

CET/23/61
Development Management Committee
6 September 2023

County Council Development

Teignbridge District: Erection of a community centre and general practice surgery and associated infrastructure provision for vehicle parking, cycle storage, EV charging bays, pedestrian and cycle routes and landscaped spaces, Land to the east of the A379, south of Ellacott Road and adjacent to the new Matford Brook Academy, Exeter

Applicant: Devon County Council

Application No: DCC/4355/2923

Date application received by Devon County Council: 5 June 2023

Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport

Please note that the following recommendation is subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

1) Recommendation

It is recommended that, subject to satisfactory resolution of surface water management issues, planning permission is granted subject to the conditions in Appendix 1 of this report (with the addition of any necessary conditions relating to surface water management and with any subsequent minor material changes to the conditions being agreed in consultation with the Chair and Local Member).

2) Summary

- 2.1 This report relates to a planning application to construct two buildings to provide a community centre and general practice surgery on land forming part of the South West Exeter development.
- 2.2 It is considered that the main material planning considerations in the determination of the proposed development are planning policy considerations, site layout, design and materials, nature conservation, traffic and parking, surface water management and environmental and sustainability considerations.
- 2.3 The planning application, representations received and consultation responses are available to view on the Council website under reference DCC/4355/2023 or by clicking on the following link:
<https://planning.devon.gov.uk/PlanDisp.aspx?AppNo=DCC/4355/2023>.

3) The Proposal/Background

- 3.1 Outline planning permission [15/00708/MAJ] was granted by Teignbridge District Council in 2018 for land forming the major part of the South West of Exeter Urban Extension, to include residential development and a mix of other uses including community and educational buildings. Development is progressing with phased, construction of dwellings, while highway junction improvements, a cycle/pedestrian bridge and a new school have been constructed.
- 3.2 The site of the current application is located at the junction of Ellacott Road with the A379, with new residential properties to the north and the new school and associated sports facilities to the south and south-east. Immediately to the south-west of the site is a pedestrian and cycle path leading to the newly installed bridge over the A379. The land within the application site has been cleared and was used as the site compound for the bridge construction.
- 3.3 Ground levels within the application site generally slope from south-west to north-east, with differences across the site ranging between 5.75m and 8m. The path to the south-west leading to the bridge is at a significantly higher level, resulting in retaining walls facing the site.
- 3.4 The proposed development comprises two new buildings – a community centre and a general practice surgery – together with associated car and cycle parking, seating and planting areas, a community garden and bin storage. Vehicular access would be provided at the south-eastern corner of the site, while pedestrian and cycle access will also be available from Ellacott Road to the north.
- 3.5 The community centre would occupy the larger of the two buildings and would comprise two main pitched roof elements – a two storey part facing Ellacott Road and a single storey structure to the south – linked by a wedge-shaped flat-roofed infill structure. Facilities within the community centre would include a reception and office, community hall with rentable stores, smaller studio hall, community kitchen, multi-use foyer and café space, meeting rooms and toilet facilities. The building would be managed by Exminster Parish Council.
- 3.6 The general practice surgery will be managed by Ide Lane Practice and would comprise a single building with two storeys fronting Ellacott Road but with a single storey facing the parking and circulation area to the south. Facilities within the surgery building will include reception and manager's offices, waiting room, consulting rooms, staffroom and storage and utility rooms.
- 3.7 The two buildings share a common approach to external materials, with the two storey elevations facing Ellacott Road comprising dark brickwork for the lower floors and profiled metal sheeting in a brick red colour for the upper floors and roofs. For the rear part of the community building, a different approach is taken with vertical timber cladding for the walls and grey profiled metal sheeting for the roof. The rear elevation of the surgery building would also incorporate timber cladding for part of the structure.

- 3.8 External spaces include a lower plaza with cycle parking fronting Ellacott Road, linked by steps to the upper plaza from which access to each of the buildings would be achieved. The layout of the site has been designed for all ranges of mobility, with both the lower and upper plazas being accessible. The 3m difference in levels between the two plazas means that they are not directly linked for those users requiring a ramp, but an external lift is not viewed as being viable for insurance and maintenance reasons. The lower plaza can be accessed via a ramp from Ellacott Road and the upper plaza from the car park. Both buildings have lifts to the lower floors and access doors externally which offer a third option when the buildings are open. The parking area would have 29 parking bays, including six for disabled persons, and four electric vehicle charging points, together with further covered and uncovered cycle parking.

4) Consultation Responses

- 4.1 Teignbridge District Council (Planning): No response received.
- 4.2 Exminster Parish Council: Objection due to the exterior appearance of the community centre not being in keeping with the neighbouring area, contrary to the Neighbourhood Plan; insufficient car parking available; and not according with the provisions of the South West Exeter Development Framework and Neighbourhood Plan regarding a principal community building and indoor sports and leisure facilities.
- The Parish Council also comment that the community centre is like a barn conversion or industrial unit; the timber cladding could create a maintenance issue; and the use of metal sheeting on the roof raises concerns over aesthetics, maintenance and noise disturbance.
- 4.3 National Highways: No objection.
- 4.4 Exeter Airport: No objection.
- 4.5 DCC Highways: No objection but recommend that a construction environmental management plan is required.
- 4.6 DCC Historic Environment: No comment as the development lies within an area where archaeological investigations have been completed.
- 4.7 DCC Ecology: No objection subject to a condition requiring a Construction Environmental Management Plan to address potential impacts from surface water runoff, dust and water pollution and to make provision for species protection.
- 4.8 DCC Flood Risk: Further information is required on the arrangements for surface water management to demonstrate that flows can be managed in conjunction with the wider development.

5) Advertisement/Representations

- 5.1 The application was advertised in accordance with the statutory publicity arrangements by means of site and press notices. As a result of these procedures, no responses have been received.

6) Planning Policy Considerations

- 6.1 In considering this application the County Council, as County Planning Authority, is required to have regard to the provisions of the Development Plan insofar as they are material to the application, and to any other material considerations. Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that where regard is to be had to the Development Plan, the determination shall be in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case, the Development Plan policies are summarised below and the most relevant are referred to in more detail in Section 7.

- 6.2 Teignbridge Local Plan (adopted May 2014)

Policies S1 (Sustainable Development Criteria); S2 (Quality Development); S5 (Infrastructure); S6 (Resilience); S7 (Carbon Emission Targets); S9 (Sustainable Transport); EN3 (Carbon Reduction Plans); EN8 (Biodiversity Protection and Enhancement); EN9 (Important Habitats and Features); EN10 (European Wildlife Sites) and SWE1 (South West of Exeter Urban Extension).

- 6.3 Exminster Neighbourhood Plan (made March 2015)

Policies EXM1 (Community Sports & Leisure Facility) and EXM3 (Quality of Design).

- 6.4 Other material planning considerations include:
- National Planning Policy Framework;
 - Planning Practice Guidance;
 - South West Exeter Development Framework; and
 - Proposed Submission Teignbridge Local Plan.

7) Comments/Issues

- 7.1 It is considered that the main material planning considerations in the determination of the proposed development are planning policy considerations, site layout, design and materials, nature conservation, traffic and parking, surface water management and environmental and sustainability considerations.

Planning Policy Considerations

- 7.2 Policy S5 of the Teignbridge Local Plan highlights the importance of infrastructure provision for the growth of sustainable communities, while Policy SWE1 requires that the South West of Exeter Urban Extension should include “a range of community buildings well related and accessible to all, including a

multi-purpose community/sports building...[and] health...provision". Exminster Parish Council has referred to the need for a community sports and leisure facility in the context of Policy EXM1 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

- 7.3 The community centre and surgery proposed in this application will form part of a wider hub complex with the Matford Brook school and proposed retail floorspace, with good accessibility by a range of means including the adjacent pedestrian and cycle route. The site's corner location and topography will lead to the facilities acting as a focal point within the community. It is therefore considered that the proposals meet the locational requirements of Policy SWE1.
- 7.4 The main hall within the proposed community centre building would extend to 180m² and has been designed for community events and activities, including floor-based activities such as dance, yoga and circuit training, but the internal height does not allow for ball or racquet sports. A smaller 100 m² studio is also proposed at the lower level with external access. While the Neighbourhood Plan includes reference to a '4-court multi-use sports hall', it appears to conclude that the cost of such a facility would be beyond the scope of available funding. However, the new school adjacent to the application site includes a sports hall and outdoor pitches that are required to be made available for community use through a community use agreement to be approved by Teignbridge District Council in consultation with Sport England.
- 7.5 Given the availability of community sports facilities within the adjacent school, the proposed facilities within the community building, together with provision of a surgery, the proposal is considered to accord with the requirements of Policies S5 and SWE1 of the Local Plan and to reflect the aspiration of Policy EXM1 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Site Layout, Design and Materials

- 7.6 Policy S2 of the Local Plan seeks the delivery of high-quality design "to support the creation of attractive, vibrant places", with designs that respond to site characteristics, create attractive and accessible public spaces and use materials appropriate to the area. These requirements are reflected in Policy EXM3 of the Neighbourhood Plan which envisages the urban extension having "its own distinctive neighbourhood identity and reflect local traditional building materials".
- 7.7 This report referred earlier to the site's sloping topography, and the application has responded to this by creating a strong two-storey frontage on the lower part of the site fronting Ellacott Road, with single-storey elements providing the main entrance areas to both buildings on the higher part of the site alongside the parking area. The two-storey massing extends to the end elevations of the community building, creating a focal point at the junction of Ellacott Road and the A379 that complements the tall residential building on the other side of Ellacott Road.

- 7.8 The palette of external materials for the Ellacott Road frontage, including brick red metal cladding and dark brickwork, will create a modern and distinctive appearance that befits the important functions of these buildings, while achieving a degree of consistency with walling and roofing materials being used for nearby residential properties. On the smaller-scale southern elevations that will be the main arrival points for users of the buildings, contrasting timber cladding is used to give a more natural feel.
- 7.9 Exminster Parish Council has questioned the design of the buildings and choice of materials in terms of aesthetics, maintenance and noise. In response, the applicant has made the following observations:
- the proposed materials are on the muted scale and of high quality, and have been chosen for their sustainable credentials and longevity;
 - the chosen timber cladding has a lifespan of 60 years and is sourced from Scotland, and can be supplied with a coating that accelerates the rate of weathering if a lighter appearance is preferred;
 - buildings of this type are large volumes and require rhythm to their elevations and clear elements to the façade, so the timber cladding adds a depth and texture to the façade in contrast to the horizontal texture of the lower level brickwork;
 - the mass of the building is broken at first floor level with vertical red cladding or timber cladding above the brick plinth, and the design is not considered to be 'barn like' or 'industrial' but uses high quality materials and detailing to provide a piece of modern architecture; and
 - the metal cladding to the roof has a vented void above 500mm of insulation, with a ceiling void and acoustic ceiling below, and the roof will therefore meet BS8233 for noise reduction.
- 7.10 It is considered that the proposal represents a high quality of design and materials that will ensure the new buildings contribute positively to the new urban extension, and that the development meets the requirements of Policies S2 and EXM3.

Nature Conservation/Habitats

- 7.11 Local Plan Policies EN8 to EN12 collectively provide for protection and enhancement of biodiversity, including European wildlife sites such as the Exe Estuary [Ramsar, Special protection Area and Site of Special Scientific Interest] and other designated sites.
- 7.12 The application site is an unvegetated working construction site with no habitat present, but it is 1.6km from the Exe Estuary with the potential for surface water runoff to cause harm if not properly controlled. However, the application includes a drainage strategy that includes use of an attenuation basin within the wider urban extension, and runoff during the construction

process can be addressed through a condition requiring submission of a construction environmental management plan.

- 7.13 Although the baseline biodiversity of the application site is zero, the application proposes to achieve net gain through the creation of new habitat in the form of hedgerows, tree and shrub planting and wildflower and amenity grassland, together with bat and bird boxes and invertebrate bricks. Together, these measures will meet the requirement of Local Plan Policy EN8 for net increases in biodiversity.

Highways/Car Parking/Traffic Issues

- 7.14 Infrastructure works undertaken through the Housing Infrastructure Fund have delivered a new signal-controlled junction on the A379 to provide access to this part of the urban extension, together with a cycle and pedestrian bridge to link new development on either side of the A379.
- 7.15 Vehicular access to the proposed buildings will be from an existing road to the south-east of the site that also provides access to the new bridge and school. Access for pedestrians and cyclists will also be available from Ellacott Road on the northern frontage of the site, increasing accessibility for those modes. A travel plan is provided which proposes measures to manage travel by staff and users of the proposed facilities and to encourage non-car travel.
- 7.16 Exminster Parish Council has objected on grounds of insufficient car parking. The application proposes the provision of 29 car parking spaces, including six spaces for disabled drivers and three with electric vehicle charging points. This level of provision accords with the approach of the outline planning application for the urban extension, which assumed the provision of one car parking space per 40m² of new floorspace.
- 7.17 Given that the facilities are intended to serve residents of the development within which the site sits and that a high level of accessibility for non-car modes will be achieved, the proposed level of car parking is considered to be appropriate. The opportunity exists for the purchase of adjoining land to provide additional car parking if the need arises in the future.

Surface Water Management

- 7.18 Policy EN4 of the Teignbridge Local Plan presumes against development that would cause pollution as a result of inadequate provision of surface water drainage and requires that regard is had to the need for surface water drainage systems and use of sustainable drainage systems.
- 7.19 Ground investigations have shown that the application site is not suitable for infiltration techniques due to groundwater levels, the shallow bedrock and the sloping nature of the site, but a drainage blanket is proposed beneath the car park to slow surface water flows. It is proposed that surface water be pumped to a point of connection to the south-east of the site, from where a gravity network outfalls into the Church Brook via an attenuation basin. An

alternative connection downstream of the site was investigated, but that system has been designed with a smaller capacity than would be required to accommodate the application site.

- 7.20 Clarification on arrangements for the management of surface water have been sought from the applicant and any further information, together with any additional conditions that may be required, will be reported at the meeting.

Sustainability and Environmental Considerations (Including Climate Change)

- 7.21 Paragraph 152 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires that “the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate”, while Devon County Council has declared a climate emergency and committed to facilitating the reduction of Devon’s carbon emissions to net-zero by 2050. Policies S7 and EN3 of the Teignbridge Local Plan also address carbon emissions and reduction. The scope for individual planning applications to contribute to these initiatives will be dependent on the nature and scale of the development being proposed, and relevant considerations are outlined below.
- 7.22 The planning application is accompanied by a carbon reduction plan that demonstrates that the proposed development meets the requirements of Policies S7 and EN3 through a range of measures including:
- use of glazing to reduce internal lighting loads;
 - use of natural ventilation prioritised as far as practicable;
 - thermal modelling to demonstrate compliance with relevant standards;
 - incorporation of energy monitoring into the mechanical and electrical design; and
 - use of photovoltaic panels on the southern elevations of the community centre hall and surgery for on-site electricity generation.

8) Strategic Plan

- 8.1 The proposed community building and surgery will contribute to the priorities of the County Council’s Strategic Plan in terms of improving health and wellbeing and helping communities be safe, connected and resilient.

9) Financial Considerations

- 9.1 The proposal raises no financial implications for the Council in its role of county planning authority.

10) Legal Considerations

- 10.1 This proposal has been managed in accordance with statutory requirements and there are no specific legal considerations.

11) Equality Considerations

- 11.1 Regard has been given to the provisions of the Equalities Act 2010, particularly the Public Sector Equality Duty. Given the nature of the proposal and the measures within the recommended conditions, it is considered that no adverse impacts on persons with protected characteristics would occur.

12) Risk Management Considerations

- 12.1 This proposal has been managed in accordance with statutory requirements and no risks to the Council in its role of county planning authority are considered likely to arise.

13) Reasons for Recommendation/Alternative Options Considered

- 13.1 The Committee has the option of approving, deferring or refusing this planning application.
- 13.2 In conclusion it is considered that the proposed development will meet the requirements of the Teignbridge Local Plan for delivery of community and health facilities for the South West of Exeter urban extension in an accessible and focal location. The proposed layout and building design are appropriate to the topography and context of the site. It is therefore considered that planning permission should be granted.

Meg Booth

Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport

Electoral Division: Exminster & Haldon

Local Government Act 1972: List of background papers

Background Paper: Casework File

Date: June 2023

File Reference: DCC/4355/2023

Contact for enquiries:

Name: Barnaby Grubb

Telephone: 01392 382434

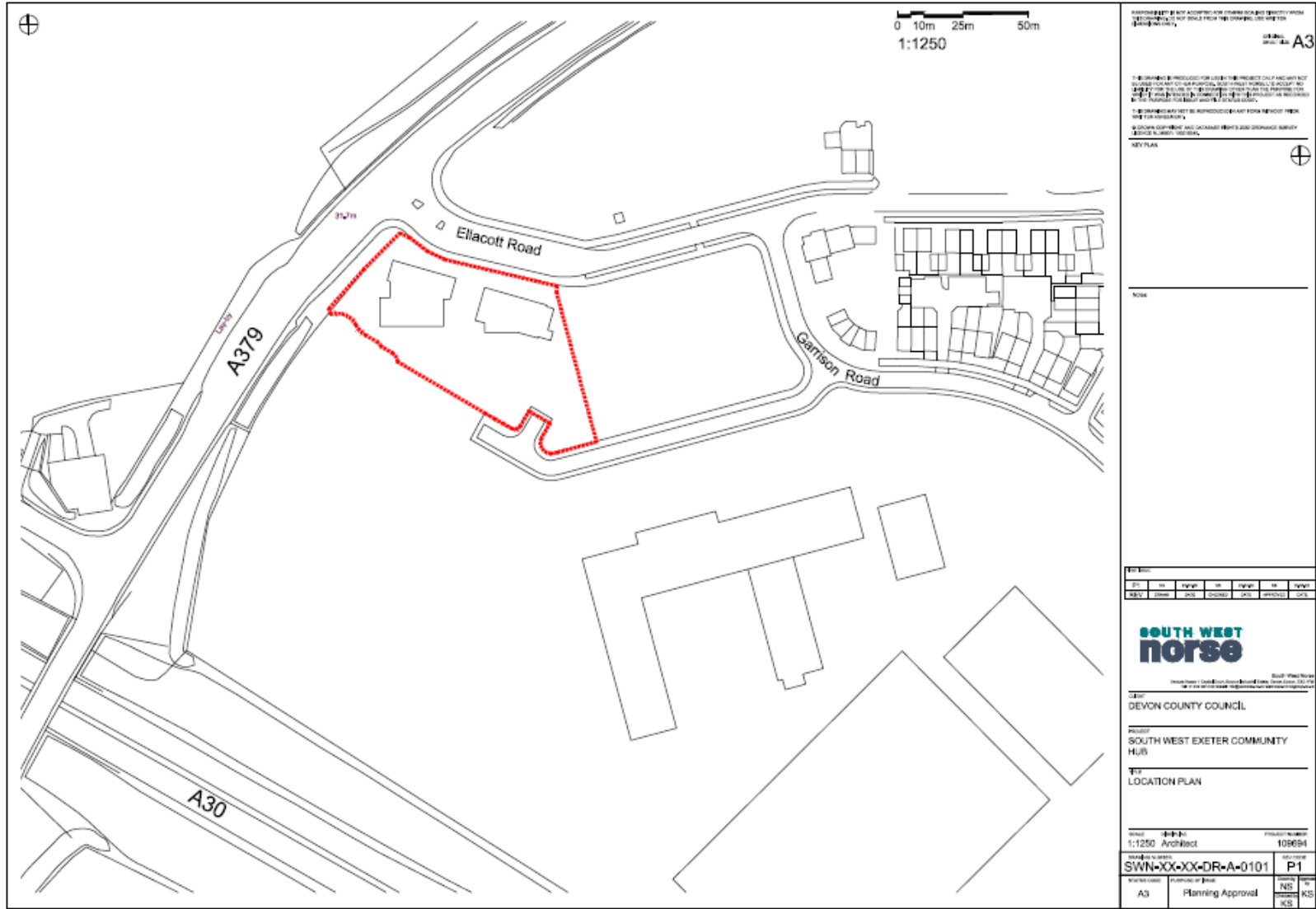
Address: 120, County Hall, Exeter

bg140823dma

sc/cr/community centre gp surgery A379 Ellacott Road Matford Brook Academy
Exeter

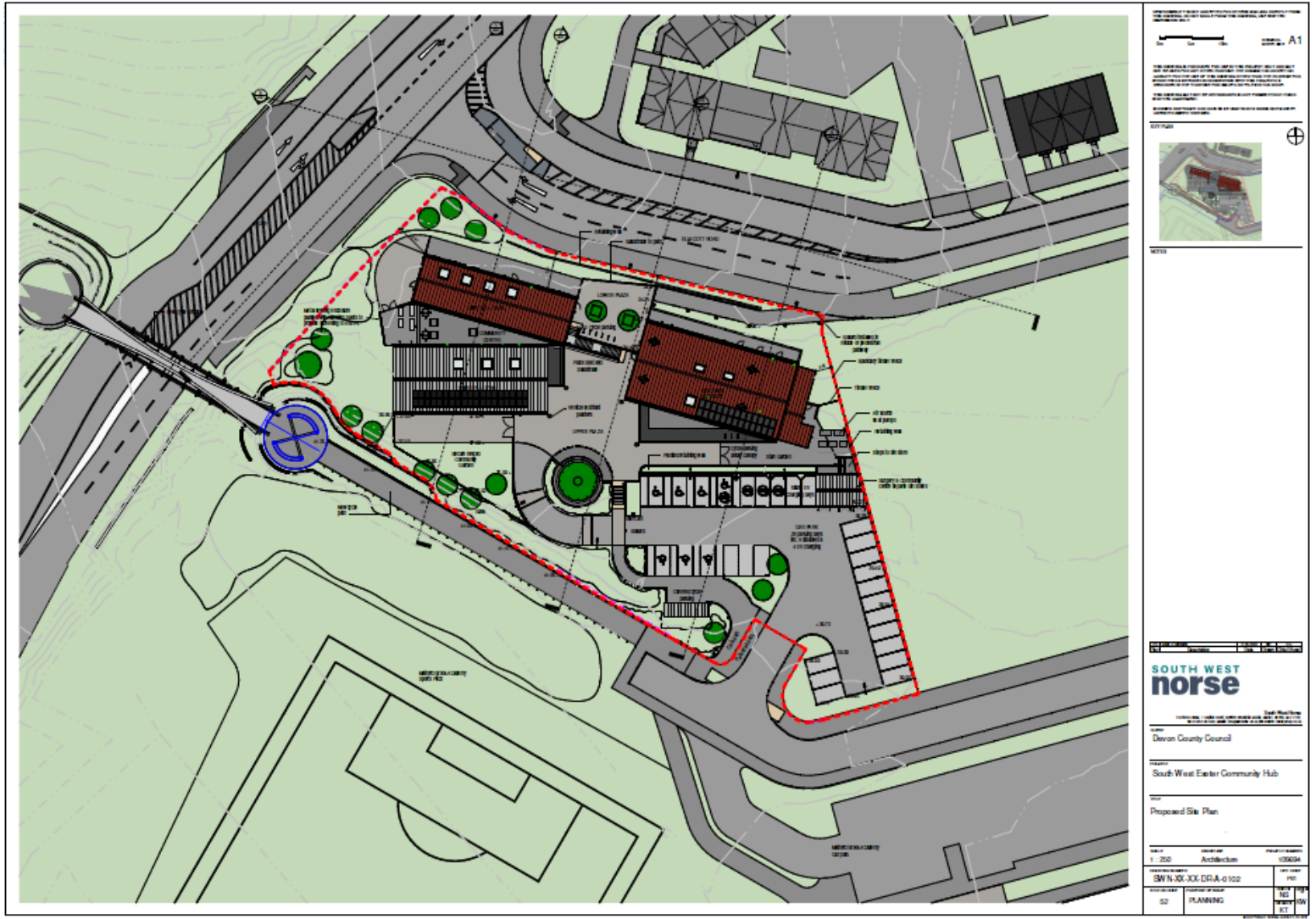
02 250823

Location Plan



Site Plan

To CET/23/61



Scale: 1:500
 Date: 2023, A1

Notes:
 1. All dimensions are in meters unless otherwise stated.
 2. The site is bounded by a red dashed line.
 3. The building is shown in red and grey.
 4. The parking area is shown in grey.
 5. The circular paved area is shown in grey with a blue circular feature.



NO.	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	CHECKED BY
1	Issue for Planning	2023-08-10	SW	SW
2	Issue for Planning	2023-08-10	SW	SW

SOUTH WEST
norse

Devon County Council

South West Eater Community Hub

Proposed Site Plan

NO.	DATE	BY	CHECKED BY
1	2023	Architecture	SW
NO.	DATE	BY	CHECKED BY
02	2023	PLANNING	SW

**Appendix 1
To CET/23/61**

Planning Conditions

1. The development shall commence within three years of the date of this permission.

REASON: In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

2. The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the details shown on the approved drawings and documents numbered/titled:
 - Proposed Site Plan – SWN-XX-XX-DR-A-0102 rev P01
 - GA Floor Plans – SWN-CC-XX-DR-A-0200 rev P05
 - GA Plans Floor and Roof – SWN-DS-XX-DR-A-0210 rev P07
 - Proposed Site Sections – SWN-XX-XX-DR-A-0301 rev P01
 - Community Centre – Proposed Elevations 1 of 2 – SWN-CC-XX-DR-A-0400 rev P02
 - Community Centre – Proposed Elevations 1 of 2 – SWN-CC-XX-DR-A-0401 rev P02
 - Proposed Elevations – SWN-DS-XX-DR-A-0410 rev P04
 - Proposed External Works Plan – SWN-ZZ-00-D-L-800 rev P04
 - Proposed Planting Plan – SWN-ZZ-00-D-L-801 rev P01
 - External Lighting Layout – EBS045-EBS-ZZ-XX-DR-E-700001 rev P04
 - Design and Access Statement rev A (South West Norse, May 2023)
 - Ecological Impact Assessment (GE Consulting, May 2023)
 - Wildlife and Geology Trigger Table
 - Biodiversity Metric 4.0 Calculation Tool
 - Landscape & Ecology Management Plan (South West Norse, May 2023)
 - Phase I Environmental Desktop Report (John Grimes Partnership, January 2023)
 - Transport Statement (Vectos, May 2023)
 - Travel Plan (Vectos, May 2023)
 - Carbon Reduction Plan (Melin, May 2023)
 - TDC Policies S7 and EN3 Demonstration Calculator
 - Drainage Statement (South West Norse, May 2023)
 - Foul Drainage Assessment Form

unless otherwise provided for by the conditions below.

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved details.

3. No development shall be commenced until a Construction Environmental Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The Plan shall include:
 - (a) a timetable of the works;

- (b) daily hours of construction;
- (c) any road closure(s);
- (d) hours during which delivery and construction traffic will travel to and from the site, with such vehicular movements being restricted to between 0800 and 1800 on Mondays to Fridays and 0900 to 1300 on Saturdays, with no such vehicular movements taking place on Sundays and Bank/Public Holidays;
- (e) the numbers and sizes of vehicles visiting the site in connection with the development and the frequency of their visits;
- (f) the compound/location where all building materials, finished or unfinished products, parts, crates, packing materials and waste will be stored during the demolition and construction phases;
- (g) areas on-site where delivery vehicles and construction traffic will load or unload building materials, finished or unfinished products, parts, crates, packing materials and waste with confirmation that no construction traffic or delivery vehicles will park on the County highway for loading or unloading purposes unless prior written agreement has been given by the County Planning Authority;
- (h) hours during which no construction traffic will be present at the site;
- (i) the means of enclosure of the site during construction works;
- (j) details of proposals to promote car sharing amongst construction staff in order to limit construction staff vehicles parking off-site;
- (k) details of wheel washing facilities and obligations;
- (l) the proposed route of all construction traffic exceeding 7.5 tonnes;
- (m) details of the amount and location of construction worker parking;
- (n) photographic evidence of the condition of the adjacent public highway prior to commencement of any work;
- (o) measures to prevent potential impacts from surface water runoff, water pollution and dust causing harm to nearby sensitive habitats; and
- (p) measures to ensure that drainage systems and other excavations are designed to prevent negative impacts on species including badgers, hedgehogs and amphibians.

REASON: To ensure that construction is undertaken without harm to highway safety, residential amenity and biodiversity in accordance with Policy S1 of the Teignbridge Local Plan.

4. No construction of fencing, cycle parking or bin storage shall be undertaken unless the prior written approval of the County Planning Authority has been obtained to details of their location, materials and appearance.

REASON: To ensure that the development is of high quality and makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area in accordance with Policies S1 and S2 of the Teignbridge Local Plan.

5. The facilities for the parking of cars and cycles approved by this planning permission shall be provided prior to the proposed buildings first being brought into use and shall be maintained thereafter.

REASON: To ensure the availability of sufficient parking facilities for users of the proposed buildings in accordance with Policies S1, S2 and S9 of the Teignbridge Local Plan.

6. The new planting shown on the drawings approved by Condition 2 shall be implemented during the first planting season following completion of construction of the proposed buildings.

REASON: To ensure the timely completion of landscaping to integrate the proposed buildings within the surrounding environment in accordance with Policy S2 of the Teignbridge Local Plan.