



## Report of the Chief Planning Officer

### *PLANS PANEL CENTRAL*

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> August 2009

**Subject: APPLICATIONS 09/02237/OT & 09/02239/CA – Demolition of the former gymnasium and existing lecture theatre and erection of 3 buildings with ancillary parking and landscaping. A separate concurrent conservation area consent application has been submitted for the demolition of the gymnasium.**

#### **APPLICANT**

The University of Leeds

#### **DATE VALID**

8<sup>th</sup> June 2009

#### **TARGET DATE**

7<sup>th</sup> September 2009

#### **Electoral Wards Affected:**

Hyde Park & Woodhouse

(Ward Members consulted referred to in report)

#### **Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

##### **09/02237/OT**

Defer and Delegate approval to the Chief Planning Officer subject to the conditions specified below (and any others which might be considered appropriate), the completion of a legal agreement within 3 months from the date of resolution unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Chief Planning Officer, to include the obligations as specified in the Appraisal section below, Main Issue 5

##### **09/02239/CA**

Defer and Delegate approval to the Chief Planning Officer subject to the conditions specified below (and any others which might be considered appropriate)

#### **Conditions (Application ref: 09/02239/CA)**

1. Time Limit.
2. Demolition not to take place until a contract for redevelopment of the first phase of the site has been signed.

### **Conditions (Application ref: 09/02237/OT)**

1. Time limit for implementation
2. Temporary car park use to commence with the development of building A and to cease operating on first occupation of building A to ensure it remains temporary and does not prejudice the landscaping proposals for the campus green.
3. Building C is not to be occupied until the central service road is relocated to the south of the site to ensure its delivery in accordance with the approved masterplan.
4. Submission of reserved details applications for buildings B and C (access, appearance, landscaping).
5. Submission of a phasing plan for development of buildings B and C.
6. Development of reserved matters details in accordance with the agreed design code
7. Provision of typical 1:20 detailed elevations for material joints, windows, entrances, eaves, reveals and soffits to each building.
8. Full details of the following specific works are required in the interest of visual amenity and use of the public spaces: roof top plant screen; the roller shutter to the basement car park; the canopy column supports; the proposed finishes to the retaining walls within the site; the external opening and louver for the biomass fuel delivery chute; design of the ventilation grilles to the basement car park; and the barrier control details at the Moorland Road and Clarendon exit and entrance points.
9. Full details of proposed site boundary treatments to Belle Vue Road and Moorland Road including the making good of new wall openings
10. Samples of all external hard surfacing materials to be agreed.
11. Sample panel of all external materials to be approved, including junction details between louvers, windows, metal cladding and brickwork.
12. Prevention of mud/grit/dust nuisance during construction works.
13. Full details of hard/soft landscaping to be submitted.
14. Implementation of landscaping.
15. Landscape management
16. 1:20 scale details of tree pits to proposed trees including irrigation details
17. Provision of tree report with protection measures for retained trees and details of replacement planting for development of buildings B and C
18. Full details of cycle and motor cycle parking facilities for each phase of development .
19. Details of contaminated land site investigation work and full remedial measures
20. Details of external vents, flue pipes and excressences.
21. Times of day during which construction can take place (7.30am to 7pm Mon-Fri, 9am to 6pm Saturday, not on Sundays or Bank Holidays).
22. Full Details of construction management measures for buildings B and C including contractors' cabins and parking, location of site hoardings to protect passing pedestrians, contractors' vehicle routes to and from the site and location of construction access.
23. Details of surface water drainage works including sustainable drainage techniques, reduction of flow rates and details of on-site water storage to be provided.
24. Provision of 3m easement to the water main entering the site
25. Requirement to deliver the proposed sustainability measures (Breeam rating "Very Good" for building A, "Excellent" for buildings B and C unless otherwise agreed in writing and provision and control of biomass boiler use and proposed energy consumption standard for building A)
26. Full construction details of the temporary car park and its method of removal to ensure future potential for tree and grass planting is not jeopardized.
27. Full details of proposed ecological and wildlife protection and enhancement measures
28. Restriction on permitted development rights to interchange between building C archive use and another class D1 use.

It should be noted that conditions 2, 3, 8,16, 25, 26 and 27 are non-standard conditions and if further clarification is needed on their purpose this can be provided verbally at Plans Panel.

**Reasons for approval:** The applications are considered to comply with policies listed in Section 8 below of the UDP Review, and having regard to all other material considerations, as such the applications are recommended for approval.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION:**

The applications are brought to Plans Panel because they relate to 3 of the 27 potential development sites put forward by the University as part of their overall Strategic Development Framework for the campus, which was presented to Members on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2008. They also represent major proposals for 3 buildings with associated landscape improvements covering a site area of 1.7ha, which have been the subject of a pre-application presentation to Plans Panel on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2009. Members asked questions about the roof design, use of finishing materials, the relationship of the law school to the site frontages and the extent of the roof top plant. The overall Member view was that the design, siting, form and access of the Law School was acceptable but they wanted to see a sample of the proposed brick.

## **2.0 PROPOSAL:**

Consent is being sought for full details relating to a new School of Law (building A) to be sited in the north west corner of the site and for 2 further buildings in outline – an educational use building (building B) to the south of the proposed School of Law and a document Archive Store (building C) to be erected adjacent to the southern frontage with Woodsley Road. A design code has been prepared for buildings B and C to guide the development of reserved matters details. The primary objective has been to ensure that the code sets the principles for 3 related collegiate style buildings.

### Building A

The area for the School of Law contains an existing 69 space surface car park and gymnasium building. It is proposed to demolish the gymnasium and erect a part 3 and part 4 storey building including a basement car park which extends to become the ground floor of the building as the site level falls steeply southwards. This level of the building also houses the proposed biomass boiler which would generate about 48% of the building's energy demands.

The School of Law would provide teaching spaces including a 100 seat lecture theatre, staff offices, research, seminar and study areas, a library and a "moot" court. The main entrance to the building would be to its eastern side, facing a central open space within the western campus. Pedestrian access would be from Moorland Road to the north and from Clarendon Road to the east (across the central green space). The basement car park would comprise 59 car parking spaces and 20 cycle parking spaces with access and egress off Belle Vue Road, via a swipe card barrier control. The total floorspace including the basement car park would be 6,200 sq.m. Servicing and deliveries to the building would be to the south side of the building using the existing access routes from Clarendon Road and across the campus green including delivery of the biomass fuel. However refuse collection would take place from Belle Vue Road due to the location of the internal bin store.

The building design comprises a rectangular building footprint with a flat roof finish. A roof top plant area is also included. The building proposes a limited palette of external finishing materials - predominantly masonry elevations to its northern, eastern and western sides (a stone coloured brick is being proposed) and curtain wall glazing to its southern side but returning for part of the way along its eastern and western sides. In addition a copper clad element would be provided midway up the south-west corner of the building and an external canopy supported by a colonnade of steel columns is proposed to the eastern side of the building.

A concurrent application for Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of the gymnasium has been submitted. This also includes details of the making good of the northern gable end and roof to the Lecture Theatre which is physically attached to the gymnasium. It will be given a blockwork and render finish.

### Building B

Building B is to be sited on the existing Lecture Theatre site adjacent to the proposed Law School, which will be demolished. Consent is only being sought for the scale and layout of the building at this stage with the details for the access, appearance and landscaping reserved for later approval. The building would provide up to 2,975 m<sup>2</sup> of accommodation with the building height being no higher than the proposed Law School. Its eastern building line would align with the eastern building line of building A and it would be set 12m away from the southern side of building A. There would be a 5m set back from the boundary with Belle Vue Road. The design code stipulates the building will be terraced to Belle Vue Road to lessen its potential mass to this frontage (this is indicated as a further set back of 5 m on the master plan – providing a 10m set back overall from the Belle Vue Road frontage), would be accessed off the central green space, would have a minimum height of no less than one storey below building A and would incorporate elements of the architectural language and materials proposed for the School of Law, including the continuation of the external canopy feature, subject to the specifics of the internal layout and building use.

### Building C

This will be a University Archive Building. It would be sited within the southern edge of the green space, adjacent to the bank of trees fronting Woodsley Road. The building would provide 2600 m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace and would be no greater in height than the proposed School of Law. Consent is being sought for the scale of development only at this stage with the details of the access, appearance, exact layout and landscaping reserved for later approval. At this stage flexibility is being sought in the exact location of the building with 4 possibilities being indicated on the masterplan. The design code stipulates that its position would maintain views across the campus green from the Woodsley Road entrance towards the School of Law, it would have a minimum height of no less than one storey below building A, would be accessed off the central green space, and would use matching brickwork to the School of Law for its plinth with its upper floors clad in metal to match the metal cladding element to the School of Law.

The application also proposes landscaped works to provide an enhanced campus green space. These include relocation of the central service road to the south side creating an opportunity to provide a unified central space. This will be dependent upon the implementation of building C. A double row of trees is proposed to the perimeter of the greenspace and a diagonal pedestrian and cycle route is proposed between the Woodsley Road entrance and the School of Law. It is also proposed to provide an area of more formal landscaping with opportunity for seating between building C and the campus green and between buildings A and B, adjacent to Belle Vue Road. An area of green roof is also indicated between building A and B over the lower level lecture theatre adjacent to Belle Vue Road. The perimeter approaches to the buildings would also provide enhanced cycle parking (36-40 spaces) and 7 new disabled car parking spaces (these would replace an existing 8 car parking spaces on the site). The design code also stipulates that the campus green proposals should screen views of the roof top plant to the leisure centre (located to the south-west of the site) which due to the significant ground level changes is seen at a similar level to the campus green.

It is also proposed to provide 77 temporary car parking spaces on the northern half of the greenspace to replace the existing car parking affected by development works and to make

alterations to the campus service road and entrance barriers to enable two way traffic movement during the construction of the School of Law. The temporary car park will be removed upon completion of the School of Law.

As part of the consideration of the application proposals the University has also agreed to provide improved pedestrian and cycle links between the Moorland Road entrance and the existing network in Woodhouse Moor to the north.

There is also a commitment in the University's Strategic Development Framework to carry out additional public realm enhancement works to University Road within the wider city centre campus to compensate for further development on the western campus green (building C). Due to a bringing forward of the programme for building C the University is now seeking to change the delivery arrangements for public realm enhancements and are proposing the relocation of the western campus service road and enhancements to the former cooling pond area adjacent to the Roger Stevens building in compensation for building C.

The application has been supported by the following documents:

Transport Statement

Design and Access Statement

Travel Plan

Statement of Community Involvement

Ecological Biodiversity statement

Bat Survey

Demolition Statement

Tree Survey

Acoustic Report

3D Visuals

Sun Path/Shadow analysis

Planning Statement

Statement of Planning Obligations

Biomass, lighting, utilities, ventilation and sustainability statements

Site waste management plan, land contamination and drainage statements

### **3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:**

The site forms part of the former Leeds Grammar School site, which is now occupied by the Leeds University and known as the western campus. It is bounded by Moorland, Belle Vue, Woodsley and Clarendon Roads. The site levels drop generally from north to south,

reflecting the surrounding topography of this part of the city, and significantly in the south-west corner due to the built up level of the campus green.

The western campus comprises the former Grammar School buildings on its northern side, an ancillary gymnasium and lecture theatre building and surface car park to its western side, the modern innovation hub and business school buildings fronting Clarendon Road, a central open green space with pedestrian and vehicle routes through it and a belt of mature trees along the Woodsley Road boundary and around its south west corner. The application site boundary excludes the former Grammar School buildings and more recent developments along Clarendon Road but includes the rest of the western campus.

The site is characterised by high stone walls to the majority of its frontages. These and the original Grammar school buildings are grade II listed and the site lies within the Woodhouse - Moorlands Conservation area. It is also immediately adjacent to the University Precinct conservation area to the eastern side of Clarendon Road. The green space is identified as a protected playing pitch in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) due to its former use as school playing fields.

The immediate surroundings to the west, south and east are characterised by predominantly Victorian housing stock in a mixture of commercial, institutional and residential uses. To the north is the open park land of Woodhouse Moor. Also a University leisure centre is located immediately adjacent to the south-west corner of the site, but due to the significant level changes, its roof is at a similar level to the campus green.

#### **4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:**

1. Planning permission was granted in April 1999 for the erection of a detached 3 storey "innovation hub" building to the Clarendon Road (eastern) frontage, just to the south of the former grammar school building. This has been implemented (ref: 26/458/98/FU).
2. Planning permission was granted for a 4-storey business school to the south-eastern corner of the site in June 2006. This has been implemented. (ref 06/02083/FU). In mitigation for developing on the former school playing fields a section 106 obligation was secured to provide enhancement of sports facilities on Woodhouse Moor and public access to an enhanced green space on the site.
3. Planning permission was granted in June 2005 for the erection of a 3 storey building with basement car parking on the site of the proposed law school building . This has not been implemented and expires in June 2010. (ref 26/740/04/RE).
4. Outline planning permission was granted in April 2004 for the whole of the open grounds (c.1.5 hectares in area) to erect 4x three storey buildings arranged around landscaped gardens and a central open space with public access. The consent was not implemented and has now expired (ref: 26/87/01/OT).
5. Although not directly related to the site it should be noted that the University has also submitted applications for sites off Woodhouse Lane, for a new business and innovation centre on an existing University car park and a 607 space multi-storey car park to replace existing parking to be lost to campus wide developments. These are yet to be determined. (ref: 09/02351/FU and ref: 09/03060/FU respectively)

#### **5.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS:**

The proposal has been the subject of pre-application discussions between the Developer, their Architects and Local Authority Officers since December 2008. These discussions have focused on the access and traffic implications (particularly the servicing and operation of the biomass boiler), the position of the buildings in relation to the listed wall and the bank of

existing trees, the form and scale of the buildings, details of the elevational treatment and materials in relation to the proposed law school, the development of a design code for the outline buildings and the landscape treatment of the site including proposals for the central open space.

The applicant has also made a presentation to the planning sub-group of the North-West Area Committee (11/2/09). The key issues raised regarded the treatment of the elevations onto Belle Vue Road, the potential increase in traffic along Belle Vue Road and the landscaping proposals for the campus green. The applicant undertook a community consultation event on 13/3/09. 14 people attended and one questionnaire and 3 letters were sent to the applicant following the event. The questionnaire supported the proposals whereas the letters raised a number of concerns including the question whether the school of Law sat comfortably within the context of the conservation area and the potential for increase in traffic to the site.

## **6.0 PUBLIC/LOCAL RESPONSE:**

The application proposals have been advertised as a departure from the adopted Unitary Development Plan due to its protected playing pitch designation. It was advertised by site notices posted on 18/6/09 and a press notice in the Leeds Weekly News dated 25/6/2009.

Four letters of objection have been received from local residents raising the following concerns (summarised):

- The proposals do not enhance and are out of character with the conservation area
- The flat roof design is considered inappropriate for the existing pitched roof character
- The building should be finished in York stone to match the adjacent listed building
- The buildings are too tall and would dominate the adjacent listed building and the houses on Belle Vue Road
- The modern design would dominate an area of traditional Victorian housing
- There will be a loss of existing parking on the site and on Belle Vue Road but more traffic will be generated by the buildings resulting in increased parking pressure in the area
- Traffic and parking will increase in Belle Vue Road due to the proposed access to the basement car park
- The rubbish should be collected from within the site and not from Belle Vue Road
- The archive building is an enormous windowless edifice. Existing buildings should be used for archive purposes, not new buildings built on greenspace.
- What does contamination mean in the context of the former school playing fields
- Most residents were not aware of the consultation event that took place on 13/3/2009
- The University's development plans are resulting in the loss of a significant number of campus wide car parking spaces. How will future car parking needs be catered for ?
- The proposed pedestrian crossing at the Woodsley Road/Clarendon Road junction will result in the loss of on-street parking spaces outside the Samaritans Headquarters exacerbating existing parking problems
- The proposals do not improve public transport in the area
- Increased parking and traffic will be detrimental to the character of the conservation area
- The gymnasium is a charming building that blends in with the conservation area and its demolition will negatively impact on the character of the conservation area

- The Law School should be only 2 storeys high or step down the steep slope of Belle Vue Road as the existing houses do on the opposite side of the road
- The location of the basement car park entrance would cause noise and light pollution to the residents living opposite. The entrance should be off Moorland Road
- Trees should be planted to the Belle Vue Road frontage to mitigate the impact of the Law School
- The lights in the Law School should not be left on all night causing light pollution to the adjoining residents.

Response: The appraisal section responds to the comments on the merits of the buildings to be demolished, the proposed building design, and the likely traffic impact. With regard to the other comments:

- all deliveries and servicing will take place from the campus green side apart from waste collection for the law school which will take place at grade from Belle Vue Road due to the location of the bin stores. The likely impact of this would be no more than standard rubbish collection for houses in the street in terms of noise and frequency and therefore is considered acceptable.
- No site investigative information has been submitted on ground contamination for most of the site and because the site has been subject to development in the past (all be it a school use) an assessment needs to be undertaken to establish what if any risks are posed by ground conditions to environmental safety and appropriate remediation measures need to be provided as part of the development. These details will be controlled by condition.
- The applicant has advertised (Yorkshire Evening Post -9/3/09) and run a public event (13/3/09) in line with the guidance contained within the Leeds Statement of Community Involvement 2007 and whilst turn out was low (14 people attended), this is not considered to be directly linked with any failure on the part of the applicant to attempt to consult with the local community.
- The University has about 2,200 campus wide car parking spaces. It is not proposed to increase this provision as part of the campus wide developments but it is acknowledged that the bulk of this has to be reprovided including the provision of a multi-storey car park for which a separate application has recently been received from the University. This level of provision along with public transport and travel plan initiatives will help to ensure that the University's campus development programme does not adversely impact on existing highway conditions.
- The provision of a pedestrian and cycle crossing at the Woodsley Road/Clarendon Road junction forms part of the Council's planned highway improvement works. Although some on-street short stay spaces may be affected by the works the availability of significant alternative short stay parking and widespread resident priority parking controls in the area would mean that facilities for residents and visitors would not be unduly affected. Also the new crossing would deliver highway safety benefits for this location which has seen 4 serious accidents in the last 5 years.
- Although there would be noise generated by cars accessing and exiting the basement car park, the likely levels of movement even at peak times (about 20 two way movements per hour) should avoid queuing in the road and the level of noise should not break into the residential properties on the opposite side of the road and would be commensurate with general use of the road at these times. When residents are most likely to be at home (at evening and weekend times) the law school car park would be subject to very low levels of use and there should be no disturbance whatsoever.



- At ground level to Belle Vue Road, the basement car park would have no windows and a roller shutter to the entrance area. The adjoining store rooms and lecture theatre would have only doors and a fire escape and high level windows respectively. Also the lighting to the upper floor office spaces will be daylight and occupancy controlled. It is therefore considered that there would be no adverse impact in terms of potential light pollution for residents in the houses sited 35m to the west.
- Although trees cannot be planted to the Belle Vue Road frontage of the law school due to the 5m “well” that would be created between the building and the boundary wall, it is considered that provision of a 3m set back behind a 2m plus boundary wall and provision of a “green” (planted) wall adjacent to the basement car park entrance will help to reduce the dominance and soften the appearance of the law school on the Belle Vue Road frontage.

## **7.0 CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES:**

### **Statutory:**

**English Heritage** – No comment to make in this case

**The Victorian Society** – Support the applications. The School of Law design quality is high and is considered to enhance the conservation area. It also respects the listed former grammar school buildings in terms of height and location. There is no objection to the demolition of the former gymnasium and the principle of two further buildings to follow the Law School with a well landscaped green is also acceptable.

**Sport England-** No objection. The proposed development on the protected former playing field (building C) is mitigated by the already agreed enhancements to sports facilities on Woodhouse Moor.

### **Non-statutory:**

**West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (Metro)** – Has no objection. Seek a public transport contribution towards the New Generation Transport scheme in line with the Council’s adopted policy and seek provision of real time information within the communal areas of each building. Response: The University thinks provision of real time information displays as requested is not appropriate in this case. It is accepted that the provision of travel information packs at the start of term for each student and the internet connections available in each building would provide a similar level of access to bus time information.

**Contaminated Land** – No objection subject to standard conditions controlling the details of the site investigations and any necessary remediation works

**Disabled Access Officer** – With regard to the law school the number of disabled spaces in the basement should be increased from 1 to 3 spaces and the single surface disabled parking space is not to the correct design standard. The external steps should be to the latest building standards guidance (BS 8300:2009) and the canopy columns and glazed curtain walling at ground level require contrasting visual manifestations. It would also be preferred if a revolving door was not used to the main entrance since this presents particular difficulties to some groups of disabled people. Response: The applicant has altered the surface spaces to provide 5 disabled parking spaces which will be opposite the entrance to the law school and increases provision to a total of 6 disabled spaces for the building. The revolving door has side pass doors which meet the latest access guidance and the supporting documents also confirm that the building design will comply with the current building regulations for disabled access design.

**Mains Drainage Officer**– Conditions have been requested to control the design of the drainage details

**Public transport Officer** – Seeks a contribution of £73,573 for building A and £35,315 for building B towards the provision of strategic transport improvements in line with the Council's adopted policies. A contribution is not sought for the archive building C because the likely trip rates to be generated by this use would not exceed the thresholds set in the adopted policies. The use will remain restricted to an archive store by planning condition.

**Nature Conservation Officer** – Has requested imposition of a condition to control full details of the proposed bio-diversity enhancements including details of the bird and bat boxes. Has also requested provision of green roofs to buildings B and C which the University has rejected. Response: The site currently is assessed to provide low ecological and biodiversity value. The proposals for bat and bird boxes, provision of enhanced planting areas to the boundaries ( 4x Italian Alders and areas of shrub and climbing plants), significant tree planting (lime and wild cherry) within the campus green and enhancement to the existing wooded southern slope will help to enhance the ecology and biodiversity of the site. It is therefore considered that green roofs to the buildings cannot be insisted upon in this case.

**Sustainability Officer** – The application has focussed on the key sustainability issues of energy consumption and CO2 emissions for the School of Law which includes proposals for a biomass boiler and has a projected Breeam "Very Good" rating. The University's Sustainability Brief aspires to Breeam "Excellent" and this should be applied to the outline buildings B and C. This is considered acceptable and delivery of these measures should be controlled by condition.

**Police Architectural Liaison Officer** – The proposals have been designed in consultation with the University's Crime Reduction Team.

**Highways Officer** – The proposal does not raise road safety concerns and is considered acceptable in highway terms subject to conditions or a section 106 agreement to control the following measures:

- provision of the travel plan measures and monitoring fee including provision of 2 car club spaces within the vicinity of the site and provision of enhanced cycle parking facilities as proposed.
- funding of the necessary alterations to the traffic regulation orders on Belle Vue Road to allow for the proposed basement car park access
- alterations to the existing site barriers to accommodate cycle use and provision of a cycle route through the site
- provision of an enhanced pedestrian and cycle link to the existing network on Woodhouse Moor from the Moorland Road entrance
- provision of a strategic public transport infrastructure contribution in line with adopted policy
- provision of a £20,000 contribution towards extending the existing parking permit scheme in the area should on-street parking problems become apparent following the development.

Response – The applicant has confirmed agreement to the above measures in principle although at the time of writing the report the details of the location of the car club spaces and the precise nature of the enhanced pedestrian and cycle link to Woodhouse Moor remain to be agreed.

**Yorkshire Water** – No objection subject to conditions to provide a 3m easement to the existing water mains which enter the site and the full drainage details.

**Environmental Protection Team** – Seek conditions to control the hours of demolition and construction to between 0730 to 1900 hours during weekdays and 0900 to 1800 hours on

Saturday with no operations on Sundays and Bank Holidays and the details of any ventilation and plant in order to protect the amenities of the area.

## **8.0 PLANNING POLICIES:**

### National planning guidance

PPS1 *Delivering Sustainable Development*

PPG13 *Transport*

PPG15 *Planning and the Historic Environment*

PPG17 *Sport and Recreation*

### Adopted Unitary Development Plan (Review 2006) (UDP)

The site is identified as a protected playing pitch in the UDP and lies within the Moorlands Conservation Area and adjacent to the University Precinct Conservation Area.

The most relevant policies in the UDP are:

GP11 and GP12: Sustainable design principles

N6: seeks to protect former playing pitches from development

N12: seeks to achieve fundamental urban design objectives.

N13: seeks to achieve a high standard of building design.

N15, N16, N17: seeks to preserve the character of listed buildings

N19: seeks to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area

BD2: seeks to ensure that the design of new buildings complement and where possible enhance existing vistas, skylines and landmarks.

BD3: seeks to ensure that all new buildings provide disabled access

BD4: seeks to minimise the impact of plant and machinery.

BD5: seeks to ensure a satisfactory level of amenity for occupants and surroundings.

T2C: requires provision of a travel plan

T2D: requirement for public transport contributions

T7: promotes new and improved cycle routes

T5: seeks to ensure satisfactory and secure access and provision for pedestrians and cyclists.

T6: seeks to ensure satisfactory access for disabled users.

T24: seeks parking provision in accordance with guidelines in Appendix 9 of the UDP.

## **9.0 MAIN ISSUES**

1. Principle of the development

2. Impact on the character of the conservation area and setting of the listed building

3. Traffic and parking impact

4. Public Realm enhancements

5. Section 106 obligations

## **10.0 APPRAISAL**

### 1. Principle of the development

The campus greenspace is protected from development under policy N6 of the UDP as former playing fields, unless compensatory enhancement to sporting facilities can be provided in the vicinity of the site or as part of the development. The granting of a previous outline consent in 2004 for development on the greenspace and the subsequent approval for the business school towards the Clarendon Road frontage in 2006 along with the related Section 106 contributions to enhance sports facilities on Woodhouse Moor has set the precedent for accepting development on this site. It is considered that with the implementation of the business school consent and receipt of the financial contribution for the Woodhouse Moor improvements that the playing field policy issue has been addressed and resolved.

The proposed educational and archive store uses clearly relate to the primary function of this University site and would be located adjacent to the UDP designated Education Quarter and city centre boundary. The immediate area also comprises a mix of institutional, commercial and residential uses which are characteristic of this edge of city centre location. The principle of the proposed uses is therefore considered acceptable.

## 2. Impact on the character of the conservation area and setting of the listed building

The existing gymnasium and lecture theatre provide rendered and stone elevations respectively. They are 2 storey high functional buildings of a more modern design and age than the surrounding Victorian architecture. They are not considered to have any significant architectural merit and their demolition is considered acceptable, subject to appropriate redevelopment on the site.

The site contextual elevations help to demonstrate that the position and scale of the proposed buildings would respect the scale and setting of the surrounding buildings. It is considered that the most prominent impact would be to Belle Vue Road and Moorland Road.

The roof height of the proposed law school is similar to the eaves level of the listed building (12 to 15m to the east) and similar to the ridge height of the terraced houses on the opposite side of Belle Vue Road (35m to the west). Along Moorland Road the Law School would be seen as a termination to the run of the former grammar school buildings and would be of a compatible scale.

Although taller than the eaves height to the terraces on Belle Vue Road and without a step down the slope of Belle Vue Road as the terraced houses do, the Law School would form part of an institutional site characterised by larger scale buildings whose impact is mitigated in part by the high stone boundary wall and gaps to surrounding properties.

The Law School would form one of three buildings along the eastern side of Belle Vue Road with 12m and 22m gaps respectively between the buildings and part of its lower floor would be designed to continue the characteristic boundary enclosure to Belle Vue Road with the upper floors of the building set 3m off this boundary. The proposed Building B would be set back at 5m from Belle Vue Road with a further 5m set back to the upper floors to reduce its dominance, as the ground levels fall southwards along Belle Vue Road. The set back to building B would also allow continuation of the stone boundary wall with tree planting behind. It is considered that this design approach would respect the existing grain and character of the site and adequately mitigate against the potentially dominating impact on Belle Vue Road.

The height of building C would be similar to the existing business school (sited 12 to 20m to the east) and it would be sited over 40m away from the terraced houses on Woodsley Road to the south and well screened by the existing bank of trees to this frontage.

Consent is being sought for the full details for the design of the Law School. A modern contemporary design approach has been adopted which seeks to be sympathetic to the character of the surrounding Victorian properties not just through compatible scale and setting but also through interpretation and reflection of the key design elements of the surrounding Victorian properties in a modern way. The key features of the building in this respect are considered to be:

- the use of a limited palette of materials – it is fundamentally a masonry building with a glazed southern end
- a clear eaves line reflects the strong traditional eaves definition
- The provision of punched windows (20cm recess) in a masonry enclosure with a vertical emphasis reflects the approach to fenestration to the listed building

- The provision of a mix of large and small scale windows reflects the rhythm of the windows and bays to the houses along Belle Vue Road
- The use of a stone coloured brick would compliment the stone material to the listed building and also reflects the scale and type of material used in the terraced houses.

One of the comments raised at the pre-application presentation to Plans Panel and by local residents relates to the proposed use of a flat roof design. It is considered that the flat roof is compatible with the appearance of the more recent developments on the western campus and is characteristic of modern architecture generally within the city centre. Modern technology has ensured that flat roofs now last and they are reflective of buildings of the current period. The adoption of a flat roof also helps to make the most efficient use of the site whilst keeping down the scale of development so that it is compatible with the scale of surrounding buildings.

Members had also questioned the amount of roof top plant area (indicated as measuring 24.5 m long x 13.5m wide with a 2.5m high enclosure, sited towards the southern half of the building). The architects have tried to minimise its impact as far as possible. The plant is restricted mostly to air handling units which is ideally located on the roof and has been positioned within a “well” to minimise views of it from the approaches to the site. It would be most apparent when the building is approached from the south-east corner of the site , across the campus green. To further mitigate its impact a louvered screen is proposed to simplify its appearance. It is considered that in this case the roof top plant would only be seen obliquely from the surrounding area and would not unduly detract from the composition and scale of the building. The use of a visual screen will also avoid an unduly cluttered appearance.

Overall it is considered that the design of the Law School would result in an elegant modern building that is compatible with the quality of the surrounding buildings.

Buildings B and C would not exceed the height of the Law School and would be designed so that they keep to within one storey height of it. This along with the design code commitment to using the same palate of materials and architectural language to the Law School would help to create a related collegiate style theme focused around the campus green. This would be compatible with the unified Victorian character of predominantly 3 storey properties within the adjacent conservation area.

Building C is to be an archive store and its function would mean there is likely to be a limited need for windows to the upper two floors. However commitment in the design code to use a matching brick to the Law School for the ground floor to the campus green and a matching metal cladding to the Law School for the upper two floors will help to integrate the building with the site context.

### 3. Traffic and parking impact

The proposals will result in a loss of 11 existing on-site parking spaces serving the University. These have to be considered in the context of a total of 2245 spaces serving the University campus (identified in a 2007 survey). The University parking spaces are generally restricted to staff and visitors only. Students are not allowed to park on campus. The parking spaces are managed through allocation of parking permits for which there is a charge. The management strategy for the campus parking also aims to leave vacant spaces to account for daily fluctuations in demand and car park turn over.

There will also be a loss of 6 general short stay (maximum 2 hour) car parking spaces on Belle Vue Road to provide adequate access arrangements to the basement car park and

accommodate the potential location of 2 car club spaces. This would still leave 44 short stay spaces immediately surrounding the site.

It is considered that the ongoing availability and management of significant parking facilities on campus along with the extensive resident priority parking restrictions in the area would ensure that the loss of the above parking spaces would not result in unacceptable parking conditions on the adjacent roads or impact on facilities for local people.

It is accepted that the proposals are likely to introduce more traffic to Belle Vue Road due to the new access to the basement car park. However based on a recent survey of traffic movements to and from the 455 space University car park off Woodhouse Lane (23/4/2009) an estimate can be made on the likely traffic movements to be generated by the car park access on Belle Vue Road on a pro rata basis.

It is estimated that during the morning period of 7.30am to 9.30am an average of 19 two-way movements can be expected per hour and that during the evening period of 4pm to 6pm an average of 23 two-way movements can be expected per hour. This level of traffic is considered acceptable in the context of a reasonably busy city centre route which will already be used by some people accessing the existing on-site car park and the fact that at evenings and weekends when residents are most likely to be at home the level of activity to the car park would be much lower.

The proposals would also make significant contributions towards public transport improvements, provide funding for expansion of parking controls in the area if deemed necessary due to the development impact, provide enhanced cycle and pedestrian facilities and fund car club spaces. The University is also committed to the adoption and on-going monitoring of an agreed travel plan for future occupiers of the site. These initiatives will help to encourage more sustainable modes of transport that will reduce reliance on the private car and will help to manage car parking demand and impact on the area.

#### 4. Public Realm enhancements

It is considered the scope of the landscaping works proposed for the central green , as described in the proposal section above, would result in a more attractive and welcoming greenspace that would encourage connection with the surrounding area and provide greater opportunities for sitting out and recreation. The proposed tree planting to the Moorland Road boundary would compensate for the loss of 3 existing trees in the north-west corner of the site and along with the climbing plants proposed for the section of green wall to the Belle Vue Road frontage will enhance the appearance of the site.

The relocation of the service road would only be provided in connection with the development of building C to avoid potentially abortive works to this area. This would help to provide a more unified greenspace without level changes and along with proposals to enhance the former cooling pond area adjacent to the Roger Stevens building (new paving, seating, lighting and fountains) it is considered adequate compensation for the loss of part of the existing greenspace to building C.

If buildings B and C are not implemented the University would still be required through the legal agreement to undertake landscape enhancements works to the greenspace upon expiry of the permission, as per the existing obligations tied to the development of the business school on the Clarendon Road frontage.

The proposed phasing for the development is to construct the Law School first with a site compound to the northern half of the greenspace and a temporary car park to replace the existing parking lost to the construction works. Although this would adversely affect the

appearance and use of the greenspace it would only be during the construction phase and would help to manage parking pressures in the area during this period.

#### 5. Section 106 obligations

The applicant has agreed to the following obligations:

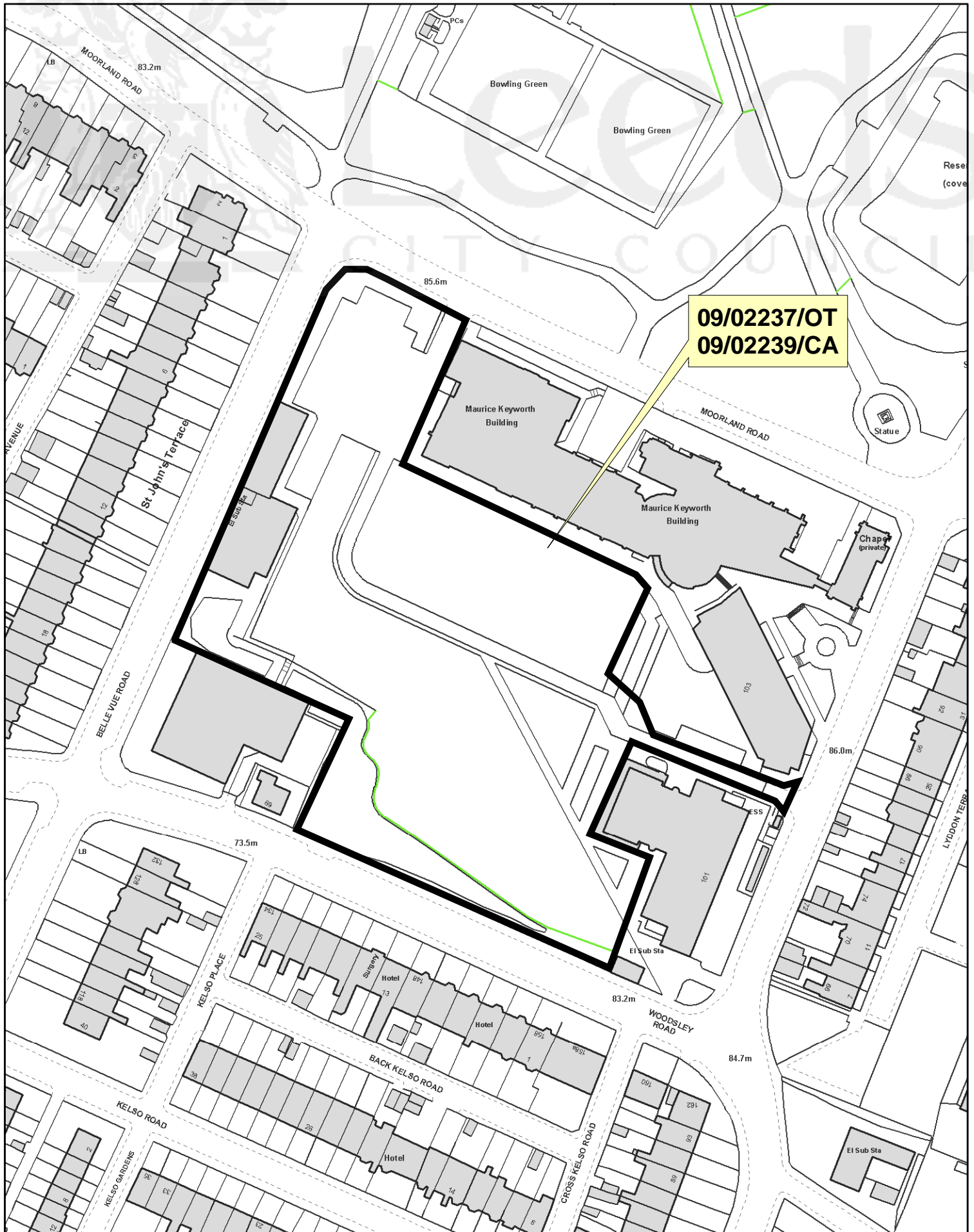
- funding of Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) should on-street parking become a nuisance/safety concern as a result of the development ( £20,000).
- Funding of the alteration to the TROs on Belle Vue Road to accommodate the new access arrangements
- the agreed travel plan measures including the evaluation fee (£2,500) and the funding of 2 on-street car club parking spaces
- the provision of enhanced pedestrian and cycle links to Woodhouse Moor
- a strategic public transport improvement contribution in line with adopted policy (this will be £73,573 for building A and £35,315 for building B).
- Support of local employment initiatives
- provision of permissive access rights to the enhanced greenspace and a cycle route through the site
- provision of landscaping enhancements to the former cooling pond next to the Roger Stevens building
- provision of enhanced landscaping to the greenspace if buildings B and C are not implemented, in line with previous consent ref 06/02083/FU.

#### **11.0 CONCLUSION**

The principle of development on the former school playing fields and provision of enhanced compensatory playing facilities within the vicinity has already been established and resolved by previous applications on the site. The proposal to provide 3 collegiate style modern buildings placed around an enhanced campus green would preserve and enhance the character of the site and this conservation area. The bulk of the existing car parking would be reprovided on site and along with measures to encourage use of more sustainable modes of transport this will help to ensure that there are no adverse highway and traffic impacts arising from the proposals. The public realm enhancements both on and off site will not only compensate for loss of some of the existing greenspace to building C but will provide a more attractive and varied space that will encourage greater public use of the site and enhance the ecology and biodiversity of the site. On balance the proposals are considered to comply with the Council's planning policies and subject to completion of a legal agreement to secure delivery of the above Section 106 obligations the applications are recommended for approval.

#### **Background Papers:**

Application and history files ref: 26/458/98/FU, 06/02083/FU, 26/740/04/RE, 09/02237/OT, 09/02239/CA) .



# CITY CENTRE PANEL I

Scale 1/ 1500

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