

DELEGATED REPORT

Report considered and agreed by Assistant Director (Policy)

..... [redacted] date 15.7.04

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

..... [redacted] date 15th July 04

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

Proposal: **Extension of existing car park.**

Site Address: **Hurst Green Primary School, Hurst Green.**

Application No: **RR/2314/CC**

Applicant: **Director of Education & Libraries and Hurst Green School.**

Key Issues: i) **Impact on visual amenity and the adjacent AONB**
 ii) **Impact on residential amenities**
 iii) **Trees and landscaping**
 iv) **Traffic and transport**
 v) **Loss of playing field**

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 conditions set out in the recommendation.

CONSIDERATION OF RELEVANT PLANNING MATTERS

1. The Site and Surroundings

Hurst Green School is located on the west side of the A21 London Road in Hurst Green at the southern extent of the village. The site is within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). To the east and west of the site is open countryside in agricultural use and the village of Hurst Green is to the north of the site. The site is within the development boundary of the village.

The school occupies a reasonably level site with car parking between the main school building and the A21 London Road and additional parking on the northeast part of the site. Vehicular access to the site is via a 4.4m wide gate on the northeast part of the site with a pedestrian access further south on the eastern boundary adjacent to the school buildings.

There are currently two temporary classrooms on the site located to the north of the main school building on the edge of the school playing field.

The school has 170 pupils (including the nursery), 15 full time staff and 11 part time staff.

2. The Proposal

The applicant seeks planning permission to extend the existing car park to provide a total of 23 parking spaces. The area of the site that would be occupied by the extended car park currently forms part of the school field between the school buildings and the car park.

The application includes the widening of the vehicular access to the school from the A21 and the creation of a new pedestrian access from the A21 at the northeast corner of the site and a pedestrian path to the school buildings.

3. Site History

There have been 3 applications for the retention of the mobile classrooms on the site in the last 10 years. There is no other relevant site history.

4. Consultations and Representations

Rother District Council – No objections

Hurst Green Parish Council – No objections

Environment Agency - No objections

Highways Agency – No objections

Highways Authority– No objections

Sport England – No objections subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the submission of a plan to show the position of pitches on the remaining playing field.

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

East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011: EN1 (The Environment - General), EN2 (AONB's), S1 (Sustainability) and W10 (Construction Industry Waste).

East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Waste Local Plan Second Deposit (April 2002): WLP11 – (Reduction, re-use and recycling of construction waste).

Rother District Local Plan Revised Deposit November 2003: GD1 (Development Principles), DS1 (General Development Strategy)

6. Considerations

Impact on visual amenity and the adjacent AONB

Policy EN2 of the Structure Plan calls for careful control of development to conserve and enhance the landscape quality of the AONB. Policy DS1 of the Rother District Local Plan Revised Deposit requires development to avoid prejudicing the character and qualities of the AONB. Policy GD1 of the Rother District Local Plan Revised Deposit requires development to be compatible with the conservation of the natural beauty of the AONB.

It is considered that the proposed development would not be detrimental to the visual amenities of the surrounding area or the AONB. The works proposed would not be widely visible from outside of the site and would not have a significant effect on the appearance of the AONB. For this reason it is considered that the proposed development accords with the above policies.

Impact on residential amenities

Policy GD1 Rother District Local Plan Revised Deposit requires new development to be in keeping with, and not unreasonably harm, the amenities of adjoining properties.

The proposed extension is not intended to accommodate an increase in the number of pupils at the school and it is therefore considered unlikely that the development would lead to an increase in noise and disturbance to the surrounding residences. The main effect of the development will be to reduce the number of cars parking on the highway at the start and end of the school day. It is considered that this would be beneficial to the residential amenity of neighbouring dwellings as it is likely to reduce congestion on the main road through the village. This will result in a reduction in noise, pollution and general disturbance and the proposal is therefore in accordance with the above policies.

Trees and Landscaping

Policy GD1 Rother District Local Plan Revised Deposit (November 2003) requires new development to incorporate wherever practicable, features that enhance the ecological value of the site.

While no significant landscaping is proposed as part of this development. It is recognised that adequate protection must be provided to the trees on the site that are close to the area. Subject to a condition requiring submission of a detailed scheme of tree protection the proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact on trees and landscaping.

Traffic and Transport

Policy GD1 Rother District Local Plan Revised Deposit (November 2003) requires new development to provide for adequate parking and safe access for all modes of transport.

The proposed extension would increase the number of parking spaces to 23 which is the maximum number recommended for a school of this size. The increased width of the entrance would enable simultaneous entry and exit from the site by motor vehicles. The increase in parking spaces would reduce the number of cars that park on the A21 and is considered desirable in terms of highway safety.

Provision for pedestrians would be greatly improved by the proposed new separate pedestrian entrance and pathway to the school. This will be an improvement in terms of safety and attractiveness for users.

While no cycle parking is being proposed at the school, it is considered that the school's location on a trunk road makes it unsuitable for children to cycle to the site. However, a condition is recommended which requires 2 covered cycle parking spaces for teachers and/or visitors to the school, in accordance with the County Council's guidance. Subject to this condition the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of the likely impact on traffic and transport.

Loss of playing field

PPG17 States that planning permission for development on playing fields should only be allowed where the development only affects land that is incapable of forming a playing pitch (or part of one).

The extension to the car park would occupy 170 M2 of the 5000 M2 playing fields. The land to be used for the car park is currently grassed and used as an overflow car park during the summer. The position of the proposed car park extension between the mobile classrooms and the existing school driveway means that this part of the playing field could not be used for a playing pitch.

There is an 80m running track (straight) and a 40 m long football pitch on the playing field to the west of the site which will not be affected by the proposed car park. There is also sufficient space for another mini pitch to meet the requirements of Sport England. In accordance with the recommendations from Sport England, a condition is recommended

which requires the applicant to submit a plan showing the position of at least two mini pitches on the remaining playing field.

For these reasons it is considered that the loss of part of the playing field is acceptable subject to the above condition.

7. Conclusion and reasons for approval

The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact on visual amenity and the adjacent AONB, impact on residential amenities, trees and landscaping, traffic, transport and loss of playing field subject to conditions. It is therefore considered to be in accordance with policies EN1, EN2, S1, and W10 of the East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011, policy WLP11 of the East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Waste Local Plan Second Deposit (April 2002) and policies GD1 and DS1 of the Rother District Local Plan Revised Deposit November 2003.

There are no material conditions that indicate that planning permission should be refused. Therefore, in accordance with Section 54a of the Town and Country Planning Act, it is recommended that planning permission be granted subject to conditions.

8. Recommendation

Grant Planning Permission subject to the following conditions:

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

Reason: To comply with Section 91 Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. No development shall take place until a scheme showing the specification and position of fencing and of any other measures to be taken for the protection of trees adjacent to the car park from damage before or during the course of development has been approved in writing by the Director of Transport and Environment and has been completed in full accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: In the interests of protecting the existing trees on the site in accordance with policy GD1 Rother District Local Plan Revised Deposit (November 2003)

3. The development hereby approved shall not be bought into use until a scheme showing the specification and position of two covered and secure cycle parking spaces has been approved in writing by the Director of Transport and Environment and has been completed in full accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: In the interests of promoting alternative modes of transport to the motor car in accordance with policy GD1 Rother District Local Plan Revised Deposit (November 2003).

4. The development hereby approved shall not be bought into use until a plan has been submitted showing the retention of an area of playing field adjacent to the car park that would be capable of accommodating two mini football pitches including their safety margins suitable for Under 8's in accordance with Sport England's Guidance.

Reason: To ensure the protection of the remainder of the existing playing field in order that it may be utilised to its maximum capacity to comply with Planning Policy Guidance PPG17.

BOB WILKINS
Director of Transport and Environment
15 July 2004

Policy:

Contact Officer: Luke Carter Tel.No. 01273 481833
Local Member: Councillor Barnes

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011,
East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Waste Local Plan Second Deposit (April 2002)
Rother District Local Plan Revised Deposit November 2003.
Planning Policy Guidance Note 17