

MC/18/1525

Date Received: 21 May 2018

Location: Sir Joseph Williamsons Mathematical School Maidstone Road
Rochester Medway

Proposal: Construction of a two storey mathematics building (demolition of existing modular building), extensions to hard play area, addition of shade sails by main hall and provision of 10 additional parking spaces

Applicant Mr Robert Banks

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Case Officer: Mary Smith

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Recommendation of Officers to the Planning Committee, to be considered and determined by the Planning Committee at a meeting to be held on 1st August 2018.

Recommendation - Approval with Conditions

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

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Drawing numbers MED001-PEV-02-00-DR-A-0201 Rev P01;
MED001-PEV-02-00-DR-A-9120 Rev P01; MED001-PEV-02-01-DR-A-9121 Rev P01;
MED001-PEV-02-02-DR-A-9122 Rev P01; MED001-PEV-02-ZZ-DR-A-9320

Rev P01; wwa_1805_LL_104 Rev P0; wwa_1805_LP_302 Rev P0; wwa_1805_LsE/401 Rev P0 (excluding the extent of the hard play extension); wwa_1805_LD_501 Rev P0; wwa_1805_LD_502 Rev P0; & wwa_1805_LL_106 Rev P0 received 21 May 2018 and MED001-PEV-02-ZZ-DR-A-9220 Rev P02; MED001-PEV-02-ZZ-DR-A-9221 Rev P01; & wwa_1805_LL_105 Rev P02 received 4 July 2018.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 3 Prior to the commencement of the development a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Construction Environmental Management Plan shall include amongst other matters details of: hours of construction working; measures to control noise affecting nearby residents; wheel cleaning/chassis cleaning facilities; dust control measures; pollution incident control and site contact details in case of complaints. The construction works shall thereafter be carried out at all times in accordance with the approved Construction Environmental Management Plan.

Reason: Required before commencement of development in order to minimise the impact of the construction period on the amenities of local residents and with regard to Policy BNE2 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

- 4 Prior to any development above slab level in respect of the two storey mathematics block hereby approved a scheme of acoustic protection for this building shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme must demonstrate that the internal noise levels will conform to Building bulletin 93 Acoustic design of schools: performance standards February 2015. All works which form part of the approved scheme shall be completed before any part of the building is occupied and shall thereafter be maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of the amenity and with regard to Policy BNE2 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

- 5 Prior to any development above slab level in respect of the two storey mathematics block hereby approved a scheme to minimise the transmission of noise from the use of the building shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Noise from the building should be controlled such that the cumulative noise rating level (L_{Ar,Tr}) emitted from the development shall be at least 10dB below the background noise level (L_{A90,T}) at the nearest residential facade. All measurements shall be defined and derived in accordance with BS4142: 2014. All works which form part of the approved scheme shall be completed before any part of the building is occupied and shall thereafter be maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of the amenity and with regard to Policy BNE2 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

- 6 Prior to the first use of the development hereby approved:
- (a) an update to the School Travel Plan submitted as part of this application shall be made to include terms of reference; evidence that the school community, particularly the students, have been consulted on it or have had direct input; and details to show how the plan would be monitored and reviewed on an on-going basis; and
 - (b) this update shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The approved details shall be implemented thereafter.

Reason: In order to encourage sustainable means of transport and in accordance with Policy T14 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

- 7 Prior to the first use of development hereby approved new tree planting shall be undertaken in accordance with details which have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This new planting shall be in the areas of the site indicated on the plans hereby approved but the submitted details shall include full details of the numbers and exact location of the planting, as well as species and size at time of planting. Any tree which within 5 years of planting is removed or becomes seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with another of a similar size and species.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory external appearance and provision for landscaping in accordance with Policies BNE1 and BNE6 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

- 8 In this Condition "retained tree" means an existing tree which is to be retained in accordance with the approved plans and particulars; and paragraphs a) and b) below shall have effect until the expiration of 5 years from the date of occupation of the building for its permitted use.
- A) No retained tree shall be cut down, uprooted or destroyed, nor shall any retained tree be pruned other than in accordance with the approved plans and particulars. Any pruning approved shall be carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998 (Tree Work).
 - B) If any retained tree is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, another tree shall be planted at the same place and that tree shall be of such size and species, and shall be planted at such time as may be specified in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

- C) The erection of fencing for the protection of any retained tree shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved plans and particulars before any equipment, machinery or materials are brought on to the site for the purposes of the development, and shall be maintained until all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been removed from the site. Nothing shall be stored or placed in any area fenced in accordance with this Condition and the ground levels within those areas shall not be altered, nor shall any excavation be made without the written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect and enhance the appearance and character of the site and locality, in accordance with Policies BNE1 and BNE6 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

- 9 Prior to its first use the additional parking area hereby approved shall be clearly marked as being for staff parking only and it shall be retained as such thereafter.

Reason: In order to clarify the use of the parking in the interests of the safe flow of traffic and with regard to Policies T1 and T2 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

- 10 All materials used externally shall accord with the plans hereby approved.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the development is satisfactory and without prejudice to conditions of visual amenity in the locality, in accordance with Policy BNE1 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

For the reasons for this recommendation for approval please see Planning Appraisal Section and Conclusions at the end of this report.

Proposal

The proposal consists of three main elements, firstly the construction of a two storey mathematics building, secondly extensions and alterations to hard play areas including the addition of shade sails and thirdly the provision of ten additional parking spaces.

The proposed mathematics building would replace a single storey modular building which is no longer fit for purpose. It would be 18m by 31m and would include eleven teaching classrooms with associated facilities. The new building would be two storeys, 7.7m high, and would be constructed of brick with fibre cement panels between the windows with a brick parapet to hide the shallow sloping roof. The building would be located at the rear of the main school buildings, just to the south of the school hall.

The replacement mathematics building would be larger than the existing building and would extend into part of the current hard play area to the west. The proposals include an extension to both the north and south of this play area of approximately 16m in depth by 26m in width to the north and a maximum of 17m in depth by 29m in width to the south.

Changes to the mainly hard surfaced area between the mathematics building and the school hall area to the north are also proposed, including the addition of two 6m by 6m shade sails between buildings.

It is proposed to provide ten parking spaces in front of the recently added Da Vinci building, near the site frontage onto Maidstone Road. This would involve works to cut into the bank in order to provide flush access from the existing internal access road to the spaces.

The number of pupils admitted to the school has gradually increased over recent years, the planned admission number increasing from 180 in 2016 to 203 this September. The school have assessed their accommodation needs in association with these changes and the current proposals are in response to this.

Relevant Planning History

There have been many applications for alterations and extensions on this large secondary school site, the most recent being:

MC/18/0957	Construction of a single storey extension to main hall and provision of additional changing rooms Decision Approval with Conditions Decided 30/05/2018
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MC/16/1972	Construction of a proposed single storey extension Decision Approval with Conditions Decided 15/09/2016
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Representations

The application has been advertised on site and by individual neighbour notification to the owners and occupiers of neighbouring properties. EDF Energy, Southern Gas, Southern Water and Sport England have also been consulted.

Southern Gas confirms that it currently has no gas or electricity apparatus in the vicinity of the site.

Southern Water requests an informative advising that a formal application to them for a connection to the public foul sewer will be required. Their initial investigations indicate that there are no public surface water sewers in the area to serve this development and that alternative means of draining surface water from this development are required, which should not involve disposal to a public foul sewer. However should any sewer be found during construction works an investigation of the sewer will be required and the applicant is advised to discuss this further with Southern Water.

Sport England has considered the application in light of the NPPF and against its own playing fields policy. They are satisfied that the proposed development meets exception 3 of their playing fields policy, in that 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. This being the case they have no objection to the application.

Four letters of objection have been received, one from the adjacent nursery and three from parents who use this nursery, in summary raising the following concerns:

- The children's day nursery at 206C Maidstone Road has 9 dedicated parking bays at the back of the nursery – school parents and visitors ignore signs and use these spaces causing a health and safety issue for parents dropping off and collecting their nursery children;
- The current barrier does very little to curb this issue, the car park is badly laid out and the roadways quite tight, there are no real parking control measures in place, parents and after school visitors park inconsiderately, cause congestion, block barriers, the exit and the nursery entrance and can be abusive;
- Creating extra parking spaces will increase traffic and exacerbate this out of control and unregulated situation, detrimental to the safety of children;
- The road safety travel plan is not fit for purpose, a serious travel plan needs to be commissioned.

Development Plan

The Development Plan for the area comprises the Medway Local Plan 2003 (the Local Plan). The policies referred to within this document and used in the processing of this application have been assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (the NPPF) and are considered to conform.

Planning Appraisal

Principle

There is no objection in principle to the alterations and extension of facilities for this established secondary school including with regard to the advice in paragraph 72 of the NPPF which gives great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools. Much of the school grounds and playing fields are allocated as protected open space subject of Policy L3 of the Local Plan and the proposals overlap part of this area. However as the development is for educational purposes and no outdoor sports areas would be directly affected by the development there is no objection to this in line with subsection (iv) of this policy (although the extensions to the hard play area would reduce the grassed area of

the main playing fields they would not project onto any pitches or affect formal sports facilities). Sport England has confirmed that it has no objection to the proposals.

Design

The proposed design of the mathematics block would sit well within the context of the existing buildings, which are all fairly functional in design but with a variety of styles added over the years. The use of a mainly brick finish and a parapet roof is welcomed, to fit in with the more visually pleasing of the existing buildings. Amended plans have been submitted in order to reduce the extent of the proposed fibre cement panels within the brickwork, which is also welcomed.

The extension of the hard play area will have a minor visual impact on the context of the wider school site. Additional landscaping is proposed to help fill the gap in the boundary vegetation to the southern side of this. The proposed shade sails and associated alterations would be between school buildings and not readily visible from outside the school grounds.

The proposed parking spaces would result in a reduction of the landscaped area between the Da Vinci building and the Maidstone Road frontage, including ground works to reduce the land level for the parking area. Whilst it would be preferable not to intrude in this area, as there would still be a reasonable landscaped buffer between the proposed parking and the road frontage and subject to additional planting within the remaining area (secured by condition), it is not considered that this would result in a harmful visual impact.

In summary the design and visual impact of the proposals are considered acceptable including with regard to the advice in Policy BNE1 of the Local Plan and paragraph 56 of the NPPF.

Amenity

The proposed mathematics block and shade sails would be located well away from site boundaries and would not have any direct impact on neighbours including with regard to light, privacy and overbearing impact. The submissions include an acoustic assessment for the proposed mathematics building and this is considered to be acceptable subject to conditions to ensure that internal noise levels meet the appropriate standard and that noise from mechanical plant does not adversely affect neighbours.

The southern section of the hard play area extension would take this facility closer to the back of adjacent rear gardens to the south. Amended plans have been secured to increase the originally proposed gap between the hard play area and site boundary in this location, now providing a minimum separation distance of 13.7m. Enhanced planting by the boundary is proposed and this arrangement is now considered acceptable. This general area of the site is already used for external recreation, which can extend onto the existing grassed area, and any increase in noise and disturbance is likely to be minor in this context. It is not considered that the proposed parking area would result in any

amenity concerns to neighbours and the safety concerns raised regarding this will be assessed below.

In summary the impact of the development on amenity is considered acceptable including with regard to the advice in Policy BNE2 of the Local Plan and the NPPF (point 4 of paragraph 17).

Highways

It is stated that the site currently has 80 parking spaces for staff and 5 for visitors with 1 disabled parking space. As on-site parking provision is very well used during the school day and the school role has increased in recent years it is proposed to provide an additional 10 on-site parking spaces for staff. There is no objection in principle to this however concern has been raised with regard to the impact of its siting on the adjacent nursery at 206C Maidstone Road. This nursery shares the use of the northern vehicular access to the school site from Maidstone Road, this access already provides access to a mix of school and nursery parking spaces. The concerns raised relate to existing issues due to high demand for the limited spaces available for both the school and the nursery including in relation to safety issues when dropping off and collecting nursery children. The proposed additional spaces would be for school staff and would be on a spur to the south of the main northern parking area. Although there would be an increase in associated traffic movements using the northern access subject to the spaces being marked for school staff only (to be secured by condition) it is considered unlikely that this would result in a significant increase in highway safety hazards in this area. However an informative would draw attention to the concerns regarding the existing situation, which the school are strongly encouraged to address in communication with the nursery.

In summary the parking and highways impact of the development are considered acceptable including with regard to Policies T1, T2 and T13 of the Local Plan. Policy T14 is also relevant, this requiring travel plans for developments including 'new or expanded educational facilities', paragraph 36 of the NPPF also noting that travel plans are a key tool to promote sustainable transport. A School Travel Plan has been submitted in response to this however this requires developing further and will therefore be addressed by condition.

Other Matters

There are a number of trees on the site, close to the existing (to be demolished) and proposed mathematics block, in the area of the shade sails and associated landscaping and by the additional parking. The proposals have been designed to retain as many of these trees as possible. One is shown to be removed by the proposed additional parking area and others are likely to be impacted by the works, however protection measures are provided together with an indication of additional tree and shrub planting which would be more extensive than the trees lost. In these circumstances subject to conditions the impact of the development on trees is considered acceptable including with regard to Policy BNE43 of the Local Plan and paragraph 109 of the NPPF.

The submissions include a ground investigation which did not reveal any land contamination issues. They also include a drainage strategy which is acceptable in principle although an informative will draw attention to detailed matters which are relevant to this.

The submissions state that the proposed working hours would be between 0800 to 1800 Monday to Friday and 0800 and 1300 on Saturday with no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays which is acceptable in this location. However in view of the proximity of the works to some neighbours, a condition is recommended to secure a construction environmental management plan.

Local Finance Considerations

There are no relevant local finance considerations.

Conclusions and Reasons for Approval

In summary there is no objection in principle to the proposed additions and alterations and subject to conditions their design, amenity, highways and other impacts are considered acceptable. Approval is therefore recommended including with regard to Policies BNE1, BNE2, BNE43, T1, T2, T13, T14 and L3 of the Local Plan and the advice in Paragraphs 17, 36, 56, 72 and 109 of the NPPF.

The application would normally be determined under delegated powers but is being referred to Planning Committee due to the extent of the representations received expressing a view contrary to the recommendation.

Background Papers

The relevant background papers relating to the individual applications comprise: the applications and all supporting documentation submitted therewith; and items identified in any Relevant History and Representations section within the report.

Any information referred to is available for inspection in the Planning Offices of Medway Council at Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham ME4 4TR and here <http://publicaccess1.medway.gov.uk/online-applications/>