

DELEGATED REPORT

Report considered and agreed by Assistant Director (Policy)

..... date 19.12.2003

Report considered and agreed by Team Leader Development, Minerals and Waste Group

..... date 18th December 2003.

Report by: **Director of Transport and Environment**

Proposal: **Retrospective laying out of a car park to south of sports hall to provide 3 disabled spaces and 4 ordinary spaces.**

Site Address: **Helenswood Lower School, The Ridge, St Leonards on Sea.**

Application No: **HS/2258/CC**

Applicant: **Education and Libraries Department.**

Key Issues: **i) Effect on visual amenity.
ii) Provision of car and cycle parking.
iii) Effect on the natural environment.**

RESOLUTION OF THE DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT:

Under the powers delegated to me by the Council, I resolve to grant planning permission subject to the reasons set out in the recommendation.

CONSIDERATION OF RELEVANT PLANNING MATTERS

1. The Site and Surroundings

Helenswood Lower School is a large secondary school site on the north side of The Ridge in Hastings. The site was formerly the landscaped grounds of a country mansion known as Hydneys house, now demolished.

The main school building was erected following the grant of planning permission in 1977. The school is on one and two storeys and has flat roofs with red brick elevations. The school buildings are located towards the rear of the site and there are tennis courts and car parking areas between the school and The Ridge. A large sports hall that is open to the public during the day and evening has recently been erected to the north east of the school buildings under planning permission granted in 1998.

Access for vehicles and pedestrians is via the entrance off of the roundabout on The Ridge, which also serves The Conquest Hospital. To the rear of the site the land drops away sharply to the predominantly open countryside of the High Weald AONB.

2. The Proposal

The applicant seeks retrospective consent for the laying out of a car park to the front of the new sports centre. The car park provides three disabled spaces, four other car parking spaces and a large area of hard standing indicated as a turning area for fire engines.

3. Site History

1995 – HS/1628/CC - Granted – extension to provide drama and music facilities.

1998 – HS/1892/CC - Granted – Extensions and alterations to provide new sports hall, dance studio changing and recreational facilities and floodlighting to tennis courts.

1999 – HS/1956/CC - Granted – Two-storey extension to include art room and four class bases, adaptations to reception area and addition of circulation route.

2000 – HS/2000/CC - Granted – Dining room extension, reception area extension and internal alterations.

There are also 14 planning consents that have been granted for the erection or retention of mobile classrooms on the site since 1978.

4. Consultations and Representations

Hastings Borough Council – No objections

Sport England – No objections as the development only affects land incapable of being used as a playing pitch.

Highway Authority – No objections

Waste Local Plan Team – No objections. However, it should be noted that concern is raised that it appears no attempt has been made to minimise waste from this development.

5. The Development Plan policies of relevance to this decision are:

East Sussex Brighton & Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011: Policy S1 (Sustainability), EN1 (The Environment), W10 (Waste) and T16 (Parking Standards).

Second Deposit Waste Local Plan (April 2002): WLP11 (Construction Waste).

Hastings Local Plan Deposit Draft and Pre Inquiry Changes: DG1 (Development Form) **TR11 (Cycle Parking)**.

6. Summary of Policy Issues

Policy S1 of the East Sussex and Brighton and Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011 is concerned with general development and seeks to ensure that development takes account of various criteria including; (b) minimising impact on the environment and (f) protecting and enhancing attractiveness and individual character of urban and rural environments. Policy EN1 requires development to sustain, conserve and where possible enhance the local diversity and quality of the landscape and natural and built environments. Policy T16 requires development to comply with the parking standards adopted by Local Authorities.

Policy DG1 of the Hastings Local Plan Deposit Draft is concerned with development form and states that development will only be permitted provided that it meets four criteria including; (a) density, scale and massing etc. are appropriate to the area, (c) design,

materials and landscaping are appropriate and (d) neighbouring properties would not suffer from unacceptable loss of privacy or noise and disturbance. Policy TR11 requires developers to provide adequate cycling facilities in new developments.

7. Considerations

Effect on visual amenity.

The car parking area is set back from the frontage of the buildings but remains visually prominent when viewed from the main site entrance and the adjacent roundabout. There is a large storage container immediately in front of the car park that is incongruous in the setting of the new sports centre and occupies an area of land that, if planted and landscaped, would largely obscure views to the car park from outside of the site. For this reason it is recommended to impose conditions on the retrospective grant of consent that require the removal or re-siting of the container and the planting/landscaping of the part of the site immediately to the south of the car park to ensure a satisfactory appearance to this development. Subject to the removal of this container and suitable planting of the south side of the car park the development is considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact on visual amenity.

Provision of car and cycle parking.

Including the car park that is sought to be regularized under this application, there are 66 car parking spaces available on the site. The County Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance for Parking Standards at Developments require a school of this size to have a maximum of 67 parking spaces (based on an estimate of 45 fulltime teaching staff). It is considered that the fire engine turning area would be used as a car parking area unless it is clearly marked with double yellow lines or similar. As such a condition is recommended to require that the fire engine turning area be clearly marked as a no parking area and the details of how this will be enforced by the school and leisure centre be agreed in writing by the Director of Transport and Environment.

The school is also required to provide 243 covered and secure cycle parking spaces. At present there are no covered cycle parking spaces at the school. In order to remedy the existing bias against non car borne modes of travel to the school, a condition is recommended to require a schools travel plan to be submitted by the school within 6 months of the date of consent to include details of how cycle parking will be provided on the site.

Subject to the above conditions, the development is considered to be in accordance with guidance and policy relating to the provision of car and cycle parking on school sites.

Effect on the natural environment.

The car park is sited close to a pond and concern is raised that surface water runoff from the car park could contaminate the pond. It is therefore considered appropriate to recommend a condition requiring the applicant to prevent surface water runoff contaminating the adjacent pond by installing the appropriate drainage measures.

There is a planted bed to the west side of the car park adjacent to the vehicular entrance. The position of the bed has resulted in cars "cutting the corner" and driving over the planted area. In order to avoid this in future, a condition is recommended requiring the positioning of an appropriate bollard on the southeast corner of the planted bed.

The applicant has stated that they are not intending to provide any landscaping around the unauthorized car park. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that the car park's visual prominence and the loss of vegetation that has occurred as a result of this development

would require some form of landscaping and planting in order to compensate for the erosion to the landscape amenity on the site.

A condition is recommended requiring landscaping to the area to the south of the car park and the positioning of a bollard on the south east corner of the planted bed. Subject to these conditions the car park is considered to be acceptable in terms of its effect on the natural environment.

8. Conclusion

For the reasons above, and subject to imposition of conditions, the development of the car park is considered to be in accordance with the policies of the development plan and there are no considerations that indicate that retrospective planning permission should be refused.

9. Recommendation

It is recommended to grant retrospective planning permission subject to the following conditions:

1. No later than 3 months from the date of consent, details of a scheme of planting and landscaping shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Director of Transport and Environment. This scheme shall include the provision of a bollard to the south east corner of the planted bed to the west of the car park. The agreed scheme shall be implemented in the next available planting season and thereafter retained. Any trees, plants or shrubs which die, are destroyed or become diseased within a period of 5 years from the date of this permission shall be replaced on a like for like basis unless any variation is agreed in writing.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development and proper integration into the landscape to comply with policies S1 of the East Sussex and Brighton and Hove Structure Plan and policy DG1 of the Hastings Local Plan Deposit Draft.

2. No later than 12 months from the date of this consent a school travel plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the director of Transport and Environment. This travel plan shall include details of how covered and secure cycle parking will be provided to satisfy the demand identified in the travel plan and shall be implemented in accordance with the agreed details and retained thereafter unless any variation is agreed in writing.

Reason: To ensure that a range of travel options are available to staff and pupils and to comply with policies and TR1 and TR16 of the East Sussex & Brighton and Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011 and policy TR3 of the Wealden District Local Plan.

3. The storage container located immediately to the south of the new car park shall be removed from the site or permanently re-sited to a location agreed in writing by the director of Transport and Environment no later than 2 months from the date of this consent.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the car park when viewed from the school's entrance and to enable landscaping and planting to the south side of the car park and to comply with policies S1 of the East Sussex and Brighton and Hove Structure Plan and policy DG1 of the Hastings Local Plan Deposit Draft.

4. No later than 3 months from the date of this consent, details of the provision of surface water drainage works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Director of Transport and Environment. The agreed scheme shall be implemented no later than 6 months from the date of this consent and thereafter retained.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory drainage of the site and to prevent water pollution to the adjacent pond.

5. No later than 3 months from the date of this consent, all areas of the car park shall be clearly marked in accordance with a scheme showing the laying out of parking spaces and area where parking is prohibited. This scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the director of Transport and Environment and retained thereafter unless any variation is agreed in writing.

Reason: To ensure that provision of parking spaces on the site does not exceed the standard identified in the County Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance "Parking Standards at Development", to prevent unauthorised parking on the area required for turning of emergency vehicles and to comply with policy T16 of the East Sussex and Brighton and Hove Structure Plan.

BOB WILKINS

Director of Transport and Environment

16 December 2003

Policy:

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

HS/1628/CC

HS/1892/CC

HS/1956/CC

HS/2000/CC