

**WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - PLANNING, PUBLIC PROTECTION AND GOVERNANCE**

DELEGATED APPLICATION

Application No: 6/2018/2150/MAJ
Location: De Havilland Campus University Of Hertfordshire Mosquito Way Hatfield
Proposal: Erection of three storey business and social building, associated drainage, landscaping and ancillary works
Officer: Mr Mark Peacock

Recommendation: Granted

6/2018/2150/MAJ

Context	
Site and Application description	The proposal is for a single standalone building of 3057m2 of floor space over three storeys accommodating a business and social hub with café and dining facilities, workplaces, teaching spaces and associated support facilities. The new building is proposed to be centrally located in the heart of University's de Havilland Campus between the Weston Auditorium and the Law Court building; and flanked by residential accommodation to the north and the main faculty circulation known as "The Street" to the south. The site is currently well-managed amenity grassland which incorporates landscape mounds. Ornamental lime trees sit on the northern boundary and one isolated Norway spruce tree is located in the southwest corner of the site. A well-managed hedge also lies on the southern boundary.
Constraints (as defined within WHDP 2005)	LCA - Landscape Character Area (De Havilland Plain) - Distance: 0 PAR - PARISH (HATFIELD) - Distance: 0 UoH - University (University) - Distance: 0 Wards - Hatfield Villages - Distance: 0 A4HD - Article 4 HMO Direction - Distance: 0 HAT - Hatfield Aerodrome - Distance: 0 HEN - No known habitats present (medium priority for habitat creation) - Distance: 0 SAGB - Sand and Gravel Belt - Distance: 0
Relevant planning history	Application Number: 6/2017/0585/FULL Decision: Granted Decision Date: 22 June 2017 Proposal: Erection of a new 6m high Social Club building (975sq.m) with associated landscaping and works between the Law Court Building and Weston Auditorium Application Number: S6/2009/1740/MA Decision: Granted Decision Date: 09 November 2009 proposal: erection of teaching building comprising of 2120m ² floorspace (Use Class D1) associated car parking and landscaping

	<p>Application Number: S6/2001/1026/DE Decision: Granted Decision Date: 07 January 2002 Proposal: Erection of 1600 student study bedrooms and associated support facilities, refectory, sports centre including pool, sports halls and health club and layout of playing fields. (reserved matters application pursuant to outline planning permission S6/1999/1064/OP and S6/1999/1106/OP)</p> <p>Application Number: S6/2000/1471/DE Decision: Granted Decision Date: 06 April 2001 Proposal: Demolition of existing structures, and erection of academic buildings, learning resources centre and auditorium, together with associated facilities, infrastructure, car parking, landscaping and access works</p> <p>Application Number: S6/1999/1064/OP Proposal: Demolition of existing (unlisted) buildings, removal of runway and other hard standing areas and redevelopment for the following purposes: as a business park comprising uses within Use Class B1, B2, B8 and Sui Generis use; housing; new university campus (Use Class D1 and D2) to include replacement De Havilland Sports and Social Club and associated playing fields; two hotels; primary school and associated facilities; district centre; works of conversion to enable recreation use existing listed hanger; Aviation Heritage Centre, together with associated highway, transport and service infrastructure (including a strategic transport corridor), landscaping and open space, diversion of Ellenbrook. Means of access to be determined. Decision: Granted subject to a Section 106 Agreement Decision Date: 29/12/2000</p>		
Consultations			
Neighbour representations	Support: 0	Object: 0	Other: 2
Publicity	Site Notice Display Date: 17 September 2018 Site Notice Expiry Date: 8 October 2018 Press Advert Display Date: 12 September 2018 Press Advert Expiry Date: 26 September 2018		
Summary of neighbour responses	9 Selwyn Crescent - Support the proposal but would welcome replacement tree planting.		
Consultees and responses	Lead Local Flood Authority – No objection subject to suggested planning conditions Herts Biological Records Centre – Suggested S106 contribution of £2,500 be provided as Biodiversity Offsetting to supplement local ecological resources elsewhere, to offset the impact of this development. Thames Water; WHBC Public Health and Protection; HCC Historic Environment Advisor; HCC Transport Programmes & Strategy – No objection.		

	<p>The Environment Agency; WHBC Landscaping; WHBC Client Services; Welwyn Hatfield Access Group and Hatfield Town Council – No response received.</p> <p>Councillor Duncan Bell – Comment: Will it be possible for part of the proposed facility, particularly the meeting rooms, to be used by local residents? The nearby residential areas are rather short of such facilities.</p>
<p>Relevant Policies</p>	
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NPPF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D2 <input type="checkbox"/> GBSP1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GBSP2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M14 Others: R1, R2, R3, R4, R10, R11, R19, D3, D4, D5, D6, D7, D8, D9, EMP12, HATAER1, HATAER2, HATAER3, HATAER4 Hatfield Aerodrome Supplementary Planning Guidance 1999 Supplementary Design Guidance 2005 Supplementary Planning Guidance Parking Standards 2004 Interim Policy on Car Parking and Garage Sizes 2014</p> <p><u>Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission August 2016 (Emerging Local Plan):</u> SP 1 – Delivering Sustainable Development SP 4 – Travel and Transport SP 9 – Place Making and High Quality Design SP10 – Sustainable Design and Construction SADM 2 – Highway Network and Safety SADM 11 – Amenity and Layout SADM 12 – Parking, Servicing and Refuse SADM 16 – Ecology and Landscape</p>	
<p>Main Issues</p>	
<p>Background</p>	<p>The application site benefits from an extant Planning permission for a single storey (double height) Social Club building (ref: 6/2017/0585/FULL). Post planning permission, a review was undertaken by the University to explore options to ensure the most efficient use of the site is made which has led to current re-design. Incorporating social uses within the centre of the campus remains a driver for the project, however rather than a building with a purely social function, the revised design includes social and café spaces, offices and workspaces for the Business Development Department and Business Incubator as well as teaching, informal learning and collaboration spaces for undergraduate and postgraduate students. A key aspiration for the building is to create a facility which actively promotes opportunities for socialising, collaboration and interaction between its users.</p> <p>The building is proposed to be used predominantly by the existing University of Hertfordshire campus population, however first floor offices will have the option of being lettable to small startups (student startups or external). These offices will have access to, and support of, meeting rooms and associated ancillary spaces.</p>
<p>Design (form, size, scale, siting) and</p>	<p>It is evident that the design of the building has been informed not only by the needs of the university, but also through considered assessment and understanding of the site context. The accompanying Design and</p>

<p>Character (appearance within the streetscene)</p>	<p>Access Statement provides a detailed description of the proposals and demonstrates that the proposed development can be satisfactorily accommodated across the site given the surrounding context. The proposal features a strong and clear public entrance which will ensure that the building delivers a legible form. In terms of its scale and massing the proposed development represents an efficient use of the land whilst still sitting comfortably within the site. It is considered that the building's design, scale and massing and site layout would result in a scheme which reflects the locality and the function of the building without resulting in an overly dominant form of development.</p> <p>The scheme proposes an interesting palette of high quality materials and contemporary form of detailing, which would create a well-articulated and visually interesting building of an appropriately high standard for this location. The buildings which surround the application site are all of modern design and construction and feature a variety of materials and architectural styles. This allows for some flexibility in the design of new additions where contemporary architectural styles and materials would not result in a scheme that would harm the character of the area. In this context, it is considered that the proposed development would add to the characteristic variety in a manner that would not be discordant. The proposal thereby conforms to both local and national planning policy.</p> <p>Although some indicative information has been provided in terms of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building, no samples have been submitted. Given the scale of development proposed, a condition is suggested requiring samples to be approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to installation to ensure a satisfactory standard of development in the interests of visual amenity and maintaining the character of the area.</p>
<p>Impact on neighbours</p>	<p>The Council's Environmental Health Officer was consulted and did not object to the proposal subject.</p> <p>The acoustic report provided with the application shows that plant associated with the development will not impact on the amenities of the student accommodation nearby. Therefore, any residential properties outside of the Universities grounds are very unlikely to be affected.</p> <p>The type of activities proposed, the expected noise attenuation of the fabric of the building and the distance to residential properties makes an impact on amenity unlikely.</p> <p>In terms of conditions to control activities, due to the type of usage, these are best left for control under the licensing regime for measures such as noise limiters and hours of use.</p> <p>Taking into consideration the above, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the Policies R19 and D1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan and the NPPF.</p>
<p>Access, car parking and highway</p>	<p>The application site benefits from good connectivity to the existing pedestrian infrastructure throughout the de Havilland Campus. Bus Services are available from Albatross Road to the west of the campus</p>

considerations	<p>and Mosquito Way to the east. Both of which accommodate the University's UNO bus services. There is ample parking a short walk to the south of the campus and a number of accessible spaces in close proximity to the site. Cycle stores are located around the campus which will facilitate those cycling to the new social space.</p> <p>As the building is predominantly catering for the existing University population, no additional parking is proposed, and the new building will be served by existing parking supply on campus.</p> <p>The development is fully within the curtilage of the university site and is unlikely to impact on public highway visibility or internal roads and footpaths, or impact upon the safety of highway users. Additional trip generation from the development is unlikely to be of a level that would be a material increase to the highway network, with the development serving the existing users of the site. Existing servicing for waste is unlikely to be affected and carry distances are all acceptable.</p>
Landscaping and ecology	<p>The application is located within the centre of the de Havilland Campus and is currently an area of well-maintained grass mounds with ornamental trees to the north and a low, well-maintained hedge to the south. There are no Tree Preservation Orders on or adjacent to the site.</p> <p>As per the previously approved planning application (ref: 6/2017/0585/FULL), the current proposals necessitate the removal of the existing trees and hedge to allow for the building to be constructed. The current proposal, compared to the previously approved scheme, provides a stronger landscape proposal, balancing the loss of trees by planting six trees to the west of the new building and providing an area of perennial planting to the southwest. Hedging and grasses are also included in the scheme.</p> <p>Given the location and well maintained nature of the existing planting, the proposals are considered to adequately mitigate the loss of planting and in this instance the request from Herts Ecology for S106 contributions are not considered to be proportionate to the loss. Furthermore, this was not required for the previously approved scheme which offered less in terms of planting and biodiversity.</p> <p>In accordance with advice from Herts Ecology, the previously approved planning application was subject to a planning condition to protect nesting birds which may be affected by the removal of trees from the site prior to development. The condition was suggested because there are many bird records from within a 1km radius and it is likely that some of the trees on site may be used by breeding birds. Whilst the latest comments from Herts Ecology do not refer to nesting birds, it is unlikely that that a material change in circumstances would have occurred in the relatively short time since the previous application was considered. It is therefore reasonable to apply the same condition in this instance, albeit updated to reflect the revised NPPF 2018 and the Town and Country Planning (Pre-commencement Conditions) Regulations 2018.</p>
Other Material considerations	
Contaminated	The Council's Public Health and Protection Team have been consulted

Land	and have confirmed that the information provided by the applicant shows that there was no contamination on site when ground investigations were carried out. In this respect, no objections are raised and no conditions are suggested.
Archaeology	The proposed development has a large footprint and would cause significant disturbance to any archaeological features present. However, a previous archaeological evaluation was carried out within the area of the former Hatfield Aerodrome (Cotswold Archaeology 1999) which included two trenches in this general location. Neither these trenches nor any other trenches nearby encountered any buried archaeological features, instead finding considerable modern disturbance, including asbestos, on top of natural geology. In this instance the development is unlikely to have a significant impact on heritage assets of archaeological interest. In this respect, no objections are raised and no conditions are suggested.
Flood Risk and Drainage	A Drainage Strategy Report (Conisbee, October 2018) was submitted to support to this application. Having consulted the Hertfordshire County Council Flood Risk Management Team, no objections have been raised with regard to the impact on surface water flooding either on site or further afield and the proposed development has been found to be acceptable in principle, subject to suggested planning conditions in accordance with Local Plan Policies R7, R10 and the NPPF.
Energy Efficiency	<p>Local Plan Policy R3 requires developments to include measures to maximise energy conservation through the design of buildings, whilst Policy R4 supports the development of renewable energy sources subject to a number of criteria, including visual impact, among others. In regards to visual impact, Polies D1 and D2 are again relevant.</p> <p>The submitted Design and Access Statement describes the energy strategy for the development. In order to deliver an environmentally responsible building, an approach is being proposed based on low energy design principles. In summary, this approach involves reduction of energy demand through effective building form and orientation, good envelope design and proficient use of services. In addition, solar photovoltaic panels are proposed on the roof of the building as identified on drawing No.UHER-BBA-00-RF-DR-A- 2001 Rev P04. These are likely to be concealed from public view by the 1m high parapet which surrounds the roof. Notwithstanding the above, a condition is suggested requiring full details or the panels to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to ensure he solar photovoltaic potential is achieved in the interest of tackling climate change and creating sustainable development, whilst also ensuring a satisfactory standard of development in the interests of visual amenity and maintaining the character of the area.</p>
Conclusion	
The new building will enhance the offer of the University for the existing campus population, providing much needed and centrally located social space, as well as incubator and academic facilities. Importantly, the proposal represents a more efficient and sustainable use of the site compared to the previously approved scheme, delivering multiple uses to support the offer of the University.	

Careful consideration has been given to the design and siting of the building to ensure that it sits comfortably with its surroundings in terms of scale, massing and materials.

As identified within this statement, some trees will be lost to allow for the development. These are not significant specimens with negligible ecological value and are not considered to be a constraint. Furthermore, the landscaping proposed will compensate for this loss and enhance the open space to the west of the new building, delivering an attractive and useable space for people to enjoy.

Whilst the building, is increasing the built footprint on site it is predominantly serving the existing university population. On this basis no additional parking is being proposed as part of the project given the existing supply.

Subject to the imposition of relevant conditions the proposal is considered acceptable and in accordance with the aims and objectives of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005; the Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission August 2016; and the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.

Conditions:

1. Samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building hereby granted must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to installation. The development must be implemented using the approved materials and subsequently, the approved materials must not be changed.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory standard of development in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies SD1, D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.

2. No removal of hedgerows, trees or shrubs shall take place between 1st March and the 31st August inclusive, unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a careful, detailed check of vegetation for active birds' nests immediately before the vegetation is cleared and provided written confirmation that no birds will be harmed and/or that there are appropriate measures in place to protect nesting bird interest on site.

REASON: To protect the biodiversity value of the site in accordance with in accordance with Policies SD1 and R11 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.

3. The development hereby approved must not be carried out other than in accordance with the submitted surface water drainage assessment carried out by Conisbee, reference 180149/J Courtney, revision P2, dated 8th October 2018. The mitigation measures detailed within the report must be fully implemented prior to occupation and subsequently in accordance with the timing / phasing arrangements embodied within the scheme, or within any other period as may subsequently be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The mitigation measures include:

- a. Limiting the surface water run-off generated by the critical storm events so that it will not exceed the surface water run-off rate of 2 l/s during the 1 in 100 year event plus 40% of climate change event.

b. Providing storage to ensure no increase in surface water run-off volumes for all rainfall events up to and including the 1 in 100 year + climate change event providing a minimum of 127m³ of total storage volume in an underground tank.

c. The discharge surface water from the private drain into the wider surface water sewer network within the University of Hertfordshire De Havilland Campus site.

REASON: To reduce the risk and impact of flooding by ensuring the satisfactory storage and disposal of surface water from the site and to ensure surface water can be managed in a sustainable manner in accordance with Policies SD1, R7 and R10 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.

PRIOR TO OCCUPATION

4. No occupation of the development shall take place until a detailed management and maintenance plan for the all the Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) features and structure must has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The management and maintenance plan must include an inspection timetable and arrangements for adoption and any other measures necessary to ensure the efficient operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime.

REASON: To ensure the drainage system is maintained throughout the lifetime of the development to an acceptable standard in accordance with Policies SD1, R7 and R10 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.

5. No occupation of the development shall take place until full details of the photovoltaic panels hereby approved have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Subsequently the photovoltaic panels must be fully installed in accordance with the approved details and operational prior to the occupation of the development to which the details relate.

REASON: To ensure the solar photovoltaic potential is achieved in the interest of tackling climate change and creating sustainable development whilst also ensuring a satisfactory standard of development in the interests of visual amenity and maintaining the character of the area in accordance with the Polices SD1, R3, R4, D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.

DRAWING NUMBERS

6. The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details:

Plan Number	Revision Number	Details	Received Date
UHER-BBA-00-XX-DR-L-1002	P02	Existing Site Plan	20 August 2018
UHER-BBA-00-XX-DR-L-1003	P04	Proposed Site Plan	20 August 2018
UHER-BBA-00-XX-DR-L-	P01	Proposed Landscape Ga Plan	20 August 2018

1004 UHER-BBA- 00-XX-DR-L- 1005	P01	Proposed Block Plan	20 August 2018
UHER-BBA- 00-XX-DR-L- 6201	P01	Tree Removals Plan	20 August 2018
UHER-BBA- 00-XX-DR-L- 8002	P01	Soft Landscape Plan	20 August 2018
UHER-BBA- 00-ZZ-DR-A- 3001	P05	Ga Elevations East/West	20 August 2018
UHER-BBA- 00-ZZ-DR-A- 3002	P05	Ga Elevations North/South	20 August 2018
UHER-BBA- 00-ZZ-DR-A- 3003	P03	Site Elevations	20 August 2018
UHER-BBA- 00-ZZ-DR-A- 4002	P02	Site Sections	20 August 2018
UHER-BBA- 00-ZZ-DR-A- 4001	P03	Ga Sections AA/BB	20 August 2018
UHER-BBA- 00-01-DR-A- 2001	P05	First Floor Ga Plan	20 August 2018
UHER-BBA- 00-02-DR-A- 2001	P06	Second Floor Ga Plan	20 August 2018
UHER-BBA- 00-GF-DR-A- 2001	P05	Ground Floor Ga Plan	20 August 2018
UHER-BBA- 00-RF-DR-A- 2001	P04	Roof Ga Plan	20 August 2018
UHER-BBA- 00-XX-DR-L- 1001	P01	Location Plan	20 August 2018
UHER-CON- 00-GF-DR-C- 1000	P3	Drainage Strategy	9 October 2018

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and details.

1. POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT

The decision has been made taking into account, where practicable and appropriate the requirements of paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework and material planning considerations do not justify a decision contrary

to the development plan (see Officer's report which can be viewed on the Council's website or inspected at these offices).

Informatives:

1. Breeding Birds and Protected Species: It is an offence to take or disturb the breeding or resting location of protected species and precautionary measures should be taken to avoid harm where appropriate. If protected species, or evidence of them, is discovered during the course of any development, works should stop immediately and advice sought as to how to proceed. This may be obtained from Natural England (0300 060 3900) or a suitably qualified ecological consultant.

Determined By:

Mr Chris Carter
19 November 2018