

Item No. 9

APPLICATION NUMBER	CB/17/02252/FULL
LOCATION	St Andrews Lower School, Bantock Way, Biggleswade, SG18 8UQ
PROPOSAL	To create a new nursery extension to the existing 6 classroom teaching block. The nursery will be in a position that enables it be accessed separately from the rest of the school, with minor changes to the route around the north of the existing school building to accommodate this access. One of the classrooms within the 6 classroom extension will be moved into the existing school to allow for the creation of the nursery.
PARISH	Biggleswade
WARD	Biggleswade South
WARD COUNCILLORS	Cllrs Lawrence & Woodward
CASE OFFICER	Nikolas Smith
DATE REGISTERED	08 May 2017
EXPIRY DATE	03 July 2017
APPLICANT	Willmott Dixon Construction Ltd
AGENT	White Design
REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE	The site is owned by the Council and there has been an objection to the planning application.

RECOMMENDED DECISION

Full Application - approve

Reason for recommendation:

The principle of the development would be acceptable, as would its appearance and impact on the highways network. The need for the facility has been clearly demonstrated. The development would be sustainable.

Site Location:

St Andrew's Lower School is a new school brought forward as part of the Land East of Biggleswade mixed-use development. It is located at around the centre of the site, near to the Local Centre. The school is occupied and is a popular lower school choice for residents of Biggleswade. Planning permission was granted in December 2016 for a six classroom extension to the school. That development has been implemented but is not complete.

A nursery group has been operating out of the school for some time. The applicant has explained that this temporary solution is not sustainable because the space at the school is needed to provide for early years teaching.

The Application:

Full planning permission is sought for a single-storey extension to the eastern

corner of the recently approved extension to the school. It would be used as a nursery.

It would be located on an area of the school site that had been planned to be used as a habitat area and seven trees would be removed as a result of the development. Both would be replaced elsewhere at the site school site.

Staff would utilise the existing and planned car and cycle parking at the site. Visitors would utilise the existing drop-off loop to the west of the site or short-stay car parking within the local centre which is a short distance from the site.

Relevant Policies:

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009)

- DM1 Renewable Energy
- DM2 Sustainable Construction of New Buildings
- DM3 High Quality Development
- DM9 Providing a Range of Transport

King's Reach Biggleswade Design Code (2008)

Central Bedfordshire Design Guide (2014)

Planning History:

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|------------------|--|
| MB/03/01205/OUT | Residential development of approximately 1450 dwellings, construction of Eastern relief road, Local Centre, primary school, public open space, structural landscaping, infrastructure including surface water balancing facilities and associated works. Demolition of 128 Potton Road to facilitate vehicular access. (All matters reserved except means of access) |
| | Granted 13 November 2006 |
| CB/14/00516/RM | Reserved Matters: following outline application MB/03/01205, erection of lower school, with; - access roads - car parking - sprinkler tanks - playing fields - hard courts - hard and soft landscapes. |
| | Approved: 10 th June 2014 |
| CB/16/04686/FULL | A new single storey 6 classroom teaching block with associated support spaces and a single storey extension to the existing school building all with associated external works including additional car parking and revised layout, play areas, cycle parking, relocated recycling enclosure and extended Air Source Heat Pump enclosure. |

Approved: 13th December 2016

CB/17/02910/NMA Non Material Amendment to planning permission CB/16/04686/FULL: (Classroom Block) Removal of 1no. roof lights to each classroom, retaining 1no. per each room. Removal of 2 windows to the west elevation of the building. Adjustment to shape of kerb edging at entrance / exit to car park. Increase size of ASHP enclosure.

Decision pending.

Representations:

Biggleswade Council Town Objection because the development is out of character, (appearance not in keeping with the surrounding properties) and concern on traffic movements, (overdevelopment).

Neighbours 15 letters in support of the planning application have been received.

Consultee responses:

Highways Thank you for confirming that it is only the building that is new, and all other functions are existing, including a looped drop of area. It is basically a 'like for like' proposal which will not generate any additional traffic and therefore I have no objection to the proposal as submitted.

Pollution Control I have considered this application in terms of potential noise, light and contamination impacts. Light and noise need no further action however, a Ground Investigation Report submitted in 2014 identified landfill gas potential to the south east; while the findings were not elevated enough to propose further action it was advised that further precautionary ground gas investigations be undertaken if any further development took place in closer vicinity to the former landfill.

As the application site is sensitive and does approach somewhat more closely the former landfill it is prudent that we require the applicant to provide further updated ground gas information, which can be secured by means of a prior to use condition as follows:

No occupation or use of any permitted building shall take place until the following has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:

A contaminated land and ground gas assessment focussing on the former landfill to the south of the

application site adhering to BS 10175 and incorporating all appropriate monitoring.

Where shown to be necessary by this assessment a detailed remediation/mitigation scheme shall be submitted and approved in writing. Any works which form part of such a scheme shall be approved by the local authority and completed in full before any permitted building is used or occupied.

The effectiveness of any scheme shall be demonstrated to the Local Planning Authority by means of a validation report (to incorporate photographs etc.), unless an alternative period is approved in writing by the Authority. Any such validation should include responses to any unexpected contamination discovered during works.

Reason: To protect human health and the environment in accordance with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document (2009).

Landscape Officer

There are no landscape objections to this proposal, subject to a satisfactory landscape scheme. It is however, disappointing that more built form is required as this is a small site and the natural environment ,which can add so much to all aspects of education and well being, has to be reduced as a consequence.

A fully detailed landscape scheme will be required. It is noted that 7 trees are to be removed or replanted. Although fairly new trees, it is recommended that new trees are used, as the relocation and watering demands will be great and successful transplantation is unlikely.

I would like to be certain that the school has been consulted on the new landscape proposals - the scheme should meet their needs for environmental education in the broadest sense. Rather than like for like replacement, there could be scope for planting trees or bushes which can be coppiced, or the space could be used for shrubs such as buddleia , in order to attract butterflies. A willow sculpture could help define the space and create a feature. A tree with shade bearing leaves might also be a requirement.

The shrubs proposed for the hedgeline will also require a detailed specification - the hedge could be of native species or be a range of flowering shrubs to provide a more ornamental feature , but the species used must support wildlife.

As outdoor landscaped space has been lost, it is important that as many "tiers " of planting make the most of the remaining area e.g. through the use of climbers - on the building or on a pergola , the use of bulbs and the introduction of habitat features such as rock or log piles .

I would be happy to discuss the planting opportunities further, but emphasise that the new scheme need not replace the same number of trees as overplanting can reduce the value of grassed areas and lead to potential problems in the future e.g. the need to remove some trees as their canopies spread.

Archaeology

The proposed development is located in an area of Iron Age and Roman settlement (HER 18301), a heritage asset with archaeological interest as defined by the *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*.

The Iron Age and Roman settlement was identified in an archaeological field evaluation undertaken as part of planning application MB/03/01205/OUT. The evaluation identified a number of archaeological sites and features of prehistoric, Roman and later date, forming part of wider archaeological landscape around Biggleswade. As a consequence a planning condition requiring the implementation of an approved *Scheme of Archaeological Resource Management* was attached to the outline planning consent. The approved *SARM* identified areas requiring further archaeological investigation in advance of development. One of the identified areas, Area 2, included part of the school site. An open areas archaeological investigation was undertaken in advance of construction of the existing school in 2014. The excavation did not include the whole school site, part of which lies outside Area 2 and the eastern part of the schools site preserved archaeological remains under the school playing field. The excavation found evidence of Late Iron Age and Roman occupation which extended outside the excavated area including to the north (Albion Archaeology 2016).

The site of the proposed nursery extension was not included in the area excavated during the original construction of the school, this part of the site was originally identified as preserving archaeological remain *in situ* (see: *St Andrew's Lower School, Kings Reach, Biggleswade, Bedfordshire Scheme of Archaeological Resource Management* (Albion Archaeology, Document 2014/125, Version 1.1, 5th August 2014)). The 2014 excavation showed that archaeological features belonging to the Late Iron Age and Roman settlement extend eastwards in to the area of the proposed new nursery extension.

The proposed nursery extension site is known to contain archaeological remains forming part of a Late Iron Age and Roman settlement site. The investigation of sites of these periods to understand the character, chronology, development, structure and organisation of rural settlements (Bryant 2000, 16; Going and Plouviez 2000, 19; Oake 2007, 11 and Medlycott) and the transition between the Iron Age and Roman periods (Medlycott 2011, 31) have been identified as regional and local research objective.

Paragraph 141 of the *NPPF* states that Local Planning Authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of heritage assets before they are lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible (CLG 2012). The proposed development will have a negative and irreversible impact upon any surviving archaeological deposits present on the site, and therefore upon the significance of the heritage assets with archaeological interest. This does not present an overriding constraint on the development providing that the applicant takes appropriate measures to record and advance understanding of the heritage assets. This will be achieved by the investigation and recording of any archaeological deposits that may be affected by the development; and will take the form of an open area excavation. The scheme of works will also include the post-excavation analysis of any archive material generated and the publication of a report on the works. In order to secure this, please attach the following condition to any permission granted in respect of this application.

No development shall take place until a written scheme of archaeological investigation followed by post excavation analysis and publication, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The said development shall only be implemented in full accordance with the approved archaeological scheme.

Reason: To record and advance understanding of the heritage assets with archaeological interest which will be unavoidably affected as a consequence of the development. This condition is pre-commencement as a failure to secure appropriate archaeological investigation in advance of development would be contrary to paragraph 141 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* that requires developers to record and advance of understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) as a consequence of the development.

Fire Safety

Although this should normally be dealt with at Building Regulations consultation stage, I would like to draw the developer's attention to the requirements of Building Regulations "Approved Document B (Fire Safety) Volume 1 - Dwellinghouses" or "Volume 2 – Buildings other than dwellinghouses" as appropriate, particularly 'B5 - Access and Facilities for the Fire Service', to ensure compliance is met and specifically as below with respect to dwelling houses:

- Vehicle access for a pump appliance to within 45m of all points within a dwelling house;
- Turning facilities should be provided in any dead end access route that is more than 20 m long. This can be by a hammerhead or turning circle, designed on the following table.

IDB

No objection

Determining Issues:

The considerations in the determination of this application are:

1. The principle of the development
2. The appearance of the development
3. Highways and parking
4. Drainage
5. Noise and disturbance and the impacts on neighbours
6. Archaeology

Considerations:

1. The principle of the development

Outline planning permission has been granted for a mixed-use development at the wider site that included a lower school. The proposed nursery extension would be compatible with the intended use of this part of the King's Reach Development. The applicant has demonstrated that there would be a need for the facility. The principle of the development would be acceptable.

2. Appearance

The appearance of the extension would reflect that at the recently consented lower school extension in terms of its scale, design and materials. It would sit comfortably in its context and would be acceptable.

The Town Council has raised concern that the scheme could result in overdevelopment. Given the scale of the development and the size of the site, even when taken together with the recently approved extension, that could not be the case.

The loss of seven trees and the planned habitat area would be mitigated by their relocation elsewhere at the site (which would be controlled by condition).

The Landscape Officer has requested that a detailed landscape scheme is submitted and a condition would ensure that a high quality scheme was secured.

3. Highways and parking

The Council's Highways Officer is satisfied that the use of existing parking and drop-off facilities would be appropriate and that there would be no 'severe' transport impacts (in NPPF terms) associated with the development.

In response to concerns raised over the parking provision by the Town Council, the applicant has set out the following:

Our pre-school children are all from the immediate vicinity and local area and we make it clear at induction meetings that there is no parent parking at the school during normal school hours. We encourage healthy living and therefore suggest that children walk, scoot or bike to pre-school, we can store their bikes or scooters for them. Where it is not possible for parents to walk to the pre-school with their children, we do sign post them to the community centre where there is public parking available situated right next to the lower school. Therefore parents that live some distance away normally choose an alternative pre-school.

We are a sessional pre-school that operates between 9am to 12pm and 12.15pm to 3.15pm. Some children attend morning only or afternoons only and some children attend for the whole day. This means that out of the numbers quoted above for the drivers, they are not all at 8.50am and 3.10pm, as some of the children are collected at lunch time. We will never have 50 parents driving to our pre-school at 8.50am or 3.15pm.

We have been operating now for 2 years and as far as we know have had no complaints from residents about our parents parking in the nearby residential area and to be honest with all of the building works going on in the area currently, it would be extremely difficult for anyone to park in the nearby roads, which backs up the fact that any parents who drive have parked in the permitted parking at the community centre.

We have more parents who drive between 7.30am and 8pm when they are dropping their children off for breakfast club, at that time there is room for parents to park in the school car park so no need to park in the residential area. The same for our children who attend after school club.

A high volume of the children who attend pre-school have siblings at the lower school, so at least half if not more of the children who are driven to pre-school do not incur additional road trips as parents would be driving the older children to lower school anyway.

To summarise, the majority of our road trips are between 7.30am and 8pm and 4.30pm and 5pm and the school car park is used for those trips.

If planning is not permitted we will be unable to operate wrap around care and in

that case, St Andrews Lower School would have to operate it themselves, I know that they also believe strongly that they have to have a pre-school on site, as that is what parents who are interested in their school ask them about. So in any case the road trips would not decrease.

We have been operating at full capacity for the past 2 years meaning that the number of road trips will not increase from what they have been. We are enhancing the infrastructure, by providing pre-school places, which Biggleswade Town Council are saying is the main reason for their objections to the increase in development.

The traffic and parking impacts of the development would be acceptable.

4. Drainage

A drainage strategy has been submitted with the application. The IDB has raised no objection.

5. Noise and disturbance

The site would be near to approved residential development, within and around the Local Centre. A use like that proposed would likely result in noise and disturbance but that would likely be limited to daytime hours and would be experienced in the context of the Local Centre, which contains other non-residential uses.

6. Archaeology

A condition would ensure that archaeological heritage at and near the site would be protected during the development.

Recommendation:

That Planning Permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with 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 used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension shall match those used on the approved, and implemented classroom extension to the school, unless otherwise agreed beforehand in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the development would be acceptable in accordance with Policy DM3 of the Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009).

- 3 **Notwithstanding the submitted details, no development shall**

commence at the site before details of landscaping, the relocation of the habitat area that would be removed to make way for the development and the replacement of trees that would be removed as a result of the development within the site together with a timetable for the completion of these works has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and the approved timetable unless otherwise agreed beforehand in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the development would be acceptable in accordance with Policy DM3 of the Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009).

- 4 The development shall not be occupied before the following has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:

A contaminated land and ground gas assessment focusing on the former landfill to the south of the application site adhering to BS 10175 and incorporating all appropriate monitoring.

Where shown to be necessary by this assessment a detailed remediation/mitigation scheme shall be submitted and approved in writing. Any works which form part of such a scheme shall be approved by the local authority and completed in full before any permitted building is used or occupied.

The effectiveness of any scheme shall be demonstrated to the Local Planning Authority by means of a validation report (to incorporate photographs, or membranes etc.), unless an alternative period is approved in writing by the Authority. Any such validation should include responses to any unexpected contamination discovered during works.

Reason: To protect human health and the environment in accordance with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document (2009).

- 5 **No development shall commence at the site before a written scheme of archaeological investigation followed by post excavation analysis and publication, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved archaeological scheme.**

Reason: To record and advance understanding of the heritage assets with archaeological interest which will be unavoidably affected as a consequence of the development. This condition is pre-commencement as a failure to secure appropriate archaeological investigation in advance of development would be contrary to paragraph 141 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* that requires developers to record and advance of understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) as a consequence of the development.

- 6 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans and documents: 6298 3 7105 rev B, 6298 3 0132, 6298 3 0322, STA-MOT-V0-00-DR-E-0450 rev P3, D001 A, D002 A, 6298 c 0221 rev A, 6298 3 0061, 6298 3 0065, 6298 3 0066, 6298 3 0321 rev A, 6298 3 0131 rev A, Supplementary Planning Statement, External Lighting Design and Control Statement, Stage 3 Report and Design and Access Statement

Reason: To identify the approved plan/s and to avoid doubt.

INFORMATIVE NOTES TO APPLICANT

1. This permission relates only to that required under the Town & Country Planning Acts and does not include any consent or approval under any other enactment or under the Building Regulations. Any other consent or approval which is necessary must be obtained from the appropriate authority.
2. The applicant's attention is drawn to the requirements of Building Regulations "Approved Document B (Fire Safety) 'Volume 2 – Buildings other than dwellinghouses'.
3. If the method of storm water disposal is to be by way of soakaways then it is essential that the ground conditions be investigated and if found to be satisfactory the soakaways constructed in accordance with the latest Building Research Establishment Digest 365.

In the event that ground conditions are found not to be suitable for soakaways drainage any direct discharge to the nearby watercourse will require the prior consent of the Internal Drainage Board.

With respect to any alternatives to the above methods of surface water discharge the applicant should enquire of Anglian Water whether a public sewer is available.

Statement required by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 - Part 6, Article 35

The Council acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant during the determination process which led to improvements to the scheme. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively to secure a sustainable form of development in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

DECISION

