
Caversham Primary School

Replacement of Existing Single Storey Dining Hall with
New Single Storey Dining Hall

Planning Statement

March 2018

Caversham Primary School

Replacement of Existing Single Storey Dining Hall with New Single Storey Dining Hall

**Planning Statement submitted on behalf of
Ashley House Plc**

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APPENDICES

1. Reading Borough Council - Pre-Application Advice Letter

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Barton Willmore LLP has been instructed by the Ashley House Plc to prepare and submit a Full Planning Application for the demolition and removal of the existing single storey dining hall and its replacement with a new single storey building at Caversham Primary School, Hemdean Road.

1.2 The description of development (the “proposed development”) is as follows:

“Demolition of existing single storey extension to school building and replacement with new single storey extension”

1.3 The following documents and plans are submitted in support of the application:

- Completed application form and ownership certificate;
- Location / site plan;
- Design and Access Statement;
- Floor Plans and Elevations (existing / proposed);
- Landscaping plans;
- Arboricultural impact assessment and Arboricultural Method Statement;
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal;
- Building Service Design Report (including Sustainable Design Checklist);
- Construction Method Statement; and
- Flood Risk Assessment.

1.4 The proposed development has been subject to a pre-application exercise with Reading Borough Council (the “Council”), who provided a response dated the 15th February 2017. In summary, the Council did not raise an in-principle objection to the proposal.

1.5 Chapter 2 of this statement provides a description of the application site, Chapter 3 provides a description of the proposed development, Chapter 4 considers the relevant development plan policies and Chapter 5 provides an appraisal of the proposals against adopted planning policy requirements. Finally, Chapter 6 provides our conclusions.

2.0 APPLICATION SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The proposed development would be located on the footprint of the existing building which is towards the south west of the school site. The proposed single storey would accommodate a dining hall and would be attached to the existing school building (as is the case with the existing dining hall). To the north and east of the proposed dining hall are other existing school buildings. To the south of the proposal is an area of grass outdoor play space, beyond which are the rear gardens of residential properties on Queen Street and Hemdean Road. To the west is further grass outside play space, beyond which are allotments.
- 2.2 The proposed development will re-provide the floorspace currently found within the existing dining hall which is in a poor state of repair and has reached the end of its operational life. In order to maintain suitable school accommodation, there is a need to remove the ageing structure and replace it with a new, modern and fit for purpose facility.
- 2.3 The site is of an irregular shape with points of access from Hemdean Road and Victoria Road. The predominantly single storey school building is centrally located within the school site and has been incrementally extended with various additions to the original building. Beyond the northern, boundary of the site is Victoria Road with residential properties fronting onto the other side. To the eastern boundary is Hemdean Road which also has residential properties fronting onto the other side. To the south of the site are the rear gardens of properties which front onto Queen Street and Hemdean Road. To the west of the school site is an area of allotments beyond which are the rear gardens of properties which front onto Blenheim Road.
- 2.4 The site is within Flood Zone 1 which has the lowest risk of fluvial flood risk. The site is not in a conservation area nor are there are no Listed buildings within the immediate vicinity of the site. The closest listed building to the site is Balmore which is Grade II Listed 19th Century Suburban Villa which is some 200m away from the application site and separated from the site by a Hemdean Road, residential properties, and an area of open space.

3.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The proposed development involves the demolition of the existing single storey dining hall and its replacement with a new fit for purpose dining hall on the same footprint. Details of the proposed design are available on the plans and design and access statement submitted with this application, however, a brief description is provided below.

Amount

- 3.2 The proposed total internal floorspace areas for the new single storey dining hall is 133 sqm. This is slightly smaller than the existing building which has a floor space of 141 sqm. The proposal would not result in any increase of pupils or teaching staff.

Layout

- 3.3 The new building is located towards the south of the site, on the same footprint as the existing building to be demolished. The new block is attached to the existing block, (referenced EFAF on the submitted plans) on its East side.
- 3.4 Internally, the building comprises the dining hall and a small plant room.

Appearance

- 3.5 The new education building is to be constructed using modular methods and largely constructed off-site prior to being delivered to the site and installed.
- 3.6 The appearance is to be modern but complementary to the design of the retained school building incorporating a flat roof one storey design.
- 3.7 In terms of external appearance, the building primarily comprises white render. At low level there is a band of dark Eternit panelling, to provide contrast and protection to the building. Windows are full height, providing large amounts of daylight into the space.

Building Height

- 3.8 The proposed new education building would measure a height of 3.5m from ground level to the top of the parapet flat roof.

Access

- 3.9 Construction access into the site to remove the existing buildings and bring in and install the proposed building will be taken from the north of the site from Victoria Road. This is preferred access due to the built-up nature of the frontage onto Hemdean Road and minimises disruption to the tarmac external play area and existing school buildings. For further information in this regard, please refer to the Design and Access Statement and Construction Method Statement. Access during its operational life would be through the existing school complex.

Landscaping

- 3.10 In terms of landscaping, the area around the building will be reinstated with tarmac and the any areas disturbed during construction will be made good as necessary.

Drainage

- 3.11 The site falls within Flood Zone 1, which is the lowest area of fluvial flood risk. A flood risk assessment accompanies this submission which states that surface water drainage for the proposed new building will be discharged by a granular soakaway.
- 3.12 There are no proposed foul water outlets within the replacement block.

4.0 DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (and the NPPF at paragraphs 2 and 11) require that where the development plan contains relevant policies, applications for development which are in accordance with the plans should be allowed unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.2 Paragraph 12 of the NPPF further clarifies that the policies within the NPPF do not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making and that proposed development which accords with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved.

4.3 The Development Plan for Reading Borough Council includes the following policy documents of relevance:

- Reading Borough Core Strategy (Adopted 2008, altered 2015)
- Reading Central Area Action Plan (Adopted 2009)
- Sites and Detailed Policies (Adopted 2012, altered 2015)

4.4 It is also noted that Reading Borough Council are in the latter stages of producing a new Local Plan. The Council consulted on the Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan between November 2017 – January 2018. In accordance with the Council's Local Development Scheme, the plan is anticipated to be formally adopted in January 2019. Given that the emerging Local Plan has not gone through examination by a Planning Inspector, relevant policies currently carry limited weight. It is anticipated that given the minor nature of the proposal which is the subject of this application, the application will be determined in accordance with existing policy. Nevertheless, the proposal is considered in accordance with the draft policies within the Emerging Local Plan.

4.5 The Council, in their pre-application response (Appendix 1), dated 15th February 2017, considered the below policies to be of relevance:

- Reading Borough Core Strategy (2008)
 - CS1 Sustainable Construction and Design
 - CS7 Design and the Public Realm
 - CS24 Car / Cycle Parking
 - CS31 Additional and Existing Community Facilities

- CS34 Pollution and Water Resources
- CS36 Biodiversity and Geology
- CS38 Trees, Hedges and Woodlands

- Reading Borough Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012):
 - DM4 Safeguarding Amenity

- Supplementary Planning Documents:
 - Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
 - Revised Sustainable Design and Construction (2011)

5.0 PLANNING APPRAISAL

Principle of the Development

- 5.1 The site is located within the settlement of Caversham. The site is an existing school site with associated existing school buildings and outside play areas. Policy CS31 (Additional and Existing Community Facilities) supports proposal for new extended or improved community facilities. As such, the principle for the proposed development which would see the improvement of the existing dining hall is acceptable when considered against the Reading Borough Core Strategy (2008)

Design and Appearance

- 5.2 Policy CS7 requires that all development must be of a high design quality which maintains and enhances the area in which it is located. The proposed building is of flat roof modular construction to a height of one storey (3.5m). In terms of external materials, the building primarily comprises white render whilst at low level there is a band of dark Eternit panelling, to provide contrast and protection to the building. Windows are full height within the north and south elevations to provide large amounts of daylight into the space.
- 5.3 Due to the sighting of the proposal, it would not be readily viewable from within the public realm, nevertheless, it is considered that the design of the proposal is in keeping with the use of the site and the existing school buildings. As such it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with Policy CS7.

Neighbouring Amenity

- 5.4 In relation to neighbouring amenity, DM4 requires that development does not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties. The proposed building will be single storey and on the footprint of an existing single storey building. As such, it is not considered that the building will result in overshadowing or an overbearing effect. In addition, views from windows within the proposal would be similar to those currently available and it is not considered that the proposal would result in overlooking which would lead to any harmful loss of privacy or visual amenity. As such, it is considered that the proposal would be consistent with policy DM4 of the Reading Borough Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012).

Trees

- 5.5 Policy CS38 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands) requests that trees are protected from damage or removal. A tree survey, arboricultural impact assessment and arboricultural method statement has been prepared in support of this application.
- 5.6 The proposed works will not require any tree removal. Protection measures are recommended within the report which include minor access facilitation pruning to one tree along Victoria Road and the erection of a protective barrier between the working area and trees along the western and southern site boundary. These recommendations will be taken forward. As such, it is not considered that the proposal would result in an unduly harmful impact on the overall amenity value provided by trees on the site and, therefore, it is considered that the proposal would be in accordance with Policy CS38 of the Reading Borough Adopted Core Strategy.

Ecology

- 5.7 Policy CS36 (biodiversity and Geology) states that developments should retain, protect and incorporate features of biodiversity interest. The policy goes on to state that developments which have an adverse impact on biodiversity will not be permitted. A preliminary ecological appraisal has been conducted, which concludes that if all of the avoidance measures outlined are incorporated into the proposed works programme, then no significant residual impacts to protected species and habitats are perceived. The avoidance measures recommended are as follows:

Bats

- Removal of roofing materials to be carried out under the supervision of a licenced/accredited bat ecologist as a precaution. If at any time a bat or evidence of a bat roost is encountered, then works will immediately cease and the ecologist contacted to determine the best method to proceed and need for an EPS licence from Natural England.
- To avoid the disturbance of off-site roosts, there will be no construction activities undertaken which could obstruct access to this structure (i.e. no scaffolding or building built directly in front of/or adjoining the north and south boundaries, i.e. likely flight lines to off-site habitats/woodland). Any construction activities undertaken within the proximity of the off-site properties will be undertaken sensitively and with minimal noise disturbance.

Common Reptiles

- To avoid the risk of killing/injury of any common reptiles, the grassland will be maintained at the current sward height until commencement of construction activities. If any suitable habitat remains at the start of construction works, the site will be cleared in an ecologically sensitive manner. This will be undertaken by an ecological contractor or under the direct supervision of a suitably qualified Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW). In each instance, an ecologist will check any potential habitats/refugia prior to clearance. This approach can only be undertaken between April and October (weather dependant) when reptiles are active. It is not appropriate for use between November and March when reptiles are in hibernation. Any potential refugia i.e. grass cuttings/brash piles, will also be inspected. If necessary, this can be subject to a planning condition and will not require any further survey prior to planning determination (note: a full reptile survey has not been recommended due to the limited extent of suitable habitat and the small number of common reptiles that could be expected within the development footprint).

England SPI/Local BAP and Notable Species

- Avoidance: Habitats will be sensitively managed to avoid impacts to any England SPI/Local BAP and Notable species that could be present on-site. Any located will be allowed to disperse into off-site habitats or moved by hand.

5.8 By reason of the above avoidance measures as recommended in the preliminary ecology appraisal, it is considered that the proposal accords with Policy CS36 of the Reading Borough Core Strategy (2008).

Sustainability/Energy Efficiency

5.9 Policy CS1 (Sustainable Design and Construction), requires proposals for new development to use energy, water, mineral, materials and other natural resources appropriately and efficiently. In this regard, a 'sustainable design checklist' has been incorporated within the building services design report which accompanies this application. In respect of energy usage, this states that the building has a passive first approach using good construction, insulation and air tightness to reduce energy use. It also states that the proposal incorporates an efficient electric underfloor heating system. Further the building includes large windows on the north and south elevations in order to utilise natural daylight. As such, it is considered that the proposal is consistent with policy CS1 of the Reading Borough Core Strategy (2008).

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The proposed development replaces an existing single storey dining hall which is attached to the main school building with a new single storey dining hall in the same location. The existing dining hall which would be replaced has reached the end of its operational life and is in need of replacement. The proposed replacement building would enhance the school through the provision of much needed updated modern facilities. There would be no unacceptable impact upon surrounding land users, the character of the surrounding area or biodiversity.
- 6.2 Having had regard to relevant Development Plan policies and to the contents of the National Planning Policy Framework, we consider that the proposals fully accord with relevant requirements.
- 6.3 Taking all of the above into account, in accordance with paragraph 14 of the NPPF, this application should be permitted without delay in order to facilitate the commencement this improvement at Caversham Primary School.

Appendix 1

Reading Borough Council - Pre-Application Advice Letter

Mr F Aslam / Mr J Anderson
Mott MacDonald Ltd
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15 February 2017

Your contact is: **Ms Claire Ringwood, Planning**

Dear Mr Aslam / Mr Anderson,

PRE PLANNING APPLICATION ENQUIRY RESPONSE

Enquiry Reference: 170044

Address: Caversham Primary School, Hemdean Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7RA

Proposal: Pre-application advice for the demolition of existing dining block and replacement with new.

Thank you for your enquiry.

Further to your pre-application request received on 11th January 2017 here is my advice in relation to your proposal.

The following information was submitted on 11th January 2017:

Site Plan

Block Plan

Floors Plans (Sept 2014) Job No: J004007

Drawing No: 352972-109778-SK01 Rev 1 - Site Constraints & Phasing Plan

The proposal is to demolish an existing dining block which is in poor condition and build a new dining block. No elevation drawings have been submitted and no proposed floor plans although the proposed dining block is stated as being similar in size to the existing and built on the same footprint. There are residential properties to the north, east and south of the site with allotments to the west. The proposed dining room would be single storey and located on the west side of the school. The proposed materials are not known.

Relevant Planning History:

96/00792/REG3 (Civica Ref: 950582) - Removal of 4 existing classrooms and replacement with 4 modular classrooms with covered link. Permitted 11/12/1996.

99/00030/REG3 (Civica Ref: 991822) - Installation of single storey modular classroom unit including corridor link to existing building. Permitted 15/02/1999.

03/00463/REG3 (Civica Ref: 030622) - Installation of a temporary classroom. Permitted 17/06/2003.

09/00032/PREAPP (Civica Ref: 090482) - Pre-application advice for proposed demolition of existing single-storey extension and construction of a larger replacement single-storey extension to provide extra toilets. Observations sent 19/02/2009.

09/00432/REG3 (Civica Ref: 090357) - Demolition of a small staff toilet extension and the re-construction of a larger toilet extension to accommodate new toilets for use by foundation stage children, and replacement of staff toilets. Permitted 12/05/2009.

09/01159/APPCON (Civica Ref: 090086) - Discharge of condition 6 of planning consent 09/00432/REG3. Discharged 19/10/2009.

13/00229/REG3 (Civica Ref: 130090) - Provision of one demountable modular double classroom and associated external works. Permitted 16/04/2013.

13/00701/APPCON (Civica Ref: 130731) - Discharge of conditions 3 and 4 of planning permission 130090/REG3. Discharged 13/12/2013.

Consultation Responses:

Transport raised no objection but advised any subsequent planning permission would include a condition for the submission of a Construction Method Statement.

Environmental Protection raised concerns relating to odour and noise (kitchen extraction) and construction and demolition phases.

Noise generating development

Applications which include noise generating plant (such as a kitchen extraction system) should be accompanied by an acoustic assessment carried out in accordance with BS4142:2014 methodology.

The noise assessment needs to establish the predicted noise rating level taking account of any characteristic factors like tonality or impulsiveness of the noise. The rating level should be compared with the background noise level.

Within Reading there is strong justification for requiring the plant noise rating level to be at least -10dB below the measured background level. Specifically to prevent cumulative impact from the addition of plant over time which could result in background noise creeping up to levels which might cause adverse health impact, which is more likely in a densely occupied town such as Reading. Levels of -10dB ensure that the background level is not increased and nuisance is unlikely.

However, there may be some situations where this cannot be achieved and there may be some flexibility where this is justifiable for example where there are very low background noise levels, etc. Reasons should be clearly stated within the assessment conclusion. The assessment report should include any mitigation measures required in order to meet our criteria.

Kitchen Extraction - odour

In addition to concerns about noise (as discussed above), cooking odour is often a significant problem in commercial kitchens and therefore the applicants must provide an assessment of the likelihood of odours based on the proposed cuisine and a statement of how the proposals will ensure that odour nuisance will be prevented. Reference must be made to the Defra Guidance on the Control of Odour and Noise from Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Systems (January 2005).

Construction and demolition phases

There are concerns about potential noise, dust and bonfires associated with the construction (and demolition) of the proposed development and possible adverse impact on nearby residents (and businesses). Measures to control noise and dust should be submitted with the application as part of the Construction Method Statement.

Fires during construction and demolition can impact on air quality and cause harm to residential amenity. Burning of waste on site could be considered to be harmful to the aims of environmental sustainability. Bonfires on site will be prohibited during demolition and construction of the development.

Ecology advised that a preliminary ecological appraisal, including a preliminary bat roost assessment of the buildings, should be submitted with any subsequent application.

Natural Environment Trees advised there are no tree/landscape objections to a like-for-like replacement of the existing school dining room. There are some significant trees around the site. As part of any future planning application details showing the working zones and access routes for vehicles to the development site indicated on a plan so that any areas where significant trees might be affected by the development can be identified.

If on receipt of this information, Natural Environment Tree Officers consider significant tree(s) will be at risk then further information will be requested in accordance with BS:5837 (2012) - Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction.

Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance:

The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)
Paragraph 72

Reading Borough Core Strategy (January 2008):
CS1 (Sustainable Construction and Design)
CS7 (Design and the Public Realm)
CS24 (Car / Cycle Parking)
CS31 (Additional and Existing Community Facilities)
CS34 (Pollution and Water Resources)
CS36 (Biodiversity and Geology)
CS38 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands)

Reading Borough Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012):
DM4 (Safeguarding Amenity)

Supplementary Planning Documents:

Revised Parking Standards and Design (Oct 2011)

Revised Sustainable Design and Construction (July 2011)

The main issues to be considered are:

- a) The principle of development;
- b) The effect upon visual amenity and the public realm;
- c) Impact on neighbouring amenity;
- d) Traffic generation and parking;
- e) Energy Efficiency Statement;
- f) Submitting a planning application.

a) Principle of development

Policy CS31 (Additional and Existing Community Facilities) of the Reading Borough Core Strategy states that “Proposals for new, extended or improved community facilities will be acceptable, particularly where this will involve co-location of facilities on a single site.” The site is within an existing school site and would provide improved facilities. As such it is considered that the principle of a replacement dining block is in accordance with policy CS31 of the Reading Borough Core Strategy.

b) The effect upon visual amenity and the public realm

No proposed elevation drawings have been submitted and therefore no comment can be made on the design of the proposed dining block however the proposal would be of a similar size to the existing dining block and be single storey. Materials have also not been stated however as the proposal is likely to be similar to the existing block the principle of a replacement dining block is considered acceptable.

c) Impact on neighbouring amenity

The proposed extension would be a sufficient distance from residential properties on Hemdean Road and Queen Street and there is unlikely to be an impact in terms of noise and disturbance, loss of outlook and overbearing effects on neighbouring properties.

d) Traffic generation and parking

Consultation with the Reading Borough Council Transport section has been undertaken and as the proposed development is simply for the purpose of upgrading the school facilities and would not result in an increase in staff and student numbers, there are no Transport objections.

e) Energy Efficiency Statement

Core Strategy Policy CS1 (Sustainable Construction and Design) advises that proposals for new development, including the construction of new buildings and the redevelopment and refurbishment of existing building stock, will be acceptable where the design of buildings and site layouts use energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change. An Energy Statement should be submitted with any subsequent planning application to demonstrate how the energy related aspects of the proposed development actually meets the requirements of policy CS1 and CfSH/BREEAM.

f) Submitting a planning application

The Council's Planning Application Validation Information Requirements document should be read prior to submitting an application. This document can be found on the Reading Borough Council website

www.reading.gov.uk or via this link:

http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/2660/Validation-Checklist-Updated-Dec-2016/pdf/Validation_Checklist_Final_Dec_16.pdf

The following is required should an application be submitted:

- Correct fee.
- Completed application form and certificates.
- Completed CIL Form.
- Location Plan with the application site outline in red, to a scale of 1:1250 showing at least two road names.
- Block Plan showing the proposed development to a scale of 1:500 or 1:200. This should also show neighbouring properties.
- Full (not part) existing elevations and floor plans (1:50 or 1:100).
- Full (not part) proposed elevations and floor plans (1:50 or 1:100).
- Planning Policy Statement (for more details refer to page 22 of the Validation document above).
- All relevant documents relating to the development as highlighted above in the report i.e. noise assessment, cooking odour assessment, construction method statement (unless included as a planning condition), preliminary ecological appraisal, details showing working zones and access in relation to the trees on site and energy statement (for more details see the Validation document above).

Please also make sure the drawings submitted with a planning application are provided with a scale bar, to a recognized scale and that any drawings do not have the disclaimer 'do not scale'.

To conclude, in principle there is no objection to a replacement dining block but any subsequent application will need to address the points raised above and include the relevant documents.

I have discussed the matter of the letter of comfort with the Planning Manager, Kieran Roughan, and it is not felt appropriate to complete this letter as the majority of it has not been written by an officer of Reading Borough Council. The letter also requires more detail than is felt necessary as part of a pre-application response. The Council will not therefore provide a letter of comfort however it is hoped that the pre-application response provides you with enough detailed information.

Please note that the advice contained within this letter, or attached report, is that of an officer of the Borough Council and is provided without prejudice to the decision of the Borough Council in the event of a formal application for planning permission.

Yours sincerely

Ms Claire Ringwood
Planning Officer
LEB

bartonwillmore.co.uk

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