

Planning Application: Report of Handling

Reference No. 20/0218/LB



Renfrewshire
Council

KEY INFORMATION

Ward (4)

Paisley North West

Applicant:

JR Construction
Scotland Ltd
Cardea House
5 Sandyford Road
Paisley
PA3 4HO

Registered:

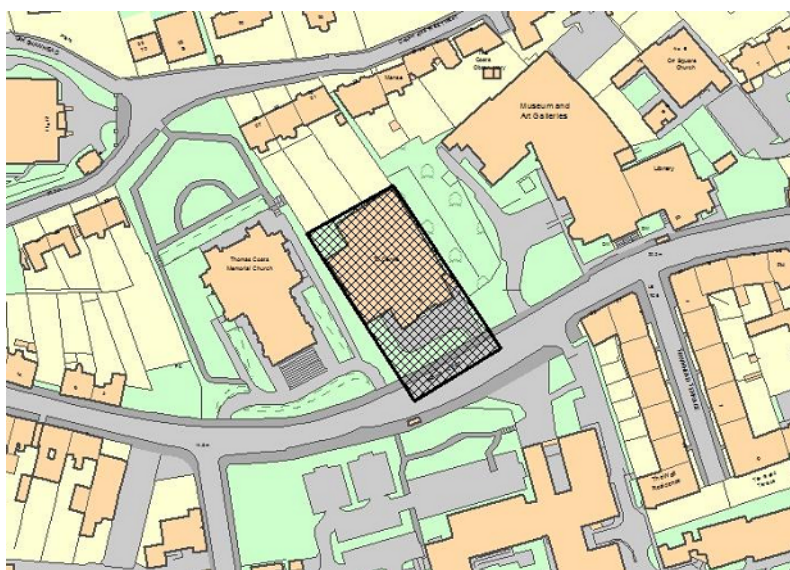
20 April 2020

Report by Director of Communities, Housing and Planning Services

PROSPECTIVE PROPOSAL: Erection of student accommodation, partial demolition of existing building with façade retention and associated internal and external alterations (including retrospective emergency stabilisation works), and erection of bin store.

LOCATION: TA Centre, 76 High Street, Paisley, PA1 2BA

APPLICATION FOR: Listed Building Consent



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RECOMMENDATION

Grant subject to
Conditions

IDENTIFIED KEY ISSUES

- The development proposal accords with Policy ENV3 of the Local Development Plan and the associated New Development Supplementary Guidance on Listed Buildings.
- The TA Centre is category B listed.
- The building is included on the Buildings at Risk Register for Scotland. The condition of the building has further deteriorated following a fire in March 2020.
- Demolition and façade retention of the building must be justified against one of the four tests set out within the Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement
- Historic Environment Scotland have not objected to the development.
- There has been one objection to the development.

Fraser Carlin
Head of Planning and
Housing

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PLANNING SERVICES
REPORT OF HANDLING FOR APPLICATION 20/0218/LB

APPLICANT:	JR Construction Scotland Ltd Cardea House 5 Sandyford Road Paisley PA3 4HO
SITE ADDRESS:	TA Centre, 76 High Street, Paisley, PA1 2BA
PROPOSAL:	Erection of student accommodation, partial demolition of existing building with façade retention and associated internal and external alterations (including retrospective emergency stabilisation works), and erection of bin store.
APPLICATION FOR:	Listed Building Consent

NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIONS AND SUMMARY OF ISSUES RAISED:	One representation has been received. The points raised in the can be summarised as follows: 1 - Development should be scaled back to avoid direct line of sight from the high street and to reduce impact on the Coats Memorial Church; Response: Views from external locations and the impact of the development on the setting of the adjoining listed buildings is considered fully in the concurrent planning application. It is considered that the proposed development will generally enhance the character and appearance of the area. 2 - Tree coverage is misrepresented in the Design and Access statement; Response: Tree coverage is considered fully in the concurrent planning application which also includes a supporting tree survey. It is acknowledged that the development will result in the loss of the majority of trees located within the site, while trees in adjoining sites will be pruned back under supervision of a qualified arborist. A comprehensive planting strategy is proposed to compensate for the loss of any trees. 3 - Lifetime of trees is finite, and thinning of trees could potentially open up line of sight from the High Street; Response: Potential line of site during periods where trees are bare or if trees are felled has been factored into the
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	assessment. 4 - Students may choose to live elsewhere as all rooms are twin rooms. Response: This is not material to the assessment of the listed building consent application or the concurrent planning permission application
CONSULTATIONS:	Historic Environment Scotland - Welcome the principle of the proposed development, and accept the principle of the demolition and facade retention. Further details are required with respect to the proposed works to the retained facade. Detail is lacking in certain areas including rebuilding of decorative ridge ventilators and turret cupolas. It is evident that none of the previous schemes proposed were found to be viable, and given the current state of the building it is considered that refurbishment should be carried out as soon as possible to prevent further decay. It is accepted that demolition of the drill hall is necessary to provide enabling development for repairing the front of the building. A salvage strategy is encouraged to establish whether any historic fabric can be retained and reused as this would help to retain the character of the building. A darker shade of brick for the extension is also suggested so as to tone more sympathetically with the historic building. Response: Historic Environment Scotland's support for the principle of the development is welcomed. They also do not raise any significant issues with the new build element. Instead the consultation mainly focuses on detailed issues relating to the repair and refurbishment of the façade. Comments with respect to a salvage strategy and the colour of the brick on the new build element are also noted. It is considered that conditions can be used to address the points raised in the consultation. This includes submission of a Conservation Method Statement to guide the detailed repair and refurbishment of the façade, submission of a salvage strategy, and submission of brick samples which can be assessed on site.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION	<u>Structural Inspection Report 9th January 2020</u> - Report focuses on the drill hall area, and concludes that repair of the drill hall would not be economically viable. This is due to the extent of damage and water ingress especially to the steel trusses, and the extent of repairs required to the building to bring it to modern standards. <u>Structural Inspection Report 1st April 2020</u> - An additional structural inspection was undertaken following a fire at the building on the 11th March. It is stated that the fire caused significant damage to the frontage of the building with the loss of the roof. Use of a suitable designed facade retention system, regular monitoring, and supervision of the stabilisation and demolition works will allow the sandstone facade to be retained as part of the redevelopment project. Response: The structural reports state that retention of the drill hall area is not viable. Retention of the sandstone facade however will still be possible (even in light of the recent fire) provided a suitable designed facade retention system is implemented. The findings of the report have been accepted by Historic Environment Scotland, and it is recognised that viable redevelopment of the site can only involved retention of the sandstone facade. Demolition of the drill hall area is therefore accepted. <u>Heritage and Townscape Visual Assessment</u> - The assessment provides valuable context to the site including the historic development of the site and surrounding area, description of the site, its condition and heritage assets, and an assessment of special interest. The assessment then goes on to discuss the scope of the proposed development and assess the impact on the site itself and the character of the townscape. To illustrate the impact of the development the assessment provides visuals from several vantage points which compare the existing situation before showing how the proposed development will look. The effect of the development at each viewpoint is also discussed. The assessment creates a distinction between the sandstone frontage of the building which is of greater value, and the drill hall to the rear which is ordinarily and primarily functional. While the demolition of the drill hall will result in some loss of historic value, it is necessary to deliver the restoration and refurbishment of the sandstone frontage. The assessment has informed the design of the proposed
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	extension. The assessment states that the extension is well considered in terms of both scale, massing and design, creating a new 21st century architectural layer to the site which will enhance the existing townscape. The proposal is considered to enhance the character and appearance of the designated heritage assets. Response: This is a comprehensive assessment which provides valuable contextual information. In terms of the proposed development, the 'before' and 'after' visuals in particular are welcomed and provide a valuable insight and interpretation of the proposed development and its effect on the streetscape. Comments with respect to design, massing and materials are noted, and there is a clear underlying design concept which is to create a modern yet contextual building which will positively enhance the area and its heritage assets. <u>Design and Access Statement</u> - The statement provides further contextual information relating to the site and its setting, the existing site conditions and listed building survey including further site deterioration. It is noted that the buildings presence makes a positive contribution to the conservation area and is a well-known landmark within the town. The principal frontage is a key part of the overall setting. The design approach is to retain the frontage, with a strategic approach then taken to compliment the retained frontage with new accommodation. It is proposed to remove the trees along the frontage as this will open up view of the building from the High Street. The key aspect of the proposals is to place the new accommodation subservient to and to the rear of the retained frontage. The principal elevation of the extension is designed to site behind the retained frontage, and a strong vertical emphasis akin to the character of the existing building is deployed. The proposed material palate is composed of subtle, high quality complementary materials. When viewed in context the material palette is considered to offer a subtle considered contribution to the setting of the listed building and wider conservation area, with the new extension viewed as a backdrop to the retained facade. Access to the building will be substantially improved. Incorporation of a new access ramp will aid access by offering an alternative to the steeper incline at the existing access. Accessible spaces will be provided immediately in front of the
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	entrance to the main building. Refuse collection will be from a newly provided, covered refuse collection point which is accessible from the public footway. Secure, covered cycle storage will be provided within the common courtyard area. In terms of landscaping the proposed concept is to create a robust landscape setting which will fit seamlessly with the existing mature landscaping surrounding the site. The majority of trees within the site will be removed including those to the front of the building (with the exception of one tree in the south west corner of the site). The tree removal is in order to facilitate the creation of a new accessible route to the building as well as opening up the building frontage. A single semi mature Lime tree is proposed to the frontage to compensate for the trees which will be felled. Response: Further background to the evolution of the design concept is welcomed, as are the details regarding materials, landscaping and access. <u>Tenement Toolbox Report</u> - Provides further detail on the history of the building, its architecture and special interest, historical associations and use. Key detailing and features on the building are also categorised with respect to their condition. The purpose of the report is to infer costing and to provide key information to allow the ongoing management and maintenance of the building in an appropriate manner. Response: Further insight into the history of the building is welcomed.
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES/ OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS	<u>Development Plan</u> <u>Adopted Renfrewshire Local Development Plan 2014</u> Policy ENV3 - Built Heritage <u>New Development Supplementary Guidance 2014</u> Delivering the Environment Strategy - Listed Buildings <u>Proposed Renfrewshire Local Development Plan 2019</u> Policy ENV3 - Built and Cultural Heritage <u>New Development Supplementary Guidance 2019</u> Delivering the Environment Strategy - Listed Buildings <u>Material Considerations</u> Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement Historic Environment Circular Historic Environment Scotland's Managing Change in the

	Historic Environment Guidance Notes
PLANNING HISTORY	20/0217/PP - Erection of student accommodation, partial demolition of existing building with facade retention and associated external alterations, and erection of bin store. Concurrent application yet to be determined. 19/0809/NO - Erection of student accommodation and associated uses, partial demolition of existing building with facade retention, and other associated works. Proposal of Application Notice accepted 13/12/2019. 07/0131/PP - Refurbishment and sub-division of main building to form 8 flats; refurbishment of chapel to form 1 house; demolition of rear buildings and erection of 17 new build flats and maisonettes with associated parking and landscaping. Granted subject to conditions 02/10/2007. 07/0132/LB - Refurbishment and sub-division of main building to form 8 flats; refurbishment of chapel to form 1 house; demolition of rear buildings and erection of 17 new build flats and maisonettes with associated parking and landscaping. Granted subject to conditions 21/11/2007. 05/1435/LB - Refurbishment and sub-division of main building to form 8 flats; refurbishment of chapel to form 1 house; demolition of rear buildings and erection of 17 new build flats and maisonettes with associated parking and landscaping. Withdrawn 19/04/2006. 05/1421/PP - Refurbishment and sub-division of main building to form 8 flats; refurbishment of chapel to form 1 house; demolition of rear buildings and erection of 17 new build flats and maisonettes with associated parking and landscaping. Withdrawn 19/04/2006.
DESCRIPTION	This application seeks listed building consent for the erection of student accommodation, partial demolition of existing building with facade retention and associated internal and external alterations (including retrospective emergency stabilisation works), and erection of a bin store at the TA Centre which is located on Paisley High Street. The TA Centre is a category B listed building dating from around 1899. Designed by Thomas Graham Abercrombie. The building has been vacant for a number of years, and is included on the Buildings at Risk Register for Scotland which describes it as being in a poor condition. The condition of the building deteriorated further following a fire in March this year. The building comprises of a drill hall which is housed within a

	steel frame structure. This is to the rear of a sandstone facade which fronts the High Street. The facade comprises of a three and a half storey centre block with wall dormers, flanked by four storey gabled wings which are slightly advanced. The pitched roof is finished in clay tiles. The proposed development involves retention of the sandstone facade, demolition of the drill hall the erection of an extension in its place. The extension is six storey in height immediately to the rear of the retained facade, rising to seven storeys in height towards the rear of the site. The extension will be finished in pale stone coloured brick with sections of aluminium panelling, and precast stone feature elements around doorways. The TA building is located within an area of significant streetscape value. To the west the site is bound by the A listed Thomas Coats Memorial Church, and to the east by the A listed Paisley Museum and Art Gallery. The museum is currently undergoing a programme of refurbishment and extension.
LISTED BUILDING ASSESSMENT	<u>Adopted Renfrewshire Local Development Plan 2014</u> The Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 states that in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works, special regard must be had to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic merit. A key material consideration in the assessment of the application is the consultation response from Historic Environment Scotland (HES). HES advise that they accept the principle of the demolition and the retention and refurbishment of the facade as part of a development of student flats. It is evident that previous schemes were not viable, and that demolition of the drill hall is likely to be necessary to provide enabling development for repairing the front of the building A number of detailed comments are made with respect to the bracing and restoration of the facade, the join between old and new fabric, stone repair and replacement, a salvage strategy and the finishing colour of the brick associated with the new accommodation. In terms of local development plan policy, policy ENV3 and the associated New Development Supplementary Guidance on Listed Buildings seek to protect and enhance the listed building. Development proposals relating to listed buildings are required to meet various criteria including the use of sympathetic and appropriate materials and finishes, and that the massing, scale and form of development should be appropriate.

	In terms of the proposed demolition, it is accepted that demolition of the drill hall to allow enabling development is the only viable redevelopment option for the site. Demolition of the drill hall was accepted for the listed building application submitted in 2007, and HES continue to be of the view that the principle of demolition is acceptable. As the proposal involves the substantial demolition of the building with only the facade being retained, it must be assessed against the criteria for demolition as set out in Historic Environment Scotland's Policy Statement. Planning Authorities should only approve applications for demolition where they are satisfied that: (a) The building is not of special interest; or (b) The building is incapable of repair; or (c) The demolition of the building is essential to delivering significant benefits to economic growth and the wider community; or (d) The repair of the building is not economically viable and that it has been marketed at a price reflecting its location and condition to potential restoring purchasers for a reasonable period. These tests are restated in the Local development Plan and associated New Development Supplementary Guidance. The policy statement and supplementary guidance require that only one of these tests need to be satisfied. When the proposed demolition is assessed against these requirements the following conclusions can be made. The building is not of special interest In the heritage statement the applicants assert that the interest of the building is in the sandstone face which is more grand and aesthetic in appearance compared with the drill hall which is utilitarian and ancillary. An attempt has been made to distinguish between these two elements of the building. On assessment, there is agreement with HES that the drill hall is an integral and fundamental part of the building as a whole. It contributes positively to the special interest of the building in this regard. Demolition is not therefore justified on the basis that the building is not of special interest The building is incapable of repair It is not contended that the building is beyond repair.
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	The demolition of the building is essential to delivering significant benefits to economic growth and the wider community Demolition will release land for enabling development that will then provide funds for the repair and refurbishment of the sandstone facade. The facade will then be incorporated into the new development in this regard. This approach is considered to be the only way to prevent the loss of the historic asset in its entirety. In releasing land for enabling development, the substantial demolition of the building will facilitate the redevelopment of the site as a whole. Bringing the site back into active use will bring significant economic benefit to the area both in terms of the immediate enhancement to the public realm, and also through the provision of student accommodation that will contribute to the vitality and viability of Paisley Town Centre. The repair of the building is not economically viable and that it has been marketed at a price reflecting its location and condition to potential restoring purchasers for a reasonable period. The building has been vacant since 1996, with the heritage statement asserting that its condition has deteriorated since then to the point that the costs associated with its repair are so significant so as to make the works economically unviable. Three reports have been submitted which give an indication as to the current condition of the building. This includes a survey undertaken following the most recent fire in March 2020. This fire resulted in the loss of the roof, and it is assumed that the vast majority of the interior structure is beyond economic repair. Extensive restoration works would be necessary in order to stabilise the building with the view to bringing it back into active use. Whilst the building is still considered to be of special interest, there is a risk that given its deteriorating condition it will be lost in its entirety without significant intervention. The scope of intervention proposed is considered to be the only viable way of ensuring that any of the historic fabric of the building can be retained. It has been demonstrated that repair and subsequent reuse of the building in its entirety is not economically viable. The substantial demolition of the building will allow enabling development to take place that will provide funds to ensure that the facade of the building can be saved.
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	Retention of the facade and its incorporation into the development of the site will be of significant economic and cultural benefit to the area. In view of the above, it is considered that the proposed substantial demolition of the building meets two of the four tests set out within the policy statement and the Local Development Plan in that the repair of the building is not economically viable, and the substantial demolition of the building will facilitate enabling development that is of significant benefit to the area. The substantial demolition of the building with facade retention is therefore considered to be justified. As noted above, the proposed development can be divided into two parts: the retention of the sandstone facade and the enabling development to the rear. Each part of the development will be considered in turn. Firstly with respect to the facade retention, it is noted that emergency stabilisation works have been undertaken following the recent fire. This included removal of loose masonry, roof members, sarking and tiles. Further down takings are also proposed. HES have advised that they are content with the down taking works that have been undertaken to date and those still to take place. Dismantled stone should be stored so that it can be reinstated at a later date. Following the down takings a series of facade monitoring devices were installed to detect any further movement in the external walls. It is noted that monitoring has shown slight movement in the building since the fire, and as such the applicants have brought forward the stabilisation of the facade to ensure that it can be retained. The proposed facade retention scaffold is detailed in building warrant application 20/0730/eBC. The scaffolding will be fixed to the facade either by drilling through the stone or using the window openings. HES have discouraged the fixing of bracing to the building via drilling into the masonry. However, if such an approach is necessary the drilling should avoid decorative masonry and a strategy for repairing damaged stone should be agreed. These matters can be controlled via condition. Retention scaffolding is required in order to ensure the facade can be saved. The proposed method of retention is accepted, as is the installation of the scaffolding in advance of the current application being determined. Health and safety issues as well as a desire to save the facade should take precedence in this regard. Installation of the retention scaffold will allow full repair of the facade and reinstatement of elements which were removed following the fire. The extent of repairs and reinstatement work
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	is illustrated in the submitted drawings and the heritage statement. HES have advised that the submission is essentially a set of conservation principles and recommendations which are generally good but lack detail. While the principles set out are welcomed, in order to fully control the repair and reinstatement of the facade it is considered that the principles outlined in the submission should be used to infer a Conservation Method Statement. The statement will set out in detail the scope of required works, and guide the repair and reinstatement of the facade. The Conservation Method Statement can be submitted via condition. Behind the retained facade it is proposed to rebuild the interior to suit the proposed use and allow for integration into the new development. It is asserted that the interior has no surviving features of interest. However, as the submission indicates that interior inspection of the building has not been undertaken it is possible that items may have survived that could be salvaged and reused in the new development. In their consultation response HES encourage the preparation of a salvage strategy. A salvage strategy can be submitted via condition, and subsequently implemented on site during demolition to ensure that any items of interests are retained and reused. In order to retain the facade, it is recognised that enabling development (in this instance a student accommodation block) is required to the rear. While the principle of enabling development has been accepted on the basis that it will prevent the loss of the building in its entirety, the enabling development itself still has to comply with the requirements of Scottish Planning Policy namely that it is designed and sited carefully to preserve or enhance the character and setting of the historic asset. The requirements of Scottish Planning Policy are reinforced by Policy ENV3 and the associated New Development Supplementary Guidance which states that enabling development must not materially harm the heritage values of the place, and that development proposals in general must use sympathetic and appropriate materials and should be of an appropriate form, scale and mass. The Managing Change in the Historic Environment guidance notes must also be considered. The heritage statement advises that the proposed student accommodation has been designed as a contemporary addition that sits well within the wider context. A vertical emphasis akin to the character of the existing building
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	is deployed in the design, with the material palette comprising of high quality complementary materials that will provide a well-detailed backdrop to the main building. While the proposed accommodation is modern in design, it can be considered as a complementary addition to the retained facade. The design of the accommodation takes visual cues from the retained facade with respect to massing, fenestration and proportions. It is not a direct replication, and instead creates a clear distinction between old and new. Overall the new accommodation is considered to be a contextual and robust addition that sits behind the retained facade but does not overwhelm it. The combination of old and new is considered to positively enhance the character and setting of the historic asset. HES have made comment on the proposed colour of brick that will be used to construct the new accommodation. It is stated that a slightly darker brick would be more appropriate, and that choosing a brick that is lighter than the historic masonry will make the building less subservient to the historic building. While the use of brick is accepted in principle as a key component of the new accommodations contemporary design, the importance of choosing the appropriate colour match is noted. The best way to ensure an appropriate match is to view samples on site, and it is considered that this process can be managed via condition. It has been demonstrated that the new accommodation is of a high standard of design that is contextually appropriate to the area and will enhance the character and setting of the historic asset. It is therefore considered to comply with the requirements of Policy ENV3 and the associated New Development Supplementary Guidance on listed buildings. It is noted that the impact of the development on the setting of the neighbouring listed buildings and the character and appearance of the town centre Conservation Area is assessed in the concurrent planning application 20/0217/PP. <u>Proposed Renfrewshire Local Development Plan (2019)</u> The policies within the Proposed Local Development Plan and the associated Supplementary Guidance reflect those of the currently adopted plan. The proposal is therefore found to be compliant with the proposed plan. <u>Conclusion</u> It is acknowledged that the proposed development represents a significant intervention into the historic fabric of the site. It is an intervention that is required in order to ensure that the asset is not lost in its entirety.
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	The substantial demolition of the building will provide land for enabling development which will allow the facade to be retained and combined with contemporary but complementary student accommodation. The development as a whole will positively enhance the character and setting of the historic asset, and will generate significant economic benefit by bringing the vacant site back into use. It is found that the proposal complies with the policies and guidance of the Local Development Plan and all applicable material considerations.
RECOMMENDATION	Grant subject to conditions.

Reason for Decision

The proposal accords with the provisions of the Development Plan and there were no material consideration which outweighed the presumption in favour of development according with the Development Plan.

Conditions

- 1 That prior to the commencement of works to the retained façade beyond those required as part of the emergency stabilisation works, the developer shall submit a Conservation and Restoration Method Statement for the written approval of the Planning Authority. The statement shall detail the schedule of works associated with the repair and restoration of the retained façade. It shall be guided by the principles set out in approved drawings EE(01) and EE(02) by John Gilbert Architects, and shall include works to repair stonework following removal of the retention scaffolding. Only the works approved as part of the statement shall thereafter be implemented on site to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the repair and restoration of the façade is appropriate in the interests of the character and appearance of the building.

- 2 That prior to the commencement of development on site, the developer shall submit a Salvage Strategy for the written approval of the Planning Authority. The strategy shall set out measures to identify items that can be salvaged from the building and where possible re-used within the new development. The agreed upon measures shall thereafter be implemented on site during the demolition of the building.

Reason: The reinstatement of salvaged historic fabric will contribute positively to the character of the new development.

- 3 That prior to the commencement of construction works on site, samples of all external finishing materials associated with the student accommodation hereby approved shall be submitted for the written approval of the Planning Authority. Only the approved materials shall thereafter be used in the development of the site.

Reason: To ensure the proposed materials are suitable for use in the interests of the character and appearance of the building.

Fraser Carlin
Head of Planning and Housing

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 - Background Papers
For further information or to inspect any letters of objection and other background papers,
please contact Sharon Marklow on 0141 618 7835.