

Planning Statement

Introduction

This planning statement is submitted to Wokingham Borough Council Planning Department on behalf of Wokingham Borough Council, in support of a planning application for the development of a new SEND unit at Radstock Primary School.

The council has a statutory obligation to provide a suitable education placement for every child of school age and for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) up to the age of 25 years where education continues to be appropriate to their needs. The project is necessary to ensure that children are educated in an environment that supports them to fulfil their potential. In addition, providing appropriate accommodation within the borough will have a long-term cost saving overall.

The proposed development will comprise of a single storey SEND block, with:

- Lobby / circulation area
- 3 nr classrooms
- 2 nr sensory rooms
- 2 group / meeting rooms
- Kitchen Area
- Hygiene Room and WC areas
- Additional parking spaces for cars and cycles
- External play spaces

Site Description

Radstock Primary School is located in Earley, Reading, which is part of Wokingham Borough. The school is set on Radstock Lane and serves as a vibrant educational hub for children aged three to eleven

The surrounding area is predominantly residential.

Planning History

Application Number	Proposal	Decision
970667	Proposed Single Storey Classroom Extensions To School	Approved 30/06/1997
061089	Proposed construction of hard surface for games and play area.	Approved 05/07/2006
082652	Proposed extension of existing building to increase usable floor area of existing classrooms	Approved 04/04/2008

100830	Proposed single storey extension to enlarge existing reception area.	Approved 15/09/2010
110750	Proposed installation of replacement kitchen ventilation equipment to primary school site.	Approved 04/10/2011
130851	Application to vary condition 4 of planning consent F/2013/0935 to allow for changes to the admission number of children attending the nursery.	Approved 02/10/2013
131777	Proposed replacement nursery building, plus replacement canopy and fence/railings attached to building to provide secure covered play area.	Approved 27/06/2013
151231	Proposed erection of an enclosed link corridor between existing buildings, plus covered waiting area for parents.	Approved 22/06/2015

Planning Policy

The site is located within settlement limits and the proposals provide additional education provision for vulnerable children, the scheme is compliant with Policy CP2 and CP3 of the Core Strategy.

Core Strategy 2010:

The application is in line with the policy set out in Core Strategy 2010:

Policy CP2 of the Core Strategy seeks to ensure that that new development contributes to the provision of sustainable and inclusive communities (including the provision of community facilities) to meet long term needs, planning permission will be granted for proposals that address the requirements of:

- Children, young people and families, including the co-ordination of services to meet their needs;
- People with special needs, including those with a physical, sensory or learning disability or problems accessing services

Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area in which it is located and must be of high quality design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land uses and occupiers.

Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (MDDLDP) 2014:

The application is in line with the policy set out in MDDLDP 2014:

Policy CC02 relates to Development Limits. The policy states that planning permission for proposals at the edge of settlements will only be granted where they can demonstrate that the development, including boundary treatments, is within development limits and respects the transition between the built up area and the open

countryside by taking account of the character of the adjacent countryside and landscape.

National Planning Policy Framework:

The application is in line with the NPPF:

The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan.

Policy CC01 of the MDD Local Plan states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Paragraph 97 of the NPPF states that to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:

- take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community

Paragraph 99 of the NPPF states that it is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:

- give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications; and
- work with school promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.

While there is a loss of playground space to facilitate this development the school site is still well within the guidance of BB103, see site area analysis appended to the application, especially when the reduced intake from 60 per year to 45 per year is taken into account which will lead to a reduction in the size of the school of 25% over the next few years.

Character of the Area:

The building would be sited in the north-eastern corner of the application site and would be well screened from the public realm by the densely vegetated site boundaries. The parking area associated with the building would form a natural extension to the existing parking area, facilitated by an additional pedestrian crossing.

Overall, the scale of the building's footprint would be proportional to the scale of the school grounds but in the absence of elevational plans, a full assessment of the development's visual impact cannot be completed at this time. It is expected that the material choices for the building will positively reflect its local context, with appropriate hard and soft landscaping provision to enhance the site's verdant surroundings.

Neighbour Amenity

Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy aims to protect neighbouring amenity and R23 of the Borough Design Guide SPD requires that extensions relate to neighbouring properties.

Overlooking, Overbearing and Loss of Light.

The building proposed is well separated from the adjacent Community centre and the residential properties to its east, south and north, aided by the densely vegetated site boundaries.

The building is of single storey construction with little or no impact on the adjoining properties.

Noise:

Policy CC06 and Appendix 1 of the MDD Local Plan requires that development protect noise sensitive receptors from noise impact.

The site lies adjacent to several residential properties. The site's existing purpose is an outdoor playground/court which undoubtedly has residual noise impacts on the neighbouring properties during active use. Therefore, the provision of an educational building which would alternatively provide internal amenities is likely to generate less noise impacts onto these dwellings.

Landscaping and Trees:

Policy CC03 of the MDD Local Plan aims to protect green infrastructure networks, promote linkages between public open space and the countryside, retain existing trees and establish appropriate landscaping and Policy TB21 requires consideration of the landscape character.

As the development is within close proximity to several mature trees an Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan have been commissioned and are appended to this application.