

Reference: 18/00019/FUL	Site: Thurrock Learning Campus High Street Grays Essex RM17 6TF
Ward: Grays Riverside	Proposal: Retention of the further education building for 5 years, until 4 August 2023, and modifications to the layout and amount of disabled car parking, cycle and motorcycle parking

Plan Number(s):		
Reference	Name	Received
001	Location Plan	4th January 2018
102	Existing Site Layout	4th January 2018
103	Proposed Site Layout	16th February 2018
001L REV 9	Floor Layout	4th January 2018
010E REV 4	Elevations	4th January 2018
404	Other	4th January 2018

<p>The application is also accompanied by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Statement • Design and Access Statement • Noise Report • Archaeological Excavation Report • Contaminated Land Report • Transport Statement • Travel Plan • External Lighting details 	
<p>Applicant: South Essex College c/o Lambert Smith Hampton</p>	<p>Validated: 15 January 2018</p> <p>Date of expiry: 16 April 2018</p>
<p>Recommendation: Approve, subject to conditions.</p>	

This application is scheduled for determination by the Council's Planning Committee because it is considered to have significant policy / strategic implications given the Council's corporate ambitions for Grays Town Centre, in accordance with the Constitution Chapter 5, Part 3 (b), 2.1 (a).

1.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

- 1.1 Full planning permission was granted on the 4th August 2008 for; ‘*Temporary college accommodation, disabled car parking, cycle parking, associated access and landscaping*’ (reference 08/00523/TTGFUL). The permission was then renewed through reference 13/00701/TEL for a further 5 years through an application for variation of condition 1 of the original 08/00523/TTGFUL. Reference 13/00701/TEL remains a live planning permission but expires on 4 August 2018.
- 1.2 This application therefore seeks the further retention of the further education building for another 5 years, until 4 August 2023.
- 1.3 A summary of the applicant’s Planning Statement with regard to the need for retention of this building is explained below:

The building subject of this application was required to provide education facilities in the area whilst the new college buildings to the north were being developed. The building is currently used for education purposes for providing logistics and transport courses for age groups 16-19 and through to adults. The building forms the main base for the College’s higher education centre in Thurrock.

The College is expanding the higher education offering by art, performance and design courses in partnership with the University of Arts London from this year onwards. In the medium term future the College intends to create larger and bespoke higher education centres in Thurrock and Southend with a new building in Thurrock adjacent to and expanding upon the building subject of this application, which would become the new higher education centre or provide alternative construction/engineering accommodation.

In addition to the education use the building provide a facility to the Council, community and college partners including the Essex Chamber of Commerce, short course for adults, apprenticeship programmes and bespoke programmes for business and industry.

1.1 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.2 The temporary buildings occupy a 1,500m² site located on the east side of the southern pedestrianised part of the High Street. Pedestrian access to the site is obtained via High Street, whilst vehicular access to the site can be obtained via Argent Street.

1.3 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

1.4 The following table provides the planning history:

Reference	Description	Decision
08/00523/TTGFUL	Temporary college accommodation (2490.5m ² GEA), disabled car parking, cycle parking, associated access and landscaping	Approved 04.08.2008
13/00701/ETL	Extension of time limit for planning application 08/00523/TTGFUL (Three Storey Further Education Building)	Approved 15.10.2013
18/00018/FUL	Retention of the further education building for 5 years, until 4 August 2023, cut back to north-west corner of building, infill of existing courtyard and modifications to the layout and amount of disabled car parking, cycle and motorcycle parking	Pending consideration

1.5 With regards to the existing college buildings on land to the north and east:

Reference	Description	Decision
11/50402/TTGFUL	Demolition and redevelopment for college campus comprising one three-storey and one four-storey building of 13,698 square metres (Use Class D1), ancillary cafe of 680 square metres, 96 car parking spaces, public open space, access and associated development	Approved 08.02.2012

1.6 CONSULTATION AND REPRESENTATIONS

1.7 Detailed below is a summary of the consultation responses received. The full version of each consultation response can be viewed on the Council's website via public access at the following link: www.thurrock.gov.uk/planning

1.8 PUBLICITY:

This application has been advertised by way of individual neighbour notification letters, press advert and public site notices which has been displayed nearby.

There have been no representation received.

1.9 EDUCATION:

No objection.

1.10 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH:

No objection.

1.11 HIGHWAYS:

No objection.

1.12 HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION ADVISOR:

No objection.

1.13 REGENERATION:

Support the application as the development would be consistent with the Grays Development Framework.

1.14 TRAVEL PLAN CO-ORDINATOR:

No objection but requires further information within the Travel Plan.

1.15 POLICY CONTEXT

1.16 National Planning policy Framework

The NPPF was published on 27th March 2012. Paragraph 13 of the Framework sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 196 of the Framework confirms the tests in s.38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and s.70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and that the Framework is a material consideration in planning decisions. Paragraph 197 states that in assessing and determining development proposals, local planning authorities should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The following headings and content of the NPPF are relevant to the consideration of the current proposals.

- Core Planning Principles
- 2. Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- 4. Promoting sustainable transport
- 7. Requiring good design
- 8. Promoting healthy communities
- 12. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

1.17 Planning Policy Guidance

In March 2014 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) launched its planning practice guidance web-based resource. This was accompanied by a Written Ministerial Statement which includes a list of the previous planning policy guidance documents cancelled when the NPPF was launched. PPG contains 48 subject areas, with each area containing several subtopics. Those of particular relevance to the determination of this planning application comprise:

- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- Design
- Determining a planning application
- Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- Noise
- Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space
- Planning obligations
- Transport evidence bases in plan making and decision taking
- Travel plans, transport assessments and statements in decision-taking
- Use of Planning Conditions

1.18 Local Planning Policy Thurrock Local Development Framework (2011)

The Council adopted the “Core Strategy and Policies for the Management of Development Plan Document” in December 2011. The following Core Strategy policies also apply to the proposals:

OVERARCHING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT POLICY

- OSDP1 (Promotion of Sustainable Growth and Regeneration in Thurrock)¹

SPATIAL POLICIES

- CSSP2 (Sustainable Employment Growth)
- CSSP3 (Sustainable Infrastructure)

THEMATIC POLICIES

- CSTP7 (Network of Centres)
- CSTP8 (Viability and Vitality of Existing Centres)²
- CSTP12 (Education and Learning)
- CSTP14 (Transport in the Thurrock Urban Area)³
- CSTP22 (Thurrock Design)
- CSTP23 (Thurrock Character and Distinctiveness)²
- CSTP24 (Heritage Assets and the Historic Environment)

POLICIES FOR MANAGEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT

- PMD1 (Minimising Pollution and Impacts on Amenity)²
- PMD2 (Design and Layout)²
- PMD4 (Historic Environment)²
- PMD8 (Parking Standards)³
- PMD9 (Road Network Hierarchy)
- PMD10 (Transport Assessments and Travel Plans)²
- PMD12 (Sustainable Buildings)²
- PMD16 (Developer Contributions)²

[Footnote: 1New Policy inserted by the Focused Review of the LDF Core Strategy. 2Wording of LDF-CS Policy and forward amended either in part or in full by the Focused Review of the LDF Core Strategy. 3Wording of forward to LDF-CS Policy amended either in part or in full by the Focused Review of the LDF Core Strategy].

1.19 Focused Review of the LDF Core Strategy (2014)

This Review was commenced in late 2012 with the purpose to ensure that the Core Strategy and the process by which it was arrived at are not fundamentally at odds with the NPPF. There are instances where policies and supporting text are recommended for revision to ensure consistency with the NPPF. The Review was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination in August 2013. An Examination in Public took place in April 2014. The Inspector concluded that the amendments were sound subject to recommended changes. The Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development Focused Review: Consistency with National Planning Policy Framework Focused Review was adopted by Council on the 28th February 2015.

1.20 Draft Site Specific Allocations and Policies DPD

The Consultation Draft "Issues and Options" DPD was subject to consultation

commencing during 2012. The Draft Site Specific Allocations DPD 'Further Issues and Options' was the subject of a further round of consultation during 2013. The Planning Inspectorate is advising local authorities not to continue to progress their Site Allocation Plans towards examination whether their previously adopted Core Strategy is no longer in compliance with the NPPF. This is the situation for the Borough.

1.21 Thurrock Core Strategy Position Statement and Approval for the Preparation of a New Local Plan for Thurrock

The above report was considered at the February meeting 2014 of the Cabinet. The report highlighted issues arising from growth targets, contextual changes, impacts of recent economic change on the delivery of new housing to meet the Borough's Housing Needs and ensuring consistency with Government Policy. The report questioned the ability of the Core Strategy Focused Review and the Core Strategy 'Broad Locations & Strategic Sites' to ensure that the Core Strategy is up-to-date and consistent with Government Policy and recommended the 'parking' of these processes in favour of a more wholesale review. Members resolved that the Council undertake a full review of Core Strategy and prepare a new Local Plan.

1.22 Thurrock Local Plan

In February 2014 the Council embarked on the preparation of a new Local Plan for the Borough. Between February and April 2016 the Council consulted formally on an Issues and Options (Stage 1) document and simultaneously undertook a 'Call for Sites' exercise. It is currently anticipated that consultation on an Issues and Options (Stage 2 Spatial Options and Sites) document will be undertaken in 2018.

1.23 **ASSESSMENT**

1.24 The principles issues to be considered with this case are:

- I. Principle of the development
- II. Design and Layout and Impact upon the Area
- III. Traffic Impact, Access and Car Parking
- IV. Effect on Neighbouring Properties
- V. Heritage
- VI. Other Matters

I. PRINCIPLE OF THE DEVELOPMENT

The site is located within Grays Town Centre where policies CSSP2 and CSTP7 seek to promote the Thurrock Learning Campus and education developments respectively.

As set out earlier in this report, the College intends to develop the site in the near future to accommodate expanded HE provision at the Grays campus. This would require a bespoke building of high quality design. The current modular building would not fulfil this purpose and objective, but in the short term, it is considered appropriate to retain the building because it provides essential facilities for the College at this time.

In conclusion under this heading, there are no objections to the retention of the building in the short term.

II. DESIGN AND LAYOUT AND IMPACT UPON THE AREA

- 1.25 The existing modular building has been in situ for a number of years and whilst not of a sufficient design quality to be retained in the long term, is considered acceptable as a temporary building for this site within the context of the streetscene and the wider area. There are no objections to the building with regard to policies CSTP22, CSTP23 and PMD2.

III. TRAFFIC IMPACT, ACCESS AND CAR PARKING

- 1.26 It should be noted that the arrangements for car, cycle and motorcycle parking that exist on site differ slightly from the scheme approved under 08/00523/TTGFUL. Rather than provide 4 disabled parking spaces, 8 motorcycle parking spaces and 30 secure cycle parking spaces the College are currently providing 7 disabled car parking space and 54 secure cycle / motorcycle parking spaces which would all be retained as part of the proposal. The access and servicing arrangements would also remain the same as existing. Given the town centre location, the building is easily accessed from the nearby railway and bus stations, which provide sustainable transport modes to the wider area. There are no objections from the Council's Highways Officer and the application is acceptable with regard to policies PMD8, PMD9 and PMD10.
- 1.27 Through the consultation process the Council's Travel Plan Co-ordinator has no objection to the retention of the building but requires further details and revisions to the Travel Plan, which could be agreed through a planning condition.

IV. EFFECT ON NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES

- 1.28 The surrounding area mainly comprises of commercial uses including the existing college buildings to the north and east of the site, areas of public open space to the south and further commercial uses to the south and west. The proposed retention and continuation of the use of the building raises no objections with regard to neighbouring amenities in terms of policy PMD1.

V. Heritage

- 1.29 The site is located within close proximity of the White Hart Public House which is a grade II listed building but given the distance between the listed building and the application building the Historic Buildings and Conservation Advisor raises no objections as there is no adverse harm upon the setting of the listed building with regard to policy PMD4.

1.30 CONCLUSIONS AND REASONS FOR APPROVAL

- 1.31 Approval of this application would allow the temporary retention of the building for education uses for a further 5 years, until 4 August 2023. It is considered that the proposed modification of the building is acceptable and the continued provision of education facilities in the town centre location represents sustainable development, in accordance with a range of Development Plan policies. The temporary permission would also give the college time to develop their plans for an expanded HE offer at the Grays campus.

1.32 RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 Approve, subject to the following conditions:

Time Limit for Permission

1. The building hereby permitted shall be dismantled and all resulting material from the building shall be removed from the site before 4 August 2023 in accordance with a scheme of work for restoring the land to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme of work for restoring the land shall be implemented within 3 months following the buildings removal from the site.

Reason: Due to the temporary nature of the building and its visual impact upon the surrounding area. Permission is only granted for a temporary period in order to allow time for a future alternative development opportunity in this part of the High Street in light of the Grays Town Centre Framework and wider vision for this area, having regard to policies CSSP2, CSTP7, CSTP22, CSTP23 and PMD2 of the adopted Thurrock LDF Core Strategy and Policies for the Management of Development [2015].

Plan List

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

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Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the details as approved with regard to policies PMD1 and PMD2 of the adopted Thurrock LDF Core Strategy and Policies for the Management of Development [2015].

Retention of parking provision

3. The vehicle parking areas as shown on the approved plans for all forms of vehicles shall be retained as shown without modification for the duration of the permission. The vehicle parking areas shall not be used for any purpose other than the parking of vehicles that are related to the use of the approved development.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure that adequate car parking provision is available in accordance with policies PMD8 and PMD9 of the adopted Thurrock LDF Core Strategy and Policies for the Management of Development [2015].

Travel plan

4. The measures and procedures set out within the submitted Travel Plan [ref. February 2018 for Phase 1 Building reference TLC P1] shall be implemented during the construction and operational phases of the development and maintained throughout the lifetime of this temporary planning permission, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To reduce reliance on the use of private cars, in the interests of sustainability, highway safety and amenity in accordance with Policy PMD10 of the adopted Thurrock LDF Core Strategy and Policies for the Management of Development [2015].

Positive and Proactive Statement

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application. As a result, the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Documents:

All background documents including application forms, drawings and other supporting documentation relating to this application can be viewed online: <http://regs.thurrock.gov.uk/online-applications>

18/00019/FUL Thurrock Learning Campus

