



# REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE

5 September 2013

# REPORT

**Subject Heading:**

**P0817.13 – Abbs Cross Academy and  
Arts College, Abbs Cross Lane,  
Hornchurch**

**Demolish a two storey teaching block  
and replace it with a three storey  
teaching block on the adjacent site  
(Application received 24<sup>th</sup> June 2013)**

**Report Author and contact details:**

**Helen Oakerbee (Planning Manager,  
Regulatory Services) 01708 432800**

**Policy context:**

**Local Development Framework,  
London Plan  
National Planning Policy**

**Financial summary:**

**None**

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

Clean, safe and green borough	[x]
Excellence in education and learning	[x]
Opportunities for all through economic, social and cultural activity	[ ]
Value and enhance the life of every individual	[ ]
High customer satisfaction and a stable council tax	[ ]

**SUMMARY**

This matter is brought before committee as the floor space for the proposed teaching block is over 1000 square metres. The application seeks full planning permission to demolish a two storey teaching block and replace it with a three

storey teaching block on the adjacent site. 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 - Before any of the development hereby permitted is commenced, samples of all materials to be used in the external construction of the building(s) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter the development shall be constructed with the approved materials.

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 approved plans as detailed on page one of the 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 the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

4. Archaeological evaluation – A) No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority.  
B) No development or demolition shall take place other than in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under Part (A).  
C) The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under Part (A), and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of the results and archive deposition has been secured.

Reason: Heritage assets of archaeological interest survive on the site. The Planning Authority wishes to secure the provision of archaeological investigation and the subsequent recording of the remains prior to development in accordance with recommendations given by the borough and in the National Planning Policy Framework.

5. 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.

6. Construction methodology - Before development is commenced, a scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority making provision for a Construction Method Statement to control the adverse impact of the development on the amenity of the public and nearby occupiers. The Construction Method statement shall include details of:

- a) parking of vehicles of site personnel and visitors;
- b) storage of plant and materials;
- c) dust management controls;
- d) measures for minimising the impact of noise and, if appropriate, vibration arising from construction activities;
- e) predicted noise and, if appropriate, vibration levels for construction using methodologies and at points agreed with the Local Planning Authority;
- f) scheme for monitoring noise and if appropriate, vibration levels using methodologies and at points agreed with the Local Planning Authorities;
- g) siting and design of temporary buildings;
- h) scheme for security fencing/hoardings, depicting a readily visible 24-hour contact number for queries or emergencies;
- i) details of disposal of waste arising from the construction programme, including final disposal points. The burning of waste on the site at any time is specifically precluded.

And the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme and statement.

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

7. Demolition of block A - The existing two storey teaching block entitled block A on Drawing No. AXA/TB shall be demolished prior to the first use of the proposed block B. Prior to demolition, a scheme to show how the land will be reinstated shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented in full within 6 months of the date block B first comes into use.

Reason: In the interests of the character and openness of the surrounding area and of amenity.

## **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.
2. The applicant is advised that planning approval does not constitute approval for changes to the public highway. Highway Authority approval will only be given after suitable details have been submitted considered and agreed. The Highway Authority requests that these comments are passed to the applicant. Any proposals which involve building over the public highway as managed by the London Borough of Havering, will require a licence and the applicant must contact StreetCare, Traffic & Engineering on 01708 433750 to commence the Submission/ Licence Approval process.
3. The development of this site is likely to damage heritage assets of archaeological interest. The applicant should therefore submit detailed proposals in the form of an archaeological project design. The design should be in accordance with the appropriate English Heritage guidelines.
4. Pursuant to the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner. It is recommended that a watching brief is implemented for the presence of any land contamination throughout the life of the development. In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the development it should be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must then be undertaken and where remediation is necessary a remediation scheme must be prepared, implemented and verified in accordance with current best practice and submitted to the Local Planning Authority.
5. A fee is required when submitting details pursuant to the discharge of conditions. In order to comply with the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) Regulations 2012, which came into force from 22.11.2012, a fee of £97 per request or £28 where the related permission was for extending or altering a dwellinghouse, is needed.

## REPORT DETAIL

### 1. Site Description

- 1.1 The application site is Abbs Cross Academy and Arts College, which is accessed from Abbs Cross Lane. There are grounds and playing fields surrounding Abbs Cross School, which separates it from surrounding residential properties. The application site is located within a predominantly residential area, with the railway to the south and two storey housing with associated rear gardens to the north and east.

### 2. Description of Proposal

- 2.1 The application seeks permission to demolish a two storey teaching block and replace it with a three storey teaching block on the adjacent site.
- 2.2 The three storey teaching block would have a width of 49 metres, a depth of 16 metres and a height of 10.2 metres with a flat roof. The proposed materials for the building are brickwork, plastic boarding, a felt roof and white UPVC windows and doors.
- 2.3 Most of the academy buildings (with the exception of the sports hall) are over fifty years old and reflect the architecture of that period with exposed aggregate panels, curtain glazing and flat roofs, some are single, two and three stories high. The existing two storey block is dated and lacks in amenities with only two WC's and the remaining area comprises of classrooms. The proposed block will have amenities on all floors including disabled WC facilities and a lift. The second floor will be occupied by the Arts Department and house the Drama and Performing Arts classes, which at present, have inadequate facilities and accommodation. The two storey teaching block would be demolished once the new block is operational and will be returned to either a base for court games or a grassed area. The proposal does not involve increasing the number of pupils or staff.

### 3. Relevant History

- 3.1 No relevant planning history.

### 4. Consultations/Representations

- 4.1 Notification letters were sent to 40 neighbouring properties. Two letters of representation were received and one comprised of a letter of objection with detailed comments that have been summarised as follows:
- The plans were not available on the Council's website upon receipt of the neighbour notification letter and requested that the consultation period should be extended.
  - Loss of privacy.
  - Overlooking.

- Would prefer a higher boundary fence adjoining the residential properties in Tindall Mews to improve security.
  - Reference was made to the installation of defensive planting adjacent to the boundary fence adjoining Tindall Mews, which was allegedly secured by condition, but not implemented following the grant of an entertainment licence.
- 4.2 In response to the above, the consultation period for the advertisement expired on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2013, which was later than the neighbour notification period which expired on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2013. Comments regarding an entertainment licence and defensive planting are not relevant to this planning application and are not material planning considerations. Each planning application is determined on its individual planning merits. The remaining issues will be addressed in the following sections of this report.
- 4.3 English Heritage – The application site lies within an Area of Archaeological Potential and parts of the former Abbs Cross School were archaeologically evaluated in 2003 before redevelopment of the east of the site for housing and the construction of the school sports hall. These areas were not found to contain archaeological remains. Since then, examination of aerial photographs has revealed that cropmarks are visible in the remaining, undeveloped parts of the academy grounds. Although not yet tested archaeologically, their appearance suggests a field system and a ring ditch as being present. Some of these marks are visible on the current Google Earth imagery for the site. In view of the above, it is advised that a planning condition, securing archaeological evaluation and any appropriate mitigation works, would be advisable should the application be granted.
- 4.4 Network Rail – There is no formal objection to the application.

## **5. Relevant Policies**

- 5.1 Policies CP17 (Design), DC29 (Educational Premises), DC33 (Car parking), DC34 (Walking), DC35 (Cycling) and DC61 (Urban Design) 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 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 as the floor space for the proposed teaching block is over 1000 square metres. The issues arising in respect of this application will be addressed under the headings impact on the streetscene, amenity issues and parking and highways implications.
- 6.2 Principle of Development

6.2.1 The proposal is to demolish a two storey teaching block and replace it with a three storey teaching block on the adjacent site. The proposal is acceptable in principle and complies with LDF Policy DC29.

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

6.3.1 The application would comprise the demolition of the existing two storey block on the site. While the block appears to be in a structurally sound condition, it is not of any particular architectural or historic merit and no in principle objection is therefore raised to its demolition.

6.3.2 Council policy and guidance seeks to ensure that all new developments are satisfactorily located and are of a high standard of design and layout. In this regard, it is important that the appearance of new developments is compatible with the character of the local street scene and the surrounding area. It is considered that the three storey teaching block would not be harmful to the streetscene, as it would be located to the rear of the Abbs Cross Academy and Arts College. The proposal would be of a similar design to the existing two storey teaching block, which is being demolished and this will help to mitigate its impact. Staff consider that the height of the teaching block would integrate satisfactorily with the existing academy buildings, which are single, two and three stories high.

### 6.4 Impact on amenity

6.4.1 It is considered that the teaching block would not be harmful to residential amenity, as there would be a separation distance in excess of approximately 95 metres between the block and eastern boundary of the site, which borders the rear gardens of residential properties in Tindall Mews. It is considered that the residential properties to the north of the site in Cedar Road would not be adversely affected by the proposal, as there would be a separation distance of approximately 120 metres between the block and northern boundary of the site. It is considered that the residential properties to the west of the site in Abbs Cross Lane would not be adversely affected by the proposal, as the block would be located to the rear of the Abbs Cross Academy and Arts College. Staff consider that the proposal would not create any additional overlooking over and above existing conditions. In addition, the proposal does not involve increasing the number of pupils or staff.

### 6.5 Highway/parking issues

6.5.1 There are 91 car parking spaces on the site. As the proposal does not increase the number of teaching staff and the parking standard set by Havering has been met, the Highway Authority has no objection to the proposals. It is considered that the proposal would not create any highway or parking issues.

## 7. Conclusion

7.1 Having regard to all relevant factors and material planning considerations staff are of the view that this proposal to demolish a two storey teaching block and replace it with a three storey teaching block on the adjacent site would be acceptable. Staff are of the view that the proposal would not have an impact on the streetscene or result in a loss of amenity to neighbouring occupiers. 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:**

None.

### **Human Resources implications and risks:**

None.

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

The Council's planning policies are implemented with regard to Equalities and Diversity. The new teaching block features a disabled W.C and a lift to improve access.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

The plans and application form were received on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2013.