

WEST/CENTRAL AREA COMMITTEE MEETING – 28th October 2010
Pre-Committee Amendment Sheet

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

CIRCULATION: First

ITEM: **APPLICATION REF:** 10/0822/FUL

Location: Whittle Laboratory, Department Of Engineering, 1 J J Thomson Avenue

Target Date: 18.10.2010

To Note: The University has written a response to the comments of the Design and Conservation Panel which are attached as Appendix 1 to this amendment sheet.

Amendments To Text:

Pre-Committee Amendments to Recommendation:

DECISION:

APPENDIX 1

Whittle Laboratory : Proposed Extensions (Application Reference 10/0822/FUL)

Response to the comments of Design and Conservation Panel

Comments of the Design and Conservation Panel	Response
<p>General</p> <p>i) The Panel regretted that there was no indication of the relationship between the proposal and the entrance building envisaged for the West Cambridge site.</p> <p>ii) Concern that the two buildings might compete for attention and hoped that the Gateway building would be modest in design</p>	<p>The presentation to the Panel made clear, in plan form, the relationship between the proposed extension of the Whittle Laboratory and the 'gateway' building.</p> <p>This relationship is in our view wholly acceptable from a planning point of view and this proposed extension of the high speed laboratory will not prejudice the development of nearby site for a 'gateway' building. The University has, however, no current plans to develop this 'gateway' site at the present time and therefore no building designs exist.</p> <p>There are no grounds, in our view for refusing planning permission for the current proposals on the basis that they would prejudice the future development of the nearby 'gateway' site.</p> <p>The concern of the Panel regarding the future relationship between these buildings is noted - as is their hope that the Gateway building will be modest in design.</p> <p>Any future proposals to develop the 'gateway sites' will be referred to the Panel for consideration.</p>

Comments of the Design and Conservation Panel	Response
<p>Laboratory extension</p> <p>i) The design is commonly used but the execution appears oddly reminiscent of a sports hall</p> <p>ii) The elevations suggest a two storey building but internally it is in fact a single volume</p> <p>iii) The self conscious language of detailing relates neither to precedence nor function</p> <p>iv) the abutment between the strong forms of the extension and the existing lab needed to be further considered</p>	<p>This is not a view we share. The scheme architects, Saunders Boston, advise that they have designed many sports halls and none look like this.</p> <p>This is not uncommon for what is after all an ‘industrial’ style building. The building is to be used for research into industrial scale engineering and as such requires space similar in height and construction to a typical warehouse or factory. It was explained to the panel that the lower area of brickwork reflects the 2 M high block work on the inside of the building which provides robust protection at the working height where machinery and equipment are most commonly being moved around. A strip of windows is then introduced above this because the users require good natural day lighting as close to working height as possible without permitting direct ‘eye level’ views into the building. The area above this can then be clad in less robust and lightweight materials. The fans and louvres at high level are a direct result of the functional requirement to move large volumes of air at that level. The elevations are therefore a direct reflection of the building type and the specific function in this case.</p> <p>We beg to differ and refer to our response to ii) above.</p> <p>We accepted this point during the presentation and did reflect on the fact that we had considered it ourselves during the design development but had decided that to introduce another element might start to make the design look too fussy and complicated. If necessary, we would be happy to discuss this issue of detail further.</p>

Comments of the Design and Conservation Panel	Response
<p>Office extension</p> <p>i) the use of the existing formal language for the new offices is appropriate but the success of this approach will depend on securing a common parapet line when the existing building has been repaired</p> <p>ii) the Panel was concerned about the visual impact of the ventilation turrets and hope that a less obtrusive solution might be explored</p> <p>iii) site landscaping – the Panel hopes that when reviewing the facilities to be provided on site, additional covered cycle parking will be provided</p>	<p>This is the intention. The University maintenance team plan to raise the existing parapet to the level indicated on the extension.</p> <p>The turrets are an essential part of the natural ventilation strategy, which in turn will enable the project to comply with the requirements of the new Part L of the Building Regulations. The turrets are well set back from the edge of the roof and will be barely discernible by casual observers. We do not believe that these detract in any way from the building and indeed could be said to add interest to what is otherwise a rather heavy and regular treatment of a single storey building.</p> <p>There will be no change in the number of users of the site as a result of this development and the provision of additional cycle parking is not therefore a planning requirement</p> <p>Consideration will, however, be given to the provision of additional cycle parking when the University reviews its site facilities</p>

