

SOMERSET COLLEGE OF ARTS & TECHNOLOGY

REDEVELOPMENT OF BLOCKS A, C, D AND F, REMOVAL OF BLOCK B AND ERECTION OF NEW BLOCK (Y) AND REVISED PARKING ARRANGEMENT AND STRUCTURAL LANDSCAPING SCHEME INCORPORATING PEDESTRIAN ROUTES AT SOMERSET COLLEGE OF ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY, WELLINGTON ROAD, TAUNTON.

21500/24730

OUTLINE APPLICATION

PROPOSAL

A previous proposal to redevelop the Wellington Road site for SCAT was submitted in 1999. This was predominantly a new build scheme with only the sports hall and G block retained. Members resolved to grant permission subject to a S.106 agreement which was not concluded and the application was subsequently withdrawn. Full permission has subsequently been granted, and work commenced on a new technology block on the western side of the site adjacent to the cemetery. This outline application provides a mix of new build and conversion with only blocks C, D and F being totally replaced. The large four storey (block A) building is to be reclad. A new performance arts building (block 7) is also to be provided. Progress of this application has been delayed by protracted negotiations in respect of a potential S.106 agreement relating to transport improvements.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY are placing a greater priority in the signalised entry and exit due to the accident record, concerns of the Applicant with regard to highway safety, and in order to alleviate potential conflicting traffic hazards with the introduction of the imminent bus lane. Therefore negotiations have taken place with Somerset College of Art & Technology in which the Highway Authority have agreed to take a contribution of \$250,000 towards access infrastructure works, in addition that land would be made available for the construction of the cycle route identified in the Local Plan and forming part of the Sustrans Route 3 from Herons Drive through to the flood alleviation bund. Somerset College of Art & Technology also agreed to provide additional cycle parking and will ensure safe cycle routes until such times as the cycle route is constructed. It has also been a requirement that Somerset College of Art & Technology will produce a green travel plan to the satisfaction of the Highway Authority and the targets identified shall form part of the Section 106 agreement. Therefore should planning permission be granted, the following revised conditions should be imposed. No works shall commence on the site until a Section 106 agreement has been signed for the following works:- (1) A contribution of \$250,000 towards the design, funding and implementation of access works, incorporating pedestrian, pedestrian/cycle provision, signalised entry and exit, bus and coach stops, traffic regulation orders at the Wellington Road frontage and the dedication of lands as identified by the Highway Authority; (2) To make available land for the future construction for the Local Plan Cycle Route/Sustrans Route 3 on land identified by the Highway Authority and to

protect the said route from future development; (3) To provide and implement a green travel plan in accordance with Highway Authority approval, and to meet the targets set out in the said document; and (4) To provide additional cycle parking provision as identified by the Travel Plan. Should the above conditions be imposed I would wish to raise no further objection to the above development. WESSEX WATER no objection subject to notes.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER I am still concerned that there is only a promise of a comprehensive and substantial structural landscape element. To date I have only seen very sketchy proposals and therefore would not advise the felling of the significant trees as proposed.

ONE LETTER OF REPRESENTATION received raising concern that highway improvements should take into account other developments in the area.

POLICY CONTEXT

Taunton Deane Local Plan (Revised Deposit Draft). Policy S1 criterion (A) additional road traffic arising, taking into account of any road improvements involved, should not lead to an overloading of access roads, road safety problems or environmental degradation by fumes, noise, vibrations or visual impact; (B) the accessibility of the development by public transport, cycling and pedestrian networks should be consistent with its likely trip generation and minimising the need to use the car. Policy S2 encourages good quality design.

ASSESSMENT

The principle of redevelopment of the site has already been established through the resolution to grant permission in respect of the earlier scheme. The illustrative drawings submitted in support of this application show a striking and innovative design treatment, which due to the position of the buildings set back from Wellington Road behind established landscaping, will not appear incongruous when viewed against more traditional adjacent buildings. In order to cement these principles further it is essential that the buildings are designed to accord with a masterplan outlining a comprehensive strategy of both hard and soft landscaping. A Landscape Architect has recently been appointed to develop the masterplan in consultation with the Council's Landscape Officer. Whilst the College were initially reluctant to fund major transport improvements on the contention that their proposals would not lead to a significant increase in students, a contribution of \$250,000 has now been negotiated towards access infrastructure works, incorporating pedestrian and cycle provision, signalised entry and exit, bus and coach stops, traffic regulation orders at the Wellington Road frontage and dedication of land to the Highway Authority. The proposed Section 106 agreement also makes land available for the Sustrans cycle route, provides cycle parking and the implementation of a green travel plan. It is therefore now felt that the proposals meet the sustainability requirements of new development as set out in the policy section above.

RECOMMENDATION

Subject to completion of masterplan and Section106 agreement in respect of (a) contribution of \$250,000 towards transport improvements, (b) provision of land for cycle

route (c) implementation of green travel plan and (d) provision of additional cycle parking the Chief Planning Officer in consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair be authorised to determine and permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of outline, materials, landscaping, hard landscaping, levels, trees to be refined and protected, parking, services underground, materials compound. Notes re secure by design, building over sewer, asbestos removal, Section 106 agreement, landscaping, public art, CDM Regulations, health and safety and infrastructure charge.

In preparing this report the Planning Officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998.

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NOTES: