



Raymond Lee  
Council Offices  
The Campus  
Welwyn Garden City  
AL8 6AE  
United Kingdom

Direct Dial: 01223 582751

Our Ref: P01435424

23<sup>rd</sup> August 2021

Dear Raymond Lee

**T&CP (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015  
& Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990**

**Campus West, The Campus, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 6BX  
Application No. 6/2021/2207/MAJ**

Thank you for your letter regarding the above application for planning permission. On the basis of the information available to date, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining the application. Historic England have provided extensive pre-application advice on this scheme in relation to the impact upon the historic environment.

**Historic England Advice**

Welwyn Garden City is England's second Garden City and is important as a good example of early 20th Century town planning. Most of the designs of the buildings are the work of one man, Louis de Soissons who's neo Georgian architecture for the main administrative and town centre buildings remains the most prevalent architectural style in the Campus area of the town, through to the present day. The scale of the buildings are relatively low being predominantly 2 or 3 storeys with landmark buildings such as the John Lewis Store being more akin to 5 storeys. These heights are appropriate for the architectural style and scale and differentiate buildings in a subtle fashion.

The Campus West site lies at the heart of the planned civic core of de Soissons' plan for Welwyn Garden City. Its location on the western edge of the Campus means it is on the boundary between the civic and residential zones. The western campus civic core consists of the police station and the leisure centre while the main route in from the west (B195) is characterised by substantial plots containing well proportioned buildings that actively address the street scene. The style of the architecture varies across the civic zone in this area ranging from the 1958 campus college and the 1965 Police Station but, they all share a use of sympathetic materials that are in line with the traditional architecture of the rest of the Garden City.

Impact of the Proposed Scheme





The scale of the proposal has been reduced since the beginning of our pre-application discussions and the scale and mass of the proposed scheme is less than other large buildings of the same footprint. Although this introduces a raised level of parking, the height of the proposed car park would be less than the adjacent college building.

The materials and colour palette proposed is in line with pre-application discussions. The burnt orange colour being designed to match the traditional red brick used elsewhere within the garden village. The range of colours has been significantly reduced to blend in with the historic environment while being overtly modern and of its age. Pre-application discussions centred around making the cladding face in different directions to further create a vision of solidity and the plans do not make this element clear. The applicant should ensure that this is the case as per the visualisations.

Notwithstanding this, the scheme contains high level lighting which needs to be carefully controlled to ensure that light pollution and nuisance are kept to a minimum. Lighting should not be dominant within this scheme and any lighting should work with the architecture to produce a building that is as appropriate during night hours as in daylight hours.

#### Policy Context

- Paragraph 130 of the NPPF indicates that development should be sympathetic to the local character and history while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change and are visually attractive among other criteria relating to ensuring good design.
- Paragraph 199 of the NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development upon the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater that weight should be).
- Paragraph 200 of the NPPF states that any harm to or loss of significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting) should require clear and convincing justification.
- Paragraph 202 of the NPPF states that where a development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefit of the scheme.

#### Historic England's Position

The agent has entered into extensive pre-application discussions with Historic England and the design has evolved into a scheme which respects the scale, form and materials of the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area. We therefore consider that the scheme is in accordance with paragraphs 199 and 200 of the NPPF.

Historic England consider that scheme has the potential to cause a low level of less than substantial harm through the provision of lighting which could result in a dominant building at night. It is therefore for your Local Authority to determine the planning balance as per paragraph 202 of the NPPF and, your local authority should be sure



that the lighting results in a building which is compliant with the requirements in paragraph 130 of the NPPF.

### **Recommendation**

Historic England has concerns regarding the application on heritage grounds as we consider that the lighting scheme could result in the building being overly visible and dominant during the night hours.

We consider that the issues and safeguards outlined in our advice need to be addressed in order for the application to meet the requirements of paragraphs 130, 199, 200 and 202 of the NPPF.

In determining this application you should bear in mind the statutory duty of section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Your authority should take these representations into account and seek amendments, safeguards or further information as set out in our advice. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or you would like further advice, please contact us.

Yours sincerely

### **Lynette Fawkes**

Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas  
E-mail: [Lynette.Fawkes@HistoricEngland.org.uk](mailto:Lynette.Fawkes@HistoricEngland.org.uk)