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**Ref 2023/0823**

Applicant: Barnsley College

Description: Formation of training facility site

Site Address: Barnsley College, Honeywell Campus, Honeywell Lane, Barnsley, S75 1BP

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### **Site Description**

The application relates to an area of land (circa 925m<sup>2</sup>) to the South of Honeywell Lane. The site is bounded by the Sheffield/Leeds railway line to the East and the access Road serving Barnsley College Honeywell Campus to the West. To the North of the site is a tree belt which separates it from Honeywell Lane, which is on a lower level than the site. Directly to the South of the site is an area of scrub with football pitches and the main college buildings beyond on a higher level.

The site sits within the curtilage of Barnsley College's Honeywell Campus and was most recently used as a storage area. Prior to being used for storage it was used as a site compound by Miller Homes while constructing the housing estate off Honeywell Lane. The centre of the site is relatively level and has an area of hardstanding. The boundaries of the site mainly consist of trees and soft landscaping and vehicular access is taken from the college access road to the West.

There are residential properties directly to the North of the site on Honeywell Lane and opposite the railway line to the East. The main college site is to the South and there is a children's play area with residential properties beyond to the West.

### **Proposed Development**

The application is a collaboration between Barnsley Collage and T3 Industry Solutions to provide a dedicated and unique Assembly Technicians Learning Facility in Barnsley. The facility will help to provide necessary skills uplifts to support a growing sectorial need. The training facility would complement the college's current construction centre but would also be available to students, apprentices, trainees and construction workers across the country and beyond.

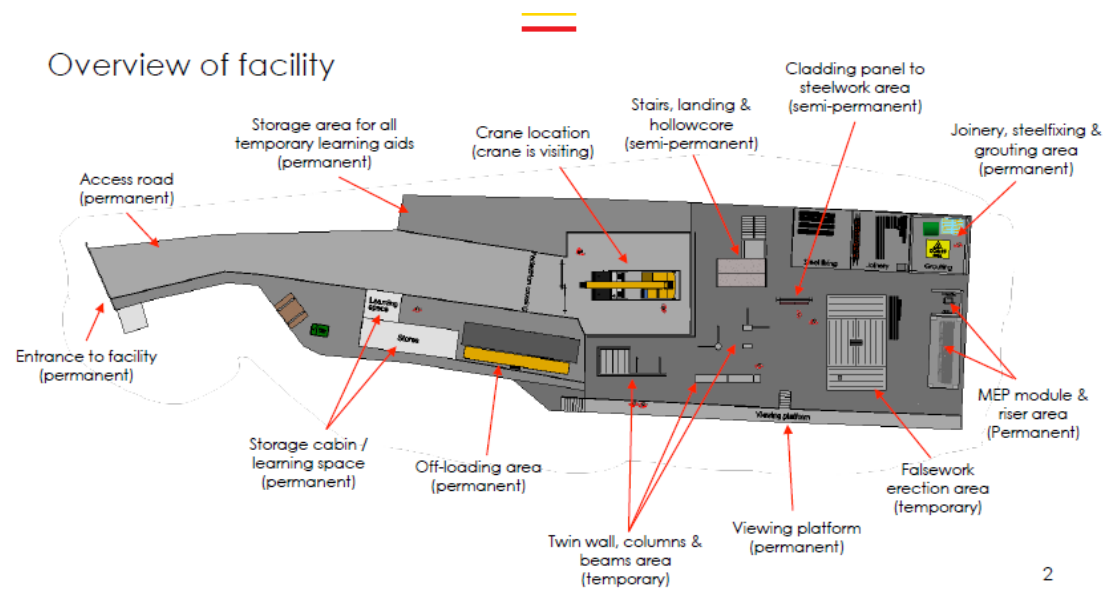
The proposal consists of a learning space and store, viewing platform, crane location and a number of bays/area where various construction activities can take place including falsework erection, joinery, steel fixing and grouting, cladding etc.

Students would undertake practical activities in the bays and construction areas. Once they had built the sample or section this would then be dismantled for the next group of students to erect/build and construct. Students and teachers can also oversee the works from the proposed viewing platform to the South of the site.

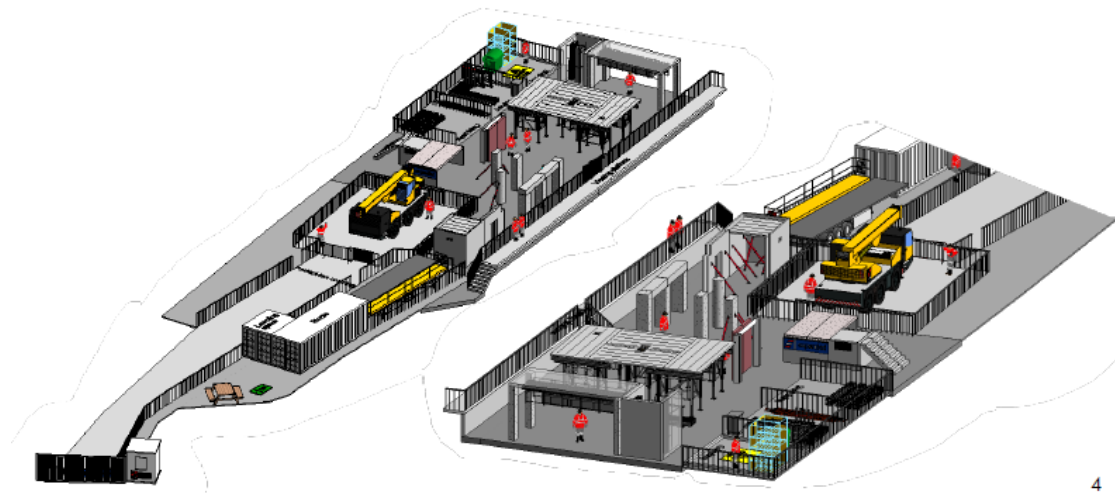
Materials would be delivered periodically to the site and due to the bulky and heavy nature of the materials a crane would be required periodically. An access track and crane location area is included within the proposal.

The trees surrounding the site would be retained with minimal pruning works required. There is currently hardstanding within the site but this would be renewed as part of the

works. No parking is proposed within the site as users would park in the main college car parks within close proximity.



Facility with all temporary elements erected



## Policy Context

Planning decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. The Local Plan was adopted in January 2019 and is also now accompanied by seven masterplan frameworks which apply to the largest site allocations (housing, employment and mixed-use sites). In addition, the Council has adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans which provide supporting guidance and specific local policies and are a material consideration in the decision-making process.

The Local Plan review was approved at the full Council meeting held 24th November 2022. The review determined that the Local Plan remains fit for purpose and is adequately delivering its objectives. This means no updates to the Local Plan, in whole or in part, are to

be carried out ahead of a further review. The next review is due to take place in 2027 or earlier if circumstances, require it.

### Local Plan

Allocation: Urban Fabric & Greenspace (school grounds)

Policy GD1 – General Development  
Policy GD2 – Temporary Buildings and uses  
Policy GS1 – Green Space  
Policy T3 – New Development and Sustainable Travel  
Policy T4 – New Development and Transport Safety  
Policy D1 – Design  
Policy CC1 – Climate Change  
Policy CC2 – Sustainable Design and Construction  
Policy BI01 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity  
Policy Poll1 – Pollution Control and Protection  
Policy RE1 – Low Carbon and Renewable Energy

### SPD's

- Parking
- Residential Amenity and the Siting of new buildings
- Sustainable travel
- Trees and Hedges

### NPPF

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where the development plan is absent, silent, or relevant policies are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole; or where specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted or unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Paragraphs of relevance to this application include:

Para 7 - The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

Para 11 – Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Para 96 - Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive, and safe places

Para 99 - notes that the Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities.

Local authorities should take a proactive, positive, and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:

- Give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications; and
- Work with schools' promoters to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.

Para 115 - Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

Para 131 - The creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

### **Consultations**

Drainage – no objections, Building Control to check

Enterprising Barnsley – Support the application

Regulatory Services – No objections subject to condition

South Yorkshire Police ALO – No objections

Tree Officer – No objections, requested an AMS and protection details which have been submitted.

Highways – No objections following the submission of additional information

Ward Cllrs – No comments

### **Representations**

None

### **Assessment**

#### Principle of Development

Local Plan Policy I2 'Educational and Community Facilities' states 'we will support the provision of schools, educational facilities, and other community facilities.'

The supporting text to policy I2 sets out that one of the borough's ambitions is to invest in education and skills to support the development of the economy and increase educational attainment. It is important that everyone has access to a good education.

It is noted that the site is allocated as greenspace as it is within the college grounds. Policy GS1 'Green Space' states 'proposals that result in the loss of green space, or land that was

last used as green space, will not normally be allowed. However, no green space would be lost as a result of the development as the development would be located centrally within the site where there is already an existing area of hardstanding. That hardstanding would simply be upgraded with the proposed permanent, semi-permanent and temporary structures located on that hardstanding. The areas of trees and scrub surrounding the development would be retained. No existing areas of greenspace or play space would be lost or significantly affected by the proposed development

All new buildings/structures must ensure that overall standards of residential amenity are provided or maintained to an acceptable level for existing and future neighbouring residents and land users. In addition, development will only be granted where the development would maintain visual amenity and not create traffic problems or prejudice the possible future development of a larger area of land.

### Design/visual amenity

The last use of the site was as a storage area for the college where containers were placed on the land as well as outdoor storage areas. Before that use it was utilised by Miller Homes as a compound associated with the housing development directly to the North of the site. Again it contained storage containers, cabins and material storage areas.

The proposed use contains a mix of relatively modest permanent, semi permanent and temporary structures. The site is on a higher level than Honey Well Lane to the North, however, views would be limited due to a mature tree belt which would be retained. The site is also separated from the residential properties to the East by a trainline, embankment and trees. Directly to the South of the site is the college site with views limited given that the site is on a lower level with a sloped embankment separating the site from the football pitches. The access to the site is from the West so there would be some views through to the site but these would be from the internal access road and would be fleeting. All the structures would also be viewed against the neighbouring mature trees and embankments.

Furthermore, the permanent structures on the site are relatively modest and the structures built on the site by the students would be taken down and dismantled relatively quickly in order for the next group of students to utilise the bays and undertake the construction activity. It is noted a crane would be required on the site, however, this would be a movable crane and would only be on site when needed.

Given the comments above, the visual amenity of the area would be maintained, in accordance with Local Plan Policy D1.

### Residential Amenity

The site is located within the college grounds immediately adjacent to football pitches, but the surrounding area is predominantly residential in nature and there are dwellings within relatively close proximity to the site. It is acknowledged that the activities on the site are outdoors and would require the use of power tools and a crane and generate noise and disturbance, however, they would occur during college opening times and during sociable hours.

In addition, the site is separated from the dwellings to the North by a tree belt and Honeywell Lane. The dwellings to the East are separated from the site by a railway line and

associated banking and the dwellings to the west are beyond the access road and a children's play park.

As a result of the comments above, the development would not significantly reduce residential amenity and would be in accordance with Local Plan Policy GD1.

### Highways

Additional information has provided clarification that if the proposed training facility were in operation, there would not be a requirement for large vehicles to regularly visit the site because the training facility would involve the repeated assembly and disassembly of construction elements that would remain permanently on site.

In terms of access during construction of the facility, no problems are envisaged due to the site having previously been used as a site compound for construction works and also because large (40 foot) shipping containers were recently removed from the site without any issues regarding the access and egress of large articulated vehicles.

Minimal car parking spaces are required for the proposals, any staff and visitor parking requirements can be accommodated within the existing car parking facilities on site.

In view of the above, the proposals are considered acceptable from a highways perspective and the development would be in accordance with Local Plan Policy T4. Highways DM have been consulted on the application and have not raised any objections subject to conditions.

### Biodiversity

The application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA). Given the site has been used for a number of years for storage and the fact the centre of the site largely consists of hardstanding there is little of ecological value within the centre of the site where the majority of the proposed works would be located. The majority of the trees, hedges, shrubs and scrub is located around the periphery of the site and would remain largely untouched barring the removal of 2no. cherry trees and some pruning works.

The PEA concludes that 10% net gain can easily be achieved through tree and shrub planting and this will be conditioned inline with the report recommendations. Other mitigation measures also include bird and bat boxes which again would be conditioned.

The Councils Biodiversity Officer has raised no objections subject to suitably worded conditions.

### Trees

As outlined above, the majority of the development would take place within the centre of the site which is devoid of trees and shrubs. The majority of the trees are around the edges of the site and would be maintained as part of the scheme. None of the trees are subject to a TPO and the site is not located within a conservation area.

2no. Cherry trees are proposed to be removed but the rest of the trees and shrubs would be retained, with some subject to relatively minor pruning works. The applicant has supplied a Arboricultural Method Statement and details of tree protection during the construction

phase. Furthermore, a scheme of tree and shrub planting would be conditioned as part of the 10% BNG requirement.

### Conclusion

Taking into account the relevant development plan policies and other material considerations the application is in accordance with the development plan (most notably policies D1, GD1, BIO1 and T4) and is assessed to be a suitable and sustainable form of development that accords with Local Plan Policy SD1 Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development in overarching terms. Similarly in National Planning Policy terms (NPPF) the presumption in favour of sustainable development is considered to apply also (para 11) which is that proposals that accord with an up to date development plan should be approved without delay. The recommendation is one of approval therefore subject to the conditions listed below.

### **Recommendation**

Grant subject to conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

**Reason: In order to comply with the provision of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.**

2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the plans (Nos. BC-PR-EL-1005-P01, BC-PR-EL-1006-P01, BC-PR-EL-3001-P01, BC-XX-LP-0001-P01 & Panning Documents dated August 2023) and specifications as approved unless required by any other conditions in this permission.

**Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and in accordance with Local Plan Policy D1 High Quality Design and Place Making.**

3. Before the development is brought into use, that part of the site to be used by vehicles shall be surfaced in a solid bound material and adequate measures shall be so designed into the proposed access to avoid the discharge of surface water from the site on to the highway.

**Reason: To ensure adequate provision for the disposal of surface water and to prevent mud/debris from being deposited on the public highway and to prevent the migration of loose material on to the public highway to the detriment of road safety and in accordance with Local Plan Policy T4 New Development and Transport Safety.**

4. The development shall be completed in line with the recommendations in the Preliminary Ecological Report and the conditions of the planning permission. All the recommendations shall be implemented in full according to the timescales laid out, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and thereafter permanently maintained for the stated purposes of biodiversity conservation.

**Reason: In the interest of Biodiversity and in accordance with Local Plan Policy BIO1.**

5. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following additional biodiversity enhancement measures. The measures listed below shall be

implemented in full, prior to completion of the works, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority; the features shall thereafter be permanently retained.

- At least two bat roosting boxes and two bird nesting boxes to be installed on suitable trees on/adjacent to the site;
- Any brash plies should be retained in suitable locations on/adjacent to site (within areas of woodland/scrub) to provide additional refuge habitat for small mammals.

**Reason: In the interest of Biodiversity and in accordance with Local Plan Policy BIO1.**

6. The development shall be carried out in accordance the Arboricultural Method Statement and associated Tree Protection Plan and fencing details.

**Reason: In the interest of the protection of the existing trees and in accordance with Local Plan Policy BIO1.**

### *Informatives*

The contractor shall ensure that no vehicle leaving the development hereby permitted enters the public highway unless its wheels and chassis are clean. It should be noted that to deposit mud and debris on the public highway is an offence under provisions of the Highways Act 1980.

The works should be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season (March-August inclusive). Should this not be possible then a suitably qualified ecologist should undertake a nesting bird check no more than 48 hours prior to the start of works. Should active nests be found, works should cease until the nests are no longer active and the chicks have fledged and the ecologist has deemed the area to be free of nesting birds.

If a protected species (such as any bat, badger, hedgehog or nesting bird) is discovered using a feature on site that would be affected by the development or related works all activity which might affect the species at the locality should cease. You should then seek the advice of a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist and consider the need for a licence from Natural England prior to commencing works. This action is necessary to avoid possible prosecution and ensure compliance with the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and the Wild Mammals Act 1996. This advice note should be passed on to any persons or contractors carrying out the development/works.