

REFERENCE NO - 18/506658/REM			
APPLICATION PROPOSAL			
Reserved Matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline application 16/507292/OUT (outline application with access sought for development of medical campus) for construction of proposed four storey Innovation Centre office building (Class B1) and associated external works.			
ADDRESS Plot 3, Newnham Court Way, Weaving, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 5FT			
SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION – (APPROVE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development complies with the site allocation policy in the Local Plan and the outline consent. • The design and appearance of the building is considered to be to a high standard. • Permission is therefore recommended. 			
REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE			
The applicant is Maidstone Borough Council.			
WARD Boxley	PARISH COUNCIL Boxley	APPLICANT Maidstone Borough Council AGENT Bond Bryan Architects	
DECISION DUE DATE 08/04/19		PUBLICITY EXPIRY DATE 13/02/19	
RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY			
App No	Proposal	Decision	Date
18/506656	Erection of a new two-storey primary school and special educational needs secondary school with formation of new access onto Bearsted Road, together with associated car parking and drop off area, pedestrian access, drainage, areas for formal and informal outdoor play and landscaping works.	Pending	
18/506609	Application to vary conditions 3, 4, and 5 of planning permission 16/507292/OUT (outline application with access sought for development of medical campus) to allow for the relocation of the Nature Reserve.	Pending	
18/500312	Removal of condition 37 of 16/507292 - condition limiting B1 uses only to occupiers directly associated with the life science, health care and medical sectors.	Pending	
17/501723	Approval of reserved matters (siting, design, external appearance and landscaping) pursuant to outline permission MA/13/1163 for the development of a 4222 sqm GEA class C2 care facility comprising a mixture of step-down residential, nursing, dementia, rehabilitation and respite care at Zone 5,	Approved	13/07/17

	Kent Medical Campus, Maidstone		
16/507292	Outline Application with access matters sought for development of medical campus comprising up to 92,379 m ² of additional floorspace; internal roads and car parks, including car park for residents of Gidds Pond Cottages; hard and soft landscaping including creation of a nature reserve (to renew existing consent 13/1163).	Approved	16/06/17
16/500360	Approval of Reserved Matters following outline planning permission MA/13/1163 for the erection of a 65-bed hospital, with associated parking and landscaping. (Cygnet Hospital)	Approved	29/04/16
15/504202	Construction of spine road and new bridge over existing stream to enable future development on land at Kent Medical Campus, together with creation of two attenuation ponds for surface water drainage purposes	Approved	10/08/15
13/1163	Outline application for the development of a medical campus comprising up to 98,000sqm of additional floor space; internal roads and car parks, including car park for residents of Gidds Pond Cottages; hard and soft landscaping including creation of new woodland area with access for consideration and all other matters reserved for future consideration.	Approved	23/04/13

1.0 DESCRIPTION OF SITE

1.01 The application site is referred to as 'Plot 3' of the Kent Medical Campus (KMC) which was most recently granted outline permission under application 16/507292. This permission granted a mix of uses including hospital facilities, clinics, consultation rooms and a rehabilitation centre (classes C2/D1); education and training facilities with residential accommodation (class C2/D1); keyworker accommodation for nurses and doctors (class C3); pathology laboratories (class B1); business uses (class B1); ancillary retail services (class A1, A2, A3); and up to 116 bed neuro-rehabilitation accommodation (class C2).

1.02 Plot 3 is located to the south of the 'KIMs Hospital' car park on a corner plot between Newnham Court Way to the west and the main KMC spine road to the south (Gidds Pond Road), and there is a stream to the east. There is a drainage ditch between the site and Newnham Court Way to the west and further east a care home is under construction.

1.03 The site has an area of approximately 0.5ha and is generally level. It is set down around 4m below Newnham Court Way and the same for much of the boundary with Gidds Pond Way to the south. The north boundary is partly

defined by a 4m high retaining gabion wall to the KIMs car park. The Newnham Court Inn (public house) is a Grade II Listed building around 200m west of the site within the retail complex.

- 1.04 The site forms part of the 'Kent Medical Campus' which is allocated in the Local Plan under policy RMX1(1) in addition to the KIMs Hospital. The Local Plan describes KMC as providing "expanded hospital facilities and associated development to form a medical campus to create a specialist knowledge cluster" and "associated uses with related offices and research and development." Appropriate uses are outlined as hospital or healthcare facilities, specialist rehabilitation services, medical related research and development, central laboratory facilities and medical training (paragraph 4.206 of the Local Plan).

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.01 Reserved matters of siting, design, external appearance and landscaping for a 4 storey building are sought. The building would be used as an 'Innovation Centre' for B1 uses (offices/research and development/light industry) and these are restricted to those directly associated with the life science, health care and medical sectors under condition 37 of the outline consent. The building would provide 3,482m² of floorspace including flexible office spaces and shared office areas; hot desk areas; conference rooms; and break out areas.

- 2.02 The applicant has explained that the *"Innovation Centre will provide workspace, conferencing and meeting facilities attuned to the needs of pre, early stage and growing Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the medical technology, healthcare and life sciences sectors. The facility will provide access to high-grade office accommodation to facilitate the development of new products and services, with companies occupying and using the space anticipated to be involved in the following life science groupings: core medical technologies, service and supply for biopharma and medtech, or digital health. Activities typically associated with these groupings range from the development of medical imaging, orthopaedic devices and assistive technologies, to analytical services, telecare and e-health. The innovation centre will also provide conferencing and meeting space to assist in the formation of a "research hotel", where businesses, academics and medical professionals can collaborate to enable new ideas to be developed and introduce new products to the market."*

- 2.03 The L-shaped building would be sited near to the southwest corner of the site with the vehicular entrance in the southeast corner leading to a rear car park. The design and layout will be discussed in more detail below in the assessment.

- 2.04 Whilst the applicant has not signed up to a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA), pre-application meetings, including one with Members, were held prior to submission.

3.0 POLICY AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Maidstone Borough Local Plan (2011-2031): SS1, SP1, SP18, SP21, RMX1, DM1, DM2, DM3, DM6, DM8, DM21, DM23
- Kent Waste and Minerals Plan 2016
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

4.0 LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

4.01 **Boxley Parish Council:** The Parish Council has no material planning reason to object but has concerns that there is insufficient on-site car parking.

4.02 **Local Residents:** 3 representations received raising the following (summarised) points:

- Development is unnecessary as other offices are vacant.
- Development would waste money and increase noise and pollution whilst under construction.
- Conflict of interests as MBC is the applicant and decision maker.
- Greater traffic in congested area.

4.03 **Councillor Bob Hinder:** *“With regard to the above application I wish to register my support for this proposal. I consider it to be a very good concept and design and will provide much needed employment in the Maidstone area. I see no material planning refusal issues in this proposal.”*

5.0 CONSULTATIONS

(Please note that summaries of consultation responses are set out below with the response discussed in more detail in the main report where considered necessary)

5.01 **KCC Highways: No objections** subject to a Travel Plan monitoring fee and conditions (which pass the tests for conditions) relating to securing parking provision and the access point.

5.02 **KCC Lead Local Flood Authority: No objections** as the detailed design of drainage will be provided via condition on the outline consent.

5.03 **KCC Ecology: No objections.**

6.0 APPRAISAL

6.01 Under the outline permission the outward impacts of the mixed use development were fully assessed and considered to be acceptable including the traffic impacts upon the local highway network, and it was considered that the site could suitably accommodate up to 100,000m² of mixed floorspace subject to approval of the detailed design, layout and scale of the development. As such, the Council cannot re-visit principle matters such as transport. The site also falls within the medical campus allocation in the Local Plan.

6.02 This reserved matters application is to only consider the detailed issues of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for this plot. There are a number of parameters under both the outline consent and site policy which need to be taken into account. Therefore the key issues to consider are as follows:

- Layout, appearance, scale, landscaping and compliance with the site allocation policy and outline permission.
- Parking provision, ecology and other matters.

Layout

6.03 In terms of layout for the wider KMC site and to mitigate impacts upon the setting of the AONB, the allocation policy requires retention of existing landscaping and new structural and internal landscaping, and various buffers around the site (criterion 5(i) and (ii)), and a landscape buffer of a minimum 15m in width either side of the stream (criterion 8). This is also secured under the outline consent. Relevant to this plot the layout ensures that the 15m buffer to the stream to the east is provided free from development in line with criterion 8 and condition 4 of the consent. Along the south boundary the building is set back to allow room for the area of structural 'avenue planting' along the entire boundary in line with the landscape parameter plan approved under the outline consent, and space for structural tree planting is provided on the entire west boundary. So it is considered that the layout complies with the relevant parts of the allocation policy and the outline consent.

6.04 More specifically, the layout sees the building sited so it addresses the corner plot providing active frontages to both Newnham Court Way and Gidds Pond Way. The main entrance to the building is on the south side and I consider it is appropriate to have the building relatively close to the road with some low planting rather than set further back with more substantial landscaping. In my view, this is a prominent plot and subject to the building being of sufficient quality, which will be discussed below, it should not be hidden away. Room for tree planting is provided along parts of the south boundary and also part of the west boundary. The position of the L-shaped building also serves to screen much of the rear parking area. Overall, I consider the siting and layout of the building and parking areas is acceptable and complies with policy RMX1(1) and the outline consent.

Appearance & Scale

6.05 In terms of appearance and to mitigate impacts upon the AONB, the allocation policy requires buildings of high quality design in a sustainable form, the use of 'green' roofs where practical and avoidance of light coloured or reflective materials. The outline consent requires the same and also 'green' walls to buildings where practical and the use of vernacular materials including ragstone on buildings and in boundary treatments.

6.06 The building is simple in its form, being an L-shaped building with flat roof, but provides much visual interest through the use of different materials and their positioning. The ground and first floors of the building on most of its

front south and west sides are made up of two storey height glazing with two storey ragstone elements between, which provide a vernacular material, a strong base to the building, and quality appearance and finish. For the second and third floors, bronze aluminium cladding would be used and the windows would be wrapped by an outer skin of perforated bronze cladding which would provide a unique and interesting front elevation. Breaking the building into two main elements over the four levels serves to reduce the impression of a four storey building. Turning the corner on the top floor would be an exposed glazed section that would serve a terrace area, and this provides a feature on this prominent corner.

- 6.07 The remainder of the building would feature dark grey aluminium cladding and glazing with full height bronze vertical highlights, which provides strong vertical lines and visual interest. Bronze cladding would also be used on some of the rear corners of the building and ragstone at ground floor level. Part of the rear north wing of the building would be raised on supports which would hide some of the parking areas. Rainwater goods would be internal with any vents etc. hidden behind the second skin cladding so the appearance would not be compromised. A parapet wall would screen plant and PV on the roofs.
- 6.08 Most of the roof would be utilised for solar PV panels and so a green roof is not practical, and on balance I do not consider the lack of a green roof would cause any unacceptable impacts to or from the AONB. I do not consider green walls are necessary as the appearance and materials are of a good quality and will be secured by condition. The materials are also not too light coloured or reflective in line with the site policy.
- 6.09 In terms of scale, the site policy allows for a four storey height at this location as does the parameter plan under the outline consent because this part of the site is lower than other areas and the KIMs Hospital further north features four storey buildings. The outline consent requires any four storey buildings to be designed so as to reduce the visual impact through cutting into the ground and/or reducing its massing through building design. As outlined above, the site is set down from the road and so half of the ground floor of the building would be set below road level. In addition and as outlined above, the use of materials serves to break up the mass of the building.
- 6.10 Overall the design of the building is considered to be to a high standard appropriately mixing contemporary and vernacular materials, providing a strong building on the corner plot, and interest on all elevations. With the building being set down due to the lower topography of this plot, the height is considered to be acceptable and would not cause any undue harm to the setting of the AONB or in views to or from the AONB. This is in accordance with policies RMX1(1) and DM1 and the outline consent.

Surfacing & Boundary Treatments

- 6.11 The main entrance road would be block paved and parking areas permeable tarmac, although a large number of parking spaces at the north end of the site would be a concrete system with voids to allow for grass to soften the

impact (much like 'grasscrete'). Paths and entrances would be a mix of clay and stone paving. Gabion retaining walls using ragstone would be used along the west boundary, alongside the ramped access at the entrance, and to screen the refuse storage area similar to those used at the KIMs Hospital. Whilst solid ragstone walls with mortar would provide a higher quality treatment, this is being used on the building itself and so I consider this would be acceptable. Overall, the surfacing and boundary treatments would provide a quality appearance to the development.

Landscaping & Ecology

- 6.12 The landscaping scheme provides new trees along the south and west boundaries (birch and field maple). The frontage to the building is proposed with a mix of formal and structural shrub planting with semi-native and ornamental grasses, and more informal natural grass/wildflower meadow planting. The parking area is broken by birch trees and understorey native woodland planting and the 15m stream buffer would have a number of trees and mainly natural grassland and wildflower meadow. Overall the landscape scheme is considered to provide an appropriate setting to the development and provides trees along Gidds Pond Road as part of the 'tree avenue' required under the outline consent.
- 6.13 In terms of ecology, there is a site-wide LEMP and GCN mitigation has been approved under the outline consent/conditions. Relevant to this site the 15m stream buffer would be maintained and enhanced with grass and wildflower meadow planting which accords with the GCN strategy. Bat boxes are proposed for the building which can be positioned on the less visible eastern façade without compromising the design of the building.

Highway Issues Relating to the Layout

- 6.14 The development provides 78 parking spaces, of which 4 will be designated for disabled users, cycle parking for 24 bikes and two electric vehicle charging points. The Council has no set standards for non-residential parking and policy DM23 outlines that consideration needs to be given to accessibility and public transport and whether on-street parking will be exacerbated. The site currently has access to local bus services on the A249 and when vehicle movements at the site reach a level set out in the legal agreement (500 movements AM and PM), a bus stop and turning area will be provided opposite the site and bus services into the site would need to be provided. So good access to public transport is in place and this will be improved. Whilst not adopted by MBC, as a guide, County Council parking standards would seek a maximum of 100 spaces for this size of development, and with public transport available, I consider 78 spaces is an appropriate level. I do not consider this would lead to any on-street parking that would cause highway safety issues.
- 6.15 Kent Highways raise no objections to the level of parking provided or the layout in terms of highway and pedestrian safety and manoeuvrability for vehicles. They request a Travel Plan monitoring fee but this is secured under the outline consent. The impacts of traffic on the local area were

considered under the outline application as a principle matter and cannot be re-visited under this reserved matters application.

Other Matters

Listed Building

- 6.16 The principle of a four storey building has been accepted on this plot and the design and appearance is not considered to cause any harm to the setting on the listed Newnham Court Inn.

Sustainable Design

- 6.17 Being a commercial building, policy DM2 seeks a BREEAM Very Good level and this is a requirement of the outline consent. The development has been designed to achieve this and as part of this solar panels are proposed on the roof which can be secured by condition. Condition 28 of the outline requires a BREEAM certificate to be issued within 6 months of occupation.

Surface Water Drainage

- 6.18 In line with the outline permission, surface water would be controlled and discharged into the existing stream which runs along the eastern site boundary. The majority of the external areas will consist of permeable paving with storage crates beneath and in addition a swale and detention basin will be provided within the landscape strip along the eastern side of the development. KCC consider that more infiltration (soakage) into the ground could be used but this would be dealt with at the detailed design stage under the relevant outline condition. Ultimately there is a solution to deal with surface water and KCC raise no objections.

Representations

- 6.19 Issues relating to the need for the development are not relevant as outline permission is in place. Any noise or disturbance during construction is not a material planning consideration. There is no conflict of interest as this recommendation and any decision is made by the Local Planning Authority in accordance with planning policies and legislation.

Conditions on Outline Consent

- 6.20 Some of the information provided covers a number of the conditions of the outline consent and these are conditions 17 (surface materials), 18 (boundary treatments), and 20 (EV charging points).

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.01 I have considered all representations received on the application and for the above reasons the proposals are considered to be acceptable and provide a high quality development in accordance with site policy RMX1(1), the outline consent, and other relevant policies within the Local Plan. Permission is therefore recommended subject to the following conditions.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following conditions with delegated powers for the Head of Planning to be able to settle or amend any necessary planning conditions in line with the matters set out in the recommendation and as resolved by the Planning Committee.

Conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings:

KMCIC-BBA-00-01-DR-A-2001-P06; KMCIC-BBA-00-02-DR-A-2001-P06;
KMCIC-BBA-00-03-DR-A-2001-P06; KMCIC-BBA-00-GF-DR-A-2001-P06;
KMCIC-BBA-00-RF-DR-A-2001-P06; KMCIC-BBA-00-XX-DR-A-9106-P02;
KMCIC-BBA-00-ZZ-DR-A-3001-P06; KMCIC-BBA-00-ZZ-DR-A-3002-P06;
KMCIC-BBA-00-ZZ-DR-A-4003-P02; KMCIC-BBA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-L-1004-P04;
KMCIC-BBA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-L-1005-P02; KMCIC-BBA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-L-1006-P05;
KMCIC-BBA-ZZ-ZZ-M3-A-1001-P03; KMCIC-BBA-ZZ-ZZ-M3-A-1002-P02;
KMCIC-BBA-ZZ-ZZ-M3-A-1004-P05; KMCIC-BBA-ZZ-ZZ-M3-A-1005-P02;
and KMCIC-BBA-ZZ-ZZ-M3-A-4001-P1.

Reason: To clarify which plans have been approved.

2. The development shall not commence above slab level until samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and the development shall be constructed using the approved materials. Unless otherwise agreed in writing, the materials shall be as outlined on the approved plans and within the Design and Access Statement as follows:

- Bronze colour solid and perforated aluminium panels
- Dark grey aluminium cladding
- Dark grey aluminium frame windows
- Dark grey aluminium curtain walling frames
- Bronze colour metal vertical highlights
- Ragstone

Reason: To ensure a high quality finish to the development.

3. No development above slab level shall take place until a sample panel of the ragstone for the building has been constructed on site and subsequently approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Written details of the mortar mix shall also be provided for approval by the Local Planning Authority. Such details as approved shall be fully implemented on the building.

Reason: To ensure a high quality design.

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4. The development shall not be occupied until the approved access has been fully implemented in accordance with drawing no. 1809041-01 RevA (within the Transport Statement), and the visibility splays shall be maintained free of obstruction above a height of 1m and maintained as such thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

5. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved landscaping scheme as shown on drawing no. KMCIC-BBA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-L-1006-P05.

Reason: In the interests of sustainable travel and air quality.

6. The development shall be operated in accordance with the approved Travel Plan dated 21/12/18 unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of sustainable travel and air quality.

7. All rainwater goods shall be internal and any vents or flues shall be positioned behind the cladding of the building so as not to be exposed to public view unless agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure a high quality appearance.

8. Prior to the occupation of the development the three proposed bat boxes shall be installed on the building and thereafter maintained.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity enhancement.

Informative

1. Condition numbers 17, 18 and 20 of the outline consent are approved as part of this reserved matters application.