

<u>No:</u>	BH2018/02404	<u>Ward:</u>	Withdean Ward
<u>App Type:</u>	Full Planning		
<u>Address:</u>	Varndean College Surrenden Road Brighton BN1 6WQ		
<u>Proposal:</u>	Relocation of 2no modular classroom blocks and erection of a two storey Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) centre with associated cycle parking and landscaping alterations (retrospective)		
<u>Officer:</u>	Sonia Gillam, tel: 292265	<u>Valid Date:</u>	15.08.2018
<u>Con Area:</u>		<u>Expiry Date:</u>	10.10.2018
<u>Listed Building Grade:</u>		<u>EOT: 21/11/2018</u>	
<u>Agent:</u>	NTR Planning Clareville House 26-27 Oxendon Street London SW1Y 4EL		
<u>Applicant:</u>	Varndean College Surrenden Road Brighton BN1 6WQ		

1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That the Committee has taken into consideration and agrees with the reasons for the recommendation set out below and are **Minded to GRANT** planning permission subject to no objection from Sport England and to the following Conditions and Informatives:

Conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved drawings listed below.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Plan Type	Reference	Version	Date Received
Block Plan	957.18.03	C	27 July 2018
Site Layout Plan	957.18.04	A	27 July 2018
Sections Proposed	957.18.10	C	27 July 2018
Sections Proposed	957.18.100	B	27 July 2018
Elevations Proposed	957.18.110	C	27 July 2018
Elevations Proposed	957.18.120	D	27 July 2018
Site Layout Plan	957.18.20	C	27 July 2018
Elevations Proposed	957.18.21	B	27 July 2018
Site Layout Plan	957.18.50	D	27 July 2018
Site Layout Plan	957.18.51	B	27 July 2018
Floor Plans Proposed	957.18.60	F	27 July 2018
Floor Plans Proposed	957.18.75	F	27 July 2018
Roof Plan Proposed	957.18.90	E	27 July 2018
Location Plan	957.18.01	D	15 August 2018
Site Layout Plan	957.18.51	C	28 September 2018

2. The 2 no. temporary classroom structures (nos. 40-72 and 48-50 shown on the site plan 957.18.51revC received on the 28/09/2018) shall be removed from the site within 18 months of the date of this permission or with 3 month of commencement of the use of the STEM building hereby approved, whichever is soonest, and the land returned to its former condition within 2 months of removal.
Reason: The temporary buildings are not considered suitable as a permanent form of development; to ensure a satisfactory appearance to the character and appearance of the campus and the surrounding area and to comply with policies QD14 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan and CP12 of the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part One.

3. Access to the flat roof over the development hereby approved shall be for maintenance or emergency purposes only and the flat roof shall not be used as a roof garden, terrace, patio or similar amenity area.
Reason: In order to protect adjoining properties from overlooking and noise disturbance and to comply with policies QD14 and QD27 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan.

4. The hard surface hereby approved shall be made of porous materials and retained thereafter or provision shall be made and retained thereafter to direct run-off water from the hard surface to a permeable or porous area or surface within the curtilage of the property.
Reason: To reduce the risk of flooding and pollution and increase the level of sustainability of the development and to comply with policies CP8 & CP11 of the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part One.

5. No development above ground floor slab level of any part of the STEM building development hereby permitted shall take place until samples of all materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, including (where applicable):
 - a) samples of all brick, render and tiling (including details of the colour of render/paintwork to be used)
 - b) samples of all cladding to be used, including details of their treatment to protect against weathering
 - c) samples of all hard surfacing materials
 - d) details of the proposed window, door and balcony treatments
 - e) samples of all other materials to be used externally
 Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development and to comply with policies QD14 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan and CP12 of the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part One.

6. Within 3 months of first use of the STEM building hereby permitted a BREEAM Building Research Establishment has issued a Post Construction Review Certificate confirming that the non-residential development built has achieved a minimum BREEAM New Construction rating of 'Very Good' and such certificate has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development is sustainable and makes efficient use of energy, water and materials and to comply with policy CP8 of the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part One.

7. The STEM building hereby permitted shall not be first occupied until a scheme to enhance the nature conservation interest of the site has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall accord with the standards described in Annex 6 of SPD 11 and shall be implemented in full prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved and thereafter retained.

Reason: To increase the biodiversity of the site, to mitigate any impact from the development hereby approved and to comply with Policy CP10 of the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part One and Supplementary Planning Document SPD11 Nature Conservation and Development.

8. The STEM building hereby permitted shall not be occupied until details of secure cycle parking facilities for the students and staff of, and visitors to, the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved facilities shall be fully implemented and made available for use prior to the first occupation of the development and shall thereafter be retained for use at all times.

Reason: To ensure that satisfactory facilities for the parking of cycles are provided and to encourage travel by means other than private motor vehicles and to comply with policy TR14 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan and SPD14: Parking Standards.

9. The STEM building hereby approved shall not be occupied until refuse and recycling storage facilities have been installed adjacent to the building and made available for use. These facilities shall thereafter be retained for use at all times.

Reason: To ensure the provision of satisfactory facilities for the storage of refuse and recycling and to comply with policy QD27 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan, policy CP8 of the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part One and Policy WMP3e of the East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Local Plan Waste and Minerals Plan.

10. Within 3 months of overall occupation of the development hereby approved, the Developer or owner shall submit to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing, an updated Travel Plan (a document that sets out a package of measures and commitments tailored to the needs of the development, which is aimed at promoting safe, active and sustainable travel choices by its users (pupils, parents/carers, staff, visitors, residents & suppliers)).

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The updated Travel Plan shall include measures and commitments as are considered necessary to mitigate the expected travel impacts of the

development and shall include as a minimum the following initiatives and commitments:

- i Measures to promote and enable increased use of active and sustainable transport modes, including walking, cycling, public transport use, car sharing and Park & Stride, as alternatives to individual motor vehicle use;
- ii Identification of a nominated member of staff to act as School Travel Plan Co-ordinator to become the individual contact for the council's School Travel Team relating to the School Travel Plan; to convene a School Travel Plan (STP) Working Group;
- iii Use of the BHCC STP guidance documents to produce and annually review the STP
- iv Production of a SMART action and monitoring plan, which shall include a commitment to undertake annual staff, parent/carer and pupil travel surveys to enable the STP to be reviewed and to update the SMART actions to address any issues identified;
- v A commitment to take part in the annual 'Hands Up' Mode of Travel Survey co-ordinated by the council's School Travel Team;
- vi Identification of mode-use targets focussed on reductions in the level of individual motor vehicle use by staff and parent/carers;
- vii A commitment to reduce carbon emissions associated with nursery and school travel;
- viii Initiatives to increase awareness of and improve road safety and personal security;
- ix Evidence of dialogue and consultation with neighbouring residents and businesses;
- x Submission of an annual STP review document, following the annual travel surveys, to the Council's School Travel Team to demonstrate progress towards the identified targets.

Reason: To ensure the promotion of safe, active and sustainable forms of travel and comply with policies TR4 and TR7 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan and SA6, CP7, CP9, CP12, CP13, CP15 and CP21 of the City Plan Part One.

Informatives:

1. In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy SS1 of the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part One the approach to making a decision on this planning application has been to apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The Local Planning Authority seeks to approve planning applications which are for sustainable development where possible.
2. The applicant is advised that details of the BREEAM assessment tools and a list of approved assessors can be obtained from the BREEAM websites (www.breeam.org).
3. The applicant is advised that advice regarding permeable and porous hardsurfaces can be found in the Department of Communities and Local Government document 'Guidance on the permeable surfacing of front gardens' which can be accessed on the DCLG website (www.communities.gov.uk).

4. The applicant should contact the Highway Authority Access Team for advice and information at their earliest convenience to avoid delay (travel.planning@brighton-hove.gov.uk or telephone 01273 292233). The Travel Plan shall include such measures and commitments as are considered necessary to mitigate the expected travel impacts of the development and should include as a minimum the initiatives and commitments detailed in the condition above.

2. SITE LOCATION & APPLICATION DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application relates to a further education college site located in the north-west corner of the Surrenden campus, which it shares with Downsview Link College, Dorothy Stringer School, Varndean School and Balfour Infant School. The site is bounded by Surrenden Road to the north and west, Draxmont Way to the south and Friar Road and Friar Crescent to the east, all of which are residential streets.

The application seeks permission for the relocation of 2no modular classroom blocks and the erection of a specialist two storey Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) building (583m² - GIA 1165m²) including 4 science labs and 6 teaching classrooms, with associated cycle parking and landscaping alterations. The objective is to provide fit for purpose permanent teaching space.

- 2.2 The relevant section of the site is approximately 900m² and is situated to the north of the main College Building and to the east of the Hutchins Building. There are a cluster of nine temporary classrooms to the east of the site. The site was, until recently, occupied by 2 no. existing modular classroom buildings. These modular classrooms have already been relocated further to the east in preparation for the development; therefore the application is part retrospective. On completion of the STEM building two of the temporary classrooms would be permanently removed.

- 2.3 The proposed STEM building represents the first phase in the delivery of a wider masterplan proposal to provide improved permanent teaching accommodation, enabling the removal of the existing cluster of temporary teaching space on site, much of which is now coming to the end of its functional life. Longer term masterplan proposals on site will seek the provision of a new 'horseshoe-shaped' building to complete the masterplan and enable the removal of temporary buildings from the site. However it is uncertain when this application will be forthcoming as it is dependent on future funding.

3. RELEVANT HISTORY

- 3.1 There is an extensive planning history for additional and replacement college buildings and alterations on the site. Of greatest relevance are the following:-

PRE2018/00172 Pre-application advice: Removal of temporary classroom accommodation and erection of two storey building, including installation of temporary classrooms to provide accommodation during construction.

BH2017/03676 Outline application with some matters reserved for erection of 10no residential units (C3), comprising 1no two bedroom, 6no three bedroom and 3no four bedroom houses, with new access from Surrenden Road, associated car and cycle parking and approval of reserved matters for access and layout. Under consideration.

BH2017/04102 Installation of an artificial turf pitch with alterations to existing adjacent grass playing pitch and installation of 8no 4.5 metre floodlights. Under consideration.

BH2015/01497 Erection of second floor extension to east attic to house fire escape stairs with associated alterations. (Retrospective). Approved 02.10.2015.

BH2014/02176 Retention of existing temporary classrooms for a further period of five years. (Retrospective). Approved 16.12.2014.

BH2014/02172 Retention of existing temporary classroom for a further temporary period of five years. (Retrospective). Approved 29.10.2014

BH2014/01793 Installation of new classroom accommodation within section of roof space to East side of East quadrangle with associated. Approved 10.11.2014

BH2013/03153 Erection of single storey extension to existing gymnasium. 20.12.2013

BH2012/00296 Installation of new classroom accommodation within the roof of the North facing slope of the quadrangles. Approved 26/03/2012.

BH2011/03056 Installation of additional floor over existing hall incorporating pitched to flat roof alterations and associated works. Approved 06/02/2012.

BH2009/02423 Provision of 7 No. temporary classroom blocks for 5 year period. (Retrospective). Approved 08/02/2010.

BH2008/02854 Demolition of existing college with erection of replacement college and nursery (D1) with associated car parking and landscaping. Approved 08/05/2009.

BH2007/02040 Erection of 2 temporary portacabins to the east of existing mobile classrooms in connection with educational (D1) use for 3 years. Approved 16/08/2007.

BH2006/02084 Renewal of Planning Permission BH2003/02467/FP for temporary classrooms 43-45. Approved 22/08/2006 (for 3-years).

BH2006/02082 Renewal of planning permission BH2003/02486/FP for temporary classrooms 48-50. Approved 22/08/2006 (for 3-years).

BH2005/05154 Renewal of temporary planning consent for humanities hutted classroom (Hut G). Approved 28/09/2005 (for 5-years).

4. REPRESENTATIONS

4.1 **Twenty-eight (28)** letters have been received objection to the proposed development. The main grounds for objection are as follows:

- Legality of retrospective application
- Overdevelopment
- Poor design
- Inappropriate height
- Impact on residential amenity
- Parking issues
- Traffic issues
- Highway safety
- Loss of open space
- Inaccurate statements in submission documents
- Lack of detail on masterplan
- Increase in student numbers
- Existing unauthorised development on site
- Damaging to trees
- Noise
- Overshadowing
- Too close to the boundary
- Impact on biodiversity, wildlife, vegetation
- Pollution
- Lack of consultation with community
- Detrimental impact on property value
- Restriction of view

4.2 **Councillor Nick Taylor** objects to the application; the letter is attached to the report.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 **Ecology:** No objection. There are unlikely to be any protected species that will be impacted by the proposals. No specific surveys or mitigation are required.

5.2 **Planning Policy:** No objection. The development of new educational floorspace to increase and improve existing provision is supported.

5.3 **Sustainability:** No objection. Applicant has justified why 'very good' BREEAM rating rather than 'Excellent'.

5.4 **Sustainable Transport:** No objection to the development in principle. To accommodate potential future increases in students and staff, it is recommended that the trip generation assessment is resubmitted based on the increase in floor space.

6. MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 In accordance with Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, this decision has been taken having regard to the policies and proposals in the National Planning Policy Framework, the Development Plan, and all other material planning considerations identified in the "Considerations and Assessment" section of the report
- 6.2 The development plan is:
Brighton & Hove City Plan Part One (adopted March 2016);
Brighton & Hove Local Plan 2005 (retained policies March 2016);
East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Plan (adopted February 2013);
East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Sites Plan (adopted February 2017);
- 6.3 Due weight has been given to the relevant retained policies in the Brighton & Hove Local Plan 2005 according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF.

7. POLICIES

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Brighton & Hove City Plan Part One

SS1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
CP7 Infrastructure and developer contributions
CP8 Sustainable buildings
CP9 Sustainable transport
CP10 Biodiversity
CP11 Flood risk
CP12 Urban design
CP16 Open space
CP17 Sports Provision
SA6 Sustainable Neighbourhoods

Brighton & Hove Local Plan (retained policies March 2016):

TR4 Travel plans
TR7 Safe Development
TR14 Cycle access and parking
SU9 Pollution and nuisance control
SU10 Noise Nuisance
HO19 New community facilities
QD15 Landscape design
QD18 Species protection
QD27 Protection of amenity
SR17 Smaller scale sporting and recreational facilities

Supplementary Planning Documents:

SPD03 Construction & Demolition Waste
SPD11 Nature Conservation & Development

8. CONSIDERATIONS & ASSESSMENT

8.1 The main considerations in the determination of this application relate to the principal of the scheme, design and visual impact, impact on neighbour amenity, highways, sustainability and ecology issues.

8.2 Neighbour objections on matters relating to impact on property values and restriction of view are noted, however these are not material planning considerations.

8.3 Planning Policy:

Provision of education facilities

The provision of new and improved education facilities would help to increase capacity at the college although the aim is mainly to provide fit for purpose teaching space for existing pupils. This is considered to meet priority 10 of SA6 "to encourage existing education and community organisations to provide local communities with a greater range of services and facilities for learning and training." The provision of new educational facilities is also supported by Local Plan policy HO19 subject to a number of criteria being met with regard to accessibility and impact on neighbours. No concerns are raised with regard to these and the principle of the development is therefore supported.

8.4 Loss of Open Space

City Plan Policy CP16 states that "the Council will require the retention of and seek better, more effective and appropriate use of all existing open space".

The area within the campus which the applicant proposes to develop is designated as open space of the "schools grounds and sports pitch" typology. The new development would therefore result in a permanent reduction in the amount of 'open space' available for informal recreation once the two other temporary classrooms have been removed.

However the site, as well as the clusters of temporary classrooms, comprises a grassed area in the centre of the school grounds which is of a sloping nature and is at a lower level than the adjoining playing field. Additionally it is noted that this area of the school grounds appears to predominantly consist of pathways between the main building and the temporary classrooms themselves

The planning statement submitted by the applicant seeks to justify the loss of open space on the grounds that:

- The building will provide fit for purpose, fully accessible teaching facilities, is required to meet current provision and may support a small increase in pupil numbers;
- The design of the building over two storeys will minimise the loss of open space;

- The site is within the existing cluster of educational buildings, both permanent and temporary, and will not encroach onto open space of a more open nature;
- The open space on which the development is proposed is poorly located and too small to be meaningfully used as open space;
- The sloping topography of the site is challenging and means that it makes a poor visual and physical contribution to open space;
- The temporary buildings have meant that this part of the site has not served a visual or physical open space purpose for a significant number of years and is not required for open space use by the College.

8.5 The applicant also states that the STEM building represents the first phase in the delivery of wider masterplan for the site to provide permanent teaching accommodation which would enable the removal of the existing cluster of 9 temporary classrooms. The masterplan for the permanent building would cover a similar footprint to some of the existing temporary buildings, but would not include development within a central area on which 3 temporary buildings are currently located, and could potentially release this central area of land back to into open recreation space use in the longer term.

8.6 On balance, it is considered that an exemption to policy CP16 could be justified, given the size and nature of the open space that would be lost, the current use by temporary classrooms, and the wider benefits of the proposal to improve education facilities on site, which would be of citywide benefit. The Council's Planning Policy officer supports the application.

8.7 It is noted that there is a current Outline planning application in progress for use of the northern section of the site for the development of residential dwellings. The concern for potential cumulative permanent development on the designated open space is acknowledged; however each application is assessed on its own merits.

8.8 Design and Appearance:

The proposed STEM building would be similar in height to the adjacent Hutchins Building. It is noted that the land to the rear of the proposed building slopes steeply up towards the College playing fields. Within the context of the adjoining permanent college buildings the proposed building would not be overly dominant and in medium to long views from the north the visual impact would be reduced by the siting (partially built into the slope) and changes in ground level across the site.

Furthermore the design of the building is considered to be appropriate. It is proposed that the materials would comprise of red brick elevations on three sides to complement the existing red brick of the main and subsidiary buildings. The finish to the front (south) elevation will be in a palette of six shades of green powder coated metal cladding which colours reflect the College's past use of green during its previous incarnation as a grammar school. It is noted that a

colour cladding approach has been used successfully at other schools in the area.

In terms of visual impact within the site and in respect of neighbouring properties there is no objection to the relocation of the temporary classrooms to the east of the site.

It is acknowledged that the STEM building would be viewed in context with the remaining temporary classrooms which do not make a positive contribution to the visual quality of the environment. The College are very likely to require this accommodation beyond 2019 as there is no firm timetable in place for the development of the permanent teaching block. However it is also recognised that two temporary classrooms would be removed on completion of the STEM building (ensured by condition), lessening the visual impact of these incongruous structures, which would be welcomed.

On balance, given the provision of enhanced education facilities and the proposed removal of the two temporary buildings, the overall visual impact is considered to be acceptable.

8.9 Impact on Amenity:

Policy QD27 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan states that planning permission for any development or change of use will not be granted where it would cause material nuisance and loss of amenity to the proposed, existing and/or adjacent users, residents, occupiers or where it is liable to be detrimental to human health.

The building would be located approximately 50 metres from the nearest residential properties in Surrenden Road to the west. With a sunken appearance, set into the slope, it is considered that the building would have no significant impact with regard to overlooking or overshadowing, or loss of outlook.

The relocated temporary classrooms would bring the temporary buildings slightly closer to the properties in Friar Walk and Friar Crescent. However, given that they are still in excess of 40m from the boundary of the rear gardens of these properties, it is not considered that they will cause a significant nuisance in terms of increased activity and noise.

It is noted that a minimal (potentially up to 20) increase in student numbers is proposed; therefore it is considered that the development should not result in significant noise disturbance above that already existing.

8.10 Sustainable Transport:

The Council's Highways team has no objections to the scheme in principle. Access to the site would remain unchanged; no additional car parking spaces are included; and extra cycle parking provision is proposed, all of which is deemed acceptable.

The Highways team has recommended however that a trip generation assessment is resubmitted based on the increase in floor space, to accommodate potential future increases in students; this has been requested. Additionally it is recommended that an updated travel plan is requested by condition.

8.11 Sustainability:

The proposed building would measure 1,165sqm GIA and under Policy CP8 standards this scheme would be expected to achieve BREEAM 'excellent' or provide justification for achieving a lower standard. Financial information submitted would suggest that the higher specification would jeopardise delivery due to funding available.

The Council's Sustainability officer considers that sufficient justification has been provided as to the reasons why the scheme can only achieve a 'Very Good' rating, not only on the grounds of viability and funding available, but additionally (although it can't achieve certain early stages credits) the predicted achievements in water and energy credits are very high. Therefore a 'Very good' rating is acceptable in this instance.

8.12 Other Considerations:

The application site is designated in CPP1 as a Nature Improvement Area (NIA) forming part of the city's Green Network. Policy CP10 requires that within NIAs, a strategic approach is taken to nature conservation, including protecting existing biodiversity from the negative effects of development, including noise and light pollution and ensuring that development delivers measurable biodiversity improvements.

The County Ecologist has been consulted on the application and has advised that, although the site is within 80m of a proposed Local Wildlife Site (LWS), there are unlikely to be any impacts on the LWS or any other sites of interest for nature conservation. The proposed development site comprises buildings, hard standing and amenity grassland and is therefore of limited ecological value. There are unlikely to be any protected species that will be impacted by the proposals.

The proposal includes no enhancements for biodiversity. In line with the NERC Act 2006 and the NPPF, opportunities should be sought to enhance the site for biodiversity, to achieve a net gain where possible. This can be secured by condition.

9. EQUALITIES

The scheme would provide the following: level access to the building; eastern emergency escape route for level egress from the building for wheelchair users; new and upgraded pedestrian pathways for inclusive access to the new building from the wider college complex; accessible classroom designed for wheelchair use.