

**KEY INFORMATION****Ward** Tay Bridges**Proposal**

Demolition of 2 existing buildings to allow for the future extension of the Wellcome Trust Building

**Address**

Well Road  
Dundee DD1 5HL

**Applicant**

Department of Estates & Buildings  
University of Dundee  
Nethergate  
Dundee DD1 4HN

**Agent**

Boswell Mitchell & Johnston  
18 Woodlands Terrace  
Glasgow G3 6DH

**Registered** 12 Aug 2002**Case Officer** Eve Jones

## Demolition of Existing Buildings at Well Road

The Demolition of two existing buildings to allow for the future extension of the Wellcome Trust Building is **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS**. Report by Director of Planning and Transportation

**RECOMMENDATION**

The application is in accordance with one of the relevant policies in the Dundee Local Plan and is supported by strong material considerations. It is recommended for **APPROVAL** subject to conditions.

**SUMMARY OF REPORT**

- Conservation Area consent is sought for the demolition of two sandstone buildings on the site in order to allow the extension to the Wellcome Trust building as proposed in application 02/00855/FUL which is also on this agenda.
- The applicants have submitted a statement of justification in support of the demolition on the grounds that the buildings are unlisted and the proposed development is of significance in the continued expansion of life sciences research and development at the University of Dundee.
- The proposal is in accordance with the Campus Plan which was recently approved by Committee as a material consideration.
- There were no objections to the proposed development.
- It is considered that the demolition of these traditional buildings, which are in poor condition internally, and are surrounded by much later development is acceptable as the new extension will replicate the scale, alignment, design and materials of the existing.
- Should Members be minded to approve this application for conservation area consent, the consent notice cannot be issued until Historic Scotland formally determine not to call in the application.

## DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

The application is for the demolition of two unlisted buildings in the University Conservation Area. The cleared site is required for a major extension to the east of the Wellcome Trust building at the University of Dundee, see Application reference 02/00855/FUL also on this agenda.

The applicants' agent has submitted a statement of justification in support of the application emphasising the importance of the proposed Centre for Inter Disciplinary Research which will link to the existing Wellcome Trust Biocentre. They advise that the buildings are of little architectural significance and are in poor condition internally. In order to maintain vehicle access to buildings to the rear, the road layout requires to be amended and improved which necessitates the removal of both buildings.

## SITE DESCRIPTION

The site lies on the northern edge of the University Campus, south of the Old Hawkhill. It is bounded by Well Road to the west and Mount Pleasant to the east. The two traditional sandstone buildings are set in a grassed and landscaped area with several large trees. Number 3-5 Mount Pleasant is a three storey tenement used for student housing. 7-9 Mount Pleasant is a two storey house used as a Student Union Building.

## POLICY BACKGROUND

### Dundee and Angus Structure Plan 2001-2016

There are no policies relevant to the determination of this application.

### Dundee Local Plan 1998

The following policies are of relevance:

Policy BE 11 - Development in Conservation Areas. Within Conservation Areas developments will be expected to complement and enhance the character of the area.

Policy BE16 - Demolition of Listed Buildings. The introduction to the policy also makes reference to

demolition of any building in a Conservation Area. That policy sets out criteria to be satisfied before any application for demolition will be considered. Therefore this application has also been considered against those criteria.

### Dundee Urban Nature Conservation Subject Local Plan 1995

There are no policies relevant to the determination of this application

### Finalised Dundee Local Plan Review

The plan was approved as a material consideration in January 2002.

The following policies are of relevance:



Policy 62 - Demolition of Listed Buildings and Buildings in Conservation Areas. The policy states that any application for demolition of a building that is worthy of retention in a conservation area must be fully supported by reports on the condition and marketing history of the building along with a feasibility study which explores the viability of retaining the building in active use. Where the demolition is permitted, there must be acceptable proposals for the redevelopment or treatment of the cleared site.

### Scottish Planning Policies, Planning Advice Notes and Circulars

National Planning Policy Guideline (NPPG) 18 - Planning and the Historic Environment. The Guidance states that there should be a presumption in

favour of retaining buildings that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Where demolition is approved salvage of materials and fixtures and fitting should be sought

The Memorandum of Guidance on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas 1998 advises that the demolition of unlisted buildings may affect the character of a conservation area. In the determination of any application, local planning authorities are advised to take account of the importance of the building to the character or appearance of any part of the conservation area and of proposals for the future of the cleared site.

Non Statutory Statements of Council Policy. There are no non statutory Council policies relevant to this application.

## LOCAL AGENDA 21

The proposed new development represents efficient use of resources as the building will be located within the University campus, close to the city centre where facilities and resources can be shared more efficiently. In addition, demolition material from the buildings will be retained and used in the repair and maintenance of other buildings within the University campus. The development will also provide employment opportunities.

However the demolition of two traditional buildings represents a loss of local diversity and distinctiveness which does not comply with Key theme 15.

## SITE HISTORY

02/00855/FUL The planning application for the extension to the Wellcome Trust building which is proposed to be erected on this site is also on this agenda.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The application was advertised as a Demolition in the Conservation Area in both the local press and the Edinburgh Gazette. There were no objections.

## CONSULTATIONS

The Director of Contract Services requests confirmation that retained trees will be protected in accordance with BS5837. There were no other comments from consultees

## OBSERVATIONS

The Memorandum of Guidance states that an assessment should be made of the importance of the buildings to the character and appearance of the conservation area and the proposals for the redevelopment of the site. If the buildings are of any value, it suggests that a positive attempt should be made to retain them. It also states that consent to demolish should only be given where there are acceptable proposals for the redevelopment of the site.

### The Development Plan

The provisions of the development plan relevant to the determination of this application are specified in the Policy background section above

Policy BE 11 - Development in Conservation Areas. Within Conservation Areas developments will be expected to complement and enhance the character of the area.

The buildings are not Listed but they are traditional sandstone buildings with slate roofs which are characteristic of the inner City and are the remnants of the original buildings which occupied this part of the campus. Whilst the proposed extension to the Wellcome Trust building will add to this significant and striking landmark building, the demolition of these buildings does not complement and enhance the character of the Conservation Area and is contrary to Policy BE 11.

Policy BE16 - Demolition of Listed Buildings. The introduction to the policy also makes reference to demolition of any building in a Conservation Area. That policy sets out criteria to be satisfied before any application for demolition will be considered. Therefore this application has also been considered against the following criteria:

a) "retention of the building is structurally and financially impracticable". The tenement would

prevent the construction of the proposed Wellcome Trust extension and the Student Union building would prevent the construction of the revised service road and fire tender access to the adjacent Duncan of Jordanstone College. Retention of the buildings would have a significant impact on the major extension to this important research and educational facility.

b) "every reasonable effort has been made to dispose of the buildings to a user who will retain and reuse them". The site lies within the heart of the campus and disposal to non-University use would have an impact on the successful operation of the University's functions.

c) "there is an essential need for the proposed redevelopment of the site which cannot be accommodated elsewhere". This has been detailed above and the site is essential for the proposed use.

d) "proposals for redevelopment are approved and a contract let". The planning application for the redevelopment is also on this agenda and an appropriate condition can restrict demolition until contracts are completed. A timetable of works has been submitted which indicates that following completion of demolition, if permitted, construction of the new building will commence in September 2003 with completion of the project by January 2005.

It is concluded from the foregoing that the proposal complies with Policy BE16 but is contrary to Policy BE 11 of the development plan.

### Other Material Considerations

The other material considerations to be taken into account are as follows:

As detailed above, the Finalised Dundee Local Plan 2003, Policy 62 and the Memorandum of Guidance require supporting justification for demolition of buildings in Conservation Areas. Where the demolition is permitted, there must be acceptable proposals for the redevelopment or treatment of the cleared site.

The applicants architect has submitted such a statement which is available in the Members' lounges. It emphasises the importance of the new building which will house the Centre for Inter

Disciplinary Research which will enable all externally funded research activities to operate in a single linked complex with expanded laboratory facilities. It will enhance the reputation of the University as an internationally competitive centre of excellence in life sciences research and teaching. The buildings are described by the Estates and Buildings Department of the University as being of sound exterior and poor interior. They are not listed and are surrounded by developments from the 1960's, 70's and 90's. As a result, their contribution to the character of the University Conservation Area is reduced. The statement of justification concludes by detailing that the site is included within the Campus Plan as an area for new building development.

### University of Dundee Campus Plan.

The Campus Plan was approved by the Development Quality Committee as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications on 27 January 2003. The Plan contains the development vision including a focus of expansion proposals on the northern edge of the campus and the creation of a major new green linear space in the heart of the campus which physically links the various faculties. The proposed extension to existing Wellcome Trust is shown as a new development site.

It should also be noted that no objections were received to the proposed demolition from the public or the Community Council.

It is concluded from the foregoing that the proposed development complies with one policy (Policy BE 16) of the Development Plan but does not comply with another (Policy BE 11). However, sufficient weight can be accorded to the material considerations as detailed above such as to justify the grant of conservation area consent for demolition contrary to the provisions of the development plan.

Should Members be minded to approve this application for conservation area consent, the consent notice cannot be issued unless and until Historic Scotland formally determine not to call in the application.

## Design

There are no design issues other than those detailed in the Policy section above.

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## CONCLUSION

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The buildings do not make a significant contribution to the Conservation Area although they are traditional stone buildings. The proposed redevelopment of the site will provide an extension to a landmark building within the University which will provide important research and development accommodation.

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## RECOMMENDATION

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### Recommendation 1

That this permission shall not be issued unless and until the Scottish Ministers decide not to formally call in this application.

It is recommended that planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:-

- 1 the development hereby permitted shall be commenced within five years from the date of this permission
- 2 the building shall not be demolished until both a contract for carrying out of the works of redevelopment of the site in accordance with the plans hereby approved has been made and evidence thereof supplied to the District Council
- 3 Stone, slates, decorative features, fixtures and fittings from the buildings hereby approved for demolition shall be carefully salvaged and stored in order to provide suitable traditional materials for the repair and maintenance of other buildings within the Campus area.

## Reason

- 1 To comply with Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997
- 2 to ensure that redevelopment of this site takes place immediately following demolition of the existing building, thereby ensuring that an unattractive gap

does not exist in the street scene to the detriment of the character and appearance of the area

- 3 In order to provide traditional materials for repair and maintenance of other buildings within the Campus.