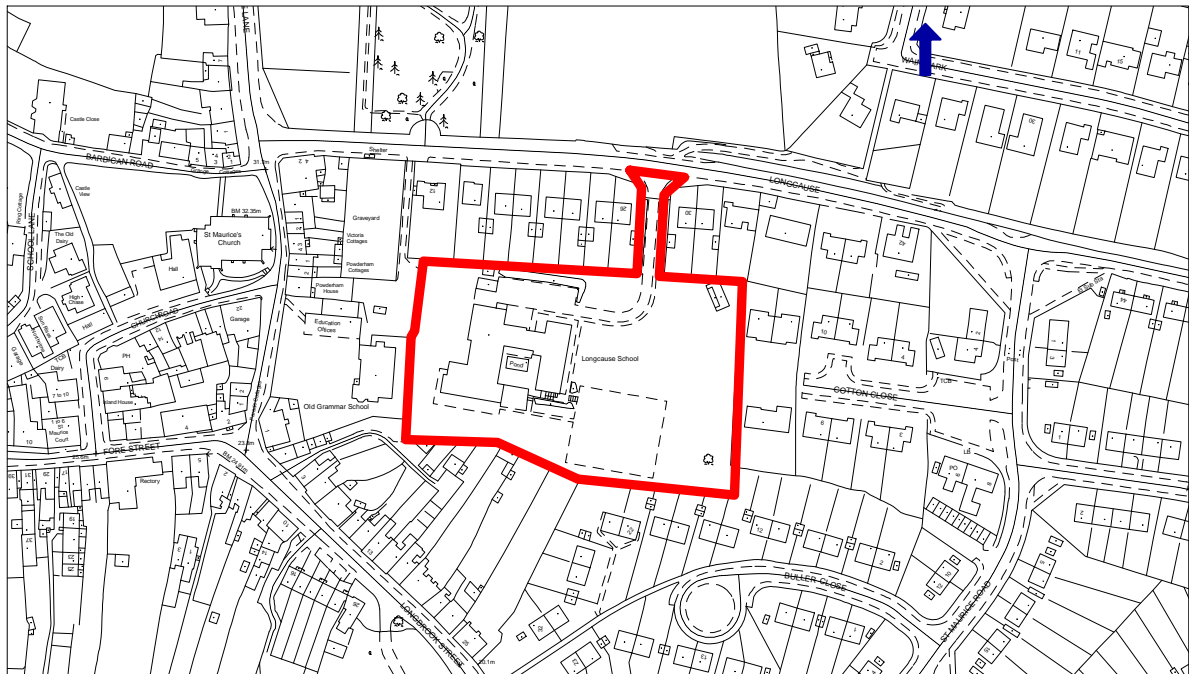


ITEM: 06

Application Number: 10/00010/FUL
Applicant: Mr Mike Jelly
Description of Application: Construction and erection of covered multi-use games area
Type of Application: Outline Application
Site Address: LONGCAUSE SCHOOL, LONGCAUSE PLYMOUTH
Ward: Plympton Erle
Valid Date of Application: 08/01/2010
8/13 Week Date: **05/03/2010**
Decision Category: Member referral
Case Officer : Jon Fox
Recommendation: Grant Conditionally
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OFFICERS REPORT

Site Description

Longcause School is situated on the south side of Longcause and is a pocket of non-residential use set within and surrounded by residential property on all four sides. The adjoining land to the south west and west is within the Plympton St. Maurice Conservation Area and the nearest listed building to the site is the old Plympton Grammar School. The land to the east is characterised by more modern semi-detached and detached residential property. The location of the school is therefore one that straddles the divide between the historic village to the west and the further spread of more modern development to the east. The southern boundary of the school land is several metres above the rear gardens of semi-detached bungalows in Buller Close and the terrace in Longbrook Street; the former having short gardens and the latter with much long gardens.

Proposal Description

Construction and erection of covered multi-use games area. The proposed sports facility would serve the existing school, other local schools and also provide for out-of-school activities for the local community. The proposed building is 17 metres wide by 24.3 metres long and its long axis runs north/south adjacent to the eastern side of the existing school buildings, which is currently the site of a hard surfaced games area. The building has been designed with an asymmetrical curved roof with five, curved timber beam extensions that give the appearance of extending the curved roof down to ground level. The building scales approximately 13.4 metres from the southern boundary of the site and is in line with adjacent school building. The semi-detached bungalows beyond the southern boundary are below the level of the school land.

Relevant Planning History

In recent years the school had significant new buildings erected on the southern side of the site. More recently a proposal for the construction and erection of a covered multi-use sports facility was withdrawn (application 09/00710) amid concerns about the building's size, design and impact on neighbours.

Consultation Responses

Highway Authority

Transport accept that the proposed sports facility would give rise to a small number of additional vehicle movements, but consider that this is not enough to have a significant impact on the highway network. They have also commented on the sub-standard accessway to the school, car parking and the school travel plan. Transport therefore has no objections subject to conditions requiring the submission of a staff travel plan and a code of practice. Informative notes are also recommended regarding improvements to the school access and the formal marking out of the car parking area in the north-west corner of the site.

Public Protection Service

Has no objection subject to the submission of a code of practice.

Police Architectural Liaison Officer

The Devon and Cornwall Constabulary are not opposed to the granting of planning permission.

Representations

22 letters were received. 19 letters raise the following objections:-

1. The development will increase the amount of traffic visiting the school.
2. The proposed use of the building will lead to vehicles being parked on the adjoining roads causing obstruction and restricting the use of the highway, as well being prejudicial to highway safety by virtue of inconsiderate parking that restricts access and visibility. Extra traffic will also cause noise and pollution.
3. The roads around the site are not capable of accommodating the extra traffic without causing more congestion and damage to property.
4. Will transport be provided to students who wish to use the facility during the holiday periods?
5. The school has limitations for community use for numbers and hours of use as well as there being only one disabled parking space on site.
6. The similar facility at Hele School should be used instead. There is also the Ridgeway Sports Centre and other unused commercial structures in the Plympton area.
7. Youths and their vehicles will congregate causing noise, littering and damage.
8. The operational hours have not been verified.
9. The building is out of character in the area. The existing school dominates the village and is out of keeping with this historic area.
10. The building is disproportionate to the site and not in keeping with the surrounding environment.
11. There was no proper public consultation on the proposals and the recent application for an extension at the school.
12. The applications states that net additional gross internal floor space of the development will be 379, whereas the design and access statement states that the sports facility has a total proposed internal floor area of 388m².
13. The school cannot accommodate more development – there must be a limit to development at the site.
14. The proposals will lead to flood risk elsewhere due to overdevelopment of the school site and the lack of natural drainage.
15. Impact on the water table, ground water and possible underground springs. The lower part of the site is liable to flooding and the proposed drainage and storage system will concentrate water behind properties in Buller Close and Longbrook Street.
16. The proposed building does not provide full size courts or showering/changing facilities or heating. Only 20% of the sporting activities have national sizes. An alternative site would be more viable and efficient to run as well and traffic and parking issues would not be

- a problem and would be fit for the number of users and hours of opening.
17. The sporting activities for after school hours are extremely limited due to the use of Education Authority transport. There is no proposed management of the facility for the community's use.
 18. The conservation area management plan states that the conservation area should not attract additional traffic movements.
 19. Loss of existing play area and associated benefits of outdoor play space, which is advocated in Plymouth Core strategy Objective 15.
 20. The curved roof support structures would present a danger to children and further erode the space for outdoor play.
 21. Contrary to policy CS30 (for reasons given above).
 22. Contrary to PPG17 (planning for open space, sport and recreation) due to loss of existing open space at the school for sport and informal recreation.
 23. The existing temporary school car park and the potential extension to it, as well as plans to widen the school driveway mean that the available outdoor play space is being eroded.
 24. Detrimental to the conservation area, listed buildings and the vista of the area. The modern design of the building is totally out of keeping.
 25. The development will dominate and overshadow a number of bungalows in Buller Close. There will be a loss of light and the building will be visually oppressive.
 26. Light pollution and noise from within the building and from those accessing it during evenings, weekends and holidays.
 27. Loss of security at the site.
 28. There are enough sport and relaxation facilities elsewhere.
 29. The protected oak tree on the eastern boundary is being ignored.
 30. No confidence that improvements referred to in the travel plan will be implemented. The travel plan states that there will be no more than two additional minibuses for visiting students, but this does not take account of staff, assistants or parents that would accompany them.
 31. Sports halls on school grounds are of limited value because they cannot be accessed by the public during school hours.
 32. The facility will not provide a benefit for local people.
 33. The development would be better sited at Plympton St. Maurice Primary School.

Three letters of support were received, which state that the facility will be available for use by the community outside school hours; pupils at the school will not have to travel elsewhere for similar facilities and this will reduce vehicle journeys; it will compliment the existing school buildings and grounds; this will provide a much needed venue; this facility will provide a properly supervised sporting venue for pupils with autism and cognitive behavioural problems;

Analysis

Human Rights Act - The development has been assessed against the provisions of the Human Rights Act, and in particular Article 1 of the First Protocol and Article 8 of the Act itself. This Act gives further effect to the rights

included in the European Convention on Human Rights. In arriving at this recommendation, due regard has been given to the applicant's reasonable development rights and expectations which have been balanced and weighed against the wider community interests, as expressed through third party interests / the Development Plan and Central Government Guidance.

The application turns on policies CS02, CS28 and CS34 of the Core Strategy of Plymouth's Local Development Framework 2007 and the main issues are:-

1. The size, scale and design of the building in relation to the site and the surrounding area;
2. The impact on neighbours' amenities in terms of outlook, noise and disturbance and light pollution;
3. Traffic generation and parking;
4. Flood risk.
5. Loss of outdoor play space at the school.

With regard to the size and design of the building in relation to the site, the height, width and length of the building is not considered to dominate or unduly detract from the scale and setting of the existing school buildings and the openness of the space around them. In this respect the proposed building is also situated close to existing school buildings and leaves a significant proportion of the outside play areas to the east and north. The result is that the bulk and massing of the building and its position on the site is not considered to be out of scale and proportion with the school buildings and the school site overall.

With regard to design the form and materials are considered to result in a building of interest and quality that would not, in this context, appear discordant or out of character with the modern extensions to the school or the surrounding area.

With regard to the surrounding area, the proposed building is distant enough from the northern and eastern boundaries such that it will not appear visually dominant in relation to the surrounding domestic scale of development. The residential properties beyond the southern boundary are at a lower level and the building will have a greater impact on the scale of buildings there. However, the building would not project beyond the line of the existing two-storey building near this boundary and as such would be visually contained within the site.

The nearest part of the Conservation Area is adjacent to the school boundary to the south west of the proposed building. As described above the historic village is generally to the west and south of the site, whereas the sports facility would be on the eastern side of the school buildings and it is considered that the building would not be harmful to the setting of the Conservation Area.

With regard to the impact on neighbours' amenities in terms of outlook, the main impact is on 22 and 24 Buller Close and 25 Longbrook Street. These

properties are adjacent to the lower, southern side of the school site and would look up at the proposed building as they do the adjacent two-storey school building. 25 Longbrook Street has a very long garden and the proximity of the proposed building next to it would not be harmful to outlook and it is considered that the rear garden would not be dominated by the structure. 22 and 24 Buller Close have shorter rear gardens and the dwellings themselves are much closer to the school boundary. Of these two, No.24 is affected the most. This property is approximately two metres below the level of the school site and the proposed building would be approximately 13.5 metres from the boundary at its nearest point. The proposed building has a curved roof and at its highest would be approximately 7.8 metres high. However, the end of the building would not extend across the whole length of the boundary with No.24. Given also that the overall height of the eastern elevation of the building, being at the lower (asymmetrical) end of the curved roof, is lower (4.6 metres high compared with 6.2 metres on the other side of the building) means that the property would enjoy a degree of unimpeded outlook and for this reason it is considered that the proximity of the building would not unreasonably affect the outlook from No.24 Buller Close.

Any loss of light to neighbouring properties would not be significant because the proposed building is situated to the north of Buller Close and Longbrook Street.

With regard to noise and disturbance and light pollution, the hours of use of the building would need to be controlled so that comings and goings associated with the building's use would not be harmful to residential amenity. On that basis it is considered that the level of activity associated with the building would not be harmful to amenity. There would be no external lighting associated with the building.

With regard to traffic generation and parking, this is a major concern with residents who are unhappy with the amount of on-street car parking generated by the school. Incremental additions to the school such as this sports facility, the previous application for an additional classroom and past extensions are all potentially adding to traffic generation. However, it is considered that existing parking and access infrastructure is adequate at this time. As mentioned in the Transport response, the time is likely to come when additional provision will have to be made. However, in this scheme the use of the building is not considered to generate such additional traffic that would warrant refusal of the application.

Residents are also concerned with the potential for the development to increase flood risk. Surface water from the development would be drained to an attenuation tank, which would allow the water to seep slowly into the ground over time. The alternative, to allow some of this water to drain to the surface water sewer, would be resisted because this area of Plympton has suffered flooding downstream in the Longbrook watercourse. Therefore it would be important to ensure that the release of water into the ground did not lead to flooding and associated problems in the properties down the slope, in Longbrook Street and Buller Close.

With regard to the loss of outdoor play space at the school, the building would be mainly on the existing hard surfaced play area, although some of the existing running track would be developed. However, the area of grassed play space/running track that would be lost is not considered significant in the context of the sporting facilities being provided. It is accepted that this is a smaller site compared with many schools and that the amount of open space is correspondingly less. However, a reasonable balance of open space, including informal recreation space, would remain.

With regard to neighbours' concerns about security at the site, it is considered appropriate for a management plan to be submitted that defines the operation of the facility and how it would be supervised and overseen during its operation.

Equalities & Diversities issues

The building has been designed to be accessible to people with disabilities.

Section 106 Obligations

There is no Section 106 application in respect of this application.

Conclusions

The proposed building is not considered to be harmful to residential amenity or the character and appearance of the area. Hours of use would need to be restricted and details will need to be submitted regarding drainage and the management of the facility. With the conditions recommended by Transport and PPS it is considered that the proposals are in accordance with policies CS02, CS03, CS21, CS28 and CS34 of the Core Strategy of Plymouth's Local Development Framework 2007. It is therefore recommended that conditional planning permission be granted.

Recommendation

In respect of the application dated **08/01/2010** and the submitted drawings, **208 L 01.01 PL, 208 L 01.02 PL, 208 L 02.01 PL, 208 L 04.01 PL, 208 L 04.02 PL, 208 L 04.06 PL, 208 L 51.02 PL, contamination statement, School Travel Plan and accompanying design and access statement**, it is recommended to: **Grant Conditionally**

Conditions

DEVELOPMENT TO COMMENCE WITHIN 3 YEARS

(1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years beginning from the date of this permission.

Reason:

To comply with Section 51 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

STAFF/SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

(2) The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the phase one of a Staff Travel Plan (STP) and an updated School Travel Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall provide measures for monitoring, measuring and controlling travel to and from the school, based on available information at the time of the development hereby permitted being commenced. The approved measures shall be brought into operation upon occupation of the permitted development. Phase two of the travel plan shall be submitted and approved and brought into use by the beginning of the second school term after the occupation of the permitted development, and shall be based on surveys and monitoring exercises of the operation of the school under the measures introduced under the phase 1 Travel plan.

Reason:

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, such measures need to be taken in order to reduce reliance on the use of private cars (particularly single occupancy journeys) and to assist in the promotion of more sustainable travel choices, in accordance with policy CS28 of the Core Strategy of Plymouth's Local Development Framework April 2007.

CODE OF PRACTICE

(3) Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, a detailed management plan for the construction phase of the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be constructed in accordance with the management plan.

Reason:

To protect the residential and general amenity of the area from any harmfully polluting effects during construction works and avoid conflict with Policy CS22 of the Plymouth Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2006-2021) 2007.

EXTERNAL MATERIALS

(4) No development shall take place until samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:

To ensure that the materials used are in keeping with the character of the area in accordance with Policy CS34 of the Plymouth Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2006-2021) 2007.

SURFACE WATER DISPOSAL

(5) Notwithstanding the submitted plans development shall not begin until details of the proposals for the disposal of surface water have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved

details shall be implemented before the development hereby permitted is first brought into use.

Reason:

To enable consideration to be given to any effects of changes in the drainage regime on landscape features in accordance with Policy CS34 of the Plymouth Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2006-2021) 2007.

OPENING HOURS

(6) The covered multi-use games area hereby permitted shall not be open or used outside the following times: 0800 hours to 2100 hours Mondays to Saturdays inclusive and 1000 hours to 1600 hours on Sundays and Bank or Public Holidays.

Reason:

To protect the residential and general amenity of the area from any harmfully polluting effects, including noise and disturbance likely to be caused by persons arriving at and leaving the premises, and avoid conflict with Policies CS22 and CS34 of the Plymouth Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2006-2021) 2007.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

(7) The covered multi-use games area shall be used strictly in accordance with a management plan to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before development commences. The management plan will include, among other things, the manner in which the facility will be supervised during its use.

Reason:

To protect the residential and general amenity of the area from any harmfully polluting effects, including noise and disturbance likely to be caused by persons arriving at and leaving the premises, and avoid conflict with Policies CS22 and CS34 of the Plymouth Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2006-2021) 2007.

DETAILS OF LIGHTING

(8) Details of any external lighting, including security lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before development commences. The works shall accord with the approved details.

Reason:

To protect the residential and general amenity of the area from any harmful light pollution and glare, in accordance with policies CS22 and CS34 of the Plymouth Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2006-2021) 2007.

INFORMATIVE - IMPROVEMENTS TO SCHOOL ACCESSWAY

(1) The applicant is advised that the sub-standard school access-way is liable to stifle any future development at the school site. It is considered that the existing sub-standard pedestrian and vehicular school access-way needs to be improved as a matter of priority to provide safe ease of movement for both

pedestrians and vehicles entering and leaving the school property, to allow two vehicles to pass one another and provide a safe footway for pedestrians of 2 - 3 metres wide.

INFORMATIVE - IMPROVEMENTS TO ON-SITE PARKING

(2) The applicant is advised that in order to improve existing car parking opportunities at the school site the car parking area in the northeast quadrant of the site should be formally demarked.

Statement of Reasons for Approval and Relevant Policies

Having regard to the main planning considerations, which in this case are considered to be: the size, scale and design of the building in relation to the site and the surrounding area; the impact on neighbours' amenities in terms of outlook, noise and disturbance and light pollution; traffic generation and parking; flood risk and loss of outdoor play space at the school the proposal is not considered to be demonstrably harmful. In the absence of any other overriding considerations, and with the imposition of the specified conditions, the proposed development is acceptable and complies with (a) policies of the Plymouth Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2006-2021) 2007 and supporting Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents (the status of these documents is set out within the City of Plymouth Local Development Scheme) and the Regional Spatial Strategy, (b) non-superseded site allocations, annex relating to definition of shopping centre boundaries and frontages and annex relating to greenscape schedule of the City of Plymouth Local Plan First Deposit (1995-2011) 2001, and (c) relevant Government Policy Statements and Government Circulars, as follows:

- CS28 - Local Transport Consideration
- CS34 - Planning Application Consideration
- CS22 - Pollution
- CS21 - Flood Risk
- CS03 - Historic Environment
- CS02 - Design