

<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P12/V2091/FUL</a>
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	FULL APPLICATION
<b>REGISTERED</b>	9 October 2012
<b>PARISH</b>	ABINGDON
<b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>	Angela Lawrence Helen Pighills
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Abingdon & Witney College
<b>SITE</b>	Abingdon & Witney College Wootton Road Abingdon OX14 1GG
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Construction of a single storey building for the teaching of advanced engineering and associated landscaping. As amended by letter from agent.
<b>AMENDMENTS</b>	15 November 2012
<b>GRID REFERENCE</b>	449507/198261
<b>OFFICER</b>	Stuart Walker

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1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This application seeks planning permission for the construction of a new teaching building for advanced engineering. The site is located on the east side of the campus which is located to the north of Northcourt Road.

1.2 The application comes to committee because Abingdon Town Council objects.

2.0 **PROPOSAL**

2.1 The proposed development comprises a stand alone single storey teaching facility that will replace existing outdated temporary classrooms. The new building is contemporary in design with facing brick and horizontal clad panelled elevations and a standing seam roof and will achieve a BREEAM rating of very good. It has a floor area of 395sqm under two mono-pitched roofs with a maximum height of 6.9m and will provide a motor vehicle workshop (seven bays and one MOT bay), a computer aided engineering / IT classroom, a secure tools store, a technician's office, accessible toilet and cleaner's store and a plant room.

2.2 The additional space is required to achieve modern working standards and to provide courses in spaces that closely resemble those within the motor industry. The proposed use of the building, however, remains in class D1 and will only be used during normal college hours (08.30 – 20.30). The application is accompanied by a detailed noise impact assessment report, a drainage statement and a design and access statement.

2.3 The plans have been amended to take account of officer comments in relation to amenity impact on the adjoining neighbour, 105 Northcourt Road. The revised plans have resulted in the building being handed in its design and re-positioned further away to the north-west. These changes will result in the replacement of the existing temporary classrooms with the 'propeller' classroom which is currently located to the north. The revised plans and the applicant's supporting statement are **attached** at appendix 1. The superseded plans and the noise impact assessment are available to view on the council's website.

3.0 **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 Abingdon Town Council objects. Their full comments are **attached** at appendix 2.

- 3.2 County highways: no objection.
- 3.3 Environmental Protection: no objection, subject to the implementation of the recommendations in the noise impact assessment.
- 3.4 Drainage Engineer: no objection.
- 3.5 Thames Water: no objection.
- 3.6 Conservation Officer: no objection “This application will not have an impact on the Northcourt Conservation Area; there are also no listed buildings in the vicinity of the college that will be affected by the development. The proposed new building will replace a number of poor quality temporary buildings on the site and will enhance the area.”
- 3.7 Waste Team: no objection.
- 3.8 Five letters of objection were received in connection with the original proposal. One of these letters has been withdrawn following consultation on the amended plans. The concerns raised are summarised as follows:
- This is the wrong place for this type of building. It would be better sited on the other side of the college campus.
  - The ‘industrial’ building is out of keeping with the locality.
  - It is far too large in height and scale.
  - The activities commonly associated with garages will result in harmful noise and disturbance to local residents.
  - Light pollution.
  - Noise and disturbance from the relocated ‘propeller’ classroom.
- 3.9 Councillor Angela Lawrence:  
“As local member for Northcourt ward I wish to comment on this application for the following reasons. The location: This is to be an engineering teaching facility, commercial size garage workshop, with up to six hydraulic car lift platforms including a MOT bay. It has associated mechanical and electrical plant back up such as compressors, pneumatic wheel guns and further panoply of specialist garage equipment. Furthermore exhaust and other aromatic fumes and hazardous contaminants may be discharged via blowers to the local residential atmosphere. It is therefore inappropriate to site this development so very close to the garden of neighbouring residential properties. The height: This is misleadingly portrayed on the drawings to make it appear lower than it really is. It is described as one storey, which theoretically it is as there is no upper floor but the reality is that it is as high as the neighbouring two storey dwellings and will have a dominating effect over the nearest properties. Effect on the residents: This development will have a harmful effect on the neighbouring properties due to loss of sunlight, and other related factors as described in the first paragraph. There is no objection to the actual development but I do feel strongly that it should not be sited so close to residential properties. There appear to be plenty of spaces around the campus where this development could be more appropriately sited.”
- 4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**
- 4.1 [P02/V0837/A](#) - Refused (04/07/2002)  
Retrospective application for display of new signage.

- 4.2 [P01/V0177](#) - Approved (08/03/2001)  
Erection of a two storey teaching block with workshop facilities. (Engineering Block B).
- 4.3 [P00/V0596](#) - Approved (29/06/2000)  
Amendments to approval ABG/475/37 for two storey arts teaching facility and re-location of nursery, to allow for change of construction/materials. Alterations to elevations. Omission of walkways/shelters.
- 4.4 [P99/V0465](#) - Approved (02/08/1999)  
Re-submission of approval ABG/475/33 for erection of two storey Arts Teaching Facilities. Removal of two temporary buildings. Re-location of nursery facility.
- 4.5 [P96/V0880](#) - Approved (03/10/1996)  
Erection of two storey Arts Teaching facility. Removal of two temporary buildings. Relocation of nursery.
- 4.6 [P96/V1015](#) - Approved (03/10/1996)  
Extension to Block B (Engineering Block).
- 4.7 [P95/V0473](#) - Approved (22/02/1996)  
Extend and infill existing buildings to form new reception and offices. New vehicular access from Wootton Road.

5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

5.1 *Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 policies:*

- CF2 - Provision of new community services and facilities
- DC1 - Design
- DC5 - Access
- DC6 - Landscaping
- DC9 - The impact of development on neighbouring uses

5.2 *National Planning Policy Framework*

The National Planning Policy Framework confirms there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and within the overarching roles that the planning system ought to play are a set of 12 core planning principles, the following of which are directly relevant to this application:

- i. Be genuinely plan led; ii. Always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings; and iii. Take account of and support local strategies to improve health, wealth, and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.

5.3 In delivering sustainable development, the framework sets out a variety of detailed guidance and the following sections are directly relevant to this application:

- i. Requiring good design – achieving high quality and inclusive design to contribute positively to making places better for people by concentrating on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally and permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.
- ii. Promoting healthy communities – planning positively for the provision and use of community facilities along with a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to development that will widen choice in education.

- iii. Meeting the challenge of climate change and flooding – managing risks through suitable adaptation measures to ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere.
- iv. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment – planning decisions should aim to avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life as a result of new development.

## 6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The college has identified a need to improve its facilities for teaching engineering and motor vehicle engineering to respond to local demand and the national skills agenda. Given the government's direction of travel in proactively responding to business and educational needs, the principle of the proposal is considered to be acceptable.
- 6.2 The proposal is not considered to be harmful to the character of the locality. The new building is considered to be a high quality design and the amount of teaching accommodation proposed together with the building's height and massing are considered acceptable. The new building is also set back within the site and thus will not be overly prominent when viewed from Northcourt Road. Consequently, the visual impact of the proposed development and its impact on the character and appearance of the locality are considered acceptable.
- 6.3 Concerns have been raised by local residents in terms of over-dominance, noise and general disturbance. In response to these concerns, the plans have been amended and the revisions to the design and position of the building are now considered to be acceptable. The proposed engineering teaching use would not be so harmful to warrant refusal of the application and subject to the mitigation measures stated in the noise assessment, the council's environmental health officer raises no objection.
- 6.4 The revisions will result in the proposed replacement of the existing temporary classrooms adjoining 105 Northcourt Road with the 'propeller' teaching building (a temporary building currently located to the north). The swapping of these buildings is considered acceptable and officers consider there is no justifiable case to refuse permission on this element of the proposal on either visual / residential amenity grounds. Overall, the neighbour amenity impacts arising from this proposal are considered to be acceptable.
- 6.5 The parking and access arrangements proposed (as amended) are considered acceptable. Any additional traffic resulting from this development would not be so significant to warrant refusal on highway safety grounds. The County Highways Engineer raises no objections.

## 7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposal is considered to comply with the requirements of the development plan and the scheme is acceptable in terms of its impact on the character of the locality, residential amenity, parking and highway safety.

## 8.0 RECOMMENDATION

**Planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:**

- 1 : TL1 - Time limit**
- 2 : Planning condition listing the approved drawings**
- 3 : MC3 - Materials in accordance with application**
- 4 : HY7 - Car parking**
- 5 : Mitigation measures of noise assessment**

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