

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE AGENDA

Winchester City
Council
Planning Department
Development Control

TEAM MANAGER
SIGN OFF SHEET

Committee Decision

Case No:	07/02101/FUL	Valid Date	28 August 2007
W No:	12804/39	Recommendation Date	18-December 2007
Case Officer:	Mr Dave Dimon	8 Week Date	27 November 2007
		Committee date	10 January 2008
Recommendation:	Application Permitted	Decision:	Committee Decision

Proposal:	Erection of student accommodation containing 382 rooms and ancillary facilities following the demolition of Colebrook and Parchment former nurses accommodation houses in Queens Road (AMENDED PLANS), increasing number of units from 375 to 382 and showing reduced height at southern end and consequent increased height to block adjacent to Queens Road and including minor changes to footprint and layout)
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Site:	University Centre The University Of Winchester Sparkford Road Winchester Hampshire
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Open Space Y/N	Legal Agreement	S.O.S	Objections	EIA Development	Monitoring Code	Previous Developed Land
	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N

DELEGATED ITEM SIGN OFF		
APPROVE Subject to the condition(s) listed	REFUSE for the reason(s) listed	
	Signature	Date
CASE OFFICER		
TEAM MANAGER		

AMENDED PLANS DATE:-23 Nov 2007 increased number of units from 375 to 382 and showing reduced height at southern end and consequent increased height to block adjacent to Queens Road and including minor changes to footprint and layout.

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Item No: 1
Case No: 07/02101/FUL / W12804/39
Proposal Description: Erection of student accommodation containing 382 rooms and ancillary facilities following the demolition of Colebrook and Parchment former nurses accommodation houses in Queens Road (amended plans), increasing number of units from 375 to 382 and showing reduced height at southern end and consequent increased height to block adjacent to Queens Road and including minor changes to footprint and layout

Address: University Centre The University Of Winchester Sparkford Road
Winchester Hampshire
Parish/Ward: Winchester Town
Applicants Name: Domain Queen's Road LP
Case Officer: Dave Dimon
Date Valid: 28 August 2007
Site Factors: None Identified

Recommendation: Application Permitted

General Comments

This application is reported to Committee because of the number of objections received and because it is for a major development

Amended plans have been received which increase the number of rooms from 375 to 382 and show reduced height at the southern end and consequent increased height to the block adjacent to Queens Road, and include minor changes to the footprint and layout

Site Description

The application site, which has an area of 0.603 hectares, lies immediately to the south of the hospital maternity unit, Florence Portal House, with the university campus adjoining its western boundary and the mental health unit, Melbury Lodge, lying to the east, but separated by an area of woodland. To the south is the large residential curtilage of Lommedal, a large detached dwelling at the end of Milnthorp Lane.

Access to the application site is via Queens Road and the spur off that leads to Melbury Lodge. Queens Road marks the southern edge of the RHCH complex and serves the main hospital car parks, linking via the one-way Burmah Road to Sparkford Road in the west and to Romsey Road to the north.

The site presently accommodates two four-storey brick and slate accommodation blocks that step down the hill parallel to the adjacent accommodation blocks within the university. The two blocks, Colebrook House and Parchment House, are former nurses accommodation that is now used as student accommodation, each providing 30 rooms and having small car parks on their northern sides.

The site falls steeply to the south from Queens Road with a difference in level of over 20 metres from top to bottom. It is separated from the university accommodation by established tree cover along its eastern boundary and the tree cover also defines the southern boundary with Lommedal in Milnthorpe Lane. The dense tree cover on the western side of the site, which contributes to the setting of Melbury Lodge, extends into the south western corner of the application site and there are two important individual trees that lie to the west side of each of the existing buildings.

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Proposal

The proposal is to remove the existing accommodation blocks and redevelop the site to provide 382 student rooms and ancillary facilities. This would comprise 330 single rooms and 52 studio or double rooms. The accommodation would be arranged in 7 buildings running down the hill in two parallel rows of three attached but staggered blocks, with a further block turned at right angles to front onto Queens Road. The space between the two rows of buildings would be a cascade of landscaped terraces forming an amenity area interconnected by steps and open platform lifts and incorporating open storage space for cycles.

The height of the buildings would generally comprise six levels but with elements of seven levels as shown in the table below, although the complexity of the floor levels as they step down the hill means that the lower floors are partly cut into the slope and, with the buildings articulated, especially at the upper level, the appearance is not of 6/7 storeys.

As a result of the amendments Building 7 at the lower southern end of the site, closest to Milnthorpe Lane, has been stepped back at the upper levels to present only a part 3/4 storey elevation at its closest point to the boundary with the property Lommedal. Building 7 is 11 metres from the southern boundary at its closest point, increasing to 19 metres as the boundary is angled. At the northern end Buildings 5 and 2 come up to the boundary with the access drive to Melbury Lodge, and the eastern row of buildings terminates at the lower southern end to form a right angle at the boundary of the application site with the existing student accommodation, Alwyn Hall.

BUILDING	No of Floors	No of Rooms	No of Studios	Gross External Area (sq m)
1	7	60	2	1790
2	7	50	10	1856
3	6	51	4	1525
4	6	48	6	1602
5	6	54	10	1755
6	6	30	14	1441
7	6	37	6	1302
TOTAL		330	52	11271

Vehicular access and servicing will be from Queens Road at the higher level, with only drop off and disabled car parking provision provided to a total of ten spaces.

The six buildings in the two rows that step down the hillside do not have internal connections between them, but each building has a lift and the applicants state that an open lift arrangement within the terraced courts between the buildings will ensure that 72% of all rooms are accessible for disabled access purposes, since the site is too steep for ramped access. Additionally Building 3 has a purpose designed room for disabled persons and four other rooms that can be readily converted to full disability standards if required.

The blocks are subdivided vertically by a central staircase access and lift cores to the upper floors. Each core serves two clusters of flats per floor. These flats are subdivided to accommodate between four and seven individual student bedroom spaces, each with its own en-suite toilet and shower facility. Each individual cluster has its own kitchen, dining and lounge area.

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Relevant Planning History

There is no relevant history for this site except to note that the existing buildings, Colebrook House and Parchment House, were built circa late 1960s to early 1970s to provide accommodation for nurses employed at RHCH. The Health Authority ceased to require such facilities from 2005/2006 with the university using Parchment from Sept 2005 and Colebrook from Sept 2006 for student accommodation.

The Winchester and Eastleigh NHS Trust has confirmed that the site has been sold to the applicants, Domain, earlier this year, having become surplus to the requirements of the Trust.

Consultations

Engineers: Drainage:

Existing public foul sewer crosses the site and will be required to be diverted to avoid being beneath the proposed buildings. It also serves other university buildings and Southern Water must be consulted to see if it has capacity to serve the development and whether it can be modified to accommodate the existing runs of other private sewers and drains.

The applicant will need to liaise with Southern Water to see what works are necessary and possible and provide a drainage strategy to show proposed works for diverting the sewer and accommodating all existing and proposed flows.

Engineers: Highways:

Summary

Subject to the strict implementation of the Management Plan it is unlikely that the submitted proposal will interfere with or cause demonstrable harm to users of the adjoining highway network.

Further advice

This application seeks full permission for a new residential campus for 375 students attending the University of Winchester. The two existing blocks, previously used as nurse's residential accommodation, will be replaced by 7 new blocks of accommodation.

A Management Plan has been submitted in support of the application, which sets out the management company's (Domain) policies regarding Traffic/Parking Management; Access by Pedestrians, Cyclists and Vehicular Traffic; CCTV Monitoring, Operational Site Management; and Refuse Storage and Collection. Further information has also been sought following concerns raised by the Highway Engineer.

Restrictions to student parking

Generally the university does not allow its residential students to bring their cars to its sites. Student Regulations state:-

"Except in the case of disabled students displaying orange/blue disabled persons badges in their vehicle, or families with permission, students may not park any motor vehicle on any premises belonging to the University at any time".

Expected peak periods and arrival procedures

Domain have experience of running similar sites at Coventry, Liverpool and Newcastle and from this it is anticipated that the universities register first year students a few days before they register other students, thus reducing the number of students arriving on the first day of their tenancy.

Typically, the initial forecast for student arrivals is predicted to be as follows:-

1st weekend of lease - 52%

2nd weekend of lease - 21%

Weekday by appointment - 27%

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The Management Plan operates as drop off only at check-in times on site. Arrivals can access the site by car, deliver belongings and remove their car to other designated areas (such as an overflow facility at Alwyn Hall). Ten parking spaces will be provided to the north of the site, including two accessible parking bays.

The arrival date and time is included in the joining instructions sent out to new students, this enables Domain to regulate numbers of students arriving at any one time. The university uses senior students to act as student guides/traffic wardens on arrival days who coordinate with on-site security teams arrangements to manage the flow of vehicles on and off university premises. Any vehicles that would cause queues onto Queens Road will be redirected to other parking areas.

Departure procedures

It is not anticipated that the departure of students will cause problems, as students tend to depart their residential accommodation following the end of their exams, which is spread out over a longer time period at the end of the term.

Cycle parking

It is intended that cycle parking at the ratio of 1 space per 2 students will be provided, in central areas overlooked by many student rooms and monitored by CCTV. The cycle parking will be in racks, which are open to the elements. I would prefer to see cycle parking in secure undercover parking facilities, however Domain and the university do not believe there is a need for secure undercover cycle storage that they say would significantly block the openness of the common amenity space which is a feature of the development. Again, Domain refer to open air cycle parking being the norm on their other schemes at Coventry, Liverpool and Newcastle.

Refuse storage and collection

Regarding refuse storage and collection - students are responsible for taking refuse to the on-site bin store located within the ancillary building adjacent to the new access road off Queens Road entrance. Rubbish will be deposited into 1100 litre Eurobins and collections will take place on a daily basis.

Emergency access

The strategy for emergency access for ambulances and fire services is as follows:-

Each building will be provided with dry risers within the core. The inlets will be located at the north end of the two blocks, well within 18m of the street from where fire engines will operate. Alarm panels next to the inlets will indicate in which building the fire is located. The site is open with no boundary fences and walls, allowing ambulance staff to enter from several positions. Terraces of different scales step down the sloping site and stairs connect these terraces to access all buildings. As the slope is too steep to access the site with ramps, some external platform lifts will be provided to allow for disabled access to upper levels.

Environmental Health:

I have examined the proposals in detail and am concerned about the potential for noise nuisance arising from this development both during it's construction and it's occupation.

No noise report has been submitted in support of this application. It is therefore recommended that a condition be added requiring that a full noise assessment of the proposals, including measures to ensure that the development will not result in noise nuisance to neighbours, be required to be submitted and approved before development commences. The report should also include details of how the university management will address any noise nuisance issues that may arise.

(Condition 8)

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Landscape:

This is a sensitive site in landscape terms. The well established wooded slopes form an important backdrop and setting to the City of Winchester and contribute to the distinctive qualities of the adjoining heritage suburban villa development on Sleepers Hill. There are important views of this area from the south, particularly St. Catherines Hill on the far side of the Itchen valley. The document "Winchester City and its Setting" refers to the importance of this view (pp 5.1.1, 5.1.2) as does the City Council's Winchester Conservation Project 2003 (para. 3.6, p96), the latter stating that strategic views such as this are to be safeguarded to protect the silhouette quality of the skyline. The LADs document for Sleepers Hill takes this further by identifying, in addition, the importance of the visual relationship between the historic city and its surrounding suburbs and landscape, whilst describing the view from the south as 'notable for its lack of intrusive modern development' (pp 13-14).

There are concerns regarding visual impact, especially from the south-east, with the massing and accumulative overall height of the student blocks as shown. Reservations remain regarding the concept of tall thin buildings as having the least visual impact from the south, not least because of the limitations regarding the ability of existing and new tree planting to mitigate the buildings proposed. Although there was mention of greening the roofs in the pre-application discussion documents, this has not been carried through in the submission. Advise further exploration and feasibility of this more sustainable approach as it may also aid mitigation.

Notwithstanding the perspectives and photographs already submitted, additional information is essential to properly assess the impact of the proposed development on the site and surrounds. This should include photomontages of proposals and perspectives as viewed from St Catherines Hill, rather than birds eye views. They should not rely on existing tree cover to screen the buildings at the lower level. Regarding existing tree cover, visualisations need to show only those trees that have been identified as in good condition and for retention (ref: tree constraints report). The need for further specialist tree advice, an arboricultural implications assessment and a woodland management plan is recommended in the report and should be part of this submission. An accurate topographical survey is also required showing trees to be removed, and new and replacement tree planting.

Other concerns:

Proposals are very dependent on main pedestrian throughway that can only function with inclusion of many flights of steps, which is not user-friendly. New trees in this location are unable to screen buildings when viewed from the south.

Proposed building footprint as shown is too close to the eastern site boundary, limiting opportunities for enhancing the existing landscape framework along this boundary.

Reservations regarding the high level of fenestration, especially from the south, as it may appear out of character in this sensitive location.

There is reference to a Development Masterplan framework for the site in the Ecology Report (30 July 2007) which intends to take account of ecology constraints. Confirmation required as to whether this has been submitted.

NB: Additional clarification in regard to the visual impact and landscape mitigation planting has been subsequently submitted and is detailed in the landscape section of the Planning Considerations.

Environment Agency:

Application has been assessed as having a low environmental risk

Urban Design

1. This is a sensitive site and sits within a suburb which steeply slopes and is heavily wooded

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and which plays a major role in providing a green and wooded setting to the city of Winchester. W1 of WDLPR is important in this respect and should carry significant weight in the consideration of this application.

2. The submission does not test the visual impact that this very dense development will have from distant views. What has been provided in this respect are two views showing the existing situation (one from a particular point on St Giles' Hill, the other from St Catherine's Hill) but nothing has been provided showing the proposed development superimposed. This is such a sensitive site that, if this proposal is to be progressed, we should insist on verifiable views. From my initial assessment I consider that the development will be quite intrusive and the height ought to be considerably reduced.
3. There are no proper sections going through the buildings and showing the relationship with Queens Road and Florence Portal House but it is possible (from the elevations and the floor plans) to understand the height of the buildings at the boundaries. From the car parking at the top of the site Building 2 will be 6 storeys and marginally taller than Florence Portal House on the other side of the road.
4. Also of concern is the impact the development will have on the amenity of adjacent residents in Milnthorpe Lane. I imagine most of the trees are deciduous along this boundary and therefore these tall buildings (5 storeys at this point) are likely to be overbearing.
5. On a positive note I find the architecture and the alignment of blocks and their disposition one with another and the spaces and linkage with the existing campus buildings to be acceptable. It is very important that the detailing and the quality of materials should be to a very high standard

Further to the above response and now having been able to consider the subsequently submitted accurate visual representations, these verifiable views do allay my fears somewhat and it appears that the scheme when viewed from these two key places (St. Catherine's Hill and St. Giles' Hill) will nestle into the wooded slope reasonably well.

I would like to discuss the treatment of the large brick walls with the architect as I feel that they may have quite a visual impact when viewed across the valley. There may be a less conspicuous way of articulating these sidewalls.

HCC Ecology

The proposed design appears to involve the loss of some grassland, some trees and scrub. However, I have no objection to the proposals providing further protected species surveys are undertaken and appropriate mitigation put in place, as recommended in the Ecology Report attached to the application. This would include surveys for badgers, reptiles and stag beetles, as the presence of these species on site is likely. Once this has been established, then the appropriate mitigation needs to be agreed.

Natural England:

Objects to the application and recommends that it be refused on the grounds that it contains insufficient information to demonstrate whether or not the development would have an adverse effect on legally protected species. The Ecological Report for the application suggests that further surveys need to be carried out for protected species, to avoid offences being committed.

Our concerns relate specifically to the likely impact on bats. Part IV and Annex A to Circular 06/2005 'Biodiversity and Geological Conservation' sets out the statutory obligations. In order to assess the potential implications on protected species, assessments and recommendations for mitigation measures should be undertaken at the most appropriate time of the year (for the target species) by suitably experienced persons holding the relevant licences.

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No objection is raised in regard to badgers and common reptiles provided further survey work is undertaken and that, if badgers do use the site, works are undertaken under licence and that, if reptiles are present, a suitable reptile mitigation strategy is submitted to and approved by the Council before works are commenced.

If permission is granted before such further investigation is undertaken the applicant must be advised that it does not absolve them from complying with the relevant law protecting species.

Architects Panel

Recommend that application should be referred to Hampshire Panel of Architects with a supporting impact statement.

The site is south of the maternity hospital and was occupied by nurses' homes, now occupied by students. The site slopes steeply to the south.

The proposal is to demolish the existing buildings and replace with 7 buildings running down the slope separated by a cascade of terraces. The buildings are contained by planes of brickwork containing glazed south walls.

From the hospital the main impact would be a new roofscape while from the southern residential area, dense tree planting obscures views. This tree cover also appears to screen views of the site and most of the proposed development from St. Giles' Hill and St. Catherine's Hill. The 7 buildings will accommodate 375 rooms.

Whilst being adjacent to the existing campus, this site has very restricted access, which has to be shared with the hospital. This poses issues not just for the construction period but also at the beginning and end of terms when students are moving in and out. An additional access along the southern edge of the campus should be investigated. It is important that the servicing of this site does not have an adverse impact on the hospital.

This important issue raises the whole question of context; how does this accommodation relate to the wider campus? This scheme should be shown in model form as part of the whole campus. It appears as a stand-alone development, and the scheme cannot be read in relation to the existing campus buildings, spaces and circulation system. The visual impact of the buildings on the Winchester landscape needs to be clearly demonstrated.

The basic concept and principles of layout are supported, but the scheme lacks context and detail. This is an intense development, which might not emerge as an asset to the University and to Winchester.

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Hampshire Advisory Panel of Architects

Summary and Conclusions

Although there were some initial concerns about the scale and massing, particularly on the southern boundary, these had been addressed to some extent by the revised scheme. There was some concern about the effect of over-shadowing and wind effect in the central courtyard.

The following conclusions were made:-

1. Overall concept and arrangement on site.
Despite some initial concerns that the brief numbers may have driven the concept, it was accepted that the proposed orientation and form was a valid approach for this site.
2. Architecture and scale of the buildings in context.
This is a site that can take some scale and mass, particularly towards the northern end where 5-6 storeys could assist in forming an urban experience in what is a dull streetscape at present. It was felt that the general form and scale was generally acceptable in this context. There was some concern caused by the scale of the proposal from the south, south east/west from within the site and a suggestion that this should be illustrated in 3D from pedestrian level and, if there are issues with over dominance, the building should be cut back to “cascade” down the hill. It was also felt that further mitigation measures through landscaping and tree planning are likely to be necessary to address the physical impact on adjacent properties on the southern boundary.
3. Design of the courtyard.
This is a major feature of the scheme and, although the proposed treatment of the space appears to be providing a quality environment, the Panel still has some reservations about the overshadowing effect due to the height of the west blocks. Success will depend, among other things, on the detailing and maintenance of the hard and soft landscaping.
4. Architectural Detail.
It was felt that the simplicity of the design sketches had been lost in the latest, more detailed, CAD drawings. In particular, the design for the brick plane had become confused in an attempt to introduce modelling. It was suggested that this should be reviewed, maintaining the simplicity of the sketch elevations with smaller openings, and all in the same plane rather than the overly complicated CAD elevations.
5. Landscaping
In addition to the importance of the central courtyard in the scheme, it was felt that this proposal had presented an opportunity to afford some landscape connections to adjoining sites - in particular the forecourt of Alwyn House. This aspect ought to be explored further in such a way that the two sites could be viewed as a whole, and would probably involve the removal of the trees on the eastern boundary of the site.

Crime Prevention

“Secured by Design” recognises that the less the access control, the greater the risk of crime. The site should therefore be made secure with perimeter fencing and defensive planting that will deter unlawful entry and have minimal entrance/exit points.

Theft of cycles is a high volume crime and therefore it is important that all cycle bays are well overlooked and that good quality locks and stands that are anchored to the ground are used. The proposal will incorporate CCTV but the bays will need to be lit to BS 5489. Car parking should similarly be well overlooked and lit.

Low level lighting bollards should not be used due to their ineffectiveness and vulnerability to vandal and other criminal attack. Practical column lighting is recommended.

The building design should ensure maximum natural surveillance and avoid the many recesses

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and blind corners where criminals could hide. All ground floor areas should have doors and windows to SBD standards including laminated glass window opening limiters. The access statement indicates that 'individual cluster blocks' will be accessed by electronic fob that can be cancelled if lost or stolen. It is not, however, clear how the main doors to the blocks will be made secure.

The combination of CCTV and regular security patrols, as the proposals indicate will be part of the site management, will reduce the fear of crime and the possibility of crime.

Southern Water:

Existing public sewer that crosses site will need to be diverted at developer's expense, if this is possible without unacceptable loss of hydraulic capacity and to the satisfaction of Southern Water. Alternatively, applicant may wish to amend the site layout or combine a diversion with amendment of the site layout.

Investigations indicate there is currently inadequate capacity in the local network to provide foul sewage disposal to service the proposed development. Without improvement to existing sewers there is a greater risk of flooding to properties and land. Section 98 of the Water Industry Act 1991 provides a legal mechanism through which the appropriate infrastructure can be requested (by the developer) and provided to drain a specific location.

If permission is granted, the inclusion of an appropriate condition and informative is requested. (Condition 3).

The applicant has not stated details of the proposed means of disposal of surface water from the site. This should not involve disposal to the public foul sewer.

A water supply to the site can be provided.

Representations:

City of Winchester Trust:

Following their initial comments in which objection was raised, mainly due to a lack of detail, the Trust has, following a further presentation by the architects, advised that, although some concerns remain, the main reasons for their objection have been addressed.

Landscaping: Concern about Cedar at top of site and whether sufficient space has been allowed for the growth it will make. Question the need for such a large number of bicycle racks which seem to be intrusive and require so much space to be given over to hard landscaping. Present boundary trees would benefit from some evergreen under-planting to provide additional screening during winter months, especially to lessen the effect this development could have on residents of Milnthorpe Lane.

Window Details: The detailing of these was discussed at some length, and the approach proposed felt to be appropriate.

Materials: Provided it is well chosen, use of buff coloured bricks for the buildings on either side of the courtyards that step down hill is acceptable, however a computer generated view from St Catherine's Hill appears to show light coloured brick as being intrusive in east-west block. Suggested that this should be slightly darker brickwork. The Trust wishes to be consulted regarding approval of materials, which should include details for brick type, bonding and pointing.

General Concerns: Success will be dependent upon high standard of materials and detailing. Will be important that architect remains in charge throughout to ensure high standard of workmanship. There may be views from the south, including from amenity space along the ridge above Badger Farm, from where the hospital area can also be seen.

22 letters received objecting to the application for the following reasons:

Impact

- Height sets a precedent among all other buildings within confines of hospital, college grounds or even Winchester itself. Will dwarf surrounding properties. Currently university accommodation is three storeys and stands a sensitive distance from Milnthorpe Lane residents. A six storey building running down the fall line of the hill would be totally

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disproportionate and out of sympathy with the local environment. Overall impression of a stack of prefabricated units rather than a considered design exercise.

- Current buildings are aligned generally in an east-west aspect and use the contours of the land.
- Proposals do not respect the context within which they would sit. Does not accord with Policy DP3, DP4, DP10 and W1.
- Whilst building is six storeys high towards southern boundary, it would have the appearance of a ten storey building with the proposed buildings climbing up behind it.
- Unacceptable proximity to properties in Milnthorpe Lane. Should not be permitted to extend down the slope but be retained in it's natural undeveloped state to provide a buffer between the buildings and residential area.
- Fundamentally changes the landscape and environment.
- Would be clearly visible from St Catherine's Hill and St Giles' Hill. Fails to protect strategic vistas of Winchester, which have been designated as of importance in Winchester Conservation Project 2003. Massive glass frontage would be spectacularly visible from the town. Submitted views of impact from these locations is inaccurate and misleading.
- At 375 units, far larger than the site can accommodate. Half the size would be adequate and there should be underground parking.

Amenities

- Will give unrestricted views into house and gardens (Milnthorpe Lane) removing privacy, especially during winter months.

Parking & Highways Impact

- Intolerable burden on streets around. No provision shown for car parking.
- Queens Road is not suitable to take additional traffic.

Noise & Light Pollution

- College chairs a regular liaison meeting with residents. Most frequent complaints are those of noise, especially following drinking sessions. Provision for 375 additional students is likely to concentrate the problem. Would dramatically alter the level of activity.
- Playing of loud music and anti-social behaviour is no less a problem.
- Student accommodation will remain well lit into the early hours, providing another source of disturbance in a quiet residential area. Glazing would result in high level of reflection.
- Disruption caused during building works

Other Issues

- University, in its letter of support, puts forward a number of arguments not well made. Concedes that there has been limited growth but considers the development necessary to ease pressure on the private rented sector. University does not show why the development would necessarily attract or divert students from Stanmore, which may have facilities (e.g. parking), that the proposed development lacks. University states development will increase from 180 to 375, however proposal indicates the increase is from 60 to 375, assuming the accommodation for 120 students in Alwyn Hall is retained.

Reasons not material to planning and therefore not addressed in this report

- No meetings have taken place between the Residents Association and the developers which is disappointing. *N.B: meetings with residents have been held subsequent to the submission of the application.*

2 letters of support received.

- University already has over 1000 bedspaces but has been asked by local community and Winchester City Council to build more to help ease pressure on the private rented sector. Although there has been limited growth in full time student numbers there has been a greater concentration in where they live. The rise in student population in Stanmore has been relatively sudden and unplanned. Long term residents bought their houses with buy-to-let mortgages and let them to students as a commercial enterprise, or sold them to commercial landlords.
- Demographic composition of neighbourhoods around a university can change and become increasingly characterised by a population which is predominantly young, seasonal and transient. From the perspective of local communities, concerns arise if student numbers

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increase so much that they outnumber permanent resident population. This is far from happening in any part of Winchester but significant concentrations of student houses on individual streets can have similar effects.

- It is clear that the single area where effects of “studentification” are more likely to be pronounced is Stanmore. One very obvious solution is to provide more bedspaces at the university.
- This development is ideal, immediately adjacent to existing halls of residence. University will take a 40 year lease on residences and manage them itself. Already been successful in managing West Downs Student Village. Already have an active neighbourhood group involving residents in Milnthorpe Lane.
- There have been 60 students living in the existing buildings on this site for the past few years. Further 120 live in Alwyn Hall. The development is not a new departure; it simply increases the bed numbers from 180 to 375.
- Planning application is critical to maintaining a positive balance between the benefits that the university brings to the city and minimising the detrimental impact on the local communities.

RHCH Estate Services supports the application. The scheme will result in the provision of high quality accommodation for students and will effectively become a continuation of the university campus, and will also ensure the regeneration of a substantially under utilised site, as well as making a positive contribution to the city.

Winchester & Eastleigh NHS Healthcare Trust, having reviewed the proposals and discussed them with the applicant, considers that the amenity of its existing buildings is suitably protected. Additionally, the Trust considers the proposed use to be wholly compatible with its location.

Relevant Planning Policy:

Hampshire County Structure Plan Review (Saved policies):
T5, E16,

Winchester District Local Plan Review
DP.1, DP.2, DP.3, DP.4, DP.5, DP.6, SF.6, H.3, T.1, T.2, T.3, T.4, W.1,

National Planning Policy Guidance/Statements:
PPS 1 Delivering Sustainable Development
PPG 3 Housing
PPS 9 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
PPS12 Local Development Framework
PPG 13 Transport
PPG 16 Archaeology and planning
PPG 17 Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation

Supplementary Planning Guidance
Winchester District Landscape Character Assessment

Other Planning Guidance
Guide to the Open Space Funding System
Hampshire Biodiversity Action Plan
Hampshire Historic Landscape Assessment
Housing Monitoring Report
Movement, Access, Streets and Spaces
Parking Standards 2002
The Future of Winchester Study
Winchester City and its Setting
Winchester District Landscape Assessment
Winchester Housing Needs Survey
Winchester Sites and Monument Record

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Planning Considerations

Principle of Development,
Design / layout
Impact on character of area and adjoining property
Landscape / Trees / Open Space
Ecology
Highways / Parking
Other Matters

Principle of development

Paragraph 8.44 of the Local Plan recognises that “Higher education provision in the District provides valuable facilities and is an important aspect of the local economy”. Policy SF.6 incorporates provision for the development of new and improved facilities and services within the settlements and this includes that relating to educational establishments. Paragraph 8.37 recognises that such developments can involve the construction of buildings which are likely to be of high architectural profile, by virtue of their function and location.

The housing policies of the Local Plan do not specifically address the need for student accommodation. However, it is recognised that such need is a part of higher education provision. The principle of such development is thus not contested and the site is already in use for student accommodation. However, as with all development, any proposals must be considered with regard to all relevant policies and in this case it is the impact of the development that must be carefully assessed. Policy W1 in particular requires that development respects the particular architectural and historic qualities of the town as a whole and its landscape setting. Development on steep slopes will only be permitted where the LPA is satisfied that it is appropriately designed for the site conditions and will not detract from the quality of the townscape and landscape of Winchester.

The university has stated that the proposal will serve to reduce the present level of student accommodation within the private residential stock; some 400 rented dwellings across the city particularly at Stanmore (170), Fulflood/Greenhill (22), Highcliffe (24), Weeke (13), Badger Farm (12), Winnall (12), St Cross (9) and with the others distributed across other areas, together with 130 that are well dispersed around the city centre. Whilst the growth of full time student numbers is stated to be limited, the university is requiring this development to be available to meet the Sept 2009 intake. There is also no guarantee that student numbers in the private rented sector will decrease, thereby releasing property to the general housing market, as this will be determined by market forces.

Design/layout

The design is contemporary and is based on brickwork ‘plates’ to the principal side elevations of the buildings that are punctuated by a formal arrangement of recessed fenestration, creating a frame in which four windows are divided by brick details, with the coloured aluminium window frames and screens further recessed within the brick frame. The end elevations are constructed of fully glazed curtain walling with aluminium louvers to reduce solar gain, light pollution and overlooking. The top level of the buildings is set back from the plane of the elevations and finished with lead cladding and incorporating glass spandrel panels to the rooms. The main features of the design are described in the above section headed “Proposal”.

Ecology

The application was supported by an ecology report and in principle both the HCC ecologist and English Nature consider the report to be competent in most respects. However, although the report recommends that further survey work be undertaken, because the surveys that have informed the report were not undertaken at an optimal time, English Nature has raised objection

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to the application, because insufficient survey information has been provided to demonstrate whether the development would have an adverse effect on legally protected species.

In particular, they are concerned that further bat survey work should be undertaken.

It is, however, considered that, providing development is not commenced in advance of such further work being undertaken and any necessary licences being obtained, the refusal of the application on ecology grounds would not be warranted as the matter can be covered by an appropriate condition and informative. (See Condition 7 & Informative 5).

Impact on character of area and neighbouring property

The design has clearly responded to the challenging topography of the site whilst maximising its potential use in the form of a multi storey development that steps down the hill and provides for the achievement of a student room density of 633 / hectare. The amended plans have lessened the impact of the development on neighbouring properties in Milnthorpe Lane by virtue of the height being reduced and the mass being further broken up. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the scale of the development is substantial as seen from Milnthorpe Lane and will result in a significantly more imposing impact than do the existing accommodation blocks on the site. Furthermore, the glazed curtain wall end elevations, which mostly comprise the shared kitchen / living room areas, will give a perception of overlooking and possible light pollution as seen from residences in Milnthorpe Lane. However, the louvers and existing / proposed tree planting will serve to reduce such impact on the southern side of the site.

Although the scale of development at the hospital site is very large and it occupies high ground such that it is visible in longer views across the city, the buildings to the south as they step down the hill, including the existing university campus, do not generally break the skyline and are discreetly accommodated within the existing tree cover. The proposed development has been tested by the production of verifiable views from St. Catherines Hill and St. Giles' hill, being the principle vantage points for views over the city. In each case the development has been shown to be visible but not incongruously dominant. The impact has also been examined from Whiteshute Ridge and the footpath that crosses the Royal Winchester Golf Course, from neither of which locations can the site be seen.

Landscape/Trees

The supporting Tree Constraints Report has surveyed the existing trees on the site and identified those for removal which are principally poor specimens on the eastern boundary of the site and some on the western boundary. The existing Blue Atlas Cedar that lies to the west of Colebrook House is retained as a centrepiece of the terraced amenity area.

A revised landscape strategy plan provides for existing boundary planting to be retained and reinforced with new tree and understory planting, and for further planting to the south east corner of the site to reinforce the screening to Milnthorpe Lane with a group of Hornbeam and Corsican Pine. The gap in the southern boundary where a Juniper and two Cypress trees need to be removed is also filled by new Hornbeams. Further planting on the site of Alwyn Hall is also intended to complement the setting

The open terraces between the buildings have the potential to provide a high quality landscaped amenity area with lawned banks, shrub and ground cover planting in raised planters, with seats and trees, but the need for retaining walls, steps, lifts and possibly safety barriers will, together with the large amount of hard surfacing and cycle storage areas, significantly limit the potential for tree planting and soft landscaping and, as the Architects Panel has commented, the building heights are likely to overshadow the area during some of the day. The central terraced area is connected through to the existing university site at level 4.

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Highways/Parking

As referred to above in the consultations section (Engineers) the Management Plan accompanying the application provides the only information on traffic and parking management issues. The university's policy is that students are not allowed to park on site unless registered as disabled or having other exceptional need to do so, so the development provides only 10 spaces including 2 disabled. The management of these spaces will be undertaken by the university.

The provision of cycle parking is based on 1 space per 2 students but the university believes that the provision (188 spaces) is excessive and, based on the experience of the present campus student accommodation, wishes to reduce such provision. The engineer is prepared to consider this based on a case supported by evidence of likely need. This would also be welcomed in terms of improving the appearance of the terraced amenity area and could be dealt with by way of amended plans.

The application is not supported by a construction management / construction traffic plan and this is an important consideration in view of the parking problems that already arise at the hospital and the need to minimise the impact of the construction works and traffic implications of this major project. Conditions are therefore included requiring that a construction management plan and construction traffic and parking plan be provided and to prevent mud on the highway. (Conditions 11, 10 & 12 respectively)

Compliance with the Management Plan submitted in support of the development will also need to be secured by condition to ensure that the development is satisfactorily managed (See Condition 13)

Other Matters

Although the applicant has submitted in support of the application a sustainability appraisal this is no more than the SEEDA checklist and the application does not detail the specific sustainability provisions that are to be incorporated into the design. The checklist shows that the building will attain a 'good' rating overall but without further information to clarify this it is not possible to comment on how green the development will be. Therefore, a condition is attached requiring that further details of the sustainability provisions of the scheme be submitted for approval. (Condition 15)

Conclusion

This is an intensive development that will significantly change the present character of the site and is likely to have its greatest impact in terms of the immediacy of the site. In longer views from around the city it is considered that the proposal can be absorbed into the existing cityscape satisfactorily, particularly considering its context with the existing hospital buildings.

The impact with regard to the residential properties in Miltnthorpe Lane will be significant but the amended plans and proposed further planting will serve to mitigate such impact and the louvers to the glazed end elevations of the buildings will serve to restrict any overlooking and the impact of lighting.

The design is considered satisfactory, subject to the selection of appropriate materials which is covered by Condition 2. Similarly, landscaping details will need to be agreed under the provisions of Condition 4.

Measures to protect the amenities of neighbours are required by virtue of Conditions 7-14.

The proposal is accordingly considered to be acceptable.

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Recommendation

Permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. No development shall take place until details and samples of the materials to be used for the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the development presents a satisfactory appearance in the interests of the amenities of the area.

3. The developer must advise the local authority (in consultation with Southern Water) of the measures that will be undertaken to divert the public sewers, prior to the commencement of the development.

Reason: To ensure that the development does not prejudice existing sewage disposal infrastructure and makes satisfactory provision to connect into it.

4. No development shall take place until details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and these works shall be carried out as approved. These details shall include the following, as relevant:

- (A) existing and proposed finished levels or contours:
- (B) means of enclosure, including any retaining structures:
- (C) car parking layout:
- (D) other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas:
- (E) hard surfacing materials:
- (F) minor artefacts and structures (e.g. street furniture, play equipment, refuse or other storage units, signs, lighting etc):
- (G) proposed and existing functional services above and below ground (e.g. drainage, power, communications cables, pipelines etc, including lines, manholes, supports etc.):
- (H) retained historic landscape features and proposals for restoration.

Soft landscape details shall include the following as relevant:

- (I) planting plans:
- (J) written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment:
- (K) schedules of plants, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate:
- (L) retained areas of grassland cover, scrub, hedgerow, trees and woodland;
- (M) manner and treatment of watercourses, ditches and banks:
- (N) implementation programme:

Reason: To improve the appearance of the site in the interests of visual amenity.

5. All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out before the use hereby permitted is commenced and prior to the completion of the development or in accordance with the programme agreed with the Local Planning Authority. If within a period of five years after planting any tree or plant is removed, dies or becomes, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, seriously damaged,

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defective or diseased another tree or plant of the same species and size as that originally approved shall be planted at the same place, within the next planting season, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of a reasonable standard of landscape in accordance with the approved designs.

6. The accommodation hereby permitted shall not be used for any other purposes than halls of residence to serve students of the University of Winchester including university courses run outside of normal term time.

Reason: The development is not of a type that would be satisfactory for other residential use and does not incorporate sufficient parking provision for alternative types of occupancy.

7. No demolition of buildings or works to trees shall commence pursuant to this permission until such time as a further ecological survey has been undertaken to check for the presence of protected species and any relevant licence obtained. All works shall comply with any approved mitigation strategy and the terms and conditions of any licence issued. The demolition shall be supervised by a licensed bat worker who can advise on appropriate action in the event of previously undetected bat presence being discovered.

Reason: To ensure that appropriate regard is had to the protection of protected species in accordance with national and local ecological policies and relevant legislation (see informative 5 below).

8. Details of a scheme for insulating the buildings hereby approved against internally generated noise shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the commencement of development and completed before the use permitted commences. Such noise insulation shall thereafter be maintained and operated in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To secure the reduction in the level of noise emanating from the building and to protect the amenities of the occupiers of nearby premises.

9. Details of the provision to be made for the storage and disposal of refuse from the units of accommodation shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the development hereby permitted is commenced. This provision shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details before the units are occupied.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the locality.

10. Before the development hereby permitted is commenced a construction traffic routing plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to require that all construction traffic or deliveries of materials to the site shall access the site only via Romney Road and Queens road in connection with the development hereby permitted.

Reason: In the interests of road safety and the amenity of neighbouring properties.

11. No development shall take place until a Construction Method Statement and Construction Code of Practice for limiting the emission of noise and dust from all demolition and construction activities on the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall not commence until the measures approved in the scheme have been fully implemented and they shall be adhered to throughout the construction period

Reason: To protect the amenities of the occupiers of nearby residents.

12. Details of measures to be taken to prevent mud from vehicles leaving the site during construction works being deposited on the public highway shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and fully implemented before development commences. Such measures shall be retained for the duration of the construction period. No

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6. All building works including demolition, construction and machinery or plant operation should only be carried out between the hours of 0800 and 1800 hrs Monday to Friday and 0800 and 1300 hrs Saturday and at no time on Sundays or recognised public holidays. Where allegations of noise from such works are substantiated by the Environmental Protection Team, a Notice limiting the hours of operation under The Control of Pollution Act 1974 may be served.
7. No materials should be burnt on site. Where allegations of statutory nuisance are substantiated by the Environmental Protection Team, an Abatement Notice may be served under The Environmental Protection Act 1990. The applicant is reminded that the emission of dark smoke through the burning of materials is a direct offence under The Clean Air Act 1993.