



GERALDEVE
A NEWMARK COMPANY

No. 1 Marsden Street
Manchester M2 1HW
Tel. +44 (0)161 259 0450
geraldev.com

Planning and Building Control
Wrexham County Borough Council
Lambpit Street
Wrexham
LL11 1AR

23 April 2024

Our ref: U0026194/DPA/SREY

Your ref:

Dear Sir/Madam

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) – Full Planning Application

Student Roost, Snowdon Hall, Vicarage Hill, LL13 7HN, Wrexham

Gerald Eve LLP is instructed by Roost Propco 4 Limited (“the Applicant”) to submit a planning application at Student Roost, Snowdon Hall, Vicarage Hill, LL13 7HN, Wrexham (“the Site”) to Wrexham County Borough Council (“the Council”) for the following development proposal:

“Erection of a pavilion and pergola structure to the external amenity area, soft and hard landscaping improvements and installation of bin store facilities”.

This planning application has been submitted electronically via the Planning Portal (portal reference: PP-12708497).

The following documents have been submitted in support of this planning application:

- Planning Application Form (Signed and dated)
- Land Ownership Certificate (signed and dated)
- Site Location Plan (1:1250) (Ref. 23146-56T-P0-00S-D-A-001-P01)
- Existing Site Plan (Ref. 23146-56T-P2-00S-D-A-001-P01)
- Proposed Site Plan (Ref. 23146-56T-P0-00S-D-A-002-P01)
- Proposed Pavilion Plan (Ref. 23146-56T-P4-ZZZ-D-A-001-P01)
- Proposed Site Sections (Ref. 23146-56T-P5-ZZZ-D-A-001-P01)
- Proposed Pavilion Elevations (Ref. 23146-56T-P6-ZZZ-D-A-001-P01)
- Proposed Bin Store Elevations (Ref. 23146-56T-P0-00S-D-A-002-P01)
- Design and Access Statement prepared by 56Three Architects
- Green Infrastructure Statement prepared by Gerald Eve
- Arboriculture Assessment prepared by Tyler Grange
- Flood Risk Technical Note prepared by Egniol

The requisite statutory application fee in this instance is £230 (i.e. erection of buildings with 32 sqm of floorspace), which has been paid in full.

Background

The Site currently operates as purpose-built student accommodation in accordance with planning permission WRO/CBO1558 (“the Operative Planning Permission”, approved by the Council on 26 November 1998 for the following description of development:

“New student accommodation, 2 shop units and new wine bar”.

The applicant is seeking permission to alter the existing external public spaces at Snowdon Hall, in order to create a courtyard amenity space to the rear of the site which provides a greater variety of external amenity facilities for the residents to use throughout the year.

Site Description

The Site comprises student accommodation and is located in Wrexham Town Centre and is bound by Vicarage Hill to the west, Abbot Street to the north and commercial properties to the east and south. The surrounding area is mainly comprised of town centre uses with most properties comprising of ground floor commercial premises and 1st floor residential uses.

The Site is sustainably located in relation to public transport services and local amenities. It is situated within 2-minute walking distance from Wrexham city centre which offers a variety of shops, restaurants, bars and other amenities and services. It is also within a 10-minute of Wrexham Central and General Train Stations as well as Wrexham Bus Station which provide services nationally.

Planning History

As noted above, planning permission WRO/CBO1558 was approved on 26 November 1998 for the erection of new student accommodation, 2 shop units and a wine bar.

A review of the Council’s online planning register did not reveal any other planning decisions at the Site that are considered to be relevant in this instance.

Proposed Development

This planning application seeks to enhance the external amenity area of the existing student accommodation to provide a greater variety of space for the residents, with the ultimate aim of making the space more accessible and beneficial throughout the year. The Site’s existing internal amenity space is relatively constrained, and the Applicant’s proposals will significantly enhance the quantum and functionality of the amenity space available to residents.

The proposed improvements to the area will involve the erection of a timber clad pavilion, which will provide an enclosed internal space within the amenity area. Furthermore, there will also be additional external amenity spaces, including a flexible covered pergola area providing kitchen facilities, as well as an outdoor dining/study area.

The proposals will also involve several hard and soft landscaping improvements to the overall amenity area, with the addition of resin-bound gravel and permeable paving as well as a SuDS raingarden feature to the rear of the pavilion building which will collect rainwater from the pavilion's roof through a slow-release water butt. Additional soft landscaping will be introduced through hedging around the raingarden feature.

In addition to the amenity area enhancements, the proposals will also involve the installation of new bin store facilities along the southern boundary.

The proposed pavilion structure will measure 32sqm in size and 3.2m in height at its tallest point. It will provide a fully insulated internal study space for students to use throughout the year. The pavilion will be timber clad with a glazed sliding door, a fixed glazed window panel and a single ply roof.

For the avoidance of doubt, no alterations are proposed to the existing student accommodation buildings nor are any alterations proposed to the existing boundary walls.

In the most part, the majority of the proposed furniture and planting does not require planning permission but is shown for completeness. It is therefore the proposed pavilion and pergola structures that form the basis of this planning application.

Planning Policy

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) (as amended), indicates that all planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance, the relevant development plan document comprises:

- Wrexham Local Development Plan (LDP) (Adopted December 2023)
- Future Wales – The National Plan 2040 (Adopted February 2021)

Wrexham LDP (2023)

The site is not subject to any site-specific allocations, however it is included within the wider Wrexham City Centre designation and is partially within the TAN 15 Flood Zone and immediately adjacent to a Conservation Area.

The following development plan policies are considered to be particularly relevant to this application:

- Policy DM1: Development Management Considerations
- Policy SP7: Wrexham City
- Policy SP15: Historic and Cultural Environment
- Policy SP18: Climate Change
- Policy R2: Development within the Wrexham City Centre Masterplan Area

Policy DM1: Development Management Considerations outlines that development proposals, where relevant, must:

- a) Accord with or enhance the character, local distinctiveness and appearance of the site, existing building(s) and surrounding landscape/ townscape in terms of their siting, layout, scale, height, design, density, use of materials and landscaping;*

- b) Not have an unacceptable effect on the amenity of the occupiers of nearby properties/land; and provide a satisfactory standard of amenity for the occupiers/users of the development itself;*
- c) Safeguard the environment from the adverse effects of pollution of water, land, noise, light or air, or land instability, arising from development;*
- d) Take account of personal and community safety and security in their design and layout;*
- e) Not give rise to highway safety, pedestrian safety or parking problems on site or in the locality;*
- f) Not increase the risk of flooding but make adequate provision for sustainably dealing with foul and surface water drainage and not result in an unacceptable impact upon the water environment.*

Policy SP7: Wrexham City states that Wrexham city will be the focus for new development, including housing, in order to strengthen the city's regional function as a settlement of national importance.

Policy SP15: Historic and Cultural Environment sets out that development will only be supported where it conserves, protects, preserves or enhances the cultural and historic assets, including conservation areas, of the County Borough and their setting.

Policy SP18: Climate Change outlines that to mitigate against the effects of climate change and adapt to its impacts, development proposals will need to demonstrate that they have taken into account the following:

- i. Reducing carbon emissions;*
- ii. Protecting and increasing carbon sinks;*
- iii. Adapting to the implications of climate change at both a strategic and detailed design level;*
- iv. Promoting energy efficiency and increasing the supply of renewable energy; and*
- v. Maintaining ecological resilience;*
- vi. Avoiding areas susceptible to flood risk in the first instance in accordance with the sequential approach set out in national guidance. Highly vulnerable development, as defined in TAN15: Development and Flood Risk, should not be located within zone C2;*
- vii. Preventing development that increases flood risk; and*
- viii. Assesses the potential effects of climate change when preparing a Flood Consequence Assessment for the site.*

Policy R2: Development within the Wrexham City Centre Masterplan Area states that development proposals within the defined Wrexham City Centre Masterplan area should:

- Support the regeneration, renewal and enhancement of Wrexham City Centre; and
- Be compatible with the Wrexham City Centre Masterplan vision, objectives and aims.

Future Wales – The National Plan 2040 (2021)

Future Wales acts as the national development framework in Wales, setting out the direction of development up to 2040 by addressing key national priorities through the planning system. It addresses strategic, national development and infrastructure requirements and outlines where investment in infrastructure and development should be targeted.

The following policies are considered to be relevant to the proposals:

- Policy 20: National Growth Area – Wrexham and Deeside

Policy 20: National Growth Area – Wrexham and Deeside outlines that Wrexham and Deeside will be the main focus for growth and investment in the North region.

Other Material Considerations

Planning Policy Wales (2021)

The latest edition of Planning Policy Wales (PPW) was published in February 2021m and sets out the land use planning policy of the Welsh Government. Its primary aim is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development.

The following chapters of PPW are considered to be relevant to the proposals:

- Chapter 2 – People and Places: Achieving well-being through placemaking
- Chapter 3 – Strategic and Spatial Choices
- Chapter 4 – Active and Social places

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 15 – Development flooding and coastal erosion

The TAN outlines the locational hierarchy for proposed development and states that “*resilient development in undefended areas of relatively low risk*” should be allowed within areas designated in flood zone 2.

Furthermore, the TAN sets out that development will be justified in zone 2 if:

- *It will assist, or be part of, a strategy supported by the Development Plan to regenerate an existing settlement or achieve key economic objectives; and*
- *Its location meets the definition of previously developed land; and*
- *The potential consequences of a flooding event for the particular type of development have been considered, and found to be acceptable in accordance with the criteria contained in section 11.*

Planning Justification

This section considers the following key planning matters which are relevant to the determination of this planning application:

- Amenity
- Flood Risk
- Heritage
- Arboriculture

Amenity

As the application site is currently available to use as amenity space for the residents, the proposals would not have a detrimental impact on the surrounding area in terms of privacy and overlooking, and would not result in any harm to residential amenity of surrounding properties, in accordance with criterion B of Policy DM1. Additionally, the proposals are considered to improve both the quality and functionality of the existing amenity space and would therefore be likely to have a positive impact on the standard of amenity provided at the site. The accommodation managers would continue to ensure the area is not used during anti-social hours.

Flood Risk & Drainage

A Flood Risk Technical Note has been prepared by Egniol and submitted as part of this application. It confirms that the Site lies within Flood Zone A and is at a very low risk of fluvial or tidal flooding, and a low risk of surface water and associated flood risk. It adds that the proposals would be categorised as 'amenities and leisure' which is classed as high vulnerability development, however, the Note confirms that this type of development is suitable for flood zone A.

As the proposals will result in a net increase in hard surfacing of greater than 100 sq m, the approval of the SUDS Approval Body (SAB) will be required and a separate application is due to be made shortly. Initial discussions have been held between Egniol and the SAB regarding the scope of information required and testing of infiltration rates is due to be completed in the coming weeks.

The Note acknowledges that the proposed impermeable areas are comparable in size to the existing areas currently at the Site, adding that the pavilion roof is equivalent to the existing asphalt path. Furthermore, discharge from the pavilion roof is intended to utilise several SuDS features, including a water butt and linear raingarden. The proposed pedestrian footpaths will make use of permeable resin-bound gravel and permeable paving to replicate the existing infiltration of the grassed areas. These elements will ensure that the site continues to deal with surface water sustainably and will not lead to an increased risk of flooding at the site.

The principle of development is considered to be acceptable in respect of flood risk and drainage matters.

Heritage

The site is located adjacent to the Wrexham town centre Conservation Area. Policy SP15 states that development proposals will only be supported where they 'conserve, protect, preserve or enhance' historic assets and their setting.

The proposal would directly improve the appearance of the external amenity space and is not considered to have a significant impact on the setting of the Conservation Area given the site's enclosed and sheltered location. As such, the proposals would continue to conserve and protect the setting of the Conservation Area and therefore would not result in any conflicts with Policy SP15.

Arboriculture

An Arboriculture Assessment has been submitted in support of this application with details of all trees on site including a tree constraints plan. The proposed pavilion building is situated in proximity to an existing mature tree (T1), which is a Category B tree. The tree will be retained as part of the proposals in recognition of the quality of the tree and proximity to the Conservation Area boundary.

As the pavilion building is proposed slightly within the root protection area of T1, the building will be constructed using sensitive foundation design and construction techniques. There would be no conflict between the building and the tree's canopy as the crown starts at approximately 4m above ground, whilst the high point of the building is approximately 3m.

The proposed pergola will require some limited pruning works to be carried out to an existing group of trees on the south eastern boundary to allow construction, and will require maintaining thereafter; however, there is no conflict with the trees' root protection area.

Summary

This proposal seeks to alter the external amenity area of the existing student accommodation building at Snowdon Hall to extend the amount and functionality of shared amenity provided on site. The proposals will ensure that a greater variety of facilities for residents with the ultimate aim of making the space more accessible and beneficial throughout the year.

The proposals are considered to be compliant with the relevant policies of the Development Plan and there are no material considerations that would prevent planning permission from being granted in this case. As such, it is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted at the earliest opportunity to enable works to commence as soon as possible.

I trust the above is sufficient to enable this planning application to be validated and determined within the statutory period, however, please do not hesitate to contact either Dominic Page or Scott Reynolds of this office if you require any additional information or should you wish to discuss the proposal further.

Yours faithfully,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Gerald Eve LLP.

Gerald Eve LLP

Cc – David Naylor - Roost Propco 4 Limited