

MEMORANDUM

From:	Chief Officer, Environment & Technical	To:	Chief Officer Planning & Regulatory
		FAO:	Amy Brittain
Our Ref:	ET/DC/MM/P/2023/0094 Rev 3	Your Ref:	P/2023/0094
Date:	21 July 2023		

**Unit G, Yale Business Village, Ellice Way, Wrexham Technology Park, Wrexham, LL13 7YL
Change of Use of Building from Class E (Business) to Class D1 (Education Use)**

Further to your email / consultation dated 21/06/2023 in respect of the above, I comment as follows:

The application (P/2023/0094) submitted is for the change of use of Unit G, Ellice Way, Yale Business Park, Wrexham from Offices (Class E) to Education use (Class D1). A previous highways response was provided on 14th April 2023 requesting additional information from the applicant in the form of a Transport Statement and Travel Plan.

A Transport Statement and a Travel Plan have been prepared by Vectos on behalf of the applicant. The review of these documents has formed the basis of this response.

Site Access and Layout

Existing access to the site is taken from an access road north of Ellice Way which serves a number of two-storey business units. Unit G features a surface car park north of the building, with access via a rising arm barrier.

It is proposed the existing building would be retained which comprises a single unit of 818m² GFA.

Parking

Existing parking would be retained which comprises 32 marked parking bays, of which three are blue badge bays located nearest the building. Cycle parking is provided for 10 cycle spaces in the form of external Sheffield stands at the north west corner of the site.

Provision against LPG16 parking standards would equate to a maximum of 35 vehicle parking spaces for the building size of 818m².

The Transport Statement estimates 24 out of 32 staff would drive to the site and use the existing car park leaving around 8 spaces available. The level of car parking provision is sufficient to accommodate the predicted level of vehicles expected to park at the site during operational hours and is therefore accepted.

Pick up/Drop off

A total of 17 vehicles would transport pupils to and from the school. These will arrive and depart the site between 08:30 to 09:30. The period of pupil drop-off trips to the site is not expected to overlap with staff trips.

No details have been provided on pick-up/drop-off arrangements and how this will be managed on site.

Vehicle tracking in Appendix C of the Transport Statement indicates all vehicles associated with pupil pick-up and drop-off will need to turn around within the car park to exit the site. The predicted level of drop off trips using the car park raises concerns around pedestrian safety at the start and end of the school day within the car park with vehicles turning and manoeuvring, and it will be vital that the applicant ensures that appropriate plans are in place to manage these concerns on a daily basis.

The tracking drawings (ref. 237391_AT_A03 and 237391_AT_A05) indicate a minibus and vehicles parked outside the main entrance with sufficient clearance for a vehicle to pass and enter the car park. No further comment has been made on this arrangement in the Transport Statement. This would create a pinch point at the car park entrance restricting it to one-way movements only and would therefore impact the operation of the car park and highway at the start and end of the school day. Therefore, WCBC request the applicant reconsiders the vehicle access arrangements for pupil pick-up and drop-off, in order to provide better vehicle circulation and remove potential restrictions.

The proposals in their current form raise some safety concerns, in respect of vehicle movements around pupil pick-up and drop-off times. We suggest that these can be overcome through appropriate on-site management of vehicle movements, and that assurance should be sought from the applicant that appropriate arrangements will be put in place.

Vehicle Tracking

The following tracking drawings have been provided in Appendix C of the Transport Statement:

- 237391_AT_A07 Fire Tender Movements
- 237391_AT_A06 Small Refuse Movement
- 237391_AT_A03 Minibus drop off passing a Standard Design Vehicle (SDV)
- 237391_AT_A05 SDV Movements with SDVs Queuing

The drawings demonstrate that:

- Both a fire tender and small refuse vehicle could access and egress the site in a forward gear by turning around in the car park.
- A minibus could be accommodated outside the building entrance with sufficient room for a SDV to pass and enter the car park.
- Three SDVs could be accommodated outside the building entrance with sufficient room for a SDV to pass and enter the car park.

Trip Generation

Existing Trip Generation

Trip demand for the existing office has been calculated using TRICS to generate total person trips. These have been assigned to modes using Census 2011 Travel to Work data.

The existing trip generation has been calculated based on the current office being fully utilised however it is noted in the Transport Statement (paragraph 5.4) *'The majority of staff have left the office building as of April 2023 due to the current occupier moving offices'*.

Table 5.4 within the Transport Statement outlines the total trip generation of the existing office however this is based on full occupancy and is likely an overestimation of the current trip generation.

Proposed Trip Generation

Details of the proposed trip generation to the site by staff and pupils has been provided. This is based on information provided by the school operator across the two existing SEN sites in Wrexham which will relocate to the proposed site. The school is proposed to operate on weekdays only during term times.

It is predicted the maximum number of staff on site at any given time will be 32. Staff are expected to arrive at the site between 07:45 and 08:30 and depart between 15:30 to 18:00. Based on Table 5.5 within the Transport Statement it is estimated staff would generate around 26 vehicle trips in these periods with 24 staff driving and 2 vehicle passenger trips.

The maximum number of pupils on site at any given time would be around 45. The Transport Statement sets out these would arrive by the following methods across 19 vehicles:

- 30 pupils in 15 taxis
- 20 pupils in 4 vehicles comprising other school transport e.g. minibus / people carrier

Traffic Impact

Total proposed gross vehicle trip generation based on Table 5.8 in the Transport Statement is estimated to be:

- 29 trips in the AM peak hour 08:00 to 09:00 (21 arrivals and 9 departures)
- 25 trips in the PM peak hour 15:00 to 16:00 (9 arrivals and 17 departures)

The level of gross predicted vehicle trips in isolation is not expected to result in a significant impact on the operation of highway network as this is under 30 two-way trips. It is noted the net trip impact will be less once vehicle trips associated with the existing office have been discounted. The proposed trip generation and discounting approach, though over estimating the current level of office trips, is accepted.

Active Travel

The Transport Statement includes an active travel assessment, with pedestrian and cycle links to Wrexham Town Centre. This details that the site is accessible by active travel, and public transport, with frequent buses into Wrexham during peak hours.

The quality of cycle parking will be improved through providing a covered shelter to the existing cycle parking.

Travel Plan

A School Travel Plan (May 2023) has been provided by Vectos, on behalf of the applicant. The nature of the development means that sustainable travel targets will focus on staff travel movements, specifically around reducing car use.

The School Travel Plan includes a long-term strategy to reduce car trips by staff to the school, with the appointment of a School Travel Plan Coordinator along with a range of proposed measures. An action plan has been produced to help achieve these. This is to be implemented upon occupation and will be revised annually. This is accepted.

Conclusion

The proposals in their current form raise some safety concerns, in respect of vehicle movements around pupil pick-up and drop-off times. We suggest that these can be overcome through

appropriate on-site management of vehicle movements, and that assurance should be sought from the applicant that appropriate arrangements will be put in place.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. W. W.' or similar, written in a cursive style.

Chief Officer, Environment & Technical