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Architecture + Building Surveying + Town Planning

**S73 Application to vary P/2018/0672 -
Wrexham University Crispin Lane
Student Village**

**Planning Note and Green
Infrastructure Statement**

22nd November 2024

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Cassidy + Ashton have been instructed by Wrexham University to prepare and submit this Section 73 application (Town and Country Planning Act 1990).
- 1.2 Application ref. **P/2021/1195** has been ongoing and this Statement relates to the updated scope of the application.
- 1.3 The original description of development for this application (P/2021/1195) is the following:

Removal of condition 9 (highways) and variation of condition 2 (reserved matters) and condition 3 (commencement of development).

- 1.4 The description of development is to be updated as follows:

Variation of condition 2 (submission of reserved matters) and condition 3 (commencement of development).

- 1.5 Removal of Condition 9 is no longer subject to this S73 application, which purely proposes the variation of Conditions 2 and 3 to extend the timeframe for implementing the permission, as follows:

Condition 2 to be **varied** states:

Plans and particulars of the reserved matters referred to in condition 1 (above) shall be submitted in writing to the Local Planning Authority before the expiry of three years from the date of this permission. The development shall only be carried out in strict conformity with such details as are approved.

Condition 3 to be **varied** states:

The development hereby approved shall be commenced before the expiry of five years from the date of this permission or before the expiry of two years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters required to be approved, whichever is the later.

- 1.6 For the avoidance of doubt, the above defined timeframes relate to the expiry of the permission to be determined under this S73 application as P/2021/1195, and its future determination date.
- 1.7 This supporting planning statement sets out the context of the site and thus the perspective in which the proposed variation to conditions should be considered.
- 1.8 The timeframes defined for submission of reserved matters (condition 2) and commencement of development (condition 3) are proposed to be extended on the basis of the uncertainty to timescales and development of the site.

2.0 SITE BACKGROUND

SITE CONTEXT & BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The application site concerns land situated West off Crispin Lane on the wider Wrexham Plas Coch Campus.
- 2.2 The land subject to this application is adjacent to the existing Wrexham Football Club and Wrexham Student Village which currently comprises of 2 no. accommodation blocks.

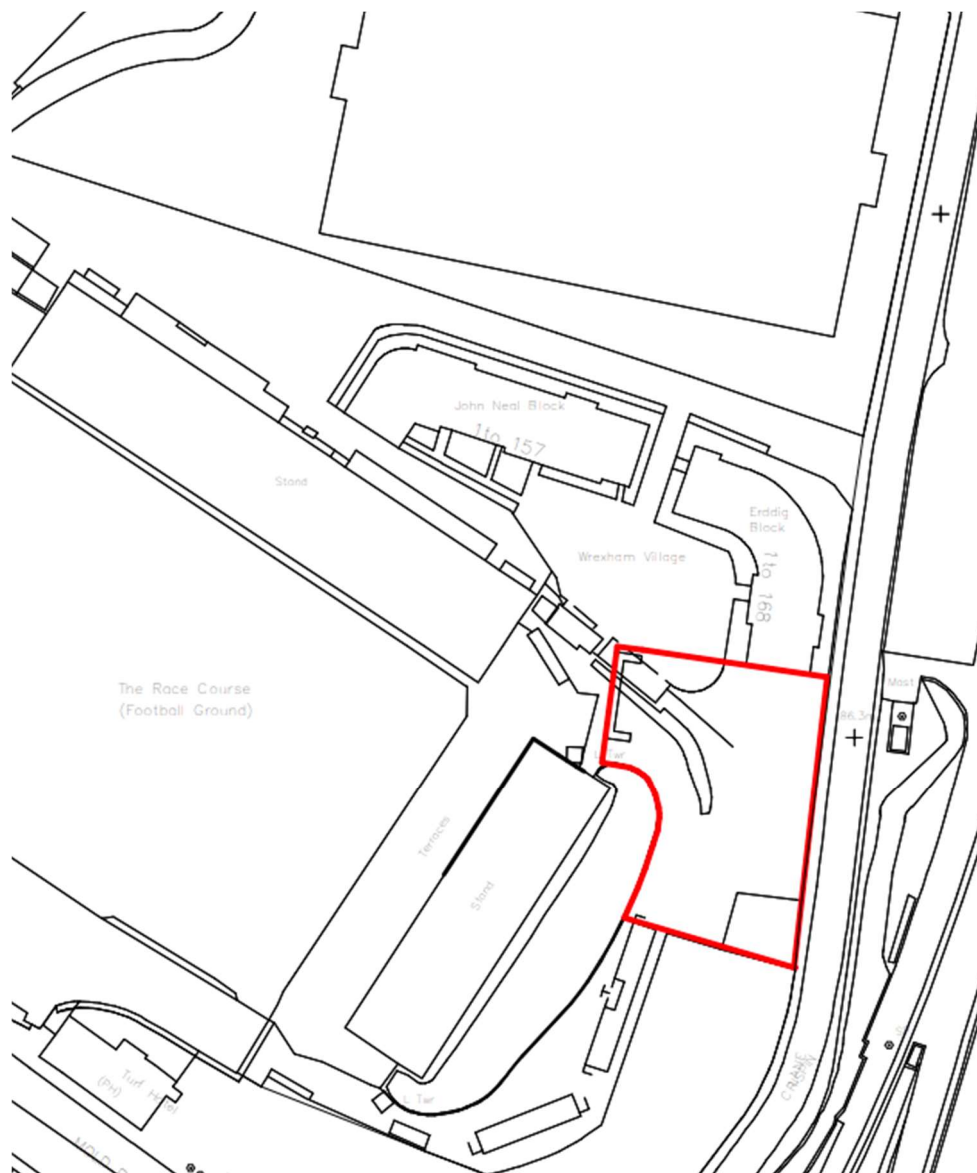


Figure 1 – Site Location [source: application ref. P/2018/0672]

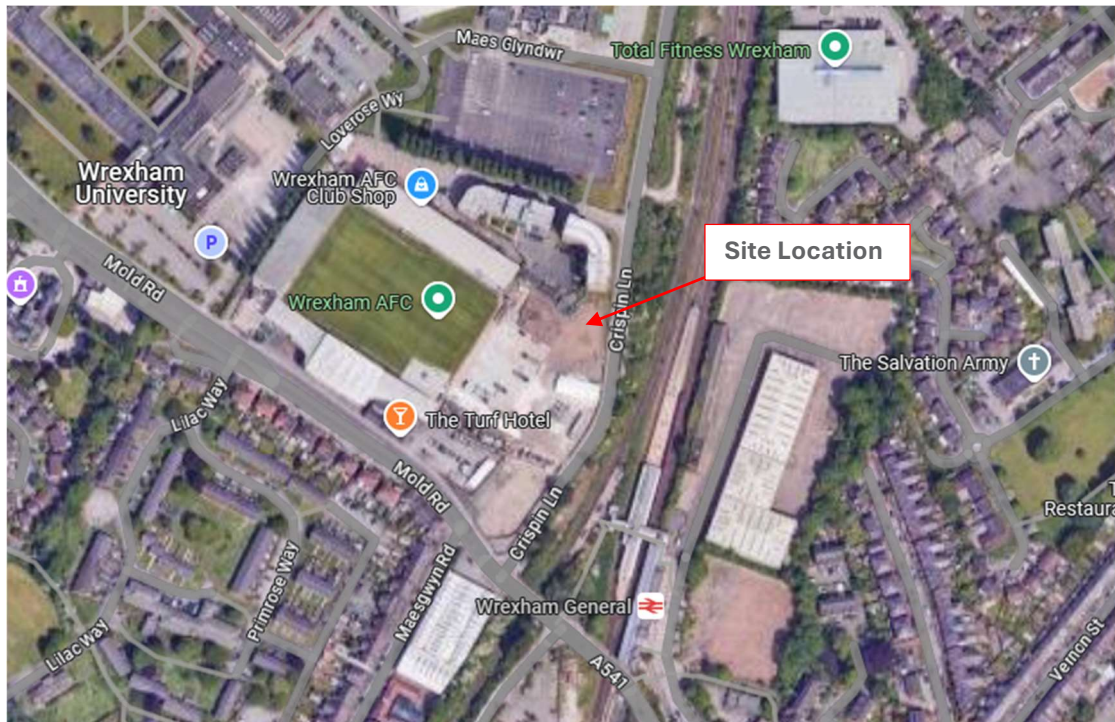


Figure 2 – Site Location [source: Google Maps]

- 2.3 The neighbouring student accommodation and Wrexham Association Football Club (WAFC) are indicated within the above location plan / aerial image.
- 2.4 Situated 1 mile from the centre of Wrexham, the site is sustainably located, with access to public transport connections, walking, cycling and local amenities.
- 2.5 Wrexham General Railway Station is less than 300m from the site providing frequent connections both regionally and nationally, including to Cardiff and Birmingham. The town centre amenities are sited approximately 600m away.

WIDER SITE CONTEXT

- 2.6 The application site is located within the wider Wrexham University campus development. 'Campus 2025' is the universities future strategy, which seeks to sustain its position in the higher education sector.
- 2.7 As part of 'Campus 2025' Wrexham University are committed to investing in sufficient student accommodation to develop an environment where students want to stay, building a student centred, vibrant and sustainable campus.

- 2.8 P/2018/0672 intended to deliver additional student accommodation alongside the existing Wrexham Student Village which is located north of the site.
- 2.9 The site is also subject to another proposal associated with Wrexham Football Club's new Kop Stand. Wrexham University are keen to ensure the best possible outcome for the land at Crispin Lane and whilst the University are particularly enthusiastic about the neighbouring proposals, there are uncertainties for the delivery of the student accommodation and the University must protect its position.
- 2.10 In June 2021, WAFC announced that the new Kop Stand would have to be reassessed, to improve supporter's experience. As reported within Place North West in October 2025, WAFC have appointed a new Architect to design the new Kop. This endorses the fact that timescales are likely to be extended for the football club developing the site. With that, comes extended timeframe and uncertainty for the Universities position in relation to the land, P/2018/0672 and protecting their interests.
- 2.11 Due to the uncertainty in the timeline of developing the site, Wrexham University are keen to preserve the planning permission at Crispin Lane to protect their future position.

PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.12 There are a number of relevant planning applications related to the site. These are detailed below:

- 2.13 Application Ref. **P/2008/1295**

Outline application for 319 student bedroom development and access road, parking, landscaping and development of East stand/multi-function arena.

Approved 6 April 2009.

Reserved matters have not been submitted to accord with this outline permission.

2.14 Application Ref. **P/2008/1296**

Erection of 521 student bedroom development/construction in two blocks, together with access road, parking and landscaping.

This full application was approved 6th April 2009.

The permission was the basis to build the Wrexham Student Village accommodation which is now erected onsite.

2.15 Application Ref. **P/2022/0551**

Reserved Matters pursuant to outline planning permission P/2018/0672 (access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) – erection of student accommodation – 197 beds land west of Crispin Lane, Mold Road, Wrexham

This application was approved 25th April 2023. This is the basis for the current expiry date, two years after approval of the reserved matters for the planning permission, which is 25th April 2025.

3.0 PROPOSED VARIATION

3.1 This application seeks to vary conditions 2 and 3 of **P/2018/0672**.

3.2 This application is pursuant to ref. **P/2018/0672**.

3.3 **P/2018/0672** dated 01/07/2019, has the following description of development:

Outline application for student accommodation facility of up to 197 bed spaces, parking and landscaping.

3.4 **P/2021/1195** seeks the following variation to P/2018/0672:

Variation of condition 2 (reserved matters) and condition 3 (commencement of development).

3.5 This application proposes the variation of Conditions 2 and 3 to the following.

Condition 2 to be varied to:

Plans and particulars of the reserved matters referred to in condition 1 (above) shall be submitted in writing to the Local Planning Authority before the expiry of three years from the date of this permission. The development shall only be carried out in strict conformity with such details as are approved.

Condition 3 to be varied to:

The development hereby approved shall be commenced before the expiry of five years from the date of this permission or before the expiry of two years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters required to be approved, whichever is the later.

3.6 This application is to facilitate an extension of time to preserve the planning permission (**P/2018/0672**) on behalf of Wrexham University.

3.7 In order to preserve the permission, the existing position would require the University to come forward to discharge prior to commencement conditions and

implement the permission prior to the expiry date, 25.04.2025 of the reserved matters permission ref. **P/2022/0551**. In light of proposals of WAFC covering the site, this would likely result in unnecessary progress and for the University.

- 3.8 Wrexham University are on board to ensure the best possible outcome for the land at Crispin Lane and whilst the University are enthusiastic about neighbouring landowners' proposals, the timeframe for development and their current interests are uncertain.
- 3.9 As such, the enforcement of the conditions within the defined timeframe are considered unreasonable and it is requested that these conditions be varied accordingly.

CONDITION 2 - EXTENSION OF TIME FOR SUBMISSION OF RESERVED MATTERS

- 3.10 Whilst there is an existing approved reserved matters permission, the University are not in a position to commence development on the basis of the reserved matters approval. Due to the uncertain nature of developing the site, an extended timeframe is requested to preserve the lifetime of the permission.
- 3.11 We understand it is both necessary and reasonable for Wrexham County Borough Council to extend the timeframe for submission of reserved matters to 3 years from the date of this permission. This would protect the Universities position and prevent any unnecessary investment.

CONDITION 3 - EXTENSION OF TIME FOR COMMENCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT

- 3.12 The University do not feel it reasonable to progress the permission at this stage, which is likely to result in unnecessary progress and investment, considering the neighbouring proposals, which are set to supersede any development at the site.

- 3.13 In line with the above justification to extend the period for submission of reserved matters, it is understood that the development commencement date should be extended to reflect this uncertainty in the same manner.
- 3.14 It is therefore requested that it would be reasonable for the Council to extend the timeframe of this condition equally, to 5 years from the date of this permission or before the expiry of 2 years from the date of approval of the last reserved matters. This is considered necessary to facilitate the preservation of this permission, to protect the position of Wrexham University.

4.0 BIODIVERSITY / GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STATEMENT

- 4.1 This application is subject to the requirement for a green infrastructure statement proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed under Planning Policy Wales (PPW) **(6.2.12)**.
- 4.2 The following outlines the existing position on site and illustrates the step-wise approach taken to maintain and enhance biodiversity **(PPW 6.4.11)**, aligned with the proposed development.
- 4.3 This application is pursuant to the planning permission for the site ref. **P/2018/0672**.
- 4.4 The existing position within the red line boundary is wholly hardstanding as seen in photos from a site visit below:



Figure 2 – View of existing site condition



Figure 3 – View of existing site condition



Figure 4 – View of existing site condition

- 4.5 Therefore, the site is at a biodiversity baseline of zero with no habitats, species or ecological value present on site. Consequently, there is no requirement to avoid, minimise or mitigate against impact on habitats or species on site.
- 4.6 In order to enhance the site and the proposed development under permission **P/2018/0672** includes a soft landscaping scheme which will include as follows:
- Planting of 1 no. Amelanchier lamarckii shrub
 - Planting of 2 no. Carpinus betulus “Frans Fontaine” trees
 - Planting of 5 no. Prunus avium “Plena” trees
 - Planting of 3 no. Sorbus aucuparia “Cardinal Royal” trees
 - Planting of 35m of hedgerow Fagus Sylvatica
 - Planting of 147 sqm of low sun shrub mix
 - Planting of 113 sqm of Hebe mix
 - Planting of 24 sqm of wildflower meadow mix
- 4.7 Considering the existing baseline of zero, the above landscaping additions will achieve a clear net benefit for biodiversity on site.
- 4.8 A formal Landscape Management Plan (LMP) is required to follow within three months of commencement of development as aligned with **condition 4 of the Reserved Matters permission (P/2022/0551)**.

Condition 4 states the following:

“Within three months of the commencement of development a landscaping Management Plan, including long term design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all landscaped areas shall be submitted in writing for the approval of the Local Planning Authority. The landscaping shall thereafter be managed and maintained in strict accordance with these details as are approved.”

- 4.9 The LMP will outline the creation and management processes for the proposed soft landscaping on site and will follow these key principles:

- All planting, seeding or turfing shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the completion of the development.
- Management responsibilities and maintenance schedules will be included in the LMP, which would be aligned with the Universities overall management team and processes.
- The LMP will set out to establish and maintain newly created and existing habitats within the site so that they establish successfully and provide continued biodiversity benefit in the long-term and aftercare to maintain their ecological value.

4.10 The Green Infrastructure Statement above includes detail of the proposed habitats and their implementation and management which will be undertaken to ensure the development results in Biodiversity Net Benefit.

4.11 The existing ecological value of the site is zero and with the consideration of the proposed planting and LMP, long term negative effects on biodiversity are not anticipated. Due to the site having a biodiversity baseline of zero, the proposed development gives rise to biodiversity enhancement opportunities, and will improve biodiversity at a local level.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The above evidence highlights the requirement for variations to conditions 2 and 3 of the planning application ref. **P/2021/1195**.
- 5.2 This statement requests the timeframes defined for submission of reserved matters (condition 2) and commencement of development (condition 3) are extended on the basis of the uncertainty of development across the wider campus.
- 5.3 Whilst Wrexham University are committed to providing sufficient student accommodation to develop a vibrant and sustainable campus, the application site is subject to other proposals within its vicinity and the University will explore other opportunities.
- 5.4 Due to the uncertainty in the timeline of the development of the site, Wrexham University are keen to preserve the planning permission at Crispin Lane to secure the potential for the development of the site into the future and protect their position.
- 5.5 The proposed development under permission **P/2018/0672** achieves net benefit to biodiversity by providing a soft landscaping scheme which will improve the site from its zero baseline for ecological value. A Landscape Management Plan will follow to ensure continued management of habitats and biodiversity on site.

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