

## **DELEGATED REPORT**

Report considered and agreed by Assistant Director (Policy)

date

13.09.06

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

date

13<sup>th</sup> September 06

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

Proposal: **Construction of new access and access road from Mill Lane to provide new pick up/drop off facility for school buses. Landscaping and associated works to provide visitor parking on existing bus parking area and provision of staff car parking west of school.**

Site Address: **Chailey School, Mill Lane, South Chailey**

Applicant: **Director of Children's Services**

Application No. **LW/2513/CC**

Key Issues: **I. Need  
II. Siting and Design  
III. Effect on Residential Amenity  
IV. Waste Minimisation**

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### **RESOLUTION OF THE DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT:**

**Under the powers delegated to me by the Governance Committee on 30 January 2003 I resolve to approve the proposal subject to the conditions set out in the recommendation.**

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### **CONSIDERATION OF RELEVANT PLANNING MATTERS**

#### **1. The Site and Surroundings**

Chailey School occupies a site adjacent to Mill Lane in the western part of the small settlement of South Chailey, which is approximately 6.5km north of Lewes. The surrounding area is predominantly residential, housing lies to the east and west of the School site and on the opposite side of Mill Lane. Open fields and areas of woodland lie beyond the housing. The School is not located in an area designated for its landscape or ecological value and it is within the development boundary of South Chailey.

The School is arranged with car and bus parking and space for vehicle manoeuvring at the front of the site, with School buildings and a hard play area beyond, and playing fields at the rear. The School lies on ground which slopes from north-west to south-east so that the School buildings are situated at a lower level than the public highway to the north. The whole frontage of the School is adjacent to Mill Lane and a substantial hedge approximately 1.2 metres high runs the length of the School's front boundary, breaking three times in the centre and the west to allow for two pedestrian accesses and two vehicular accesses. In the eastern part of the site there is a grassed area and some mature trees close to the site's front boundary.

School buildings are mostly on one and two storeys and are built of brown brick, with white window frames and a mixture of flat and pitched roofs. There is a more modern two-storey classroom block in the centre of the site which differs slightly from the older buildings through the provision of blue panelling and contemporary brickwork.

## **2. The Proposal**

It is proposed to construct a new access and access road from Mill Lane in the eastern part of the site to provide a new pick up/drop off facility for School buses. This new access will be an entrance for School buses only and will have a controlled gate open only at dropping off/collecting times in the morning and afternoon. The existing two accesses from Mill Lane in the west of the site will be retained, and will be made one-way for improved vehicle circulation. Two trees will be removed from close to the site's front boundary to make way for the new access and it is proposed to plant two trees to the west of the new access to compensate for the loss.

A section of the grassed area approximately 80 metres long in front of School buildings in the east of the site will be removed to enable a new area for bus parking to be formed, leading from the new access to join with the existing car-parking area in the west of the site. There will be ten bus-parking spaces formed in two rows in the new parking area and a pavement will be created adjacent to School buildings directly to the south of the parking area. Buses will thus be able to enter through the new access, park in the new area to collect or drop off pupils and exit through the existing access to Mill Lane at the far western end of the site. The bus parking area will allow buses to travel from east to west only, and the area will not be accessible from its western end to any vehicle. The area will be surfaced in block paving and a zebra crossing will be provided for pedestrian access across the west of the parking area. A grassed area and existing trees will be retained between the bus-parking area and the hedge that separates the site from Mill Lane. The existing tarmac car park at the western end of the new bus parking area will be broken up and replaced with a new grass finish with mounds and tree and shrub planting. An existing gate for pedestrian access from Mill Lane in the centre of the site will be removed and the area planted with a section of hedgerow to match the existing.

In the existing bus parking area in the west of the site, landscaping and associated works are proposed to reorganise this area to provide spaces for car parking and better separation between existing School buildings and car-parking areas. Tarmac paths and a zebra crossing will be provided to allow access to the School entrance. 7 car-parking spaces, including one designated disabled space, will be created opposite the School's entrance building.

A new car-parking area measuring approximately 30 metres by 25 metres is proposed to the west of existing School buildings on a grassed area to the north of the School playing field that is currently used informally for some car-parking. The applicant is proposing to fence this new car park with low timber rails and to surface it with recycled plastic hexagonal cells filled with gravel. Housing lies to the west of this area, and it is proposed to supplement the existing hedge on this boundary with additional tree planting. The proposed development will result in an overall increase of 14 car-parking spaces at the School.

The applicant anticipates the construction period to last for approximately 7 months and result in 2 extra lorry movements and 6 extra van movements per day during the construction period. Working hours during construction are expected to be between 8am and 6pm and the applicant has not confirmed if any weekend or Bank/Public Holiday working is proposed.

## **3. Site History**

There have been a number of developments at the School over the last 30 years, including:

1984 – Granted – LW/870/CC – Provision of bus park and additional car parking to facilitate safe arrival and dispersal of children and traffic.

2000 – Granted – LW/1966/CC - Refurbishment of and extension to existing sports hall and first floor extension over existing flat roof for new hall.

2003 – Granted – LW/2190/CC - Single storey extension at first floor level providing teaching and office accommodation.

2005 – Granted – LW/2417/CC – Single storey extension to west elevation. Extension of existing hard court playground to south east of School building.

2005 – Granted – LW/2400/CC – The complete refurbishment of the ROSLA block to include a new front extension to house the access stairs, new timber cladding, windows and doors and new steel fire escape stairs.

2006 – Granted – LW/2475/CC - Demolition of existing entrance extension and the erection of two storey extension providing School administration facilities.

#### **4. Consultations and Representations**

Lewes District Council has no objections.

Chailey Parish Council supports the application subject to the County Council's assessment of the adequacy of manoeuvring room for buses entering the proposed new entrance in Mill Lane and consideration of the displacement effect on parking in Mill Lane caused by double yellow line restrictions near the new entrance. Parish Councillors welcomed the improvement in safety resulting from one-way flow of bus traffic through the School grounds and noted the increased capacity for on-site parking and the plans for landscaping with native species.

Highway Authority advises that the proposal meets the County Council's parking standard and satisfactorily formalises the current informal car parking areas. The swept path analysis demonstrates that the vehicular movements at the new access point can be delivered. Conditions are recommended related to the provision of a wheel-wash facility, the new access not to be used until its construction has been completed in accordance with the plans and the new access not to be used until parking areas have been approved in accordance with the plan and thereafter retained. The School is advised to consider a School Travel Plan and to contact the School Travel Plan co-ordinator at the County Council for details.

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

East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011; Policies: S1 (b) (sustainable development), TR3 (accessibility), EN1 (environment), W10 (construction waste)

Lewes District Local Plan 2003: Policies: ST3 (design, form and setting of development), T8 (pedestrian routes and traffic calming)

East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Waste Local Plan 2006: Policy WLP11 (construction waste).

The East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Waste Local Plan was adopted and came into force on 21 February 2006. Currently there is a High Court Challenge to parts of the Plan.

#### **6. Considerations**

## **I. Need**

Policy TR3 of the Structure Plan requires development proposals to provide for the demand for access they create while Policy T8 of the Lewes District Local Plan provides for the granting of planning permission where it is required for traffic calming measures designed to increase road safety, to improve conditions for pedestrians and to enhance the environment provided that the works have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area and the amenities of local residents.

The School's large catchment area and relatively rural location means that there is little scope for people to access the site by any means other than by car and bus. The Highway Authority has recommended that the School consider a School Travel Plan but it is recognized that this is likely to be limited in its content. The School currently does not have enough formal car-parking spaces for its needs and the Highway Authority has confirmed that the proposal meets the County Council's parking standard.

A large number of buses serve the School each day. The applicant has informed me that the current access arrangements at the School necessitate extensive maneuvering of the buses, as they enter through one access, park in chevron bays and then reverse out of the bays to leave through another access. This requires extensive supervision by School staff but also presents a potential health and safety hazard. The proposed scheme will result in an increased parking area for buses, arranged in staggered bays in two rows. The new area will be of a size capable of accommodating all the buses that serve the School each day, therefore avoiding any potential obstructions on the highway created by buses waiting on Mill Lane to enter the site. The provision of a new access and the designation of the whole parking area as one-way will mean that buses enter the site through the new access, park in the new area to allow children to get on or off and then continue forward through the vehicle movement area to leave through the designated exit. This means that there will be no need for the buses to reverse at any point which I consider will improve safety at the School. The School has stated that supervision by staff of children boarding the buses will continue with the new scheme.

Chailey Parish Council offer their support to the proposal subject to the County Council's assessment of the adequacy of manoeuvring room for buses entering the proposed new entrance in Mill Lane and consideration of the displacement effect on parking in Mill Lane caused by double yellow line restrictions near the new entrance. The applicant has provided a drawing with the application demonstrating that coaches entering the site's new and existing entrances and leaving the via the exit have sufficient room for manoeuvring. I do not consider that the provision of the new access will have a significant effect on parking provision in Mill Lane, as parking is currently not allowed on the length of road that is likely to be affected by the access. Indeed, the proposal is likely to have a beneficial effect on the parking situation on this stretch of Mill Lane as the number of vehicles associated with the School having to park on Mill Lane rather than within the School site is likely to be reduced as more parking spaces become available within the site. The Highway Authority has not raised an objection to the proposal.

I consider that the proposed alterations to the car and bus parking areas will lead to improved levels of safety around and within the School grounds, and reduce congestion on Mill Lane from vehicles associated with the School. The provision of zebra crossings, wide footpaths, dropped kerbs and 'Give Way' signs will create a safer environment for pedestrians. The proposal therefore accords with Policy TR3 of the Structure Plan and Policy T8 of the Lewes District Local Plan as it will reduce the impact of traffic associated with the School, it is appropriate for the School, road safety and conditions for pedestrians will be improved and the local environment will be enhanced.

## **II. Siting and Design**

Policy EN1 of the Structure Plan requires development to sustain, conserve and, where possible, enhance the character, local diversity and quality of the landscape and natural and built environment. Policy ST3 of the Lewes District Local Plan requires development to (a) respect the overall scale, height, massing, alignment, site coverage, density, landscaping, character, rhythm and layout of neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally, (b) use materials of a quality, type, colour and design which is appropriate to the character of the local area and (g) incorporate hard and soft landscaping in spaces around buildings to enhance and complement new development where appropriate and to maximise wildlife potential.

The frontage to the western part of Chailey School is rather drab, with large areas of hard-standing and the tendency of many cars to park informally all over the site within School hours. The eastern part of the frontage benefits from a substantial hedgerow along the front boundary and a number of trees which provide some screening of the School buildings from Mill Lane.

Although the proposal will result in the removal of an area of grass, two trees and part of the hedgerow in the east of the site, I do not consider that this will have an unacceptable visual impact as the majority of the hedgerow and trees will be retained and the new paved area will be screened to a large extent by the hedge. Two additional trees will be planted close to the new access which I consider an appropriate compensatory measure for the proposed loss of two existing trees.

In the west of the site, landscaped areas will be enhanced by the provision of extended areas of grass, the formation of mounds and extra shrub and tree planting. I consider that the formalization of the car-parking area and associated measures will also have a beneficial visual impact.

To the west of School buildings, an area of grass will be removed and replaced with a new surface of gravel-filled plastic cells to form a new area of car-parking. I consider this to be acceptable because it will not be readily visible from public view, there is a further, much larger area of grass beyond the section to be removed and the applicant is proposing further tree planting on the site's eastern boundary which will assist in screening the new car-park from nearby residential properties. Trees and shrubs will also be planted on the southern boundary of the new car-park to screen it from the School playing field.

Overall, the amount of grass-cover and other vegetation that will be removed from the site to facilitate this development is not significant, and the provision of the proposed landscaping features will result in an improved visual environment. The proposal is therefore in accordance with Policy EN1 of the Structure Plan and Policy ST3 of the Lewes District Local Plan. However, the applicant has not provided a detailed planting plan with the application so I will be recommending the imposition of a condition requiring full landscaping details.

### **III. Effect on Residential Amenity**

Policy S1 (b) of the Structure Plan requires development to minimise impact on the environment, including residential areas, while Policy ST3 (c) and (d) of the Lewes District Local Plan requires development to respect the amenities of adjoining properties in terms of noise, privacy, natural daylight, visual amenities and smell and to ensure that development does not result in detriment to the character or the amenities of the area through increased traffic levels, congestion or hazards, noise levels and other environmental considerations.

The School is bordered to its east and west by housing and there is also housing opposite the site on the northern side of Mill Lane. The proposed development will result in an increased parking area for buses, which the applicant informs me is sufficient to accommodate all the buses that serve the School each day at the same time. This will reduce the likelihood of School buses having to wait on Mill Lane before entering the site, thereby reducing congestion and the associated noise and pollution. This is likely to have a

beneficial effect on the amenity of residents of this part of Mill Lane. The proposed increased number of car-parking spaces within the site should also reduce the instance of cars associated with the School having to park on Mill Lane. This is also likely to reduce congestion and its associated effects, benefiting nearby residents.

The new access is proposed on the opposite side of the road and to the east of housing on Mill Lane. As this access will only be used by School buses at the beginning and end of each day and will be closed at all other times, I consider that its provision will cause no unacceptable loss of amenity to nearby residents. The property bordering the site to the east is located approximately 110 metres from the proposed new access and I consider that there will be no effect on the amenity of occupiers of this property.

The proposed new car-parking area to the west of School buildings is adjacent to the site's western boundary, on the other side of which is housing. Access to this car park is along the area's eastern side, thereby reducing the potential for disturbance to the residents of these dwellings from cars entering or leaving the car-park. The applicant is proposing to increase planting on the western boundary to screen the car-park from the adjacent housing. I consider that the provision of this planting will ensure that the proposed new car-parking area has no unacceptable effect on residential amenity.

The imposition of a condition limiting the construction times will ensure that the construction of the proposed development will have no unacceptable impact on residential amenity. The proposal is therefore in accordance with Policy S1 (b) of the Structure Plan and Policy ST3 of the Lewes District Local Plan.

#### **IV. Waste Minimisation**

Policy W10 of the Structure Plan seeks a reduction in the amount of construction industry waste arising in the Plan area through measures including the adoption of construction practices which minimise the use of raw materials and encourage the use of recycled waste, if possible on site. Policy WLP11 of the Waste Local Plan requires all development proposals to have regard to the need to minimise, re-use and recycle waste generated during the construction phase.

An outline Waste Management Plan has been submitted as part of the application, which the applicant informs me will be further developed by the main contractor at tender stage. The Plan details that the small amount of existing verge topsoil affected by the works will be reused within the site confines for new landscaped areas. No topsoil will be removed from site. Any excess waste generated by the project will be removed from site by registered waste carriers to approved local tips. With approval, any usable materials from the excavation will be set aside and reused elsewhere on site and only excess waste will be removed from the site. Any materials not suitable for re-use on site but reusable elsewhere will be separated for recycling at an appropriate recycling plant.

I consider that with the imposition of a condition requiring the submission of a detailed Waste Management Plan, the proposal will accord with the Waste Minimisation requirements set out by Policy W10 of the Structure Plan and Policy WLP11 of the Waste Local Plan.

#### **7. Conclusion and reasons for approval**

In accordance with Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 the decision on this application should be taken in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The proposal will result in a visual improvement on the existing frontage of Chailey School and improved levels of safety for vehicle users and pedestrians on and around the site. The number of car-parking spaces will be increased to a more suitable level and there will be no unacceptable effect on the local environment or residential amenity.

The proposal complies with Policies S1 (b), TR3, EN1 and W10 of the East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011, with Policy WLP11 of the East Sussex and Brighton and Hove Waste Local Plan 2006 and with Policies ST3 and T8 of the Lewes District Local Plan 2003.

There are no other material considerations and the decision should be taken in accordance with the Development Plan.

## **8. Recommendation**

### **8.1 To grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:-**

1. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.

2. Development shall not commence until a detailed Waste Management Plan has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Director of Transport and Environment. All works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan.

Reason: To minimise the amount of construction and demolition waste generated on site in accordance with Policy W10 of the East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011 and Policy WLP11 of the East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Waste Local Plan 2006.

3. Development shall not commence until details of wheel washing facilities have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Director of Transport and Environment. The approved details shall be implemented in full before the commencement of development and the facilities shall be maintained in working order during the construction period and shall be used by any vehicle carrying mud, dust or other debris on its wheels before leaving the site. No vehicle associated with the development shall leave the site carrying mud, dust or debris.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and the amenity of the locality and to enable the Local Planning Authority to control and regulate the development.

4. Development shall not commence until plans and full details of both hard and soft landscaping works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Director of Transport and Environment. All works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. These details shall include:

#### Hard Landscaping

- Proposed finished levels or contours
- Means of enclosure
- Hard surfacing materials
- Proposals for restoration, where appropriate

#### Soft Landscaping

- Planting plans indicating the position of any planting
- Written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment)
- Schedules of plants, noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate
- Implementation programme

The landscaped areas shall be maintained thereafter.

Reason: To integrate the development effectively into the surrounding environment in accordance with Policies S1 and EN1 of the East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011.

5. All existing trees, notwithstanding the two trees that will be removed to make way for the new access that are likely to be affected by the construction activities shall be protected throughout the development in accordance with BS 5837 – "Trees in relation to construction", and retained during construction.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the locality in accordance with Policies S1 and EN1 of the East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011.

6. No construction process shall be carried out and no deliveries taken to the site other than between the hours of 0800 and 1800 on Mondays to Fridays and 0800 and 1300 on Saturdays and not at any time on Sundays, Bank and Public Holidays without the prior written consent of the Director of Transport and Environment.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of properties in the vicinity of the site in accordance with Policy S1 of the East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011.

7. The new access (labelled 'location A' on plan number 8325/024e) shall not be used until its construction has been completed in accordance with the approved plan number 8325/024e and the specification set out on Form HT407 which is attached to and forms part of this permission.

Reason: To ensure the safety of persons and vehicles entering and leaving the access and proceeding along the highway and in the interests of the amenity of the locality.

#### Informatives:

The School is advised to consider producing a School Travel Plan and to contact the County Council's School Travel Plan Co-ordinator, Andrew Keer on 01273 481542 for information on this.

The applicant is reminded that they must contact the Area Highway Manager at Lewes prior to the commencement of works. The applicant is advised to use the postcard attached to Form HT407 for this purpose.

BOB WILKINS  
Director of Transport and Environment  
13 September 2006

Contact Officer: Holly Bonds Tel.No 01273 481595  
Local Member: Councillor Meg Stroude

#### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011  
Lewes District Local Plan 2003  
East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Waste Local Plan 2006.