

CASE OFFICER'S REPORT

Application Reference: N/13/00698/REM
Date of Inspection: 19/03/2013
Date site notice posted: 19/03/2013
Date of press notice:

SITE ADDRESS: RIDGEWAY FARM, COMMON PLATT, PURTON, WILTSHIRE SN5 4JT
PROPOSAL: Provision of a 1 Form of Entry Primary School Including Erection of School Building and Associated Access, Car Parking and External Works Including Playing Fields Landscaping and Associated Site Development

SITE LOCATION

The application site is part of the larger development area known as Ridgeway Farm situated on the western boundary of the Swindon Urban area albeit within the open countryside of the Wiltshire Administrative Area of Wiltshire Council. The site itself is located toward the centre of the wider development area to the west of the Phase 1 residential development and within the central square. The land is currently open agricultural land with a mature hedgerow on its eastern boundary. The land slopes from west to east. The existing residential areas of Swindon are located to the south and the east.

SITE HISTORY

N/10/04575/OUT for the erection of 700 dwellings and ancillary facilities and development was allowed on appeal by the Secretary of State 26 November 2012.

Since that date the applicant has discharged certain conditions attached to the Outline planning consent; has submitted this reserved matters application for the primary school within the timeframe required by the Section 106 agreement accompanying the Outline Planning Permission and has entered into pre-application consultations with the Council in respect of the first two phases of residential development. This process has led to the submission of Reserved Matters applications for the Phase 1 Residential development (N/13/01615/REM) and its related infrastructure and structural landscaping (N/13/01141/REM) which have yet to be determined but which provide the context for part of the primary school site.

PROPOSAL

The proposal is to erect a 1 form of entry primary school to serve the new residential development. The proposals include the necessary ancillary facilities of playing field, car parking and access. In addition land levelling, landscaping and boundary treatments are also part of the proposals.

The applicant has submitted revised plans for the school building itself following comments received as to design character raised by officers and other interested parties.

The Outline application proposals were informed and supported by an Environmental Impact Assessment in accordance with the 1999 Regulations (as amended). The EIA was the subject of a supplemental statement. The proposals and related EIA were considered and assessed as part of the Appeal and Public Inquiry process. It is not considered that the current reserved matters application proposals require further EIA.

CONSULTATIONS

For the purposes of clarity and completeness the Council has consulted all consultees and respondents from the Outline planning application and appeal process. Not all those consulted responded.

Spatial Plans
No Objections.

Education
No Objections. The proposals meet operational requirements and the site provides adequate pupil security. The design of the sports hall element presenting to the main square would benefit from greater definition and architectural variation.

Highways

Queried details as to the parking strategy and provision and sought details as to the access arrangements..
Revised plans were submitted and no objections were raised subject to conditions.

Environmental Health

No Objections.

Archaeologist

No Objections.

Drainage

No Objections following the submission of additional details.

Ecologist

No Objections.

Urban Design

Initial comments raised concerns regarding the utilitarian large scale frontages and roof profiles with plant and solar panel in relation to the main square and the prominent setting. Alterations were suggested. Following the submission of revised plans Officers have confirmed that their concerns have largely been addressed albeit further suggestions as to the use of materials have been made.

Network Rail

No Objections.

Wiltshire Fire Service

No objections but recommend the provision of sprinkler system and ensure access for emergency vehicles.

Esso Pipelines

No Objections.

Highways Agency

No Objections.

MOD

No Objections.

Thames Water

No objection subject to informative.

Swindon Borough Council

SBC raised concerns regarding the red line boundary for the site and the access. It was considered that the access from the public highway was not included in the proposals and should have been. Further concerns were raised in respect of capacity for projected pupil numbers and recommended that the site layout make provision for possible temporary structures also. Accessibility to existing and proposed residential neighbourhoods was raised as a concern. Concerns were raised in respect of drainage for the development in the absence of wider site proposals. Query as to the location of a parent and pupil drop off point. Recommended that details as to ancillary infrastructure such as lighting should be included in the scheme design proposals at this stage rather than later. Concerns as to the bland character of the school design

SBC made no further comment on the revised plans.

L.ydiard Milicent Parish Council

Objects to the proposals on the grounds of the impact of residential development on the local highway network and the impact on wildlife.

Cricklade Parish Council

Objection on the grounds of increased flood risk off site; Traffic generation and congestion; Highways Safety concerns on the rail bridge on the B4553

Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre
Identify multiple records of birds and amphibians within a 1KM grid covering the site. Records of water voles within 60 metres of the centre grid of the site.

Three letters of representation from local residents were received raising objections in respect of:-

- Accuracy of the submitted plans
- Adequacy of drainage and foul sewerage
- Loss of privacy
- Traffic generation

ASSESSMENT

Principle

The school is required to support the proposed level of residential development and accords with proposals set out in Outline Planning Application allowed at appeal. The submission of the application for approval of Reserved Matters reflects timeframes included in the approved Section 106 agreement tied to the Outline Permission. The details of this application in accord with Condition 4 of the Outline Planning Permission largely relate to the design character of the building and the layout of the site. In particular condition 4 requires submission and approval of:

- (a) The scale of the development;*
- (b) The layout of the development;*
- (c) The external appearance of the development;*
- (d) The landscaping of the site;*

A range of other conditions attached to the Outline consent remain in force until discharged and are largely phrased as pre-commencement conditions. Sufficient detail has been submitted with this application to allow assessment of details in respect of the above listed matters. The principle of the development proposed and matters such as traffic generation arising from the school and the wider related development are not available for reconsideration as a part of this application. The application relates solely to reserved matters of design character, site layout, landscaping, and external appearance. The application is set with the context of the discharge of conditions that has already taken place including the approval of an urban design framework for the site as a whole. The details of this application accord with that framework plan. The proposed school is located at the heart of the residential area that it will serve. The proposed layout will address the operational education needs and requirements adequately. In this context it is considered that the proposals meet the principle requirements of the proposed development.

Design

The proposal has been subject to significant design revisions following comments from a range of interested parties as to the design character of the school. Of particular concern has been the treatment of the facades facing the main square of the development. These elements relate to the sports hall element of the building. In pre-application discussions with the applicant it was made clear that the primary school building should form a key element and feature of the main square. In particular, it was specified that the building should relate well to the form and scale of the other buildings within the main square. Other buildings in and adjacent the main square will be up to three storeys in height and present a strong focus to the development and a leading design characteristic. The large main school hall building presented an opportunity for the school building to respond to this and the applicant has sought to do so in the proposed layout of the site. However the facades of the structure as proposed in the application plans were relatively undefined and uniform in character without significant detailing or design features. The applicant has entered into a process of design revision in liaison with the Council's Urban Design Team. Revised plans have been submitted and officers consider that these revisions adequately address previously raised concerns. The amendments include:-

The Reduction of the scale of the administration and sports hall building including reduction of roof void;
Addition of recessed detailing adjacent to fenestration;
Details of roof mounted solar array;

Introduction of a roof overhang around the building edge;
Alterations to the positioning of doors;
Additional Fenestration;
Removal of some planting and vegetation;
Narrowing of flag paving areas; and
Repositioning and reconfiguration of external storage boundary wall structure.

Further alterations to the site layout have also been proposed and these are referenced below. Cumulatively it is considered that the effect of the alterations on the external appearance of the building have addressed the specific concerns raised. The alterations to the detailing, doors and fenestration with the roof overhand and reduced scale in particular add detail and character to the structure whilst relating the building to the neighbouring square. It is of course important to note that this is a primary school building and the critical issue is for the structure to meet operational requirements. It is also not a residential or commercial structure and again its design character should reflect that purpose and use. The scale, bulk and mass of the proposal does however respond to the context of the main square and anticipated neighbouring buildings as well as the key open spaces in this locality. Similarly it is considered that the proposed materials are broadly in accord with the character approach that is being adopted for the buildings adjacent to the school site.

It should be noted that no further objections or concerns were raised by any party following re-consultation on the revised proposals.

It is considered that the boundary treatments are appropriate for the site given the nature of the use and the form and character of the land including changing levels and mature hedgerow boundary to the east. The treatments include 1.2 metre; 1 metre; 2.4 metre and 1.8 metre high metal railing/fences, predominantly weld mesh fences around the playing field locations; and 1.8 metre timber fences to the northern boundary. To the main square frontage the treatment is for a combination of open areas, metal railing, metal fences, built walls and benches and the building itself. The metal fencing treatment provides security to the site, particularly around the playing field areas and adjacent the hedgerow to the east and adjacent the southern boundary where there is a change in levels. Avon and Somerset Constabulary have been consulted on the proposals directly by the developer and the Crime Prevention Design Advisor for the Constabulary has written to confirm that all of their concerns are fully addressed and that they consider that the design addresses the "Secured by Design" guidance and objectives.

Full details as to external lighting of the site are not submitted at this point in time. It is considered that this matter can be addressed by discharge of condition attached to the Outline Planning permission and it is not a fundamental objection to determination of the proposals.

Given the position, design character, form, scale, bulk, massing and orientation of the proposed buildings on site and the form and layout of the proposed ancillary facilities it is not considered that the proposals would result in any harm to existing residential or proposed amenities. Similarly it is considered that the proposals will contribute to the character and visual amenity of the locality; whilst meeting operational education requirements.

Access and Parking

Initial concerns were raised by various parties regarding the access to the facility and the layout of the access and parking areas. Additional information, particularly with respect to swept path analysis for vehicles accessing the site, especially any large scale vehicles was sought and has been submitted. Queries were also raised regarding the red line boundary and access to the highway. Concerns have also been raised in respect of parking provision, servicing and layout/provision of drop off/pick up areas.

The applicant has submitted additional details regarding swept path analysis for the accesses and parking areas and delineation of the access points to the actual carriageway adjacent the site. The additional submissions also propose some minor alterations to the layout of the parking areas and the frontages and access points in order to ensure adequate visibility splays. Following the submission of additional information and these revisions the Council's Highways and Education Officers have raised no objections to the scheme proposals subject to conditions. No further comments or representations have been received from other interested parties following the submission of additional details and revisions.

Drainage

Initial concerns were raised regarding the proposals for surface water drainage at the site and how this may accord with wider site proposals and discharge of conditions in that regard. Additional details have been supplied that address the land formation proposals including use of a porous retaining wall. The applicant has confirmed that a detailed drainage scheme will be required related to the detailed specification for the retaining wall but that the intention is that the water will drain from this location to a ditch to the east of the site where the sports field drainage will also discharge. Anti climbing measures for the wall will be included within the Building Regulations application details for health and safety. The Council's Drainage Engineers have reviewed the additional submissions. The Council's Engineers have also been consulted in respect of the Reserved Matters Applications for the Phase 1 Residential development adjacent to this site and in respect of pre-application consultations on Phase 2. The Council's drainage Engineers will also be consulted in respect of applications to discharge conditions in relation to surface water drainage attached to the Outline Planning Permission. The current application does not Discharge these details but provides sufficient information to confirm that the site can be drained such that approval of the reserved matters can be issued.

Landscaping

Boundary treatment matters have been addressed above. The site has been the subject to minor alterations to the detail of the layout albeit in an indicative Masterplan form. The applicant has requested that full specification of details of site landscaping be approved under discharge of condition 6 of the Outline Planning Consent requiring submission and approval of Landscape details as part of the site as a whole. This is considered largely acceptable but will require a condition to be included to restrict development until details are submitted and agreed. The alterations to the detailed layout of the site largely relate to reduced areas of internal access and circulation roads, reductions to the hard surfaced paved areas, removal of some of the proposed tree planting and ornamental shrub planting, removal of a nature trail and outdoor amphitheatre and adjustments to the land form regarding changes in levels at the southern, eastern and part of the northern boundary.

Ecology

The Council's Ecologists has raised no objection to the scheme proposals which allow for the retention of the hedgerow to the eastern boundary in accord with the submitted EIA and approved Ecological Management Plan. Furthermore condition 9 of the Outline permission requires the submission and agreement of a Construction Environmental Management Plan that will provide details for the protection of protected habitats and species during construction.

RECOMMENDATION:

The reserved matters of appearance, layout, scale and landscaping accords with the outline permission granted under 10/04575/OUT. The proposed development would not result in the detrimental impact on any residential amenities, landscape, drainage, ecology or highways. The proposal thus accords with Policies C2, C3 and NE15 of the adopted North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011.

CONDITIONS:

1. The development hereby approved shall not be first occupied for educational purposes until all the accesses, car parks, servicing areas and internal paths have been constructed in accordance with the approved plans.

REASON: To ensure that the development is served by an adequate means of access.

2. The development hereby approved shall not be first occupied for educational purposes until the adoptable road network serving the site has been completed to at least binder-course level and provided with street lighting.

REASON: To ensure that the development is served by an adequate means of access

3. No development shall commence on site until a scheme of safe pedestrian and cycle routes within the outline application site, providing access from the walking and cycling catchment area has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such facilities shall be provided in accordance with the

approved details prior to any part of the development being first brought into occupied for educational purposes.

REASON: In pursuit of sustainable transport objectives.

4. No part of the development shall be first occupied for education purposes, until the visibility splays shown on the approved plans, with a 'y' distance of 43m, have been provided with no obstruction to visibility at or above a height of 600mm above the nearside carriageway level. The visibility splays shall be maintained free of obstruction at all times thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety

Note to Applicant: This condition could require minor changes to boundary treatment

5. No development shall commence on site until a Travel Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Travel Plan shall include details of implementation and monitoring and shall be implemented in accordance with these agreed details. The results of the implementation and monitoring shall be made available to the Local Planning Authority on request, together with any changes to the plan arising from those results.

REASON: In the interests of road safety and reducing vehicular traffic to the development.

6. Construction of the school building shall not commence until details and samples of the materials to be used for the external walls and roofs have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

7. Development shall not commence until full details of the landscaping of the site have been submitted and approved under the discharge of condition 6 attached to 10/04575/OUT.

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

C12000.13.01 Location Plan 15/03/2013

Proposed Location Plan/Framework Plan 15/03/13

130226_Design and Access Statement 15/03/2013

Appendix D 15/03/13

Appendix E 15/03/13

Appendix F 15/03/13

Appendix I 15/03/13

Design and Access Supplemental Statement Walker Simpson Architects 13/09/2013

1352 L.5 REV A Illustrative Masterplan

WSA.0300.P1.04 REV Proposed Roof Plan

WSA.0300.P1.03 REV A Ground Floor Plan

WSA.0300.P1.05 REV A Proposed Elevations

440/ATR/001 REV D Access Swept Path Analysis and Visibility Splays (Replace Design and Access Statement Appendix H)

440/ATR/002 REV C Swept Path Analysis (Replace Design and Access Statement Appendix H)

440/EW/005 REV B Indicative Site Cross Sections

Appendix G Secure by Design Response for Updated Revised Plans August 2013

No variation from the approved plans should be made without the prior approval of the local planning authority.

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

INFORMATIVES

WP3 CONDITIONS ON OUTLINE PERMISSION

Your attention is also drawn to the conditions imposed on the outline planning permission reference 10/04575/OUT and dated 26/11/12].

WP4 APPROVAL OF RESERVED MATTERS

This approval of matters reserved refers only to condition 4 of outline planning permission 10/04575/OUT dated 26/11/13, but does not by itself constitute a planning permission.

WP6 Alterations to approved plans

Any alterations to the approved plans, brought about by compliance with Building Regulations or any other reason must first be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority before commencement of work.

WP8 Reference to Section 106 agreements

This permission shall be read in conjunction with an Agreement made under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990 and dated the 16th May 2012.

WP13 Public sewers

The applicant should note that the grant of planning permission does not include any separate permission which may be needed to erect a structure in the vicinity of a public sewer. Such permission should be sought direct from Thames Water Utilities Ltd / Wessex Water Services Ltd. Buildings are not normally allowed within 3.0 metres of a Public Sewer although this may vary depending on the size, depth, strategic importance, available access and the ground conditions appertaining to the sewer in question.

WP18 Permission not authorising work on land outside the applicant's control & Party Wall Act

The applicant is requested to note that this permission does not affect any private property rights and therefore does not authorise the carrying out of any work on land outside their control. If such works are required it will be necessary for the applicant to obtain the landowners consent before such works commence.

If you intend carrying out works in the vicinity of the site boundary, you are also advised that it may be expedient to seek your own advice with regard to the requirements of the Party Wall Act 1996.