

KEY INFORMATION

Ward Riverside

Proposal

Partial demolition of existing and erection of new student residences, landscaping, alterations to access and road infrastructure

Address

West Park Hall
319 Perth Road
Dundee DD2 1NN

Applicant

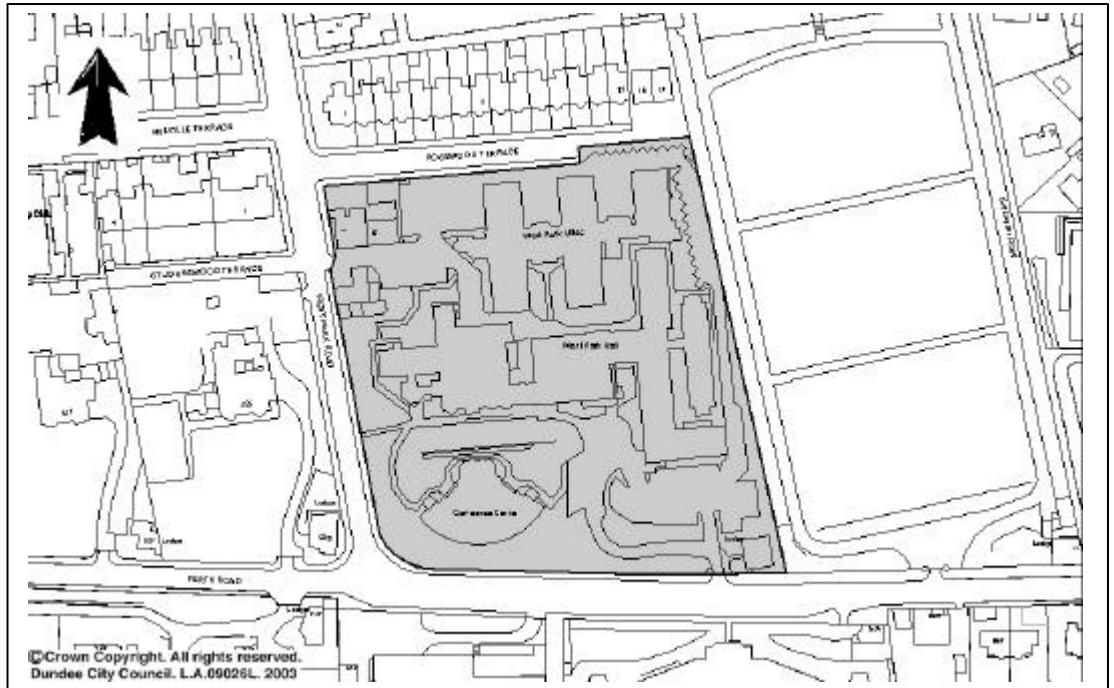
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Partial Redevelopment of Student Residences Proposed at West Park Hall

The partial demolition of an existing and erection of new student accommodation is **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL subject to conditions**. Report by Director of Planning and Transportation

RECOMMENDATION

The development is considered as a positive contribution to the redevelopment of the University campus area and one that will complement and enhance the surrounding conservation area. The application is recommended for **APPROVAL subject to conditions**.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

- Planning permission is sought for the demolition of 181 catered student bedrooms and their replacement with 140 student bedrooms on the east side of the West Park Conference facility site on the north side of Perth Road. The new buildings will be 4 - storey in height and will be finished in contemporary materials. A total of 113 car parking spaces are to be provided. Alterations are also proposed to the southern access into the site.
- The proposal was advertised in the local press as development affecting the setting of a listed building and conservation area. The site is contained within the West End Suburbs Conservation Area and West Park villa is a Category B listed building. Five objections to the proposals have been received from local residents.
- It is considered that the proposed development is acceptable in terms of design, siting, massing and scale. The new buildings will not significantly detract from the setting of the adjacent listed building or the surrounding conservation area. In addition, the levels of proposed car parking and cycle provision are also acceptable.
- There are no development plan policies or other material considerations, including the local objections, which would justify the refusal of this application.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

The proposal under consideration involves the demolition of 181 catered student bedrooms within the extension blocks located on the east side of the application site and their replacement with 140 student study bedrooms (24 flats). The new extension will form a 4-storey terrace of buildings running in a north to south direction along the east side of the site. The proposed finishing materials will be projecting metal roofs, with the walls being facing brick, smooth render and hardwood rainscreen cladding.

The amount of car parking within the West Park complex will remain unchanged ie 113 off street car parking spaces. A total of 24 covered and secure cycle parking spaces are also to be provided.

The development proposals also involve the realignment of the existing access on the southern boundary of the site ie onto Perth Road to allow improved access arrangements, including coach access, to the existing conference facilities at West Park. These alterations are also the subject of a listed building application that currently remains to be determined by this Council.

It is also proposed to carry out internal alterations to the existing residence / conference block (east extension of original villa), which is proposed to be retained.

Landscape proposals have also been submitted as part of the planning application details.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The planning application site is located on the north side of Perth Road immediately to the east of West Park Road. The site measures approx. 1.8 hectares in size and is bounded on the east by a cemetery, on the north side by the residential properties of Rosewood Terrace, on the west by residential properties and to the south by Harris Academy. The land slopes in a north to south direction. The site is located within the West End Suburbs Conservation Area and the main villa building is a category B listed building.

The application site comprises predominantly existing buildings with

associated external hard and soft landscaping. Mature trees exist within the site particularly along the eastern side of the site.

The West Park site has two primary functions, the first of which is that of a student residence. West Park Halls currently consist of 181 catered bedspaces within the extension blocks to the east of the site, and 159 self-catered en-suite bedspaces within the modern West Park villas located on the north side of the site. The second function at West Park is that of a conference location. The conference facilities at West Park consist of the West Park Centre, which is a stand-alone building, with a capacity for 300 people. Facilities are also provided in the Balbeggie Suite (150 capacity) and a range of other conference rooms, which are either within the existing Villa or are extensions. These rooms



have a range of capacities of between 20 and 60 people.

Access into the site is achieved from Perth Road in the south and West Park Road to the west. Car parking (113 spaces) can be found throughout the site.

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 EU19 - The Council will encourage appropriate business and research developments and supporting uses associated with Higher Educational Institutions in "campus" locations.

Policy H10 - This policy offers design guidelines for new build housing within the city.

Policy BE1 - The Council will expect the highest standards of composition and design in all new developments and its careful integration with its surroundings as regards scale, form, siting, alignment, materials and landscaping.

Policy BE11 - Within Conservation Areas all development proposals will be expected to complement and enhance the character of the surrounding area.

Policy ENV12 - Development proposals must have regard to existing healthy mature trees, the survival and retention of which should be accommodated throughout the construction period and in the proposed layout of the buildings.

Policy ENV 13 - Where appropriate, proposals for new developments should include details of proposed tree planting and landscape treatments.

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 following policies are of relevance:

Policy 4 - Design of New Housing. The design and layout of all new housing in the city should be of a high quality.

Policy 9 - Student Housing. Student housing proposals on sites located within 15 minutes walking distance of the Universities will be supported where this is in accordance with other Local Plan policies. A Section 75 Legal Agreement will be required to restrict occupancy to students. Given the prominent location of many sites close to the city's universities, it is important that development proposals are of a very high quality design. As a general rule car parking should be provided at a ratio of 25% bedspaces although this may be reduced in highly accessible central locations. Secure

cycle storage facilities should be included in all proposals.

Policy 55 - For all new developments the emphasis will be on design quality and the Council will seek the creation of public spaces and points of interest which incorporate architectural and landscape features and reflect and enhance historic street layouts, significant views and vistas. The Council will require the use of Design Statements for planning applications for new buildings.

Policy 61 - Development in Conservation Areas. Within conservation areas all developments will be expected to preserve or enhance the character of the surrounding area. This will require the retention of all features that contribute to the character and appearance of the area including unlisted buildings, trees and landscape features.

Policy 72 - Trees and Urban Woodland. New developments must have regard to existing healthy mature trees, the survival and retention of which will be strongly encouraged through sensitive site layouts both during and after construction. Where appropriate, development proposals must be accompanied by a tree planting and landscape scheme that includes a supporting justification and sufficient map based material to document existing planting within the application site as well as new planting and maintenance arrangements.

Scottish Planning Policies, Planning Advice Notes and Circulars

The following are of relevance:

National Planning Guideline 17 - Transport and Planning.

Scottish Planning Policy 17 - Transport and Planning Maximum Parking Standards (Addendum to NPPG17).

Planning Advice Note 67 - Housing Quality.

Designing Places - A Policy Statement for Scotland.

Non Statutory Statements of Council Policy

The following policy statements are of relevance:

Dundee - The Urban Design Guide. This sets out the objectives that are to be pursued in the design of new buildings and spaces within the city.

LOCAL AGENDA 21

The development will result in the redevelopment of a brownfield site and is therefore considered to be sustainable and consequently consistent with the aims of Local Agenda 21.

SITE HISTORY

The site has been the subject of 19 separate planning and listed building applications for developments within the current planning application site including the erection of new student accommodation on the north side of the site (now completed and occupied). All applications to date have been supported by the Council.

The Council are also currently considering a listed building application for alterations to the southern access into West Park including relocation of a boundary wall and gate piers (04/01079/LBC refers). This application remains to be determined.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The statutory neighbour notification procedure has been undertaken by the applicants. In addition, the development has been advertised in the local press as development affecting the setting of a listed building and conservation area.

Five objections to the proposals have been received from local residents (one letter was signed by an additional two local residents). The main issues raised by the objectors related to:

- 1 Traffic, parking and access issues including coach parking. It is argued by the objectors that the proposals will result in further overspill of vehicles on the neighbouring terraces and West Park Road and will further aggravate traffic congestion and inconvenience generated by the Halls and Harris Academy.
- 2 Removal of trees from the site.
- 3 Residential amenity issues (noise). The objectors advise that the student and conference activities often produce social

noise that can be sustained and uncomfortably audible in the evenings and late at night. In addition, noise from delivery traffic in the morning is evident.

- 4 Appearance, design of the new buildings within a Conservation Area. The objectors have raised concerns about the use of metal as a roofing material within a conservation area.

Copies of these objections can be found in the Members Lounges. Comments on the issues raised above are discussed in the 'Observations' Section below.

CONSULTATIONS

The relevant Council Departments and outside bodies have been consulted with regard to the proposals. The Council's Forestry Officer has been advised of the proposals and has requested certain additional details including a justification for the removal of the trees and a method statement for the protection of the trees during construction works. This information has now been submitted for consideration.

OBSERVATIONS

In accordance with the provisions of Section 25 of the Act the Committee is required to consider:

- a whether the proposals are consistent with the provisions of the development plan; and if not
- b whether an exception to the provisions of the development plan is justified by other material considerations.

Also, in accordance with the provisions of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997, the Council is required to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest that they possess. The Council is also required to have regard to preserving and enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.

The Development Plan

The provisions of the development plan relevant to the determination of

this application are specified in the Policy background section above.

The proposed development under consideration is one of a series of proposals being progressed as part of the Dundee Students Villages project - a major outsourcing project that seeks to build, own and operate all the University's student residence provision for the next 35 years. The principle aim of the project is to provide new and refurbished residences that are of a quality and standard that meets and exceeds standards in the higher education sector, and which will assist the University in attracting students, and associated funding through the provision of appropriate support facilities. The proposals for student residence developments at Seabraes, Heathfield and Belmont Halls have now all been granted permission by the Council.

The proposal under consideration involves the demolition and replacement of the 181 catered bedspaces in existing extensions on the east side of West Park with 140 student study bedrooms (24 flats). The car parking provision will remain the same ie 113 spaces with 24 secure and covered cycle spaces also being provided. It is also proposed to realign the existing access on the southern boundary ie onto the Perth Road to allow coach access to serve the existing residence / conference block (east extension of the Villa).

It is considered that the principle of the use of the site for student accommodation has been established by the current use of the site ie catered student bedspaces. In addition, the land use allocation within the adopted Dundee Local Plan and the Finalised Dundee Local Plan Review support uses associated with Higher Educational Institutions in campus locations. Consequently, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policy EU19 of the Dundee Local Plan.

With regard to the design of the new buildings, the applicants advise, through the terms of their submitted Design Statement, that the architectural concept of the scheme has been specifically designed to respond to the context of the site and the surrounding local features such as existing buildings, mature trees and stone boundary walls. It is intended to

restructure the site by partially removing the residences on the east side of the site, rationalising the access and parking and providing two new residential blocks. These blocks are developed as a wing of accommodation to the eastern side of the site formed by two buildings separated by a link road providing additional access to the villas at the north side of the site. This residential wing is created by a 4 storey wall of buildings stepping down the slope of the site. This wall will be punctuated with windows and entrances and will form the backdrop to the eastern boundary of the site. The southern block adopts the building line created by the existing conference centre facility and Victorian villas to the east of the Western Cemetery.

The walls and planting around the edge of the site is respected and it is proposed to retain a link road that runs along the eastern boundary of the site. The principle entrance to the site remains in the same position ie off the Perth Road with the boundary walls and stone gateposts repositioned to improve the geometry of this access and allow for coach access into the site. The existing car park is to be reconstructed to make more efficient use of its surface area although the car provision remains the same (113 spaces).

The palette of finishing materials to be used in the development will be contemporary in nature based on projecting metal roofs, wall finishes of masonry, facing brick and hardwood rainscreen cladding.

The proposals have been developed over a number of months through the progression of designs in conjunction with representatives of Dundee Student Villages and this Council. It is considered that the scale, massing, materials and appearance of the new building are in general accordance with the design principles originally agreed for the development of the site. The development will provide high quality buildings that will make a positive contribution to the environmental improvement of the surrounding conservation area. In this respect, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the requirements of Policies H10, BE1 and BE11 of the Dundee Local Plan.

The proposed development will involve the removal of a number of

trees from the site. The applicants have submitted a detailed justification for the removal of the trees in addition to a landscape plan for the redevelopment of the site. The Council's Forestry Officer has been advised of the proposals and it is intended to attach conditions to any consent granted that requires replacement planting for the trees to be removed and the protection of any existing trees during construction works. Landscape proposals for the site have also been submitted for consideration.

It is concluded from the foregoing that the proposal complies with the provisions of the development plan.

It is also concluded from the foregoing that the statutory duty set out in Sections 14 and 64 of the planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 is discharged in this instance.

Other Material Considerations

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

Finalised Dundee Local Plan Review

It is considered that the terms of Policy 4 (Design of New Housing), Policy 55 (Urban Design, Policy 61 (Development within Conservation Areas) and Policy 72 (Trees and Urban Woodland) are similar to the equivalent policies in the adopted plan and therefore discharged in similar terms to the above.

With regard to Policy 9 (Student Housing), the applicants have been in discussion with this Council on the future occupancy of the new residences. It has now been agreed that the residences subject of this application, together with those at Belmont Halls, Heathfield and Seabraes, shall be occupied only by students of the University of Dundee, of other universities other than the University of Dundee and of other higher educational establishments. It has also been agreed that the temporary occupancy of the residences for conferences, holiday lets etc., shall be limited to periods outwith the University of Dundee's semester / term dates. In this respect, it is considered that the requirement for a Section 75 Agreement restricting the occupancy of the new residences to students only

should be set aside in this instance and that control over this agreed restriction be achieved through the use of appropriate planning conditions attached to any consent granted. As indicated above, this procedure has been adopted for the previously approved student accommodation developments for the University at Seabraes, Heathfield and Belmont Halls.

The application proposes that a 181 catered bedrooms (200 bedspaces) will be replaced with 140 student study bedrooms. Together with the existing 159 self-catered en-suite bedspaces located within the more modern West Park villas on the north side of the site, the new accommodation will result in a total of approx. 299 bedspaces within the site ie a reduction of approx. 60 spaces. The applicants have indicated that the off street car parking provision within the site shall remain the same ie 113 off street spaces. Policy 9 requires that adequate car parking should be provided based on a parking and accessibility assessment that takes account of factors identified in the Addendum to National Planning Policy Guideline 17 - Transport and Planning Maximum Parking Standards, including the need to avoid overspill parking on surrounding streets.

The Maximum Parking Standard identified for Higher and Further Education premises in the Addendum to NPPG 17 is 1 space/ 2 members of staff and 1 space for 15 students. The proposed development would result in a maximum parking requirement of 20 spaces for students (300 bedspaces) and 17 spaces for staff (34 staff members) ie a total of 37 spaces. In addition, the Standards require that the maximum parking provision for Conference facilities should be 1 space / 5 seats. It is understood that the capacity of the conference facilities within West Park is approximately 510 spaces - this equates to a maximum provision of 102 car parking spaces. This would combine (students, conference facilities and staff) to a maximum total requirement of 139 spaces. The existing provision of 113 spaces falls within the maximum limit as outlined above.

The applicants have advised that to significantly increase the amount of parking within the curtilage of West Park would result in the removal of additional trees and landscaping from

the site. This further reduction would not be in the best interests of the protecting and enhancing the setting of the surrounding conservation area particularly as the existing trees form an important screening role for the existing buildings within the site.

The proposed redevelopment also includes a coach turning facility within the site. The applicants have advised that no coach parking facilities are to be provided within the site as the conference facility at West Park has a very limited coach based business. In addition, several of the coach based parties that do attend the conference centre are disabled parties that are generally only undertaken once or twice a year. The majority of the other coaches that transport delegates to the conference facilities generally only pick up and drop off, therefore, are not parked at West Park for the duration of the conference - this primarily relates to excursions for delegates doing conference programmes. The proposed coach turning facility within the site would be capable of providing a parking space for one coach if required.

Taking into account the above, it is considered that the proposal to leave the off street parking capacity of the site at the current levels ie 113 spaces is acceptable and within the requirements of Policy 9 of the Finalised Dundee Local Plan Review.

Objections

With regard to the issues that have been raised by the objectors, it is considered that the matters of the removal of trees and the appearance of the new buildings have been discussed and discharged above. With regards to parking, this matter has also been fully discussed above. The applicants have been made fully aware of the concerns of the local residents in relation to car parking and have offered the following further comments on this matter:

- the only opportunity for users of the conference facility to use the new student residence accommodation would be out of term time;
- the student contract periods are over a 37-week period, therefore, the extent of any use of this accommodation by external parties shall be restricted to a maximum 15 weeks;

- out of term time the students vacate residences, therefore, any student cars would not be present during this time. Related to this it should be noted that the only dedicated student parking spaces at West park Halls are for disabled students and for students who can demonstrate special circumstances;
- it is understood that Harris Academy generates a significant amount of vehicular traffic. It should be noted that one of the busiest times for the conference facility is during the school holidays, therefore, would not exacerbate the situation during this time.

With regards to the issue of noise, it is considered that this is a management issue that should be tackled by the operators of the site.

It is concluded from the foregoing that insufficient weight can be accorded to any of the material considerations such as to justify the refusal of planning permission contrary to the provisions of the development plan. It is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted with conditions.

Design

The concept of the proposed new accommodation has been the subject of a number of detailed discussions between the applicants and this Council. The siting, scale, form, materials and style of the proposed buildings all combine to provide a structure of a high quality design that is appropriate for this conservation area setting. It is considered that the removal of the existing extensions to West Park and their replacement with the residences proposed will enhance and improve the setting of the conservation area and the adjacent listed building. In addition, the alterations to the southern access to West Park, including the relocation of the walls and gate piers, are considered acceptable.

CONCLUSION

The objective of the proposals is to create high quality student residences to contribute to the Dundee Student Villages project that will provide new and refurbished accommodation for the purposes of University of Dundee students for the next 35 years. The

development proposes the removal of existing student accommodation and its replacement with new improved facilities. In addition, the principle of a development of this nature on this site is supported through the land use allocations of the in both the adopted Dundee Local Plan and the Finalised Dundee Local Plan Review.

The development is seen as a positive contribution to the redevelopment of the University campus strategy and as a positive improvement in the setting of the surrounding conservation area and fulfils the statutory requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997.

RECOMMENDATION

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 Samples of the finishing materials proposed to be used shall be submitted to the Council for approval and if approved the development shall be carried out only in accordance with such approved samples.
- 3 During the academic year the student accommodation shall be used and occupied only by students enrolled in and undertaking a course of full time study at the University of Dundee, of other universities other than the University of Dundee and of other higher or further educational establishments. At any time outwith the University of Dundee's semester / term time dates, the accommodation shall be occupied only by business, conference or recreational visitors to the City of Dundee in association with business, educational, conference or tourist events and for no other purpose whatsoever.
- 4 Development shall not begin until details of a scheme for landscaping works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority. For the avoidance of doubt, details shall include:

- a location of existing and new trees, shrubs, hedges and grassed areas
- b existing and finished ground levels in relation to a fixed datum preferably ordnance
- c schedule of plants to comprise species, plant sizes and proposed numbers /density
- d a programme for completion and subsequent maintenance
- e existing landscape features and vegetation to be retained and, in the case of damage, restored.

- 5 Development shall not begin until a scheme to deal with waste recycling has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. The development shall not be brought into use until the measures that have been agreed have been put in place in full accordance with the approved scheme.

Reasons

- 1 To comply with Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.
- 2 To ensure that the proposed development has a satisfactory external appearance in the interests of the visual amenities of the area.
- 3 To ensure that the use of the new residences is restricted to students of higher institutions only and that the use of the property outwith semester / term times is restricted to appropriate alternative uses.
- 4 To ensure that the proposed development has a satisfactory external appearance in the interests of the visual amenities of the area.
- 5 In the interests of sustainable development.