

SECTION D
DEVELOPMENT TO BE CARRIED OUT BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL

Background Documents - the deposited documents, views and representations received as referred to in the reports and included in the development proposal dossier for each case and also as might be additionally indicated.

Item D1

New teaching block, community room building, minor extensions, revised car parking, replacement playground and flood risk compensation work at Headcorn Primary School, Headcorn.

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 17 April 2007.

Application by Kent County Council Children, Families & Education Committee for a proposed new single storey teaching block extension, comprising 4 no. classrooms, associated toilets and cloakroom areas. New build community room building, minor extensions to a classroom and the staff room, internal remodelling of admin areas, revised car parking provision, replacement playground area, and flood risk compensation works to playing field at Headcorn Primary School, Kings Road, Headcorn. (Ref: MA/06/1892)

Recommendation: Permission be granted subject to conditions.

Local Member(s): Sir Sandy Bruce-Lockhart OBE

Classification: Unrestricted

Site

1. Headcorn Primary School is located to the north of Kings Road, situated to the north west of the village of Headcorn. The school site is split to the north and south of Hogg Stream, which runs east to west across the site. The existing school buildings, and the village library and care takers house, together with parking areas and the majority of the school's hard play areas, lie to the south of the stream. To the north of the stream lies the school playing field area, which includes a junior sized football pitch, a large additional grassed area and a rectangular shaped macadam surfaced play area. This area is connected to the school buildings by two bridges over the Hogg Stream. The existing Victorian school building lies at the eastern end of the school site, which is somewhat remote from, although connected to, the main part of the school at the western side of the site. Pedestrian and vehicular access to the site is currently off Kings Road, although there is a vehicular gated access to the school from Brooklands, to the east of the site. The site is bounded by residential properties to the east and west, with facing residential properties and a village green to the south.
2. The whole of the school site is within a Special Landscape Area, with open fields extending to the north. In addition, the site is within the 1% annual probability floodplain of Hogg Stream (1 in 100 year). A site plan is attached.

Background

3. It has been considered that the Victorian school buildings, and the school land to the rear of these buildings, should be disposed of to the residential market, and the proceeds used to fund the replacement accommodation and alteration works on the main school site. A planning application has, therefore, been submitted to Maidstone Borough Council for the conversion of the Victorian school building into

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four residential apartments, with a further 10 new build residential units proposed on the land to the rear. The existing library and caretaker's house would remain unaffected by the proposals.

4. Minor amendments have been made to this proposal in order to retain trees of high value and worth, and to protect biodiversity interests on site. It is the amended proposal that will be discussed throughout this report.

Proposal

5. This application has been submitted by Kent County Council Children, Families & Education and envisages that the disposal of the Victorian school building, and associated rear playground, would facilitate the provision of replacement accommodation in a new build extension to the western end of the school site. In addition, the existing retained accommodation would be reordered to provide a more logical and structured plan, with some areas extended and/or remodelled.
6. Within the new build accommodation, four new classrooms are proposed, with associated stores and cloakrooms, additional toilet facilities and a new disabled toilet with shower facility. This principal extension to the main school building is intended to be sited upon land to the east of the school, currently an informally laid out car parking area. The extension would allow the junior class bases of the school to be grouped together, and connected back to the school via the remodelled SEN and ICT/library area, which would form the core of the school under this proposal.
7. The administration areas would migrate to the western end of the school buildings, the classrooms formally located here being separated from the remaining accommodation by the school hall. That area is proposed to be modestly extended and remodelled, and the visitor's entrance to the school relocated to be via this newly formed administration area. The visitor's entrance would also adjoin, via a covered link, a new community room, which is proposed to provide an auxiliary teaching space, and a community facility. The existing path at the western edge of the site, accessed from Kings Road, would be renewed to provide pupil access to the site, and also visitor access to the administration accommodation.
8. A new covered canopy is proposed to the eastern side of the existing swimming pool. This would provide visual screening from the proposed residential accommodation (if permitted) on the adjacent site, and also provide an enclosure for possible future conversion into pool changing accommodation.
9. All pedestrian access to the school would be via Kings Road. An existing maintenance access gate would be adjusted to form the main pedestrian access to the western side of the site. This access would also form the visitor's entrance and afford access to the community room. Vehicular access to the site would be split under this proposal, with visitors parking accessed from Kings Road, and staff parking from Brooklands. In addition, a vehicular access is proposed to the school caretakers house, with parking, garaging space and on-site turning provided.
10. Vehicular access to the rear of the site would be accessed from the proposed turning head to be provided as part of the residential housing application. This would be accessed through Brooklands, and would afford access to school staff only, and for school deliveries. There would be no visitor or pedestrian access to the school off this access point, and all pedestrians, whether visitor, staff or pupil would enter the site off

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King's Road. In this way, the applicant suggests that the number of additional pedestrian and vehicular movements to Brooklands would be kept to a minimum, and that this area would not be used as a drop off point due to its lack of proximity to the pedestrian access on Kings Road.

11. The applicant advises that existing buildings on site exhibit markedly different architectural styles, from the original Victorian school with brick and ragstone walls under tiled, pitched roofs, to the later school building with a flat roof, large glazed sections and a mix of panel and brickwork walls. Therefore, it is suggested that the new extension has no strong, consistent reference style with which to identify, and has the opportunity to be contrasting in style with both adjacent buildings, and to be overtly modern. Its recessed siting enhances this opportunity, and the applicant suggests that the proposed building has been conceived as a unifying entity of different and modern styles.
12. The applicant states that it is envisaged that the facing brick employed in the main new extension would be complementary to that in the existing adjacent buildings, and that contrasting highlights of through-colour render would brighten the building appropriately for the age group of pupil occupants. The applicant also considers that a low pitched roof form, in a standing seam metal, would be more advantageous from a maintenance point of view, and would not contrast too severely with the existing forms. The roof form would also be oriented to take advantage of natural daylight, whilst providing large overhanging eaves to the south giving solar shading. Where smaller extensions are proposed to the existing building, these would be in a style and use materials that match the existing. Localised security lighting is proposed to the perimeter of the new building, and to the car parking areas and access routes. It is anticipated that all luminaires would be operated on time switches and be wall mounted around the perimeter of the building or otherwise be upon low level bollards.
13. There are a small number of trees that require to be removed to accommodate the proposed development. An additional hard surfaced area of 1000sq m would be provided on the playing field, to the north of the existing playground, to replace the hard play area 'lost' at the rear of the Victorian school building. In addition to this, flood compensation works are proposed, which require an adjustment to the level of the playing fields. However, the applicant does not consider either of these works to be detrimental to the delivery of the school curriculum with regards to playing field provision.
14. As the proposed accommodation is replacement accommodation, the school roll would not increase as a result of this application. In addition, it is not anticipated that the new facilities would be used for any other purpose than in direct connection with the school curriculum, and community use of the school hall and community room.
15. An Ecological Scoping Survey was submitted with this application, which concluded that the possible presence of several protected species on site, including bats, reptiles, great crested newts and birds, should be taken into account prior to any development at the site. The applicant has undertaken and submitted further survey work, which has confirmed the presence of slow worms on land at Headcorn Primary School.
16. This application is also accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment, which states that the proposed school extension would be set at a level of 20.800, 100mm above the assumed year 2000 flood level. The existing floodplain storage volumes of the Hogg Stream would be improved by the lowering of the playing field (as referred to in paragraph 13) by a nominal 200mm at the opposite side of the stream. The Flood Risk

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Assessment concludes that the flood plain storage volume would be improved by a net volume gain of 128.5m³.

Reduced copies of the submitted drawings showing the site layout, elevations and floor plans are attached.

Planning Policy

17. The Development Plan Policies summarised below are relevant to the consideration of the application:

(i) **The Kent & Medway Structure Plan: Adopted 2006:**

Policy SP1 - Seeks to conserve and enhance Kent's environment and ensure a sustainable pattern of development.

Policy QL1 – Seeks to conserve and enhance the environment through the quality of development and design.

Policy QL12- Provision will be made for the development of local services, including schools, in existing residential areas. Flexibility in the use of buildings for mixed community uses, and the concentration of sports facilities at schools, will be encouraged.

Policy EN5 – The primary objective of designating Special Landscape Areas is the protection, conservation and enhancement of the quality of their landscapes, whilst having regard to the need to facilitate the social and economic well-being of the communities situated within them.

Policy EN8 - Wildlife habitats and species will be protected, conserved and enhanced. Development likely to have an adverse effect, directly, indirectly or cumulatively, on important habitats or species, will not be permitted unless the adverse impact on an important nature conservation resource can be adequately mitigated and/or compensated.

Policy EN9 - Tree cover and the hedgerow network should be maintained. Additionally, they should be enhanced where this would improve the landscape, biodiversity, or link existing woodland habitats.

Policy TP19 - Development proposals must comply with the respective vehicle parking policies and standards adopted by Kent County Council and Medway Council.

Policy NR10 – Where development is necessary in areas at risk from flooding it should be designed and controlled to mitigate the impact of flood risk.

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(iii) Maidstone Borough Local Plan: Adopted December 2000

Policy ENV2 – Planning permission will not be granted for development in the defined urban area and village settlements unless:

- (1) proposals relate sympathetically to the context provided by their setting and by adjoining buildings with regards to scale, height, proportion, detailing and materials, building frontages, topography, public views, landmark buildings, existing landscape features, highways and car parking; and
- (2) due regard is given to the reasonable enjoyment of their properties by neighbouring occupiers.

Policy ENV5- Development will not be permitted if it would result in the destruction of, or damage to, one or more trees which make a significant contribution to the amenities of the locality, the character or quality of the landscape, or to habitat quality or biodiversity, unless a number of criteria are met.

Policy ENV6 – In appropriate cases, the Borough Council will require a landscape scheme, including surfacing and boundary treatments, to be carried out as part of development proposals.

Policy ENV34 – In Special Landscape Areas particular attention will be given to the protection and conservation of the scenic quality and distinctive character of the area and priority will be given to the landscape over other planning considerations.

Policy ENV40 – If features of nature conservation interest are discovered, planning permission will not be granted for development unless the development would not harm those features, the features will be protected from harm either in situ or by transfer to another habitat, or the importance of the development outweighs the value of the features.

Policy ENV50 – Within the floodplains or in areas at risk from flooding, new development, the intensification of existing development, or land raising which would exacerbate flooding, will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that compensating storage can be provided.

Policy T13 - The Borough Council will adopt parking standards for all new development, generally to ensure minimum provision.

Consultations

18. **Maidstone Borough Council:** no written comments received to date.

Headcorn Parish Council: raises no objections and wishes that the application be permitted.

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Natural England: raises no objection to the proposal subject to the imposition of conditions, including that the recommendations of the ecological surveys be adhered to, protection of nesting birds and the inclusion of biodiversity enhancement measures. Natural England is satisfied that the mitigation as proposed appears sufficient to maintain local reptile populations and, therefore, subject to the works being conducted in accordance with the mitigation strategy, Natural England has no further comments to make.

Biodiversity Officer: the applicants should follow their ecologist's recommendations and mitigation plans that they have commissioned for this application. The method statement and proposed mitigation for reptiles is adequate, and all recommendations such as exclusion fencing, re-surveying work, any trapping that is needed, and the retention and management of the receptor site, must be adhered to and form conditions on the planning consent.

Landscape Advisor: comments as follows:

'The school extension proposed is in scale with the existing buildings and is of an appropriate contemporary design. I am satisfied that it would not, in itself, result in any significant adverse or landscape impacts.'

'The revised submission addresses earlier concerns with regards to tree protection, level information and car park design/layout. Therefore, we have no further comments to make.'

'Due to the amount of proposed planting, it would be acceptable to provide the detailed planting plan as a condition to planning approval.'

The Environment Agency: raises no objection providing the applicant adheres to the recommendations and details as outlined in the submitted Flood Risk Assessment. The Agency requests conditions be placed on any subsequent decision regarding surface water drainage works, floor levels of the main extension and protection of ground water supplies.

Divisional Transportation Manager: raises no objection to the proposal subject to the imposition of conditions covering disposal of surface waters, use of a properly consolidated surface and safeguarding of parking provision.

Kent Police Architectural Liaison Officer: following discussions with the School and the Architects, agreed that the issues discussed are not insurmountable and that Secured by Design status can be achieved. A number of suggestions are made, including the use of external lighting and CCTV.

Sport England: raises no objection to this proposal.

Local Member

19. The local County Member, Sir Sandy Bruce-Lockhart OBE, was notified of the application on the 10 October 2006.

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Publicity

20. The application was publicised by the posting of a site notice, and the individual notification of 47 nearby properties.

Representations

21. 6 letters of representation have been received to date, regarding the original proposal. The main comments/points of concern can be summarised as follows:

- No objection to the extension to the school buildings, but School land should not be sold off for housing to finance new facilities. It is very short sighted.
- Headcorn is due to expand in the next 20 years, which will require more school places, in turn requiring a larger school with extra facilities and more land.
- Two storey development should be used instead of single storey in order that land areas be conserved.
- This proposal moves the pedestrian entrance 100 metres closer to the Kings Road/Maidstone Road crossroads which is a danger to road users.
- Residents suffer with parents parking along Kings Road, blocking the road and individual accesses to properties.
- Suggestion is made that a one way drop off system should be developed, with access from Brooklands and egress onto Kings Road.
- Access through Brooklands will put more strain on a narrow road, in a bad state of repair, which is already overused.
- If building on the flood plain is to be allowed then an alternative way of providing floodplain compensation should be found. It is suggested that removing topsoil from the playing field would make land in the adjacent field unstable, due to the drop in levels, contrary to DEFRA requirements, and their soil erosion policy. It would also eliminate the possibility of having flat land suitable for a sports field. In addition, the County Council spent a large amount of money on draining the playing field only a few months ago.
- Development in the floodplain should not be permitted.
- It is suggested that an alternative site for a new school be found on the outskirts of the village.

No letters of representation have been received to date with regards to the revised submission.

Discussion

22. In considering this proposal regard must be had to the Development Plan policies outlined in paragraph (17) above. Section 38(6) of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act states that applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Therefore, this proposal needs to be considered in the context of the Development Plan Policies, Government Guidance and other material planning considerations arising from consultation and publicity. Issues of particular relevance include impact upon residential and local amenity, highway implications, and possible effects on the local environment, particularly flooding, effect on trees and biodiversity concerns.

23. Policies SP1 and QL1 of the Adopted Kent and Medway Structure Plan, and Policy ENV2 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan seek to conserve and enhance the environment and require development to be well designed and respect its setting. This

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is particularly relevant to this site which is within a Special Landscape Area, the primary objective of which is the protection, conservation and enhancement of landscape quality. Policy ENV34 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan states that priority will be given to the landscape over other planning considerations.

Siting and Design

24. Policy ENV2 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan states that planning permission will not be granted for development in village settlements unless proposals relate sympathetically to the context provided by their setting and by adjoining buildings with regards to scale, height, proportion, detailing and materials, building frontages, topography, public views, landmark buildings, existing landscape features, highways and car parking. In addition, due regard must be given to the reasonable enjoyment of their properties by neighbouring occupiers. Headcorn Primary School is located within a village settlement and, therefore, this proposal needs to be considered in relation to Policy ENV2 and the criteria set out within that policy.
25. As detailed earlier in this report, this application envisages that the disposal of the Victorian school building, and associated rear playground, would facilitate the provision of replacement accommodation in a new build extension to the centre of the existing school site. In addition, the existing retained accommodation would be reordered to provide a more logical and structured plan, with some areas extended and/or remodelled. The new build extension would accommodate four new classrooms, with associated stores and cloakrooms, additional toilet facilities and a new disabled toilet with shower facility. This would be the largest form of new build development, and would be sited upon an existing informally laid out car parking area. Other minor extensions are proposed which would facilitate an internal reorganisation of the school, including the relocation of the administration areas, and visitor's entrance, to the western side of the site. The visitor's entrance would adjoin, via a covered link, a new community room, which is proposed to provide auxiliary teaching space and a community facility.
26. The new build four classroom extension is proposed to the centre of the existing school site. However, should disposal of the land at the east of the site for residential development be successful, the extension would be located on the new school boundary. However, the existing Victorian School building would be located to the east of the proposed extension, and the caretakers house would remain as existing, forming a barrier between the school and the proposed housing development. The single storey extension would be recessed from the road frontage, separated from Kings Road by a new parking area and existing trees and boundary planting. The site is well screened from the road frontage, and the extension, with its low pitched roof form, is in scale with the existing buildings. In addition, the minor extensions within the school site are adjacent to existing built development and do not extend outside of the built confines of the school. The proposed community room is small scale and well screened, and although adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site, would not impact upon neighbouring properties, or be widely visible from the site frontage. However, in order to protect the amenities of the locality, details of the intended use of the community room would be required under planning condition, should permission be granted.
27. The applicant advises that the existing buildings on site exhibit markedly different architectural styles, and that the new extension has no strong consistent reference style with which to identify. This has enabled the new extension to be overtly modern in style, designed to take full advantage of natural light, whilst providing large overhanging eaves to the south to give solar shading. The applicant proposes that the facing brick employed

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in the main new extension would be complementary to that in the existing adjacent buildings, and that contrasting highlights of through-colour render would brighten the building appropriately for the age group of pupil occupants. It is also considered that the use of a low-pitched standing seam metal roof would be more advantageous from a maintenance point of view, whilst not contrasting with existing built forms. Where smaller extensions are proposed to the existing building these would use materials to match the existing, which I consider to be appropriate for this scale of development. Our Landscape Advisor is satisfied that the proposed development would not result in any significant adverse or landscape impacts.

28. Therefore, I consider that provided it is conditioned that no works commence on site until the details of all materials to be used externally are submitted and approved, any potential visual intrusion or harm to the local area would be minimised. In addition, I consider that the siting and massing of the proposed new build elements of the scheme are of a size and scale that is appropriate to the context of the site, and are designed in a way which complements, rather than competes, with existing buildings. Therefore, I consider that this proposal is acceptable in terms of siting, massing and design and accords with the general principles of Local Development Plan Policies.

Highway Implications

29. Local residents have expressed concern over the impact that this proposal could have on the local highway network. This application proposes that all pedestrian access to the school would be via Kings Road. An existing maintenance access gate would be adjusted to form the main pedestrian access, to the western side of the site. This access would also form the visitor's entrance, and would afford access to the community room. Vehicular access to the site would be split under this proposal, with visitor's parking accessed from Kings Road, and staff parking from Brooklands. Vehicular parking to the rear of the site would be accessed from the proposed turning head to be provided as part of the residential housing development, and would afford access to school staff and school deliveries only. Although not currently an access for school car parking, Brooklands is currently used as a pick up/drop off point for pupils. As all pedestrian access would be via a new access point to the west of the site on the Kings Road frontage, I consider it unlikely that Brooklands would be used as a pick up/drop off point should planning permission be granted. Therefore, although vehicular through traffic in Brooklands could increase as a result of this proposal, I consider that traffic associated with school peak times would not utilise Brooklands to the extent that currently occurs.
30. Currently all vehicular access to the site is via the single access on Kings Road, which is also the current pedestrian access point. This proposal would relocate staff parking and school deliveries to Brooklands, and allow only visitor car parking to be accessed from Kings Road. This should help to alleviate current traffic congestion associated with peak school hours. In addition, pedestrian access and vehicular access to the school would be separated under this proposal, alleviating existing safety concerns. The Divisional Transportation Manager raises no objection to this proposal subject to the imposition of conditions covering the disposal of surface waters, the use of a properly consolidated surface and the safeguarding of parking provision. Staff and pupil numbers would not change as a result of this application as the new accommodation would merely replace the current accommodation to be disposed of for residential dwellings. Therefore, I consider that this proposal would not have an unacceptable impact upon the local highway network, and furthermore, current traffic congestion and conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians could be alleviated as a result of the proposed access changes.

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31. Construction of the development would have an impact on the local highway network by way of construction traffic and associated vehicles. Unfortunately, the construction of any development does have short term impacts upon the local highway and this cannot be avoided. However, the impact can be minimised through the imposition of suitable conditions. Therefore, should Members be minded to permit, conditions would be imposed to ensure that construction traffic does not enter/egress the site at peak school times and that mud and debris is not deposited on the local highway.

Flooding

32. As outlined in paragraphs 1 and 16 above, Headcorn Primary School lies within the 1% annual probability floodplain of Hogg Stream (1 in 100 year), and therefore the application was accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment. Under PPS25 (Planning & Floodrisk), the risk based Sequential Test should be applied at all stages of planning. Its aim is to steer new development to areas at the lowest probability of flooding (Zone 1). Headcorn Primary School is within Flood Zone 3a. To address the sequential test the proposal and the existing school would need to be relocated to an alternative site outside of the flood zone risk areas. There are no reasonable available sites within Flood Zone 1 or 2 that could accommodate the development, given the need to locate the facilities on the existing school site. Therefore the suitability of the site, within Flood Zone 3a, for further development must be considered against the 'Exception Test'.
33. Flood Zone 3a is a zone of high probability, assessed as having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of flooding. Non residential uses for educational establishments is classified as 'more vulnerable' under the Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification, a use which should only be permitted in Zone 3a if the Exception Test is passed. For the Exception Test to be passed, three criteria must be fulfilled. First, it must be demonstrated that the development provides wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweighs flood risk. In this instance, to provide improved school facilities on an alternative site to the existing school would not offer a sustainable solution. Secondly, the development should be on 'developable previously developed' land. The proposed development is within the existing confines of the school site, and in the most part is sited upon existing areas of hardstanding. Therefore, the precedent for built development has been set. Lastly, a Flood Risk Assessment must demonstrate that the development would be safe, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and where possible would reduce risk overall.
34. The Flood Risk Assessment submitted with this application states that the existing site levels range from approximately 21.600 AOD at the extreme north west corner of the playing field and south east corner of the school site, to 19.400 AOD at the stream banks. The existing school building is at 2 levels, the nearest block to the road having a finished floor level of approximately 20.700 AOD, with the school hall to the rear being at approximately 20.400 AOD. The proposed school extension would be set at a level of 20.800 AOD, 100mm above the assumed year 2000 flood level.
35. In addition, the applicant proposes to lower the level of the school playing field by a nominal 200mm on the opposite side of the stream to the school buildings. The Flood Risk Assessment concludes that this would improve the floodplain storage volumes by a net volume gain of 128.5m³. The fact that the new buildings would be set higher than the 1 in a 100 year flood level, and that there would be a net gain of flood plain storage has led to the Environment Agency raising no objection to this application. Therefore, the third criteria of the exception test has also been met. I am satisfied that subject to

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the imposition of a condition requiring the applicant to adhere to the recommendations and details set out in the Flood Risk Assessment, that the proposed development would not be at high risk from flooding, or exacerbate current flood risk. The development therefore accords with the thrust of Kent & Medway Structure Plan Policy NR10, and Maidstone Borough Local Plan Policy ENV50, both of which require development in areas at risk of flooding to be designed and controlled to mitigate the impact of flood risk, and/or demonstrate that compensation storage can be provided. In addition, conditions could also control surface water drainage works, floor levels of the main extension and protection of ground water supplies.

Biodiversity

36. The ecological scoping survey submitted with this application identified that the site had the potential to host a number of protected species and, therefore, recommended that further survey work be undertaken. The subsequent Herpetofauna Survey concluded that the Headcorn Primary School site supports a low population of slow worms, and may be visited by transient grass snakes. In response to this, a Reptile Mitigation Method Statement was prepared and submitted, which sets out the mitigation and compensation works that would be undertaken in order to protect the slow worm population. Natural England and the County Biodiversity Officer conclude that the mitigation as proposed appears sufficient to maintain local reptile populations. Therefore, I consider that subject to the imposition of conditions to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the Mitigation Method Statement, the development would not have a detrimental effect on local reptile populations and that any impacts upon protected species would be effectively mitigated against.

Trees

37. The applicant has submitted a full Tree Survey with this application and has confirmed that 4 trees would be removed as a result of the proposed development, one to accommodate the car parking to the rear, two as a result of the classroom block and one to the front of the site, to accommodate visitor car parking. These trees are a Whitebeam, two Cherry trees and a Field Maple. Our Landscape Advisor expressed initial concerns over the removal of mature trees from the rear of the school to accommodate the car parking area, namely a Lime Tree which is classified in the highest category and contributes greatly to the street scene. Subsequent amendments to the layout of the car park have facilitated the retention of the Lime Tree, and it is now proposed to remove only 1 tree from this area of the site. Following the amendments to the site layout, and submission of details relating to tree protection and site levels, our Landscape Advisor has no objections to the application and is satisfied that every effort has been made to retain trees of significant value and worth. In addition to this, should Members be minded to permit, a landscaping scheme would be required under condition, which would require details of tree protection measures for existing trees on site, and the provision of additional planting. This would aid in mitigating any adverse impacts that the removal of the 4 trees may have, and would ensure that the Lime Tree, and other important trees to be retained are protected throughout the duration of works on site.

Conclusion

38. In summary, I consider that there are special circumstances to justify the proposed development within a Special Landscape Area. Overall, I consider that the siting and design of the proposed extension would not have a detrimental effect on the amenity of

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local residents or the character and appearance of the Special Landscape Area. Overall, I consider that the design solution proposed is a sensitive approach to the landscape aspects relevant to this particular location. Subject to the imposition of conditions, I am of the opinion that the proposed development would not give rise to any material harm and is otherwise in accordance with the principles of the relevant Development Plan Policies. Therefore, I recommend that permission be granted subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

Recommendation

39. I RECOMMEND that PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED SUBJECT TO conditions, including conditions covering:

- the standard time limit;
- the development to be carried out in accordance with the permitted details;
- external materials to be submitted for approval;
- details of use of the community room;
- details of the surfacing of the car parking areas;
- a scheme of landscaping, its implementation and maintenance;
- tree protection methods;
- works to be carried out in accordance with the reptile Mitigation Method Statement;
- protection of nesting birds;
- works to be carried out in accordance with the Flood Risk Assessment;
- details of surface water drainage;
- details of finished floor levels;
- hours of working during construction;
- prevention of access for construction vehicles at peak school times;
- prevention of mud being deposited on the highway;

Case officer – Mary Green	01622 221066
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Background documents - See section heading
