

Application No: 15/0535N

Location: WISTASTON BERKELEY COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL, LAIDON AVENUE, WISTASTON, CHESHIRE, CW2 6RU

Proposal: Construction of two new classrooms with integral WC block and glazed connection to existing school building, to be built as Phase 1 and then Studio with integral kitchen block as Phase 2. External works such as outdoor teaching areas and landscaping Modification of car parking area

Applicant: Carolyn Brown, The Berkeley Primary School

Expiry Date: 13-May-2015

#### **SUMMARY:**

The principle of development is acceptable.

The design and layout of the revised scheme is considered to be acceptable. The extension is considered to be appropriate to the character and appearance of the area.

The proposal is not considered to impact upon existing or proposed levels of residential amenity and would not give rise to any highway implications.

Conditions to secure a drop off parking zone and tree protection would be attached to any grant of consent.

The proposal would comply with the relevant policies of the Development Plan and is recommended for approval subject to the conditions set out below.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**APPROVE with conditions**

#### **DETAILS OF PROPOSAL**

The proposed development is for an extension to the front of the school to provide 1no. new classroom.

The extension would also incorporate a lean to structure on the south elevation to provide external teaching space.

Maximum internal dimensions would measure 26m (width) x 15.2m (depth) x 4.6m (height).

Maximum external dimensions would measure 26m (width) x 22.9m (depth) x 4.6m (height).

The application originally proposed an extension comprising Phase 1 (2 no. classrooms) and Phase 2 (a hall). The application has since been revised to include only Phase 1.

## **DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT**

The application site is Wistaston Berkeley County Primary School which is a modern school located in a residential area within the Crewe Settlement Boundary.

## **RELEVANT HISTORY**

P02/0941 – Ground Floor Extension - Approved 16<sup>th</sup> October 2002.

P00/0313 – Courtyard infill to provide information technology resource centre - (County Consultation) - Approved 06<sup>th</sup> June 2000.

## **POLICIES**

### **National Policy**

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

### **Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan 2011**

RT.1 – Protection of Open Spaces with Recreational or Amenity Value

BE.1 – Amenity

BE.2 – Design Standards

BE.3 – Access and Parking

### **Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy – Submission Version (CELP)**

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

Policy SD 1 - Sustainable Development in Cheshire East

Policy SD 2 - Sustainable Development Principles

Policy SE 1 – Design

## **CONSIDERATIONS (External to Planning)**

**Sport England:** No objection given the siting of the extension would be in area that does not constitute functional playing field.

**Environmental Health:** No objection subject to a compliance condition regarding method of piling, submission of dust suppression statement, construction hours and an informative regarding contaminated land.

**Highway Authority:** No objection based on the additional information submitted on 22<sup>nd</sup> April. Confirmation was provided from the Headmistress that the proposal would involve the addition of 1 no. member of staff and that the staff car park was increased by 8 no. parking spaces in August 2014. The proposal is to enhance the existing teaching facilities on site.

**View of the Parish/Town Council:**

Comments received 21.04.2015 (Based on original application submitted – Phase 1 and 2) - Object to the proposal based on siting, impact on visual amenity and the existing mature oak tree, proximity of footpath along Laidon Avenue to Phase 2.

Comments received 05.07.2015 (Based on the revised application) – Concerns raised regarding increased parking, access and highway issues. A condition is suggested to provide a safe, off-road drop off area for parents should the application be approved.

### **Other Representations:**

3 representations received objecting to the proposal (based on the original application submitted – Phase 1 and 2). Concerns raised include inadequate parking facilities to accommodate the proposal, impact on access and highway safety.

1 representation received supporting the proposal (based on the original application submitted – Phase 1 and 2) subject to improved parking facilities and impact on the oak tree will be mitigated for.

2 representations received objecting to the proposal (based on the revised application submitted – Phase 1 only). Concerns raised include inadequate parking facilities to accommodate the proposal, impact on access and highway safety and adverse visual impact.

### **OFFICER APPRAISAL**

#### **Principle of Development**

The site lies within an area of formal open space and school playing fields and Crewe Settlement Boundary.

Policy RT.1 permits development where it would result in the loss of open space, including school playing fields, where the proposed development is ancillary to the principal use of the site as a playing field and does not affect the quantity or quality of pitches or adversely affect their use.

The application states that the school is increasing pupil numbers by 18 no. in September 2015 as there is a smaller Year 6 cohort leaving in comparison to the new intake. Existing classrooms are currently used for multiple purposes which is considered to be inadequate. The proposal would involve the construction of an extension to the existing school building, to provide additional accommodation and enhanced teaching facilities for the schools pupils.

It is not considered that the proposal would adversely impact upon the quantity or quality of the existing sports pitch, given the classroom would be partly sited on the playing field and not directly on the existing sports pitch.

Sport England raises no objections given the proposal would affect land considered to be incapable of forming, or forming part of, a playing pitch and/or a functional playing field.

The principle of development is acceptable subject to compliance with visual and residential amenity policies.

### **Character and Appearance**

The original application included two phases of development. The second phase fronted the adjacent street scene along Laidon Avenue and appeared to be within the RPA of a mature oak tree.

The application has since been revised to include only the first phase, given the scale and massing of the second phase was considered to appear incongruous in its siting directly adjacent to Laidon Avenue.

The current proposal is considered to have a relatively long depth, measuring 26m. However, the siting of the extension would not exceed beyond the existing building parameters on site and its scale is considered to be appropriate in the context of the main school building and its existing extensions.

The extension would be set back approximately 21.6m from the site boundary to the highway which would help to lessen the massing of the building when viewed from the street scene.

The building would be typically modular in nature which is considered to be acceptable in the context of the existing buildings on site.

Overall, the scale, massing and appearance of the proposal are considered acceptable and would not adversely affect visual amenities of the locality, complying with Policy BE.2 of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan 2011.

### **Residential Amenity**

The extension would be sited within the existing school building complex and in excess of 21m away from the nearest residential dwelling.

On this basis, it is not anticipated that the extension would result in a detrimental impact on existing levels of residential amenity of neighbouring properties.

Environmental Health raises no objections.

The proposal would comply with Policy BE.1 of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan 2011.

### **Access and Car Parking**

The application form states that the proposal would involve increasing full time staff to 3 no. and increasing part time staff to 2 no.

The Headmistress has since confirmed that there would be 1 additional part time member of staff.

There are 29 existing car parking spaces on site, with 1 no. disabled space.

The primary purpose of the building is to improve the teaching accommodation for existing pupils. It is anticipated therefore that there would be little, if any, increase in trips to and from the site.

A condition would be attached to any grant of consent that a drop off zone is secured as part of the application, to which the Highway Authority have verbally confirmed no objections are raised in this respect.

The proposal would comply with Policy BE.3 of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan 2011.

### **Trees**

During the course of the determination of this application, the oak tree sited on the western boundary of the site was granted TPO status.

No objections are raised, subject that a tree protection condition is attached to any grant of consent.

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

The overall scale and layout of the revised proposal is considered acceptable and would not result in adverse impacts upon visual or residential amenities of the locality and would not raise any access or parking implications.

The proposal would comply with the above mentioned local policies contained within the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan 2011 and the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy – Submission Version as well the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**APPROVE** subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Standard time 3 years**
- 2. Plans**
- 3. Materials**
- 4. Piling hours**
- 5. Dust Suppression Statement**
- 6. Tree Protection Condition**
- 7. Provision of drop off Parking Zone**

In order to give proper effect to the Committee's intentions and without changing the substance of the decision, authority is delegated to the Principal Planning Manager (Regulation), in consultation with the Chair (or in her absence the Vice Chair) of Southern Planning Committee, to correct any technical slip or omission in the wording of the resolution, between approval of the minutes and issue of the decision notice.

