

## DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PANEL

7 March 2024

Item: 4.

<b>Application No.:</b>	23/02835/FULL
<b>Location:</b>	Hilltop First School Clewer Hill Road Windsor SL4 4DW
<b>Proposal:</b>	Single storey front extension with raised decking, steps and 2no. canopies, nursery play area, new fence, gates and relocation of the existing gates and 3no. additional parking spaces.
<b>Applicant:</b>	Mr Smith
<b>Agent:</b>	Ms Vicky Kolliopoulou
<b>Parish/Ward:</b>	Windsor Unparished/Clewer And Dedworth East
<b>If you have a question about this report, please contact:</b> Zishan Pervez on 01628 682977 or at <a href="mailto:zishan.pervez@rbwm.gov.uk">zishan.pervez@rbwm.gov.uk</a>	

### 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The proposed development is considered an enhancement of the school facilities and provides an improvement to the overall quality of education. The works, comprising of a single storey extension with raised decking, steps, 2no. canopies and new fence and gates including relocation of existing gates are considered, by virtue of its appropriate design, scale and siting to respect the character and appearance of the site and would not be out of keeping with its surroundings. The additional 3no. parking bays do not have a negative impact upon highways. The proposal accordingly is compliant with the NPPF (Dec 2023) and the relevant Adopted Borough Local Plan and Windsor Neighbourhood Plan policies identified in section 6 and 7 of this report.

**It is recommended the Committee grants planning permission with the conditions listed in Section 11 of this report.**

### 2. REASON FOR PANEL DETERMINATION

- The Council's Constitution does not give the Head of Planning delegated powers to determine the application for this proposal as it involves an RBWM school site.

### 3. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 3.1 The application site is a First School situated in Clewer Hill Road in Windsor. The building is mainly single storey with pitched roofs, with a two-storey part to the northern part of the building.

### 4. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The application seeks planning permission to erect a single storey front extension with raised decking, steps and 2no. canopies, nursery play area, new fence, gates and relocation of the existing gates and 3no. additional parking spaces.
- 4.2 The proposed works comprise of remodelling the existing playroom to a resource base for existing SEND pupils which include two group rooms, a sensory room, an office and new WC's improving the existing special education needs and disabilities (SEND) facilities. The proposed extension would provide additional space to relocate the original nursery playroom with additional WC's. The new decking along the

extension will provide for external play area. The new gates and fence would set apart the nursery informal soft play area with the remaining school play area.

## 5. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

5.1 There is extensive planning history for the site, the most relevant being:

Application Reference	Description	Decision and Date
23/00519/FULL	Detached timber structure	Approved / 16.08.2023
14/00988/FULL	Construction of single storey infill extension to rear of school, relocation of existing canopy and installation of new canopy	Approved / 14.05.2014
08/02524/FULL	Two storey extension to provide additional classrooms together with revised car parking access road and bin storage	Approved / 23.01.2009
08/00864/FULL	Single storey front extension with canopy and additional hard surface play area	Approved / 16.05.2008
01/80392/FULL	Erection of a single storey extension	Approved / 06.03.2001

## 6. DEVELOPMENT PLAN

6.1 The main relevant policies are:

### Adopted Borough Local Plan

Issue	Policy
Sustainability and Placemaking	QP1
Character and Design of New Development	QP3
Nature Conservation and Biodiversity	NR2
Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows	NR3
Environmental Protection	EP1
Community Facilities	IF6
Sustainable transport	IF2

### Windsor Neighbourhood Plan (2011-2026)

Issue	Neighbourhood Plan Policy
Design in keeping with the character and appearance of area	DES.01
Highways/Parking	PAR.01
Residential Amenity	RES.01

## 7. **MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

National Planning Policy Framework Sections (NPPF) (December 2023)

Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development

Section 4 - Decision-making

Section 9- Supporting sustainable transport

Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities

Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places

Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

### **Supplementary Planning Documents**

- Borough Wide Design Guide

### **Other Local Strategies or Publications**

Other Strategies or publications relevant to the proposal are:

- RBWM Townscape Assessment
- RBWM Parking Strategy

## 8. **CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT**

### **Comments from interested parties**

Five neighbouring properties were directly notified of the proposal. No comments were received.

### **Consultees**

<b>Comments</b>	<b>Officers Response</b>
<i>Environmental Protection:</i> No objection, conditions and informative recommended.	Noted. Please see section 8.
<i>Highway:</i> No objections	Noted.
<i>Ecology:</i> Subject to condition, no objection.	Noted. Please see section 8.

## 9. **EXPLANATION OF RECOMMENDATION**

9.1 The assessment of the application is set out in the following way:

- i. Enhancement of school facilities
- ii. Impact on the character of the area and street scene;
- iii. Impact on neighbouring amenities;
- iv. Impact on trees;
- v. Biodiversity
- vi. Impact on parking provision and highway safety.

### **Enhancement of School Facilities**

9.2 Paragraph 99 of the NPPF states: '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

a) give weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications.'

9.3 Policy IF6 (Community Facilities) of the Adopted Local Plan states:

'1. Proposals for new or improved community facilities which meet the needs or aspirations of local residents and visitors will be supported. Where an assessment identifies specific needs in the local area, proposals to meet that local need will be supported when they are located in areas that are accessible by walking, cycling or public transport.'

9.4 The proposed works would improve the overall recreational, learning, and sheltered facilities of the school to cater the requirements of the pupils. The proposed development is considered to accord with paragraph 99 of the NPPF and policy IF6 of the Adopted Local Plan.

### **Impact on Character**

9.5 The appearance of a development is a material planning consideration and the National Planning Policy Framework, Section 12 (Achieving Well-Designed Places) and Borough Local Plan Policies QP1 and QP3, advises that all development should seek to achieve a high quality of design that improves the character and quality of an area.

9.6 The proposed development includes a single storey extension. The extension is of a proportionate scale and has been suitably designed comprising of a gable feature with eaves and ridge height level with the eaves and ridge of the main roof, appearing in keeping with the character the existing building. The external materials proposed would be similar to that used on the existing build, comprising of matching brickwork, tiles and fenestration to appear visually in keeping and sympathetic.

9.7 The new decking would be erected along the side and rear of the extension with one canopy of each side of the decking. The canopies are made from timber and would be in keeping with the setting. Moreover, the fence and gates along the side of the open space along the extension is to split the play area and would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the site.

9.8 In summary, the proposed development is considered to respect both, the character and appearance the host building and the wider area.

### **Impact on Neighbours**

9.9 The proposed development maintains a distance of circa 29m with School Lodge and 17m with 7c Highfield Road. Due to the scale, nature and separation distance from the neighbouring properties, the proposed development would not result in a material loss of light, privacy or overbearing impact. It is considered that the proposal would not result in material harm to neighbouring properties within the surrounding area with respect amenity and the enjoyment of the rear garden space. As such, the proposal is compliant with the Borough Local Plan policy QP3, paragraph 135(f) of the NPPF, which supports a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupiers.

9.10 Environmental Protection were consulted on the application. Following review of the proposal the environmental protection officer offered no objections to the proposal

however recommended a condition requesting a construction environmental management plan to be submitted and approved by the local planning authority, however, it is not considered that it would be necessary to impose such a condition, as the matters that would be covered by this condition is covered by other legislation and guidance outside of planning.

### **Trees**

- 9.11 Adopted Borough Local Plan policy NR3 sets out that development proposals should carefully consider the individual and cumulative impact of proposed development on existing trees, woodlands, hedgerows, including those that make a particular contribution to the appearance of the streetscape and local character/distinctiveness. The policy provides further guidance and states development proposals should, a) protect and retain trees, woodlands and hedgerows, b) where harm to trees, woodland or hedgerows is unavoidable, provide appropriate mitigation measures that will enhance or recreate habitats and new features and c) plant new trees, woodlands and hedgerows and extend existing coverage where possible.
- 9.12 The application site comprises of a number of trees as identified in the tree survey submitted. T2 (sweet gum) and T3 (olive) are identified as category C trees. T1 (category), Olive Gum Tree is scheduled to be felled prior to the proposed extension. There is no objection to the loss of the Olive Gum tree (T1). As the trees in proximity of the proposed extension are not covered by Tree Preservation Order, and are C category trees, it is not considered necessary to impose a planning condition requiring the tree protection measures to be in place during the construction period.

### **Biodiversity**

- 9.13 Paragraph 186(a) of the NPPF states where significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated, or as a last resort compensated for, local planning authorities should refuse planning permission. Local Plan Policy NR2 also states protected species and habitats will be safeguarded from harm or loss and should be enhanced where possible.
- 9.14 The applicant has submitted a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and a Preliminary Roost Assessment carried out by Arbtech Consulted Ltd dated October 2023. The findings have identified that the buildings affected by the proposals were deemed to have negligible potential to support roosting bats and therefore a further survey is not required. There was no or very limited potential on site to support great crested newt, reptiles, badgers, dormouse, riparian mammals, hedgehog or nesting birds and therefore no further survey or specific mitigation is required.
- 9.15 Ecology were consulted on the application, and in light of the above, the ecologist has raised no objections, but has recommended a pre-commencement condition (should planning permission be granted) requiring details of biodiversity enhancements to be submitted and approved by the local planning authority. The planning officer agrees this condition would be necessary and the applicant has agreed to this condition in writing.

### **Highways/Parking**

- 9.16 Policy IF2 states that prior to the adoption of a Parking SPD, the parking standards in the 2004 Parking Strategy will be used as a guide for determining the appropriate level of parking provision. The proposals would allow an increase of 10 pupils and 3 more members of staff. The existing access would remain as existing, and the

existing parking arrangement is widely unaltered with the inclusion of five additional parking bays which are currently occupied by only two parking bays. Highways were consulted on the proposal and the highway officer has advised the proposal would not impact the highway network and such raises no objections. The planning officer agrees with these comments, the increase in the number of pupils and staff is not considered to exacerbate parking pressures or traffic congestion within the site of the surrounding roads. On this basis, the proposal is considered to comply with policy IF2.

## **PLANNING BALANCE**

- 10.** As set out in the above paragraphs, the proposal is considered to be acceptable, and is broadly in accordance with the aims of National and Local Plan policy. The application is recommended for approval subject to the conditions listed below.

### **Appendices to this report**

- 10.1 Appendix A – Location  
Appendix B – Proposed Site Plan  
Appendix C – Proposed Floor Plan  
Appendix D – Proposed Roof Plan  
Appendix E – Proposed Elevations  
Appendix F – Proposed Elevations

## **11. CONDITIONS RECOMMENDED FOR INCLUSION IF PERMISSION IS GRANTED**

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within three years from the date of this permission.  
Reason: To accord with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
- 2 The materials to be used on the external surfaces of the development shall be in accordance with those specified in the application unless any different materials are first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.  
Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area. Relevant Policies - Local Plan QP3.
- 3 Prior to the commencement of the development above slab level, details of biodiversity enhancements, to include the installation of bird and bat boxes within the site and wildlife friendly planting, and the timescales to implement these, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The biodiversity enhancements shall be installed in accordance with the approved details and timescales and maintained thereafter.  
Reason: To incorporate biodiversity in and around developments in accordance with the NPPF and local policy NR2.
- 4 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans listed below.  
Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved particulars and plans.

## **Informatives**

- 1 The Royal Borough receives a large number of complaints relating to construction burning activities. The applicant should be aware that any burning that gives rise to a smoke nuisance is actionable under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Further that any burning that gives rise to dark smoke is considered an offence under the Clean Air Act 1993. It is the Environmental Protection Team policy that there should be no fires on construction or demolition sites. All construction and demolition waste should be taken off site for disposal. The only exceptions relate to knotweed and in some cases infected timber where burning may be considered the best practicable environmental option. In these rare cases we would expect the contractor to inform the Environmental Protection Team before burning on 01628 68 3830 and follow good practice.
  
- 2 In the event that unexpected soil contamination is found after development has begun, development must be halted. The contamination must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken, and where remediation is necessary a remediation scheme must be prepared, which is the subject of the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority.