

<b>Planning Reference No:</b>	09/3239C
<b>Application Address:</b>	Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School, Selkirk Drive, Holmes Chapel, CW4 7DX
<b>Proposal:</b>	New pre-fabricated learning centre and associated car park
<b>Applicant:</b>	Mr Jeff Sharp
<b>Application Type:</b>	Full Planning Permission
<b>Grid Reference:</b>	375406 366734
<b>Ward:</b>	Congleton Rural
<b>Earliest Determination Date:</b>	18 November 2009
<b>Expiry Date:</b>	12 January 2010
<b>Date Report Prepared:</b>	17 December 2009

**SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION:** Approve subject to conditions

**MAIN ISSUES:**

The key issues that Members should consider in determining this application are:

- Principle of Development
- Design and Visual Impact
- Neighbouring Privacy and Amenity
- Highway Safety

## 1. REASON FOR REFERRAL

The application is for a small-scale major development, as the proposal would have a floor area between 1 and 2 hectares.

## 2. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site forms part of a grassed open area within the grounds of Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School. The site lies mostly within the Settlement Zone of Holmes Chapel however it does encroach slightly into the Open Countryside and is designated as a Protected Area of Open Space/Recreational Facility.

## 3. DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

Full planning permission is sought for the erection of a pre-fabricated building and an associated car park. The building would provide a teacher training facility for South Cheshire and the car park would provide an extension of an additional 40 spaces to the existing car park area.

## 4. RECENT PLANNING HISTORY

Retention of temporary classroom. Approved 2000

New classroom block. Approved 2001

Access road and car park for 38 vehicles and external lighting. Approved 2003

New science laboratory. Approved 2003

Extension of classroom. Approved 2004

Construction of new dining facility. Approved 2005

Store extension. Approved 2006  
2 single storey extension. Approved 2007  
Astroturf pitch. Approved 2008

## **5. POLICIES**

### **Regional Spatial Strategy**

DP1 Spatial Principles

DP7 Environmental Quality

RDF2 Rural Areas

L1 Heath, Sport Recreation, Cultural, and Educational Services Provision

### **Local Plan Policy**

PS5 Holmes Chapel Plan Strategy

PS8 Open Countryside

GR1 General Criteria for Development

GR2 Design

GR6 & GR7 Amenity & Health

GR9 Accessibility and Parking Provision

GR21 Flood Prevention

RC1 Recreation and Community Facilities – General

RC2 Protected Areas of Open Space

RC11 Indoor Recreation and Community Uses

## **6. CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)**

### **Highways:**

[09.11.2009] The Strategic Highways Manager has no comment or observation to make on the application.

### **Environmental Health:**

[04.11.2009] The Environmental Division does not raise any objection to the development however, recommends that conditions relating to the protection from noise during construction and details of external lighting be submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

## **7. VIEWS OF THE PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL**

[13.11.2009] Holmes Chapel Parish Council has no objection to the proposal providing that there is adequate screening and any new lighting would not have a detrimental effect upon residents of Mardale Court. It was noted that neighbours views should be taken into account.

## **8. OTHER REPRESENTATIONS**

Three letters of representation were received during the consultation period. Concerns raised include: -

- There should be no further lighting on the site as the existing provision is sufficient;
- The proposal should include features to deter unauthorised nuisance ball games and other activities;
- The opportunity should be taken to improve traffic management on Selkirk Drive as at present cars park anywhere and the highway code is a secondary consideration;
- The proposal should not increase flood risk elsewhere and not be detrimental to drainage on the site.

## **9. APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

A Design and Access Statement was submitted with the application that addresses issues relating to use, amount, layout, scale, landscaping, appearance, and access.

## **10. OFFICER APPRAISAL**

### **Principal of Development**

Proposals for the development of community facilities are acceptable in principle within the Holmes Chapel Settlement Zone Line subject to the scale and nature of the development and its impact upon highway safety and neighbouring amenity.

It is noted that a small area of approximately 10 square metres of car parking would extend into land that is designated as Open Countryside. In such cases, development is acceptable in principle subject to the impact upon the character of the surrounding area.

### **Design and Visual Impact**

The proposal would be located on a parcel of land bounded by a residential estate to the north, Open Countryside to the west, and the remainder of the school premises to the east and south.

The proposed pre-fabricated building would be of a simple, small-scale design and sited in line with an existing detached school building. The proposed tarmac car parking would be large in area but located immediately adjacent to an existing car park area.

It is acknowledged that the scale of the development is quite significant. However, due to the location and siting of the proposal when viewed from the wider Open Countryside area to the west, and public vantage points to the north and east, it would not appear obtrusive due to the proposals close relationship with existing school buildings and car park. As such the proposal would not appear detrimental to the visual amenity of the surrounding area or the surrounding Open Countryside and it is considered that the character will be maintained.

With regard to any lighting that may be required to illuminate the proposed car parking it is noted that the existing car park already benefits from lighting and as such any additional lighting would not appear incongruous.

### **Neighbouring Privacy and Amenity**

A residential estate is located immediately north of the application site. With regard to any additional lighting, the Environmental Health Division have noted no objection subject to the submission of any lighting details and that any lighting is to be erected and directed as to avoid any nuisance. Given that proposal would be located a minimum distance of approximately 20 metres from the development, it is considered that lighting could be accommodated without causing significant harm to the amenities of such properties.

It is acknowledged that the proposal would result in an intensification of a car parking on the site however, given the distance of approximately 20 metres between the site and neighbouring properties and a proposed landscaping belt between the two, it is considered that any impact upon privacy or amenity would be negligible.

It is appreciated that concerns were raised relating to potential nuisance from sports and other activities however, given that the existing use is a field which could also accommodate such activities, it is not considered that this would be a reasonable refusal reason.

## **Highway Safety**

In the absence of any objection from the Strategic Highways Manager, it is considered that the proposal would be acceptable in terms of highway safety.

Representations were made which highlighted that cars do not park in accordance with the Highway Code on Selkirk Drive however, it is noted that illegal parking could only be controlled by the Local Police Department, not the Local Planning Authority.

## **Other**

### **Landscaping**

New landscaping is proposed between the proposal and neighbouring properties to the north. As this would provide a useful belt between the two to negate any impact of the development it is considered reasonable to condition any consent requiring the submission of full details to the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development.

### **Flooding**

Due to the large area of hard standing proposed and as it is indicated within submitted forms that the proposal would drain into mains sewers, it is considered reasonable to condition the materials of the car parking to be permeable in order to ensure that the scheme does not result in unsatisfactory drainage on the site.

## **11. CONCLUSIONS**

It is acknowledged that the proposal would result in a significant car parking area however, on balance, it is considered that the benefit that a teacher training facility and the suitability of the proposals appearance would outweigh any concerns relating to the scale of the development. Additionally the proposal would be of an acceptable design and appearance and when viewed from the wider area would not be detrimental to the visual amenity of the Open Countryside. The proposal therefore complies with the relevant regional and local planning policies and is recommended for approval accordingly.

## **12. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**APPROVE** subject to the following conditions: -

- 1. Standard time limit**
- 2. Plan numbers**
- 3. Submission of all external materials and finishes for pre fabricated building**
- 4. Car park materials to be permeable and details of such to be submitted prior to the commencement of development**
- 5. Protection from noise during construction.**
- 6. Submission of a landscaping scheme**
- 7. Planting to be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons**
- 8. Full details of any lighting to be submitted prior to the commencement of development**

