



REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE

3 December 2015

REPORT

Subject Heading:

P1295.15: Gidea Park Primary School,
Lodge Avenue

Landscaping and installation of single demountable classroom building upon new extended hard standing playground. (Application received 8 October 2015).

Ward

Romford Town

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Policy context:

Local Development Framework
The London Plan
National Planning Policy Framework

Financial summary:

None

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Havering will be clean and its environment will be cared for	[X]
People will be safe, in their homes and in the community	[]
Residents will be proud to live in Havering	[X]

SUMMARY

The Council is in receipt of an application for a demountable classroom. The building measures 155m² in Gross Internal Area and contains a classroom, offices and amenities.

The proposed classroom is to accommodate a planned bulge expansion of up to 30 pupils from either Reception Year or Year 1 children. The proposed building will have a flat roof matching the height and design of the other buildings on the site.

The development proposed is considered to be acceptable in all material aspects and it is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions.

1. Temporary building

In respect of the demountable classroom only, this permission shall be for a limited period only expiring on 4 December 2020 on or before which date the demountable classroom shall be removed from the site.

Reason: The temporary nature of the building is such that permanent permission would not be appropriate in the interests of amenity. This permission is therefore granted on a temporary basis to enable the Local Planning Authority to retain control, and that the development accords with the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

2. Time

The development to which this permission relates must be commenced not later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

3. Accordance with Plans

The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the approved plans, particulars and specifications (as set out on page one of this decision notice).

Reason: The Local Planning Authority consider it essential that the whole of the development is carried out and that no departure whatsoever is made from the details approved, since the development would not necessarily be acceptable if partly carried out or carried out differently in any degree from the details submitted. Also, in order that the development accords with Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

4. Hours of Construction

All building operations in connection with the construction of external walls, roof, and foundations; site excavation or other external site works; works involving the use of plant or machinery; the erection of scaffolding; the delivery of materials; the removal of materials and spoil from the site, and the playing of amplified music shall only take place between the hours of 8.00am and 6.00pm Monday to Friday, and between 8.00am and 1.00pm on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays/Public Holidays.

Reason:-

To protect residential amenity, and in order that the development accords with the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

5. Wheel washing

Before the development hereby permitted is first commenced, vehicle cleansing facilities to prevent mud being deposited onto the public highway during construction works shall be provided on site in accordance with details to be first submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved facilities shall be retained thereafter and used at relevant entrances to the site throughout the duration of construction works. If mud or other debris originating from the site is deposited in the public highway, all on-site operations shall cease until it has been removed.

The submission will provide;

- a) A plan showing where vehicles will be parked within the site to be inspected for mud and debris and cleaned if required. The plan should show where construction traffic will access and exit the site from the public highway.
- b) A description of how the parking area will be surfaced, drained and cleaned to prevent mud, debris and muddy water being tracked onto the public highway;
- c) A description of how vehicles will be checked before leaving the site - this applies to the vehicle wheels, the underside of vehicles, mud flaps and wheel arches.
- d) A description of how vehicles will be cleaned.

e) A description of how dirty/ muddy water be dealt with after being washing off the vehicles.

f) A description of any contingency plan to be used in the event of a break-down of the wheel washing arrangements.

Reason: Insufficient information has been supplied with the application in relation to wheel washing facilities. Submission of details prior to commencement will ensure that the facilities provided prevent materials from the site being deposited on the adjoining public highway, in the interests of highway safety and the amenity of the surrounding area. It will also ensure that the development accords with the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policies DC32 and DC61.

6. Works within the dripline of trees

No works shall take place in relation to any of the development hereby approved until a scheme for the protection of the Oak trees on the site closest to the proposed building has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such scheme shall contain details of the erection and maintenance of fences or walls around the trees, details of underground measures to protect roots, the control of areas around the trees and any other measures necessary for the protection of the trees. Such agreed measures shall be implemented before development commences and kept in place until the approved development is completed.

Reason: Insufficient information has been supplied with the application to demonstrate how the existing trees on site will be adequately protected during construction. Submission of details prior to commencement will ensure that the measures to be employed are robust.

INFORMATIVES

1. Statement Required by Article 31 (cc) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management) Order 2010: No significant problems were identified during the consideration of the application, and therefore it has been determined in accordance with paragraphs 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.

REPORT DETAIL

1. Site Description

- 1.1 The subject site is located on the southern side of Main Road with access also located on Lodge Avenue. The site contains a central cluster of buildings in north-south orientation with playing fields located to the east.
- 1.2 The application site is set well away from the highway by means of a gated entrance and car parking area. It is set a significant distance away from residential buildings which surround the site.

2. Description of Proposal

- 2.1 Permission is sought for a single storey temporary demountable building situated on the south eastern corner of the school premises, representing an additional 155m² of gross internal floor area. The proposal would feature a flat roof and be of a height similar to the other buildings on the site.
- 2.2 The playground area will also be extended.
- 2.3 The proposal will result in a temporary increase of 30 pupils as well as two teaching staff. There are currently 423 pupils and 56 members of staff. The proposal will result in a total of 453 pupils and 58 members of staff. There are currently 25 dedicated staff car parking spaces (out of a total of 29) within the school site. No additional car parking spaces are proposed under this planning application.
- 2.4 The proposal also includes earthworks, landscaping and the removal of a mature Oak tree to accommodate the classroom. It should be noted that there are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on the site.
- 2.5 The earthworks comprise the following:
 - re-grade the existing site contours to accommodate the proposed classroom and playground area
 - re-contouring the earth bank which will then be retained by stone-filled gabion wall (with a maximum height of 1m)
 - filling in the existing pond

3. History

- 3.1 P0565.14 – Removal and dismantling of existing shipping container and lightweight metal storage shed and construction of replacement brick built storage building – Approved with conditions

P1319.12 – Retention of metal storage container – Approved with conditions

P0517.09 – To erect one temporary office unit – Approved with conditions

P1955.08 – Single/two storey extensions including four classrooms, a small hall and staff/administration area with a new school entrance – Approved with conditions

4. Consultation/Representations

4.1 Neighbour notification letters were sent to 105 neighbouring occupiers. Council has received 97 objections to the proposal.

4.2 Traffic, Engineering & Streetcare – No objections.

4.3 Environmental Health – No objections.

4.4 The objections received relate to the following material planning considerations:

- Inappropriate landscaping
- Insufficient car parking leading to increased congestion and road safety issues
- Increased traffic generation leading to increased congestion and road safety issues
- Insufficient infrastructure
- Out of keeping with the character of the area
- Loss of privacy
- Construction effects
- Increased noise and disturbance

5. Relevant Policy

5.1 Policies DC29, DC32, DC33, DC34, DC61 and DC63 of the LDF Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document are relevant.

5.2 Also relevant are London Plan Policies 3.1, 3.18, 6.10, 6.13, 7.3, 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

6. Staff Comments

6.1 The application is being reported to Committee because the applicant is the Council and the proposed scheme has received objections as part of the consultation process.

7. Principle of Development

- 7.1 The issues for Members to consider relate to the impact that the proposed demountable building would have on the character of the locality, and the residential amenity of neighbouring properties together with the impact upon the highway network as a result of pupil and staff expansion.
- 7.2 Policy DC29 of the LDF states that educational premises should be of a suitable quality to meet the needs of residents. The development contained herein creates a new classroom in order to accommodate the increasing demand for schooling in the borough. Therefore the proposal can be considered a necessary expansion in order for the school to continue to cater acceptably to the needs of existing students and thereby the wider community. The proposal is therefore acceptable in principle.
- 7.3 Paragraph 72 of the NPPF attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools.

8. Design/Impact on Street/Garden Scene

- 8.1 Policy DC61 states that development should respect the scale, massing and height of the surrounding physical context.
- 8.2 The proposed classroom would be a considerable distance from both Main Road and Lodge Avenue with screening provided by the existing grove of trees.
- 8.3 Its height and roof design would be similar to the existing school building and it is of a design that will not be incongruous with the character of the school.
- 8.4 Furthermore the existing ground level will be lowered by a maximum height of 2.4m to ensure that the building will be on level ground with the surrounding school buildings. The building will also be oriented towards the school and will not be facing any neighbouring dwellings. It is not considered that it would give rise to any harmful visual impact.
- 8.5 The proposal will also involve the removal of a tree and earthworks in order to accommodate the building on the site. It should be noted that there are no TPOs on the trees on the site. While the proposal will involve works within the driplines of the central cluster of trees, a condition will be imposed to ensure that these works will not impact on the health of the trees.

- 8.6 The removal of the tree and earthworks are required to create a level platform to accommodate the classroom as well as the extension to the playground.
- 8.7 The earthworks are required to accommodate the building and create a more suitable platform for the playground. The change in ground levels are not considered to drastically alter the landform and the gabion wall is of a low scale design. Furthermore the gabion wall will be facing into the school and will not be visible from anywhere outside the site. There will not be any adverse visual effects of the proposed earthworks.
- 8.8 It is considered that the proposed addition would, by reason of its design, positioning and scale, safeguard and preserve the character and appearance of the school and surrounding area. The proposal is acceptable and in accordance with Policies DC61 and advice contained within the NPPF.

9. **Impact on Amenity**

- 9.1 Policy DC61 states that Planning permission will not be granted where the proposal results in unacceptable overshadowing, loss of sunlight/daylight, overlooking or loss of privacy to existing and new properties and has unreasonable adverse effects on the environment by reason of noise impact, hours of operation, vibration and fumes between and within developments.
- 9.2 While the proposed building will be located away from the existing cluster of buildings on the site and towards the southern boundary. It is considered that there will not be any adverse effects on the residential amenities of neighbouring occupiers as the proposed building will be located 40m from the nearest residential dwelling. Extensive screening is also provided along the site boundaries. The building will also be set lower relative to the ground levels at the boundary giving the building an effective height of 1.1m above ground level as viewed from the boundary. The proposed building will also be oriented towards the existing cluster of buildings on the site and will not be facing any neighbouring dwelling. The proposal would not result in any loss of privacy, outlook, sunlight or daylight to neighbouring properties over and above that which exists presently.
- 9.3 The proposal will result in a 7% increase in the number of students within the site. The proposal will also increase the size of the playground area and moving it closer to the southern boundary. The increase in the size of the playground will not lend to a perceivable increase in the noise levels received by the neighbouring sites. The increase in student numbers represents a small increase relative to the total number of pupils on the site. Any increased noise generated by the additional pupils is likely to be marginal given the number of existing students on the site and is not likely to be perceived by neighbouring sites. Overall, any increase in the noise effects generated by the proposed increase will be negligible.

9.4 It is therefore considered that the proposal would safeguard the amenities of neighbouring properties in accordance Policy DC61 the intentions of the NPPF.

10. Highway/Parking

10.1 The applicant has provided a Transport Statement supporting the proposal. This report makes the following comments:

- The school has good accessibility for pedestrians to nearby residential areas and there are good facilities for pedestrians, particularly crossings at points of conflict
- There are numerous cycle lanes and wayfinding facilities for cyclists in the immediate area surrounding the site
- Whilst access to the site by public transport is considered poor and the site is not easily accessed by the London Underground, there are several regular bus services and a school bus service which serve the site
- The additional vehicle movements related to the development in the vicinity of the site will not have a material impact on the local highway network
- Additional parking demand associated with staff is anticipated to be accommodated on-site and additional demand associated with pupils can be accommodated within the wider highway network and Lodge Farm Park
- Appropriate recommendations have been made to amend the School Travel Plan (including mode shares for pupils and staff, increased cycle and scooter parking and demand management measures) in order to mitigate the effects of this increase

10.2 A significant number of objections have been received which raise concerns regarding the increased demand in on-street parking during the school drop-off and pick up periods. Concerns are also raised at the increase in the traffic generated during the same drop-off and pick up periods.

10.3 The proposal will result in a temporary increase of 30 pupils as well as two teaching staff. There are currently 423 pupils and 56 members of staff. The proposal will result in a total of 453 pupils and 58 members of staff. There are currently 25 dedicated staff car parking spaces (out of a total of 29) within the school site. A total of 30 cycle parking spaces are provided for use by both staff and pupils. No additional car parking spaces are proposed under this planning application. The expansion of the school is anticipated to generate up to 10 pupil car journeys (20 two-way trips) and one car trip from staff.

10.4 The Council's car parking standards requires a maximum of 1No. car parking space per teaching staff. The proposal complies with this standard.

10.5 On street parking measures are currently in place within the locality including:

- Restricted parking along all the junctions and most of the apexes of the bends (in the form of double yellow lines) of the roads to the rear of the school, specifically St Ivians Drive, Tudor Drive and Repton Drive
- The residents parking scheme along this section of Lodge Avenue is in place during the hours of 9:15am – 10am (Monday to Friday).
- The school 'Keep Clear' markings fronting the school in Lodge Avenue have also been updated to apply from 8am – 5pm (Monday to Friday throughout the year)
- A parking review is currently being undertaken by Havering's Streetcare team for the streets surrounding the school to assess whether any further parking restrictions are required in these areas. Public consultation on these measures closed on 7 August 2015. The outcome of the review has yet to be finalised.

10.6 The main conclusions reached by the Transport Statement are:

- While the school is located in a residential area, none of the personal injury accidents in the last three years have involved children during the school peak hours
- The roads in the local area provide on-street parking with road markings in place to deter inappropriate parking that may represent a potential safety issue
- The roads surrounding the school provide a comprehensive network of footways and the school has pedestrian accesses from two gates to the west of the site on Lodge Avenue and to the east of the site on St. Ivians Drive.
- Dedicated cycle lanes are provided directly to the north of the site on Main Road. Dedicated cycle lanes are provided directly to the north of the site on Main Road. There are signed cycle routes through the local area to nearby town centres
- There are bus routes available on Main Road, which are a short walk from the school. While the school has poor accessibility it is noted that there is relatively limited demand for public transport from a primary school. As such this is not considered to be significant issue
- Parking demand was observed to be greater during the afternoon peak than the morning peak
- Parking demand was observed to be greater at the rear access on St. Ivians Drive during the morning peak, and greater on Lodge Avenue during the afternoon peak
- The expansion of the school is expected to generate a negligible increase in vehicular traffic, which is not considered to have an impact on the capacity or operation of junctions in the area
- On-street parking is available in the wider area and park and stride initiatives would reduce the impact of the School on the immediate area around the site

- Additional cycle and scooter parking is required at the site in order to meet the demand anticipated by the expansion. Additional demand may be required as a result of Travel Planning measures and further spaces should be provided through the Travel Plan. With the introduction of additional cycle and scooter parking, 'soft' mitigation measures, and management measures, it is considered that the proposed expansion would be acceptable in transport and highways terms

10.6 It is noted that the Council Highways Department have raised no objections to the proposed development.

10.7 Given the above conclusions, it is considered that the proposal will generate a negligible increase in traffic generated (over and above the current situation). This is not expected to cause any detrimental impact on the local highway network with the additional parking demand accommodated on street. Mitigating measures have been proposed in order to manage this increased demand. It is considered that the relatively minor increase in traffic and parking and the implementation of the mitigating measures to help manage this means that the proposal will not have a prejudicial impact on the road network and will be acceptable in accordance with Policy DC33 and DC34.

11. **Conclusion**

11.1 Having had regard to the LDF Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document, all other relevant local and national policy, consultation responses and all other material planning considerations, it is considered that the proposal would not harm the form and character of the school and surrounding area, the residential amenity of the occupants of neighbouring properties or result in highway issues.

11.2 The application therefore complies with aims and objectives of Policy DC61 of the LDF Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document and approval is recommended accordingly.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial Implications and risks:

None.

Legal Implications and risks:

The application relates to a land which is within the Council's ownership. This does not affect the planning considerations relating to this development. The Council's interests as applicant are considered separately from the Council's role as a Local Planning Authority.

Human Resource Implications:

None.

Equalities and Social Inclusion Implications:

The proposal would provide additional school places for the Borough's residents.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Application form and drawings received 08-10-2015.