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1.0

Introduction

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1.0 Introduction

The key purpose of this Design and Access Statement is to set out the architectural design intentions for the proposed development of a new Business and Social Hub for the University of Hertfordshire (UoH) at their de Havilland campus, and is to be read in conjunction with all drawings and documentation submitted as part of the planning application

The design has been developed in conjunction with the University of Hertfordshire and its advisors leading to the information presented on the drawings issued and discussed in this report.

1.0.1 Overview

Use

Education Building (Use Class D1 Non-residential Institutions) within the University of Hertfordshire's de Havilland campus.

Description

A single stand alone building of 3057m² of floor space over three storeys accommodating a business and social hub with cafe and dining facilities, workplaces, teaching spaces and associated support facilities.

Appearance

The design of the exterior facades of the Business and Social Hub aims to be timeless through the juxtaposition of contemporary materials. The architectural language and the palette of materials chosen for the building is one of simplicity and elegance respecting the academic character of the campus whilst providing a durable look and ease of maintenance.

Landscaping

The new building will create a strong identity for the University becoming a destination within the wider campus. The character of the landscape will complement this by creating a seamless link with the surrounding campus and offering pleasant functional outdoor public spaces.

Energy

Passive measures (e.g. natural ventilation) are prioritised - generally highest CO₂ saving per pound spent. Active measures are only applied after passive measures are considered. Renewables: Photovoltaic panels located on the main roof (to provide the required energy reduction). Energy efficient lighting is used together with an approach to minimise ecological impact.



Aerial View of the proposed building

1.1 Site Location

The University of Hertfordshire de Havilland Campus, Hatfield sits to the north of the College Lane campus to the west of the A1 (M). The roughly rectilinear campus is bounded by the A1057 St. Albans link road to the south, Albatross Way to the west and Mosquito Way to the east.

The selected site for the new Business and Social Hub is the grassed area that runs alongside 'The Street' and is adjacent to the auditorium at the heart of the campus. The site is flanked by Student residence buildings to the north and the Sports Village to the west. This proposed site is considered to be the most suitable location for the new building due to its central location at the heart of the de Havilland Campus and proximity to supporting uses such as the Auditorium and Library.

Section 2.1 provides a detailed description of the site and our understanding of the opportunities and constraints.



Image - Aerial View showing the location of the Social and Incubator Hub in the University of Hertfordshire

1.2 Project Context

1.2.1 UoH Priorities and Vision

In 2012 Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (WHBC) endorsed the University of Hertfordshire's 2020 Estates Vision which sets out the development strategy for the University over a 10 year period, covering both the de Havilland and College Lane campuses. Since receiving council endorsement a significant amount of development has taken place in accordance with the Masterplan, including the new Student Residences, Science Building, Reception, Hub Building and Boulevard. As well as identifying future development projects for the University, the 2020 Vision sets out key issues and opportunities for each campus.

The £120 million de Havilland Campus was completed in 2003 and offers a high quality, contemporary teaching and learning environment, being home to the Business School, School of Humanities, School of Education and School of Law, whilst also accommodating the Sport Village as well as student residences. As a relatively new campus, the 2020 Vision did not identify many requirements for improvement, however it did highlight that outdoor spaces on campus are under-used and that informal learning and social spaces are lacking.

Easily accessible indoor and outdoor social spaces are significant provisions within a campus setting, necessary to support and enhance the academic offering, delivering a comprehensive campus experience for staff and students. Many higher education institutions are now finding themselves having to retrofit such spaces into the campus to respond to the evolving needs of staff and students.

Club de Havilland currently provides the main indoor social space located on the de Havilland Campus situated in the south west corner of the campus. This building has long been considered sub-optimal due to its peripheral location, size, layout and distance from other social and informal uses. The relocation of Sports Science from CP Snow on College Lane to Club de Havilland has also strengthened the requirement for a new social space building on campus, as this relocation will displace the existing social use within the building.

Based on the current deficiency of accessible social space on campus coupled with the fact that Sports Science will soon be relocating to Club de Havilland, there is a requirement for a new, centrally located social space at de Havilland which this planning proposal responds to. With the rise of knowledge that the study of economics is an important part of the UK's economy, Universities are making spaces for collaboration with business to maintain and grow the UK's global reputation. One of the most significant factors in the changing nature of work and the workplace is the massive growth of self-employment, which reached a record high of 4.5 million in 2014, and the expansion of SMEs and micro-businesses. This is reflected in the boom of open workspaces, incubators and accelerators that can provide the affordability, flexibility and support that start-ups require. As hubs of creation and creativity, these can also support local regeneration, community engagement, skills and training.

The University of Hertfordshire wishes to create a Business Incubator Hub to continue to expand the scope and depth of its offer at de Havilland. This is driven by the University's desire to both enhance the student experience and opportunities as well as being relevant within the local community in Hatfield.

The University of Hertfordshire's vision for a Business Incubator Hub is centered around the creation of an environment that encourages and supports innovative forms of collaborative working and learning. The Hub will act as the focal point for the fostering of industry partnerships and will drive forward the development of an innovative and entrepreneurial culture.

The Business Incubator and the Social Hub will complement each other forming an important element of the campus as a vital asset to the student community.

1.2.2 Key Design Policies and Operational Requirements

The objectives of the new Business and Social Hub at the de Havilland campus are as follows:

- Provide much needed, more accessible quality social space that is distinctly lacking at de Havilland.
- Enhance the student experience by providing well designed flexible social facilities.
- Provide a range of working and collaborative environments for incubators to thrive.
- Provide flexible teaching spaces that could be used for exam space if required.

The key driver is creating an environment that actively encourages communication and collaboration at the heart of the campus. This means making the social and shared spaces visible and putting them at the heart of the building, immediately accessible to all and enabling users to move easily between the shared public and semi-public spaces and the individual offices and workspaces.

It is envisaged that this building will require more adaptive and flexible social and working spaces that offer a range of potential working and learning environments. The spaces within this building will be designed to support informal social and dining, formal dining, open plan offices, cellular offices and meeting spaces, structured teaching through to more informal self-study/work areas.

It is essential that the design of the Business Hub facilitates the growth of graduates in lone worker support spaces to group work areas and eventually office units. Therefore, a key element of the brief is dedicated mini office suites suitable for teams of 3-5 individuals. These offices will have access to, and support of, meeting rooms and associated ancillary spaces.

A key element of the building design will therefore be to develop a concept that offers the ability to create a diverse mix of spaces, from large open plan areas to more cellular offices and support spaces. Critically this needs to be achieved whilst still maintaining the University's long-term flexibility to either increase the amount of cellular space provided, or create more open plan environments depending upon future needs and alternative uses.

Furthermore, changing social and working patterns, new technologies and the demands of businesses are constantly shaping the types of spaces needed. Flexibility and adaptability will therefore be a fundamental part of the design. The proposed design will aim to create spaces flexible enough to support the variety of activities of users on a day-to-day basis, and adaptable enough to respond to the changing accommodation needs as the needs of students and businesses evolve.



1.2.3 Strategic Core Design Objectives

The University has identified a number of key design objectives for the new Business and Social Hub Building to achieve:

- A high quality environment that will actively encourage communication and collaboration between students and young local entrepreneurs.
- A well-designed vibrant social environment that meets the aspirations of the students.
- An environment that will provide students, researchers, staff and alumni with the opportunity to accelerate the development of their start up on campus.
- A new facility that integrates fully with the existing facilities and resources available at the de Havilland Campus.
- State of the art facilities and equipment that will reflect the needs and standards of similar offers by Universities and Business Incubators.
- Flexible spaces that can adapt to changing needs, demands, trends and technologies.
- Externally a building that is simple, elegant and distinct yet complement its immediate context at the heart of the campus.
- The Business and Social Hub will be complete by early 2020.
- Meet the commitments defined in the LEP funding criteria.
- Achieving the design criteria and objectives within the gross project budget.



Precedents Images of University Social Spaces / Teaching Spaces



- 2.0 The Process**
- 2.1 Site Analysis
 - 2.1.1 Site Topography and Context
 - 2.1.2 Site Opportunities and Constraints
- 2.2 Consultation
 - 2.2.1 Design Team
 - 2.2.2 Client Consultation
 - 2.2.3 Planning Process
- 2.3 Design Development

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2.0 The Process

2.1 Site Analysis

This section of the report aims to demonstrate how the Design Team has reviewed the site and its surroundings in order to design a proposal that appropriately sits within its site acting as a significant building that responds to its immediate context.

2.1.1 Site Topography and Context

The site, as identified by the client, is part of a wider University property and has an area of 2853sqm. It is flanked by Student accommodation to the north, the main faculty buildings, and faculty circulation known as “The Street” to the south, Weston Auditorium to the West, and a public plaza to the east with the Law Court building adjacent to it. A campus service road along the north edge of the site acts as a boundary between the educational and residential buildings of the campus.

The site lies in a strategic central location within easy reach from the whole campus. Currently it is a grassed undulating plot with 8 trees along the north boundary and presents a slope from the south to the north side by an average of 1.5m. Other than being an open space, it presents no particular urban or architectural interest. The space has no particular use and it is occasionally used during good weather conditions by students who lie on the grass or partially as a break out external space from the Auditorium.

2.1.2 Site Opportunities and Constraints

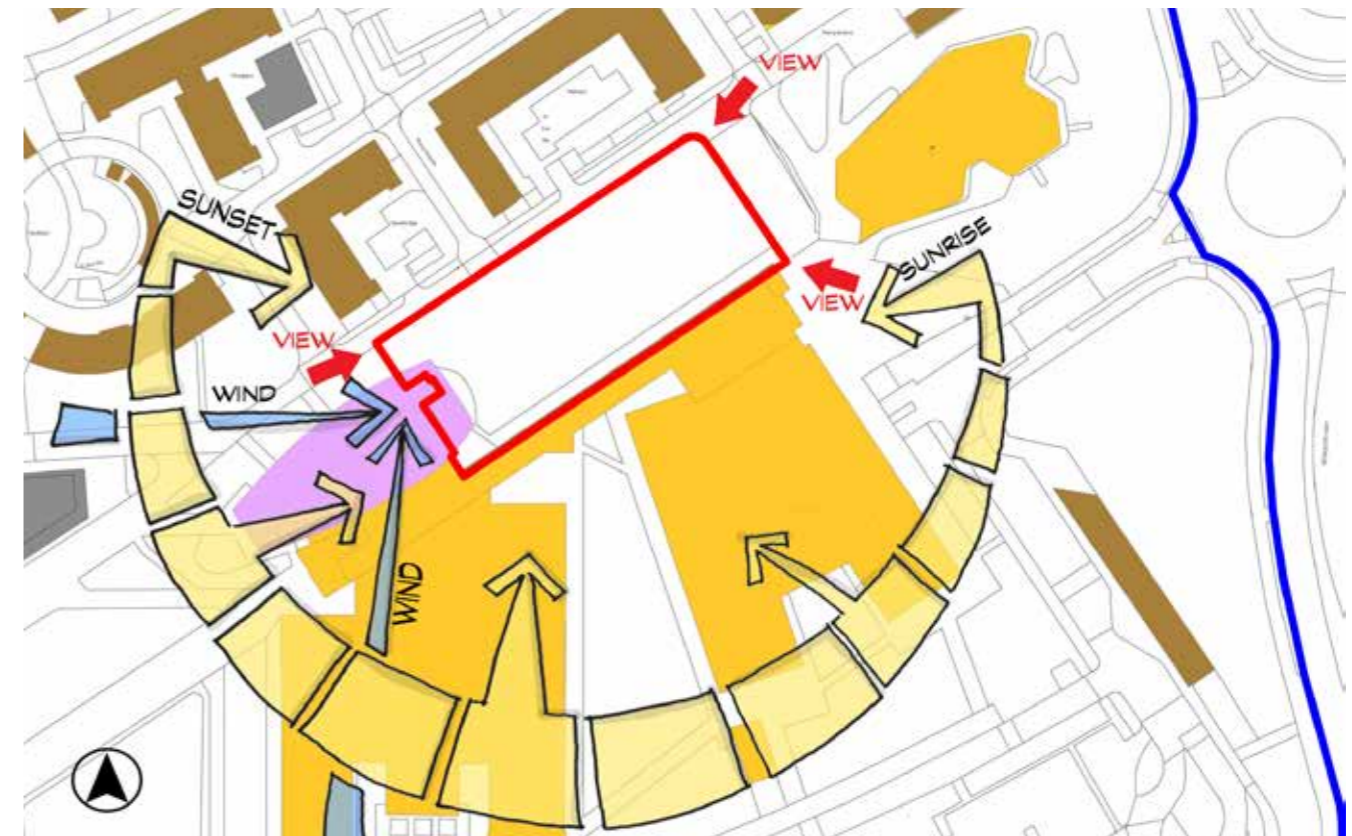
The application site is subject to planning permission for a single storey Social Building (ref: 6/2017/0585/FULL) which was granted by WHBC in 2017. The client team felt that the site, due to its location, has the potential to accommodate a richer building program and a set of diverse uses that will create an active environment and a destination space for the whole campus.

The site is visible and approached from various points within the campus therefore the proposed building will be a 360deg object with four equally important elevations.

The adjacent buildings have a strong architectural character and an established presence in the campus therefore, the new development would require a robust formal language combined at the same time with a subtle palette of materials to form a scheme with integrity that coexists harmoniously with the surrounding blocks.

The proximity to other campus buildings, especially the student accommodation, dictates a strategy for noise reduction and control. Noise either from the use of the building and the activities on site or from the support equipment and plant room operation.

The current open nature of the site is an element that the design team have identified as an asset and aim to integrate in the new scheme. Included within the proposals there will be open areas of hard and soft landscaping on the main three public frontages (East/West/South) that will be accessible to all to form active public spaces within the campus context.



Location Plan with Views / Accesses / Sun Path



Existing Site Plan



VIEW 4. View from Service Road looking southwest towards the site.



VIEW 3. View towards Weston Auditorium.



VIEW 2. View towards adjacent Plaza to the east of the site.



VIEW 1. View from the main access route towards the site.



EXISTING MATERIALS



Rumbled effect Block paving. Service Road. **Slab paving in natural colours. Pedestrian footpath**



Granite setts in Existing Plaza. Furniture: Concrete benches.



Concrete slab/ block paving in natural/ grey



2.2 Consultation

As part of the design development of these proposals for the Business and Social Hub, the scheme has been discussed and developed with the following interested parties:

2.2.1 Design Team

The proposals have been developed for the University of Hertfordshire by Bond Bryan Architects in conjunction with the Design Team appointed by Willmott Dixon Construction (WDC). WDC have appointed a professional design team to progress the design of the training facility. These professionals bring considerable knowledge in their specialist fields but in particular education and manufacturing.

The Design Team is as follows:

- Architect / Principal Designer: Bond Bryan Architects
- Landscape Architect: Bond Bryan Architects
- Planning Consultant: Turnberry
- Civil and Structural Engineers: Conisbee
- Mechanical and Electrical Engineers: CPWP
- Fire Consultant: Affinity
- Acoustic Consultant: Sharps Redmore

2.2.2 Client Consultation

The Design Team have developed the proposals in line with the University's requirements identified to date. In order to ensure a smooth process, the following consultation has already been carried out with the Client:

Regular Client Team meetings involving the Client Sponsor, Senior Management Team members of the University and the Client's Project Managers to develop the overall design and layout of the building in accordance with their requirements.

The designs have been presented to and developed in conjunction with UoH and their project team, in particular the internal layouts and relationship of the new development with the surrounding campus buildings.

2.2.3 Client Consultation

On 31st July 2018 a Pre-Application Advice meeting was held with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council. This meeting provided the opportunity to review the new proposal for the site with a senior planning officer. The proposals were positively received with no issues or objections raised.



2.3 Design Development

Preliminary design studies examined a range of potential options for massing and elevation treatment. Indicative sketches are presented demonstrating the thought process.

This exercise identified a preferred massing option comprising of two interlocking / contrasting volumes expressing the front of house (FoH) and back of house (BoH) spaces of the development breaking down the mass of the building. In addition articulation of the facades with shading elements, fins/louvers was investigated however when feedback from the thermal model was received, no shading devices were required. Therefore we pursued the more open glazed elevation for the front of the building creating a more active facade where internal activity would be projected to the outside public space.

In brief:

- Two interlocking volumes reduce the massing and scale of of the scheme while creating a building with presence on site.
- An open glazed main elevation provides an opportunity to showcase the activity occurring inside the spaces.
- Setting back the entrance and the terrace offers the opportunity to create external protected social spaces on Ground and Second Floors.

Additional studies were carried out exploring options for other elevations of the building looking at opening configurations and extent and type of cladding. The aim was to create a contemporary, interesting and varied composition without introducing a plethora of architectural elements that would increase cost, and compete with the surrounding buildings.



Massing Development Sketches



Volume and External Shading Options

Elevation development options

