

**PLANNING  
COMMITTEE**

10<sup>th</sup> December 2014

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**Planning Application 2014/249/FUL**

**School Extensions and Additional Car Parking**

**Webheath First School , Downsell Road, Webheath, Redditch, Worcestershire, B97 5RJ,**

**District: Webheath  
Applicant: Mrs Chris Millward  
Expiry Date: 5th November 2014  
Ward: WEST**

**(see additional papers for Site Plan)**

The author of this report is Sharron Williams, Planning Officer (DM), who can be contacted on Tel: 01527 534061 Email: sharron.williams@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk for more information.

**Site Description**

Site comprises of an established first school that has been extended over time and is now a school academy. The school is single storey accommodation although parts of the building are double storey in height. Vehicular access and pedestrian access to the school is via Downsell Road.

**Proposal Description**

Permission is sought for an extension at the rear of the existing nursery, and stores. The extension measuring approximately 28 x 22.5 m would provide a re-located nursery, new staff room, two new reception rooms and two new infant rooms with ancillary cloak rooms / stores etc.

Another extension measuring approximately 20.5 x 6.8 m is proposed to provide additional floorspace for the existing hall, and create a new studio. Both extensions would be finished in a zinc coated steel dual pitched roof and rendered walls are proposed for the extensions.

A new car park is proposed off an existing service road that is currently used as the pedestrian access into the school. The car park would be located where the school allotment is at present and would provide 19 car spaces and 2 disabled car spaces for staff use only.

**Relevant Policies :**

**Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3:**

CT02 Road Hierarchy  
R01 Primarily Open Space  
BBE13 Qualities of Good Design  
BBE14 Alterations and Extensions

## REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

# PLANNING COMMITTEE

10<sup>th</sup> December 2014

---

CT12          Parking Standards

### **Others:**

NPPF          National Planning Policy Framework

NPPG          National Planning Practice Guidance

### **Relevant Planning History**

2006/505/CPO	Consultation - Renewal Of Planning Consent For Double Mobile Classroom	14.11.2006
2001/461/CPO	Consultation - Renewal Of Planning Consent For A Double Mobile Classroom.	05.11.2001
1994/475/CPO	Consultation - Provision Of Double Mobile Classroom Unit	20.01.1995

### **Consultations**

#### **Arboricultural Officer**

The proposed development will necessitate the removal of a significant area of tree cover (15 individual trees / shrubs currently used as a Forest School facility), and likely to impact on the Root Protection Area (RPA) of two nearby mature trees (T1 ash on site, and T2 oak off-site). Both of these trees are large prominent specimens that should be retained and afforded appropriate protection.

However, am satisfied that there is ample scope to relocate the Forest School area to another wooded part of the grounds, therefore, do not object to the loss of the trees as long as details of mitigation planting are provided by condition as part of a landscaping plan.

An Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan is required to provide details in accordance with BS5837:2012 in regard to the avoidance of adverse impacts on the retained trees.

#### **Community Safety Officer**

No objections

#### **Education Authority**

No Comments Received To Date

**PLANNING  
COMMITTEE**

10<sup>th</sup> December 2014

---

**Environmental Health- Food**

No Comments Received To Date

**North Worcestershire Water Management**

The applicant also states that the surface water will be disposed of via a SuDS system. There are no details of this included with the application. Would suggest that the applicant considers the use of porous or permeable paving for the car parking areas - these would be subject to porosity testing. It may also be of an idea to include rainwater butts and other SuDS techniques to improve the surface water drainage of the site. This could be controlled by condition.

**Highway Network Control**

No objection to the proposal

**Sport England**

No objection.

**Severn Trent Water Ltd**

No objection to the proposal subject to the inclusion of a drainage condition.

**Public Consultation Response**

5 objections

- Proposal will have an impact on trees
- Lighting would have an impact on amenities of neighbouring properties
- Parking and road congestion
- View of car park, no screening provided
- Loss of light

Petition from residents of Lyndenwood concerned about vehicles parking in Close and additional traffic.

Webheath Village Hall

Parking issues causing congestion, increasing the size of the school will exacerbate the situation.

**Assessment of Proposal**

Webheath is now an academy school. Members may be aware that there are other schools within the locality that now form part of the academy school pyramid. Tudor Grange Academy and Ridgeway Academy Middle School are preparing to convert to Secondary Schools 11-18 age range from September 2015. Astwood Bank First School is also preparing to change to become a Primary School 4-11 age range from 2016. This would have a significant effect on the structure of the school pyramid that Webheath First School Academy is in and as such Webheath School is also preparing to become a Primary School 4-11 age range from September 2016.

**PLANNING  
COMMITTEE**

10<sup>th</sup> December 2014

---

The school accommodation at present does not fulfil the current requirements, the school hall is too small, the nursery is in a converted kitchen meaning that the school are unable to prepare and serve hot meals on site, the two reception rooms are too small and the staff facilities and pupil toilets are inadequate to serve the current 300 pupils (including 25 for the nursery), 13 full time equivalent and 1 part time teacher, 35 part time support staff and 3 admin staff.

Therefore, the school requires additional accommodation to meet existing needs, as well as additional accommodation should the school proceed with a change to a Primary School. The proposed extensions would enable the School to take in 120 additional pupils, 30 additional nursery pupils and 10 additional full time staff.

The proposal raises the following matters:-

**Principle of the development**

The site is within the urban area of Redditch, however, the larger extension and car park is proposed to be built on land that is designated as Primarily Open Space in Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3. Therefore, policy R.1 would apply. Policy R.1 states proposals that would lead to the total or partial loss of Primarily Open Space will not normally be granted planning permission unless it can be demonstrated that the need for development outweighs the value of the land as an open space area.

Although the land is designated as Primarily Open Space, the land concerned is restricted for school use only and is not available to the general public. In addition, the land proposed for the car park is currently used as an allotment area for the school, and the land for the larger extension comprises of an existing store building and a group of trees / shrubs that would need to be removed. Therefore, the use of this land as formal open space is limited.

As part of assessing the proposal it is understood that there is a deficit of open space facilities in this ward (as indicated in the Open Space Needs Assessment 2009). However, given the limited access to this facility within a school site, and how the site is currently being used it is considered that whilst there would be a partial loss of Primarily Open Space in this ward, the proposed extensions to the school would be a greater community benefit in the area generally. Therefore, although the proposal would conflict with policy R.1 of Local Plan No.3, on balance the principle of an extension and car park in the designated Open Space would be acceptable on this occasion. Sport England has no objection to the proposal.

**Design and layout**

The school has been extended over time since it was originally built. However, the design of the extensions and proposed materials are considered to be acceptable complying with policies B(BE).13 and B(BE).14 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3 and design policies in the NPPF.

**PLANNING  
COMMITTEE**

10<sup>th</sup> December 2014

---

**Car parking**

The proposal includes the provision of a new car park (with low level lighting to turn off at 6.30pm) off the existing service road that is currently used as pedestrian access for pupils to the school buildings. Several objections have been submitted in respect to car parking issues currently experienced by local neighbours who have parents parking in their cul de sac during the start and end of the school day. Other concerns relate to the use of the service road as a means of access to the new car park. The original plans submitted did not make it clear as to who would use the car park, whether it was intended for staff or members of the public. Following a discussion with the agent, it is understood that the new car park would be for the staff only and the existing car park would become available for parents / members of the public.

The new car park would have restricted access and would not be available for parents to use for dropping off / picking up etc. Therefore, it is unlikely that the car park for staff would generate noise and disturbance that would have a detrimental impact on the amenities of the neighbouring occupiers. A new pedestrian access is also proposed directly off Downsell Road to segregate walkers and drivers using the new car park.

The new car park would be visible from the rear garden of 4 Lyndenwood as there is very little screening between the rear garden of this property and the application site. The agent has discussed the provision of additional boundary treatment with occupiers of 4 Lyndenwood and close boarded fencing (1.7 m high) has been agreed to be erected to help screen the development.

The provision of a new car park for staff enables the existing car park to be used by parents and as such should alleviate some car parking issues currently being experienced by local residents. County Highway Network Control has no objection to the proposal.

**Trees and landscaping**

To implement the development, a number of trees / shrubs would need to be removed. The Council's Arboricultural Officer has no objections to the removal of the trees concerned but has requested additional information to demonstrate that the remaining mature trees would be adequately protected during and after the development. This additional information is anticipated to be submitted shortly. An update on this matter will be provided in the Update Report.

**Conclusion**

The proposal would conflict with Policy R.1 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3, however, the current use of the land is very restricted for general public use. In addition, the current accommodation is substandard for the pupils and staff, and the proposals would address this matter as well as current parking problems experienced by local residents. The proposal would also enable the school the opportunity to change their status to a Primary School in line with the academy school pyramid in the locality. On balance, the proposal is considered to be acceptable.

**PLANNING  
COMMITTEE**

10<sup>th</sup> December 2014

---

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, authority be delegated to the head of Planning and Regeneration to GRANT planning permission subject to:-**

**a) The submission of additional arboricultural information**

**and**

**b) Conditions and informatives as summarised below:**

**Conditions**

- 1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of the grant of this permission.

Reason:- In accordance with the requirements of Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2) Prior to the commencement of development details of the form, colour and finish of the materials to be used externally on the walls and roofs shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the development is satisfactory in appearance, to safeguard the visual amenities of the area and in accordance with Policy B(BE).13 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3.

- 3) The development hereby approved shall be implemented in accordance with the plans and documents (to be completed at decision stage).

Reason: To accurately define the permission for the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is satisfactory in appearance in order to safeguard the visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policy B(BE).13 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3

- 4) Prior to the development hereby approved commencing, full details of a scheme for foul and surface water drainage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details thus approved shall be fully implemented prior to first use or occupation of the development.

Reason:- To allow proper consideration of the proposed foul and surface water drainage systems and to ensure that the development is provided with a

**PLANNING  
COMMITTEE**

10<sup>th</sup> December 2014

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satisfactory means of drainage and in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework.

- 5) No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include proposed boundary treatment and other means of enclosure, hard surfacing materials, new planting, trees and shrubs to be retained, together with measures to be taken for their protection while building works are in progress.

Reason:- In the interests of the visual amenity of the area and in accordance with Policy CS.8 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3

- 6) All hard and soft landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing by the local planning authority. Any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar sizes or species unless the local planning authority gives written approval to any variation.

Reason:- In the interests of the visual amenity of the area and in accordance with Policy CS.8 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3

- 7) The boundary treatment shown in the approved plans shall be fully implemented prior to the first use or occupation of the development and thereafter be retained and maintained without alteration to its design, materials or height unless first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:- In the interests of providing and maintaining a visually acceptable boundary treatment and in accordance with Policies B(BE).13 and S.1 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3.4)

**Procedural matters**

This application is being reported to the Planning Committee because two (or more) objections have been received.