

Development Management Ref No	No weeks on day of committee	Parish	Ward	Listed by:
F/2014/2662	17/17	Shinfield	Shinfield South	Scheme of Delegation

Applicant Location Wokingham Borough Council
 Grazeley School, Mere oak Lane, Grazeley, **Postcode** RG7 1JY
 Reading

Proposal Proposed erection of a new extension to existing school to provide three new classrooms, cookery room and toilets, to include new external works to provide car parking, multi use games area, football pitch and play area.

Type Full
PS Category 18
Officer Ashley Smith

FOR CONSIDERATION BY Planning Committee on 29/04/15
REPORT PREPARED BY Head of Development Management and Regulatory Services

SUMMARY

The proposal consists of the erection of an extension to the existing school to provide three new classrooms, a cookery room and toilets. The proposal also includes external works to provide car parking, a multi use games area, a football pitch and play area.

Grazeley Parochial Primary School normally only takes in a half form of entry in each year. The school is intended to be extended to accommodate a full single form of entry at all age groups. The primary school needs to provide an extension to provide additional teaching accommodation as the school does not have enough teaching space to accommodate the extra pupils and meet current educational standards.

The proposal has received no letters of objection from local residents.

The application is brought before the Committee as the site is owned by Wokingham Borough Council and it leads to an increase in pupil and staff numbers.

PLANNING STATUS

- Area of Special Character
- Countryside
- Oil/Gas Pipe Adjacent
- Adjacent to byway
- Great crested newt consultation zone
- Ground water protection zone
- Minerals Consultation Zone
- Nuclear Consultation Zone (3km)
- Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area (7km)

RECOMMENDATION

That the committee authorise the GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION by the Head of Development, subject to the ecological holding reasons being satisfactorily overcome, no objection being raised by the Office for Nuclear (ONR) Regulation, and conditions as follows (as well as any additional conditions required by the Borough Ecologist or ONR):

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

Reason: In pursuance of Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. Before any part of the development is commenced, samples and details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the buildings shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the building is satisfactory.

Relevant Policy: Core Strategy Policy CP3

3. This permission is in respect of the following drawings:

Drawing No	Title

Full schedule of all relevant plans to be included in Member's update.

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

4. No work relating to the development hereby approved, including works of demolition or preparation prior to building operations, shall take place other than between the hours of 7.00am and 6pm Monday to Friday and 8.00am and 1pm Saturday, and at no time on Sundays or Bank or national holidays, unless agreed in writing with the LPA.

Reason: To protect the occupiers of neighbouring properties from noise and disturbance outside the permitted hours during the construction period. An earlier start time than usually permitted is recommended in this case in the interests of health and safety.

Relevant Policies: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3

5. No development shall commence until a surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of the hydrological and hydro geological context of the development, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed.

Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding, to improve and protect water quality, improve habitat and amenity, and ensure future maintenance of these.

Relevant Policies: NPPF

6. No building shall be occupied until the access has been constructed in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience.

Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6.

7. Prior to the occupation of the development the proposed vehicular access shall have been formed and provided with visibility splays shown on the approved drawing number 131748-2100-C. The land within the visibility splays shall be cleared of any obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height and maintained clear of any obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height at all times.

8. No part of the new building hereby permitted shall be occupied or used until the vehicle parking and turning space has been provided in accordance with the approved plans, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The vehicle parking shall not be used for any other purpose other than parking and the turning space shall not be used for any other purpose other than turning.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory form of development and to avoid adverse impact on the public highway in the interests of highway safety.

Relevant Policies: CP6 and NPPF.

9. No development shall commence until details of secure and covered bicycle parking shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and shall be implemented as approved before occupation and permanently retained.

Reason: In order to ensure bicycle parking facilities are provided and encourage use of sustainable modes of travel.

Relevant Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP6

10. Before any phase of the development is commenced provision shall be made to accommodate all site operatives, visitors and construction vehicles loading, off-loading, parking and turning within the site during the construction period, in accordance with details to be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The provision should be maintained and used at all times.

Reason: To prevent queuing and parking off site, in the interests of highway safety and convenience.

Relevant Policies: Core Strategy policy CP6

11. Prior to the commencement of the development a Travel Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The travel plan shall include a programme of implementation and proposals to promote alternative forms of transport to and from the site, other than by the private car and provide for periodic review. The travel plan shall be fully implemented, maintained and reviewed as so-approved.

Reason: To encourage the use of all travel modes.

Relevant Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP6

12. No building shall be occupied until the off-site works comprising of new school keep clear road markings on Mere oak Lane have been provided in accordance with Drg No. 131748-2100-C.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

Relevant Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP6

13. No building shall be occupied until signage and lining has been provided at each access and within the car park to ensure safe one-way operation in accordance with details to be submitted and approved by the LPA.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

Relevant Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP6

14. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended) (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no gates or barriers shall be erected on the car park access on to Mere oak Lane hereby permitted.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

Relevant Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy CP1 & CP6

15. The development hereby permitted shall be constructed to the current relevant BREEAM requirements at the time of commencement of development. The development shall also meet and exceed the statutory requirements for water resource management.

Reason: To encourage environmentally sustainable development.

Relevant Policy: NPPF, Core Strategy policy CP1, Sustainable Design and Construction SPD.

16. The planned number of children attending the school shall not exceed 210 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To allow the LPA to assess whether or not the highway network and parking at the site can safely accommodate increase in pupil numbers.

Relevant Policies: NPPF, Core Strategy CP6

17. No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of hard and soft landscaping, which shall specify species, planting sizes, spacing and numbers of trees/shrubs to be planted. In particular the scheme shall include a replacement hedgerow on the perimeter of the new sports field and details of any bridging or fencing to be provided. The scheme shall also detail all boundary treatments to be provided on site. The works approved shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the building(s). Any trees or plants which, within a period of 5 years from the date of the planting, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

Relevant Policies: Core Strategy policy CP3.

18. a) No development or other operation shall commence on site until an Arboricultural Method Statement and Scheme of Works which provides for the retention and protection of trees, shrubs and hedges growing on or adjacent to the site in accordance with BS5837: 2012 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. No development or other operations shall take place except in complete accordance with the details as so-approved (hereinafter referred to as the Approved Scheme).

b) No operations shall commence on site in connection with development hereby approved (including any tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery) until the tree protection works required by the Approved Scheme are in place on site.

c) No excavations for services, storage of materials or machinery, parking of vehicles, deposit or excavation of soil or rubble, lighting of fires or disposal of liquids shall take place within an area designated as being fenced off or otherwise protected in the Approved Scheme.

d) The fencing or other works which are part of the Approved Scheme shall not be moved or removed, temporarily or otherwise, until all works including external works have been completed and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials removed from the site, unless the prior approval in writing of the local planning authority has first been sought and obtained.

19. Before the development hereby permitted is commenced details of all boundary treatments shall first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development or phased as agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be maintained in the approved form for so long as the development

remains on the site.

Reason: To safeguard amenity and highway safety.

Relevant Policies: Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 and CP6

20. Vegetation removal on site shall only be conducted outside the bird breeding season, (March to August inclusive), or under the supervision and control of an ecologist if undertaken in the period March to August inclusive

Reason: To ensure that the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended is complied with and breeding birds, their nests and eggs are not harmed or damaged.

21. No development shall commence until a programme of archaeological work (which may comprise more than one phase of work) has been implemented in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that any archaeological remains within the site are adequately investigated and recorded or preserved in situ in the interest of protecting the archaeological heritage of the borough.

Relevant Policy: NPPF, MDD TB25

22. Possible ecological conditions (relating to new survey work)

23. Possible emergency planning condition (relating to Office for Nuclear Regulation response)

Informatives:

1. The development accords with the policies contained within the adopted development plan and there are no material considerations which warrant a different decision being taken.

2. The applicant is reminded that this approval is only granted subject to conditions which must be complied with prior to certain elements of the development starting on site. The information required should be formally submitted to the Council, with the relevant fee, once the details have been agreed the development should be carried out only in accordance with those details. If this is not clear please contact the case officer to discuss.

3. Should any great crested newts or evidence of great crested newts be found prior to or during the development, all works must stop immediately and an ecological consultant contacted for further advice and Wokingham Borough Council informed before works can proceed. All contractors working on site should be made aware of the advice and provided with the contact details of a relevant ecological consultant.

4. Should any bats or evidence of bats be found prior to or during the development, all works must stop immediately and an ecological consultant or the Council's ecologist contacted for further advice before works can proceed. All contractors working on site should be made aware of the advice and provided with the contact details of a relevant ecological consultant.

5. The requisite Travel plan would need to comply with the latest national and local guidance:

- 1) NPPF Section 4 (Sustainable Transport)
- 2) The Essential Guide to Travel Planning (DfT, March 2008)
- 3) Delivering Travel Plans Through the Planning Process (DfT, April 2009)
- 4) A Guide on Travel Plans for Developers (DfT)
- 5) Making Residential Travel Plans Work (DfT, June 2007) All accessible at:
<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/travelplans/>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/improving-local-transport>

Also:

WBC Transport Plan 3 and Active Travel Plan 2011 – 2026

WBC Workplace Travel Plan Guidance and Residential Travel Plan Guidance

Documents, covering workplace travel plans and residential travel plans provide local guidance and are available on the Borough's website.

PLANNING HISTORY

Grazeley Parochial Primary School has an extensive planning history which is available on the planning file. The most recent relevant applications relating to permanent additional educational provision on the site are as follows:

F/2014/0156	Proposed erection of an additional single storey modular building to be used as a classroom (Approved 30/04/14)
F/2010/2134	Proposed erection of single storey extension to form new classroom infill extension and internal alterations including conversion of existing classroom to staff room. Erection of timber fence enclosure for oil tank. (Approved - 10/11/2010)

SUMMARY INFORMATION

Site Area	C. 0.75 hectares
Land use(s)	D1 + Agricultural
Proposed increase in floorspace (+/-)	322m ²
Proposed parking spaces	72 (Currently 11 spaces)
Existing School Capacity	118
Proposed increased pupil capacity	210 spaces
Staff numbers	26 FTE (currently 19 FTE)

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highways	No objection (conditions 6-14)
----------	--------------------------------

Tree and Landscapes	No objection (conditions 17-19)
Ecology	Holding objection (Officer note: due to additional survey work required, this element is covered by the recommendation) (potential condition 22)
Conservation Architect	No objection
Office for Nuclear Regulation	Comments pending (Possible condition 23)
Thames Water	No objection
Environment Agency	Offered standing advice
Borough Councillors	No comments
Parish Council	Shinfield Parish recorded "no comment" for this application.

REPRESENTATIONS

- No letters of objection received.

APPLICANTS POINTS

- The proposal provides essential facilities required to meet the borough's educational needs and leads to no additional pupil or staff numbers.

PLANNING POLICY

National policies

National Planning Policy Framework
NPPG

Wokingham Borough Core Strategy:

CP1: Sustainable Development
CP2: Inclusive Communities
CP3: General Development Principles
CP6: Managing Travel Demand
CP7: Biodiversity

MDD DPD Local Plan:

CC02: Development Limits
CC04: Sustainable Design and construction
CC06: Noise
CC05: Renewable energy and decentralised energy networks
CC07: Parking
CC09: Flood Risk
CC10: Sustainable Drainage
TB21: Landscape Character

PLANNING ISSUES

Principle of Development

1. The school site and additional land acquired are within the countryside. All the proposed new school facilities will be sited outside of settlement limits however will be located in close proximity to the existing main school buildings. Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy indicates new buildings should normally be located within settlement limits, however essential community facilities that cannot be accommodated within development limits or through the re-use or replacement of existing buildings can be appropriate and where possible these should be built in close proximity to the primary buildings on the site. It is considered in this case that the extension and ancillary features are essential community facilities in support of the school, and that there is no other more appropriate position to site the proposals in the vicinity, which would offer the same benefits to education.
2. Policy CP2 of the Core Strategy aims to ensure that new development contributes to the formation of sustainable and inclusive communities through the provision of community facilities (including educational buildings), and that the requirements of children are addressed.
3. Policy CP3 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.
4. The Wokingham Borough Council Primary Strategy was agreed by Executive on 25th October 2012. This strategy established that Wokingham Borough requires additional primary school places to meet statutory duties set out in section 14 of the Education Act 1996. This area has been identified by the Education Authority as needing additional capacity and as such it is considered that there is a need for the development which can be assigned significant weight. Wokingham Borough has a statutory duty to provide educational place and this expansion is designed mainly to meet the needs of the existing population as well as future expansion expected in the area. In the case of Grazeley Primary the ability to offer full forms of entry rather than simply part forms will offer significant educational efficiencies.
5. Paragraph 72 of the NPPF states that great importance should be attached to ensuring that sufficient choice of school places are available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Paragraph 72 states that Local Planning Authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and should look to approve development that will widen choice in education. The NPPF states that great weight should be given to the need to create, expand or alter schools.

Impact on Character

6. The proposed siting of the extension to the building would be to the north of the main school building. The proposed extension has been positioned well back from Mere oak Lane however will be relatively conspicuous from the front of the site due to the site's open frontage and the width of the addition.

7. The proposed extension is considered relatively well sited and well designed. It is attached to the main building on its less conspicuous northern side which benefits from better screening than the southern part of the site. Creating an extension, as opposed to a new building, helps to prevent significant spread of development across the site and the proposal seeks to replicate the historic appearance of the main building which is considered appropriate.



8. The proposal would be reasonably well screened by the existing school buildings to the South and East, and the northern boundary on to Mere oak Lane is reasonably well vegetated. As such the building will not appear unduly prominent or excessive when viewed from these directions. Long views of the building will be relatively limited in most directions. In cases where longer views are possible, the building will be viewed against the backdrop of the existing school and as such will not appear unduly prominent in the locality.

9. The scheme proposes a new car park and MUGA on an area of land to the north of the site, as well as the formalisation of a sports pitch and creation of a MUGA further away from Mere oak Lane. The car park layout and appearance are considered to be acceptable, and following negotiations with the Trees and Landscape officer a larger vegetative buffer has been secured on the Mere oak Lane frontage as well as the retention and provision of landscaping throughout the site. It is considered that the appearance of the ancillary features is acceptable and that adequate provision for landscaping has been made on the site.

10. The development proposes a large extension, car park and a number of supporting facilities. These will cause an urbanising impact upon the countryside by the introduction of the introduction development/built form in this locality. The harm however has been limited by the proposals being well thought out and sited in the most appropriate places on the site. It is considered preferable in countryside terms to extend this existing site than to build a new school in the Grazeley area on a greenfield countryside site. The proposals are considered to be an essential community facility in the context of local need and Wokingham's statutory educational duty, and as such the proposals are considered to meet exception 6 of policy CP11.

11. Such additions to school are relatively common place within the Borough. The building and associated facilities are considered to cause no significant character

impact on the school site especially given their acceptable positioning and design. It is considered that the proposals are of an acceptable form in relation to its locality and host site and as such the proposal complies with policies CP3 & CP11 of the Wokingham Core Strategy.

Impact on Neighbours

12. In terms of increased noise and disturbance, the school is an established educational facility with other teaching buildings situated closer to neighbouring sites than the proposals. The new facilities are at least 60m from all residential dwellings and all the new facilities are further away from residential properties than the existing classrooms and play space. As such it is considered that no significant issues with regards noise and disturbance are likely to arise.

13. Due to the separation distance involved it is considered that the proposals will not lead to any significant loss of light, overbearing or overlooking to the detriment of adjacent properties. As such the proposals are considered to accord with CP3 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy with regards loss of light, overbearing and overlooking.

14. It is recommended that an 'hours of construction' condition be utilised on the scheme to avoid noise and loss of amenity at inappropriate times. Wokingham's standard hours of construction condition usually allows works to commence at 8am, it is however recommended in this case that work is allowed to commence at 7am on weekdays (but not at weekends). This is to reduce conflict and health and safety issues from contractors and works deliveries arriving at a similar time to school children in the mornings. It is considered by officers that avoiding this conflict should be given more weight than the potential for slightly greater loss of neighbouring amenity during the construction period from earlier construction noise (Condition 4).

Access and movement

Highway safety & access:

15. Grazeley School is located on Mere oak Lane and a footway is available along Mere oak Lane on the school side of the carriageway. Mere oak Lane is a C class local distributor road subject to a 40mph speed limit with a variable speed limit of 20mph in place during school drop off and pick up times outside the school.

16. The scheme has been designed to provide a one-way entry and exit arrangement to the new car park and this is considered acceptable. Appropriate signage and car park layout markings will be required and are secured by conditions 12 and 13. The highway Officer considers that the existing variable speed limit sign is unlikely to be affected by the proposed 'entry' access. Each access is to be in the form of footway crossovers to maintain pedestrian priority. The width is considered suitable for one-way operation and will also cater for service/delivery vehicles.

17. Mere oak Lane is subject to a 20mph speed limit during school times and the proposed 'school keep clear' markings will ensure appropriate visibility is maintained from the exit. During other times of the day visibility splays of 2.4m x 120m have been demonstrated. Due to the creation of additional parking it is not considered necessary to

provide double yellow lines on MereOak Lane.

Traffic Impact and Sustainability.

18. The additional classrooms will lead to additional pupil trips. To cater for the increase in parking demand a new car park and drop-off zone is proposed and this is considered acceptable by the Highway Officer.

19. The school is also proposing a new School Travel Plan and although the location of the school doesn't lend itself well to sustainable modes of travel the Travel Plan will focus on ways of improving this. Included within the proposal is new cycle parking and detailed design of this is secured by condition 9. The level of cycle parking can be reviewed as part of the Travel Plan. A new pedestrian footway has been indicated adjacent to the 'exit' and pedestrian routes have been provided within the proposed car park. Vehicle speeds in this location will be low.

Parking

20. Eleven car parking spaces are currently available for school staff. The proposed car park will provide 25 staff parking spaces, 47 parent parking spaces and a drop-off zone suitable for up to 6 vehicles at one time. The proposed level of parking is considered to be acceptable and will offer a significant safety improvement over the current situation (on-street parking). The parking is secured by condition 8.

Drainage:

21. The proposals will lead to an increase in built form on the site which would potentially increase surface run off, as such it is recommended that the development should incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and a condition is recommended to this effect. (condition 5)

Ecology:

22. The site is located in a known bat foraging area, a great crested newt consultation zone and has some vegetation of potential habitat interest on the site. Initial survey work has been provided by the applicant which at this stage appears to be acceptable. However some additional further survey work is required before any permission is formally granted. This could not be undertaken previously as it was not within the appropriate survey season. As such it is recommended that the committee reach a resolution to delegate the application to the Head of Development Management to approve, subject to no significant issues arising in the ecological surveys.

Provision of Playground/Playing field Space

23. Due to the increase in the site size as a result of the acquisition of the additional land to the north the amount of formal play space and playing fields on the site is

increased (though there was some informal use of this area previously). The proposal includes a new multi-use games area an improved pitch and as such the proposal is considered to significantly increase the quality of the play facilities available at the school.

Atomic Weapon Establishment Zone (AWE)

24. The site falls within the 3km of the Burghfield AWE. MDD Local Plan policy TB04 requires that potential impact upon safety with proximity of the AWE. Policy TB04 states that schemes over certain thresholds require the potential for safety and emergency response be considered. This application triggers these thresholds as it is likely to increase visitors to the site by more than 50 people (though some of these visitors may have been in the area in any case as the school catchment covers this zone). The Office for Nuclear Regulation has been consulted on the proposal and it is hoped it's response will be received for inclusion in the members update.

Archaeology:

25. The Borough Archaeologist notes that Grazeley School is in a location within an area of archaeological potential. In order to assess the potential for archaeology and the impact of the development the Borough Archaeologist recommends that a condition relating to archaeological investigation.

Mineral extraction consultation zone

26. The proposed development is located in an area of the Borough where extraction of minerals could be possible. The Replacement Minerals Local Plan for Berkshire sets out the approach to planning for minerals which states that Local Planning Authorities will oppose development that would cause the sterilisation of minerals deposits, unless:-

- the mineral deposit is of no commercial interest
- it can be demonstrated that there is an overriding need for development
- there is likely to such strong environmental or other objection that extraction of minerals would be unlikely to be permitted

27. There is evidence of historic mineral working in the wider area but there are no operational mineral workings in or adjacent to the site at present and there are no dormant mineral permissions or allocated preferred areas for future minerals working at this site.

28. The site is currently a school and as such it is unlikely to ever be taken utilised for mineral extraction. The proposal could affect access to potential mineral reserve if any were on site, however the proposal is considered to have a negligible potential significance to mineral provision in Berkshire and the modular classroom could be removed meaning the impact is only temporary. Given the above constraints and the demonstrated overriding need for the development it is considered that the proposal is not unacceptable in terms of impact on mineral extraction.

CONCLUSION

The proposal consists of the erection of a new extension to the existing school to provide three new classrooms, a cookery room and toilets. The proposal also includes new external works to provide car parking, a multi use games area, a football pitch and play area.

Grazeley Parochial Primary School normally only takes in a half form of entry in each year. The school is intended to be extended to accommodate a full single form of entry at all age groups. The primary school needs to provide an extension to provide additional teaching accommodation as the school does not have enough teaching space to accommodate the extra pupils and meet current educational standards.

The proposal has received no letters of objection from local residents. The scheme is recommended for approval as it is considered to provide much needed educational spaces and is considered compliant with the development plan.

CONTACT DETAILS

Service	Telephone	Email
Development Management	0118 974 6445	development.control@wokingham.gov.uk