

Mr Henry Jones
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City of Durham Parish Council
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17 June 2019

Dear Mr Jones,

**DM/19/01711/FPA: Demolition of sections of enclosure and provision of access
in association with use of a car park and associated works,
Durham Sixth Form Centre, The Sands Durham DH1 1SG**

The City of Durham Parish Council Planning Committee considered the above planning application at its meeting on 7 June 2019 and resolved to make the following comments.

It is noted that the planning application is for works on the old tennis courts at the Durham Sixth Form Centre to enable it to become an 85-space staff car park. The former tennis courts have been marked out with car parking spaces and are being used as such.

The application thus answers the Parish Council's question as to how the Sixth Form Centre intends to replace its existing car parking spaces that it will lose if the new DCC Headquarters Multi-Storey Car Park (MSCP) is built. The new 85 spaces added to the 34 remaining existing spaces add up to 119, virtually completely restoring the 120 existing spaces referenced in paragraph 248 of the DCC HQ County Planning Committee Report of 5th March 2019.

This raises the first of a number of issues. The quantum of parking around the new DCC HQ is claimed in that Committee Report to reduce by 81. However, it is now obvious that this is not correct and that the Sixth Form Centre's parking arrangements (disowned by the County Council as not being relevant) will result in an overall increase in the quantum of car parking spaces.

Secondly, this current application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment which lists in paragraph 6.5 the committed developments to take into account as future generators of traffic on the local road network:

- Durham Sixth Form College Multimedia facility
- Milburngate House mixed use development
- Milburngate hotel
- Milburngate new service yard, extra cinema screen, etc
- Milburngate office development
- The Gates/Riverwalk re-development

- Student Castle development in Claypath
- Student residential development at County Hospital
- Erection of 35 apartments at Kepier House, The Sands

What is striking about this list of developments taken into account to assess the future traffic situation on the local road network is that it fails to include the approved new DCC HQ and MSCP. There may be a technical reason for this, in that these are subject to a claim for Judicial Review, but they are committed developments and do possess a valid planning approval certificate. The transport report for the current application must include the new HQ and MSCP in its assessment of the traffic implications.

Thirdly, the submitted drawings show a proposed footpath from the new car park to the new DCC HQ. This would be essential but needs to link with the footpath that would be required for the adjacent MSCP. These will necessarily make the narrow road with a very sharp blind bend even narrower. There are serious concerns about safety in this scenario, both for pedestrians and for people in vehicles. At the very least these footpaths will be used by some of the 700 or more employees of the new HQ, by pupils at the detached part of the Sixth Form Centre adjacent to Ferens Court, and by residents of the four housing estates along The Sands. Furthermore, the vehicles on the road will include both the large tourist buses having dropped their passengers off and the buses bringing children from nineteen schools who have swimming lessons at Freeman's Quay every week.

Accordingly, the Parish Council objects to the current application so that satisfactory clarification can be provided such as to resolve the above concerns.

Yours sincerely

Adam Shanley

Clerk to the City of Durham Parish Council