

Item No. 5

APPLICATION NUMBER	CB/18/04185/FULL
LOCATION	Etonbury Academy, Stotfold Road, Arlesey, SG15 6XS
PROPOSAL	Two storey detached school building with associated car/cycle parking, external works, landscaping and external play areas
PARISH	Arlesey
WARD	Arlesey
WARD COUNCILLORS	Cllrs Dalgarno, Shelvey & Wenham
CASE OFFICER	Benjamin Tracy
DATE REGISTERED	12 November 2018
EXPIRY DATE	07 January 2019
APPLICANT	Dr A Lee
AGENT	DT Architects
REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE	The Council own the freehold of the site, and objections have been received.
RECOMMENDED DECISION	Full Application - Approval

Recommendation:

The principle of providing additional school places at an existing education facility accords with Policy CS3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009) and Policy HQ3 of the Submission Central Bedfordshire Local Plan (2018). In addition, Paragraph 94 of the National Planning Policy Framework, outlines the importance of ensuring that sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Great weight is given to the need to create, expand or alter schools to meet this need.

For the reasons outlined within this report, the development is considered to be sustainable and no degree of harm has been identified that would outweigh the needs to ensuring that sufficient choice of school places are available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. The application is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

Site Location:

The site consists of land within the Grounds of Etonbury Academy and agricultural land to the south of Stotfold Road, Arlesey.

The Application:

The application seeks planning permission for the construction of a two storey detached school building with associated car/cycle parking, external works,

landscaping and external play areas at Etonbury Academy.

The application would affect the car parking area which currently lies adjacent to the artificial pitch, but a new larger car park will be constructed in the north-east section of the existing playing field, as well as additional car parking at the frontage of the school building.

RELEVANT POLICIES:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (July 2018)

Core Strategy and Development Management Policies - North 2009

CS3 - Healthy and Sustainable Communities
CS14 - High Quality Development
CS16: Landscape & Woodland
CS18: Biodiversity
DM3 - High Quality Development
DM4 - Development Within and Beyond Settlement Envelopes
DM14 - Landscape and Woodland
DM15 – Biodiversity

Central Bedfordshire Local Plan - Emerging

The Central Bedfordshire Local Plan has reached submission stage and was submitted to the Secretary of State on 30 April 2018.

The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 48) stipulates that from the day of publication, decision-takers may also give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The apportionment of this weight is subject to:

- the stage of preparation of the emerging plan;
- the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies;
- the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework.

Reference should be made to the Central Bedfordshire Submission Local Plan which should be given limited weight having regard to the above. The following policies are relevant to the consideration of this application:
SP7, HQ1, HQ3, EE2, EE4, EE5, CC5, CC8, DC5, T2 and T3

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Other Documents

Central Bedfordshire Design Guide (March 2014)

Relevant Planning History:

Case Reference	CB/17/04303/FULL
Location	Etonbury Academy, Stotfold Road, Arlesey, SG15 6XS

Proposal	Erection of a new single storey building to provide nursery facilities. Additional 8 car parking spaces and new outdoor play area for nursery children.
Decision	Full Application - Granted
Decision Date	01/03/2018

Consultees:

Arlesey Parish Council	No representation received.
Archaeology	The Council's Archaeologist has raised no objection to the application subject to a condition that would ensure the development would only be implemented in full accordance with the archaeological scheme of works as described in Albion Archaeology document 2018/166, version 1.1, dated 12 th December 2018; to ensure that the developer records and advances of understanding of the significance of any heritage assets affected by development before they are lost (wholly or in part) and makes the results of the archaeological work (and any archive generated) publicly available.
Lead Flood Authority	The Lead Flood Authority has raised no objection to the proposed development subject to a conditions for the submission of surface water drainage details and maintenance have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to the first occupation of the development and are implemented.
Pollution	The Council's Pollution Team have raised no objection to the application subject to a condition that would ensure that any contamination identified during the development phase is effectively remediated.
Sustainable Transport	The Council's Sustainable Transport Team has raised no objection to the application subject to a condition requiring the submission of a travel plan.
Highways	The Highway Authority have raised no objection to the application subject to the imposition of conditions.
Trees and Landscaping	The Council's Trees and Landscape Officer has raised no objection subject to conditions relating to detailed landscaping and maintenance.
Strategic Landscaping	The Council's Strategy Landscape Officer has raised concerns in relation to the landscaping treatment between the car parking and school playing field and entrance to the school. However has suggested landscaping conditions if the Officer is minded to

recommend approval.

Ecology The Council's Ecologist has raised no objection to the amended scheme subject to conditions relating to detailed landscaping and maintenance.

Leisure Leisure have made no objection to the application.

Sport England Sport England have raised no objection to the application subject to a condition that would ensure the new playing fields are constructed to meet Sport England/FA standards.

Internal Drainage Board The Bedfordshire and River Ivel Internal Drainage Board have raised no objection to the proposal subject to surface water discharge from the proposed is to be attenuated and restricted to 3 litres per second per developed hectare.

Other Representations:

Neighbours 3 neighbour representations have been received raising the following comments and objections:

- site layout plan different in the design and access statement;
- The Community Orchard is a valuable addition to biodiversity and the Etonbury Wood green spaces, and it is hoped that careful attention will be given to landscaping the boundary with the new sports fields, including the proposed native hedging.
- the site was previously designated for wild flower planting, as ecological mitigation for extensions to the school and sports centre. This will now be lost. It is recommended for wild flower planting around the wood and orchard to offset the loss.
- There is an opportunity to incorporate a green-roof in the new building design, which would have multiple benefits.
- only four sinks for 120 kids to wash their hands before dinner.
- only one toilet for 60 boys, only three for 60 girls;
- toilets are not private.
- mullions on the curtain walling to the west and east elevation cross through the fire compartment;
- cloak rooms too small, no room in the upper classrooms for cupboards or shelving;
- the low sill windows in first floor class rooms to the south elevation prevent cupboards along this wall and creates a modesty issue;
- Mullions to the upper class room windows are unlikely to carry a barrier load;

- hot food is being brought in from Etonbury middle school kitchen. Not enough room in the dining hall to distribute the food;
- ground floor classrooms do not have enough windows for cooling, the plant room is too small for air conditioning and no plant is shown on the roof. The roof parapet is too low to conceal plant.
- I think it should receive planning permission;
- the layout needs fundamentally changing to make work for the kids and teachers using it. It needs to be allowed to be slightly higher and slightly larger on plan to make the internal layout work; and
- possibly verging on an objection, due to increased traffic on the main road, but this is more an issue for the planning for the pix brook site across the road.

Determining Issues:

The main considerations of the application are;

1. Principle
2. Playing Fields
3. Internal design
4. Highway considerations
5. Surface water drainage
6. Impact upon the Character and Appearance of the Area and the Landscape
7. Biodiversity
8. Other Considerations

Considerations

1. Principle

- 1.1 The site is located beyond settlement envelopes as defined by adopted the Proposal Maps 2011 and the submission Policy Maps (2018), whereby the site is considered to be within the countryside for the purposes of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009) (CSDMP) and the Submission Central Bedfordshire Local Plan (2018) (SCBLP).
- 1.2 Policy DM4 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009) and Policy SP7 of the Submission Central Bedfordshire Local Plan state, within settlement envelopes, the Council will support schemes for education uses where a need for such facilities exists. Where no land is available within the settlement, a site adjacent to the settlement may be granted planning permission. It is considered that the site is not located within or adjacent to the settlement envelope of Stotfold or Arlesey, whereby the expansion of the school would not be supported by those policies.
- 1.3 However Policy CS3 of the CSDMP makes a commitment from the Council to ensure that appropriate infrastructure is provided for existing and growing communities (with respect to education) by supporting, in principle, the

upgrading of education facilities and identifying appropriate sites for new facilities to meet identified needs and shortfalls in accessible locations that are well served by sustainable modes of transport.

- 1.4 Policy HQ3 of the SCBLP states "the Council will support the principle of applications for the expansion or enhancement or the provision of new social and community infrastructure".
- 1.5 In accordance with Paragraph 94 of the National Planning Policy Framework, it is considered important that sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. As such great weight is given to the need to create, expand or alter schools to meet this need.
- 1.6 For the reasons outlined above it is considered that the principle of the creation of additional school capacity within this location is acceptable subject to other material considerations.
- 1.7 The details of the proposals shall now be assessed.

2. Playing Fields

- 2.1 It is advised to note the requirements of Paragraph 97 of the National Planning Policy Framework which states:
- 2.2 *"Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:*
 - *an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or*
 - *the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or*
 - *the development is for alternative sports and recreation provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use".*
- 2.3 The proposed development includes the construction of a car park on an area of the existing school playing field at Etonbury (circa 0.2 hectares), however the proposal also includes the creation of a new school playing field (circa 0.4 hectares) south of the artificial pitch, whereby it is considered that the proposal includes the replacement of this loss with a equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity, in accordance with Paragraph 97 of the NPPF.
- 2.4 Sport England have raised no objection to the application within this context subject to the imposition of a condition that would ensure the new playing fields are constructed to meet Sport England/FA standards.
- 2.5 For the reasons outlined above, subject to conditions it is considered that the proposed development would be acceptable within this context.

3. Internal Design

- 3.1 A number of concerns have been raised in relation to the internal space of the proposed building and its intended use. Central Bedfordshire Council does not have set guidance for the internal dimensions or the internal design of new schools or school buildings, however the Department for Education (DfE) have

published the document titled "Area guidelines for mainstream schools - Building Bulletin 103" which is a non-statutory guidance document aimed to assist those involved in creating a design brief for a new school buildings as well as the Schedule of Accommodation (SoA) tool.

- 3.2 Concern has been raised in relation to the dimensions of the proposed classrooms and storage. However all classrooms proposed exceed the 55m² guidance within the Department for Education's "Area guidelines for mainstream schools - Building Bulletin 103", for secondary school general classrooms. Thereby the proposed classrooms are considered to be suitable for teaching for either subject specific teaching for subjects such as Mathematics, English, Humanities or Modern Foreign Languages, but are also considered to be suitable to be used for a year group learning a range of subjects. In addition it is considered that the classrooms would be served by an acceptable degree of light.
- 3.3 Furthermore; DfE Guidance stipulates that storage for general teaching should be at least 5m² for every general teaching department for books and materials for general teaching subjects (preferably accessed from a circulation area or shared staff workroom). The proposal includes a 7.5 metre store room accessed from a circulation area, which is considered to exceed this standard.
- 3.4 Concern has been raised in relation to the accessibility of toilets and personal care facilities. It is considered in accordance with DfE Guidance that 120 pupils and staff would require six toilets as well as a separate toilet for staff and accessible toilets for pupils staff or visitors (which may also count towards the number of staff toilets). The proposal includes adequate provision of toilets and personal care facilities.
- 3.5 Furthermore it is considered that the proposed development would meet DfE guidance for circulation space, non-teaching storage and staff administration.
- 3.6 Concern has been raised in relation to the size of the Dining/ Multi-Purpose Hall, the committee are advised that this room is considered to be of a scale to allow 45 pupils to eat indoors at one particular time, as calculated in accordance with the DfE guidance, the school also benefits from an existing canteen and kitchen. This number does not include queuing for food or food distribution space.
- 3.7 The Committee are advised that there is no set per pupil guidance for Dining areas/ canteens but these should be scaled to anticipated demand and the operation of the school and queuing of students for food should be considered. There are a number of ways the operation of a school can allow for pupil dining in constrained facilities such as split lunchtime or allowing access to other areas for pupils to eat, however this is subject to the schools operational policy and it is advised that this would not form a reason to refuse planning permission.
- 3.8 For the reasons outlined above it is considered that the proposed school building would feature internal room dimensions that are acceptable for the anticipated use.

4. Highway Considerations

- 4.1 It is considered that the proposed development would not result in a severe

impact upon the highway network, in relation to congestion or capacity. It is also considered that the proposed access and internal roads are acceptable in the context of highway and pedestrian safety.

- 4.2 It is also considered that the proposed development would be served by an acceptable provision of car parking spaces that accord with the Council's Car Parking Standards.
- 4.3 The Council's sustainable transport officer has requested a condition to be imposed to update the School Travel Plan to promote sustainable modes of transport. It is considered that this condition would reduce the reliance on the car and if implemented would deliver a reduced impact on the capacity of the road network.
- 4.4 The Highway Authority have raised no objection to the proposed development subject to detailed drainage design, a restriction on swing of gates and posts at the access and a condition securing the proposed car parking.
- 4.5 For the reasons outlined above, it is considered that subject to conditions, that the proposed development would be acceptable within a highway context.

5. Surface Water Drainage

- 5.1 The Lead Flood Authority, have raised no objection to the application subject to the imposition of conditions that would ensure that surface water would be sustainably drained and would not result in an increased flood risk both on and off site.
- 5.2 Therefore subject to conditions it is considered that subject to conditions, the proposed development would be acceptable within this context.

6. Impact upon the Character and Appearance of the Area and the Landscape

- 6.1 The proposed building would be of two storeys and would appear complimentary to the existing architectural style and appearance of buildings within the existing school grounds. The proposed materials and external appearance of the building is considered to be acceptable within this context.
- 6.2 However the proposed development including the playing fields would result in the incursion of built development within the open countryside which needs to be sensitively integrated into this rural context. The site is located within the Upper Ivel Landscape character area, where the landscape strategy is to create and enhance traditional features such as hedgerows, wet woodlands and to ensure effective landscaping to integrate new urban features. It is considered that subject to acceptable soft landscaping detail including details of any bunds proposed, that the proposed development would be acceptably integrated into the wider landscape and would not cause an unacceptable landscape visual impact or cause harm to the character and appearance of the area, including the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
- 6.3 Concern has been raised in relation to the impact of the proposed car parking to the front of the site and its visual relationship to the school playing field in the context of the visual amenities of the locality, however it is considered that subject to conditions that would ensure an acceptable landscaping scheme to

soften visual impacts of the development from public viewpoints that the development would be acceptable within this context.

- 6.4 For the reasons outlined above it is considered that subject to conditions, the proposed development would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the area, including the intrinsic character and beauty of the Countryside, in accordance with Policies DM3, DM14 and CS16 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009) and Policies EE4 and EE5 of the Submission Central Bedfordshire Local Plan (2018).

7. Biodiversity

- 7.1 The limited natural capital and ecosystem services of the site are acknowledged, however it is considered that the proposed landscaping scheme to include wild flower planting would provide a net gain for biodiversity. Subject to conditions to ensure the landscaping scheme is implemented and maintained, it is considered that the proposed development would be acceptable within this context.

8. Other Considerations

8.1 Access to the Community Orchard

- 8.2 The proposed development would allow gated access to the existing community orchard, the orchard would also retain its access from the existing footpath network to the south. It is considered that the proposed development would not negatively impact upon this community and environmental asset.

8.3 Archaeology

- 8.4 The Council's Archaeologist has raised no objection to the application subject to conditions that would ensure any heritage with archaeological interest would be investigated and recorded. Therefore it is considered that subject to conditions that the proposed development would be acceptable in the context of heritage assets with archaeological interest.

8.5 Contamination

- 8.6 The Council's pollution team have suggested the imposition of a condition to ensure any contamination identified during the development phase is effectively remediated. Subject to conditions it is considered that the proposed development is acceptable within this context.

8.7 Impact upon the amenity and living conditions of neighbouring dwellings

Due to the separation between the site and neighbouring dwellings, it is considered that the proposed development would not have a harmful impact upon the amenity or living conditions of the occupiers of any neighbouring dwelling.

8.8 Third party representations

- 8.9 Concerns have been raised in relation to the appearance of external plant, which are not proposed as part of this application and would require separate planning permission and as such it is considered that this would not form a

reason to refuse planning permission.

- 8.10 Concern has been raised in relation to ventilation and overheating of rooms, which is not considered to form a material consideration in the determination of this planning application.
- 8.11 Concern has been raised in relation to the feasibility or cost effectiveness of the proposed construction, which is not considered to form a material consideration in the determination of this planning application.

Human Rights and Equality Act issues:

- 8.12 Based on information submitted there are no known issues raised in the context of Human Rights / The Equalities Act 2010 and as such there would be no relevant implications.
- 8.13

Recommendation:

That Planning Permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following Conditions:

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS / REASONS

- 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 The building hereby approved shall be externally finished in the materials described on drawing number AP0101 Revision P01, unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- Reason: To control the appearance of the building in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality.
- 3 No works above slab level relating to the construction of the building hereby approved shall take place until details of hard and soft landscaping (to include wild flower planting and cross sections of any bund) together with a timetable for its implementation have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out as approved and in accordance with the approved timetable.
- Reason: To ensure a net gain for biodiversity, acceptable mitigation for landscape visual impacts of the development and to ensure that the appearance of the development would be of a high quality, safeguarding the character and appearance of the area, including the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, in accordance with Policies CS16, DM3, DM14 and DM15 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies

2009 and Policies HQ1, EE2, EE4 and EE5 of the Submission Central Bedfordshire Local Plan (2018) as well as the NPPF.

- 4 The building hereby permitted shall not be first brought into use until a Landscape Maintenance and Management Plan for all hard and soft landscaping has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of the persons or body that will be responsible for delivering the approved landscape maintenance and management plan. The landscaping shall be maintained and managed in accordance with the approved plan following its delivery.

Reason: To ensure a net gain for biodiversity, acceptable mitigation for landscape visual impacts of the development and to ensure that the appearance of the development would be of a high quality, safeguarding the character and appearance of the area, including the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, in accordance with Policies CS16, DM3, DM14 and DM15 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009 and Policies HQ1, EE2, EE4 and EE5 of the Submission Central Bedfordshire Local Plan (2018) as well as the NPPF.

- 5 The development hereby approved (including the building and car parking areas) shall not be first brought into use until a detailed surface water drainage scheme, to manage surface water run off from the development for up to and including the 1 in 100 year event (+40%CC) for the scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The discharge rate from the development will be limited to the equivalent 1 in 1 year rate, or an appropriate rate as agreed by the Bedford Group of Internal Drainage Boards or sewage undertaker. The final detailed design shall be based on the agreed drainage Strategy (1.10 and 1.15 of the D&A statement issue P01 dated 08/11/18) and DEFRA's Non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems (March, 2018), and shall be implemented as approved. Any variation to the connections and controls indicated on the approved drawing which may be necessary at the time of construction would require the resubmission of those details to the Local Planning Authority for approval.

Reason: To ensure the approved system will function to a satisfactory minimum standard of operation and maintenance and prevent the increased risk of flooding both on and off site, in accordance with para 103 of the NPPF.

- 6 The building hereby approved shall not be first brought into use until a Maintenance and Management Plan for the entire surface water drainage system, inclusive of any adoption arrangements and/or private ownership or responsibilities, has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include written confirmation that the approved surface water drainage scheme has been correctly and fully installed as per the final approved details shall be provided. Thereafter the surface water drainage system shall be managed in accordance with the approved details for its lifetime, unless any other variation is agreed in writing.

Reason: To ensure that the implementation and long term operation of a sustainable drainage system (SuDS) is in line with what has been approved, in accordance with Written Statement HCWS161.

- 7 The development hereby approved shall only be implemented in full accordance with the archaeological scheme of works as described in Albion Archaeology document 2018/166, version 1.1, dated 12th December 2018.

Reason: In accordance with paragraph 199 of the NPPF to ensure that the developer records and advances the understanding of the significance of any heritage assets affected by development before they are lost (wholly or in part) and makes the results of the archaeological work (and any archive generated) publicly available.

- 8 In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development, it shall be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment shall then be undertaken by a competent person, in accordance with "Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination, CLR 11". A written report of the findings should be forwarded for approval to the Local Planning Authority. Following completion of remedial measures a verification report shall be prepared that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out. No part of the development should be occupied until all remedial and validation works are approved in writing.

Reasons: To ensure that no future investigation is required under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

- 9 The building hereby approved shall not be first brought into use until an updated School Travel Plan, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. All measures within the approved travel plan shall be undertaken in full accordance with the approved plan or any update to the plan which has been formally approved by the Highway Authority thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety, to reduce congestion and to promote the use of sustainable modes of transport.

- 10 No development on the proposed new playing fields shall commence until the following documents have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England:
- A detailed assessment of ground conditions (including drainage and topography) of the land proposed for the playing field which identifies constraints which could adversely affect playing field quality; and
 - where the results of the assessment to be carried out pursuant to (i) above identify constraints which could adversely affect playing field quality, a detailed scheme to address any such constraints. The scheme shall include a written specification of the proposed soils structure, proposed drainage, cultivation and other operations associated with grass and sports turf establishment and a programme of implementation. Thereafter the approved scheme shall be carried out in full and in

accordance with the approved programme of implementation [or other specified time frame - e.g. before first occupation of the educational establishment]. The land shall thereafter be maintained in accordance with the scheme and made available for playing field use in accordance with the scheme.

Reason: To ensure that the playing field is prepared to an adequate standard and is fit for purpose.

- 11 Any gates and gate posts at the access for the replacement parking shall be located so as not to cause obstruction when open, to vehicles entering/ existing the access.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and for a usable access.

- 12 The car parking approved as part of this development shall be completed and made available for use prior to the first use of the building hereby permitted.

Reason: To ensure the provision of off-street car parking and thereby minimise the potential for on-street parking which could adversely affect the convenience of road users.

- 14 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans, numbers: AP0201 Rev P03; AP0202 Rev P03; and AP0101 Rev P01.

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.

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 at the pre-application stage and 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 (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

DECISION

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