

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee: East Area
Date: 14 June 2007

Ward: Fishergate
Parish: Fishergate Planning Panel

Reference: 07/00594/GRG3
Application at: St Lawrences C Of E Primary School Heslington Road York YO10 5BW
For: Extensions and alterations to existing school building including new reception area, office and meeting room and 2 no. new educational rooms
By: Alison Kelly
Application Type: General Regulations (Reg3)
Target Date: 9 May 2007

1.0 PROPOSAL

1.1 The application site is an existing school building with grounds located on the north side of Heslington Road. It is surrounded by housing to the east and west and the Convent of Poor Clares to the north, located behind a high brick wall. The school has a separate field to the north-east accessed through double gates from the main school site. The site lies without though adjacent to the Heslington Road Conservation Area and immediately outside the Retreat Area of Archaeological Importance.

1.2 This application proposes the erection of single storey extensions to the school building and the provision of additional vehicle parking facilities. The additional floor space would provide an extended reception area, additional education rooms, and new office and meeting room accommodation. The vehicle parking facilities would formalise two areas adjacent to the internal access road, where vehicles park on grassed verges providing 19 spaces. The development would be phased to address the impacts of development works on the users of the school building.

1.3 The application submission is accompanied by a design and access statement. This outlines the proposals including the intended use and design rationale.

1.4 There have been previous extensions to the school approved in 2004, 2005 and 2006. That approved in 2004 involved the provision of hardstanding areas for the informal parking on the grassed verges to the east side of the site.

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Development Plan Allocation:

2.2

Areas of Archaeological Interest City Centre Area 0006

Conservation Area Heslington Road 0040

City Boundary York City Boundary 0001

DC Area Teams East Area (1) 0003

Schools St. Lawrence's CE Primary 0226

2.2 Policies:

CYGP1
Design

CYGP3
Planning against crime

CYGP9
Landscaping

CYHE2
Development in historic locations

CYHE10
Archaeology

CYNE1
Trees, woodlands, hedgerows

CYT4
Cycle parking standards

CYED1
Primary and Secondary Education

CYGP4
Environmental sustainability

3.0 CONSULTATIONS

3.1 Internal

Highway Network Management - It is understood that the car parking shown involves reinforcing areas already used for this purpose and is therefore acceptable. Cycle parking should be convenient to the entrance rather than tucked away behind the building. Request condition HWAY18.

City Archaeologist - This site lies immediately outside the Retreat Area of Archaeological Importance. It lies within 100m of the site of a late Roman/Anglian cemetery, and within 75m of the 17th century gun battery and observation platform in the Retreat. It is probable therefore that this development will reveal archaeological features and deposits which must be recorded through an archaeological watching brief on all groundworks. Condition ARCH2 requested.

3.2 External

Fishergate Planning Panel - No objections.

No responses from local residents.

4.0 APPRAISAL

4.1 Key issues:

- whether the development meets a recognised need and provides a dual use for community benefit;
- design considerations including whether the scale and design is appropriate;
- affect on historic environment, including archaeology and conservation area;
- impact on natural environment, including trees;
- whether sufficient open space and playing fields remain;
- impact on residential amenity;
- parking and highway safety.

4.2 Policy Context

National planning policy is set out in Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Principles, Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment and Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning. At a local level, the policy context is set out in the City of York Draft Local Plan (incorporating 4th set of changes), the relevant policies of which are summarised in section 2.2. In particular, as the site is allocated as an educational establishment on the Proposals Map of the Draft Local Plan, Policy ED1 is relevant. This policy relates to planning applications for the extension of primary schools and lists criteria that need to be met, which are: it would meet a recognised need, be of an appropriate design and scale to the character and appearance of the locality; would retain sufficient open space and playing fields; and, where capable, incorporate a joint or dual use for community benefit.

4.3 Recognised Need and Community Use

The development aims to expand and improve facilities within the school in order for it to achieve designation as a Sure Start Children's Centre, as part of a Government initiative to ensure that every child gets the best possible start in life through a re-shaping of early years provision. Underpinned by new duties on local authorities under the Childcare Act 2006, the centre would increase the availability and quality of childcare; improve the health, education and emotional development of children; and offer increased support for parents as parents and in their aspirations towards employment, education and training. Under phase 2 of this national programme, the City of York Council has received funding to establish eight Children's Centres across the City by 31 March 2008. On 18 October 2005, the Executive Member for Education and Children's Services accepted a recommendation that one of the eight Centres should be sited within St. Lawrence's CE Primary School. This selection was based primarily on the recognised needs of children and families living in the surrounding communities, in particular the relatively high levels of social & economic

disadvantage experienced by many children attending the school and on the significant number of pupils for whom English was not their first language.

The planned works would enhance accessibility and movement around the building, particularly in the reception area, where the works would provide a more appropriate secure space for students, staff and visitors, as well as a step-free entrance. The development would also provide increased educational facilities as well as facilities for wider community use. In particular, the proposed Children's Room and associated accommodation would offer a range of integrated childcare, education, family support and health care services in accordance with the requirements of the national Children's Centre programme.

The development would therefore be meeting recognised and evidenced local need, as well as providing a dual use for community benefit as encouraged by Policy ED1.

4.4 Design Considerations

The proposed extensions would be of an appropriate scale and design to the existing single storey building and would be constructed, on the whole, from materials that would match those of the main building. The extension at the front of the school, proposed to accommodate the Children's Group Room, would have an inverted roof design that would follow the pitch of the adjacent hall road and maintain the flow of the buildings appearance along this street elevation. To enable this, it would have a contrasting metal profile roof. This extension would result in the loss of a grassed area and reduce the size of an existing courtyard, but not to the extent that the appearance of the building or area would be harmed. The formalisation of the parking areas would be achieved by the laying of a rigid recycled plastic reinforcing system over the existing grass in order to retain the visual effect of these grassed areas. It is considered that the design of the development overall would respect the local environment and be compatible with the existing school building and those neighbouring it.

The application proposes to extend an existing school in a sustainable location within the urban area and on a main public transport route into the city centre. The agent has confirmed that the construction of the building would either match or be better than current building regulation requirements and that the additional facility will be heated by an oil fired system as the existing building is that can be converted to run on bio-diesel. The heating system is to be kept separate from the existing one on site in order that it can be heated outside school hours if needed in order to fulfil the proposed community function.

The site is already well secured by a 2.4m high fence along the front boundary and gates across the vehicle entrance and access to the playing fields, which restrict means of entry to the site and improve natural surveillance. The development would not alter this arrangement.

4.5 Historic Environment

The site lies immediately outside the retreat Area of Archaeological Importance, though close to the site of a late Roman/Anglian cemetery and 17th century gun

battery and observation platform. As such, the Council's Archaeologist has requested a condition to require that there be an archaeological watching brief on all groundworks (ARCH2).

The site itself lies outside the Heslington Road Conservation Area, whose outer boundary is the front boundary of the school site with Heslington Road. However, as the site is immediately adjacent to it, the impact of the development on the character and appearance of the conservation area needs to be assessed. In light of the appropriate scale and design of the extensions and the proposed method of construction for the additional vehicle parking areas, and the set back of the works from the front boundary, it is considered that the development would preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area as required by PPG15 and Local Plan policy HE2.

4.6 Natural Environment

The site has various trees within its grounds. The development would require the removal of those within the courtyard area to accommodate the Children's Group Room. A condition should be attached to require replacement planting where possible. Those within the grassed verges where the parking spaces are proposed should not be adversely affected by the provision of the reinforcing system, but the Council's Landscape Architect has requested a method statement condition to control the works in the interest of the trees.

The new classroom at the rear of the site would remove a 'wildlife area'. It has been confirmed that the school would wish to replace this facility elsewhere within the site. The Council's Countryside Officer is to visit the site and Members will be updated on this issue at Committee.

4.7 Open space and playing fields

The development would not affect the existing playground, playing fields or equipped play area. The amount of general open space around the building would be reduced due to the loss of land to accommodate the extensions, though in relation to the entire site this is within acceptable limits. Any loss also needs to be weighed against the improved community facilities that would be offered as a result of the development.

4.8 Residential amenity

The extensions would be located at sufficient distance from neighbouring residential properties not to have any significant adverse affect. The residents in the adjacent houses to the east of the site are already accustomed to vehicles parking on the grassed verge, but are also separated from them by a fence and vegetation, rear access lane and their gardens. There is a high brick wall along the northern boundary of the school with the Poor Clares Convent to the north, which would protect the amenity of its occupants from the development.

4.9 Parking and highway safety

The proposals seek to formalise parking that already occurs within the grounds. As such, the Highway Network Management Section raises no objection. However, it is considered that cycle parking should be convenient to the entrance rather than at the rear and therefore a condition to require cycle parking facilities is requested. The agent has confirmed that he is happy for this condition and further discussion about the location of cycle parking facilities.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 In light of the above, it is considered that the proposed development would improve and enhance educational and community facilities at the school, without causing demonstrable harm to any acknowledged interests, namely visual amenity, crime, historic environment, trees, residential amenity and highway safety. As a result, the application is recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION: Approve under General Regs 3 Council Dev

1 TIME2

2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the following plans:-

Drawing nos. A4002 'Proposed Site Plan', A4004 'Proposed Ground Floor Plan', A4005 'Proposed Roof Plans', A4010 'Proposed Phase One', A4011 'Proposed Window Schedule', A4015 'Proposed Phase Two', A4020 'Proposed Children's Room', and A4021 'Phase 3' received 14 March 2007.

or any plans or details subsequently agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority as amendment to the approved plans.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out only as approved by the Local Planning Authority.

3 ARCH2

4 VISQ8

5 No development shall take place until there has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a detailed landscaping scheme which shall illustrate the number, species, height and position of trees and shrubs within the site. The scheme shall include the replacement trees for those to be lost within the courtyard area adjacent to the entrance to the school building. This scheme shall be implemented within a period of six months of the completion of the development. Any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless alternatives are agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: So that the Local Planning Authority may be satisfied with the variety, suitability and disposition of species within the site.

- 6 Before the commencement of development, including the importing of materials or any excavations, a method statement regarding protection measures for the existing trees shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This statement shall include details of protective fencing, arrangements for delivery and off-loading, storage of materials, details of car park surface construction within the rooting zone of the trees and method of implementation.

Reason: To protect existing trees, which are considered to make a significant contribution to the amenity of this area and conservation area.

7 HWAY18

8 NOISE7

7.0 INFORMATIVES:

Notes to Applicant

1. REASON FOR APPROVAL

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the proposal, subject to the conditions listed above, would not cause undue harm to interests of acknowledged importance, with particular reference to the need for the extensions to the primary school, community benefit, visual amenity, crime, sustainability, historic environment, natural environment, open space and playing fields to serve the school, residential amenity, and parking and highway safety. As such the proposal complies with Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Principles, Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment, Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning, and Policies GP1, GP3, GP4a, GP9, NE1, HE2, HE10, T4 and ED1 of the City of York Draft Local Plan (incorporating fourth set of changes).

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