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Architecture + Building Surveying + Town Planning

Wrexham University Health and Education Innovation Quarter (HEIQ)

Supporting Planning and Design Statement

8th September 2023

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Cassidy + Ashton have been instructed by Wrexham University to prepare and submit this full planning application for the extension to an existing academic building, to accommodate specialist facilities in association with the existing Health education course provision.

1.2 The application site is K Block, Wrexham University, Plas Coch Campus, Crispin Lane, LL11 2HY.

1.3 The application is for the following:

Extension to existing academic building (use class D1) and all associated works, including demolition.

1.4 This supporting planning statement sets out the context of the site and considers the planning merits of the proposal, reaching the conclusion that the proposed development is compliant with local and national planning policy.

1.5 This statement is to be read in conjunction with a series of plans and other documentation, comprising the planning application pack as a whole:

- Location Plan
- Existing and Proposed Site Plan
- Existing and Proposed Floor Plans
- Existing and Proposed Elevations
- Supporting Planning & Design Statement
- Transport Statement
- Car Park Management Plan
- Drainage Strategy
- Phase 2 Ground Investigation
- Ecology Report / Bat Appraisal

2.0 SITE AND CONTEXT

- 2.1 The application site forms part of the wider Wrexham University Main Academic Campus, which totals c. 14 ha. The area subject to this application extends to 0.154 ha.
- 2.2 The campus site as a whole is comprised of the universities academic and residential buildings, together with its ancillary amenities, including sports facilities, car parking and open space.
- 2.3 The area subject to this application is situated to the North-east of the campus, as indicated by Figure 1 below. The application site for the extension to K Block is to the East of the existing building, west of Crispin Lane and North of The Racecourse Ground.

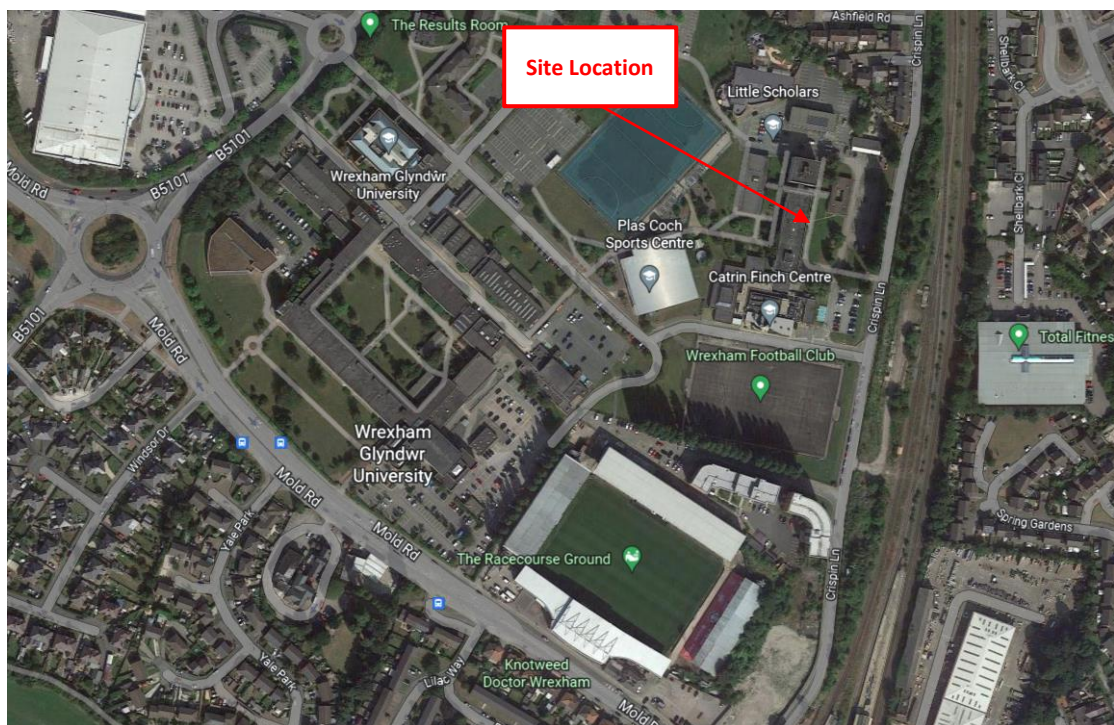


Fig. 1 Site Location [Source: Google Maps]

- 2.4 Situated 1 mile from the centre of Wrexham, the campus site is in close proximity to a suite of local amenities and public transport facilities.
- 2.5 Wrexham General Railway Station is located South-east of the site, less than 100m from the Crispin Lane / Mold Road junction, providing services to Bidston, Chester, Holyhead, Cardiff, Birmingham, and Llanelli.
- 2.6 Walking and cycling are also key methods in accessing the site, with the town centre being easily accessible via these methods.

- 2.7 K Block is currently used for teaching and staff accommodation, in association with the health education course provision.

WREXHAM UNIVERSITY – FUTURE STRATEGY

- 2.8 Wrexham University is a public research university with charitable status, which was established in 2008 from the former North East Wales Institute of Higher Education.
- 2.9 ‘Campus 2025’ is the universities future strategy, which seeks to sustain its position in the higher education sector, delivering a 21st century appropriate learning environment.
- 2.10 Campus 2025 therefore presents the primary objective to provide a modern, flexible campus, with spaces which are able to adapt as teaching and learning styles evolve.
- 2.11 The University are committed to investing in the campus to develop an environment where students want to stay, building a student centred, vibrant and sustainable campus. Aligned with this are examples such as the Northern Quarter permission, the sale of the land and subsequent reinvestment in the university campus and facilities being integral to the university’s strategy.

HEALTH AND EDUCATION INNOVATION QUARTER (HEIQ)

- 2.12 The proposed extension will enhance the accommodation within K Block in line with the healthcare courses at the University in association with Health Education Innovation Wales, the body responsible for the education of health professionals in Wales.
- 2.13 The HEIQ will transform healthcare education provision in the region by ensuring that Wrexham University is at the forefront of technology-led learning experiences and training the region’s future workforce to be experts in their chosen profession.
- 2.14 The HEIQ will provide cutting-edge facilities which will enable students to go even further with their learning experiences, forming an enhanced clinical learning and simulation environment.
- 2.15 The HEIQ facilities will provide a physical home for the delivery of a range of both pre-registration and post-registration Nursing and Allied Health Professions courses – including

Physiotherapy, Paramedic Science, Speech and Language Therapy, Nutrition and Dietetics and Operating Department Practice.

- 2.16 The launch of the proposed specialist HEIQ facilities means that the University are providing the best possible experience and training ground for our region's next generation of health professionals, with facilities and technology which is cutting-edge and in some instances, industry-leading.

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The proposed development subject to this application is for an extension to the existing academic building. The extension itself will comprise of two storeys, against the backdrop of the existing building which is three storeys in the most part, with an element extending to five storeys.
- 3.2 The extension is proposed to accommodate specialist facilities in association with the existing health education course provision.
- 3.3 The 'Technique 2' building is to be demolished and the new build sited partly in its place, creating a gateway entrance building to the Health and Education Innovation Quarter, providing specialist facilities for the health education students.

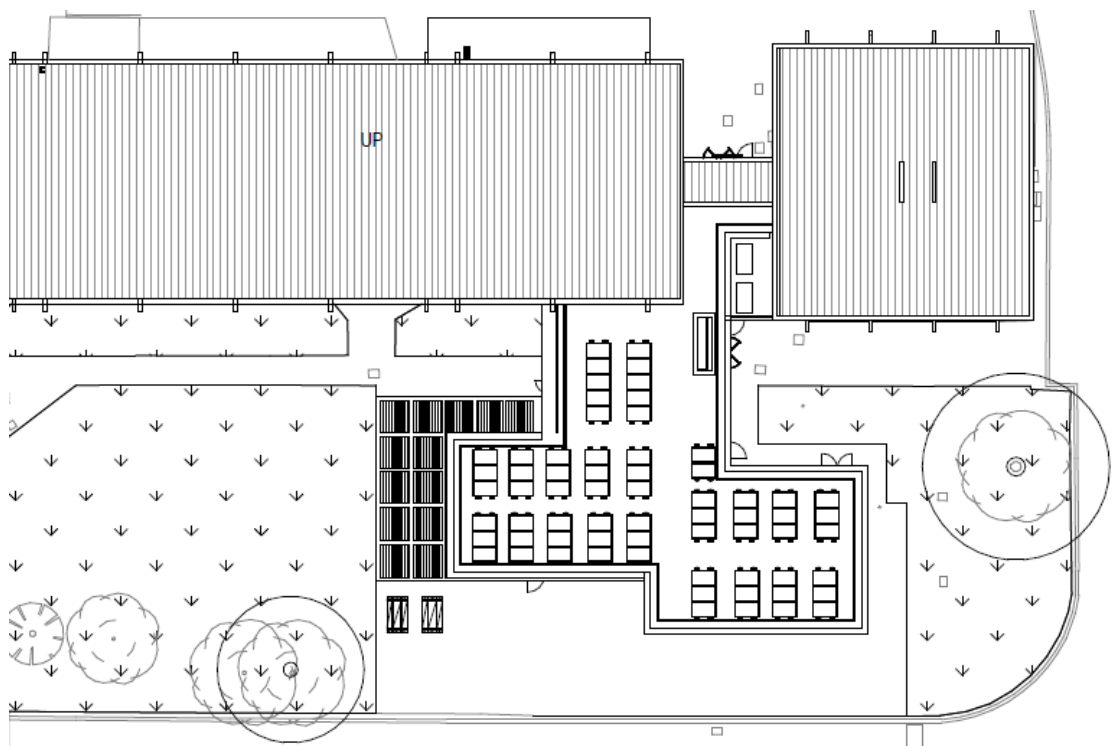


Fig. 2 Proposed Site Plan

- 3.4 As shown in Figure 2 above the extension is set within an existing landscaped area. The wider landscape either side of the extension is not part of this planning application and is to remain as existing. The area immediately surrounding the proposed new build element where the Technique 2 is currently sited is to be made good through replacement hardstanding.

- 3.5 The extension totals 785m² of internal floorspace across the two floors and includes social space, XR lab, techning & learning lab, prelim room and smaller syndicate spaces. All of the facilities will enable learning simlation across the health education courses.

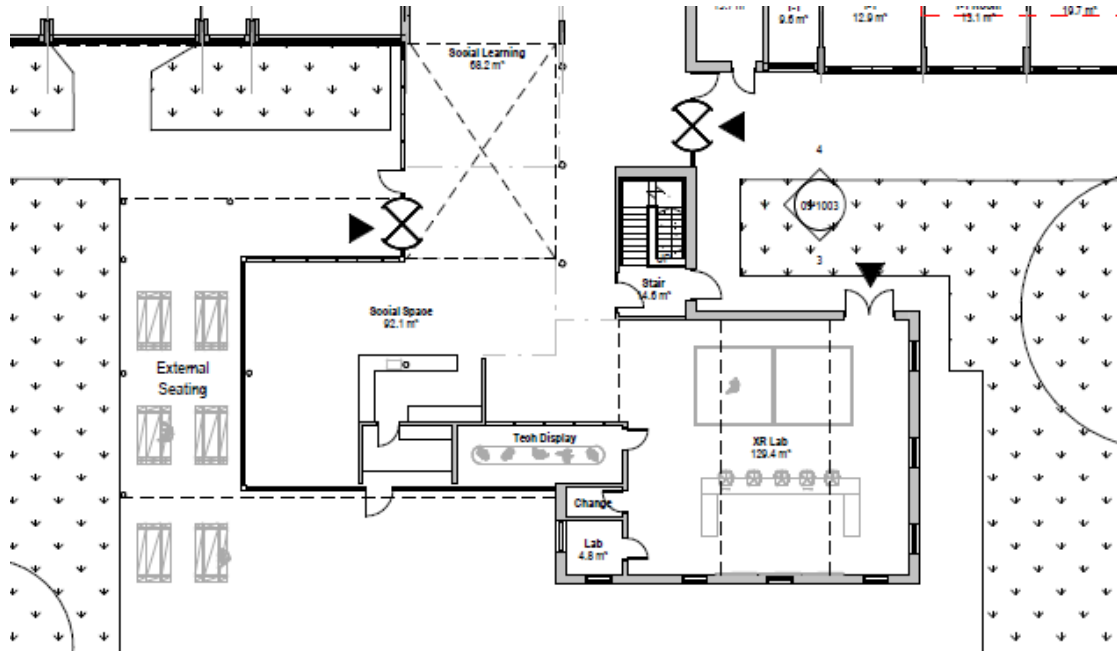


Fig. 3 Proposed Ground Floor Plan

- 3.6 At the ground floor the extension will accommodate a social space, XR Lab, Tech Display along with external seating forming an outdoor learning / social space.

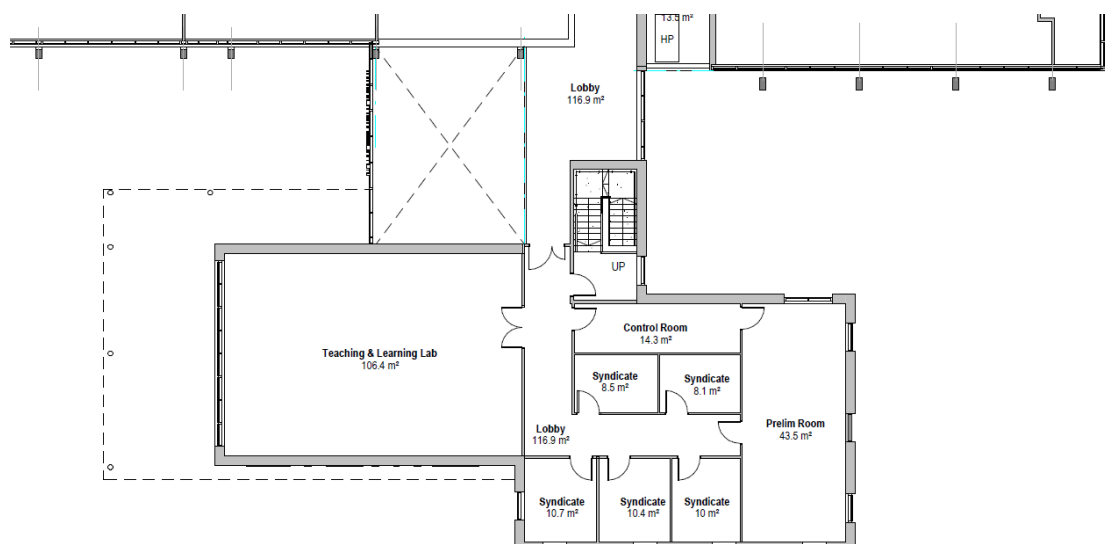


Fig. 4 Proposed First Floor Plan

- 3.7 At the first floor the extension will accommodate a teaching & learning lab control room, prelin room and syndicate spaces.

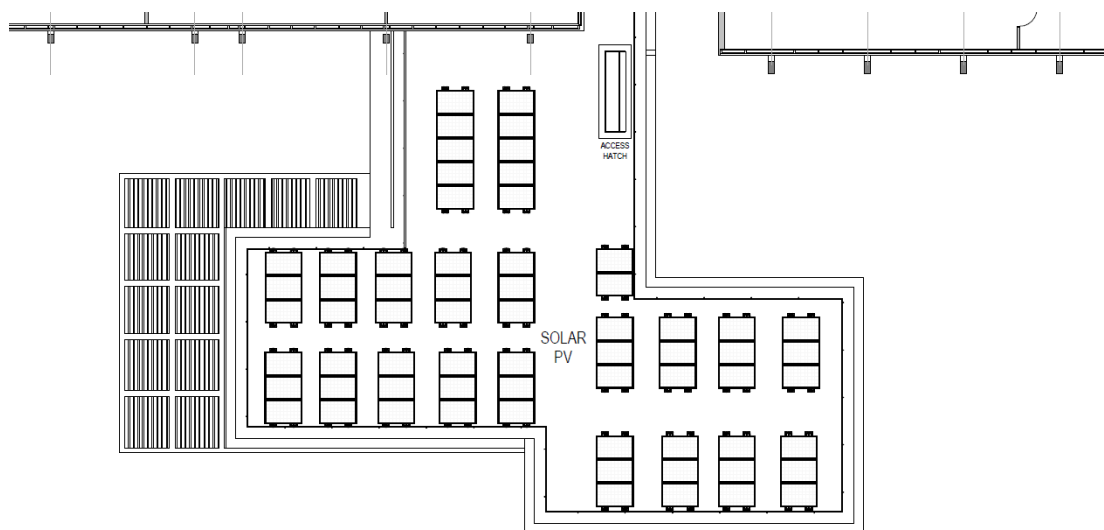


Fig. 5 Proposed Roof Plan

- 3.8 Solar PV is proposed across the roof of the extension to contribute towards the Universities decarbonisation agenda.

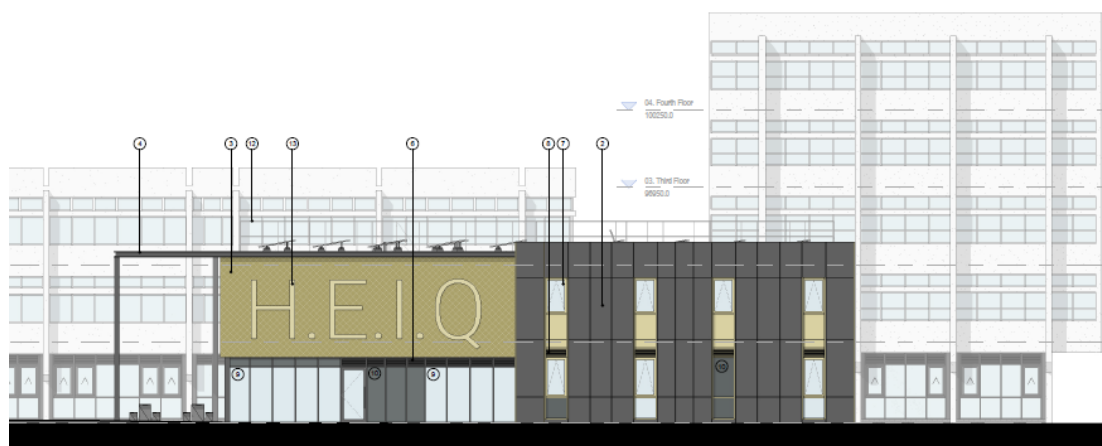


Fig. 6 Proposed East Elevation

- 3.9 Elevationally the extension will complement the existing building whilst creating a gateway entrance to the Health Education Innovation Quarter.
- 3.10 The overall reading of the building in terms of its scale and massing complements the larger scale existing building to which it is sited. The materials use have been selected so as to complement the lighter colour existing through the extension with a use of darker, bolder colours, creating emphasis and a sense of arrival through the gateway entrance.

4.0 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The proposed scheme has undergone considerable design development with a number of options being assessed and strengths / weaknesses identified to facilitate further design progression.
- 4.2 The relationship with the existing building and surrounding buildings across the campus has been a central design factor, resulting in a scheme which complements the existing block to which it is sited from, whilst creating a well defined gateway entrance to the HEIQ.
- 4.3 The proposal creates a strong arrival point to the HEIQ with clear way finding and visual approaches.



Fig. 7 Indicative Image

- 4.4 As shown in figure 7 above there is a defined outdoor learning and social space which looks out on to the existing soft landscape area with tree planting.



Fig. 8 Indicative Image

- 4.5 As shown in figure 8 above the side canopy extends over the outdoor social / learning space. The design achieves a sympathetic modern addition to the existing building, tying in the existing dark details at the ground floor with the proposed extension.



Fig. 9 Indicative Image

- 4.6 After in-depth site analysis for scale and massing, a material study for the proposed building was undertaken.
- 4.7 Reviewing the surrounding materials, mainly white render and buff brick, it was apparent to make the new build element stand out it had to be a material that contrasts but compliments the existing material palette.
- 4.8 Various options have been explored but the overall outlook should be a darker outer skin with an inner, lighter and glossy external finish with contemporary glazing.

- 4.9 In-line with the new way finding and branding scheme a dark grey and anodized gold have been proposed.



Fig. 10 Indicative Image

- 4.10 Internally the building extends the well-defined entrance with the glazing blending the internal / external space.

5.0 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

- 5.1 Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (PPW) was published in February 2021. PPW sets out the Welsh Assembly Government's planning policies for Wales and how these should be applied. This provides local government with the guidance to prepare their own local development frameworks and guidance in decision making.
- 5.2 Future Wales: The National Plan to 2040 applies the key principles of PPW and establishes how Wales should develop and grow.
- 5.3 Alongside the PPW and Future Wales sits 24 Technical Advice Notes (TAN), which form planning guidance at a national level on various topics.
- 5.4 This section will set out a summary of national planning policy guidance taken from PPW, Future Wales and the TAN documents.

PLANNING POLICY WALES

- 5.5 The primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015.
- 5.6 A plan-led approach is the most effective way to secure sustainable development through the planning system and it is essential that plans are adopted and kept under review. Legislation secures a presumption in favour of sustainable development in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, to ensure that social, economic, cultural and environmental issues are balanced and integrated.
- 5.7 The planning system should be efficient, effective and simple in operation. It is not the function of the planning system to interfere with or inhibit competition between users of and investors in land. It should not discriminate against or favour any particular group or members of society.
- 5.8 Figure 7 of PPW sets out how proposals should be prepared within the context of key planning principles of the planning system, this is included below (Figure 11).



Fig. 11 PPW Extract



Fig. 12 PPW Extract

5.9 Paragraph 3.5 states that

“Good design is inclusive design. Development proposals should place people at the heart of the design process, acknowledge diversity and difference, offer choice ... provide for flexibility in use and provide buildings and environments that are convenient and enjoyable to use for everyone.”

Commentary

The proposed scheme has fundamentally placed people at the heart of the design process, with a central focus on the learning experience for students. Flexibility in use is facilitated through the flexible learning / social spaces, across both the internal and external areas. The extension will facilitate specialist facilities and a diversity of learning environments, to simulate real world scenarios forming a learning environment which is effective and enjoyable. On this basis the proposal is consistent with Paragraph 3.5 of PPW.

- 5.10 **Paragraph 3.6.1** proceeds to highlight that adequate and efficient infrastructure – including services such as *education and health facilities* - is crucial for economic, social and environmental sustainability.

Commentary

The proposed development supports the above principle of PPW as it seeks to deliver upon a need for specialist educational facilities in line with the health education provision at Wrexham University. The proposals will facilitate enhanced facilities at the University, improving learning experience. This therefore represents sustainable development, making a positive contribution to the reputation of the University and local economic prosperity, in a scheme which is modest without negative environmental impact.

- 5.11 **Chapter 5 ‘Productive and Enterprising Places’** encompasses the economic components of place making.

A Prosperous Wales can be achieved through increased economic activity across all sectors and at all scales. This is realised through the availability of employment land, lifelong learning and training opportunities, reliable communication networks and investment in renewable and low carbon energy sources.

Within the theme, a key issue being “supporting and enabling training, education, infrastructure, construction and manufacturing capacity to support progress towards a circular economy”

Commentary

The proposed development will enhance the learning environment for students of the existing health education courses at Wrexham University, supporting and enabling education to contribute towards the circular economy.

- 5.12 **Paragraph 5.7.12** states that the Welsh Government expects all new development to mitigate the causes of climate change in accordance with the energy hierarchy for planning.

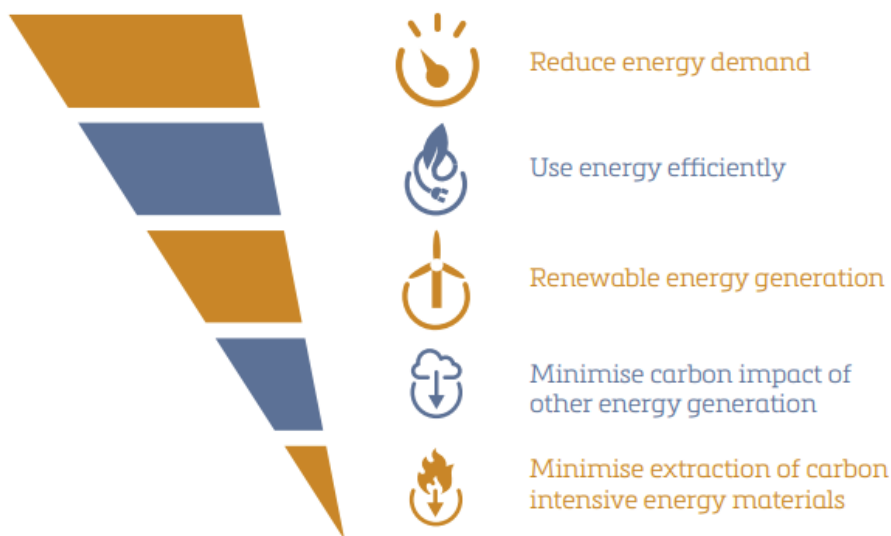


Fig. 13 PPW Extract, Energy Hierarchy for Planning

Commentary

The proposed development is consistent with the energy hierarchy for planning, through a decarbonised approach to development which includes Solar PV serving the building and efficient modern build.

- 5.13 **Paragraph 5.8.1** asserts that the planning system should support new development that has very high energy performance, supports decarbonisation, tackles the causes of the climate emergency, and adapts to the current and future effects of climate change through the incorporation of effective mitigation and adaptation measures.

Commentary

The proposed building is consistent with paragraph 5.8.1 above and will support the wider decarbonisation agenda in responding to climate change.

FUTURE WALES: THE NATIONAL PLAN TO 2040

- 5.14 Future Wales is a 20 year framework for planning the change and development of Wales to 2040, with a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of our communities.
- 5.15 Future Wales identifies that our economy is becoming increasingly service-based, with the fastest growing sectors 2008-2018 inclusive of education.
- 5.16 Wales 2020 to 2040: Challenges & Opportunities sets out the following with regard to prosperity:

Our universities can play an important role both nationally and regionally, leading innovation and research and providing opportunities for students of all ages to grow and develop. They play a key role in their local communities, attracting students from all around the world to different parts of Wales and supporting local economies and businesses. Planning authorities should proactively engage with universities to maximise the role they can play in supporting national and regional development.

- 5.17 Future Wales sets out 11 ambitions / outcomes, supported by 36 specific policies.
- 5.18 **Policy 1 – Where Wales will grow** identifies ‘Wrexham and Deeside’ as a National Growth Area. It is acknowledged that these areas are economically distinctive, supporting a range of businesses, enterprises and universities. The Strategy promotes their continued growth.
- 5.19 **Policy 20 – National Growth Area - Wrexham and Deeside** is identified as the main focus for strategic economic growth in the North region.
- 5.20 **Policy 21 – Regional Growth Area** proceeds to state that the Universities in Bangor and Wrexham are an important presence in the region, providing further education, undertaking research and supporting innovation, providing employment, attracting students, and supporting the local businesses and communities around them. Strategic and Local Development Plans should consider their role in the region and how they can play a bigger role in supporting the regional economy, innovation and their communities.

5.21 *Commentary*

On the basis of the above there is clear recognition within Future Wales for the role of universities in contributing towards national and regional development. The proposed development seeks to enhance the learning environment for future health professionals and will contribute to student attraction and experience, further contributing to economic growth across the region and Wales as a whole.

TECHNICAL ADVICE NOTES

- 5.22 Technical advice notes (TANs) provide detailed planning advice. Local planning authorities take them into account when they are preparing development plans. Of those available, the most pertinent to the proposal are as follows:

Technical Advice Note 12 – Design (2016)

Technical Advice Note 23 – Economic Development (2014)

TECHNICAL ADVICE NOTE 12

- 5.23 Technical advice note 12 sets out detailed guidance in relation to design. This is pertinent to this proposal and is therefore considered in further detail below.
- 5.24 TAN 12 identifies at 22.5 *“Good design is not inevitable. It requires a collaborative, creative, inclusive, process of problem solving and innovation – embracing sustainability, architecture, place making, public realm, landscape, and infrastructure.”*
- 5.25 *At 3.2 “Early consideration of design, well in advance of any planning application is essential to achieving good design. At the outset, appreciation of the site’s context, and the development of a vision and agreed design objectives must be established and remain central to the evolutionary process. Setting details too early in the process should be avoided and a clear understanding of the long-term implications of design decisions is also essential from the outset.”*
- 5.26 **Commentary**
- The proposed development has undergone a considerable design development exercise as set out in Chapter 4. With this in mind, a collaborative approach has been taken in association with all appropriate stakeholders – comprised of a comprehensive design team, in association with the end user.*

TECHNICAL ADVICE NOTE 23

- 5.27 Technical advice note 23 sets out detailed guidance in relation to economic development. This is pertinent to this proposal and is therefore considered in further detail below.
- 5.28 At 1.2.1 “It is essential that the planning system recognises, and gives due weight to, the economic benefits associated with new development.”
- 5.29 At 2.1.1 “It should not be assumed that economic objectives are necessarily in conflict with social and environmental objectives. Often these different dimensions point in the same direction. Planning should positively and imaginatively seek such ‘win-win’ outcomes, where development contributes to all dimensions of sustainability.”
- 5.30 **Commentary**

The proposed development will enhance the learning environment for students of the existing health education courses at Wrexham University, supporting and enabling education to contribute towards the circular economy.

6.0 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

- 6.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations of which PPW, together with emerging development plans, indicate otherwise.
- 6.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that local planning authorities move away from the old-style plans known as 'Unitary Development Plans' (UDPs) and replace them with new 'Local Development Plans' (LDPs). Policy on the LDPs is published in Local Development Plans Wales (LDPW) and practical guidance in the Local Development Plan Manual.
- 6.3 The current Development Plan relevant to this application site is comprised of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011 (adopted February 2005).
- 6.4 The emerging Wrexham Deposit Local Development Plan 2013-2028 was submitted for Inspector Examination in April 2019. Although not adopted, this is also a material consideration.

WREXHAM UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- 6.5 **Policy GDP1** sets out general development principles, stating all new development should:
 - a) Ensure that built development in its scale, design and layout, and in its use of materials and landscaping, **accords with the character of the site and makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality.**
 - b) Take account of **personal and community safety and security** in the design and layout of development and public / private spaces.
 - c) Make the best use of design techniques, siting and orientation in order to conserve energy and water resources.
 - d) Ensure **safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicular access** to and from development sites, both on site and in the nearby locality.

- e) Ensure that built development is located where it has convenient **access to public transport facilities, and is well related to pedestrian and cycle routes** wherever possible.
- f) Ensure the safety and amenity of the public and safeguard the environment from the adverse effects of pollution of water, land or air, hazards from industry and quarrying, and associated noise, odour or vibration arising from development.
- g) Secure public services (e.g. gas, water, electricity) to development at minimum public cost.
- h) Safeguard sites and areas of nature conservation and wildlife interest, and to provide new habitats where there is an unavoidable loss of existing habitats and areas of wildlife interest.
- i) Ensure that development does not result in, or is subject to, flooding, soil erosion, landslides or contamination, either on or off the site.
- j) Have regard to the need to safeguard those areas that possess a strong Welsh cultural and/or linguistic identity from development that could harm this identity.
- k) Secure the development of sustainable communities, through the promotion of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.

Commentary

The proposed development is consistent with policy GDP1 above, notably those of particular relevance highlighted in bold. The scheme presents a suitable design which is user friendly and complements existing development on campus and in the wider area.

- 6.6 **Policy GDP2** supports improvements to the capacity of community infrastructure and facilities, including through the continued development of higher education. The intention of the policy is to facilitate a modern robust economy across all sectors.

Commentary

The proposed development would facilitate an enhancement to the Universities learning environments, curriculum and thus its student experience. In turn facilitating continued student numbers and therefore wider economic contribution within the Wrexham area and beyond. On this basis, the proposed development is in accordance with Policy GDP2.

- 6.7 **Policy T8** highlights that development will be required to provide vehicle parking spaces either on site or nearby.

Curtins Transport Statement and Car Park Management Plan details the car parking demand and provision across the University campus. It is demonstrated that there is a surplus of car parking provision and is therefore acceptable in line with Policy T8.

WREXHAM LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (EMERGING POLICY)

6.8 The emerging Local Development Plan acknowledges the importance of preserving Wrexham as a location that provides an environment in which business' can prosper, flourish and expand.

6.9 The LDP vision is as follows:

By 2028, Wrexham will be an attractive, distinctive and accessible place where people will want to live, visit and invest. Our economy will be strong, resilient and responsive to our gateway location within Wales. Wrexham County Borough will be a sustainable place where everyone feels safe and included and a place that enhances the quality and distinctiveness of our natural, built heritage and unique culture.

Commentary

This proposed development will facilitate the growth of Wrexham University and is therefore in accordance with the general principles of the LDP on the basis of contribution towards the prosperity of Wrexham.

6.10 Although the emerging LDP is silent with regard to the continued development of educational facilities, Wrexham University is identified as a key destination in the town within **Policy T4**.

Commentary

The proposals will facilitate the ongoing success of the University as a destination within Wrexham and therefore contribute to the overall growth and development of Wrexham.

6.11 **Policy SP13: Design Principles & Masterplanning Framework** states that all development will be required to be of a **high quality, sustainable design which makes a positive contribution to the creation of locally distinctive places** by ensuring compliance with the masterplanning framework and KSS schematics. Proposals must demonstrate how they have taken account of

the local characteristics of surrounding areas and how innovative design solutions will enhance the quality of the built and natural environment.

Commentary

The proposals incorporate high quality, sustainable design which complements the surrounding built and natural environment. The proposed extension will enhance the quality of the built and natural environment replacing a building of poor aesthetic and creating a strong point of entrance.

- 6.12 **Policy DM1: Development Management Considerations** sets out that all development 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 its 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 by virtue of noise, disturbance and overlooking; and provides 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, light or air arising from development;**
 - d. Take account of personal and community safety and security in its design and layout;
 - e. **Be safely and conveniently accessible for all potential users/occupiers of the development on foot, bicycle, by public transport and by car;**
 - f. **Not give rise to parking or highway safety problems on site or in the locality;**
 - g. Maximise sustainable travel choices first and then provides for car related needs;
 - h. Contribute to low carbon communities through energy efficiency, be designed to minimise the use of non-renewable energy, water and the production of waste both during construction and when in use;
 - i. Not increase the risk of flooding but makes adequate provision for sustainably dealing with foul and surface water drainage and not result in an unacceptable impact upon the water environment;

- j. Consider the needs of a diverse population including those with protected characteristics such as age or disability;
- k. On sites which have previously been developed, new development proposals should make use of existing suitable building materials wherever possible for appropriate uses in order to re-use recyclable materials and reduce the amount of imported materials; and
- l. Ensure that any risks arising from past coal mining, as indicated on the proposals map, can be adequately managed.

Commentary

The proposed development seeks to improve the standard of facilities at the Health and Innovation Education Quarter – providing an improved standard of amenity to the health education courses.

The development will not cause adverse effects to pollution of water, land, light or air as evidenced within the supporting technical reports in regard to ground investigation and drainage.

The site is safely and conveniently accessible by a range of transport modes as evidenced within the Transport Statement and Car Park Management Plan. On the above basis the proposed development is consistent with Policy DM1.

6.13 Policy NE6: Waste Water Treatment and River Water Quality

Development will only be supported where there is no adverse impact on the integrity of the River Dee and Bala Lake SAC and its conservation objectives, in particular through the treatment of wastewater.

Developments should in the first instance seek to connect to the existing mains wastewater infrastructure network. Where this would result in nutrient levels exceeding conservation objectives targets within the SAC, then proposals will need to fully mitigate the adverse effects caused by the proposed development. This may involve;

- **Incorporating measures to achieve water efficiency and/or a reduction in surface water discharge to the main sewer network,** minimising the capacity required to accommodate the proposal;

- Phasing or delaying development until further capacity is available;
- Use of developer contributions/community infrastructure levy funds to contribute to improvements to waste water treatment works or appropriate measures to release capacity for new development;

Commentary

The proposed development will accommodate additional specialist facilities in line with existing student numbers. With this in mind, there will not be an increase in utilisation and therefore no increase to wastewater resulting from the site. The integrity of the River Dee and Bala Lake SAC and its conservation objectives will therefore not be compromised in line with Policy NE6 above.

6.14 Policy T1: Managing Transport Impacts

Proposals for new development will be supported where they:

- Facilitate increased journeys by more sustainable modes of travel first by walking and cycling, then by public transport and finally by private motor vehicle;
- Mitigate any significant adverse effects upon the transport network that arise from the proposed development including improvements to transport infrastructure where required;
- Do not compromise the safe, effective and efficient use of the highway network and do not have an adverse impact on highway safety or create unacceptable levels of traffic generation;**
- Provide appropriate levels of parking** and ensure access arrangements for the site to allow for safe manoeuvring;
- Make provision for people with restricted mobility including those with characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

Commentary

The proposed development will not compromise the safe, effective and efficient use of the highway network, as the development can be suitably accommodated within. The Car Park Management Plan produced by Curtins details the parking provision across the campus site

and notably the current surplus, with the highest figure recorded during a 2023 traffic survey being 74% utilisation.

7.0 OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

FLOOD RISK / DRAINAGE

- 7.1 The site is not located within an area at risk of flooding and the proposed development will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.
- 7.2 A Drainage Strategy has been prepared by Curtins which details the following drainage philosophy:
- 7.3 **Surface Water** - Surface water from roofs and limited reworked associated external hard paving will be directed towards a newly formed soakaway/infiltration facility where it will be suitably disposed. Invasive soakaway testing has proved viable percolation rates. Pipework will be used to convey flows to a suitable location south west of the proposed building and east of the existing K Block, beneath an area of soft landscaping. The soakaway will utilise geo-cellular crates and be sufficiently sized for a 1:100+40% climate change critical rainfall event ensuring appropriate rainfall events are accommodated beneath the ground onsite.
- 7.4 **Foul Water** - With no increase in student numbers existing foul connections can and should be reused. New piped connections from proposed discharge points will be laid out falling to existing apparatus and the wider University network.

DEE CATCHMENT / PHOSPHOROUS DISCHARGE

- 7.5 It is acknowledged that the site is located within the River Dee and Bala Lake Special Area of Conservation.
- 7.6 **Policy NE6: Waste Water Treatment and River Water Quality** of the emerging LDP sets out the position to managing the River Dee and Bala Lake SAC and its conservation objectives. The policy concludes that where development would result in nutrient levels exceeding conservation objectives targets within the SAC, then proposals will need to fully mitigate the adverse effects caused by the proposed development. This can involve measures to achieve water efficiency and/or a reduction in surface water discharge to the main sewer network, minimising the capacity required to accommodate the proposal.

- 7.7 The proposed development is of a very form, nature and purpose that will not increase foul water flows and hence is not likely to have an adverse impact on the river SAC in relation to phosphorus inputs. The proposed development is an extension to an existing building to provide specialist facilities in accordance with an existing course provision and notably student numbers.
- 7.8 A previous S73 application at the Plas Coch University Campus (P/2021/0967, pursuant to P/2018/0666) was subject to objection by Natural Resources Wales (NRW). This being for the redevelopment of the Plas Coch campus. A response statement to Natural Resources Wales (NRW) was submitted which addressed the concerns regarding foul drainage, associated with the potential to increase the amount of phosphate within the River Dee and Bala Lake SAC. This statement was centred on two points of justification: **volume of waste water generated and staff / student numbers on site.**
- 7.9 The position (subject to the implementation of the 0666 planning permission) at the Plas Coch campus represents more than a 50% reduction in the volume of waste water generated. This is aligned with the installation of more efficient systems across the campus as part of the overall refurbishment and upgrading in line with the 0666 planning permission (toilets, wash basins, showers etc.).
- 7.10 The onsite staff / student numbers being as follows:

		-----PROJECTED-----		
	18/19	22/23	23/24	24/25
Students Total	3308	3400	3400	3400
Staff Total	300	300	300	300
On site total	2886*	2220**	2220**	2220**

Fig. 14 on site staff / student numbers

The above figures are a combination of full time and part time students & staff.

The uplift in 20/21 and 21/22 is most likely a reflection of repeat year students through the Covid period.

**A factor of 80% is applied to the 2018/19 figure, representing a realistic figure for actual people attending on site. A number of courses are remote learning and some staff are not based on campus.*

Academic years 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 are not referenced in the table, in light of the global pandemic and associated lockdowns. Such an exceptional circumstance does not reflect a typical position in time, hence any associated figures would not be representative.

***A factor of 60% is applied to the projected figures 2022/23, 23/24 & 24/25, as the university applies the principles of the newly adopted Active Learning Framework (ALF). This combines making the best use of the on-campus learning spaces with student-focused online learning content that can be accessed anytime, anywhere.*

ALF embodies ways of teaching and learning that create and support a sense of belonging for students. It was created by staff across the university and there are a series of ALF champions who guide and encourage their colleagues.

It's important to note, too, that while ALF has proved invaluable during the pandemic, this was part of a wider change at Glyndwr which they were already working towards. It's flexible, accessible and inclusive - and like everything Glyndwr does, it puts the student experience right at its heart

- 7.11 The proposed extension is not for the purpose of accommodating any additional staff / student numbers as set out above. Further to this, the extension will not accommodate any additional toilets.

The proposed development will accommodate additional specialist facilities in line with existing student numbers. With this in mind, there will not be an increase in utilisation and therefore no increase to wastewater resulting from the site. The integrity of the River Dee and Bala Lake SAC and its conservation objectives will therefore not be compromised.

ECOLOGY

- 7.12 The demolition of the former Techniquet 2 building has already obtained approval, being included within the approved masterplan for the University Campus, originally under application ref. P/2018/0666.
- 7.13 The negligible suitability for bat roosting confirmed within the submitted Bat Appraisal undertaken by RPS was further reinforced by Sambrook Associates updated appraisal, conducted for a discharge of condition application (ref. P/2023/0152).
- 7.14 The Techniquet 2 building is identified as Building no. 5 within Sambrook Associates report, confirmed to have negligible suitability for bat roosting – flat roof, no potential roosting features. There are therefore no concerns in regard to potential impact on bats as a result of the proposed development.
- 7.15 As set out within the ecology reports, in the event that the presence of any protected species is identified during the course of the works, particularly bats and birds (due to the nature of this development), works will stop immediately and the retained ecologist contacted for advice.

HIGHWAYS / PARKING

- 7.16 The application site formed part of an approved landscape and parking area under the P/2018/0666 permission. The 2018 consented masterplan included the demolition of Techniquet 2, to be replaced with 12 no. car parking spaces and 48 cycle parking spaces.
- 7.17 The Transport Statement and Car Park Management Plan produced by Curtins details the parking provision across the campus site and notably the current oversupply, with a 2023 traffic survey demonstrating a maximum parking accumulation of 74% (699 out of 943 spaces occupied).
- 7.18 The updated Car Park Management Plan sets out the existing surplus of car parking in regard to utilisation proposed as follows:

It has demonstrated that there is an existing surplus of car parking at the campus for the current demand (with a maximum observed capacity of 699 out of 943 spaces

occupied (74% occupied) – although it is noted that this data was obtained on Tuesday 28th February 2023 when Wrexham Football Club hosted a football match, which is not considered representative of a typical day).

For robustness, Curtins has assumed the second highest occupancy throughout the surveyed week on a different day to Tuesday 28th February 2023, which amounted to 539 out of 943 spaces occupied (57% occupied). When considering an applied growth factor on university traffic of 10% and 50% as a sensitivity test (described further in Section 5 below), the maximum occupancy throughout the week would be 63% and 86% respectively (593 spaces and 809 spaces occupied respectively).

The above demonstrates that with the removal of 12 consented spaces, the site can accommodate demand with an element of growth included. This ensures flexibility in the emerging masterplan.

- 7.19 On the basis of the above it is clear that the loss of 12no consented car parking spaces as a result of this development can comfortably be accommodated with a considerable surplus at present.
- 7.20 In regard to cycle parking spaces, 48no. cycle parking spaces will be provided in close proximity to the HEIQ site so that there is no change to the consented provision in the 2018 masterplan. 24 no. cycle stands (equating to 48 cycle parking spaces) are proposed to an area adjacent to the car parking opposite the HEIQ Phase 2B building.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The proposed development is comprised of an extension to the existing academic building K Block, replacing Techniquet 2 (to be demolished).
- 8.2 As set out above, the proposals will facilitate the provision of enhanced facilities at K Block in association with the HEIQ, with the aim to deliver industry leading health education simulation learning experiences. The enhancement of these facilities are fundamental to the vision for and operation of the HEIQ, providing the best possible experience and training ground for our region's next generation of health professionals.
- 8.3 The above sets out how the proposed development is consistent with planning policy, facilitating specialist facilities to accommodate the existing course provision.
- 8.4 Whilst the siting of the proposed scheme results in the loss of parking spaces against the 2018 consented masterplan, there is a considerable surplus across the campus at present and therefore this can be comfortably accommodated.
- 8.5 It is acknowledged that the site is within the River Dee and Bala Lake Special Area of Conservation, with NRW phosphorous reduction targets. The development is for the purpose of enhancing facilities available to the health innovation quarter and is not for the purpose of increasing student numbers. With this in mind for the avoidance of doubt there will not be an increase in phosphorous discharge to the SAC.

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