

For: PLANNING AND REGULATION COMMITTEE – 28 July 2014

By: Deputy Director for Environment and Economy (Strategy and Infrastructure Planning)

Development Proposed:

Expansion from one full-time entry to 1.5 full-time entry through demolition of horsa, external store and temporary classroom. Extension of the existing building to provide Key Stage 1 and Foundation Stage classrooms and external works to provide associated play areas and MUGA. Temporary classroom installation to facilitate decant during construction.

Division Affected: Wolvercote and Summertown

Contact Officer: David Periam **Tel:** 01865-895151

Location: **Wolvercote Primary School, First Turn, Oxford, Oxfordshire, OX2 8AQ**

Applicant: Oxfordshire County Council

Application No: R3.0053/14 **District Reference:** 14/01356/CC3

Application received date: 9 May 2014

Consultation Period: 22 May – 13 June 2014

District Council Area: Oxford City

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Recommendation Summary: APPROVAL

The report recommends that the application be approved.

• Part 1 – Facts and Background

Site Location & history (please see location plan)

1. Wolvercote Primary School is situated within a largely residential area and takes both vehicular and pedestrian access from First Turn immediately to the north. St. Peter's Church faces the school from the opposite side of First Turn. Numbers 7 & 9, First Turn lies just to the north-east of the school and their nearest facades would be approximately 25 and 21 metres respectively from the proposed classroom extension. St. Peter's Road forms the western boundary of the school with residential properties and the local Young People's Club on its opposite side. A block of residential flats, The Quadrangle, lies immediately to the south of the school. The Oxford to Bicester railway line which forms part of the East-West rail proposed improvements runs immediately to the east of the school and the boundary with the existing cutting would be approximately six metres from the proposed extension. The northern part of the school, including the existing buildings and some trees which are proposed to be removed, lies within the Wolvercote with Godstow Conservation Area. The school has a metal post fence and gates to First Turn and a chain link fence with some hedges and trees on its other boundaries. It lies in Flood Zone 1.

2. The original school building was built in 1897. Further buildings date from 1912 to 1913 with various extensions and infills from the 1930s, 1960s & 1990s. A new school hall, additional classrooms and a staff room were added in 2002. The buildings are a mixture of pitched and flat roofed buildings constructed or red brick with plain tiles to the pitched roofs. The existing windows are generally white aluminium with re-constituted stone sills and lintels as well as older metal windows.

Proposed development

New extension

3. The total site area is 0.59 ha. The application proposes the creation of a total of 525.5 metres of internal floor space, although the demolition of the HORSA building would result in a loss of 170 m² of existing floor space giving an overall gain of 355.5 m². An existing temporary classroom building would also be removed. The proposed extension would be single storey and would be attached to the existing school hall, extending south over the area currently occupied by the HORSA building and onto the existing playground. This would contain three classrooms, a studio, a group room, kitchenette/office, plant room and a laundry as well as toilets and circulation areas. The extension would be to a maximum pitched roof height of 8 metres although the connecting element to the existing buildings would be flat roofed to a height of 3.2 metres. However, the roofs would be topped with ventilation turrets taking the overall maximum height of the development to 9.8 metres. The walls would be of Ibstock's Swanage handmade Light Red bricks and the roof tiles would be Medium mixed bridle coloured Redland Rosemary plain tiles. Some feature course blue brickwork is proposed to for the north-east

elevation to tie-in with the existing hall. Re-constituted stone sills and white aluminium windows are proposed. Yellow and blue entrance doors are proposed to the classrooms with dark green doors to all other entrances. Facias and soffits would be green to match the hall. Powder coated aluminium gutters and rainwater down pipes would be black. The ventilation turrets would be polyester powder coated RAL 3009, dark red/brown to match the roof. The development has been designed to reflect the existing buildings including the proportions of the existing Victorian windows. The building would have a canopy on its southern elevation covering an area of approximately 40 m². Due to the proximity to the railway line, which is due to be subject to intensified use, a noise assessment was commissioned and submitted in support of the application. The natural ventilation strategy has been designed as a result of this to supply the three teaching spaces with acoustically attenuated fresh air. The building is designed to meet the acoustic requirements at handover in order to meet the requirements of Building Regulations. External lighting would be provided on the building.

MUGA

4. This would be located on the northern end of the existing playing field, adjoining the existing rear playground. It would be 36.6 metres long by 24.3 metres wide (889 m²) with its long access running from east to west. A Type 4 polymeric surface is proposed and would comply with BS EN 14877: Surfaces for Sports Areas – Specification for Synthetic Surfaces (multi-use). It would be neither fenced nor floodlit. The east-west orientation would enable the school to mark a second pitch further down the playing field. The school is not able to use the playing field in inclement weather and an all-weather surface would facilitate this. It is considered that the proposed development would complement the existing provision locally at the Young People's Club and would provide greater opportunity for sport in the area, both being in the control of the County Council.

Play areas and external store

5. A fenced play area would be created to the south of the proposed extension and an existing adventure play equipment area re-located to its west. The fences would be partly one metre high timber palisade picket with a natural pre-treated finish and also 1.2 metres high bowtop security fencing against the extension's north-east elevation. An external store providing approximately 16 m² floor space with a maximum height of 2.5 metres would be located in the south-western corner of the fenced play area.

Temporary classroom

6. Although it would in any instance be permitted development, the application proposes the siting of a temporary double classroom building to facilitate the school's teaching requirements whilst the construction works are being undertaken, should planning permission be forthcoming. This would provide a total of 94.4 m² gross floor space with a maximum flat roof height of 3.8 metres. A cycle shelter would also be re-positioned alongside it.

7. Six trees would be removed as part of the development and a further two would be removed to facilitate the construction access. Three of the trees to be removed, including a mature sycamore, lie within the Conservation Area and so planning permission is required for their removal. Some replacement trees and shrubs would be planted within the new play area and along the school boundary to St. Peter's Road, these being fruit trees within the play area and an Acer and Ginkgo Biloba tree along the road.
8. The application is accompanied by a Transport Statement which has appended to it a School Travel Plan. This reports that the current main mode of travel is by foot or bicycle and so the number of additional vehicle trips resulting from the school expansion is likely to be small and so there would be no significant effect on the local road network. No additional car or cycle parking is proposed. Further to this and the increased pupil numbers to be accommodated, it is proposed that highway safety improvements would be provided in the form of a raised zebra crossing on Margaret Road just to the west of the school's currently used pedestrian access and a junction realignment and raised pedestrian crossing at the junction of Wharton Road with Margaret Road. The school has also updated its School Travel Plan. Construction access would be from St. Peter's Road opposite the Young People's Centre. This would require the removal of an alder, some hedge, another small tree and reduction of the canopy of the trees either side of the access point. All deliveries would be timed to minimise disruption to adjacent residential areas and ensure health and safety requirements.
9. With regard to site drainage, it is proposed to utilise permeable surfaces with storage and soakaway capacity below. However, if infiltration rates are too poor then a controlled overflow discharge to the mains surface water system may be required.
10. The school has been surveyed and no evidence of protected species was found. Tree removal would not take place during the nesting season unless inspected by an ecologist to confirm that no nesting birds are present. Although there are crop marks within the site, archaeological trenching works have identified that there are no important archaeological remains.
11. Network Rail has been consulted by the applicant on the proposals bearing in mind the construction being close to the railway line. It is understood that as part of the works to mitigate the impacts of the intensification of the railway line, Network Rail will provide acoustic fencing.
12. In support of the application it is stated that following a public consultation it was agreed by the County Council's cabinet to expand the school to 1.5 FE from September 2014 and so the formal admission number will increase from 30 to 45 pupils. There would be three additional full-time and three additional part-time members of staff giving totals of 25 and 28 respectively. The development would be open to use from 6.00 am to 6.00 pm Mondays to Fridays and from 9.00 am to 12.00 pm Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays.

• **Part 2 – Other Viewpoints**

13. A summary of consultation responses and representations is set out at Annex 1.

• **Part 3 – Relevant Planning Documents**

Relevant planning documents and legislation

14. Planning applications should be decided in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The following policies are relevant:

Oxford Core Strategy (OCS) -

CS9 – Energy and natural resources – Sets out that developments should seek to minimise carbon emissions.

CS11 - Development will not be permitted that will lead to increased flood risk elsewhere, or where the occupants will not be safe from flooding.

CS13 – Supporting access to development - Planning permission will only be granted for development that prioritises access by walking, cycling and public transport.

CS16 – Access to Education – Sets out approach to the provision of educational facilities: improving access to education through new or improved facilities throughout Oxford in locations accessible by walking, cycling or public transport (like this area).

CS18 – Urban Design, Townscape Character & the Historic Environment – Sets out urban design principles & requires development to respect Oxford's unique townscape & historic environment.

CS21 - Planning permission will only be granted for development resulting in the loss of existing sports and leisure facilities if alternative facilities can be provided and if no deficiency is created in the area.

Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 (OLP) –

CP1 – Development Proposals - Sets out key criteria expected from new development.

CP6 – Efficient Use of land & density – Requires development to make maximum & appropriate use of land.

CP8 – Designing Development to Relate to its Context – Sets out criteria required from development to demonstrate that it will respect its local context.

CP9 – Creating Successful New Places – Sets out criteria required from development to create a successful public realm.

CP10 – Siting of Development to Meet its Functional Needs - Sets out criteria required from development to ensure functional needs are met.

CP11 – Landscape Design – Sets out criteria for proposed landscaping works.

CP13 – Accessibility – Requires development to make reasonable provision for access by all members of the community.

CP20 - Planning permission will not be granted for any development which would result in unacceptable levels of light pollution and light spillage.

CP21- Noise sensitive developments should have regard to existing sources of noise e.g. from roads & railways and the need for appropriate sound insulation measures.

CP25 – Temporary buildings – restricts temporary buildings to where a short term need has been demonstrated and sets out criteria for development.

TR1 - Transport Assessment - A transport assessment (TA) must be submitted for development that is likely to have significant transport implications including expanded school facilities. Planning permission will be granted if adequate and appropriate transport-related measures will be put in place.

TR2 - Travel Plans – A Travel Plan must be submitted for development that is likely to have significant transport implications including expanded school facilities.

TR3 - Planning permission will only be granted for development that provides an appropriate level of car parking spaces no greater than the maximum car-parking standards.

TR4 - Planning permission will only be granted for development that:

- a) provides good access and facilities for pedestrians and for cyclists, and
- b) complies with the minimum cycle parking standards.

HE2 - Where archaeological deposits that are potentially significant to the historic environment of Oxford are known or suspected to exist anywhere in Oxford, planning applications should incorporate sufficient information to define the character and extent of such deposits as far as reasonably practicable, including where appropriate:

- a. the results of an evaluation by fieldwork; and
- b. an assessment of the effect of the proposals on the deposits of their setting.

If the existence and significance of deposits is confirmed, planning permission will only be granted where the proposal includes:

- c. provision to preserve the archaeological remains in situ, so far as reasonably practicable, by sensitive layout and design (particularly foundations, drainage and hard landscaping); and
- d. provision for the investigation and recording of any archaeological remains that cannot be preserved, including the publication of results, in accordance with a detailed scheme approved before the start of the development.

HE7 – Sets out the approach for development within Conservation Areas.

NE15 - Loss of Trees and Hedgerows - Planning permission will not be granted for developmental proposals which include the removal of trees, hedgerows and other valuable landscape features that form part of a developmental site, where this would have significant adverse impact upon public amenity or ecological interest. Planning permission will be granted subject to soft landscaping, including tree planting, being undertaken whenever appropriate.

SR2 - Protection of open air sports facilities - Planning permission will not be granted for development that would result in the loss of open-air sports facilities, including school playing fields, where there is a need for the facility

to be retained in its current location, or the open area provides an important green space for local residents.

Where this is not the case, planning permission will only be granted where there is no need at all for the facility for the purposes of open space, sport or recreation, or where:

- a. there is a need for the development;
- b. there are no alternative non-greenfield sites; and
- c. the facility can be replaced by either:
 - i. providing an equivalent or improved replacement facility; or
 - ii. upgrading an existing facility.

Paragraph 72 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that Local Planning Authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to ensure a sufficient choice of school places is available; they should give great weight to the need to expand or alter schools and work with school promoters to identify and resolve key planning issues prior to submission of applications. This is a material consideration in taking planning decisions. The CLG letter to the Chief Planning Officers dated 15th August 2011 is also relevant. Paragraphs 102 and 103 of the NPPF address the need for developments to protect on site users from flood risk and not increase flood risk elsewhere and this is supported by paragraph 9 of the Technical Guidance to the NPPF.

- **Part 4 – Analysis and Conclusions**

Planning Analysis – Comments of the Deputy Director for Environment & Economy (Strategy and Infrastructure Planning)

15. The CLG letter to the Chief Planning Officers dated 15th August 2011 set out the Government’s commitment to support the development of state funded schools and their delivery through the planning system. The policy statement states that:

“The creation and development of state funded schools is strongly in the national interest and that planning decision-makers can and should support that objective, in a manner consistent with their statutory obligations.” State funded schools include Academies and free schools as well as local authority maintained schools.

It further states that the following principles should apply with immediate effect:

- There should be a presumption in favour of the development of state-funded schools;
- Local Authorities should give full and thorough consideration to the importance of enabling the development of state funded schools in their planning decisions;
- Local Authorities should make full use of their planning powers to support state-funded schools applications;
- Local Authorities should only impose conditions that clearly and demonstrably meet the tests as set out in Circular 11/95;

- Local Authorities should ensure that the process for submitting and determining state-funded schools' applications is as streamlined as possible;
- A refusal of any application for a state-funded school or the imposition of conditions, will have to be clearly justified by the Local Planning Authority.

This has been endorsed as part of the National Planning Policy Framework. Policy CS16 of the OCS seeks to improve access to all levels of education through new or improved facilities, throughout Oxford, particularly in areas of population growth.

Design & Impact on the amenity of neighbours

16. The design of the proposed extension, including the materials to be used, will complement the existing buildings and reasonably serve to meet sustainability objectives. It is also considered that the design would be in keeping with the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The extension would be to the rear of the main school buildings and would not adversely impact on the amenity of local residents. The proposed storage shed would by its nature be functional, but is small and would have no adverse impacts. The replacement temporary double classroom building would also be functional but again is only required for use during the construction period and would then be removed. I therefore consider that the development is in accordance with the aims of policies CP1, CP6, CP8, CP9, CP10, CP13, CP20, CP21, CP25 and HE7 of the OLP and CS9 and CS18 of the OCS.

Historic Environment

17. As set out above, it is considered that the design of the permanent development would be in keeping with the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The HORSAs building which it is proposed would be demolished is of little architectural merit and not particularly in keeping with the rest of the school buildings and the Conservation Area. Whilst there would be a loss of trees within the Conservation Area, one of which is a mature sycamore, it is not considered that these are of significance in the context of the wider Conservation Area. Archaeological artefacts have been found to be located within the school site following trial trenching. Therefore any planning permission should be subject to the conditions requested by the County Council's Principal Archaeologist for the submission of a written scheme of investigation and a staged programme of archaeological investigation. Subject to this, I consider that the development is in accordance with the aims of policies HE2 and HE7 of the OLP.

Arboriculture and landscaping issues

18. There would be the loss of trees as a result of the development and replacement planting would be carried out elsewhere in the school grounds. Subject to a condition requiring a detailed landscaping scheme to be submitted for approval prior to commencement of the development then I consider this would accord with the aims of policies CP11 and NE15 of the OLP set out above.

Drainage

19. The site lies within Flood Zone 1. The application proposes measures for both the disposal of surface water and foul sewage from the development. Network Rail has submitted a holding objection pending more details being provided of the impact of drainage on its assets and this is being addressed by the applicant. I will update the committee meeting orally with regard to any progress on addressing this concern. Subject to this issue being resolved and to a condition requiring that a sustainable surface water drainage scheme be submitted for approval prior to the commencement of the development, it is considered that it meets the requirements of policy CS11 of the OCS.

Highways and Car Parking

20. Policy CS13 of the OCS seeks to see planning permission granted for development that prioritises access by walking, cycling and public transport. Policy CS16 of the Core Strategy seeks to see planning permission granted for new education facilities in locations accessible by walking, cycling and public transport. The application is accompanied by a Transportation Statement and Travel Plan in accordance with policies TR1 and TR2 of the OLP. Wolvercote Primary School is sited very much within the community which it serves with 90% of pupils walking or cycling to the school when surveyed in November 2013. The Highway Authority has requested that an updated Travel Plan be provided and to further revision within three months of the additional intake being received. A Travel Plan monitoring fee of £1,240 would also be required which can be obtained through the applicant providing a unilateral undertaking prior to the issuing of any planning permission which may be forthcoming.
21. Transport Development Control has suggested that a total of 18 car parking spaces should be provided which would be an additional six spaces. No new parking spaces are proposed and the applicant advises that whilst the concern is understood, it is not considered that the school site could physically accommodate any additional parking provision. Policy TR3 of the OLP sets out maximum car parking standards. The maximum set out to be provided would be one space per 60 m² or per two staff. Whilst I note the concern raised, taking account of the school's physical constraints and central government's strong guidance that refusal of any application for a state-funded school or the imposition of conditions, will have to be clearly justified by the Local Planning Authority, I am minded to consider that the harm which may be caused through not providing the additional parking spaces would not justify refusal of the application. Additional cycle parking provision has also been requested and is a requirement of policy TR4 of the OLP and I consider that this could be required through a planning condition should permission be granted. The on going commitment to the Travel Plan may also bring forward further reductions in the use of the car, for example car sharing by staff.
22. It is therefore considered that subject to the provision of an updated Travel Plan with a condition requiring that it be further revised once the school has

been expanded and to the provision of a Unilateral Undertaking to secure the provision of the monitoring fee, the development proposed would be satisfactory in respect of the requirements of policies CS13 and CS16 of the OCS and TR1, TR2 & TR4 of the OLP. Whilst contrary to the provisions of policy TR3, I do not consider that in this instance any adverse impacts would outweigh the educational benefits of the development and so this would not be sufficient to warrant refusal of the planning application.

Loss of Playing Field

23. The MUGA would lead to a loss of part of the existing school playing field. Policy SR2 of the OLP seeks to protect playing fields and policy CS21 of the OCS makes similar provision. Sport England has objected to the application due to the impact of the loss of part of the existing playing field and the lack of fencing and rebound wall or board to the MUGA and the overall reduced opportunities which it is considered the proposed development would afford.
24. Paragraph 74 of the NPPF states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:
 - an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
 - the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
 - the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.
25. Whilst I note the objection raised by Sport England, the school is the principal user of the playing field and has clearly taken the view that there would be overall benefits to the provision of education at the school site including outdoor recreation through the provision of the proposed MUGA. The applicant has advised that the school is not able to use the playing field in inclement weather and an all-weather surface would facilitate this. There is no intention to fence the all-weather surface in and so children would be able to access the field as well as the all-weather surface. At the same time, the school field serves recreational time for the pupils and the re-siting of the adventure play equipment would lead naturally to an area of all-weather surface without the need to cross any grass. This would ensure maximum use of the field space for sports coaching and at other times of the day. Locally there is a fenced in tarmac marked pitch at the nearby Young People's Club. Improvements to the school's use of the field space will complement the existing provision locally and as the two organisations are both owned by the County Council, this would provide greater opportunity for sport in the area.
26. I am satisfied that, in overall terms, the provision of the MUGA would provide improvements to the school's outdoor recreational facilities and the school's ability to provide organised sport and so would meet the school's needs for such provision better than the existing situation. I therefore consider that the

development is consistent with the aims of policy SR2 of the OLP, policy CS21 of the OCS and paragraph 74 of the NPPF and should be approved. If the committee were to be minded to approve the application contrary to an objection from Sport England, then there is a requirement that the application be first referred to the Secretary of State for his consideration as to whether he would wish to intervene.

Impact on the development from the railway line

27. Whilst no objection has been received from local residents with regard to the impact of the proposed development, objection has been raised on the basis of the potential additional noise and vibration from the railway line which would be upgraded as part of the East-West Rail and Project Evergreen improvements on the staff and pupils who would be using the development and that this would create an unacceptable environment for them. The western section of the East-West Rail improvements is now a committed, funded scheme to re-introduce passenger and freight services between Bedford and Oxford, Milton Keynes and Aylesbury. It involves upgrading and reconstructing sections of existing and 'mothballed' rail track, which is to be delivered by Network Rail. Project Evergreen 3 has been put forward by Chiltern Railways for upgrades to the line. The result would be more frequent and faster trains using the railway line. The Transport and Works Act Order for the Project Evergreen works was approved subject to conditions and one of the conditions is that operational noise and vibration monitoring shall be carried out in accordance with approved schemes. A scheme for vibration monitoring pursuant to this is currently before Oxford City Council.
28. Policy CP21 of the OLP seeks to see noise sensitive development take account of existing sources of noise generation and the need for appropriate sound insulation measures. Policy 109 of the NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of noise pollution or land instability. Paragraph 123 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should aim to avoid noise from giving rise to significant adverse impacts²⁷ on health and quality of life as a result of new development.
29. In support of the application, a noise assessment has been provided which has taken account of the potential improvements to the railway line and more frequent trains. The applicant has taken into account the conclusions and the proposed ventilation turrets would facilitate the natural ventilation strategy which would help to mitigate the noise impact of passing trains. As stated above, the building is designed to meet the acoustic requirements at handover in order to meet the requirements of Building Regulations.
30. Whilst I note the concerns expressed, the school is situated adjacent to the railway line and so the application area is in already used for educational purposes, including outdoor activities and would continue to be so used regardless of the outcome of this planning application. The proposed extension would be about six metres closer to the railway line than the

HORSA building to be demolished and would have in-built design features which are designed to mitigate any noise impact. Provision for addressing noise and vibration impacts from the railway improvement works have been included as part of the relevant Transport and Works Act Order. I do not consider that as part of this planning application the applicant could be required to demonstrate further how any impacts from the railway improvement works could be mitigated. I consider that the application is in accordance with the aims of policy CP21 of the OLP and the NPPF.

Conclusion

31. The development is required to allow the school to accommodate additional pupils. It is considered that the layout and design of the development is acceptable. There is a need for the development and it generally accords with the aims of the above policies in the development plan and where not, it is considered that an exception should be made and that conditional planning permission should be granted. The applicant will need to provide a unilateral undertaking to secure the payment of the Travel Plan monitoring fee prior to any permission being issued. Also, as Sport England have objected to the application, if members are minded to approve the application it will be necessary for it to first be referred to the Secretary of State for his consideration.

Recommendation:

32. **It is RECOMMENDED that:**
- (a) **the Planning & Regulation Committee indicates support for application no. R3.0053/14;**
 - (b) **resolves that the application be forwarded to the Secretary of State in accordance with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009;**
 - (c) **that in the event of the Secretary of State not intervening the Deputy Director for Environment and Economy (Strategy and Infrastructure Planning) be authorised to approve application no. R3.0053/14 subject to the applicant first providing a Unilateral Undertaking to provide the sum of £1,240 for the monitoring of the Travel Plan and subject to conditions to be determined by the Deputy Director (Strategy and infrastructure Planning) but in accordance with those set out below:**

Heads of Conditions

- 1. **Complete accordance with plans;**
- 2. **Commencement within 3 years;**
- 3. **Submission of details of materials for approval prior to commencement;**
- 4. **Provision of an updated Travel Plan three months after the new pupil intake is received;**

5. **Submission of a Sustainable Surface Water Drainage Scheme for approval prior to commencement;**
6. **Submission of a written scheme of investigation and a staged programme of archaeological investigation prior to commencement;**
7. **Submission of details of additional cycle parking provision prior to commencement.**

Reasons for Approval

The development is required to allow the school to accommodate 1.5-form. Its design and use of materials would be in keeping with the existing school and its surroundings including the Conservation Area. Subject to the conditions set out in this planning permission it would have no significant adverse detrimental impacts on its neighbours and the proposal accords with the relevant policies in the development plan other than policy TR3 to which an exception has been justified.

Compliance with National Planning Policy Framework

In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF Oxfordshire County Council take a positive and proactive approach to decision making focused on solutions and fostering the delivery of sustainable development. We work with applicants in a positive and proactive manner by;

- offering a pre-application advice service, and
- updating applicants and agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions.

In this case the issues of noise and the loss of playing field were discussed with the applicant and this led to the submission of amended information and the resolution of this issue such as to make the development acceptable in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF.

BEV HINDLE

Deputy Director for Environment and Economy (Strategy & Infrastructure Planning)

July 2014

Annex 1 – Consultation responses and representations

Consultations & Representations

1. The Local Member, councillor Jean Fooks, welcomes the expansion to meet local need and thinks the buildings look attractive. She considers that the issue of noise from the improved railway passing the school has been well-addressed with the choice of a single storey building and some mitigation measures being proposed.
2. Oxford City Council has no objection to the application subject to standard conditions with regard to the development being carried out in accordance with the submitted application and plans and to match those of the existing buildings and the removal of the temporary classroom unit upon occupation of the new buildings. Subject to this it is considered that it would accord with the special character and appearance of the conservation area.
3. Transport Development Control advises that the travel plan is a comprehensive document, however there are still a few areas requiring attention before it meets the usual criteria and that further revision should be required three months after the new pupil intake has been received. As pupil and staff numbers are to increase as a result of the expansion, an increase in cycle parking as part of the development and a travel plan monitoring fee of £1,240 to ensure that the school continue to monitor the impact of the expansion over a five year period are requested. At present there are 12 car parking spaces on site for staff and the proposal states that there is no room to expand on this. The application suggests staff who cannot park on site park on St Peters Road and Mere Road; both residential streets. This is highly undesirable and an expansion of on-site parking is sought. Oxford City Parking Standards for primary schools requires one space for every two staff members on a school site. This equates to 18 off street parking spaces. Though the current cycle parking meets requirements at 40 spaces, it is requested that this be expanded as if current spaces are currently used to capacity then there is potential to increase cycling/scooting for both staff and pupils on expansion of the school.
4. The County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority advises that the school extension and MUGA should be drained by a Sustainable Drainage System to reduce the surface water discharge from this site to the public surface water sewer. Soakage tests should be carried out before the drainage design is finalised so as to determine the type of SUDS for this site
5. The County Council's Protected Species Officer made a check of the school buildings proposed for demolition earlier this year and found no evidence that they are used by bats. Due to the nature of the site no other protected species are likely to be affected and she therefore has no comments to make on the application.
6. The County Council's Principal Archaeologist advises that the site is located in an area of archaeological interest within an area of archaeological features identified as crop marks on aerial photographs. An archaeological evaluation

has been undertaken on the site which recorded two Iron Age ditches along with a number of undated features (PRN 28266). It is likely that a number of these undated features are associated with the Iron Age features. A series of post medieval field ditches were also recorded. This development is likely to disturb further archaeological features and a programme of archaeological recording will be required ahead of and during any development. It is therefore recommended that, should planning permission be granted, the applicant should be responsible for ensuring the implementation of a staged programme of archaeological investigation to be maintained during the period of construction. This can be ensured through the attachment of a suitable negative condition along the lines of:

1) No development shall commence until a Written Scheme of Investigation has been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. This scheme shall provide details of the professional archaeological organisation that will carry out the investigation. The approved scheme shall be implemented in full.

Reason - To safeguard the recording of archaeological matters within the site in accordance with the NPPF (2012)

2) Prior to the commencement of the development and following the approval of the Written Scheme of Investigation referred to in condition 1, a staged programme of archaeological investigation shall be carried out by the commissioned archaeological organisation in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation. The programme of work shall include all processing, research and analysis necessary to produce an accessible and useable archive and a full report for publication which shall be submitted to the County Planning Authority.

Reason – To safeguard the identification, recording, analysis and archiving of heritage assets before they are lost and to advance understanding of the heritage assets in their wider context through publication and dissemination of the evidence in accordance with the NPPF (2012).

7. The County Council's Arboricultural Officer has no objection to the application.
8. Sport England has no objection to the proposed extension subject to a condition requiring works to reinstate the playing field affected by any temporary works e.g. the construction access. However it objects to the application because the proposed MUGA on the existing useable playing field would lead to the provision of a pitch on the remaining playing field which would be less than the Football Association's recommended pitch size for Mini-Soccer U7/U8 5v5 (37 x 27m) (43 x 33m including run-off) and one less rounders pitch. It is considered that the existing playing field has the potential to accommodate a Mini-Soccer U9/U10 7v7 pitch (55 x 37m) (61 x 43m including safety area around pitch), or two rounders pitches and an eight lane 60m running straight. While it may still be possible to accommodate a running straight, the proposed MUGA would lead to the provision of two pitches less

than the Football Association's recommended pitch size for Mini-Soccer U7/U8 5v5 and one less rounders pitch.

9. It is also not proposed to be fenced; fencing is needed to retain balls within the playing area and where five-a-side football is to be played, a rebound wall or board system should also be installed. Fencing is also needed in order to prevent contamination of the playing surface with mud and material from outside the playing area. Whilst Sport England is conscious at the potential impact of fencing on the setting of the Conservation Area, it is considered that there are no important views either into or out of the Conservation Area that warrant special protection to preserve its setting. There are no public views across the playing field and into the Conservation Area from the south and south-east, because there are well established trees and shrubs around the perimeter of the playing field. Excluding buildings that are proposed to be removed, south-easterly views out of the Conservation Area from St Peter's Road are dominated by bow top railings, the school playground, a bicycle shelter and existing trees on the edge of the playing field. When the relocated adventure play equipment is added to the view and having regard to the siting of the proposed MUGA, the impact of any fencing around the facility is unlikely to be significant.

10. Therefore, Sport England considers that the proposed MUGA will not deliver sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss of this part of the playing field. The development is not considered to fully accord with circumstances described in the exception E5 of Sport England's playing fields policy which states:

"The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor sports facility, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss of the playing field or playing fields".

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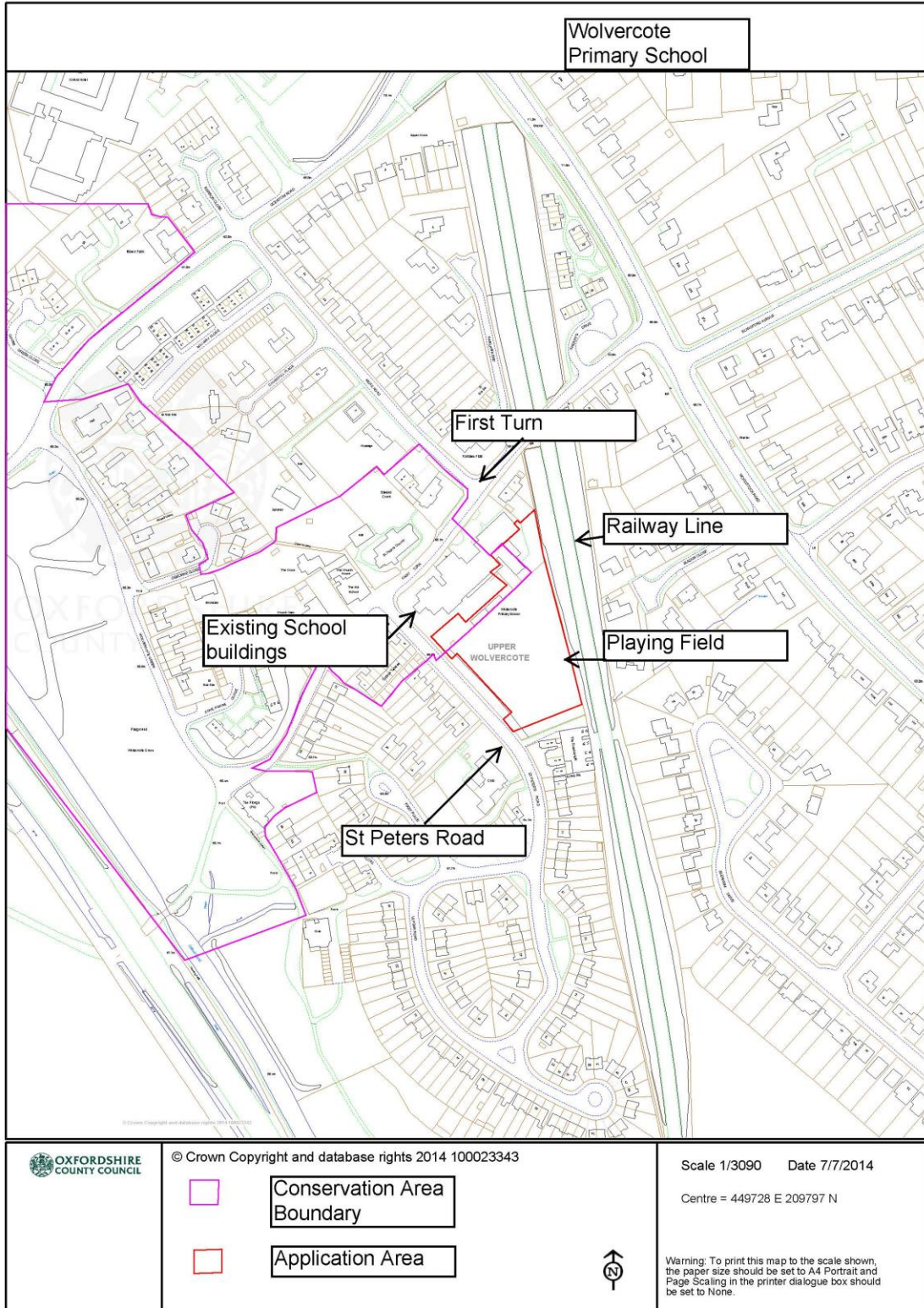
In order to overcome the objection it will be necessary for the proposal to be amended either by removal of the MUGA as currently proposed or the specification of the MUGA to be improved in accordance with Sport England's Design Guidance Note, 'Artificial Surfaces for Outdoor Sport Updated guidance for 2012'.

11. Network Rail has made a holding objection as it would like to review the proposed surface water drainage design for the site in order to ensure there will be not potential adverse effect on their assets. If the current surface water drainage is to be used, it requires confirmation that the capacity of the drainage system is sufficient. Once these details have been received and reviewed and it is found there will be no safety implications to the railway it will then be in a position to submit comments.

12. Four third party representations have been received to the application raising the following concerns/objections with regard to the unacceptable impact through noise and vibration on pupils and staff in the proposed extension from the intensified use of the upgraded adjoining railway line as part of the East-

PN7

West rail project. It is considered that no planning permission should be granted until this issue has been properly assessed.





OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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Scale 1/3090 Date 7/7/2014

Centre = 449728 E 209797 N

-  Conservation Area Boundary
-  Application Area



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