

## **LATE SHEET**

### **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 12<sup>th</sup> October 2016**

#### ***Item 06 (Pages 15-53) – CB/16/3189/FULL – Ashton Middle School, High Street North, Dunstable***

##### **Additional Consultation/Publicity Responses**

Historic England      In this case we would not object to the conversion in terms of our remit, but recommend the Council consider if the change of use would harm the building's historic significance. By building on the playing fields to such an extent we consider there could be a negative effect on the conservation area, perhaps resulting in harm to its significance in terms of the NPPF paragraph 132. Increasing the open space at the centre of the site could help reduce that effect and we suggest this is considered. Paragraph 134 asks the Council to weight the public benefit of the new housing against this impact and we recommend the Council do so before determining the application but in doing so consider the full effect on the historic buildings and the potential to reduce it by amending the scheme as suggested.

In response to the comments from Historic England, Weston Homes have submitted a letter, which is attached as Appendix A. The Conservation Officer has also made the following comments in response to the comments from Historic England:

*In their formal response to the application, Historic England do not consider proposed building conversion objectionable, but draw specific attention to the implications of conversion in terms of impact upon the historic significance of the school buildings, associated playing fields and grounds, and the combined contribution that the buildings and grounds make to Conservation Area character.*

*Less than half of the application site lies within the designated Conservation Area, this comprising the High Street frontage composition of main building, Caretaker's House and Science block of 1907, with the remainder of the site forming immediate Conservation Area setting. The school playing fields are at the far end of the application site.*

*At present, principal views into the site, from the High Street North access gate, are restricted through established landscape planting, and by the presence of the Caretaker's House, with Science and Home Economics block beyond, and the historic Science block and Gym range which defines the east site (Dog Kennel Path) boundary.*

*Acknowledging the addition to this important frontage of proposed Block 4, behind established screen planting, along with the proposed clearance of the current Caretaker's House and the evident care that has been taken in the screening of*

*proposed on-site parking bays, I am fully satisfied that the essential character of this important part of the site has been maintained.*

*I consider that the developed Scheme secures the optimum viable use of the former school buildings and grounds. Building re-use and conversion inevitably impact upon internal circulation associated with former use, but I find the presented Scheme of conversion is notable for its 'light-touch' in respect of internal reorganisation and associated building alteration..*

*As such, and following the reality of School closure, I do not feel that change of use harms building significance. I am happy that the character of the High Street frontage of buildings in a landscaped setting has been maintained. I am happy that an adequate 'buffer' has been maintained, across the site, between the buildings to be maintained and the new build proposed, and am happy that development of former playing fields in immediate Conservation Area setting does not, in itself, impact negatively upon Conservation Area.*

*In conclusion to the advisory concerns given by Historic England, and in specific terms of key NPPF criteria for appropriate development in the historic built environment, I feel that this is a sympathetic and well-designed Scheme of sustainable building and site reuse, with clear public benefit as a result.*

Tree & Landscape Officer Further to my previous comments, I have examined the revised plans, namely, the "Planting Schedule" (Revision A), the Planting Plans Sheets 1 to 3 (Drawing No's 2677-PP-01, 2677-PP-02 and 2677-PP-03 -Revision A), the Tree Planting Positions Sheets 1 to 3 (Drawing No's 2677-LA-02, 2677-LA-03 and 2677-LA-04 -Revision B) and the "Landscape Management Plan" (Ref 2677-RE-01) which was revised on the 2nd August 2016 . I am satisfied that the landscape scheme is now suitable for requirements, and that I am also in agreement with the Planning Landscape Officer's request that the Photinia is replaced with native hedging such as Beech or Hornbeam. I therefore have no objections to the application on the basis that the supplied condition is imposed.

CBC Ecologist The submitted Ecological Design Strategy is excellent. Assuming works would proceed in accordance with the strategy I see no requirement for a further condition.

Landscape Officer Soft landscape strategy acceptable subject to replacement of proposed Photinia with Beech or Hornbeam. Hard landscaping generally acceptable, but, given the historic character of the buildings and landscape setting of development the selection of appropriate hard surface materials is crucial:

The hard landscaping proposals include 'block paving' within the parking areas and bays defined by 'contrasting blocks';  
- More detail on the block paving is required – will these be

granite, clay or concrete, tumbled or sawn ? Also sizes – will these be 100x200, or other mix of sizes? Plus laying patterns need to be confirmed as these can produce very modern pattern effects.

- The inclusion of contrasting coloured blocks to define parking would not be acceptable – different texture blocks such as picked granite setts may be more appropriate.

The proposed use of granite slabs could be appropriate to setting but again;

- Sizes and laying patterns need to be confirmed.
- The proposed finishes to paving slabs also needs to be clarified – for aesthetics and skid resistance – e.g. will slabs be flame textured and how effective a surface will this provide in wet and icy weather?

I would also add that design detail is lacking especially regarding treatment of edges / edge restraints/ treatment at changes of paving materials, also the potential inclusion of sett channels to carry surface water away from downpipes, paved surfaces (and ideally to bio retention areas) as traditional drainage features and in compliance with CBC SuDS guidance.

Given the level of detail still required could I suggest a Condition be applied requiring submission of detailed design and detailing of different external floor-scape / paved surfaces including materials, colours, sizes, edge and surface finishes and laying patterns along with a submission of a samples of proposed materials for approval if the application is approved?

Public Art Officer

I suggest a Condition be applied requiring that if the application were to be approved:

A Public Art Statement must be submitted confirming that in addition to the commitment by the developer to provide a sculptural feature commemorating former pupils later lost in the Great War that additional artistic interventions will be integrated in other external public spaces within the development. The Public Art Statement should confirm opportunities, selection and commissioning processes, timetables and confirmation on future maintenance. Such features could include seating, arbours, signage or mosaics and floor tiles but features must be produced via commission of public artists and / or craftsmen and it is crucial that features are unique and bespoke to the site and surroundings.

If a trigger is required could I suggest that artistic features would need to be commissioned and implemented on site by occupation of say 100th unit, but I rely on your advice and expertise on this.

Comprehensive guidance on what is required of a Public Art Statement / Public Art is included in the CBC Design Guide / Public Realm.

An online petition has been submitted containing 2,591 entries, of which 1,854 petitioners live within an area with an LU postcode. The petition is addressed to Ashton Foundation Trust, Central Bedfordshire Council and Dunstable Town Council and states the following:

*Please help to preserve Dunstable Ashton Grammar School/Middle School, High Street North, Dunstable, which will close its doors for the last time in August 2016, bringing to an end 128 years of education at the site. This beautiful grade II listed school and grounds is now facing an uncertain future.*

Neighbours &  
Members of  
the Public  
(16 Richard  
Street, 16  
George Street,  
28 Crabtree  
Way, 1  
Printers Way,  
2 Ashton  
Road)

Object to the proposal for the following reasons:

- 1) The Ashton Foundation Trust put forward a request to CBC for the school to become an upper school, but this was recommended for refusal by the officer in the Education Team, on the basis that there was insufficient need for the school in the local community. This decision is not felt to be correct. The school should remain a school.
- 2) It is feared that the developers will leave the building to deteriorate and then seek to demolish it in the future;
- 3) The interior of the Grade II Listed Building should be retained as well as the exterior;
- 4) The school has several famous alumni and should be preserved;
- 5) The loss of trees on Ashton Road and the development in general would have a detrimental impact on wildlife;
- 6) Parking
- 7) Privacy concerns

### **Additional Comments**

The applicant should read: "Weston Homes Plc and Trustees of the Ashton Foundation"

The recommendation should state "recommended for approval subject to the completion of a Section 106 Agreement"

The planning history section should include the following:

Application Number	CB/15/02723/PAPC
Description	Pre-application non householder charge - Redevelopment of the site
Decision	Advice given on principle of development, conservation issues, layout, landscaping, open space provision, impact on Dog Kennel Walk, parking, archaeology, contamination,

Decision Date	planning obligations and affordable housing. 23/09/2015
Application Number	CB/16/02235/PPA
Description	Planning Performance Agreement
Decision	Advice given on design, layout, conservation issues, highways, landscape, archaeology, SuDS,
Decision Date	N/A

The report wrongly states that there would be 177 parking spaces on site. The actual number proposed is 178.

The first paragraph of the section entitled “The Application” may be confusing. It should be clarified that it proposed that all buildings on the site except the Grade II Listed main school building and the two early twentieth century, curtilage listed buildings are to be demolished. The proposal also includes the demolition of some post war extensions to the Grade II Listed main school building and one of the curtilage listed buildings.

Amended landscaping schemes have been submitted showing the replacement of the proposed Photinia with Hornbeam. Condition 17 is recommended to be amended as shown below to incorporate the plans setting out the landscape scheme.

The submitted petition and accompanying letter seek to retain the school as an educational establishment. However, in August 2014 the Executive Committee of CBC determined that Ashton Middle School was surplus to requirements and should be closed. It is not within the power of Development Management to re-examine the decision in regard to the requirements of the local Education Authority.

In response to the concern regarding the building being allowed to deteriorate, the Section 106 would include a phasing scheme for the development which would ensure that the restoration and conversion of the Listed Building would take place before / concurrently with the construction of the new build elements.

Public Art requirements will be included within the Section 106 Agreement.

### **Amended Conditions**

- 3 The development shall be carried out in accordance with the Ecological Design Strategy by Ecology Solutions dated September 2016.

Reason: To prevent harm being caused to protected species and to ensure that the development delivers a net gain to biodiversity.  
(Policy BE8, SBLPR and Section 11, NPPF)

- 17 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans, numbers WH182/16/P/05.01, WH182/16/P/05.02, WH182/16/P/10.01 Ref B, WH182/16/P/10.03 Ref B, WH182/16/P/10.04 Ref B, WH182/16/P/25.01, WH182/16/P/25.01 Rev A, WH182/16/P/25.02, WH182/16/P/25.03 Rev A, WH182/16/P/25.05 Rev A, WH182/16/P/25.06 Rev A, WH182/16/P/25.07 Rev

A, WH182/16/P/25.08, WH182/16/P/25.09, WH182/16/P/25.10 Rev A, WH182/16/P/25.11, WH182/16/P/25.12, WH182/16/P/25.13, WH182/16/P/25.14 Rev A, WH182/16/P/25.15, WH182/16/P/25.16, WH182/16/P/25.17, WH182/16/P/25.18 Rev A, WH182/16/P/25.19 Rev A, WH182/16/P/25.20, WH182/16/P/25.21, WH182/16/P/25.22, WH182/16/P/25.23, WH182/16/P/25.24, WH182/16/P/25.25, WH182/16/P/25.26 Rev A, WH182/16/P/25.27, WH182/16/P/55.01 Rev A, WH182/16/P/55.02 Rev A, WH182/16/P/55.03 Rev A, WH182/16/P/55.03 Rev A, 2677-LA-02B, 2677-LA-03B, 2677-LA-04B, 2677-PP-01A, 2677-PP-02B, 2677-PP-03A.

Reason: To identify the approved plans and to avoid doubt.

**Additional Conditions:**

- 18 Prior to development, all tree protection measures and tree protection fencing shall be fully implemented in strict accordance with the document "Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Preliminary Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan in Accordance with BS 5837 :2012" (Revision A) dated 15th July 2016, which includes the indicated positions of ground protection and protective barrier fencing as shown on the accompanying Drawing No. 5413-D Rev A. The protective fencing and ground protection shall remain securely in position throughout the entire course of development.

Reason: To secure the protection of retained trees by avoiding all forms of construction damage in the interests of maintaining good tree health.  
(Policy BE8, SBLPR and Sections 7 & 11, NPPF)

- 19 All retained and proposed soft landscaping on the site shall be maintained in accordance with the submitted Landscape Management Plan prepared Allen Pyke Associates Ltd dated 02/08/2016.

Reason: To secure the ongoing maintenance of the soft landscaping on the site in the interests of the visual appearance of the site and the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers.  
(Policies BE8 & H2, SBLPR and Sections 7 & 11, NPPF)

- 20 No hard landscaping shall be laid on site until details of the hard landscaping have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include materials, colours, sizes, edge and surface finishes and laying patterns. The hard landscaping shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: In the interests of the visual appearance of the site and the wider area and the safety of users of the hard landscaping.  
(Policy BE8, SBLPR and Section 7, NPPF)

***Item 07 (Pages 55-68) – CB/16/03189/LB – Ashton Middle School, High Street North, Dunstable***

**Additional Consultation/Publicity Responses**

Historic England	See Item 06 (above).
The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings	No response – deadline 12/10/2016.
The Ancient Monuments Society	No response – deadline 12/10/2016.
The Council for British Archaeology	No response – deadline 12/10/2016.
The Georgian Group	No response – deadline 12/10/2016
The Victorian Society	No response – deadline 12/10/2016
The Twentieth Century Society	No response – deadline 12/10/2016

Responses to the public reconsultation have been received from the occupiers of 2 Ashton Road and 28 Crabtree Way, however, these do not refer to the impacts of the proposal on the Listed Building and have been referenced in Item 06 (above).

**Additional Comments**

The applicant should read: “Weston Homes Plc and Trustees of the Ashton Foundation”

The recommendation should read “recommended for approval subject to no materially new issues being raised by consultation responses.”

The planning history section should include the following:

Application Number	CB/15/02723/PAPC
Description	Pre-application non householder charge - Redevelopment of the site
Decision	Advice given on principle of development, conservation issues, layout, landscaping, open space provision, impact on Dog Kennel Walk, parking, archaeology, contamination, planning obligations and affordable housing.
Decision Date	23/09/2015
Application Number	CB/16/02235/PPA
Description	Planning Performance Agreement
Decision	Advice given on design, layout, conservation issues, highways, landscape, archaeology, SuDS,
Decision Date	N/A

**Additional Condition**

- 14 Notwithstanding the details submitted with the application, no removal, alteration or modification of the street frontage (High Street North) boundary railings, associated walling, gate piers, gates and gate overthrow shall be undertaken without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority, and any work thereby approved shall be undertaken thereafter strictly in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the retention and preservation of the historic front boundary treatment in the interests of the historical significance of the setting of the Grade II Listed Building.  
(Section 12 NPPF).

***Item 08 (Pages 69-81) – CB/16/03232/FULL – 54 Mill Lane, Greenfield*****Additional Consultation/Publicity Responses**

None

**Additional Comments**

The applicant is the husband of a member of Development Management.

**Additional Condition**

All ecological measures and works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in Section 6 of the April 2016 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.

Reason: To ensure the development delivers a net gain for biodiversity.(Section 11, NPPF)

***Item 9 (Pages 85-97) – CB/16/02172/Full – Lynmore House, Sharpenhoe Road, Sharpenhoe, MK45 4SU.*****Additional Consultation/Publicity Responses**

Archaeology Officer: No objections

**Additional Comments**

Officers have checked with Land Registry who confirm that the land the subject of this application to the front of the property is unregistered.

**Additional/Amended Conditions/Reasons**

Condition 3 be amended to read:

No development shall commence until a 2m wide footway has been constructed between points A and B as shown on the approved plan number 2015/547/20/B in

accordance with the details of a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The applicant will be required to enter into a section 278 agreement of the Highways Act 1980 in order to implement the scheme and any Statutory Undertakers equipment or street furniture shall be resited to provide an unobstructed footway.

Reason: In the interest of road safety and pedestrian movement.