

Application No: 14/4656M

Location: Manor Park School & Nursery, Manor Park North, Knutsford, Cheshire, WA16 8DB

Proposal: Construction of a new, two storey, five class and library extension together with the associated external works at Manor Park School and Nursery, Knutsford

Applicant: Sarah Greensides, Manor Park School and Nursery

Expiry Date: 28-Nov-2014

### **SUMMARY**

Paragraph 72 of the NPPF states that The Government 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;
- work with schools promoters to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.

The proposed extension and alterations including the revised parking arrangements submitted during the application process are considered to fully comply with the requirements of the NPPF. The extension and works are deemed to create a sustainable development that would be acceptable in design terms, would not have an adverse impact on neighbouring amenity, the existing playing fields, the highway network or existing protected trees on the site.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve subject to conditions.

### **CONSULTATION RESPONSES (external to planning)**

-Strategic Highways and Transportation Manager: No objection subject to conditions.

-Sports England: No objection.

### **VIEWS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL**

Knutsford Town Council- The Council originally raised concerns that reports from CEC Highways, Sport England and an arboriculturalist had not been provided and that additional parking provision hasn't been made. These issues have all been subsequently addressed.

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

Occupier of 21 Delmar Road objects on the following planning related grounds:

-Sports England were not consulted; a decision should not be made until they have been and we have received comments.

-No travel plan has been submitted

-No lift provided in the extension

-The size of the proposed school classroom extension and associated facilities is not sufficient to cater for the projected increasing population numbers and needs of local children within the catchment area. Further assessment of alternative school sites should have been undertaken and considered.

## **RELEVANT HISTORY**

14/4869M

Retrospective application for the following works undertaken at the School: 1. Installation of a timber stage structure in the woods adjacent to the Northern Boundary 2. Installation of timber post and rail barrier in the wooded area adjacent to the Northern Boundary 3. Installation of a close boarded fence in the wooded area adjacent to the Northern Boundary 4. Conversion of the outdoor swimming pool to a planter area for use by the School 5. Installation of a rectangular timber shelter with polycarbonate roof to the Nursery play 6. Installation of a rectangular timber shelter with polycarbonate roof to the reception play 7. Installation of a profiled metal roofed steel canopy structure to the main school entrance 8. Installation of a secure 2.0m high ppc green weld mesh fence to the north eastern residential boundary 9. Installation of two external doors to the infant wing within the existing curtain walling configuration

APPROVED

15/12/14

## **POLICY**

Macclesfield Borough Local Plan – saved policies

BE1 (Design principles for new developments)

DC1 (High quality design for new build)

DC2 (Design quality for extensions and alterations)

DC3 (Protection of the amenities of nearby residential properties)

DC6 (Highways)

DC9 (Tree Protection)

DC38 (Guidelines for space, light and privacy for housing development)

H13 (Protecting residential areas)  
RT1 (Open Space)

Between them these policies aim to protect the living conditions of adjoining residential properties from harmful loss of amenity such as loss of privacy, overshadowing, loss of light or overbearing impact. They aim to ensure that the design of any extension or new building is sympathetic to the existing building on the site, surrounding properties, open spaces, highway network and the wider street scene by virtue of being appropriate in form and scale and utilising sympathetic building materials.

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy – Submission Version (CELP)

The following are considered relevant material considerations as indications of the emerging strategy:

MP1 -Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development  
SD1 -Sustainable Development in Cheshire East  
SD2 -Sustainable Development Principles  
SE1 -Design  
SE2- Efficient Use of Land  
CO1-Sustainable Travel and Transport  
SE5- Trees, Hedgerows and woodland

### **National Planning Policy Guidance**

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework reinforces the system of statutory development plans. When considering the weight to be attached to development plan policies, paragraphs 214 and 215 enable ‘full weight’ to be given to Development Plan policies adopted under the 2004 Act. The Macclesfield Local Plan policies, although saved in accordance with the 2004 Act are not adopted under it. Consequently, following the guidance in paragraph 215, “*due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with this framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the framework, the greater the weight that may be given)*”.

The Local Plan policies outlined above are all consistent with the NPPF and should therefore be given full weight.

### **KEY ISSUES**

#### **Principle of Development**

The principle of the development is considered to be acceptable, subject to design, open space, amenity, highways, tree issues as examined below.

Whilst the objection from the local resident has been carefully considered, the following is noted:

- Sport England have been consulted during the application process and do not object to the proposed development.
- A full Travel Plan has been submitted during the application process and the Strategic Highways Manager finds it to be acceptable.
- As submitted in the design and access statement, the new teaching extension embodied in this application is designed to be fully DDA compliant at ground level. The provision of mixed teaching rooms on the ground floor in accordance with the 1.5FE intake eliminates the need for a lift as full teaching provision and group space is made for all age groups at ground level. The first floor will be fully accessible to ambulant users. The design also addresses the existing steps in the School through the installation of a platform lift.
- A comprehensive educational justification report has been submitted for the proposed development, which is available to view on the CEC website. Furthermore, it is considered that the issue of school sizes and the legal planning process are separate entities and that the two are required to be considered separately. Whether the extension should be larger to accommodate further expansion in the future is not deemed to be a legitimate consideration by the Council in its capacity as the Local Planning Authority.

### **Application Site and Context**

The application site relates to a primary school and nursery located within a predominantly residential area of Knutsford. The site has a large area of open space to the rear of the main buildings consisting of playing fields and woodland with protected trees lying to the northern boundary of the site.

### **Proposals**

In December 2013 Cheshire East Council carried out a statutory consultation exercise for the proposed expansion of Manor Park School and Nursery, which has a current capacity of 210 pupil places. The proposed increase to 315 places is proposed to deliver sufficient capacity for the school to become a one and half form of entry (45 places per year group) primary school.

The proposals are for the erection of a two storey rear classroom extension to form 5no classrooms and associated rooms including a library. Internal works to the existing nursery are also proposed to accommodate an increase in the intake of two year old children to the nursery as set out in the submitted design and access statement.

Revised plans have been received during the application process upon the request of the Strategic Highways and Transportation Manager, in the form of an amended site plan showing the formation of an additional 5no parking spaces for the additional staff proposed and also the remodeling and relocation of existing parking bay 9 to accommodate servicing and maintenance arrangements. Other ancillary works comprising the erection of fencing and gates/ walls within the site are proposed which would constitute permitted development.

### **Design**

Policy BE1 reflects guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework as it also requires development to reflect local character and respect form, layout, siting, scale and design of surrounding buildings and their setting.

Policies DC1 and DC2 seek to ensure that proposals respect existing architectural features of the building and that they are sympathetic to the character of the local environment, streetscene and adjoining building.

The design of the proposed extension and other works proposed are considered to be of appropriate scale, siting and design to be in keeping with the context and character of the site and surroundings. The development accords with all design objectives. Details of the materials have been submitted and are considered to be suitable.

### **Amenity**

The extension would be 33m away from the frontage of the nearest properties. Overall a commensurate degree of space, light and privacy would remain to the neighbouring properties due to the distances involved and the development would comply with policies DC3, DC38.

### **Open Space**

Sport England have been consulted and do not object to the development, stating:

Although the classroom extension encroaches onto the playing field, it is minimal and on an area that can be considered marginal land. Sport England has no objection as the proposal meets the following exception to Sport England policy:

#### *Policy Exception E3:*

*'The proposed development affects only land incapable of forming, or forming part of, a playing pitch, and does not result in the loss of or inability to make use of any playing pitch (including the maintenance of adequate safety margins), a reduction in the size of the playing areas of any playing pitch or the loss of any other sporting/ancillary facilities on the site'.*

Furthermore, local plan policy RT1 states that the redevelopment of a building footprint which does not harm the integrity of the open space will normally be permitted. Additional educational buildings may be permitted provided that the integrity of the open spaces is not harmed.

The Greenspace Officer also raises no objections.

Overall the development would not harm the integrity of the existing open space within the site available for recreation nor any existing playing fields. The developments accord with local plan policy RT1 and the NPPF.

### **Highways**

The comments from the Town Council and objector have been considered, however the Strategic Highways and Transportation Manager raises no objections to the revised plans. Whilst the proposed development would result in an increase in traffic generation around the

site, the proposed Travel Plan and additional parking spaces are considered to constitute sufficient mitigation in terms parking and highway safety and management.

Overall the development accords with policy DC6 subject to conditions.

## **Trees**

The Council's officer for arboriculture raises no objections to the proposals, stating:

*The application is not supported by an Arboricultural Report despite being advised as part of Pre application discussions. Notwithstanding this the proposals will not impact upon the TPO woodland to the north of the school. It is proposed to site a Contractor route adjacent to the protected woodland (shown on plan drawing 1412 AL-0-010), which appears to show the route to the edge and beyond the canopy spreads of adjacent trees. I am reasonably satisfied that the position of the contractor route can be satisfactorily addressed by a suitably worded condition.*

*The proposed extensions will require the removal of four trees within the school grounds (their species, condition and contribution to amenity have not been specifically addressed in the submission). Given the trees location to the rear of the existing school building, their contribution to the wider amenity of the area is somewhat limited and therefore their loss can be satisfactorily be mitigated by replacement planting as part of an approved landscaping scheme.*

Subject to conditions, the development would accord with policy DC9.

## **CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR DECISION**

To conclude, the proposed development is deemed to be in accordance with all relevant policies in the development plan and there are not considered to be any other material considerations that would carry sufficient weight to refuse the application. Therefore a recommendation of approval is made, subject to conditions.

Application for Full Planning

RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to following conditions

1. A01LS - Landscaping - submission of details
2. A01TR - Tree retention
3. A02TR - Tree protection
4. A03AP - Development in accord with revised plans (unnumbered)
5. A03FP - Commencement of development (3 years)

- 6. A03TR - Construction specification/method statement
- 7. A04LS - Landscaping (implementation)
- 8. A06EX - Materials as application
- 9. A23GR - Pile Driving
- 10. A32HA - Construction method statement
- 11. Travel Plan
- 12. Hours
- 13. Parking
- 14. Informative

(c) Crown copyright and database rights 2015. Ordnance Survey 100049045, 100049046.

