

REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE

25 August 2016

REPORT

Subject Heading:

P0953.16 - Whybridge Infants School, Ford Lane, Rainham - The existing demountable single classroom (9 metres by 10 metres) to be demolished and replaced with a refurbished demountable portakabin comprising 2 classrooms (14.8 metres by 9.8 metres) (received 7/6/16)

Lead Officer:

Helen Oakerbee
Planning Manager

Report Author and contact details:

Adèle Hughes
Senior Planner
adele.hughes@havering.gov.uk
01708 432727

Ward:

South Hornchurch

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

This matter is brought before committee as the application site is Council owned and objections have been received. The application seeks planning permission for the existing demountable single classroom (9 metres by 10 metres) to be demolished and replaced with a refurbished demountable portakabin comprising of two classrooms (14.8 metres by 9.8 metres). Staff conclude the proposal to be acceptable. The application is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. Time Limit - 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).

2. Materials - The proposed development hereby approved shall be constructed in accordance with the materials detailed under Section 10 of the application form unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the proposed development will harmonise with the character of the surrounding area and comply with Policy DC61 of the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

3. Accordance with plans - The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the plans as listed on page 1 of this decision notice approved by the Local Planning Authority.

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 the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

INFORMATIVE

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 application site is Whybridge Infants School, Ford Lane, Rainham. The site is bounded by a mixture of single and two storey detached, semi-detached and terraced residential properties with associated rear gardens. The replacement demountable portakabin would be sited in the same position as the existing portakabin, which is adjacent to the rear gardens of neighbouring properties in Harlow Road and Ford Lane.

2. **Description of development:**

- 2.1 The application seeks permission for the existing demountable single classroom (9 metres by 10 metres) to be demolished and replaced with a refurbished demountable portakabin comprising two classrooms (14.8 metres by 9.8 metres) at Whybridge Infants School. The replacement portakabin would have a height of 2.7 metres and be sited in the same position as the existing one. The space created would provide two classrooms, a lobby, toilets and stores. The portakabin would be located between approximately 12 and 16 metres from the north western boundary of the site. There will be an additional 30 children and two teachers. The portakabin would be used between 8am and 5.30pm Monday to Friday.

3. **Relevant History:**

- 3.1 P1334.91 - Erection of demountable building - Approved.

4. **Consultations/Representations:**

- 4.1 The occupiers of 30 neighbouring properties were notified of this proposal. Eight letters of objection were received (four of which were from two addresses) with detailed comments that have been summarised as follows:
- Noise created within the portakabin. Suggested appropriate sound insulation.
 - Loss of privacy and overlooking from the existing fence between the application site and the rear gardens of neighbouring properties. Suggested the use of a bamboo screen.
 - Increased traffic and congestion.
 - Queried if the number of students will be increased.
 - Parking.
 - Access.
 - Pedestrian and highway safety.

4.2 In response to the above, comments regarding overlooking and loss of privacy from the existing boundary treatment are not material planning considerations. The remaining issues will be addressed in the following sections of this report.

5. **Relevant policies:**

5.1 Policies CP8 (Community needs), CP17 (Design), DC29 (Educational Premises), DC32 (The Road Network), DC33 (Car parking), DC34 (Walking), DC35 (Cycling), DC55 Noise), DC61 (Urban Design) and DC62 (Access) of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Documents are material planning considerations. In addition, Policies 3.18 (Educational facilities), 6.13 (Parking) and 7.4 (Local character) of the London Plan and Chapters 4 (Promoting sustainable transport), 7 (Requiring good design) and 8 (Promoting healthy communities) of the National Planning Policy Framework are relevant.

6. **Staff Comments**

6.1 This proposal is put before the Committee owing to the land being Council owned and objections being received. The issues arising in respect of this application are the impact on the streetscene, amenity issues and parking and highways implications.

6.2 **Principle of Development**

6.2.1 The proposal is for the existing demountable single classroom to be demolished and replaced with a refurbished demountable portakabin comprising two classrooms. The proposal is acceptable in principle and complies with LDF Policy DC29.

6.3 **Design/impact on street/Garden scene**

6.3.1 It is considered the replacement demountable portakabin would not be harmful to the streetscene, as it would be sited in the same position as the existing portakabin, which is located to the rear of the school car park. The proposed portakabin would be partly screened by the single storey nursery building and Whybridge Infants School, which would help to mitigate its impact. The proposed portakabin is single storey and relatively low in height at 2.7 metres with a flat roof, which minimises its bulk. The proposed portakabin would be located between approximately 12 and 16 metres from the north western boundary of the site. Overall, Staff consider that the overall proportions and height of the proposed demountable portakabin would integrate satisfactorily with the existing school and nursery buildings and would have no material impact on the wider streetscene.

6.4 **Impact on amenity**

6.4.1 It is considered that the demountable portakabin would not be harmful to residential amenity, as it is single storey, has a flat roof with a height of 2.7 metres and would be between approximately 12 and 16 metres from the north western boundary of the site. In addition, the proposed portakabin would be

sited in the same position as the existing portakabin, which is located to the rear of the school car park. The portakabin would be partly screened by the single storey nursery building and Whybridge Infants School, which would help to mitigate its impact. Staff consider that the proposal would not create any additional overlooking or loss of privacy over and above existing conditions and taking into account the separation distances above.

6.4.2 Environmental Health do not consider it to be reasonable or appropriate to place a condition in respect of sound insulation given the proposal consists of a demountable portakabin, as opposed to a building of solid construction. The portakabin would be used by Whybridge Infants School between 08:00 to 17:30 Monday to Friday. It is considered that these hours are deemed to be acceptable, as they are concentrated during the day time, (as opposed to very early morning or late evening). In addition, the proposed portakabin would be used during term time, which minimises the potential for noise and disturbance during the school holidays.

6.4.3 It is recognised that an additional thirty children and two staff would increase noise and disturbance, although this would be balanced against pupils utilising the whole of the school site. Given the existing use of the site as a school and the existence of a portakabin in the same position (albeit a smaller one) it is not considered the increase in pupil and staff numbers would result in a material change in the character or use of the site sufficient to justify refusal on grounds of noise and disturbance.

6.4 Highway/parking issues

6.4.1 Whybridge Infants School is located in PTAL zone 1b. There are 26 car parking spaces on the site. Whybridge Infants School will maintain the pattern of arrivals and departures. Whilst the increase in pupil and staff numbers has the potential to increase vehicle trips to and from the school, it is not considered that this will significantly impact upon the use of the highway.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Staff are of the view that demolishing the existing demountable single classroom and replacing it with a refurbished demountable portakabin comprising two classrooms at Whybridge Infants School is acceptable, would not adversely impact on the streetscene or result in a significant loss of amenity to neighbouring occupiers. In the context of the school site as a whole it is not considered this proposal would materially increase noise and activity over the existing levels. It is considered that the proposal would not create any highway or parking issues. The proposal is considered to be acceptable in all other respects and it is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted subject to conditions.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

None.

Legal implications and risks:

This application is considered on its own merits and independently from the Council's interest as owner of the site.

Human Resources implications and risks:

None.

Equalities implications and risks:

The Council's planning policies are implemented with regard to Equalities and Diversity.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Application forms and plans received 7/6/2016.