

Rosemary Wilkins Cycling Officer

From: Alan Lindsay Principal Area Transportation Co-ordinator
Sent: 22 May 2012 11:38
To: Rosemary Wilkins Cycling Officer
Subject: FW: University application 120151
Attachments: highways recommendation COL 120151.doc

Rosemary,

For info.

Best Regards

Alan Lindsay

Principal Area Transportation Co-ordinator

Environment, Sustainability and Highways

Essex County Council | telephone: 01245 437180 | extension: 51180 | mobile: 07584 580500 | email: alan.lindsay@essex.gov.uk

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From: Martin Mason Development Management Engineer
Sent: 22 May 2012 11:06
To: Chris Stevenson Head of Transportation; Sue Davis Secretary to the Cabinet Office; Liz Saville Head of Network Management
Cc: Elizabeth Hunter-Gray Cabinet Advisor; Keith Lawson Head of Strategic Development; Alan Lindsay Principal Area Transportation Co-ordinator
Subject: RE: University application 120151

Hi All,

I'm happy to be corrected but I'm not sure Cllr Louis is being asked to intervene/respond. CCC have only copied their email to him and others - it is directed at CBC planning.

Also, just so you know, the application is being considered this coming Thursday evening rather than tomorrow.

Further to Chris' comments, we were consulted on the planning application and having considered it carefully provided CBC with a recommendation of no objection subject to requirements (please

see attached). We are content the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety. The main purpose of the proposal is to regularise existing indiscriminate parking as well as to provide some additional spaces.

I draw your particular attention to requirement 2 of our recommendation.

The contribution would be forward funded by the Knowledge Gateway S106 Agreement contribution however this would be paid back at some stage in the future - the detail of which would be set out in a further S106 Agreement.

Hope this helps.

Thanks.

Martin.

Martin Mason
Strategic Development Engineer
Sustainable Environment & Enterprise

Essex County Council | telephone: 01245 433 162 | extension: 52162 | mobile: 07919 624331 | email: martin.mason@essex.gov.uk



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From: Chris Stevenson Head of Transportation

Sent: 22 May 2012 09:31

To: Sue Davis Secretary to the Cabinet Office; Liz Saville Head of Network Management

Cc: Elizabeth Hunter-Gray Cabinet Advisor; Keith Lawson Head of Strategic Development; Martin Mason Development Management Engineer

Subject: RE: University application 120151

Sue, Liz

Before Colchester prepared their report to committee they would have sought our views as highway authority. This would have been prepared by Keith Lawson's team who would have been anxious to look at the impact on the highway network and would have sought to ensure that adequate mitigation was provided either by condition or through s106 agreement. A Travel Plan would also have been a prerequisite. Proposed Parking Standards would have been examined also.

I have asked Keith and colleagues for a quick response because the application is going to Weds committee and Cllr Louis need to respond today or tomorrow.

Regards

Chris

From: Sue Davis Secretary to the Cabinet Office

Sent: 21 May 2012 16:57

To: Liz Saville Head of Network Management; Chris Stevenson Head of Transportation

Cc: Elizabeth Hunter-Gray Cabinet Advisor

Subject: FW: University application 120151

[Liz – further email below.](#)

Sue

Sue Davis

Secretary to the Cabinet Office

Strategic Services

Secretary to Cllr Kevin Bentley, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Waste & Recycling

Secretary to Cllr Derrick Louis, Cabinet Member for Highways & Transportation

From: William [REDACTED]
Sent: 17 May 2012 14:47
To: Colchester Council Planning Services Pamela Harvey
Cc: [REDACTED] Derrick Louis Member CC; [REDACTED] Margaret Fisher
Member CC; [REDACTED] Cllr Nigel Offen; [REDACTED]
Theresa Higgins Member CC; Cllr John Jowers at Colchester; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Cllr Lyn Barton at Colchester;
[REDACTED]
Subject: University application 120151

Dear Sir or Madam

CCC is extremely concerned that this planning application for a multi-storey car park at the University of Essex is now recommended for approval at your meeting on May 23.

We believe that the officer who wrote the conclusion to the original report (reproduced below for your convenience) did not give enough weight to the observations of CBC's transportation policy officer. The author of the conclusion misunderstands the points being made by the policy officer (see italics in report).

I would ask that you look again at section 9.7.

The number of car park spaces already far exceeds that set under CBC's 2009 adopted car park standards yet the university is issuing double the number of car park passes. It is basing the need for the new car park on this manufactured demand.

If this new car park goes ahead, it will lead to more university staff and students driving to work, which will hugely increase congestion in the university area. Drivers who use Wivenhoe Road, Alresford Road, Clingoe Hill and the A133 between Elmstead and Colchester should be shouting loudly about this.

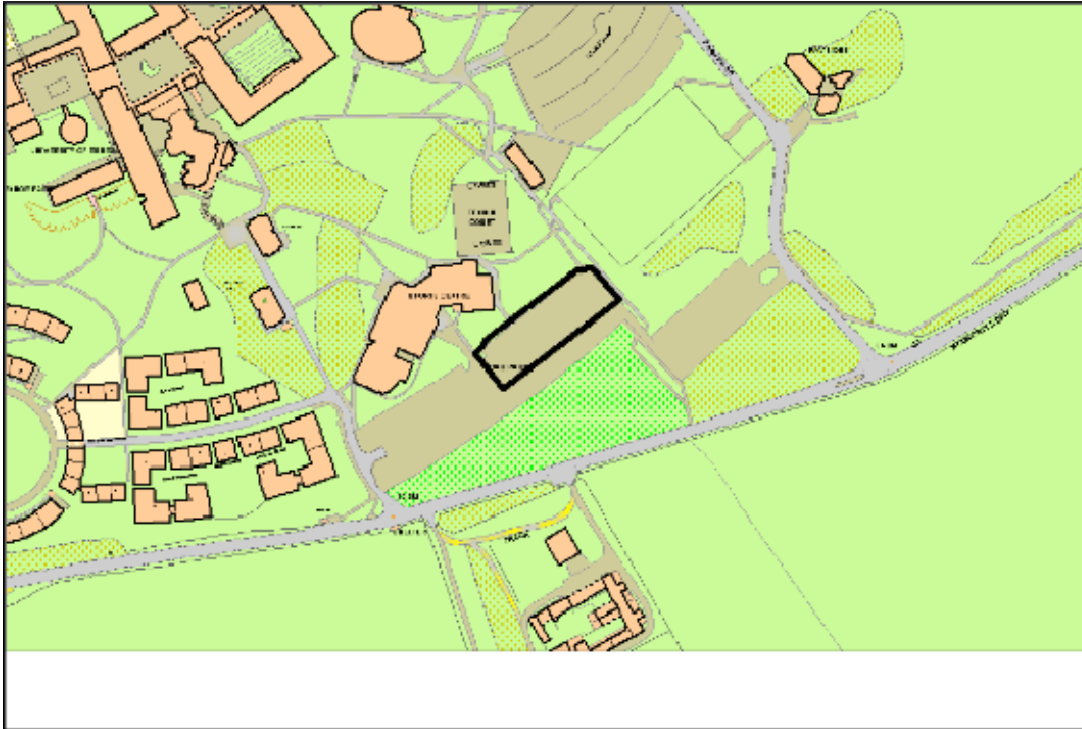
CCC notes that the university has agreed to fund the Wivenhoe-University cycle path as part of this application. However, the extra traffic that will be created by this new car park will put off would-be cyclists who have to use other roads and junctions on the approach to the university. In addition, this funding is coming from the s106 funds for the Knowledge Gateway, which is a case of robbing Peter to pay Paul. We need green transport measures at Knowledge Gateway, too, not least a remodelling of the "cycle" bridge to university quays.

We stress the point made in our original objection: the university's travel plan is not being applied in a robust manner, and there is no guarantee that it will change its attitude. The first stage to test whether this car park is necessary is a professional independent review of the travel plan's efficacy.

Please ask officers to change this recommendation to refusal. Colchester drivers — and cyclists — will thank you.

Yours

Will Bramhill



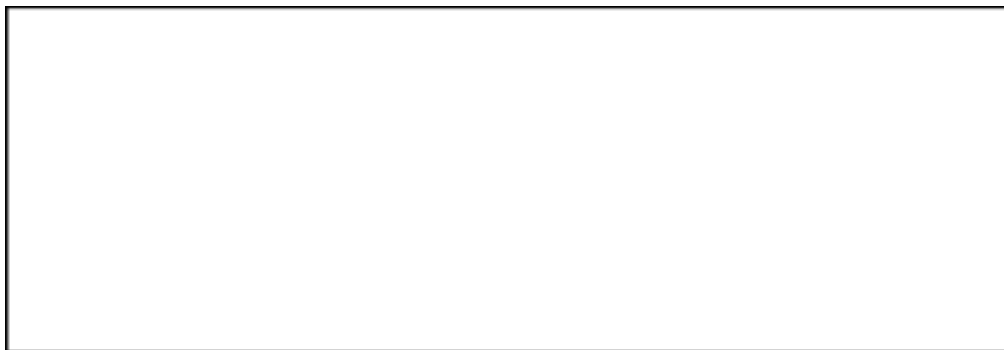
Application No: 120151

Location: Multi-Storey Car Park (Proposed), University Of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3SQ **Scale (approx): 1:2500**

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Committee Report

Planning Committee 24 May 2012

Agenda item



7

To the meeting of on:

Report of:

Title:

Head of Environmental and Protective Services Planning Applications

Relevant planning policy documents and all representations at the time this report was printed are recorded as BACKGROUND PAPERS within each item. An index to the codes is provided at the end of the Schedule.

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7.1 Case Officer: Bradly Heffer MAJOR

Site: Application No: Date Received: Agent: Applicant: Development:

Ward:

University Of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3SQ 120151

24 January 2012

Mr Nick Davey

University Of Essex

Construction of multi-deck car park above existing surface level car park; creation of new access to car park from Boundary Road to include taxi drop-off/pick-up area and relocation of existing compactor.

Wivenhoe Cross

Summary of Recommendation: Conditional Approval subject to signing of Section 106 Agreement

" "

1. **1.0 Introduction**

2. **1.1 This application was due to be determined at the Planning Committee meeting scheduled for 26th April 2012. The recommendation to Members was one of refusal – reasons being based on the design and layout of the proposal, and also the fact that a legal agreement to fund a financial contribution for the provision of local highway improvements had not been secured.**

1.2 The application was withdrawn from the agenda prior to the meeting in order to ascertain whether the reasons for refusal could be satisfactorily addressed. The report previously submitted for Members' consideration was as follows:

1. **2.0 Reason for Referral to the Planning Committee**

2. 2.1 This application is referred to the Planning Committee following a call-in request submitted by Ward Councillor Manning. The reasons for the request are as follows:
- This application should be considered in relation to the other University application for the relocation of the Essex Business School
 - Location of the car park is vital
 - It is important that the Multi-storey car park is provided before other development takes place.

1. **3.0 Synopsis**

2. 3.1 The report will explain the terms of the submitted application, together with a resume of consultation responses and representations received. The report to Members concludes that although the principle of this car park proposal is considered acceptable by officers, the design of the proposed building fails to achieve a satisfactory standard. Additionally, the identified mitigation (sought by s106 agreement) cannot be secured as the applicant has declined to enter into such an agreement. On this basis the recommendation to Members is one of refusal.

1. **4.0 Site Description and Context**

2. 4.1 The proposed site for the multi-storey car park building currently forms part of a surface car park, located on the periphery of the Essex University campus. This car park is immediately adjacent to the campus sports complex. A wide landscaped area of land defines the southern boundary of the car park and runs adjacent to Boundary Road, which runs along the southern and western boundaries of the campus, linking Elmstead Road and Colchester Road.
3. 4.2 The site is mainly level and given over to hard surfacing. A smaller portion of the site is a grassed, bunded area of land immediately adjacent to the sports centre building. To the east of the application site are other car-parking areas punctuated by greensward and established tree planting. There are also enclosed sports pitches and playing fields. To the north and west of the site are established campus buildings such as the sports centre and halls of residence. To the south, on the opposite side of Boundary Road, is an extensive area of open agricultural land that is outside of the defined University campus.

1. **5.0 Description of the Proposal**

2. 5.1 The development proposed under this application submission is the erection of a multi-storey car park building. Members should note that it is intended that the building would incorporate a roof and therefore cars would not park at this level. The building would be erected on part of the existing car park identified as car park B on the campus. The building itself would contain 382 spaces on three levels each of 5m x 2.5m dimension and would be 90 metres length and 32 metres width. The overall height of the structure would be approximately 12 metres above site ground level.

Car park B would also be reconfigured as a result of the proposed development, with a revised point of access directly from Boundary Road, as opposed to the current situation where access is provided to the east, through car park A. The plan also shows the provision of a taxi drop-off area.

2. 5.2 In terms of external appearance the building design would incorporate a combination of red cedar louvres and 'living walls' – planted green elements within the facades of the building. The 'living wall' elements of the building project beyond the plane of the timber elements. This treatment would not continue to ground floor level and the structure at this point would be expressed by columns. The north-west elevation of the building would be the 'service' side of the building, where access and ramps to each floor of the car park would be provided. The roof area of the building would be enclosed by a guard rail and this space would contain a series of solar panels. The following extract is taken from the Design and Access Statement accompanying the application, by way of explaining the proposed design in more detail:

'The approach to the design has been to create an iconic design through simplicity rather than complexity and the Colchester BC officers' desire to see a building which exhibits a high degree of architectural integrity and logic has been taken on board. The vehicle ramps are expressed as a sculptural three- dimensional feature on the north western side of the building. The other elevations use a combination of timber louvres (to provide subtle screening and mitigate light spillage) and areas of living wall (to reflect the soft landscape in this part of the campus and to create an additional ecological habitat). The proposed character and appearance of the MSCP is therefore intended to sit comfortably within its surroundings and comprises a range of materials including:

- areas of 'Living Wall' to the most visible elevations.
- natural western red cedar louvres to other areas to achieve subtle screening whilst maintaining ventilation and good levels of daylight.
- expression of the vehicle ramps as a three dimensional feature.
- flat roof and metal fascia (robust and low maintenance).
- photovoltaic panels to roof, as well as the safety balustrade, are set back from the roof edge so as not to be so visible from ground level

3. 5.3 The design development has involved considering a variety of combinations of 'Living Wall' and timber louvres, ranging from a highly formalised arrangement to a more random distribution. The submitted proposal seeks to balance the local planning authority's desire for architectural logic and integrity with breaking up the formality of the elevations in an 'organic' way which reflects the tree belt to the south. The opportunity has been taken to 'strengthen' the corners on the tree belt side by having a greater density of 'Living Wall' at these points, and then reducing the density along the south eastern elevation (which will never be viewed as a full elevation due to the presence of the trees). The net effect is that the informal pattern of 'Living Wall' areas help to break up the lines of the structure, both vertically and horizontally.'

The full text of the design and access statement, submitted as part of the overall application submission, may be viewed on the Council's website.

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6.0 Land Use Allocation

6.1 Within the Council's adopted Local Development Framework adopted Proposals Map document (October 2010) the site for this proposal is within land allocated for University purposes.

1. **7.0 Relevant Planning History**

2. 7.1 The overall University campus has been the subject of an extensive number of development proposals. However, there are no previous applications that are of specific relevance to this proposal.

1. **8.0 Principal Policies**

2. 8.1 The following national policies are relevant to this application: The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
3. 8.2 The following policies from the adopted Colchester Borough Core Strategy (December 2008) are relevant:

SD1 - Sustainable Development Locations

UR2 - Built Design and Character

TA1 - Accessibility and Changing Travel Behaviour TA2 - Walking and Cycling

TA3 - Public Transport

TA4 - Roads and Traffic

TA5 - Parking

ENV1 - Environment

4. 8.3 In addition, the following are relevant adopted Colchester Borough Development Policies (October 2010):
DP1 Design and Amenity DP17 Accessibility and Access DP19 Parking Standards
5. 8.4 Further to the above, the adopted Site Allocations (2010) policies set out below should also be taken into account in the decision making process:
SA EC7 University of Essex Expansion
6. 8.5 Regard should also be given to the following adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents:
Vehicle Parking Standards
Sustainable Construction
External Materials in New Developments

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9.0 Consultations

1. 9.1 The Highway Authority originally advised that it had no objection to the proposal, subject to various requirements – one of which was a £250 000 contribution to be secured that would be used to help fund highway & transport improvements in the vicinity of the proposal site; improvements to include but shall not be limited to the proposed University of Essex to Wivenhoe cycling and walking route. This request was raised with the University's agent and as a result the following comment was received:
'...The University is not prepared to make any contribution towards sustainable transport measures as part of the car park proposal. There is, however, a mechanism, by which the sum requested, could be secured (under the existing Section 106 Agreement relating to the Knowledge Gateway Development)...'
The further views of the Highway Authority were sought and it has confirmed that in the light of this mitigation element not being achievable, it recommends a refusal of the scheme.
2. 9.2 The Council's Development Team advises:
Application noted and approved, subject to the provision of a S106 contribution towards the construction of a cycle link between Wivenhoe and the University (amount to be confirmed).
3. 9.3 Environmental Control requires the imposition of the demolition and construction informative on a grant of planning permission.
4. 9.4 The Landscape Officer requires some variations to the proposal including additional planting in the landscape belt adjacent to the road, alteration to the arrangement of the green walling, and use of green walling in lieu of the proposed safety rail. Conditions are also suggested.
5. 9.5 Natural England identifies that this proposal does not appear to affect any statutorily protected sites or landscapes, or have significant impacts on the conservation of soils, nor is the proposal EIA development.
6. 9.6 The Design and Heritage Officer comments as follows:
'Having considered the latest elevations for this proposal I do not consider that the quality of the design outweighs the negative impacts that the scale, mass and positioning of the building has upon the existing campus. Its relationship to the sports hall is visually overbearing with inadequate space between the two buildings. The loss of green areas is detrimental to the setting of the campus and the enclosure created by the cramming does not reflect the predominately well considered composition of spaces and buildings on the campus.
The design of the green walls fails to mitigate the mass of the building. This is largely because the green areas float above the ground and appear as decorative wall elements

rather than structural landscape features that such a large structure requires to be broken down in an appropriate visual manner. The monotonous method of cladding emphasises the disproportionate scale and mass of the building.'

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9.7 The Council's Transportation Policy officer requested additional information following the initial submission of this application. Following receipt of this, the following comments have been made: 'The University case is rather "predict and provide" – we have this number of students staff and visitors parking, therefore we must provide for them.

The University of Essex has a transport strategy dated 2006 which has the following aims :

Aims and Benefits of the Strategy

2.1 Aims

The University of Essex Transport Strategy aims to :

(a) Significantly decrease car parking demand on campus and reduce the impact of University generated traffic on the local environment, particularly in terms of congestion and carbon emission levels. This will be achieved by increasing the opportunities for staff, students and other campus users to travel by alternative means of transport and a long term commitment to changing travel patterns related to work, thereby reducing the need for single occupancy car journeys.

(b) Promote a sustainable, integrated approach to transport both on and off campus. 2.2 These aims are supported by a number of short, medium and long term objectives focusing on particular areas, details of which can be found in Section 4 of this document.

The Transport strategy suggests that there are some 1,600 permanent car parking spaces on site. Survey work undertaken in the Universities Application Statement January 2012 suggest that there are 1,500 permanent spaces, plus some 250 to 300 vehicles which could be accommodated in overspill areas.

The University has a car parking review group. Information here

http://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/car_parking_review/ suggests 1,400 spaces plus additional overflow car parking. In 2008/9 the University issued some 2,800 car parking permits, which is double the number of spaces and issued 3,500 permits in 2001/12 (Application Statement Jan 2012).

If we were to apply the 2009 adopted car park standard D1 (1 space for every 15 students for students + 1 space for every 15 students for staff) then the total number of spaces would be :

- 10,000 students = 667 spaces for staff
- 10,000 students = 667 spaces for students

Total spaces = 1,334 spaces (note the University has miscalculated the standard).

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This would seem to suggest that the University already has sufficient permanent spaces on site compared with the standard. There seems to be little evidence in the University's case for increased level of car parking, except to meet the existing demand :

- The case is built around the 1969 Traffic Study – transport policy has moved on significantly since then.
- They discuss growth over the next two decades but do not substantiate this growth
- Car park supply has crept up over a number of years
- The University has issued too many permits and now cannot effectively control the demand
- The benefits and need of the travel plan to the University and the staff and students needs to be promoted

It is accepted that in building the Business School that they will lose the overspill parking next to North Towers car park but it is not clear what the capacity of this space is. Recent surveys (February 2012) only suggest 58 vehicles were using this area. Even allowing for this the supply is still greater than the adopted standards.

I have looked at other campus Universities which are located away from the nearest main town e.g. UEA at Norwich, Lancaster, and Sussex at Brighton. The latter two are similar to Essex in size and campus.

All of them have a travel plan and their car parking charges which are similar to those at Essex:

- UEA charge between 72p to £2.30 per day dependant on the student/staff and salary
- Lancaster - £115 per annum for students, £150 per annum for staff
- Sussex - £165 for students, £300 per annum for staff
- Essex – 40p per day for those eligible for a permit with a £20 or % of salary registration fee. There are certain car parks which are barrier controlled and the charge is £324 per annum

All have travel plans and offer incentives for other modes, use restrictions and enforcement, allow exceptions car parking. Essex is not unique in its Travel Plan and parking issues and could learn from other Universities on incentives.'

Officer note: The parking standard referred to in the above consultation response is not correct as that standard refers to a new building to be used for D1 purposes i.e. a new academic building. This proposal is for a new car and the adopted standards advise that such proposals are to be considered on their own merits.

In addition to the details reported above, the full text of all consultation responses is available to view on the Council's website.

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10.0 Town Council Response

10.1 The following comments have been made by Wivenhoe Town Council:-

'Proposal fails to comply with the requirements as set out in the CBC LDF. It does not comply with the transport statement. It will affect an overload on traffic routes, produce congestion on roads and have the effect of a reduction in the University's support of the use of buses, which in term may cause a very good public transport system to be reduced, or even lost.

The proposal is placed in an ancient park, damaging the amenity value of historic parkland depicted in John Constable's painting, contrary to policy DP1 which states that '*developments should respect or enhance the landscape and other assets that contribute positively to the site and surrounding area*' The visual impact of this proposal will be overbearing and present a monstrosity in a once beautiful place. Policy DP2 states that '*all development should be designed to help promote healthy lifestyles and avoid causing adverse impacts on public health*'

The proposal encourages car use. The University should instead be promoting cycling, as per their 1995 strategy in which their future plans were to reduce dependency on car usage by promoting cycling and installing a railway halt.

Policy DE17's key requirements is that '*all developments should seek to enhance accessibility for sustainable modes of transport by giving priority to pedestrian, cycling and public transport access*'

The proposal does not explain how the building of the car park will enhance sustainable transport. The transport statement does not provide substantial evidence and is inadequate. There is nothing to demonstrate what pressure would be put on the roads in and out of Wivenhoe. Nothing has been done to encourage cyclists – such as a dedicated cycle lane.

The economic statement fails to address how it would benefit the surrounding area, i.e. Wivenhoe. There is no evidence that the new car park will provide an extra benefit to the local economy over and above what is already provided. Wivenhoe has reached saturation point with car usage. Its roads are gridlocked and car parking spaces are extremely limited. This car park will encourage yet more car use. The CBC LDF requires sustainability to be enhanced. This has not been demonstrated as there are no new measures proposed for neither cyclists, public transport nor pedestrians.'

11.0 Representations

11.1 As a result of local notification, the Council has received 18 letters of objection (including a petition containing 67 signatures). Objections have also been received from Colchester Cycling Campaign, C-Bus and the Wivenhoe Society. The Council has also received 15 expressions of support for the proposed scheme. The main points raised in objection to the scheme are summarised as follows:

1. The proposed development would be damaging to historic parkland in the vicinity.

2. The proposal would increase traffic on the local road network, promotes car travel and does not improve access for alternative transportation modes. The proposal will lead to an increase in pollution and is a waste of money.

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3. The development undermines sustainable transport principles that are promoted by Council policies and central government. The University should manage its existing parking facilities more effectively.
 4. The supporting documentation fails to give sufficient information to consider the proposal.
 5. Car sharing would negate the need for more parking at the University.
 6. The University should be leading the way with sustainable transportation proposals as opposed to simply providing more car parking spaces.
- 11.2 Comments made in support of the scheme are summarised as follows:
1. The design of the car park is sympathetic.
 2. There is an urgent need for more parking spaces at the University.
 3. Areas currently used for 'overflow' parking are being damaged.
 4. There has been significant growth in the number of students and more students now drive to the campus.
 5. People drive to the University campus already and need somewhere to park; demand outstrips supply.

The full text of all of the representations received is available to view on the Council's website.

1. **12.0 Parking Provision**

2. 12.1 The Council's adopted parking standards identify that planning applications for new car parks should be treated on their individual merit (Page 69).

1. **13.0 Open Space Provisions**

2. 13.1 The proposal, being for a new car park facility, does not generate a need for open space per se.

1. **14.0 Air Quality**

2. 14.1 The site is outside of any Air Quality Management Area and will not generate significant impacts upon the zones

1. **15.0 Report**

2. 15.1 The proposal for a new car park at the University campus has resulted from the University's perceived need for additional car parking spaces to meet demand. The information that accompanies the proposal recognises that the University has expanded substantially with circa 10 000 students studying at the main Colchester campus. Of these, approximately 6000 students living off campus and travel to the site. Additionally, 2 250 staff members as well as visitors to the campus generate more trips. Obviously, not all these journeys are undertaken by car but it is a fact that there is significant car parking demand at the campus. The University currently has four main surface level car parks which contain approximately 1 500 spaces in total. Other areas of land are used as 'official' overspill car parks that can accommodate another 250-300 cars. Nevertheless, car parking also takes place on unallocated verge/green areas within the campus to meet demand.

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2. 15.2 In 1996 the Council refused permission for a 300 space car park on grazing marsh land at the end of Valley Road, primarily on environmental grounds. Following on from this refusal the University created a sustainable transportation strategy that, in combination with creation of official 'overspill' and unofficial verge car parking areas, has enabled travel and parking demand to be managed. Sustainable transport measures include:
 - The closure of Boundary Road to through traffic – being bus only
 - Pay and display parking across the campus
 - Students living on campus being actively discouraged from bringing cars to campus
 - Disabled parking being provided in the most accessible locations
 - Student car parking registration scheme
 - Wheel-clamping and parking ticket enforcement
 - Introduction and active promotion of a car sharing scheme (open to both staff

and students)

- Provision of taxi drop-off and pick up points
- Provision of new and upgrading of existing cycle and footpaths through the campus
- Promotion of the National Walk to Work week each May
- The provision of shower and locker facilities, subsidised cycle purchase scheme, free cycle checks and a cycle tagging scheme
- Business mileage scheme for staff who use cycles on University business
- Upgrading of cycle parking stands (estimated to number some 1 800) and provision of a number of cycle lockers
- Improve bus shelters and facilities across the campus
- Introduction of two new bus routes linking the Colchester campus to Greenstead and Maldon.
- Introduction of discounted annual season tickets for bus travel (the Unicard) available to students and staff. Discounted tickets on TGM Network Colchester buses for those living within 3 km of the University.
- Public transport salary advance scheme available to all permanent staff members.
- Promotion of sustainable travel information through the University's website and publications

3. 15.3 Notwithstanding the range of elements identified above the University considers that the existing parking arrangements on campus are insufficient to meet demand. Not least as the campus facilities have expanded substantially in the last 20 years and the amount of car parking on site has not increased significantly to reflect this expansion. It is estimated by the University that there is a need to provide an additional 300 – 400 spaces on the campus.
4. 15.4 Members will be aware that the issue of parking at the University has been an ongoing concern with complaints of University-generated car parking taking place on roads within Wards adjacent to the campus and also in Wivenhoe, and bearing the above in mind, it is acknowledged that the existing demand for car parking spaces may not met adequately on campus. Furthermore, in terms of location, it would appropriate, in principle, to locate additional car parking facilities within an established car park area. That said, the visual impact of the development is obviously an important consideration.

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5. 15.5 To this end it is noted that the design of the proposed building has given rise to concerns from the Design and Heritage Officer (DHU). These concerns relate to the overall impact that proposed building would have in this setting. The proposed location of the car park is on the periphery of the University campus. While the existing established planting to the south of the proposed site would assist in filtering views of the building, it would not be 'lost' in the landscape completely. Additionally, clear views would be available from the west, adjacent to the nearest accommodation blocks, and also to the east across open parkland and playing fields. The DHU comment identifies that the proposed building is in uncomfortable proximity to the adjacent sports centre building and this proximity contradicts the general character and arrangement of the development on the periphery of the campus, which is characterised by buildings set within extensive landscaped areas. On this basis, it is considered that the building would appear cramped within this setting.
6. 15.6 Following on from this it is noted that the design of the building does not achieve an appropriate standard. The functional nature of the development is fully appreciated, and it is acknowledged by officers that attempts have been made to address the impact of the structure and minimise its impact in the landscape by use of elements such as green walling. Additionally, efforts have been made to overcome officers' initial concerns regarding the appearance of the building – primarily by the rearrangement of the green wall elements of the structure. Nevertheless, officers remain concerned that the scheme fails to achieve a sufficiently-high standard of design commensurate with this peripheral location. It is your officers' view that a new building in this location, albeit a primarily functional one

such as a multi-level car park, should demonstrate a similar exemplary architectural approach, to other newer buildings on campus such as the proposed Essex Business School building (also on this Committee agenda for consideration).

7. 15.7 Members will note that the proposed development has given rise to a substantial number of representations in objection to and support of the submitted scheme. Generally the points of objection relate to the need to provide additional parking spaces at the University campus, bearing in mind issues of sustainable travel, encouragement of alternative modes, impact on the environment etc. The representations in support advise that the existing car parking provision at the campus is inadequate to cater for demand. As is identified above the University does employ a range of measures to encourage sustainable modes of travel to the campus and to discourage students from bringing cars. However, the fact that overspill parking facilities are necessary and also that further 'unofficial' parking takes place on verges etc. suggests that inadequate official spaces exist. As a principle, therefore, it is felt that a need for additional car parking can be substantiated.
8. 15.8 That said, it is considered that as part of a holistic approach to the issue of sustainable transportation the provision of this type of facility on campus should be off-set by additional elements to encourage alternative travel modes parking on the campus. The consultation recommendation received from the Highway Authority identifies that improvements to the local highway infrastructure should be secured as part of the proposed development. Members should note that this request has been endorsed by the Council's Development Team. Specifically, improvements to cycle/pedestrian links between the campus and Wivenhoe are identified as desirable as a way of encouraging walking and cycling between these nodes, and the approval of this development should include a commitment to a contribution from the University to

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secure these improvements. In response, the University's representative has advised that the submitted scheme is not able to fund the identified improvements. As an alternative, it is suggested that monies secured under the s106 agreement attached to the outline planning permission for the University's Knowledge Gateway site could be used to contribute towards the improvements requested by the Highway Authority. Members will note that the Highway Authority has rejected this suggestion on the basis that the Knowledge Gateway s106 funds are already earmarked for improvements to the Greenstead Road roundabout and this current proposal generates a requirement for mitigation in its own right. A recommendation of refusal is made by the Highway Authority on this basis, and this recommendation is endorsed by officers.

16.0 Conclusion

16.1 In conclusion, the additional car parking provision proposed under this planning application is not objected to in principle. However, the scheme as put forward for Members determination does not achieve a standard of design that is considered necessary for this location. Furthermore, it is considered that the building would appear cramped in this setting due to its proximity to the existing sports hall building. Lastly, the financial contribution considered necessary to mitigate this particular development (as identified by the Highway Authority and endorsed by the Council's Development Team) is not secured. On the basis of the above a recommendation of refusal is made to Planning Committee.

Recommendation - Refusal Reasons for refusal

1- Non-Standard Refusal Reason

Within the National Planning Policy Framework (published March 2012) it is a fundamental requirement of central government that good design is achieved in development proposals.

Specifically, the Framework states '...The government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people...In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help raise the standard of design more generally in the area. Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions...' Leading on from this, policies SD1 and UR2 of the Council's Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2008) state the Council's intention to promote a high standard of design that enhances the built character and public realm of the area in which they are located. Furthermore, policy DP1 of the Development Policies (2010) document requires inter alia that development proposals '...respect and enhance the character of the site, its context and surroundings...' and '...respect or enhance the landscape and other assets that contribute positively to the site and the surrounding area...' The Council considers that the proposed development fails to accord with the above central and local policies due to the negative impacts that the scale, mass and positioning of the building has upon the existing campus. Its relationship to the sports hall is visually overbearing with inadequate space between the two buildings. The loss of green areas is detrimental to the setting of the campus and the enclosure created by

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the cramming does not reflect the predominately well considered composition of spaces and buildings on the campus. Additionally, the design of the green walls fails to mitigate the mass of the building. This is largely because the green areas float above the ground and appear as decorative wall elements rather than structural landscape features that such a large structure requires in order to be broken down in an appropriate visual manner. The monotonous method of cladding emphasises the disproportionate scale and mass of the building, to the further detriment of the setting in which it would be located.

2 – Non Standard Refusal Reason

Within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (published March 2012) it is stated that '...Local Planning Authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of planning obligations...' The NPPF describes the tests that must be met when obligations are sought. At the local level, the Local Development Framework Adopted Core Strategy Policy SD1 requires inter alia that '...New development will be required to provide the necessary ...transport infrastructure...to meet the community needs arising from the proposal...' Development Policy DP3 also recognises the role that S106 agreements have in the development control process.

The proposal fails to include a mechanism to secure the identified contribution to provision of highway and transport improvement in the vicinity of the appeal site that are deemed necessary to balance the provision of additional car parking spaces with measures to promote sustainable modes of transport. The proposal therefore conflicts with the aims of the above identified policies and Policies DM9 and DM10 of Essex County Council's Highway Authority's Development Management Policies (February 2011).

1. **17.0 Additional Report**
2. **17.1 Members are advised that further discussions have taken place with the applicants and their representatives regarding the proposed reasons for refusal of the scheme. On the issue of position of the building – this has been amended in order to pull it away from the sports complex. The revised location also maintains the area of bunding and planting that is located between the sports complex and the**

existing surface car park. This reposition is considered to satisfactorily address the previous concerns regarding the building's location and the visually-cramped appearance that this would create. Leading on from this the design of the building has been amended. Key changes include the internalisation of the access ramps to each deck (these previously were external elements). Also the structure of the building has been revised in order that it continues to the ground floor, as opposed to being on columns. This gives the building a 'solidity' of appearance. The external materials have been amended to alter the overall appearance of the building. The planted areas to create green walling are also taken to the ground which is considered to be appropriate visually.

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2. **17.2** Members are advised that the Council's Urban Design Officer has been involved in the revised proposals (having recommended that the originally-submitted scheme be refused). The following comments have been received from that officer on the revised scheme:

'The amended design has addressed the main concerns with the design. Car parks are always large objects with regard to scale and mass.

The new design is far better grounded and no longer appears as floating mass. The visually stronger ground floor now has the appearance of structure that is capable of supporting the mass above. This is a welcomed improvement, giving the appearance of architectural integrity to the building.

The treatment of the facades has drawn aesthetic rhythms from the original campus; this makes it much easier to relate the building to its location. Using this architectural sympathy achieves a building that has a stronger relationship to the campus. The green walls now extend appropriately down to the ground. This will give a more natural appearance to this element and should act as a stronger visual element to mitigate the mass of the car park.

The internalisation of the access ramps has created a more appropriate space between the sports centre and the new building. This has, to an extent, lessened the cramped appearance of the previous scheme. This has also allowed for the treatment of the facades to extend around the whole building. On the elevation that was previously ramps the green wall will be a stronger visual mitigation for the lost view to the established sylvan boundary on the campus edge.'

3. **17.3** The repositioning of the proposed building and the alterations to design has impacted on car parking spaces. The following table shows the revisions for Members' information. The effect of the revisions is that 2 less spaces in total would be provided.

	Originally Submitted Scheme	Revised Scheme
Surface Level	397	401
First Floor	126	124
Second Floor	126	124
Third Floor	130	128
T otal	779	777

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4. **17.4 On the issue of the required contribution, Members are advised that an approach has been agreed whereby funds already secured from the s.106 agreement attached to the approved outline planning permission for the University Knowledge Gateway development can be drawn on to meet the Highway Authority's request for a £250 000 contribution to provision of the identified footpath/cycleway link required as a consequence of this application. The funds drawn from the Knowledge Gateway s.106 agreement would be replaced at a later date. This proposal has been endorsed by the Council's Development Team and the Highway Authority has also confirmed its agreement.**
5. **17.5 On the basis of the above the recommendation to Members has been revised to one of approval – subject to the mechanism described above being formally completed.**

18.0 Recommendation

APPROVE subject to the prior completion of a legally-binding mechanism to provide the following:

☐ **A contribution of £250 000 to be secured that would be used to help fund highway & transport improvements in the vicinity of the proposal site; improvements to include but shall not be limited to the proposed University of Essex to Wivenhoe cycling and walking route.**

On completion the Head of Environmental and Protective Services be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

1 - A1.5 Full Perms (time limit for commencement of Development)

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

Reason: In order to comply with Section 91 (1) and (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2 - C11.11 – Landscape Design Proposals

No works or development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape proposals have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (see BS 1192: part 4). These details shall include, as appropriate:

Existing and proposed finished contours and levels.

Means of enclosure.

Car parking layout.

Other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas.

Hard surfacing materials.

Minor artefacts and structures (e.g. furniture, play equipment, refuse or other storage units, signage, lighting).

Proposed and existing functional services above and below ground (e.g. drainage, power,

communication cables, pipelines, etc. indicating lines, manholes, supports etc.).
Retained historic landscape features and proposals for restoration.

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Soft landscape details shall include:

Planting plans.

Written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment).

Schedules of plants, noting species, plant size and proposed numbers/densities.

Planting area protection or decompaction proposals.

Implementation timetables.

Reason: To safeguard the provision of amenity afforded by appropriate landscape design.

3 - C11.12 Landscape Works Implementation

All approved hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the implementation and monitoring programme agreed with the Local Planning Authority and in accordance with the relevant recommendations of the appropriate British Standards. All trees and plants shall be monitored and recorded for at least five years following contractual practical completion of the approved development. In the event that trees and/or plants die, are removed, destroyed, or in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority fail to thrive or are otherwise defective during such a period, they shall be replaced during the first planting season thereafter to specifications agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the provision and implementation of a reasonable standard of landscape in accordance with the approved design.

4 - C11.17 Landscape Management Plan

A landscape management plan, including long term design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to any occupation of the development (or any relevant phase of the development) for its permitted use.

Reason: To ensure the provision and implementation of a reasonable standard of landscape in accordance with the approved design.

5 – Non Standard Condition

Prior to commencement of the development details of a wheel cleaning facility within the site and adjacent to the egress onto the highway shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The wheel cleaning facility shall be provided prior to commencement and during construction of the development.

Reason: To protect highway efficiency of movement and safety in accordance with policy DM1 of the Highway Authority's Development Management Policies as adopted as County Council Supplementary Guidance in February 2011.

6 - Non-Standard Condition

No occupation of the development shall take place until such time as the University of Essex's Travel Plan is reviewed and if necessary amended to take account of the development.

Reason: To balance the provision of additional parking spaces by ensuring the proposal site and University of Essex as a whole is accessible by more sustainable modes of transport such as public transport, cycling and walking, in accordance with policy DM9 and DM10 of the Highway Authority's Development Management Policies as adopted as County Council Supplementary Guidance in February 2011.

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Informatives

- (1) The developer is referred to the attached advisory note *Advisory Notes for the Control of Pollution during Construction & Demolition Works* for the avoidance of pollution during the demolition and construction works. Should the applicant require any further guidance they should contact Environmental Control prior to the commencement of the works.
- (2) All works affecting the highway should be carried out by prior arrangement with, and to the requirements and satisfaction of, the Highway Authority and application for the necessary works should be made by initially telephoning 08456 037631.

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