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Bury Council
Development Management
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22nd December 2023

**Star Radcliffe Academy, Spring Lane, Radcliffe:
Amendment Application to Planning Permission ref.70071**

On behalf of our client Morgan Sindall Construction, working with the Department for Education, this letter supports the submission of a minor-material amendment application to seek amendments to planning permission reference 70071 under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

The extant permission relates to the development of a new free secondary school, the Star Radcliffe Academy, which was granted in November 2023. Specifically, the amendments sought relate to incorporating a revised design for the highway junction from Spring Lane into the proposals.

Purpose of the Application

This application seeks to amend the approved drawings associated to the planning permission. To do so, the application specifically seeks to vary condition **no.2** of the permission, which lists the approved drawings.

The amendments sought are focused on changes to the highways infrastructure which will support the new school. Specifically, the revised plans presented have been amended to incorporate a 'Cyclops' traffic signalised junction at the connection of Spring Lane and the school's access road. This would be in the place of a traditional 'priority' T-junction which was included in the originally approved plans. The Cyclops junction is understood to be the preferred junction design for the local highway authority.

A Cyclops junction is a Cycle Optimised Protected Signals junction. This is essentially a signal controlled orbital cycle track around a traffic signal-controlled junction. This junction design fully segregates cyclists from general motorised vehicle traffic as well as providing designated pedestrian crossings. In providing segregated cycle and pedestrian crossings, the Cyclops junction design would aid improved cycle and pedestrian safety.

No changes are proposed under this amendment application to the design of the school buildings, or for the school's grounds, other than minor revisions to the landscaping scheme.

The description of development for this amendment application is as follows;

'Amendment to permission 70071 to amend the development's highway infrastructure design to incorporate a signalised Cyclops junction and minor associated revisions to the landscaping proposals.'

Planning Condition Amendments Required

As well as condition **no.2**, which lists the approved drawings, a number of the other planning conditions listed on the decision notice also make reference to approved drawings or the as approved 'priority' T-junction. Therefore, for consistency, and as part of the process to update the approved drawings which define the permission, minor revisions to four of the other planning conditions are required to accurately update references within the planning permission. This is the case for condition **nos. 12, 23, 24 and 33**.

Condition no.12 makes reference to the priory junction and details of its design, and therefore would require some adjustments to its wording to reflect the proposed change to a Cyclops junction. A revised wording can be agreed to the satisfaction of the local highway authority. Condition nos. 23, 24 and 33 reference approved drawings which would be superseded by those presented with this amendment application.

Submission Documents

Condition 2 sets out the approved list of drawings and documents associated with the permission. The below table identifies the drawings for which updates are sought to reflect the proposed amendments as highlighted in yellow.

Approved Drawing (70071)	Updated Drawings Submitted for Approval
Site Location Plan: Dwg no. FS1013-ALA-EX-ZZ-D-L-0039 S2	No change
Access Strategy - Parking Strategy: Dwg no. FS1013-ALA-EX-ZZ-D-L-0026 S2 Rev P03	Access Strategy - Parking Strategy: Dwg no. FS1013-ALA-EX-ZZ-D-L-0026 S2 Rev P05
Tree Retention and Removal Plan: Dwg no. FS1013-ALA-EX-ZZ-D-L-0031 S2 Rev P02	Tree Retention and Removal Plan: Dwg no. FS1013-ALA-EX-ZZ-D-L-0031 S2 Rev P05
Whole Site Plan: Dwg no. FS1013-ALA-EX-ZZ-D-L-0001 S2 Rev P06	Whole Site Plan: Dwg no. FS1013-ALA-EX-ZZ-D-L-0001 S2 Rev P10
Site Landscaping Plan – Overview: Dwg no. FS1013-ALA-EX-ZZ-D-L-0004 S2 Rev P03	Site Landscaping Plan – Overview: Dwg no. FS1013-ALA-EX-ZZ-D-L-0004 S2 Rev P06
Planting Plan: Dwg.no FS1013-ALA-EX-ZZ-D-L-0010 S2 Rev P03	Planting Plan: Dwg.no FS1013-ALA-EX-ZZ-D-L-0010 S2 Rev P06
Proposed Ground Floor & Sports Plan: Dwg no. FS1013-AHR-01-00-D-A-2001 S4 Rev P13	No change
Sports Hall: Dwg no. FS1013-AHR-01-00-D-A-2050 S4 Rev P01	No change
Proposed First Floor Plan: Dwg no. FS1013-AHR-01-01-D-A-2002 S4 Rev P10	No change
Proposed Second Floor Plan: Dwg no. FS1013-AHR-01-02-D-A-2002 S4 Rev P10	No change
Proposed Roof Plans: Dwg no. FS1013-AHR-01-RF-D-A-2003 S4 Rev P05	No change
Strip Sections 1-2: Dwg no. FS1013-AHR-01-ZZ-D-A-2021 S4 Rev P05	No change

Strip Sections 2-2: Dwg no. FS1013-AHR-01-ZZ-D-A-2022 S4 Rev P03	No change
Fencing Arrangement Plan: Dwg no. FS1013-ALA-EX-ZZ-D-L-0012 S2 Rev P03	Fencing Arrangement Plan: Dwg no. FS1013-ALA-EX-ZZ-D-L-0012 S2 Rev P06
Elevations: Dwg no. FS1013-AHR-XX-ZZ-D-A-2010 S4 Rev P06	No change
Levels Plan: Dwg no. FS1013-ALA-EX-ZZ-D-L-0013 S2 Rev P03	Levels Plan: Dwg no. FS1013-ALA-EX-ZZ-D-L-0013 S2 Rev P06
Site Sections 1 of 2: Dwg no. FS1013-ALA-EX-ZZ-D-L-0019 S2 Rev P02	Site Sections 1 of 2: Dwg no. FS1013-ALA-EX-ZZ-D-L-0019 S2 Rev P05
Site Sections 2 of 2: Dwg no. FS1013-ALA-EX-ZZ-D-L-0020 S2 Rev P02	Site Sections 2 of 2: Dwg no. FS1013-ALA-EX-ZZ-D-L-0020 S2 Rev P05
Cycle Shelter Details: Dwg no. FS1013-ALA-ZZ-ZZ-D-L-1008 S4 Rev P01	No change

In addition to the above listed amended drawings, the application is also accompanied by the following updated supporting technical reports and information;

- Transport Statement – FS1013-VS-XX-XX-T-H-1004 Rev P02 (VIA Solutions), including;
 - 'Proposed Access Road (Cyclops Junction) Drawing – Dwg. FS1013-VS-XX-XX-D-H-0010 Rev P05;
 - 'Proposed Cyclops Junction Drawing – Dwg. FS1013-VS-XX-XX-D-H-0011 Rev P06;
- Road Safety Audit – (Sevenairs Consulting Ltd);
- Road Safety Audit Designers Response – FS1013-VS-XX-XX-T-H-1006;
- Tree Survey and Constraints Report (Amenity Tree, 13.12.2023);
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Version 1 Update, 15.12.2023-V1-SB);
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Cyclops, 13.12.2023-V1-SB);
- Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey (Amenity Tree, 13.12.2023);
- Potential Bat Roost Feature Inspection Survey (Amenity Tree, 13.12.2023);
- Assessment of Biodiversity (updated report, Amenity Tree);
- Outline Drainage Strategy (updated report, Renaissance)- FS1013-REN-XX-XX-T-C-0161 Rev P03 and
- Topographical Survey.

Planning History

Permission Reference **70071**: Planning permission for a new secondary school at the site was granted in November 2023.

Permission Reference **70002**: Planning permission for the initial installation of temporary school accommodation at the site was granted in October 2023.

Project Background

The construction programme intends for work to commence in the first quarter of 2024 once the existing Spring Lane PRU school and leisure centre at the site have been vacated. The temporary school accommodation is then planned to open in September 2024 and used whilst

the construction of the permanent school is completed. The permanent school is then planned to open following the easter holidays in 2025.

Work is currently progressing to advance the detailed design for the new school and access, in advance of a start on site in the new year.

The Cyclops junction design has emerged as the preferred junction design for the local highway authority for two key reasons;

- It will provide a junction design which best supports cyclist and pedestrian safety and would help to promote sustainable modes of travel in the area.
- The Cyclops design would future-proof this road junction, which is earmarked in the Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan, to provide a road connection to the Elton Reservoir strategic development site which is located to the north of the application site.

Permission for the revised road junction is sought so that once development work commences, the contractor will be able to implement the preferred Cyclops junction. This would avoid significant disruption from undertaking further highway works at a later point in time, following the school's opening.

It was not possible to include the now preferred Cyclops junction as part of the originally submitted planning application for the new school. This was because the Cyclops highways design was not sufficiently progressed at the time the planning application needed to be taken forward.

The PfE Plan was also at an earlier stage in its progression at the point in time when the school's planning proposals were being prepared. The PfE Plan is now at a more advanced stage in its examination, being scheduled for adoption in 2024. Consequently, to suitably future proof the Spring Lane junction with infrastructure capable of supporting a potential future connection to the PfE strategic Elton Reservoir site, it is proposed to implement the Cyclops junction as part of the current round of works needed for the school's development.

Pre-application Discussions

Prior to the submission of the application, the amendment proposals have been discussed in detail with the local highway authority, Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) and the local planning authority.

The Cyclops junction design has been agreed in-principle with the local highway authority, who have encouraged the Cyclops junction to be incorporated in order to support pedestrian and cyclist safety in this location and to link with wider improvements in the area.

The required planning submission documents have been agreed in advance with the local planning authority.

The Council would retain ownership of the land, with a lease provided to the Department for Education for the school. It is intended that the new access road would be adopted by the local highway authority on completion.

Proposed Amendments

The proposed amendments can be summarised as follows;

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- Amendment to the design of the highway junction from Spring Lane from a priority T-junction to a signalised Cyclops junction;
- Amendments to the design of the access road leading to the school to provide designated cycle lanes on both sides of the road;
- The necessary removal of a number of existing trees and vegetation which are located in close proximity to the highway junction and access road.
- Revisions to the soft landscaping and planting proposals to mitigate for the loss of existing trees alongside Spring Lane. Revisions include an extension of the band of hedgerow along the northern side of Spring Lane.
- Minor revision to the boundary fence line adjacent to the eastern side of the access road and along the northern boundary.
- Substation relocated from a position adjacent to the east of the pupil drop-off area, to an area of green space to the south of the drop-off area.

Design details for the revised junction are provided on drawings included at Appendix A of the supporting Transport Statement. The Cyclops junction would require the use of some additional land adjacent to the existing highway above that which was required to form the originally proposed priority T-junction.

The larger footprint of the junction consequently requires for the removal of some additional existing trees and vegetation in this vicinity. The landscaping scheme is updated to mitigate for this loss to reinstate roadside planting.

The relocation of the required substation is due to the requirements and constraints of connecting with the network of underground services.

The proposed access to the approved school remains fundamentally unchanged, with a single access point provided into the school's car park. The previously proposed pupil drop-off area also remains unaffected by the proposed amendments.

No changes to the approved layout for the school, or its outdoor facilities are proposed.

Planning Policy Compliance and Material Considerations

Material Considerations

In deciding an application under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the local planning authority must only consider the condition(s) that are the subject of the application. Such applications do not call for a complete reconsideration of the application.

The following sections therefore only address the specific amendments which are proposed and the associated material considerations applicable to the changes put forward.

This being the case, the principle of the school development at the site, and the school building's design does not require reassessment. Rather, the material considerations applicable to the application should be limited to an assessment of the amendments proposed, these being a revised highway junction, and the associated design updates to the surrounding landscaping scheme.

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan

The Place for Everyone Joint Development Plan (the 'Plan') will provide a strategic spatial strategy for nine Council areas across Greater Manchester. The PfE Plan will deal with strategic planning matters of significance across the Joint Plan area. Once adopted the Plan will form part of the statutory development plan.

The application site, as well as significant land further to the north beyond the Manchester, Bolton & Bury Canal, all form part of a proposed strategic allocation. This draft allocation referred to as Policy JP Allocation 7 - Elton Reservoir, envisages a strategic residential-led development to be delivered in a phased approach over the plan period up to 2039.

The Plan is now at an advanced stage in its examination, following conclusion of a consultation in December 2023 on main modifications. A number of specific modifications were put forward for the Elton Reservoir site allocation. However, the site's boundary and overall envisaged quantum of residential development to be accommodated was unchanged. Adoption of the Plan is understood to be anticipated in early 2024. Given its advanced stage of preparation, it is understood that the local planning authority are now providing weight to the Plan in the decision-making process.

Draft Policy JP Allocation 7 specifically identifies for the Elton Reservoir site to be in-part served by a new link road connecting to Spring Lane through the application site (the former Coney Green High School site). The proposals for the new Star Radcliffe Academy therefore have been designed with the need to safeguard a potential future access route to the north to provide connection to this strategic allocation beyond the canal.

The proposed amendments to incorporate the Cyclops junction would future proof the highway infrastructure at the junction should the Elton Reservoir site come forward, avoiding the need for major further highway works in the future and consequently the disruption this would cause for the school and community.

Highways Considerations

The change to a Cyclops junction has been brought forward at the request of the local authority in order to support greater pedestrian and cyclist safety and accessibility, as well as to future proof the highway infrastructure at the junction.

This reflects the ambition across Greater Manchester to increase opportunities for cycling, walking and the use of sustainable forms of travel as part of the Bee Network initiative. The Cyclops junction design will make journeys easier and safer for those walking and cycling, including the school's users, without impacting negatively on other modes of motorised travel.

The inclusion of a Cyclops junction has in-principle been agreed with the Local Highways Authority and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) through prior engagement and design collaboration.

The revised junction would see dedicated cycle and pedestrian paths continue north towards the school's entrance.

The proposed amendments would not result in any increase in traffic through the junction, to that previously assessed as part of the original planning application. A robust transport assessment was previously undertaken, with an updated Transport Statement now also provided in support of this amendment application to model the Cyclops junction's operation.

The assessment in the Transport Statement demonstrates that the proposed junction design will operate appropriately with account taken for traffic growth, existing committed developments and traffic associated to the school development. The assessment demonstrates that all arms of the junction would comfortably work within their predicted capacity for the future assessment year of 2030.

The highway design has been the subject of an independent Road Safety Audit with the recommendations duly considered to inform the detailed design.

In conclusion, the proposed amendments would not have any detrimental impact upon the operation of the highway network, and as such are compliant with the requirements of UDP Policy HT2 and the NPPF.

Landscaping

The proposed amendments to incorporate a Cyclops junction would necessitate the removal of a number of additional trees which are located in the vicinity of the proposed highways works, as a result of the larger footprint for the junction. The updated Arboricultural Impact Assessments and Tree Retention and Removal Plan identifies the location of impacted trees.

To incorporate the amendments would require the removal of; part of 1no. tree group (Cat B), 0 category A trees, 30 category B trees, 11 category C trees and 2 category U trees, above that of the previously approved scheme. Overall, across the scheme as a whole 43no. trees would require removal.

The proposed scheme is supported by a comprehensive landscaping and planning scheme. This includes the planting of 111no. new trees within the site, as well as 49m of native hedgerow planting. These would stand alongside ground coverage mixed native shrub, meadow and grass planting though the site, which together will greatly enhance the aesthetic and ecological value of the site.

Revisions to the planting scheme have been made to reinstate planting along the northern side of Spring Lane and along the school's access road.

The proposed scheme would provide sufficient mitigation for the additional tree loss and remain compliant with the requirements UDP Policy EN8 which relates to trees and woodland.

Ecology

For completeness, an update to the previously undertaken Extended Phase 1 Ecology Habitat Survey for the site has been undertaken. This update has specifically been undertaken to review any ecological interests in the pocket of woodland within the south-western corner of the site where some limited additional tree and vegetation removal is required.

The updated survey identified potential for bat roosts, badgers and hedgehog to be present within the woodland pocket to the west of the access road and road junction. No further constraints were identified in relation to other protected species.

With respect bats, a bat roost assessment has been undertaken of the impacted trees, with no evidence of bat activity identified, with the trees considered as having negligible potential for bat roosting. No further surveys were considered to be required for bats.

A pre-commencement check of the land is recommended for the presence of any badgers and hedgehogs has been recommended.

The updated ecological surveys together recorded no evidence of protected species within the impacted area at the present time.

An update to the Assessment of Biodiversity report has also been undertaken to support the latest planning application.

Amenity

The school's access road and the amended junction would be positioned a directly comparable distance away from neighbouring residential properties as that of the previously approved road design. The design amendments would not create any increases for the levels of passing traffic above that associated to the approved development. The previously submitted noise impact assessment therefore continues to provide an appropriate assessment for the site.

It is not considered that the proposed amendments would result in any new noise impacts for neighbouring properties, beyond those considered and assessed under the previously approved application.

Drainage

To support the amendment application, the previously submitted Outline Drainage Strategy report has been updated. The updated report reflects the proposed amendments to the design to incorporate the Cyclops junction.

Survey work of the existing combined sewer network has identified that this discharges off-site under the tram line to the east, where it connects to the public sewer. Since the award of planning permission, it has been picked-up that the existing pipe is defective, with dips in level along its length. A minor revision to the strategy to dealing with foul water is therefore proposed which includes installing a small package pumping station within the final manhole on site. This is located to the east of the pupil drop-off facility. This will allow for a rising main to be installed within the existing drainage where it passes under the tram line and connects into the public sewer beyond. Further information is provided in the updated Outline Drainage Strategy report. The foul drainage strategy otherwise remains unchanged from that previously approved.

The surface water drainage strategy for the site remains fundamentally unchanged to that previously approved.

Condition no.9 attached to the existing planning permission requires for full design details of the development's surface water drainage scheme and foul water drainage scheme to be submitted for approval by the local planning authority. This requirement will still be in place and will be satisfied in due course.

Summary

The amendments proposed, in seeking to implement a revised highway junction, would improve pedestrian and cyclist safety, whilst also serving to promote sustainable forms of travel.

The proposed development would remain compliant with policies within the NPPF, adopted Local Plan policies, and has given due regard to the future delivery of proposed allocation site (JP Allocation 7) in the emerging PFE Joint Development Plan.

The amendments represent an approach to deliver highway infrastructure which will be suitable to accommodate the longer-term development aspirations for the wider area, avoiding the potential need for major future highway disruption.

The amendments are supported by an updated landscaping scheme which would retain an attractive environment across the site.

I trust the information provided is sufficient for you to validate the planning application and for the Council to determine the application in a positive manner. If you do require any additional information, please do not hesitate to get in contact.

Yours faithfully,



Peter Campbell (MRTPI BA Hons)

Associate Planner (MRTPI)

Tetra Tech