

REPORT FOR CONSIDERATION AT SPECIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

Reference No: HGY/2008/1343

Ward: Hornsey

Date received: 20/06/2008

Last amended date: 17/09/2008

Drawing number of plans: S5233 D 0 001 P2, 002 P1, 003 P1, 004 P2, 005 P2, 006 P2, 007 P2, 008 P2 & 010 P3.

Address: Hornsey School For Girls, Inderwick Road N8

Proposal: Erection of 2 x single storey buildings at the school's frontage to provide a new administration block and learning resource centre, and create a new main school entrance.

Existing Use: D1

Proposed Use: D1

Applicant: Haringey Council, Children And Young People's Services

Ownership: Public

PLANNING DESIGNATIONS

Road Network: Borough Road

Officer Contact: Jeffrey Holt

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PERMISSION subject to conditions

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

Hornsey School for Girls is built on former residential land in the 1960s. The 2.857 ha site is bounded by Inderwick Road and the rear of residential properties on Rathcoole Gardens and Weston Park. The surrounding area is characterised by 2- and 3-storey Victorian terraces.

The school has four main blocks. The main L-shaped block is 3- to 4-storeys high with other more recent additions being smaller 2-storey blocks and a number of single storey temporary buildings. The blocks are set within areas of green space and carparking and are arranged such that there is a central grassed square. There are a number of mature trees through the site.

No buildings on site are listed and no part of the site is in a Conservation Area.

PLANNING HISTORY

Planning history dates back to 1961. Most recent applications are listed below.

HGY/2006/1896 - Erection of 2 x temporary single storey portakabin classroom blocks providing an additional 4 classrooms and 2 stores – GRANTED

HGY/2006/1459 - Erection of 2 x temporary single storey portakabin classroom blocks providing an additional 4 classrooms and 2 stores – WITHDRAWN

HGY/2006/1642 - Erection of 3 x Newcastle Senior shelters, 20 cycle stands and 40 helmet lockers – GRANTED

HGY/2004/0913 - Installation of 3m high 'wiremesh' fence to Inderwick Road and along side road including sports field - GRANTED

HGY/2002/0320 - Erection of 2- storey building to provide new performing Arts block (Revised Scheme) – GRANTED

HGY/2000/1095 - Erection of new performing art block rear of existing tennis courts and main building with associated improved internal circulation and replacement of all weather pitch and replacement floodlighting. – GRANTED

HGY/1998/0630 - Erection of 2 storey building to facilitate 12 new classrooms, 1 staff room and 4 associated offices, toilets, plant room and lift – GRANTED

HGY/1996/0645 – Erection of temporary building comprising 2 No. classrooms, lobby and a store. – GRANTED

OLD/1987/0808 - Erection of double demountable classroom unit – GRANTED

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

Permission is sought for the erection of 2 x single storey buildings at the school's main entrance to provide a new administration block, learning resource centre and new entrance.

The administration block is a modern design in red brick and is 18.2m long, 13.8m wide and between 2.2 and 2.8m high above pavement. The Learning Resource Centre (LRC) is a similar but larger building, measuring 32.8m long, 12.8m wide and between 3.8m and 5.6m high above pavement level. The administration block is set on the pavement boundary whilst the LRC is set back 2m. The space between the two buildings forms the a new visitors' entrance.

The development creates a total of 640m² of new floorspace, 416m² in the LRC and 224m² in the administration building. The existing administration building will provide an improved common room, two group tutorial rooms and a 6th Form Head Teacher's office.

CONSULTATION

Ward Councillors

Local Residents:

87-143 (o) Rathcoole Gardens, N8

145-153a (o) Spencer Road, N8

Flat 1-4 (c) West Court, Inderwick Road, N8

106-180 (e) Weston Park, N8

113-185 (o) Inderwick Road, N8

96a-104 (e) Weston Park, N8

128-166 (e) Inderwick Road, N8

Flat 1-4 (c) Albert Buildings, Spencer Road, N8

7-23 (o), 23a Montague Road, N8

18-30 (e) Montague Road, N8

30-48(e) Hornsey Road, N8

Transportation Group

Cleansing

Building Control

Public meeting held at the school between BSF Team, school representatives, tp bennet architects and approximately 30 residents on 10 July 2008.

RESPONSES

Recycling Officer:

No comments to provide.

Building Control:

No comments regarding Building Regulations BS – Fire Brigade Access

Transportation:

This site is located within walking distance of Hornsey rail station and Tottenham Lane which provides some 58 buses per hour (two-way), for frequent bus connection to and from: Wood Green, Turnpike Lane, Finsbury Park, Tottenham High Road and Green Lanes. The proposal will not increase the number of existing students but improve the facilities for the existing students and staff. The school currently has a total of 74 off-street car parking spaces, which will be retained, and covered cycle parking facility capable of accommodating 50 bicycles. The school has an active travel plan, which will help to promote and increase the number of students travelling by sustainable modes of transport. The school undertakes annual travel survey; the latest travel survey undertaken January 2008 showed that 68% of students travel to school by bus, with 17% walking and 13.2% by car. We have subsequently considered that most of the pupils and staff of this development would use sustainable travel modes for their journeys to and from the site. Hence, it is our opinion that the proposal will not have any adverse effect on the existing number of generated trips or car parking demand. The site has also not been identified within the Council's adopted UDP as that renowned to have high car parking pressure.

Consequently, the transportation and highways authority would not object to this application.

Local Residents:

24 objections from local residents to the initial scheme on the following grounds:

- The height and scale of the buildings are excessive and out of keeping with the street
- The location of the buildings right on the pavement results in an oppressive view
- Lack of windows
- Yellow brick is out of keeping
- Loss of mature trees
- Overshadowing
- Increased congestion on Inderwick Road
- Inadequate pre-application consultation
- Increase opportunities for graffiti
- Support was expressed for the BSF program

Following revisions to the scheme and further consultation, 9 objections were received on the following grounds:

- Both buildings should be set back, not just the learning resource centre
- Lack of green roof on administration building
- Height is still excessive
- Loss of mature trees and lack of replanting

- Poor layout of windows

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

The London Plan

The London Plan, adopted in February 2004 and updated in February 2008, forms the Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London. It contains key policies covering housing, transport, design and sustainability in the capital. It contains key policies covering housing, transport, design and sustainability in the capital.

POLICY 3A.24: EDUCATION FACILITIES

This policy seeks to provide high-quality education services and opportunities in accordance with demand and recognises the importance of utilising existing school sites to reduce the need to identify new locations for education facilities.

Unitary Development Plan 2006

The Council's Unitary Development Plan was adopted by the council in July 2006 following its Public Enquiry and modifications procedures. It incorporates relevant national policy guidance and complies with the London Plan. The principles which are relevant to this case are set out below.

POLICY UD3: GENERAL PRINCIPLES

New development in the borough should complement the existing pattern of development in that part of Haringey. The policy aims to ensure that future development in the borough will not worsen the quality of life for those living and working in Haringey.

POLICY UD4: QUALITY DESIGN

The Council wishes to support good and appropriate design, which is sustainable, improves the quality of the existing environment, reinforces a sense of place and promotes civic pride.

The Council considers that people deserve a safe environment in which they can live and move around without fearing that they might be a victim of crime. This is an important component of peoples' quality of life. Good design of buildings and their relationship with their environment affects the perception of an area, as well as the opportunity for disorderly or criminal behaviour.

Any proposals for developments and alterations or extensions, which require planning permission or listed building consent, will be expected to be of high design quality.

POLICY UD2: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

This policy is primarily concerned with the environmental/natural resource aspects of sustainable development. (The social and economic aspects of sustainable development are addressed elsewhere in the UDP). The Council would prefer, all things being equal, that all development in the borough is designed in a way that maximises the potential of the site without causing any unnecessary local nor global environmental consequences.

POLICY CW1: NEW COMMUNITY/HEALTH FACILITIES

This policy seeks the provision of new community facilities to meet growing demand provided that they are appropriate to the location, meet a local need, are flexible in use where possible and can be reached by sustainable means.

POLICY ENV9: MITIGATING CLIMATE CHANGE: ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The Council will encourage energy efficiency and a reduction in carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions. More detail on design and layout is contained in SPG9 Sustainability Statement – Including Checklist.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

SPG1a Design Guidance
SPG3b Privacy/Overlooking, Aspect/Outlook and Daylight/Sunlight

ANALYSIS/ASSESSMENT OF THE APPLICATION

The main issues relating to this proposal are:

1. Appearance and impact on the streetscene
2. Impact on neighbouring properties
3. Need for Education Facilities
4. Sustainability
5. Transportation

Appearance/Impact on the streetscene

Apart from high street development on Tottenham Lane, the school is the only non-residential development in the immediate area. Because of this and the predominantly 1960s style architecture, the school maintains a weak relationship to the character and pattern of Victorian terrace development around it. Consequently, careful consideration must be given to how a new development would sit within these two contrasting styles.

The proposed buildings consist of two single storey rectilinear blocks with primary frontage on Inderwick Road and secondary frontage on Spencer Road. The smaller block, towards Spencer Road, is the administration building, the larger block is the Learning Resource Centre (LRC). The space between the buildings forms a new visitors' entrance.

Due to public opposition to the proposal, a public meeting was held to discuss local residents' concerns. A number of changes were made to the scheme as a result. Firstly, it was initially proposed to have both buildings immediately on the pavement edge but the applicant has pulled the LRC back 2m and proposed planting and landscaping between the building and pavement. Due to design difficulties, the administration block remains in the same location. Second, both buildings have been reduced in height by 700mm, bringing the height of the administration block and LRC to 2.8m and 5.6m above pavement level respectively. Third, alterations were made to the window arrangements on both buildings. Fourth, the colour of the bricks used has been changed from yellow to red.

The proposed buildings develop what is currently an open grassed area between the existing school buildings and the pavement on Inderwick Road. By building there, it brings development closer to pavement, which is in general accordance with the building lines of the surrounding Victorian terrace houses. Although the admin building remains on the pavement edge, its low single storey profile is considered to temper any visual impact it has, indeed it would be lower than the existing boundary fence on Inderwick Road. The LRC is a taller building but it is set back 2m from the pavement and has the benefit of planting and landscaping to soften the visual impact on the street. Even so, it must be noted that both buildings are lower than the existing school buildings and the surrounding houses and they are thus subordinate to existing development. In addition, the frequency of windows on both buildings reduces their visual weight and establishes a more interesting frontage onto Inderwick Road in comparison to the existing fence. The full height windows on the LRC, in particular, break up the brick façade as well as add elements of verticality to a horizontal building.

The buildings are block developments in keeping with the urban form established by the school but in addition they relate to the surrounding Victorian terraces by using red brick on the façade. The proposed buildings therefore successfully relate to both the distinctive built form of the school whilst maintaining a visual relationship with the surrounding architecture.

The position of the buildings near to the pavement is a departure from the existing school layout but it results in a more obvious street presence for the school. This results in a more legible approach to the entrance, greater passive surveillance to the street and a more defined amenity area for school users through the enclosure of the central courtyard. The overall result is considered to be an improvement over the current poor interface between the school and the public realm.

A green roof is proposed over the entire LRC. By adding a natural green element to the building, the green roof will reduce the appearance of hard surface area

thereby improving the outlook onto the LRC from houses on the opposite side of Inderwick Road as well as the school itself.

Trees

A survey of existing trees within the school site was undertaken in March 2008. The survey included an assessment of 80 individual trees, of which there were three trees identified as being of high individual quality and value, but none were considered to be prominent landscape features. There are 42 trees of moderate quality, 33 of low quality and two that were identified as trees to be removed due to their poor condition. The trees are concentrated in two main areas; to the front of the school fronting Inderwick Road and within a copse to the rear, with others scattered around the grounds. The existing trees contribute to the green amenity of the school site and local area.

The proposal involves the removal of 15 trees on the Inderwick Road frontage, 13 of which are mature. Of these only a mature cherry at the junction of Inderwick Road and Spencer Road is considered to be of high quality but not considered a prominent landscape feature. Six of the trees are low quality and the remainder are moderate quality. 21 other trees would be retained in the area to the front of the school, many of which would be readily visible behind the proposed new buildings providing a visual backdrop.

Where trees have been removed, 20 replacement specimens are proposed on the Inderwick Road and Spencer Road frontages, including new street trees. A further 14 new trees would be planted on other parts of the site, including a row of 8 new birch trees to create a "student street" along the northern edge of the games courts. The applicant has also committed to planting up to four street trees on the public footpath on the east side of Inderwick Road adjacent to the school's property. These replacement and additional trees, in addition to the green roof, are considered satisfactory provisions to maintain a green presence on these two frontages.

Impact on neighbouring properties

Due to proposed buildings' proximity to the pavement, there is potential for overshadowing onto the street. The LRC is the taller of the two linked buildings, reaching between 3.8m and 5.6m above pavement level at its highest point, and is set back 2m from the edge of the pavement.

As can be seen in the submitted drawing no. 008 P2, Section 9 shows the relationship between the height of the LRC and the houses on the opposite side of Inderwick Road. It can be seen that the highest point of the LRC is below the level of their eaves. Although it is 1.5m closer to the pavement than these houses, the LRC would cast a shadow the extent of which would be no greater than that caused by two rows of existing terraced houses as exemplified by no.'s 128-166 Inderwick Road, in relation to their counterparts no.'s 169 to 185. Similarly, Section 1 on drawing no. 005 P2 shows that the administration block is located on the edge of the pavement but has a maximum height that is substantially lower than the houses opposite on Inderwick Road. Despite there

being no setback, due to its limited height it is considered that there would be no overshadowing greater than that caused by the 2-storey houses on Inderwick Road referred to above.

With reference to overlooking and privacy, the windows on the proposed buildings are set 15.5m away from facing windows on the opposite side of Inderwick Road. As discussed above, this distance is comparable to the distance between the existing terrace houses elsewhere on Inderwick Road. Furthermore, all windows on the administration block and lower level windows on the LRC are obscure glazed. The only clear glazed windows are those which are above head height. Therefore, there would be extremely limited opportunity for direct overlooking. Obscure glazing in the relevant frontages can be made the subject of suitably worded planning condition.

On the issue of noise. The proposal does not involve an increase in pupil numbers but does bring school uses closer to houses on Inderwick Road. However, the proposed buildings are for relatively quiet activities such as administration and quiet study in the LRC. The central courtyard is likely to be used more frequently as it will be enclosed but this enclosure will serve to attenuate much of the resultant noise.

Need for new education facilities

Policy 3A.24 of the London Plan as well as Policy CW1 of the Unitary Development Plan 2006 both recognise the importance of providing facilities to meet demand for high-quality education services and opportunities. The proposed development will greatly improve the facilities for existing students. According to the applicant, the current administration and library facilities are cramped and divided into small office spaces. By moving these to a new purposes built buildings, these areas can be developed into three new classrooms and two new ICT rooms. The new administration and LRC blocks will then be able to provide more suitable dedicated facilities. In addition, the LRC will be available for community use during the evenings, a key goal under the above policies, as it will make more effective use of existing community sites. Overall, the proposal is considered to be of substantial benefit to school users and the local community.

Sustainability

Policy UD2 requires development proposals take into account sustainability measures.

The proposed development is in a sustainable location, near to public transport on previously developed land. The scheme incorporates CHP, natural ventilation, efficient use of water, sustainable urban drainage, measures to reduce solar gain and a green roof. The proposed development would result in a 25% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions from predicted levels. In addition, the proposal would achieve a score of "Good" on a BREEAM Schools assessment.

Transportation

Policy UD3 requires development proposals to not have a significant impact on public and private transport networks, including highways or traffic conditions. The Council's Transportation Group have assessed the proposal and do not object.

This site is located within walking distance of Hornsey rail station and Tottenham Lane which provides some 58 buses per hour (two-way), for frequent bus connection to and from Wood Green, Turnpike Lane, Finsbury Park, Tottenham High Road and Green Lanes. The proposal will not increase the number of existing students but improve the facilities for the existing students and staff. The school currently has a total of 74 off-street car parking spaces, which will be retained, and covered cycle parking facility capable of accommodating 50 bicycles. The school has an active travel plan, which will help to promote and increase the number of students travelling by sustainable modes of transport. The school undertakes annual travel survey; the latest travel survey undertaken January 2008 showed that 68% of students travel to school by bus, with 17% walking and 13.2% by car. It is subsequently considered that most of the pupils and staff of this development would use sustainable travel modes for their journeys to and from the site. It is therefore considered that the proposal will not have any adverse impact on the existing number of generated trips or car parking demand. The site has also not been identified within the Council's adopted UDP as that renowned to have high car parking pressure.

Consequently, the proposal is considered acceptable in transportation terms.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The proposal comprises the erection of two single storey buildings at Hornsey School for Girls. The buildings include an administration block and a learning resource centre.

The main issues relating to this scheme are the impact on the streetscene, impact on neighbouring properties, need for additional education facilities, sustainability and transportation. It is considered that the scheme makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the streetscene and is in keeping with the appearance of the school and surrounding pattern of development. It would also have little impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties or local traffic conditions and incorporates appropriate sustainability measures. The scheme would be of great benefit to school users and the local community and achieves a suitable balance between their needs and the quality of the local built environment. The scheme is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policies UD2, UD3, UD4 and ENV9 of the Unitary Development Plan 2006 and approval is recommended subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PERMISSION

Registered No. HGY/2008/1343

Applicant's drawing No.(s) S5233 D 0 001 P2, 002 P1, 003 P1, 004 P2, 005 P2, 006 P2, 007 P2, 008 P2 & 010 P3.

Subject to the following condition(s)

1. The development hereby authorised must be begun not later than the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission, failing which the permission shall be of no effect.

Reason: This condition is imposed by virtue of the provisions of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and to prevent the accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

2. The development hereby authorised shall be carried out in complete accordance with the plans and specifications submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved details and in the interests of amenity.

3. The construction works of the development hereby granted shall not be carried out before 0800 or after 1800 hours Monday to Friday or before 0800 or after 1200 hours on Saturday and not at all on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

Reason: In order to ensure that the proposal does not prejudice the enjoyment of neighbouring occupiers of their properties.

4. The glazing to be installed on the western elevation shall be obscured to a height of at least 1.8m above finished floor level.

Reason: To protect the privacy of neighbouring residents.

5. The tree replacement scheme shall be carried out in complete accordance with the plans and specification submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to provide a suitable setting for the proposed development in the interest of visual amenity.

6. The trunks of those trees to be retained shall be protected by two layers of chestnut paling or hessian sacking.

Reason: In order to ensure the safety of tree trunks during constructional works.

REASONS FOR APPROVAL

The proposed scheme makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the streetscene and is in keeping with the appearance of the school and surrounding pattern of development. It would also have little impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties or local traffic conditions and incorporates appropriate sustainability measures. The scheme would be of great benefit to school users and the local community and achieves a suitable balance between their needs and the quality of the local built environment. The scheme is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policies UD2 'Sustainable Design and Construction', UD3 'General Principles', UD4 'Quality Design', CW1 'New Community / Health Facilities' and ENV9 'Mitigating Climate Change: Energy Efficiency' of the Unitary Development Plan 2006.