

PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING: 9 December 2010

**PLANNING APPLICATION FOR DETERMINATION BY THE
LTGDC**

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PLANNING

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| UDC CASE NUMBER: | LTGDC-10-157-FUL | DATE MADE VALID: | 15/10/2010 |
| APPLICATION NUMBER: | U0009.10 | TARGET DATE: | 14/01/2011 |

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| APPLICANT: | Havering College |
| AGENT: | Drivers Jonas Deloitte |
| PROPOSAL: | Permanent use of Burnside House for Class D1 use(further and higher education), together with various works including rearranged and dedicated pedestrian and cycle access from New Road, a new entrance plaza, screening, landscape planting, 6 additional car parking spaces, 47 additional cycle parking spaces, removal of industrial canopy on western facade, addition of new canopy over building entrance and retention of external brick store building. |
| LOCATION: | Burnside House, New Road, Rainham |

1. SUMMARY

1.1 The application has been submitted by Havering College and seeks to make permanent the education use of Burnside House, New Road, Rainham. This use was granted temporary consent by the Development Corporation in 2008 and is due to expire in September 2014.

1.2 The application has come about to enable to College to secure funding for its wider campus proposals on much of the former Carpetright site. It is considered that if the application were to be considered in isolation of the current economic climate and budget cut backs, an application for a permanent use at this location without a wider redevelopment proposal may not be successful. However, a more pragmatic approach to the application has been taken and it is considered that a flexible approach to planning policy is warranted in this instance.

1.3 The scheme brings with it a range of site improvements including landscaping, screening of the remaining vacant Carpetright site, increase cycle parking and an improved BREEAM rating.

1.4 The application is before members with a recommendation for approval, subject to

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conditions.

2. SITE AND PROPOSAL

Site

- 2.1 The application site is a 0.7ha parcel of land located on the former Carpetright site, New Road, Rainham which is part of the former Carpetright site owned by the LTGDC. The site is adjacent to the C2C rail corridor and occupies roughly the southern third of the site overall. Access to the site is provided via an existing seven metre wide two way service drive along the western site boundary to New Road.
- 2.2 The only structure on site is a large warehouse building, Burnside House, adjacent to the southern site boundary. The building occupies an area of 2,600 sqm and has a gross internal area of 3,454 sqm including the mezzanine level. The building has the benefit of temporary planning permission for trade-related education use for a period of five years expiring in September 2014 from implementation in 2009.
- 2.3 The open area surrounding the site is predominantly hard standing. Most of this area is dedicated to 78 car parking bays (included 4 disabled) to the north of the building. The main service bay is located on the western side of the building, where the access drive is easily accessed. To the east of the main building is a newly-built basketball and five-a-side football pitch.
- 2.4 The surrounding land use is mixed industrial ranging from B8 warehousing and B2 general industry to sui generis waste and vehicle servicing uses. However, the area has been identified for industrial land release within the adopted LDF to enable residential led development along New Road. The Dovers Corner site, located to the east of Burnside House is the first such site to be examined for residential-led development and was the subject of a Public Inquiry in October of this year following an appeal against non-determination of an application. The decision of the Secretary of State is awaited.
- 2.5 The closest residential area is on the north side of New Road. To the south beyond the rail corridor is the Riverside Sewage Treatment Works.
- 2.6 Bus routes run regular services along New Road between Rainham Village, Dagenham and Romford. New Road has very good cycle and pedestrian linkages by segregated paths.

Proposal

- 2.7 The application seeks planning permission for the current temporary D1 education land use to be made permanent. The application is supported by a number of ancillary improvements to the site should permanent permission be granted.
- 2.8 Landscaping improvements to the site include enhancements to the entire width of the New Road frontage which propose to screen the open vacant former Carpetright site. A new two metre high security fence will be provided and will be printed with imagery associated with the College.
- 2.9 The entry point from New Road is proposed to be enhanced by the creation of an

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entry plaza, which will also involve the removal of a dilapidated security hut. From this plaza, improved cycle and pedestrian paths will provide access to Burnside House. Landscaping either side of these pathways is also to be provided.

2.10 At the southern end of the path, a further 47 cycle stands are intended to be provided, giving the site a total of 82 cycle stands overall. Car parking is also proposed to increase from the current 78 spaces to 84.

2.11 Works to the building itself involve the removal of a large canopy over the service bay and a new smaller canopy to be installed over the building's main entrance. The scheme also proposes to enhance the BREAAAM rating of the site.

3. MAIN ISSUES

- Context and Background
- Principle of the Use
- External Improvements
- Structural Improvements
- Access and Parking

4. RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

P1433.94 - Distribution Warehouse - Approved

P1294.00 - Extension to existing warehouse - Approved

U0008.08 - Temporary change of use from warehouse (B8) to education (D1) with associated vehicle parking and servicing - Approved

U0014.09 - Outline planning permission for 11,800 sqm of D1 education and associated parameters for the proposed Havering College campus - Approved

5. CONSULTATIONS/NOTIFICATIONS

London Borough of Havering

5.1 The application was considered by the Borough's Regulatory Services Committee on the 2nd of December 2010 where it was resolved to raise no objection, subject to conditions to secure the following:

- Three years to implementation
- Details of landscaping
- Travel Plan
- Details of cycle parking
- Details of the works to improve pedestrian priority
- Details of the perimeter screen fencing

Health and Safety Executive – PADHI+

5.2 The HSE does not advise, on safety grounds, against the granting of planning

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permission in this case.

Network Rail

5.3 Network Rail have provided advice relating to development works, earthworks, drainage fencing, landscaping and noise and vibration and have suggested that this advice be provided as an informative. (See suggested informative 3 at paragraph 12 below.)

London Fire Brigade

5.4 The Fire Brigade has indicated the position of a hydrant to be installed.

Other Notifications

5.5 Thames Water, Union Railways and the Environment Agency have been consulted but no response has been received.

6. APPLICATION PUBLICITY

Neighbour Consultations sent - 22 October 2010

Advertised in Press - 1 November 2010

Comments due by - 22 November 2010

7. REPRESENTATIONS

7.1 A total of 69 neighbouring residential and commercial occupiers were notified of the proposal. No comments have been received.

8. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

London Borough of Havering Core Strategy Development Plan Document

CP3 Employment
CP8 Community Facilities
CP9 Reducing the Need to Travel
CP10 Sustainable Transport

London Borough of Havering Development Control Policies Development Plan Document

DC26 Location of Community Facilities
DC32 The Road Network
DC33 Car Parking
DC34 Walking
DC35 Cycling

London Borough of Havering Site Specific Allocations Development Plan Document

SSA12 Rainham West

9. ASSESSMENT OF MAIN ISSUES

Context and Background

9.1 Burnside House is currently occupied by Havering College under the temporary consent U0008.08 granted by the Development Corporation in 2008. The reason for the College seeking permission to use Burnside House was to accommodate increasing numbers of students in both the Hornchurch and Dagenham (CEME) campuses. At the time, temporary consent was considered to be appropriate due to policy requirements under SSA12 which seek that any non-residential development should be 'urban' in character, rather than in industrial sheds, to complement the residential development anticipated in the area. It has always been the intention of the College to develop a larger campus on the site which better reflects the SSA12 policy objectives of the area and this was demonstrated with the grant of outline consent in November 2009 for such a campus that occupies much of the wider former Carpetright site. The remainder of the site being retained by the LTGDC for disposal for residential use.

9.2 However, the combination of the funding problems encountered by the Learning and Skills Council coupled with reduced funding for most public bodies resulting from the recent public spending review has meant that the detailed design and implementation of the outline scheme has been delayed.

9.3 Despite these recent financial constraints, the College still wishes to develop the site for its larger campus, albeit over a longer time period. This longer term commitment is evidenced through the College's progress in acquiring the freehold of the relevant part of the Carpetright site from the Development Corporation. However, the current temporary consent does not provide the lending institution with sufficient guarantee for the release of funds. Only an established permanent use would provide such comfort.

9.4 The particular circumstances of an applicant are capable of being a material consideration, albeit one to which one would not normally attach much weight. In this case, the underlying reason for the submission of this application is to secure finance from a bank to enable the comprehensive campus to be progressed. It is considered unlikely that Burnside House will remain permanently in situ should planning permission be granted.

Principle of Permanent Use

9.5 The application site falls within the SSA12 policy area, the ultimate aims and objectives of which are the release of employment land for residential-led mixed use development. Among the SSA12 development criteria is the requirement that 33% of the wider site covered by SSA12 be retained for non-residential uses, including education. As touched on earlier, the caveat to this non-residential development is that buildings shall be 'urban' in character and will complement the residential development being brought forward. The Carpetright site is also specifically identified within SSA12 as being a site where only comprehensive development will

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be considered.

- 9.6 The consideration of the application for temporary consent concluded that the use and the retention of the building would not preclude the eventual redevelopment of the surrounding area. The grant of permission for a permanent use for the site has not changed this position. Indeed it has increased the likelihood of eventual comprehensive development. Although the outline scheme is unlikely to be progressed in the short term, given that bank finance is unlikely to be forthcoming whilst only a temporary use is in place, a permanently-established education use is more likely than not to encourage redevelopment of the site.
- 9.7 The establishment of the permanent education use is also more consistent with SSA12 than the current alternative, which is to revert back to B8 storage and distribution once the temporary consent expires. Should the site revert back to this B8 use in 2014, a building and use will be established despite being at odds with the principles under SSA12. This would be a retrograde step in the regeneration of the area, rather than establishing the potential foothold of regeneration that a permanent education use would provide.
- 9.8 A permanent education use at this location is also consistent with the Rainham Compass document. Although not an adopted policy document, Rainham Compass seeks education facilities in Rainham to help establish a well educated and trained workforce. On balance therefore it is considered that, although not strictly in accordance with policy SSA12, a permanent education use in the existing building is acceptable given that, for the reasons rehearsed above, it renders the eventual redevelopment of the site for a development in conformity with SSA12 more likely.

External Improvements

- 9.9 The main improvements to the site are through landscaping and the treatment of the New Road frontage. Emphasis has been placed on this area since the demolition and clearance of the main building on the site has left the predominant view of the site as a large open expanse of concrete.
- 9.10 The scheme intends to screen this view from New Road through landscaping and fencing. The entire length of the New Road frontage is to be planted with trees and shrubs, although the specific species have not been identified in the submission and will be secured by condition. Adjacent to this planting is proposed a two metre high hoarding which is intended to display images of College activities to represent the College's location within the community. This approach to screening the open site is considered appropriate and the details of the hoarding will be secured by condition. An informative will also be included reminding the applicant that advertisement consent may also be required.
- 9.11 The entry from New Road is also intended to undergo improvements by the creation of an open paved area, referred to in the documentation as a plaza. This will involve the removal of an existing brick security hut to create the paved open area, landscaping and 'welcome' signage. This entry marks the northern-most point of an improved pathway and landscaping environment to the main building.
- 9.12 Overall, the external improvements screen the open slab of the former building and create a better environment for those attending the College. These improvements are considered to be acceptable.

Structural Improvements

- 9.13 The structure of Burnside House is a conventional warehouse design which proved to be a suitable shell for the internal fit outs for the College's requirements. The original application for temporary consent did not consider any substantial external improvements, but now that a permanent consent is sought, the current application considers some improvement to attempt to create a more 'urban' form, as prescribed under SSA12. However, these improvements are limited and only involve the removal of the main canopy on the western side of the building and the addition of a small box canopy. These changes in isolation could not be considered to create a building envisaged under SSA12.
- 9.14 However, some additional enhancements are proposed to improve the BREEAM rating and sustainability performance. These have improved the BREEAM rating from 'no rating' to 'pass'. Although a 'pass' rating is not considered to be a particularly impressive sustainability rating, it is accepted that in assessing BREEAM ratings the building itself must be considered, particularly where the assessment involves retrofitting into an older structure. In this case, a BREEAM rating of 'very good' or 'excellent' would only be achievable with major reconstruction of the building. Considering that the building is not intended to remain in the long term, the financial implications of undertaking this work are prohibitive.
- 9.15 Any new structure on the site will be required to meet a BREEAM rating of 'excellent', and it is proposed that the campus envisaged under the outline scheme would meet this sustainability rating.

Access and Parking

- 9.16 The site access will remain via the existing seven metre wide road. At present, this access is shared between vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. The improvements to the scheme will segregate cycle and pedestrian pathways into a landscape strip along the eastern side of the access. This approach is supported by officers.
- 9.17 The site currently benefits from the provision of 78 car parking spaces, which is currently above the maximum number set out in the Borough's policy DC33 (annex 5) but was previously considered adequate by a Transport Assessment provided with the previous temporary consent application. An ongoing Travel Plan is in place which aims to reduce the demand for parking as the PTAL level for the site eventually increases.
- 9.18 The current application has considered the existing and projected student numbers through an updated Transport Assessment. Since the grant of temporary consent, student numbers have increased from the anticipated 250 students and 30 staff per day to the current 378 students and 40 staff per day. It is anticipated that the daily total will further increase to 597 students and 46 staff per day.
- 9.19 The current parking standard, as set out in Havering's LDF policy DC33 (annex 5), would require an increase of 24 parking spaces on site in order to accommodate this increase. However, the site's operational Travel Plan coupled with the good access to public transport has reduced this uplift in parking spaces to 6. Therefore, given the increase in student population and the lower increase in parking spaces,

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the scheme represents a decrease in proportional on-site parking.

9.20 The scheme also provides an additional 52 cycle spaces, which assists in offsetting the car parking numbers for the site.

9.21 Overall, the scheme represents improved access and parking arrangement on site.

10. CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR APPROVAL

10.1 The application seeks to make permanent an existing temporary consent. The establishment of a permanent education use on this site is considered to be acceptable and is preferable to allowing the site to revert to a B8 use.

10.2 A number of site improvements involving boundary treatments, landscaping, parking and access arrangement support the permanent use at this location.

10.3 The proposal is considered to be broadly in line with the objectives of SSA12 and is recommended for approval, subject to the conditions listed in the following section.

11. CONDITIONS AND REASONS

1. The permission shall be implemented no later than TWO YEARS from the date of this permission.

Reason: To ensure that the development is commenced within a reasonable time period and in accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. Full details of the proposed hard and soft landscaping, including all pedestrian and cycle pathways, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority within six months of the date of this permission. The scheme shall include reference to plant species, planting arrangements, surface treatments, pedestrian and cycle pathways, any new outdoor furnishing and/or activity spaces and details of the proposed screening of the adjacent Carpetright site. The scheme shall include a description of the means of on-going maintenance and shall be implemented in the first available planting season after approval by the local planning authority and maintained thereafter.

Reason: To enhance the ecological and aesthetic value of the site and to promote the greening of the area, in accordance with policies DC58 and DC61 of the London Borough of Havering Local Development Framework 2008.

3. Not later than three months after the date of this permission the Travel Plan currently in operation shall be updated to reflect the increased student and staff numbers now anticipated and any other changed circumstances and submitted to the local planning authority for approval. Once approved the Travel Plan shall at all times be applied to this development .

Reason: To ensure that the future occupiers of the development are made aware of a wide range of travel choices to reduce the impact of travel and transport on the

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environment, in accordance with polices DC32, DC34 and DC35 of the London Borough of Havering Local Development Framework 2008.

4. Not later than three months after the date of this permission full details of the additional cycle parking facilities shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include the location and type of stands to be used. The details shall be implemented in full thereafter.

Reason: In order to ensure that adequate cycle parking is provided on site, in accordance with policy DC35 of the London Borough of Havering Local Development Framework 2008.

5. Not later than three months after the date of this permission full details of the perimeter fences shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include the height, specific location and materials to be used for the fence line and any type of display or hoarding to be mounted upon the fence. The approved details shall be implemented in full thereafter.

Reason: To ensure an appropriate standard of boundary treatment is implemented, in accordance with policy DC61 of the London Borough of Havering Local Development Framework 2008.

12. INFORMATIVES

1. The applicant is advised to contact the London Borough of Havering before installing any signage on site associated with the approved use as express advertisement consent may be required.
2. The developer is advised to contact the Water Supplies for Fire Fighting section of the London Fire Brigade, Finchley Fire Station, 227 Long Lane, Finchley, London, N3 2RP with respect to its requirement for a hydrant to be located on site.
3. The developer is advised to contact Network Rail, 1 Eversholt Street, London, NW1 2DN with respect to development near Network Rail Infrastructure.

CASE OFFICER: Stephen Allen

- Appendix 1:** Existing Situation
- Appendix 2:** Proposed Site Layout Plan
- Appendix 3:** Burnside House Details
- Appendix 4:** Site Sections and Views