

Application No: 13/4373M

Location: Dean Oaks Primary School, HANDFORTH ROAD, HANDFORTH, WILMSLOW, CHESHIRE, SK9 2LX

Proposal: Extension of existing building consisting of a single storey 2 classroom building with toilets and staff areas. External landscaping and construction of 6 new car parking spaces.

Applicant: Dean Oaks, Dean Oaks Primary School

Expiry Date: 10-Dec-2013

**Date Report Prepared: 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2013**

#### **SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION Approve subject to conditions**

##### **MAIN ISSUES**

- Scale, design and layout and impact upon the character and appearance of the locality including Area of Open Space
- Impact upon the residential amenity of neighbouring properties
- Highways Issues
- Landscaping Issues

#### **REASON FOR REPORT**

The application has to go to Northern Planning Committee as the applicants are Cheshire East Council, and also because some objections have been received to the proposed development.

#### **DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT**

The application site relates to a primary school located within a predominantly residential area of Wilmslow. The site lies within a designated area of open space within the school grounds. Residential properties bound the site to the North, East and West.

#### **DETAILS OF PROPOSAL**

The proposals are for a single storey extension to the primary school to form 2no additional classrooms. This is due to the anticipated increase in pupil numbers to the school in the coming years. The extension would be circa 22.5m wide and project circa 13.2m to the rear of the existing building. Other works involve the relocation of an existing canopy to form cycle storage area, boundary fencing, formation of 6no car parking space for additional staff and

other hard and soft landscaping works. A new pedestrian entrance to the extension is also proposed from the existing public footpath to the rear of the site. 3no trees are to be removed as part of the works; these trees are not protected.

## **RELEVANT HISTORY**

08/1052P

EXTENSIONS TO DEAN OAKS JUNIOR SCHOOL TO CREATE DEAN OAKS PRIMARY SCHOOL

APPROVED

28/07/08

## **POLICIES**

### **Local Plan Policy**

H13- Protecting Residential Areas

BE1- Design Guidance

DC1- New Build

DC2- Alterations and Extensions

DC3- Amenity

DC6- Circulation and Access

DC8- Landscape

DC38- Space, Light and Privacy

RT1- Open Space

### **Other Material Considerations**

National Planning Policy Framework.

Ministerial policy statement – planning for schools development.

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

None.

## **VIEWS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL**

Wilmslow Town Council- The Town Council's Planning Committee raised no objections but was of the view that consideration must be given to facilitating improved drop-off facilities.

## **OTHER REPRESENTATIONS**

Occupiers of 56 and 58 Budworth Walk object on the following grounds:

-Would have an adverse impact on parking and increased traffic levels, exacerbating the current problem of parent's vehicles parking on parking areas designated for residents only and the associated congestion this causes. This would also increase problems of highway safety on roads surrounding the school.

Occupier of 'Dunedin' has concerns that if the works take place, excavated soil could be dumped close to his boundary as this is what happened when the school was previously extended- this had an adverse impact in terms of flooding his garden following heavy rain.

## **APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

A design and access statement has been submitted in support of the application.

## **OFFICER APPRAISAL**

### **Principle of Development**

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

### **Open Space**

Policy RT1 states that areas of open space as shown on the Proposals Map will be protected from development. However additional educational buildings may be permitted provided that the integrity of the open spaces is not harmed.

In this case the extension would be built over an existing area of hardstanding that is not used for recreational purposes. A large playground and playing field would not be affected by the development. Soft landscape works and large areas of open space would remain either side of the proposed extension. Overall the integrity of the area of open space within the school grounds would not be adversely harmed and so the development would accord with local plan policy RT1.

### **Design / Character**

Policies BE1, DC1, DC2 seek to promote high standards of design, with the overall vernacular, scale, density, height, mass, spacing and materials of new development being sympathetic to the character of the locality, surrounding buildings and site itself.

The extension would remain subservient to the existing building and would have a similar ridge height to the existing building. The proposed vernacular would be sympathetic to the host building and the proposed materials would be in keeping with the existing building and locality. A condition should be attached requiring the submission of material samples, to ensure that they are in keeping with the existing building and locality.

The relocation of the canopy would be acceptable in design terms. A condition should be attached to require the submission of details of the proposed fencing, prior to the commencement of development.

Subject to this, overall the scheme is considered to comply with all relevant design policies.

### **Amenity**

The concerns of the neighbour at 'Dunedin' have been carefully considered. In order to ensure that no excavated soil is put on land close to their or other neighbouring properties, which could in the future result in localised flooding, a condition should be attached requiring the submission of a method statement for the proposed works, prior to the commencement of development.

Subject to this, the development would accord with policies DC3, DC38.

## **Highways**

The objections from the neighbours and the comments from the Town Council have been carefully considered. However, the Strategic Highways Manager raises no objections, stating:

*It is proposed to construct an extension to the existing building that will provide two classrooms and WC facilities. The additional classroom space is intended to meet the demand for pupils attending the school in the future.*

*As part of this application, there are an additional 6 car parking spaces to be provided for increased staff numbers.*

*As with all schools, parents dropping their children off at schools is a problem in regard to highways and it has proved extremely difficult to dissuade parents from making car trips to and from school, even with the introduction of Travel Plans. Residents have complained that there is a lack of dropping off facilities at the school, I would tend to agree with these comments as parking occurs on Handforth Road.*

*However, given the narrow access to the school and the internal layout it would be very difficult to provide such a dropping off facility internally without affecting the existing school building.*

*Therefore, I would have to deal with this application on whether the proposed extension is so severe as to warrant an objection to the application. As the extension is intended to cope with future expansion, the actual impact is gradual and is not in my opinion so severe as to reject the application.*

*No highway objections are raised.*

The Case Officer concurs with this view. The concerns regarding highway safety and parking have been carefully considered, however the proposed development is not considered to have a sufficiently adverse enough impact to warrant refusal of the application and hence the development would accord with local plan policy DC6 and the NPPF.

## **Ministerial Policy statement – planning for schools development**

This document is a material consideration, which states that it is the Government's view that the creation and development of state-funded schools is strongly in the national interest and that planning decision-makers can and should support that objective, in a manner consistent with their statutory obligations.

There should be a presumption in favour of the development of state-funded schools, as expressed in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Local authorities should give full and thorough consideration to the importance of enabling the development of state-funded schools in their planning decisions.

It states that the answer to proposals for the development of state-funded schools should be, wherever possible, “yes”.

The development of the school is therefore considered to be of paramount importance.

### **Landscaping**

The majority of land to be built on is an existing hardstanding area. The 3no trees to be removed are of relatively low amenity value and their loss, coupled with the proposed soft landscaping works in terms of the grassed area, are considered to have an acceptable impact on the visual amenities of the locality in accordance with local plan policy DC8.

### **Environmental Health**

The Environmental Health Officer raises no objections, subject to a condition regarding the hours of construction permitted, in the interests of neighbouring amenity. An informative is to be attached to advise the applicant that they have a duty to adhere to the regulations of Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and the current Building Control Regulations with regards to contaminated land.

### **CONCLUSIONS AND REASON(S) FOR THE DECISION**

To conclude, whilst the objections have been carefully considered, 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.

It is noted that there is a current problem regarding vehicles parking to drop off and pick up children from the school in areas designated for residential parking only. However it is considered that the proposed development would not have a substantially greater impact than the existing situation.

Furthermore, as stated in the Ministerial Policy statement – planning for schools development, there is a strong presumption in favour of the development of state funded schools, which is considered to outweigh the aforementioned harm in terms of the impact on the existing parking around the school.

Overall therefore a recommendation of approval is made, subject to conditions.

In the event of any changes being needed to the wording of the Committee’s decision (such as to delete, vary or add conditions/informatives/planning obligations or reasons for approval/refusal) prior to the decision being issued, the Northern Area Manager has delegated authority to do so in consultation with the Chairman of the Northern Planning Committee, provided that the changes do not exceed the substantive nature of the Committee’s decision.

Should this application be the subject of an appeal, authority shall be delegated to the Northern Area Manager in consultation with the Chairman of the Northern Planning Committee to enter into a planning agreement in accordance with the S106 Town and Country Planning Act to secure the Heads of Terms for a S106 Agreement.

Application for Full Planning

RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to following conditions

1. A03FP - Commencement of development (3 years)
2. A01AP - Development in accord with approved plans
3. A05EX - Details of materials to be submitted
4. A32HA - Submission of construction method statement
5. Hours
6. Fence Details



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