



**REGULATORY  
SERVICES  
COMMITTEE**

**REPORT**

15 September 2011

<b>Subject Heading:</b>	<b>P0788.11 – St. Albans RC School, Hornchurch</b>  <b>Alteration and enlargement of existing school car park, with associated hard standing and landscaping. Replacement boundary fencing and pedestrian gate (Application received 20<sup>th</sup> June 2011)</b>
<b>Report Author and contact details:</b>	<b>Helen Oakerbee, 01708 432 800 Helen.oakerbee@havering.gov.uk</b>
<b>Policy context:</b>	<b>Local development Framework</b>
<b>Financial summary:</b>	<b>None</b>

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

Clean, safe and green borough	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Excellence in education and learning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Opportunities for all through economic, social and cultural activity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Value and enhance the life of every individual	<input type="checkbox"/>
High customer satisfaction and a stable council tax	<input type="checkbox"/>

**SUMMARY**

This application relates to a school, where the playing fields are owned by the Council. This application relates to the alteration and enlargement of the existing school car park, replacement boundary fencing and pedestrian gates.

The planning issues are set out in the report below and cover the principle of development, impact on the streetscene, residential amenity and highways/parking. Staff are of the view that the proposal is acceptable and it is recommended that permission be granted subject to conditions.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions.

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) Accordance with plans: The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the approved plans, particulars and specifications.

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.

3) Land contamination: Prior to the commencement of any works pursuant to this permission the developer shall submit for the written approval of the Local Planning Authority;

a) A Phase I (Desktop Study) Report documenting the history of this site, its surrounding area and the likelihood of contaminant/s, their type and extent incorporating a Site Conceptual Model.

b) A Phase II (Site Investigation) Report if the Phase I Report confirms the possibility of a significant risk to any sensitive receptors. This is an intrusive site investigation including factors such as chemical testing, quantitative risk assessment and a description of the sites ground conditions. An updated Site

Conceptual Model should be included showing all the potential pollutant linkages and an assessment of risk to identified receptors.

c) A Phase III (Risk Management Strategy) Report if the Phase II Report confirms the presence of a significant pollutant linkage requiring remediation. The report will comprise of two parts:

Part A - Remediation Statement which will be fully implemented before it is first occupied. Any variation to the scheme shall be agreed in writing to the Local Planning Authority in advance of works being undertaken. The Remediation Scheme is to include consideration and proposals to deal with situations where, during works on site, contamination is encountered which has not previously been identified. Any further contamination shall be fully assessed and an appropriate remediation scheme submitted to the Local Planning Authority for written approval.

Part B - Following completion of the remediation works a "Validation Report" must be submitted demonstrating that the works have been carried out satisfactorily and remediation targets have been achieved.

d) If during development works any contamination should be encountered which was not previously identified and is derived from a different source and/or of a different type to those included in the contamination proposals then revised contamination proposals shall be submitted to the LPA ; and

e) If during development work, site contaminants are found in areas previously expected to be clean, then their remediation shall be carried out in line with the agreed contamination proposals.

For further guidance see the leaflet titled, "Land Contamination and the Planning Process".

Reason:

To protect those engaged in construction and occupation of the development from potential contamination. Also in order that the development accords with the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC53.

4) Replacement trees: No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority a scheme for 6 replacement trees along the site boundaries. This scheme shall also include details for the replacement fencing around the existing trees to the Southend Road boundary. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised within the scheme shall be carried out in the first planting season following completion of the development and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 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 other similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing 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 Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

5) Pedestrian gates: The proposed gate shall be inward opening only.

Reason:

In the interests of highway safety.

## **INFORMATIVES**

1. Reason for Approval:

It is considered that the proposal satisfies the relevant criteria of Policies DC33, DC36 and DC61 of the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

## **INFORMATIVE**

1. The proposed development is considered to be in accordance with the aims, objectives and provisions of Policies DC33, DC61 of the LDF Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

Note: Following a change in government legislation a fee is now required when submitting details pursuant to the discharge of conditions, in order to comply with the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Amendment) (England) Regulations, which came into force from 06.04.2008. A fee of £85 per request (or £25 where the related permission was for extending or altering a dwellinghouse) is needed.

## **REPORT DETAIL**

### **1. Site Description**

1.1 The application site is a Council owned school site, located to the east of Heron Flight Avenue in Hornchurch, which forms its vehicular access. To the west the school's play areas are bound by mesh fencing which faces onto Southend Road. North, east and west of the site are residential dwellings.

1.2 The application site comprises the school buildings to the southern corner with hard playing areas to the east and a car park to the north adjacent to

the entrance. The northern edge of the site is open in character, enclosed by fencing.

## **2. Description of proposal**

2.1 This application seeks permission to alter and extend the existing school car park to the west by way of additional 264 square metres of hard standing, replacement boundary fencing and pedestrian gates. The fencing would measure 2.4m high and run along the northern and eastern boundaries with a smaller section on the western boundary adjacent to no. 24 Mungo Park Road. Tree planting is also proposed along the eastern boundary facing Southend Road.

2.2 It is also proposed to relocate the existing school buildings within the site, this however, does not require planning permission.

## **3. Relevant History**

3.1 P0789.09 – erection of single storey extension to provide a new boiler room – approved.

P1067.06 – Proposed single storey extension to existing classrooms – approved.

## **4. Consultations/Representations**

4.1 Neighbour notification letters were sent to 42 properties. 4 representations were received, stating the following objections.

- Heron Flight Avenue is not an appropriate access for the school
- Parking pressures block adjacent properties

## **5. Relevant Policies**

5.1 Policies DC33 (Car parking) and DC61 (Urban Design) of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Documents are considered relevant.

## **6. Staff Comments**

6.1 This proposal is put before the Committee as the site comprises land owned by the Council. The main issues to be considered by Members in this case are the principle of development, design/ streetscene issues, amenity implications and parking and highway issues.

6.2 Principle of development

6.2.1 Policy DC61 of the LDF Development Plan Document seeks to ensure that new developments are satisfactorily located and maintains, enhances or improves the character and appearance of the local area. The school site is

located outside of the Metropolitan Green Belt, Conservation Area or Special Character Area and there is in principle no objection to replacement fencing, provided it is of an acceptable appearance. The car park is also an existing piece of infrastructure for the school; again, in principle there is no objection to limited enlargements.

### 6.3 Impact on Local Character and Streetscene.

- 6.3.1 The existing school boundaries are enclosed by a various boundary fences which front onto Southend Road, Condor Walk and Mungo Park Road. These are not of a continuous design, where sections have been replaced over time, and other sections are in a poor state of repair, having become detached from their supports. This results in a mis-matched appearance, which does not provide adequate security for the school. It is proposed to replace large sections of this boundary fencing along the north, east and southern of the site with a single design of fencing. This measures 2.4m high and is formed from panels 2.56m wide. It is of a mesh design and would be painted green. A pedestrian gate to the northern corner of the site on Condor Walk is also to be replaced, this will measure 1.2m wide and 2.4m high and would be finished in an identical green mesh with steel supports. Staff consider that fencing/ pedestrian gates of this nature would improve the outward appearance of the school by nature of its single, cohesive design. The height of the fencing is similar to that as existing and raises no Staff concern with regard to streetscene impact.
- 6.3.2 The car park is located to the western edge of the site, adjacent to Heron Flight Avenue; it is to be extended north into the playing field. The enlarged area of car park would measure 264 square metres and increase in width from 9m to 18m, but not increase in depth. This enlarged car park would be largely screened from view by the entrance on Heron Flight Avenue. Given that the car park is an existing development it is considered that an enlargement of this scale would not appear intrusive or overbearing given the scale of the school buildings and large open playing fields behind.
- 6.3.3 It is proposed to remove 5 trees from the centre of the site adjacent to the car park. These are not covered by any Tree Preservation Order, but are of amenity value for the locality. It is proposed to provide up to 6 replacement trees within the site along the edge of the highway facing Southend Road. This has been considered acceptable by the Council's Tree Officer and a condition is attached which requires a plan to show the specific location and species of the replacement trees. Replacement trees which provide additional screening on the schools prominent southern boundary is considered acceptable and would add to the established line of existing Highway trees which line this section of Southend Road. There is an existing Poplar tree on Southend Road which has the mesh fence running through the branches. A replacement fence would need to run around this tree, rather than through it, and the condition relating to the replacement trees, will also require details for how the replacement fencing would lie around the Poplar tree.

## 6.4 Impact on Amenity

- 6.4.1 The enlarged car park would result in a loss of existing landscaping that forms part of the playing fields for the school. This is not considered to alter the function or overall usability of the playing fields which remains acceptable.
- 6.4.2 The car park would be enlarged to provide additional parking for the school, increasing the 12 spaces to 21 spaces. This increase in the potential number of vehicles on site is not considered to result in a loss of amenity through increased on site traffic or light pollution given that it is not proposed to enlarge or alter the function of the school.
- 6.4.3 It is considered that the replacement 2.4m high fencing would not be harmful to residential amenity, given these are replacement, rather than additional enclosures. The open mesh fencing would allow for a degree of visual permeability through the site, whilst providing a more secure boundary for the school.

## 6.5 Highway/Parking/Access

- 6.5.1 The schools vehicular access is via Heron Flight Avenue. It is not proposed to alter this access and representations received have objected on the grounds that there is a lack of parking for the school, especially at school opening and closing hours. The creation of additional parking for school staff within the curtilage of the school is considered acceptable and would alleviate the pressures on Heron Flight Avenue to some degree. The entrance to Heron Flight Avenue would be enclosed by the existing gates which are to be retained. Representations received from the Highways Authority raise no objection to the proposals, their representations however, do require the replacement pedestrian gate to open inwards, rather than outwards onto Condor Walk.
- 6.5.2 In light of the above, whilst representations received object with regard to parking problems, in light of no objections received from the Highways Authority a refusal based on parking provision is considered unreasonable, where the enlarged car park would contribute to providing improved car parking facilities for the school. Staff therefore consider the proposal to satisfy the requirements of Policy DC33 and DC36.

## 6.6 Other issues

- 6.6.1 The site is known to be potentially contaminated, representations received from Environmental Health require the submission of a Phase 1 report as the development involve ground break with the extension of the car park. This has been attached as a condition accordingly.

## 7. Conclusion:

- 7.1 Overall, Staff are of the opinion that the proposals to replace the existing boundary fencing acceptable in streetscene terms and with the provision of replacement trees, to be agreed via condition would improve the general appearance of the school site. The enlarged car park would improve on site car parking and would contribute to alleviate the car parking issues on Heron Flight Avenue to which there is no Highways objection and approval is recommended accordingly, subject to conditions.

## IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

### **Financial implications and risks:**

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

**Legal implications and risks:** None

**Human Resources implications and risks:** None.

### **Equalities implications and risks:**

The replacement boundary fencing and pedestrian gates would improve the security of the school for its staff and students and have an improved appearance in streetscene terms.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

Application forms and plans received 20/06/2011.

1. The planning application as submitted or subsequently revised including all forms and plans.
2. The case sheet and examination sheet.
3. Ordnance survey extract showing site and surroundings.
4. Standard Planning Conditions and Standard Green Belt reason for refusal.
5. Relevant details of Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Article 4 Directions.
6. Copy of all consultations/representations received and correspondence, including other Council Directorates and Statutory Consultees.
7. The relevant planning history.