

APPLICATION REPORT - PA/344056/19

Planning Committee, 28 January, 2020

Registration Date: 17/10/2019
Ward: Coldhurst

Application Reference: PA/344056/19
Type of Application: Full Planning Permission

Proposal: 1) Demolition of two teaching blocks (Bronte & Bevan) and two mobile classrooms. 2) Erection of a new two storey teaching block on existing college car park/landscaping. 3) Creation of new car parking spaces on the college campus to mitigate loss.

Location: Oldham College, Rochdale Road, Oldham, OL9 6AA
Case Officer: Graham Smith

Applicant Ms Inchbold
Agent : AHR

THE SITE

The college is to the west of Rochdale Road and north of Middleton Road. The campus comprises a range of buildings of varying heights and designs. The site slopes downwards from Rochdale Road. There are several established trees, particularly those on the embankment abutting Rochdale Road.

THE PROPOSAL

The scheme includes demolition of two buildings and removal of mobile classrooms. The proposed teaching building (2,296m² in area in two floors) will replace an existing car park near the eastern edge of the site; it will comprise large practical areas and workshops, six classrooms and an I.T. room. The building will be used for the teaching of construction skills.

The building will have a blue engineering brick base with a steel frame and clad upper floor of industrial character, deliberately relevant to the construction skills purpose. It includes 'punched hole' windows with blue brick reveals.

The proposal includes replacement parking on the western edge of the site for 50 vehicles replacing the 46 spaces lost to the development of the new building.

PLANNING HISTORY

PA/334942/14.- Three storey education building (adjacent the current application site). Approved 12/03/2014.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

The 'development plan' is the Joint Development Plan Document which forms part of the Local Development Framework for Oldham (DPD). The application site is identified within Oldham Town Centre. The following DPD policies are relevant:

Policy 2 - Communities

Policy 5 - Promoting Accessibility and Sustainable Transport Choices

Policy 9 - Local Environment

Policy 18 - Energy
Policy 20 - Design
Policy 21 - Protecting Natural Environmental Assets

Saved UDP Policy D1.5 - Protection of Trees on Development Sites

REPRESENTATIONS

The application has been publicised by site notices and a press advertisement. No representations have been received.

CONSULTATIONS

Highway Officer	No objection to the revised scheme subject to conditions preventing access from Middleton Road, a Travel Plan and cycle parking.
Environmental Health	No objection subject to conditions regarding ground contamination, landfill gas, the prevention of burning waste during construction and wheel wash facilities.
Tree Officer	The amended layout plan and replacement tree planting is acceptable subject to conditions for tree protection and replacement planting.
GM Ecology Unit	No objections subject to recommended conditions.
United Utilities	No objection subject to conditions regarding drainage details and no development over existing sewers.
Coal Authority	No objections subject to a condition regarding remediation of former mining areas.
Environment Agency	No objection subject to conditions regarding measures to address the discovery of any unknown ground contamination during construction.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The main material considerations are:

Principle of the development
Design and amenity
Highways
Trees and ecology
Ground conditions.

Principle of Development

DPD Policy 2 seeks to support community and education facilities, including Oldham College, and the proposal therefore accords with the policy.

The College is an existing educational facility located in the Town Centre. The proposal seeks to increase teaching facilities.

The applicant has identified the proposal will provide the following benefits:

- ensure Oldham has a high quality 'Further Education' facility;
- create a new building to house the construction and technical/management skills curriculum;
- provide the College with the capacity to increase its construction provision by 70% (250+ students per year);
- increase the number and level of construction apprenticeships;
- involve local employers and assist with meeting the widespread skill shortages in the construction industry.

Design and Amenity

The proposal includes a building of contemporary design built slightly into the sloping land that rises to the east, requiring small retaining walls on the eastern edge. There are no residential properties nearby (the Civic Centre is almost opposite to the west).

The design is considered to compliment the recent nearby teaching buildings, and there are no adverse amenity issues envisaged. The proposal therefore accords with DPD Policies 9 and 20.

Highways

The proposal is well positioned for modes of sustainable transport and is highly accessible. The applicant has produced a Travel Plan which includes measures to increase car sharing and enhance the use of public transport. The proposed replacement car parking on the western edge of the site is considered acceptable. The proposal does not result in significant loss of car parking or result in severe harm to the highway network. The proposal therefore accords with Policy 5.

Trees and Ecology

The applicant submitted an arboricultural survey identifying 15 trees that are to be removed at the teaching building site due to the close proximity and likely damage to root systems. However, amended plans identify 30 replacement trees to be planted within the campus particularly around the eastern side of the site. The applicant also identifies trees to be protected during construction. The replacement planting is considered satisfactory.

The scheme is not considered likely to harm the biodiversity of the area and the proposal therefore accords with Policy 21 and saved UDP Policy D1.5.

Ground Conditions

The applicant submitted relevant surveys regarding ground conditions. However, consultee assessments required some pre-commencement conditions. Where possible these have been amended or removed due to the submission of further information, but precautionary conditions regarding contamination, landfill gas, and coal mining remediation measures are included. The applicant is continuing to work towards discharging the requirements. The proposal is considered to safeguard pollution and safety concerns regarding ground conditions and accords with Policy 9 Local Environment.

CONCLUSION

The proposal is in the interests of the wider community by introducing improved training opportunities. Whilst the scheme will lose some established trees, given the increased number of replacements proposed it will not result in harm to the local environment. The proposed building has an appropriate design. It is located in a position with good access to sustainable transport and is unlikely to result in harm to the highway network. The proposal is considered to accord with relevant policies and the thrust of the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve subject to the following conditions:

1. The development must be begun not later than the expiry of THREE years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason - To comply with the provisions of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby approved shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved plans, ref 00002 Rev P03 (Red Line Boundary), 00004 Rev P05B (Site

Plan), 00005 Rev P02B (Demolition Plan), 00006 Rev PO1A(Tree Protection Plan), 00020 Rev P8 (Building D Ground Floor Plan),00021 Rev P9 (Building D First Floor Plan), 00022 Rev P6, (Building D Roof Plan), 00023 RevP4 (Building D Elevations), 00024 Rev P4 (Building D sections) AO 19H090/001 Topographical survey, Building D Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, Ecological Assessment dated September 2019.

Reason - For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and specifications.

3. No development above slab level shall take place until a specification of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The materials to be used throughout the development shall be consistent in terms of colour, size and texture with the approved specification.

Reason - To ensure that the appearance of the development is acceptable in the interests of the visual amenity of the area having regard to Policies 9 and 20 of the Local Plan.

4. No trees shall be removed until full details of both hard and soft landscape works with an associated implementation plan, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The hard landscape details shall include proposed finished levels or contours; means of enclosure; hard surfacing materials and street furniture, where relevant. The soft landscaping works shall include planting plans; written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants and trees, noting species, plant/tree sizes and proposed numbers/densities and the implementation programme. The content of the plan should include elements to mitigate for loss of trees shrubs and bird nesting habitat.

All planting shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details either prior to or in the first available planting season following the completion of the development, and shall be maintained for a period of 5 years from the agreed date of planting. Any trees or plants which die, become diseased, or are removed during the maintenance period shall be replaced with specimens of an equivalent species and size.

Reason – To ensure that the development site is landscaped to an acceptable standard and in the interests of biodiversity having regard to Policies 9, 20 and 21 of the Oldham Local Plan, and saved Policy D1.5 of the Unitary Development Plan.

5. Prior to the commencement of any part of the development hereby approved, including site clearance, excavation or construction works or the entry of vehicles or plant into the site, all existing retained trees and hedges on and adjacent to the site, other than those indicated for removal on the approved plans, shall be physically protected from damage by plant, equipment, vehicles, excavation, deposit of excavated material and any other cause. This shall be achieved by the erection of 2.3 m high fencing using vertical and horizontal scaffolding poles, or other stout fencing to Local Authority approval with the uprights driven well into the ground, erected in accordance with BS5837:2005 outside the canopy. The fencing shall be maintained for the duration of the development operations and no operations or storage whatsoever shall take place within the fenced protection areas.

Reason - Prior approval of such details is necessary to protect existing trees and hedges having regard to saved Policy D1.5 of the Unitary Development Plan.

6. No development shall take place until a scheme of remedial works comprising of drilling and grouting within the footprint of the proposed teaching building, as

recommended in the Ground Investigation Report (Tier Environmental Ltd, 19 September 2019) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The remedial works shall then be implemented in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason - To ensure that adequate information pertaining to ground conditions and coal mining legacy is available to enable appropriate remedial and mitigatory measures to be identified and carried out before building works commence on site in order to ensure the safety and stability of the development, having regard to Policy 9 of the Oldham Local Plan.

7. No occupation of the building shall take place until a detailed energy statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The statement shall set out how the development will accord with the Energy Infrastructure Target Framework set out in Policy 18 of the Oldham Local Plan and shall detail how a target area has been determined; and how the development will meet this target.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme and phasing arrangements and retained as operational at all times thereafter.

Reason – To ensure that the development accords with the provisions of Policy 18 of the Oldham Local Plan.

8. Within three months of the first occupation of the development hereby approved, a Green Travel Plan for the whole development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Measures contained within the approved plan shall be fully implemented within six months of first occupation.

Reason - To ensure the development accords with sustainable transport policies having regard to Policy 5 of the Oldham Local Plan.

9. The means of vehicular access to the application site shall be from Alderson Street only and no vehicular access shall be gained from Middleton Road.

Reason - To ensure that the means of vehicular access to the application site is of an acceptable standard in the interests of highway safety having regard to Policies 5 and 9 of the Oldham Local Plan.

10. The use of the building hereby approved shall not commence until a scheme for the provision of secure cycle parking has been implemented in accordance with details which shall have previously been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved facility shall remain available for users of the development thereafter.

Reason – In order to promote sustainable means of travel having regard to Policies 5 and 9 of the Oldham Local Plan.

11. No works to trees or shrubs shall take place between the 1st March and 31st August in any year unless a detailed bird nest survey by a suitably experienced ecologist has been carried out immediately prior to clearance and written confirmation provided by the Local Planning Authority that no active bird nests are present.

Reason - To ensure the protection of bird habitats, which are protected species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, having regard to Policy 21 of the Oldham Local Plan.

12. Prior to the commencement of any development, a surface water drainage scheme, based on the hierarchy of drainage options in National Planning Practice Guidance with evidence of an assessment of the site conditions, and a sustainable drainage management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development, shall be

submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The surface water drainage scheme must be in accordance with the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (March 2015) or any subsequent replacement national standards. In the event of surface water draining to the public surface water sewer, the pass forward flow rate to the public sewer must be restricted to 15 l/s.

The sustainable drainage management and maintenance plan shall include as a minimum:

- a. Arrangements for adoption by an appropriate public body or statutory undertaker, or, management and maintenance by a management company; and
- b. Arrangements for inspection and ongoing maintenance of all elements of the sustainable drainage system to secure the operation of the surface water drainage scheme throughout its lifetime.

The development shall subsequently be completed, maintained and managed in accordance with the approved plan and drainage scheme..

Reason - Prior approval of such details is necessary since they are fundamental to the initial site preparation works and to ensure that the site is satisfactorily drained and to manage the risk of flooding and pollution having regard to Policy 19 of the Oldham Local Plan.

13. No development shall commence until a site investigation and assessment to identify the extent of land contamination has been carried out and the consultant's report and recommendations have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Written approval from the local planning authority will be required for any necessary programmed remedial measures and, on receipt of a satisfactory completion report, to discharge the condition.

Reason - Prior approval of such details is necessary since they are fundamental to the initial site preparation works in order to protect public safety and the environment having regard to Policy 9 of the Oldham Local Plan.

14. If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site, then no further development shall be carried out until a remediation strategy detailing how this contamination will be dealt with has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The remediation strategy shall be implemented as approved.

Reason - To ensure that the development does not contribute to, and is not put at unacceptable risk from or adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of water pollution from previously unidentified contamination sources at the development site having regard to Policy 9 of the Oldham Local Plan.

15. No development shall commence until a site investigation and assessment in relation to the landfill gas risk has been carried out and the consultant's report and recommendations have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Written approval from the local planning authority will be required for any necessary programmed remedial measures and, on receipt of a satisfactory completion report, to discharge the condition.

Reason - Prior approval of such details is necessary since they are fundamental to the initial site preparation works in order to protect public safety, because the site is located within 250m of a former landfill site, having regard to Policy 9 of the Oldham Local Plan.

16. Prior to the commencement of any earthworks a method statement detailing eradication and/or control and/or avoidance measures for Himalayan Balsam and Cotoneaster should be supplied to and approved in writing to the local planning authority. The approved method statement including a timetable, shall be adhered to and implemented in full in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason - Prior approval of such details is necessary since they are fundamental to the initial site preparation works in the interests of the protection of the natural environment having regard to Policy 9 of the Oldham Local Plan.



