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Dear Clem

Provisional Tree Preservation Order No 02/2024 – Crawley College on behalf of Chichester College Group

Further to our ongoing discussions with Crawley Borough Council (CBC) regarding our application to develop our Institute of Technology (IoT), our clients Chichester College Group (CCG) wish us to formally respond to the Provisional Tree Preservation Order (TPO) made on their site at Crawley College on the 6 March 2024.

As you are aware the College have been actively engaging with the Council, over the last in regard to the future provision of education on the site, and currently have an application CR/2023/0734/FUL which formally seeks permission for a new building for the Institute of Technology, which incorporates the Construction Hub.

The College have been actively engaging with CBC on their development requirements across the site for many years, and have been discussing a Masterplan across the whole site since 2018, which was subsequently adopted by the Council following resident and member engagement.

The Masterplan aligns with the STEM building built by CCG, and its associated s106 agreement, and provides clarity for planning opportunities and requirements across the wider site. To assist, and for ease of reference we attach 2 key plans from the adopted Masterplan which indicate the approved layout and future phasing for the educational development required on the southern part of the site.

In addition to this Masterplan work, CCG have supported CBC in their Local Plan Review, supporting your Town Centre Policy TC3's for Town Centre Key Opportunity Sites. This confirms the site is earmarked for mixed use development with a priority for educational uses.

The Local Plan Review and the Adopted Masterplan both demonstrate the partnership working that is ongoing between the Council and Chichester College Group across the Crawley Campus, and mutual support in consolidating the College provision onto the southern half of the site, releasing the northern site for development delivering c.350 dwellings.

The Masterplan is a 10-15 year commitment to reinvest, refurbish and redevelop the southern part of the College campus and has been positively prepared to illustrate a phased framework for the campus.

However, despite all this partnership working over the last 6 years, the Masterplan discussions nor the STEM, nor IoT pre-application discussions, have specified that the trees now included in the Provisional TPO are critical and must be retained. Whilst the College has positively ensured that trees and landscaping are to be enhanced by the IoT and the wider Masterplan, the TPO has not been discussed prior to the TPO being served on 6 March.

Chichester College Group are disappointed that this mechanism was not previously discussed, nor any concerns raised. They therefore they wish to formally raise concerns that the TPO in its current form with 6 trees and 3 x groups of trees, could adversely restrict the development potential of the site as a key opportunity site to deliver both positive housing delivery on the North of the site, and could restrict adequate educational provision on the southern end of the Site.

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In particular, CCG are concerned that G2 which aims to protect 4 x English oaks, would result in the adopted Masterplan being unable to be delivered, especially in regard to Phase 2 of the IoT. The college intends to deliver this Phase 2 in the next few years as an extension to the current IoT application, which is due to start work on site later this year (see Masterplan extracts below that show Block 5/Block D on the plans).

Whilst CCG support the retention of main Oak adjacent to the current IoT Phase 1, (due to be considered at committee imminently) and have, as a result of CBC concerns, relocated the Phase 1 building 2m from the Tree, we do not support that the wider G2 group in centre of site should be protected.

This is due to the fact that they will fundamentally and adversely affect the delivery of enhanced education provision of the Phase 2 IoT, which cannot be operationally relocated elsewhere on the site, and may therefore affect the Colleges ability to relocate required provision to Southern part of the site. They are also considered to be less mature and less prominent trees and are not considered to have good landscape amenity value.

The adopted Masterplan and current IoT proposals require a suitable form of building in Phase 2, that is connected and extends phase 1, and provides operationally suitable floorspace that can be used as teaching and support spaces. Any dissection of the buildings as a result of the 3 trees in G2, will result in a reduction in the space being able to be provided on site, and can affect provision and funding opportunities for the College.

Through the Masterplan and the IoT application, CCG are committed to enhancing the Campus site, providing an improvement to Biodiversity Net Gain, enhancing landscaping, all aligning with a commitment to the IoT being Net Zero.

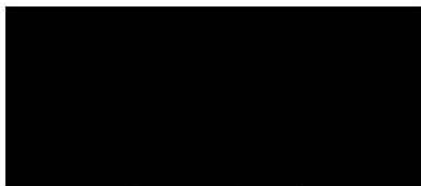
However, they request that the Group G2 is amended to reference a 7th single tree (T7) which will be retained as part of the IoT Phase 1 and the remaining 3 oaks in G2 are removed from the Provisional TPO before being made permanent.

Whilst there are also concerns regarding the impact of T2 and T6 on the adopted Masterplan, it is considered that these can be discussed at the time of any future application, and suitable mitigation may be possible. This however is not considered possible or appropriate for the 3 x oaks that are required to be removed in G2.

We hope this clarifies the situation and look forward to working with the Council with future applications on the site.

If you do have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact myself or the College.

Yours sincerely



For and on behalf of Vail Williams LLP



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