is a departure from the Development Plan (given its allocation within the Local Plan as employment land), and Officers are recommending support of the scheme. Therefore it has to be determined by Planning Committee.

1.0 The Site and its Surroundings

- 1.1 The application site relates to a parcel of land of 0.8 hectares on the west side of the A6, south of the urban area of Lancaster and approximately 3km from Lancaster City Centre. The site is triangular - around 240m in length from north to south, 60m in width at the north end and tapering to a point at the southern end. The site is located within designated Countryside Area. Under the saved Local Plan the site is allocated for business use and adjoins land to the east (opposite the A6) that is allocated for the Bailrigg Science Park (now known as the Health Innovation Campus).
- 1.2 The site was vacant for some considerable length of time having previously been occupied by a former water filter house, which has since been demolished. The only building now on the site is an electricity substation which dates from the 1960s. The site has suffered from quite extensive vandalism and graffiti over recent years.
- 1.3 The application site is tightly positioned between the A6 to the east of the site, which is a busy strategic vehicular access corridor into and out of the city, and the West Coast railway line to the west side. It therefore occupies a very prominent position at the southern gateway to the city. Beyond these access corridors the site is surrounded by open countryside, predominately used for agricultural purposes. Burrow Beck runs along the northern boundary of the site and is identified as a Biological Heritage Site. It also forms part of the Urban Greenspace designation which creates a natural edge to the boundaries of the urban area of Lancaster.
- 1.4 Vehicular access to the site is directly from the A6 into an area of hardstanding previously used for servicing and car parking. There is a pedestrian footway on the opposite (east) side of the A6 but no pedestrian crossing, although there is a pedestrian refuge at the centre of the carriageway. The northbound bus stop adjoins the site at its southern end whilst the southbound stop is opposite the

northern part of the site. The closest strategic cycle network is to the east of the A6 near the settlement of Bailrigg. This cycle path links the residential areas of South Lancaster to the University.

2.0 **The Proposal**

- 2.1 The approved development consists of two purpose-built accommodation blocks for students. The first of which is a 4 storey building which measures 14 metres in height at its highest point and would be 107 metres in length by 11 metres wide. The proposed materials consist of un-coursed stone facing to the ground floor, with darkened larch along the A6 frontage and native larch cladding within the inner courtyard elevation. The roof material would consist of a membrane in a lead effect finish with standing seams.
- 2.2 The current submission seeks the variation of condition 6 on planning permission 18/00637/VCN to allow for a phased programme of off-site highway works. Condition 6 is a pre-occupation condition and the modification is required to facilitate a two phased scheme required by County Highways to enable implementation of the works in stages

3.0 **Site History**

- 3.1 The most recent and relevant applications are outlined below.

Application Number	Proposal	Decision
18/00637/VCN	Erection of two 4-storey student accommodation buildings comprising of 28 6-bed cluster flats (C4) with associated car parking and bin and cycle stores (pursuant to the variation of condition 2 on planning permission 16/00847/FUL for amendments to floor plans and elevations to provide 12 7-bed cluster flats (sui generis) and 14 6-bed cluster flats (C4) including amendments to the fenestration and heights of the buildings)	Approved
16/00847/FUL	Erection of two 4-storey student accommodation buildings comprising of 28 6-bed cluster flats (C4) with associated car parking and bin and cycle stores	Approved
15/00135/FUL	Demolition of existing buildings	Approved

4.0 **Consultation Responses**

- 4.1 The following responses have been received from statutory and non-statutory consultees:

Consultee	Response
County Highways	No objections - The Highway Authority have mutually agreed with the applicant to split the works into two phases.
Parish Council	Objections - Assumed that the lighting was made a condition for safety to ensure that students walking up Bailrigg Lane to the University would be clearly visible to traffic. This is a narrow single track lane which does not have a footpath. In our view, provision of lighting should remain a pre-occupancy requirement for safety reasons.
Fire Safety Officer	Neither objects nor supports the scheme but has provided comments to be included with the decision notice as advice.

5.0 **Neighbour Representations**

- 5.1 No comments received.

6.0 **Principal National and Development Plan Policies**

- 6.1 **National Planning Policy Framework**

Paragraph 12 and 14 – Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development
 Paragraph 17 – Core Principles
 Paragraphs 56, 58, 61, 64 – Good Design
 Paragraph 69 – Promoting healthy communities

6.2 Local Planning Policy Overview – Current Position

On 15 May 2018, and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), Lancaster City Council submitted the following documents to the Secretary of State (Planning Inspectorate) for examination:

- (i) The Strategic Policies and Land Allocations DPD; and,
- (ii) (A Review of) The Development Management DPD

The Examination Hearing Sessions took place between the 9 April 2019 and the 1 May 2019. The Council has published the proposed Main Modifications to the Local Plan. An eight-week consultation into the modifications is currently underway and expires on 7 October 2019.

The Strategic Policies and Land Allocations DPD will replace the remaining policies of the Lancaster District Core Strategy (2008) and the residual 'saved' land allocation policies from the 2004 District Local Plan.

The Review of the Development Management DPD updates the policies that are contained within the current document, which was adopted in December 2014. As it is part of the development plan the current document is already material in terms of decision-making.

Given the current stage of both DPDs, it is considered that some weight can be attributed to the policies contained therein subject to the extent to which there are unresolved objections to the relevant policies and their consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework.

6.3 Lancaster District Core Strategy (adopted July 2008)

SC1 – Sustainable Development
SC5 – Quality in Design

6.4 Lancaster Local Plan (saved policies)

E4 – Countryside Area
EC1 – Lancaster Science Park
E29 – Urban Greenspace

6.5 Development Management DPD

DM20 – Enhancing Accessibility and Transport Linkages
DM21 – Walking and Cycling
DM35 – Key Design Principles
DM46 – Accommodation for Students
Appendix D – Purpose Built and Converted Shared Accommodation
Appendix F – Studio Accommodation

6.6 Strategic Policies and Land Allocations DPD

SG2 – Lancaster Health Innovation Campus

7.0 Comment and Analysis

7.1 The application is made under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act, and (if approved) the effect is the issue of a new planning permission, which sits alongside the original permission, which unless revoked remains intact and un-amended. A new decision notice should be issued which sets out all of the conditions related to it and it should repeat the relevant conditions from the original planning permission unless they have been discharged. As a Section 73 application cannot be used to vary the time limit for implementation, this condition must remain unchanged from the original permission (though as development has commenced in this case, the condition will be omitted).

7.2 Planning consent was granted in 2017 for two blocks of student accommodation to provide 168 bedrooms. Block A provided 4 clusters of 6 bedrooms totalling 24 bedrooms while Block B had 24 clusters totalling 144 bedrooms. A subsequent Section 73 application 18/00637/VCN retained the 168 bedrooms

but amended the number of cluster flats to twelve clusters of 7 bedrooms each, and 14 clusters of 6 bedroom flats. Initial ground works have commenced on site.

- 7.3 Condition 6 of approved application 18/00637/VCN requires a number of off-site improvement works to be implemented prior to occupation and includes the following:
- Provision of a Toucan crossing facility
 - A scheme for street lighting to Bailrigg Lane
 - Upgrading of the existing southbound bus stop
 - Provision for signage for no waiting and parking along the A6 and provision for waiting restrictions on the A6.
- 7.4 The proposed revision has come forward due to the interface with off-site highway works associated with the nearby the Health Innovation Campus development for Lancaster University which involves the dedication of highway to the south of Bailrigg Lane associated with the realignment of the A6 Scotforth Road. As a result the Highway Authority has mutually agreed with the applicant to split the works into two phases.
- 7.5 The current application now proposes a scheme of improvements to be implemented in phase 1 which would include provision of a 3m wide footway/cycleway on the western and eastern side of the A6 and the provision of a Toucan crossing facility. Phase 1 works would need to be implemented prior to occupation of the development. Phase 2 works would include the upgrading of the existing southbound bus stop, a scheme for street lighting to Bailrigg Lane, provision for signage for no waiting and parking along the A6 and provision for waiting restrictions on the A6.
- 7.6 It is noted that Parish Council have raised safety concerns relating to the occupation of the proposed development prior to the installation of street lighting on Bailrigg Lane. However, Highway Authority has confirmed that the off-site highway works in connection with the Health Innovation Campus are due to be completed in March 2020 and this will facilitate the accommodation of street lighting required as part of this submission. Although street lighting along Bailrigg Lane is acknowledged as phase 2 works on the submitted plan, discussions between Lancaster University's contractors and the Highway Authority are ongoing regarding the timing of implementation and the precise location of the lighting columns.
- 7.7 Ultimately the off-site highway works should be able to be implemented prior to occupation, but as some of these works are reliant on other works being undertaken by a third party, understandably the applicant does not want the timing of occupancy of their development to be determined by, and at the mercy of, the third party.

8.0 Planning Obligations

- 8.1 There are no planning obligations to consider as part of this proposal.

9.0 Conclusions

- 9.1 The Filter House site has been in a poor condition for a considerable length of time and the proposed amendments would allow the development to proceed with a phased approach to off-site highway improvements to the satisfaction of the Highway Authority. On balance, it is considered that the scheme can be recommended for approval subject to the conditions as listed below.

Recommendation

That Planning Permission **BE GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. Development in accordance with the approved plans
2. Surface Water Drainage including management and maintenance plan
3. Building Materials (Accommodation blocks, refuse, motorcycle, cycle and refuse stores, fencing and gates and acoustic fencing)
4. Ventilation details
5. Electric Vehicle Charging Points
6. Car Parking in accordance with approved details including submission of a car parking management plan
7. Cycle and motorcycle parking facilities
8. Hand Soft Landscaping Scheme
9. Offsite highway works phase 1 and phase 2
10. Contamination and remediation partly agreed under application 18/00637/VCN

11. Details of Access Road & Connection to Highway as agreed under application 18/00637/VCN
12. Implementation of Environmental Management Plan as agreed under application 18/00637/VCN
13. Finished floor levels as agreed under application 18/00637/VCN
14. Foul Drainage Scheme as agreed under application 18/00637/VCN
15. Security Measures as agreed under application 18/00637/VCN
16. Noise Assessment and Glazing Specification as agreed under application 18/00637/VCN
17. Scheme to Permanently Close Southern Access as agreed under application 18/00637/VCN
18. Student Accommodation Only

Article 35, Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

In accordance with the above legislation, the City Council can confirm that it has made the recommendation in a positive and proactive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development, working proactively with the applicant to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. The recommendation has been taken having had regard to the impact of development, and in particular to the relevant policies contained in the Development Plan, as presented in full in the officer report, and to all relevant material planning considerations, including the National Planning Policy Framework, National Planning Practice Guidance and relevant Supplementary Planning Documents/ Guidance.

Background Papers

— None —