

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

16 July 2026

Planning Application 26/00113/FUL

New single storey building and access off Clifton Close to serve as a vocational training centre for post-16 students with special educational needs, as part of Kingfisher Special School.

Kingfisher School, Clifton Close, Redditch, Worcestershire, B98 0HF

**Applicant: Mr Jonathan Astley
Ward: Matchborough and Woodrow Ward**

The case officer of this application is Emily Cox, Planning Officer (DM), who can be contacted on Tel: 01527 881699 EXT 1699 Email: emily.cox@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk for more information.

Site Description

Kingfisher School is located in the residential area of Redditch where the principle of development can be accepted.

Proposal Description

The proposal is for a new single storey building serving a vocational training centre for post-16 students with special educational needs (SEND). The information submitted with the application confirms that the proposed extensions would not result in any increase in pupil or staff numbers and that it would not affect the current car parking arrangements at the school.

The extensions would be located on the most southern point of the site, and would not extend the school building on to the adjacent playing field which is classified in the Redditch Local Plan as an area of Primarily Open Space.

Relevant Policies :

Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
Policy 5: Effective and Efficient Use of Land
Policy 16: Natural Environment
Policy 17: Flood Risk Management
Policy 19: Sustainable Travel and Accessibility
Policy 20: Transport Requirements for New Development
Policy 39: Built Environment
Policy 40: High Quality Design and Safer Communities

Others

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)
Redditch High Quality Design SPD

Relevant Planning History

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

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| | | | |
|--------------|--|---------|------------|
| 2015/033/FUL | Classroom extension and internal alterations | Granted | 20.03.2015 |
| 19/00002/FUL | Retention of an existing modular double classroom unit | Granted | 18.02.2019 |
| 20/00838/FUL | Removal of 2no. existing mobile classrooms and provision of 3no new classrooms, office and toilets | Granted | 04.09.2020 |
| 21/00066/FUL | Removal of 2no. existing mobile classrooms and provision of 3no. new classrooms | Granted | 12.03.2021 |
| 21/00432/FUL | New modular classroom block | Granted | 02.06.2021 |

Consultations

Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Contaminated Land)

WRS records and mapping indicate the subject site is within the zone of influence from two historic ponds and areas of unknown filled ground. The maps and records indicate the presence of a dried-up pond, planters, metal cages, concrete pad/hardstanding and the potential for made ground. As a precaution, WRS recommend a full tiered condition attached to the permission.

Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Noise)

No objection.

Worcestershire Regulatory Services (fume and odour)

Worcestershire Regulatory Services (fume and odour) – submission of the kitchen ventilation system details to be conditioned.

Sport England

No objection.

North Worcestershire Water Management

No objection subject to compliance with the submitted drainage strategy.

Public Consultation Response

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Site Notice posted 18 February 2026; expired 14 March 2026

Neighbour Letters sent 18 February 2026; expired 14 March 2026

Following the end of consultation, 1 neutral letter has been received by a neighbour. Some of the matters raised are non-material planning considerations and have not been reported within the Report. Their comments are summarised below:

- Concern around cars, taxis, buses during school drop off/pick up;
- Concern over an increase in students and an increase in parking facilities.

Assessment of Proposal

Principle of Development

Kingfisher School is an established special educational needs school which is located in a sustainable, urban area of Redditch. Paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that make more effective use of sites that provide community services such as schools and hospitals, provided this maintains or improves the quality of service provision and access to open space. Given the proposed building would provide vocational post-16 education, this is given substantial weight.

Design and Appearance

The proposed building would be a square shape, which would be in keeping with the design of Kingfisher School, and would have a duo-pitch roof. The eaves would be approximately 4m above ground level and the ridge approximately 6m. Materials proposed to be used include:

- Staffordshire blue brick plinth;
- RAL 7012 Dark grey powder aluminium;
- White render

The building would measure approximately 615 sqm. The height would be approximately 6.1m at its highest point, and width would be approximately 25m. The building is proposed to be single storey, and feature a number of rooms to help support vocational education, including a hair and beauty room, catering kitchen and dining area, IT room, and 4 general rooms.

Due to the siting, design and scale of the proposed building it is considered that it would be in scale with the existing building and would respect the overall character and appearance of the existing building. Due to the scale of the extensions, it is not considered that they would affect the overall character or appearance of the area or the existing amenities of the neighbouring properties.

Overall, it is considered that the proposal accords with the Policies in the Local Plan and the NPPF and is acceptable.

Highway Matters

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As part of the proposal, there would be the creation of a new access, car parking and bicycle parking to serve the building off Clifton Close.

At this stage, your Officers are satisfied that parking and access is sufficient in regard to highway safety, and comments from Worcestershire County Council Highways will be included within the Update Report.

Trees, Drainage and Contamination and Biodiversity Net Gain

The Council's Tree Officer was consulted and no comments were received.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) of 10% for developments is a mandatory requirement in England under the Environment Act 2021, subject to some limited exceptions. Unless exempt, every planning permission granted pursuant to an application submitted after 12 February 2024 is deemed to have been granted subject to a pre-commencement condition requiring a Biodiversity Gain Plan to be submitted and approved by the local planning authority prior to commencement of the development.

It has been found that the proposal triggers the need to provide a minimum 10% BNG. A BNG metric has been submitted which shows a net loss in habitat units and that post development BNG cannot be secured on site and a net loss is recorded. Off-site credits are therefore required to secure the uplift in BNG. It is considered reasonable that this is the only viable option and these credits can be secured via the market.

The development is therefore acceptable in this regard and the pre-commencement condition will be set out within the informatives section attached to any approval.

Other Matters

Worcestershire Regulatory Services (noise) – no objection.

Worcestershire Regulatory Services (fume and odour) – submission of the kitchen ventilation system details to be conditioned. This is listed within the schedule of conditions below.

Sport England – raise no objection as the proposal accords with exception 3: *'The proposed development affects only land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and does not: • reduce the size of any playing pitch • result in the inability to use any playing pitch (including the maintenance of adequate safety margins and run-off areas); • reduce the sporting capacity of the playing field to accommodate playing pitches or the capability to rotate or reposition playing pitches to maintain their quality; • result in the loss of other sporting provision or ancillary facilities on the site; or • prejudice the use of any remaining areas of playing field on the site'* of SE Playing Fields Policy and paragraph 104 of the NPPF.

Conclusion

Overall, it is considered that the proposal accords with the policies within the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 and the NPPF and is acceptable.

RECOMMENDATION:

That having regard to the development plan and to all other material

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considerations, planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

- 1) The development hereby approved must be begun not later than the expiration of three years 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) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and drawings:

- Location Plan, dated February 2025;
- Existing Site Plan, dated March 2025;
- Proposed Site Plan, dated April 2026;
- Proposed Floor Plan, dated December 2025;
- Proposed Elevations, dated December 2025;
- Landscape Masterplan, dated December 2025;
- Topographical Survey, dated January 2025;
- Drainage General Arrangement, dated January 2026;
- Proposed Levels General Arrangement, dated January 2026

Reason: To provide certainty to the extent of the development hereby approved in the interests of proper planning.

- 3) All new external walls and roofs shall be finished in materials listed within the Planning Statement, received February 2026.

Reason: To ensure that the development is satisfactory in appearance and to safeguard the visual amenities of the area.

- 4) Details of the kitchen ventilation system shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority prior to the installation and shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan.

Reason: To protect residential amenity.

- 5) Unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority development, other than that required to be carried out as part of an approved scheme of remediation, must not commence until conditions A to G have been complied with:

A: A preliminary risk assessment must be carried out. This study shall take the form of a Phase I desk study and site walkover and shall include the identification of previous site

uses, potential contaminants that might reasonably be expected given those uses and any other relevant information. The preliminary risk assessment report shall contain a diagrammatical representation (conceptual model) based on the information above and shall include all potential contaminants, sources and receptors to determine whether a site investigation is required and this should be detailed in a report supplied to the Local Planning Authority. The risk assessment must be approved in writing before any development takes place.

B: Where an unacceptable risk is identified a scheme for detailed site investigation must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to being undertaken. The scheme must be designed to assess the nature and extent of any contamination and must be led by the findings of the preliminary risk assessment. The investigation and risk assessment scheme must be compiled by competent persons and must be designed in accordance with the Environment Agency's "Land Contamination: Risk Management" guidance.

C: Detailed site investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken and a written report of the findings produced. This report must be approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to any development taking place. The investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken by competent persons and must be conducted in accordance with the Environment Agency's "Land Contamination: Risk Management" guidance.

D: Where identified as necessary a detailed remediation scheme to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use by removing unacceptable risks to identified receptors must be prepared and is subject to the approval of the Local Planning Authority in advance of undertaking. The remediation scheme must ensure that the site will not qualify as Contaminated Land under Part 2A Environmental Protection Act 1990 in relation to the intended use of the land after remediation.

E: The approved remediation scheme must be carried out in accordance with its terms prior to the commencement of development, other than that required to carry out remediation, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

F: Following the completion of the measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a validation report that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out must be produced, and is subject to the approval of the Local Planning Authority prior to the occupation of any buildings.

G: In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken and where necessary a remediation scheme must be prepared, these will be subject to the approval of the Local Planning Authority. Following the completion of any measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a validation report must be prepared, which

is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority prior to the occupation of any buildings.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors.

- 6) Prior to first occupation a detailed scheme of soft landscaping shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The landscaping shall be completely carried out within the first available planning season from the date of occupation or completion of the development, whichever is the earlier.

For a period of five years after the completion of the approved landscaping scheme, the trees, hedges and shrubs shall be protected and maintained in a healthy condition. Any trees, hedges or shrubs that cease to grow or are felled, removed, uprooted, destroyed or die, or become in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority seriously damaged, diseased, or defective, shall be replaced by trees, hedges or shrubs as may be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This replacement planting shall be undertaken before the end of the first available planting season (October to March inclusive for bare root plants), following the removal, uprooting, destruction or death of the original trees or plants.

Reason: To safeguard and enhance the landscape character and visual amenity of the area; to help assimilate the development into its immediate surrounds; and to provide ecological, environmental and biodiversity benefits, in the interests of no net biodiversity loss.

- 7) Prior to first occupation, in order to provide a net gain in biodiversity for protected species, two schweglar bat or bird box or equivalent shall be placed on site in suitable locations at least 3 metres above ground level facing to the south or east and kept thereafter in perpetuity.

Reason: To ensure that the proposal results in a net gain of biodiversity having regard to paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Informative

- 1) Proactive engagement by the local planning authority was not necessary in this case as the proposed development was considered acceptable as initially submitted.

2) Pre-commencement conditions for contaminated land risk assessment are considered necessary for the following reasons:

- There is potential for contamination to exist on the site. The degree and extent of contamination is currently unknown. More information relating to ground conditions is required to determine whether or not remediation will be required (prior to any construction work commencing).
- Where remediation is necessary, this remediation may involve work/techniques that need to be completed before any development is commenced, for example the removal from site of contaminated soils/underground structures, the design and incorporation of gas protection measures in any buildings etc. To carry out such work after construction has started/been completed, may require potentially expensive retro-fitting and in some cases the demolition of construction work already completed.
- Paragraph 196 of the NPPF requires development to be suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions, any risks arising from contamination, and any proposals for mitigation, including land remediation. Paragraph 196 goes on to state that after remediation, as a minimum, land should not be capable of being determined as Contaminated Land under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

3) Biodiversity Net Gain

The application is subject to statutory biodiversity net gain legislation under the Environment Act 2021, and the Biodiversity Gain Condition will be applied.

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition)" that development may not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Redditch Borough Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These are listed below.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements listed below are considered to apply.

Statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements in respect of the biodiversity gain condition.

1. The application for planning permission was made before 12 February 2024.
2. The planning permission relates to development to which section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (planning permission for development already carried out) applies.
3. The planning permission was granted on an application made under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and (i)the original planning permission to which the section 73 planning permission relates* was granted before 12 February 2024; or (ii)the

application for the original planning permission* to which the section 73 planning permission relates was made before 12 February 2024.

4. The permission which has been granted is for development which is exempt being: 4.1 Development which is not 'major development' (within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015) where:

- i) the application for planning permission was made before 2 April 2024;
- ii) planning permission is granted which has effect before 2 April 2024; or
- iii) planning permission is granted on an application made under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 where the original permission to which the section 73 permission relates* was exempt by virtue of (i) or (ii).

4.2 Development below the de minimis threshold, meaning development which:

- i) does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and
- ii) impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).

4.3 Development which is subject of a householder application within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. A "householder application" means an application for planning permission for development for an existing dwellinghouse, or development within the curtilage of such a dwellinghouse for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse which is not an application for change of use or an application to change the number of dwellings in a building.

4.4 Development of a biodiversity gain site, meaning development which is undertaken solely or mainly for the purpose of fulfilling, in whole or in part, the Biodiversity Gain Planning condition which applies in relation to another development, (no account is to be taken of any facility for the public to access or to use the site for educational or recreational purposes, if that access or use is permitted without the payment of a fee).

4.5 Self and Custom Build Development, meaning development which:

- i) consists of no more than 9 dwellings;
- ii) is carried out on a site which has an area no larger than 0.5 hectares; and
- iii) consists exclusively of dwellings which are self-build or custom housebuilding (as defined in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015).

4.6 Development forming part of, or ancillary to, the high speed railway transport network (High Speed 2) comprising connections between all or any of the places or parts of the transport network specified in section 1(2) of the High Speed Rail (Preparation) Act 2013.

* "original planning permission means the permission to which the section 73 planning permission relates" means a planning permission which is the first in a sequence of two or more planning permissions, where the second and any subsequent planning permissions are section 73 planning permissions.

Irreplaceable habitat

If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans.

The Biodiversity Gain Plan must include, in addition to information about steps taken or to be taken to minimise any adverse effect of the development on the habitat, information on arrangements for compensation for any impact the development has on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat.

The planning authority can only approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if satisfied that the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat is

minimised and appropriate arrangements have been made for the purpose of compensating for any impact which do not include the use of biodiversity credits. The effect of section 73D of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

If planning permission is granted on an application made under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (application to develop land without compliance with conditions previously attached) and a Biodiversity Gain Plan was approved in relation to the previous planning permission ("the earlier Biodiversity Gain Plan") there are circumstances when the earlier Biodiversity Gain Plan is regarded as approved for the purpose of discharging the biodiversity gain condition subject to which the section 73 planning permission is granted.

Those circumstances are that the conditions subject to which the section 73 permission is granted:

- i) do not affect the post-development value of the onsite habitat as specified in the earlier Biodiversity Gain Plan, and
- ii) in the case of planning permission for a development where all or any part of the onsite habitat is irreplaceable habitat the conditions do not change the effect of the development on the biodiversity of that onsite habitat (including any arrangements made to compensate for any such effect) as specified in the earlier Biodiversity Gain Plan.

Procedural matters

This application is being reported to the Planning Committee because the site is owned by Worcestershire County Council. As such the application falls outside the scheme of delegation to Officers.