

9 DCCE2008/0626/F - PROPOSED NEW 3 STOREY DETACHED CLASSROOM BLOCK ADJACENT TO SPORTS FIELD TOWARDS EAST OF CAMPUS (REAR) AT HEREFORD SIXTH FORM COLLEGE, FOLLY LANE, HEREFORD, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR1 1LU

For: Hereford Sixth Form College per James Morris Associates, 23 Bridge Street, Leominster, HR6 8DU

Date Received: 6 March 2008

Ward: Aylestone

Grid Ref: 52240, 40707

Expiry Date: 1 May 2008

Local Members: Councillors NL Vaughan and DB Wilcox

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 Planning permission is sought for the erection of a three-storey classroom block on land at the eastern edge of the Sixth Form College site, where the existing car park meets the playing fields. The classroom accommodation would partly be in replacement of the four existing mobile units stationed both within the car park and upon the playing fields.
- 1.2 The proposal would also see alterations to the existing car park configuration, with the result that the new layout would provide an additional 16 parking spaces for staff (78 to 94).
- 1.3 To the rear of the proposed classroom building it is proposed to locate 3 tennis courts in substitution for those existing to the rear of the Tupsley Youth Centre.
- 1.4 The classroom building would accommodate a total of 6 classrooms over the ground and first floors, with an open plan layout at 2nd floor giving a larger space for examination purposes.

2. Policies

2.1 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan 2007:

Policy S2	-	Development Requirements
Policy S7	-	Natural and Historic Heritage
Policy DR1	-	Design
Policy DR2	-	Land Use and Activity
Policy DR3	-	Movement
Policy H16	-	Car Parking
Policy T7	-	Cycling
Policy T11	-	Parking Provision
Policy T12	-	Existing Parking Areas
Policy T14	-	School Travel
Policy NC5	-	European and Nationally Protected Species

3. Planning History

- 3.1 DCCE2004/0475/O: Partial redevelopment of College Campus to provide new learning village (application for outline permission including master plan). Approved 12 August 2005.
- 3.2 DCCE2005/0507/F: Redevelopment of learning resource block with a new workshop building and seminar block with associated landscaping and car parking, Herefordshire College of Technology. Approved 17 May 2005.
- 3.3 DCCE2005/3360/RM: Demolition of existing teaching blocks and redevelopment of college campus to provide new learning village (Phase 2) at Hereford College of Technology. Approved 17 January 2006.
- 3.4 DCCE2006/1604/RM: Redevelopment of existing HCT campus to provide refurbished learning centre, new build workshop and skills centre, new build teaching block, additional car parking and enhanced public realm (Amendments to DCCE2005/0507/F & DCCE2005/3360/RM). Approved 15 August 2006
- 3.5 DCCE2007/0684/RM: Proposed pedestrian cycle and highways access to new college facilities and associated highway works at Herefordshire College of Technology. Approved 30 July 2007.

4. Consultation Summary

Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 Sport England: No objection

Internal Council Advice

- 4.2 Conservation Manger: No objection
- 4.3 Parks, Countryside and Leisure Development Manager: No objection, although the future of the existing tennis courts is queried.
- 4.4 Traffic Manager: "The original combined application for the 3 colleges as a learning village had an overall parking assessment as part of the submission, but now the colleges have split the assessment is different. A combined travel plan as part of the original consent is still to be signed off."

5. Representations

- 5.1 Hereford City Council: No objection.
- 5.2 An objection has been received from North Tupsley Action Group (N-TAG). The objection is based upon the displacement of vehicles during the construction associated with the completion of the learning village and the alternative provision as indicated on the block plan. N-TAG understands parking to be prohibited on this area with the effect that additional pressure will be brought to bear on parking provision within Whittern Way. N-TAG resolves to object to any future college development until

the colleges consult with the local community and build the requisite number of spaces into their plans.

5.3 One letter of objection has been received from Mr RA Creswell, 'Strathmoor', 2 Aylestone Grange, Hereford, HR1 1GZ. The content can be summarised as follows:

- A wildlife pool adjacent to the site hosts the Great Crested Newt. Building works may affect the breeding program of this protected species.
- The water supply to the pool is unknown, but could be affected by the proposal, with ramifications for the well being of the newts.
- Increased surface water will have difficulty in draining due to the local clay soil, as evidenced by problems within the objector's garden after heavy rainfall.
- The scale of building will be very prominent in its context.
- There is a potential threat to trees and the playing fields.

5.4 A letter of support and clarification has been received from the Sixth Form College Principal. The content is summarised as follows:

- The proposed new building is not intended to accommodate an increase in student numbers, but to replaces inadequate, temporary accommodation;
- Studies demonstrate that the Sixth Form 'cohort' will fall by at least 16% by 2013. The new building is intended to improve facilities and is not predicated on future growth nor will it attract additional students;
- The College provides transport for students and discourages driving. £250,000 is spent each year on providing bus/rail travel and parking is for staff only;
- The College was recently inspected and graded 'Outstanding' in all aspects. The report did, however, comment upon the poor temporary accommodation and recommended its urgent replacement.

The full text of these letters can be inspected at Central Planning Services, Garrick House, Widemarsh Street, Hereford and prior to the Sub-Committee meeting.

6. Officer's Appraisal

6.1 The key issues in the determination of this application are as follows:

- The impact of the proposal upon the current level of parking provision at the college;
- The scale, design and appearance of the building in its context.

Parking Provision

6.2 The original 'learning village' master plan referred to the three college campuses as a single entity. Subsequent to the grant of outline planning permission the Technical College has chosen to progress to the Reserved Matters stage and redevelopment is now ongoing. The master plan resulted in an increase in parking numbers across the

campuses to 650 spaces. The vast majority of this provision was intended on Technical College land and is unaffected by the proposal at the Sixth Form.

- 6.3 The main Sixth Form car park to the east of the campus accommodates 78 spaces. It is College policy to prohibit on site parking for students. The existing and proposed parking is for staff only and a permit scheme is in operation. Although the proposed building occupies a proportion of the existing spaces, the proposed rationalisation, including the removal of two of the existing mobile classrooms, would result in an increase in parking within this car park from 78 to 94 spaces.
- 6.4 Against this, Policy T11 (Parking provision) of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan 2007 states that parking provision will be "restricted as a maximum to that which is justifiably required". Regard should be had to the proximity to alternative provision, availability of alternative modes of transport, the type and design of the development and any agreement to provide alternative arrangements for travel within the context of developing a workplace travel plan.
- 6.5 The College, in partnership with the local authority, provides financial incentive for students to use bus and rail. As described above, students are not permitted to park on the Sixth Form campus. There exists good access to alternative modes of transport – both bus and railway stations are within walking distance. It should also be borne in mind that a proportion of the Sixth Form students are not old enough to drive. However, and despite this, there is an evident problem with college commuter demand for parking in nearby residential areas. The combined colleges are still working together on a travel plan. This will outline additional measures to promote alternatives to private car use.
- 6.6 The College asserts that the development is not linked to or dependent upon an increase in student numbers and it is described that roll numbers are in fact in decline. It is predicted that the 'cohort' will fall by 16% in the next 5 years, which should in turn alleviate the parking problems in the wider area. Whether or not this transpires, the development proposed increases staff parking by a further 16 spaces.
- 6.7 In view of the declining role numbers and the fact that the development increases parking on site it is concluded that the development proposed would not add to the existing parking problems identified by the local residents' group. Against the policy context, which speaks of setting maximum rather than minimum parking provision, it would be unreasonable to withhold permission on the grounds of inadequate parking provision being made.

Design and scale

- 6.8 The proposed building would be located a short distance to the southeast of the existing sports hall. It is three-storey with a curved roof intended to maximise northern light, but reduce solar gain through south facing windows. In plan form it is significantly smaller than the sports hall and the workshop buildings at the College of Technology. It will not be dominant in terms of height when viewed against recent developments at the adjoining campus and I consider the design appropriate.
- 6.9 The building would be over 90 metres from the nearest dwelling in Aylestone Grange and would not adversely affect residential amenity.

Other issues

- 6.10 Concern has been expressed at the potential impact of development upon the habitat of Great Crested Newts. The Council's ecologist has confirmed that the threat to the habitat is negligible, largely due to the type and characteristics of the intervening area - a car park.

Conclusion

- 6.11 The development would improve the standard of classroom provision at the Sixth Form by allowing removal of the existing sub-standard provision, identified as an area for improvement in the recently published Ofsted report.
- 6.12 The development would not increase the propensity for student parking within nearby residential areas and would in fact increase the existing parking provision for staff from 78 to 94 spaces.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

- 1. A01 (Time limit for commencement (full permission)).**

Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- 2. C01 (Samples of external materials).**

Reason: To ensure that the materials harmonise with the surroundings so as to ensure that the development complies with the requirements of Policy DR1 of Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.

- 3. G10 (Landscaping scheme).**

Reason: In order to maintain the visual amenities of the area and to conform with Policy LA6 of Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.

- 4. H13 (Access, turning area and parking).**

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure the free flow of traffic using the adjoining highway and to conform with the requirements of Policy T11 of Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan

- 5. H27 (Parking for site operatives).**

Reason: To prevent indiscriminate parking in the interests of highway safety and to conform with the requirements of Policy DR3 of Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan

- 6. H29 (Secure covered cycle parking provision).**

Reason: To ensure that there is adequate provision for secure cycle accommodation within the application site, encouraging alternative modes of

transport in accordance with both local and national planning policy and to conform with the requirements of Policy DR3 of Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.

7. H30 (Travel plans).

Reason: In order to ensure that the development is carried out in combination with a scheme aimed at promoting the use of a range of sustainable transport initiatives and to conform with the requirements of Policy DR3 of Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.

Informatives:

- 1. N19 - Avoidance of doubt - Approved Plans.
- 2. N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of PP/LBC/CAC.

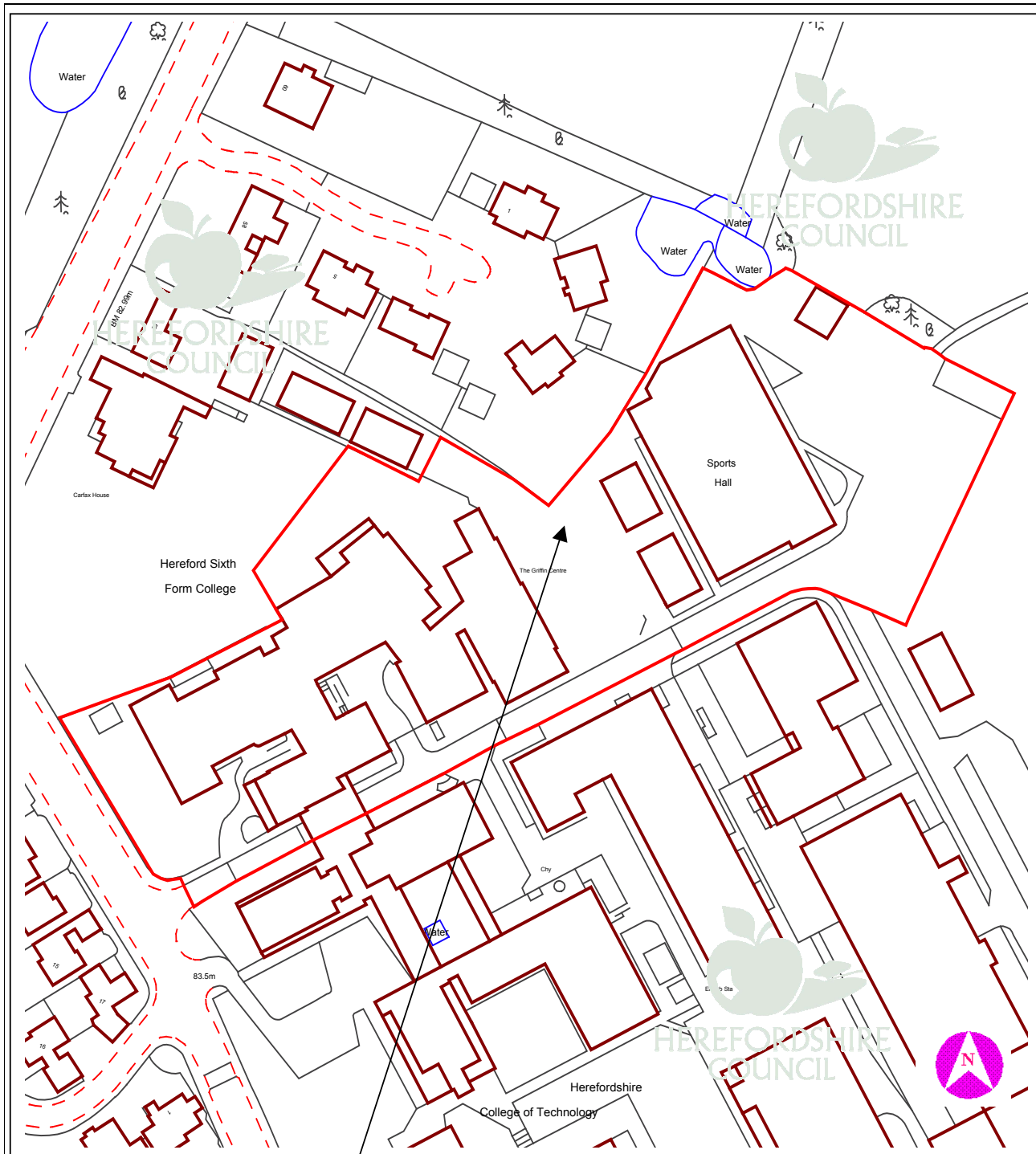
Decision:

Notes:

.....

Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.



This copy has been produced specifically for Planning purposes. No further copies may be made.

APPLICATION NO: DCCE2008/0626/F

SCALE : 1 : 1250

SITE ADDRESS : Hereford Sixth Form College, Folly Lane, Hereford, Herefordshire, HR1 1LU

Based upon the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Herefordshire Council. Licence No: 100024168/2005