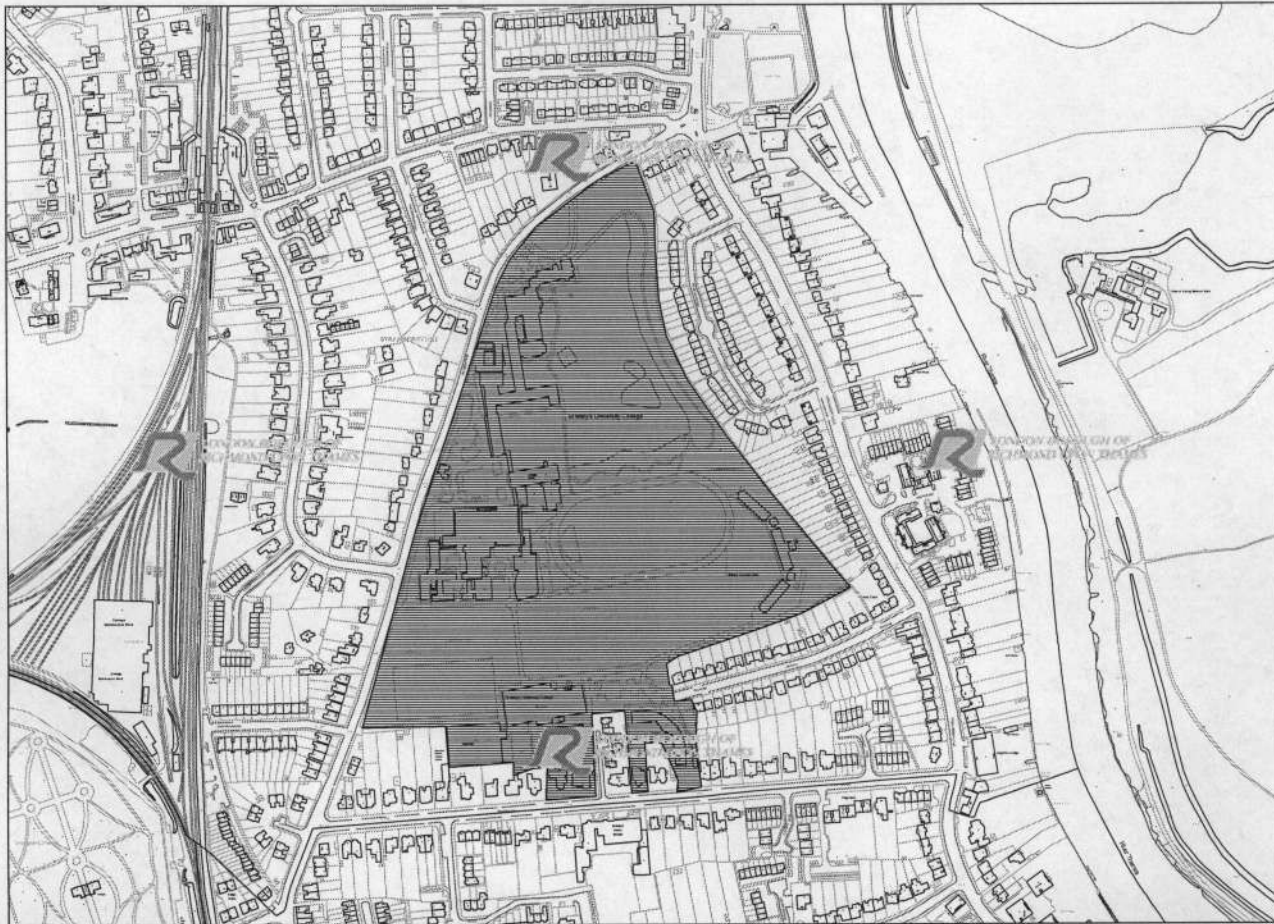


**03/1855/FUL
ST MARYS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
WALDEGRAVE ROAD
TWICKENHAM**

**SOUTH TWICKENHAM WARD
Contact Officer:
J Brown**



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Do not scale

Proposal: Erection of a three storey extension to the existing three storey residences at Graham, Wiseman and Doyle comprising 183 student rooms plus four warden suites in two new wings with all associated functions and external works.

Applicant: Ash Design Conculatants for St Marys College

Application received: 16 June 2003

Main development plan policies:

UDP. ENV 3, 8, 10, 12, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 41, HSG 10, HEP 9, TRN 22, 23

UDP - First Review BLT 2, 8, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, CCE 8, ENV 1, 9, 10, HSG 10, TRN 2, 4

Present use: Educational insitution

Site, history and proposal: The site comprises a roughly triangular area in the eastern corner of the college campus, and currently accommodates three three storey halls of residence arranged in a

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crescent facing the open playing fields to the west. To the east and south are the rear gardens of residential properties in Strawberry Vale and Clive Road. An unmarked hardstanding to the south of the halls can accommodate at least 12 cars.

The playing fields are designated as Metropolitan Open Land, the boundary being drawn so as to leave the halls just outside the designation. The south and east boundaries are fairly generously treed, with several specimens enjoying TPO protection.

An application submitted earlier this year proposed a similar development to the current one but was withdrawn prior to determination, following Officer concerns over some aspects of the scheme (ref: 03/0963/FUL). The current application is an amended version of the proposal aimed at overcoming these concerns.

The two new halls would have three storeys and a ridge height the same as the existing buildings. The southernmost proposed building would have a cruciform plan at its south-eastern end, with three wings which approach to within about 9m of the residential gardens to the south and 11.25m of those to the east. The closest approach to the houses themselves is about 35m (Clive Road) and 40m (Strawberry Vale). The gardens to the south are on land which falls from west to east so that those south of the existing halls have a similar ground level to the college grounds, but Nos 2 and 4 Clive Road have gardens some 1.5m lower.

There are 41 car parking spaces indicated, 18 to the south of the halls, the remainder to the west. There are 49 cycle securing hoops provided, intended to accommodate 98 cycles. An existing access drive close to the southern boundary would be extended northwards to access the new parking areas. This extended drive would fall just within the MOL.

The accommodation provided would include 172 student units (each one a bedsit and shower room), six slightly larger disabled units, four warden flats, offices, common rooms, communal kitchens, cleaners stores etc.

Walls would be brickwork and the roof concrete tiles to match the existing halls.

Public and other representations: Letters have been received from 64 neighbours objecting on the following grounds:-

1. Parking/congestion/safety problems due to insufficient parking provision.
2. Noise and disturbance arising from students.
3. Overbearing impact on adjoining residents.
4. Loss of light and sun.
5. Loss of privacy.
6. Loss of open space and detriment to the MOL.
7. Loss of amenity to Clive Road arising from the proposed use of a currently locked and unused entrance at its western end.
8. Light pollution.
9. Loss of wildlife.

Cllr David Marlow objects to loss of privacy, noise, disturbance, light pollution and parking problems.

Strawberry Hill Residents' Association support the objections of Clive Road residents, including objection to insufficient parking. If the scheme is approved, they recommend conditions requiring the Clive Road entrance to be kept shut, no construction vehicles to use Clive Road, residents only parking

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to be introduced to Clive Road, no intrusive lighting, and a good planting screen to be achieved along the boundaries.

English Heritage state that it does not appear likely that the scheme would affect archaeology, and that any requirement for assessment or evaluation can be waived.

Amendments: Despite the fact that the proposal had been modified to meet previous objections, it was felt that further amendments were needed to reduce the visual impact of the new buildings on neighbouring properties.

The three wings of the south building, close to Clive Road and Strawberry Vale, have been reduced in bulk by changing their gable ends (maximum height of 11.3m) to sloping roofs with eaves at a height of about 6m and a single dormer 1m wide on two of the wings.

The accommodation displaced by this reduction in bulk of the southern building would be relocated within the roofspace of the northern building. This would not result in any increase in eaves or ridge height, but 7 dormers would be introduced into that part of the roof to the west of the existing halls. The total number of student, disabled and staff units would be unaltered by this adjustment.

Professional comments: The provision of residential accommodation on campus is encouraged by Unitary Development Plan First Review policy HSG 10, which says 'It is important that ...colleges and other institutions should help to provide accommodation for their staff and students who would otherwise increase pressure on the Borough's cheaper housing'. Apart from contributing to the Borough's stock of low-cost housing, such on-site accommodation also reduces the need to travel, which is a recognised aim of both central government and the Council's policies. The proposal is therefore to be welcomed, provided there would not be significant harmful impact on local environmental conditions. The issues to be examined are residential amenity, the welfare of trees, design and visual impact, and traffic and parking.

Neighbouring amenity

The properties on Clive Road are closest to the proposed buildings. From the rear gardens of Nos 2, 4 and 6 the existing halls can be glimpsed through tree growth, and the new halls would also be visible to an extent. Further to the west, evergreens just inside the site boundary provide an effective screen, preventing light pollution and overlooking of gardens from windows in the halls as well as avoiding visual intrusion from the bulk of the buildings. The current amended proposal indicates that this boundary planting would be extended so as to fill gaps in the screen, both on the southern and eastern boundaries, and this would need to achieve a height of about 4.5m to screen the below-eaves bulk of the proposed buildings from a person standing close to their house: to completely screen the building including its roof, the height would need to be about 7m. The gardens of Nos 2 to 6 are about 24m long and those in Strawberry Vale are 27m-42m long, and I am satisfied that an effective screen could be achieved without producing problems of over-enclosure or loss of sun.

Concerns over noise and disturbance have been expressed. The withdrawn scheme showed a footpath extending around the back of the new halls and it was felt that its use would cause noise and possibly overlooking of the gardens at a lower level: this has now been omitted. There could, as now, be general noise arising from the site, but residential accommodation is not inherently a 'bad neighbour' and a refusal on the grounds of disturbance could be difficult to justify. The nearest approach of the new buildings to the site boundary is no more than that of the existing halls, and the boundary screening would contribute to reducing noise levels to an extent. Re-siting the new halls to the north of the existing buildings, as has been suggested, would put them not only within Metropolitan Open Land, where built development would normally be resisted, but also close to houses in Michelham Gardens.

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Design

The amended scheme shows that the buildings would echo the existing ones in size and choice of materials, and when seen from across the MOL to the west they would thus be relatively unobtrusive. Although not formally consulted because of the large separation between the buildings and the Listed structures elsewhere on site, English Heritage have visited the site with the Council's Design Officers and expressed the view that the originally submitted scheme showed too great a contrast between new buildings and old, preferring a more unassuming approach. It is felt that the amended scheme complies with this view, and that the development would not result in detriment to the MOL or the surrounding area.

Trees

The withdrawn scheme encroached on the potential canopy areas of several protected trees (i.e. allowing for future growth). Following discussions with the Council's Tree Officer, the buildings have been reduced in footprint so as to avoid this problem.

Traffic and parking

Current parking standards require a maximum of one car space per two units, giving a grand total of 91 spaces if the maximum standards were applied to the new halls. Forty-one are proposed, including use of the parking area to the south of the halls. The agent states that this area currently accommodates 16 cars, so the net increase in parking would be 25 spaces, 66 below the maximum. The proposed 98 cycle parking spaces is somewhat above the minimum requirement of 91.

The agent has provided a car parking strategy statement whose main points are:-

1. There is no hard data on the proportion of students who are car owners.
2. There are currently 250 spaces on the whole site. Parking passes are issued to staff and students who apply, with priority given to disabled drivers.
3. Students living within Halls of Residence do not receive passes, unless they are disabled. They do not, therefore, park on campus.
4. The existing parking provision is sufficient to cater for out-of-term conferences, whose delegates often car-share.
5. None of the new spaces will be allocated to able-bodied students
6. There will be no increase in the number of students enrolled at the college
7. The new halls will remove the need for 178 students and 4 staff wardens to commute to college. Of these 182, there is a likelihood that some currently drive daily to college and park in the surrounding streets. This would no longer be necessary and there would thus be an incentive to dispense with car use; there is therefore a likelihood that on-street car parking would be reduced as a result of the development.
8. The increase in accommodation would enable an increase in the number of conference delegates, but car-sharing and nearby rail and bus links make it unlikely that there would be a problem, which would only be occasional in any case.

It is considered that the above analysis is reasonable, and it is therefore recommended that car parking below the maximum provision be considered appropriate, bearing in mind the proximity of bus and rail links and campus amenities, and the advice in PPG 13 that provision of parking acts as an incentive to car use. If overall student numbers do not increase, but 178 more of those students live on campus rather than elsewhere, then there should be a reduction in commuting. The provision of 25 extra car spaces on site, coupled with the lack of need to commute, should decrease pressure to park in nearby streets.

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Concern has been expressed that the college may intend to open an existing vehicular gate into the site at the western end of Clive Road, and that this would cause noise, disturbance, parking congestion and possible highway danger, arising from regular use or from temporary construction traffic. The gate has been locked for many years, apart from a few occasions, and the College have recently stated that they do not intend that it should come into use as a day-to-day access for students, staff or visitors. It is not considered that use of Clive Road by construction traffic could be safely resisted on valid planning grounds.

I therefore recommend **PERMISSION** subject to the following conditions and informatives:-

Standard conditions:

- BD12 - Details – materials to be approved
- DV28 - External illumination
- DV40 - Travel Plan
- LA02A - No felling/lopping
- LA03A - Existing trees which are to be retained
- LA04A - Protect trees - shown on plan
- LA09 - Screen planting approved and carried - 'southern and eastern boundaries' '7m'
- LA16 - Written notification to start work
- PK02A - Parking/loading/turning construction - 'car and cycle parking spaces' '02644L(0)16A'
- PK06A - Cycle parking

Standard informatives:

- IE05A - Noise control - building sites
- IH06 - Damage to public highway
- IH08 - Transport Plan
- IL10 - Building regulations
- IL12 - Approved drawing Nos - '02644/L(0)10A^x, 02644/L(0)11A^x, 02644/L(0)12A^x, 02644/L(0)15A^x, 02644/L(0)16A^x, 02644/L(0)17A^x and 02644/L(0)19^x received on 16 June 2003: 02644/L(2)7B^x, 02644/L(2)8B^x, 02644/L(2)6C^x, 02644/L(2)18B^x, 02644/L(2)19B^x and 02644/L(2)38^x received on 8 August 2003'
- IL16 - Relevant policies and proposals - ENV 3, 8, 12, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 41, HSG 10, HEP 9, TRN 22, 23' 'ENV 1, 9, 10, BLT 8, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, HSG 10, CCE 8. TRN 2, 4'

Don't not commence until approved

Background papers:

- Application forms and drawings
 - Letters of representation
 - Letters from English Heritage
 - Application forms, drawings, (Sub-)committee reports and decision notices for previous applications (ref: 03/0963/FUL)
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