

Title: University of Warwick Campus Framework Masterplan
Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – consultation update and
proposed adoption

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Portfolio Holder: Councillor Chris King (Place)

Wards of the District directly affected: Kenilworth Abbey and Arden

| Approvals required | Date | Name |
|--|---|-------------------|
| Portfolio Holder | 30.09.24 | Cllr King (Place) |
| Finance | 30.09.24 | Andrew Rollins |
| Legal Services | 13.09.24 | Nigel Bell |
| Chief Executive | 20.09.24 | Chris Elliott |
| Director of Climate Change | 24.09.24 | Dave Barber |
| Head of Service(s) | 13.09.24 | Philip Clarke |
| Section 151 Officer | 30.09.24 | Andrew Rollins |
| Monitoring Officer | 16.09.24 | Graham Leach |
| Leadership Co-ordination Group | 30.09.24 | |
| Final decision by this Committee or rec to another Cttee / Council? | Yes | |
| Contrary to Policy / Budget framework? | No | |
| Does this report contain exempt info/Confidential? If so, which paragraph(s)? | No | |
| Does this report relate to a key decision (referred to in the Cabinet Forward Plan)? | No, Forward Plan item Ref 1,485 – scheduled for 17 October 2024 | |
| Accessibility Checked? | Yes | |

Summary

The purpose of the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is to provide a framework for guiding the level and broad location of growth on the main University of Warwick campus as well as design principles to be considered when assessing planning applications on the campus. The SPD provides supplementary guidance to Policy MS1 – University of Warwick - of the adopted Warwick District Local Plan and is intended to assist with the determination of future planning applications. The SPD can only be adopted as Council guidance following statutory public consultation and then subsequent formal adoption at Cabinet. Following initial Cabinet approval in March 2024, a public consultation was held from Friday 24th May to 5th July 2024. It is intended that the SPD is now adopted so that it can be used to help assist with decision making on planning applications.

Recommendation(s)

- (1) That Cabinet notes the Statement of Consultation report at Appendix A and the Schedule of Proposed Amendments at Appendix B.
- (2) That Cabinet agrees to the adoption of the amended University of Warwick Campus Framework Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document at Appendix C.

1 Reasons for the Recommendation

- 1.1 The SPD would provide supplementary planning guidance to policy MS1 of the adopted Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029. Policy MS1 states that “development of the University of Warwick will be permitted in line with an approved Masterplan or Development Brief”. There is currently no such up-to-date Masterplan and Development Brief in place for the area. The SPD can therefore provide a more detailed masterplan framework and supplementary guidance to assist with the determination of future planning applications.
- 1.2 The University’s main campus straddles the administrative boundaries of Coventry and Warwick District, with the majority of the academic faculty buildings being located in Coventry and residential accommodation and sports facilities being largely located within Warwick District. It is important therefore that the SPD is also consistent with Coventry’s relevant Local Plan policy. Furthermore, it should be noted that Coventry are also proposing to adopt the SPD.

Background/Information

Purpose of the SPD

- 1.3 Policy MS1 states that the Masterplan should “set out how proposals will contribute to the University delivering a world-class education campus” with four key purposes:
 - a) to identify the physical and economic context;
 - b) to identify the development principles to underpin future development proposals;

c) to identify the location of developments, demonstrating how proposals will mitigate any potential adverse impacts; and

d) to identify how the proposals support the vitality of the local and/or sub-regional economy.

- 1.4 The Local Plan acknowledges the important role of the University in supporting the local economy and the need for the University to be able to grow within its existing boundaries and develop as a Higher Education facility of international importance.
- 1.5 As the document seeks to clarify the University's plans for future development on campus and their proposed location, planning consultants Turleys were appointed by the University to lead on the drafting of the document and there has also been input from a range of other consultants. However, officers representing Warwick District Council, Coventry City Council and Warwickshire County Council reviewed various drafts of the SPD via a Steering Group. Specific sub-groups were also used to progress certain matters such as ecology and heritage and there was engagement with external bodies including National Highways. The comments shaped the consultation version of the Framework Masterplan SPD.

Scope and content of the SPD consulted upon

- 1.6 The SPD addresses the planning policy context (both existing and emerging) and then the current campus context by explaining existing land uses and assets. The SPD covers the entirety of the main University campus, and so addresses land in both Warwick District and Coventry City Council areas.
- 1.7 The document explains that the long-term vision of the University is based on five strategic priorities: innovation; inclusion; regional leadership; internationalisation; and sustainability. The SPD seeks to give an indication of the longer-term delivery vision up to 2050, however the SPD specifies the detailed capital projects likely to be delivered by 2033.
- 1.8 A number of key proposals are identified up to 2033:
- a) A new Social Sciences Quarter including the new Business School (within the Warwick District area – outline application W/23/0195 already approved)
 - b) The Science Precinct – redevelopment and refurbishment of Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) facilities on central campus and creation of a new University Green (within the Coventry City area – hybrid application PL/2023/0002402/OUTM approved 9th July 2024)
 - c) A new Energy Innovation Centre (within the Coventry City area)
 - d) Extension of Scarman House, Post Experience Centre, including additional bedspaces (within the Warwick District area)
 - e) 'Solar arrays' – two separate large scale photovoltaic installations to generate renewable energy (within the Warwick District area).
- 1.9 The SPD also proposes the potential creation of an Eco-Park combining ecological, recreational and energy generation initiatives. However, this is dependent on the return of land from HS2 Ltd, the extent of which is currently unknown.
- 1.10 The SPD states that the University anticipates providing 1,200 net additional student bedspaces on or immediately adjoining the campus.

- 1.11 A number of other possible proposals are identified up to 2033. Within Warwick District, possible redevelopment of Radcliffe House is identified to create a MBA Training Centre. Other possible proposals are also identified on land within the Coventry administrative area.
- 1.12 In consultation with the highway authorities, the University modelled the traffic generation from 31,000m² of new development on campus over and above the recent approval of the Social Sciences Quarter (outline application W/23/0195), as well as previous planning applications including the Capital Plan Hybrid application (OUT/2018/2115) within the Coventry area. Accounting for known projects to be pursued up to 2033, this leaves a capacity of 13,000m² of floorspace to allow for other projects to come forward over the period to 2033. If any projects come forward resulting in additional floorspace to the 31,000m² gross/13,000m² further net floorspace, additional modelling work would be required.
- 1.13 Alongside the specific proposals identified, there are a number of strategic design principles to guide future development on campus focusing on delivering higher density development in the Campus Core, providing pedestrian-focused development and active public spaces, delivering landmark design to aid wayfinding and integrating nature by connecting habitats and corridors.
- 1.14 The SPD breaks the campus down into 6 distinct character areas – Campus Core, Residential Fringe, Gibbet Hill, Science Park, Westwood and Green Fringe. In recognising the distinct characteristics of those areas, design principles are included to provide a framework for development proposals within those locations.
- 1.15 The main transport and movement strategy of the SPD focuses on reducing single occupancy trips to and from campus, maintaining accessibility through and around campus for all users (especially sustainable, non-car modes) and offering choice to incentivise behavioural change and enhance the environmental sustainability of the campus. The University has been successful in recent years in achieving a modal shift of travel movement by implementing a number of measures to encourage walking and cycling as well as use of rail and bus and is pursuing further measures in this regard (including Demand Responsive Transport for 'last mile' journeys). The strategy also addresses the more strategic and longer-term possibilities including the potential for the campus to be served by Very Light Rail in future.
- 1.16 The trip generation and traffic modelling informed the proposed Framework Section 106 and associated 'Monitor and Manage' approach. The 'Monitor and Manage' approach is an alternative to the traditional 'predict and provide' approach of using past trends to determine future need (it is noted that the traditional 'predict and provide' approach is criticized in the government's recent consultation¹ on reforms to the planning system). Instead, the 'Monitor and Manage' approach allows travel behaviour to be monitored, allowing identification of necessary, and more targeted, mitigation measures to address the specific impacts from particular proposals. This was addressed in the SPD and the Framework s106 Obligations tables appended. Where development comes forward outside of the floorspace limits or for uses not assessed through the SPD, a separate Transport Assessment would be required.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-reforms-to-the-national-planning-policy-framework-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system/proposed-reforms-to-the-national-planning-policy-framework-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system>

- 1.17 The SPD also addresses other transport considerations including the A46 Strategic Link Road project, which is not considered necessary to support the quantum of growth specified within the SPD. The potential new railway station and transport interchange to serve the University and south Coventry is also addressed and whilst is currently unfunded, it remains an aspiration and a project for further investigation.

Consultation update

- 1.18 Appendix A provides the Statement of Consultation, including the consultation process, methods of engagement and summary of issues raised.
- 1.19 A total of 42 responses were received from a range of stakeholders including statutory consultees, local residents and planning agents. Specifically, responses were received from 19 local residents, 5 planning agents/developers, The Coventry Society, the Coal Authority, the Environment Agency, Guide Dogs, Historic England, Kenilworth Town Council, Natural England, the NHS Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care Board, Transport for West Midlands, a Warwick District councillor, Warwickshire County Council (Strategic Planning & Infrastructure and Archaeology Services), Warwickshire Fire and Rescue, Wellesbourne and Walton Parish Council, and West Midlands Police.
- 1.20 A number of Leamington residents raised concerns regarding higher concentrations of student houses in multiple occupation (HMOs), and associated issues of antisocial behaviour, noise and litter. It should be noted that there is an Article 4 Direction in place for parts of Leamington which has removed permitted development rights for changes of use of a house or flat to a small HMO. For any developments requiring planning permission, Policy H6 of the adopted Warwick District Local Plan (2017) provides the starting point for determining applications for HMO proposals and student accommodation. This includes certain restrictions such as HMOs not exceeding 10% of total dwelling units within a 100m radius of the proposal, and no continuous frontage of 3 or more HMOs. As of 19th January 2024, it is a requirement that HMOs are licensable. As part of the licensing process, a number of compliance requirements are in place and this includes Landlord Guides on managing anti-social behaviour and refuse. The University predicts that 1,200 additional bedspaces are required to support the level of growth proposed up to 2033 and the SPD states that these are intended to be provided on, or immediately adjacent to, the campus. The SPD also states that there has been a downward trend in terms of the number of students residing in Leamington and this is expected to continue. No amendments are therefore proposed to the SPD however any issues relating to noise, anti-social behaviour or refuse should be reported to the relevant authority for further investigation.
- 1.21 The Warwickshire County Council Strategic Planning & Infrastructure team have requested further detail in relation to the quantum and types of additional floorspace and numbers of expected staff and students that were accounted for in the modelling. They also raised some concerns in relation to the Framework s106 and 'Monitor and Manage' approach. Further discussions have taken place with WCC to better understand the concerns and they have requested additional clarity in relation to the Monitor and Manage approach. Further still, they have sought confirmation that monies will be index linked from the date of SPD adoption, and requested that the 'Framework s106' references are removed, but confirmation provided that the 'Monitor and Manage' approach is legally binding and to be progressed by a Monitor and Manage Transport Sub

Board. Terms of Reference have been drafted for the Monitor and Manage Transport Sub Board, with representation from Warwickshire County Council, Coventry City Council and the University of Warwick. The purpose of the group is to monitor, co-ordinate and implement the 'monitor and manage' principles and to propose recommendations as to how the s106 monies are to be spent. These recommendations are then considered by the University of Warwick Transport Board comprising senior representatives from the University, Warwickshire County Council and Coventry City Council for formal consideration and decision making. Corrective or preventative action at trigger points is therefore determined by the Transport Board following recommendations from the Monitor and Manage Transport Sub Board. This includes monitoring and expediting the obligations and requirements set out in any s106 agreements. These amendments have been carried forward into the final version of the SPD.

- 1.22 One area considered to be of utmost importance to WCC is bus provision, and the requirement for additional services on the Leamington-Kenilworth-University of Warwick-Coventry corridor. In particular, capacity issues have been raised specifically relating to the Parish Church stop on Parade, Leamington. This is considered to be an area of particular focus for the Monitor and Manage Transport Board.
- 1.23 In terms of other transport issues raised, there was widespread support for measures to promote sustainable transport and the principle of a new railway station and transport interchange to serve the university over the longer term, albeit the delivery and funding challenges were noted.
- 1.24 A number of respondents requested additional clarity in relation to the Eco-park proposal and there was a specific request that the Eco-park supports, and helps extend, reconnected areas of ancient woodland like Black Waste Wood, Broadwell Wood, Whitefield Coppice, Roughknowles Wood and Crackley Wood. Whilst the University are aware of the interest in the Eco-park and are committed to its delivery, the project will be contingent on the return of land from HS2. The University note the aspirations and will give further consideration to the proposal, issuing additional detail in due course. If planning approval is required, there would of course be the option of inputting at that stage.
- 1.25 The Guide Dogs charity also raised concerns with the principle of shared surfaces and shared pedestrian and cycle lanes, owing to difficulties and potential dangers faced by the blind community. The concerns have been raised with the University. All parties are committed to ensure that the campus is safe and navigable by all students, staff and visitors. If shared surfaces or shared cycle lanes are proposed, they will be subject to detailed assessment and audit and all efforts will be taken to ensure that any schemes are designed and engineered in a way that does not pose risks to members of the blind community. Planning permission is likely to be required for such schemes and there would be an opportunity to input further, and suggest amendments, at that stage.
- 1.26 Kenilworth Town Council also raised a number of responses (some of which are addressed above) and whilst largely supportive, they raised a specific query as to whether the University could lead by example by delivering Passivhaus or Passivhaus Plus development.
- 1.27 A number of technical consultees requested the addition of references to particular studies and these have been added where necessary.

- 1.28 A number of planning consultants submitted representations in support of 'call for sites' submissions as part of Local Plan processes, all of which were beyond the confines of the SPD area but were within broad proximity of the campus. The site allocation process is clearly outside the scope of the SPD and so those submissions would be considered as part of the South Warwickshire Local Plan or Coventry Local Plan Review processes.
- 1.29 A more detailed list of issues raised and responses is set out in Appendix A. A schedule of proposed amendments is set out in Appendix B and the final version of the SPD is included as Appendix C.

Next steps

- 1.30 Recommendation 2 of the report seeks Cabinet approval to adopt the SPD. In order to adopt an SPD, the Council is legally required to publish an Adoption Statement. Legislation allows a 3 month window for parties to apply to the High Court for a judicial review of the decision to adopt. Subsequently, copies of the SPD and Adoption Statement would be available for public inspection following the decision to adopt.
- 1.31 As the SPD has been produced jointly with Coventry City Council, it is intended that the formal SPD adoption date begins once the City Council have secured approval to adopt. It is understood that their adoption decision is expected in November 2024. If Coventry City Council do not choose to adopt the SPD, a further update will be reported to Cabinet in due course.

2 Alternative Options

- 2.1 An alternative option is to not adopt the SPD. If major amendments are required, a revised version of the SPD could be presented to Cabinet in future, subject to further engagement with the University, Coventry City Council and Warwickshire County Council. Non-adoption is not recommended as there would remain a lack of planning guidance to assist with the determination of planning applications and it would also prevent decision making on how s106 monies are spent via the Monitor and Manage Transport Sub Board and University of Warwick Transport Board.

3 Legal Implications

- 3.1 The legislation relevant to the production of SPDs is set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 3.2 As stated in the Government's Planning Practice Guidance, SPDs should build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on policies in an adopted local plan. As they do not form part of the development plan, they cannot introduce new planning policies into the development plan. They are however a material consideration in decision-making.
- 3.3 The Guidance also states that SPDs should not add unnecessarily to the financial burdens on development. It is intended that the Monitor and Manage approach is legally binding as a basis for determining how monies are spent, with decision making via the Monitor and Manage Transport Sub Board and University of Warwick Transport Board. The SPD therefore does not increase financial burdens, but it will formalise the Monitor and Manage approach and act as a legally binding mechanism for future decision making.

- 3.4 As set out above, any person aggrieved by the SPD may apply to the High Court for a judicial review of the decision to adopt the SPD. Such an application must be made promptly and in any event not later than 3 months after the date on which the SPD was adopted.

4 Financial Services

- 4.1 Costs of implementing and applying the SPD are expected to be minimal. Any such costs are expected to be met through existing budgets.

5 Corporate Strategy

- 5.1 Warwick District Council has adopted a Corporate Strategy which sets three strategic aims for the organisation. The proposed SPD can contribute to the delivery of some of these strategic aims:
- 5.2 Delivering valued, sustainable services – not applicable.
- 5.3 Low cost, low carbon energy across the district – proposals set out within the SPD include the 'solar arrays' project, two separate large scale photovoltaic installations to generate renewable energy. An Energy Innovation Centre is also proposed which can help with the development of new, low/zero carbon technologies. The SPD proposals also seek to encourage zero and low carbon travel to, and around, the site to reduce reliance on private car. Any development proposals on campus would also be required to adhere to adopted sustainability policies in the Warwick District or Coventry Local Plan (as applicable to the site location).
- 5.4 Creating vibrant, safe and healthy communities of the future – the proposals set out within the SPD seek to sustain the University as a world class education facility, but also to 'open up' the campus to the wider community as an asset within the district for the public to visit and enjoy.

6 Environmental/Climate Change Implications

- 6.1 The proposals set out within the SPD seek to deliver environmental enhancement and mitigate the impacts of climate change. Any future development on site would be required to comply with Development Plan Policies that address the natural environment and climate change. The SPD therefore aligns with the Council's policies and Climate Emergency Action Plan. As part of the consultation, a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping Report was published for the three statutory consultation bodies to review and comment on. All comments have helped inform the final version of the SPD.

7 Analysis of the effects on Equality

- 7.1 The consultation was conducted in line with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement. An Equality Impact Assessment was produced as part of the consultation and this has been reviewed in light of responses that were submitted – for example, in light of the comments from Guide Dogs, further consideration will be given to the issue of shared spaces, shared pedestrian cycle routes and street furniture.

8 Data Protection

- 8.1 The statutory consultation on the SPD was undertaken in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) requirements. The responses have been processed accordingly.

9 Health and Wellbeing

- 9.1 A number of the proposals set out within the SPD are likely to deliver health and wellbeing benefits to staff, students and visitors to the campus. This includes promoting active travel to and around campus, encouraging more public use for people to enjoy the facilities and surroundings, and by delivering environmental enhancements.

10 Risk Assessment

- 10.1 By not producing supplementary guidance to policy MS1 of the Local Plan, there is considered to be a lack of guidance to assist planning officers with the determination of planning applications. This may cause unnecessary delays and hamper delivery of the University's capital growth programme. An adopted SPD will also help to communicate the vision for future growth to local communities and set the expectation for any forthcoming planning applications. Adoption of the Framework s106 will also help ensure that highway and transport impacts from new development are appropriately mitigated.

11 Consultation

- 11.1 The SPD has been subject to statutory public consultation and complies with the requirements set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 11.2 Prior to the public consultation, an all member briefing was arranged for District Council members to hear from the University and their consultants about the proposed content of the SPD. The University has also undertaken further targeted consultation.

Background papers:

Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029

The consultation version of the SPD, and supporting material, is available at https://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/info/20794/supplementary_planning_documents_and_other_guidance/1962/university_of_warwick_supplementary_planning_document

Supporting documents:

None