

## **Section '3' - Applications recommended for PERMISSION, APPROVAL or CONSENT**

**Application No :** 17/02283/FULL1

**Ward:**  
**Copers Cope**

**Address :** Worsley Bridge Junior School Brackley  
Road Beckenham BR3 1RF

**OS Grid Ref:** E: 537322 N: 170426

**Applicant :** Mrs Rebecca Williams

**Objections : YES**

### **Description of Development:**

Construction of a freestanding outdoor learning shelter.

### **Key designations:**

Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area  
London City Airport Safeguarding  
Open Space Deficiency  
Proposal Sites  
Smoke Control SCA 12  
Urban Open Space

### **Proposal**

Planning permission is sought for the construction of a freestanding outdoor learning shelter.

The building proposed is a low rise single storey structure located to the eastern side of the playing field. The structure measures 10.05m by 5.1m by 2.9m maximum height to its ridge and is situated 4m from the boundary from Abbey Lane. An area of bushes, hedging and shrubbery exist between the structure and Abbey Lane. The structure will be made of wood and is open sided and will have bench seating inside on a decked floor area.

### **Location**

Worsley Bridge School is located on the north side of Brackley Road with Worsley Bridge Road to the west and Abbey Lane to the east. The surrounding area is mainly residential in character with sports pitches opposite the school playing fields.

### **Consultations**

Nearby owners/occupiers were notified of the application and representations were received which can be summarised as follows:

#### **Support:**

- The outdoor learning centre will benefit the children of the school.
- No concerns regarding the appearance which is largely obscured due to tree foliage.
- Noise levels will be low. Nature and the school will live together happily.
- School has been there for many years.
- Sound of children learning in the building is less than playing. Unlikely therefore to disturb the adjacent residential houses.
- Local noise is of vehicles/people is worse than the children.

Objections:

- Outdoor wildlife disrupted by change of use of this area of land.
- Concerns regarding impact to trees.
- Concerns that the development will increase noise and disturbance to nearby residential properties.
- Concerns that the development will lead to more outdoor developments.

## **Internal Consultations**

Arboriculture and Ecology:

The proposed application is for the construction of a free standing outdoor education structure. The proposed location for the shelter is west of Abbey Lane on the eastern boundary of the school playing field. The boundary of the field is populated by a number of trees creating a thick hedge running the length of Abbey Lane.

The proposed design of the shelter is lightweight and therefore the foundations are unlikely to impact the root network of the surrounding trees. Furthermore, the low height of the shelter is unlikely to affect the branching of the trees.

The shelter is unlikely to have any negative effects on local wildlife as it will not affect the surrounding trees. On the contrary, the construction of an open sided, covered structure is likely to benefit local wildlife as it will act as a new type of habitat.

Drainage:

No comment.

Environmental Health - Pollution:

No objections.

## **Planning Considerations**

London Plan.

3.16 Protection and Enhancement of Social Infrastructure

3.18 Education Facilities

5.1 Climate Change Mitigation

5.2 Minimising Carbon Dioxide Emissions

5.3 Sustainable Design and Construction.

5.7 Renewable Energy

5.13 Sustainable Drainage

5.15 Water Use and Supplies

5.16 Waste Self-Sufficiency

7.2 An Inclusive Environment.

7.3 Designing Out Crime

7.4 Local Character

7.6 Architecture

7.18 Protecting Open Space and Addressing Deficiency

7.19 Biodiversity and Access to Nature

7.21 Trees and Woodlands

## Unitary Development Plan.

BE1 Design of New Development  
NE7 Development and Trees  
G8 Urban Open Space  
C1 Community Facilities  
C7 Educational and Pre School Facilities  
C8 Dual Community Use of Educational Facilities  
T1 Transport Demand  
T3 Parking  
T7 Cyclists  
T18 Road Safety

Supplementary Planning Guidance 1: General Design Principles

## Emerging Bromley Local Plan.

The Council is preparing a Local Plan and commenced a period of consultation on its proposed submission draft of the Local Plan on November 14th 2016 which closed on December 31st 2016 (under The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 as amended). It is anticipated that the submission of the draft Local Plan will be to the Secretary of State in mid 2017. These documents are a material consideration. The weight attached to the draft policies increases as the Local Plan process advances.

Draft Policy 20 - Community Facilities  
Draft Policy 27 - Educational Facilities.  
Draft Policy 33 - Access for All  
Draft Policy 37 - General design of development  
Draft Policy 55 - Urban Open Space  
Draft Policy 73 - Development and Trees  
Draft Policy 74 - Conservation and Management of Trees and woodlands  
Draft policy 75 - Hedgerows and Development  
Draft Policy 77 - Landscape Quality and Character  
Draft Policy 112 - Planning for Sustainable Waste management  
Draft Policy 113 - Waste Management in New Development  
Draft Policy 116 - Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)  
Draft Policy 118 - Contaminated Land  
Draft Policy 119 - Noise Pollution  
Draft Policy 120 - Air Quality  
Draft Policy 122 - Light Pollution  
Draft Policy 123 - Sustainable Design and Construction  
Draft Policy 124 - Carbon dioxide reduction, Decentralise Energy networks and Renewable Energy

### **Planning History**

The site has been the subject of numerous previous relevant applications,

89/01187: Five bay mobile classroom

96/00205: Retention of single storey mobile classroom and addition of one bay

13/01898: Erection of single storey temporary classroom building with canopy and link walkway to main school building. Approved 13/8/2013.

14/01411: Replacement glazing to form larger windows and new door openings out on to playground. Approved 25/7/2014.

14/02321: Retention of temporary classroom permitted under ref. 13/01898/FULL1 until no later than 12th August 2015. Approved 5/9/2014.

14/02230: Demolition of existing outbuildings and construction of a two storey classroom wing, single storey staff room extension to the rear and hall extension to the front, enlargement of staff car park and associated external works. Approved 5/9/2014

15/03295/MATAMD: Application submitted under s73 for a Minor- material Amendment to approved planning permission DC/14/02230/FULL1 for demolition of existing outbuildings and construction of a two storey classroom wing, single storey staff room extension to the rear and hall extension to the front, enlargement of staff car park and associated external works in order to allow:-

- Alterations to windows and additional door openings on all elevations
- Relocation of roof level handrails
- Removal of Brise Soleil
- Additional brick cladding on the upper level of the northwest elevation
- Relocation of cycle shelters
- Amendments to landscaping

Approved 30/9/2015.

## **Conclusions**

The main issues to be considered in respect of this application are:

- Principle of development
- The design and appearance of the scheme and the impact of these alterations on the character and appearance of the area and locality
- Impact on adjoining properties
- Arboriculture and Ecology

### Principle of development - Educational Need.

UDP Policy C7 states that applications for new or extensions to existing educational establishments or pre-school facilities will be permitted provided that they are located so as to maximise access by means of transport other than the car.

Draft Policy 27 Education of the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan details that the Council is committed to choice in education for parents and young people and will work, in partnership with agencies and providers, to ensure the provision of an appropriate range of educational facilities to cater for lifelong learning across the spectrum from early years to further and higher education, and including specialist provision.

In relation to this application the policy further details that it will achieve this by permitting extensions to existing schools which seek to address local need, subject to Local Plan open space and conservation policies, unless there are demonstrably negative local impacts which substantially outweigh the need for additional education provision, which cannot be addressed through planning conditions or obligations.

Further the policy details in all cases new development should be sensitively designed to minimise the footprint of buildings and the impact on open space, particularly playing

fields, as well as seeking to secure, as far as possible the privacy and amenities of any adjoining properties, whilst delivering the necessary educational infrastructure.

Therefore the provision and use of the outdoor learning centre building to enhance the existing teaching facilities at the school appears acceptable in principle subject to an assessment of the impact of the proposal on the appearance/character of the surrounding area, the residential amenity of adjoining residential occupiers, sustainable design, and arboricultural and ecology issues.

### Design and Impact on Urban Open Space.

Design is a key consideration in the planning process. Good design is an important aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. The NPPF states that it is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.

Policies 3.4 and 3.5 of the London Plan reflect the same principles. Policy 3.4 specifies that Boroughs should take into account local context and character, the design principles (in Chapter 7 of the Plan) and public transport capacity; development should also optimise housing output for different types of location within the relevant density range. This reflects paragraph 58 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which requires development to respond to local character and context and optimise the potential of sites.

Policy BE1 of the UDP set out a number of criteria for the design of new development. With regard to local character and appearance development should be imaginative and attractive to look at, should complement the scale, form, layout and materials of adjacent buildings and areas. Development should not detract from the existing street scene and/or landscape and should respect important views, skylines, landmarks or landscape features. Space about buildings should provide opportunities to create attractive settings with hard or soft landscaping and relationships with existing buildings should allow for adequate daylight and sunlight to penetrate in and between buildings.

Policy G8 of the UDP details that proposals for built development in Urban Open Space will be permitted where the development is related to the existing use or the development is small scale and supports the outdoor recreational uses or children's play facilities on the site or any replacement buildings do not exceed the site coverage of the existing development on the site. Where built development is involved the Council will weigh any benefits being offered to the community, such as new recreational or employment opportunities, against a proposed loss of open space. In all cases, the scale, siting, and size of the proposal should not unduly impair the open nature of the site. Draft Policy 55 reiterates this approach.

The proposed building is open sided and constructed of wood and is typical for these types of shelters for outdoor learning. The building is located on the east side of the existing playing field in close proximity to the boundary against a wooded backdrop. The existing grassed playing fields have been preserved and are unaffected by the use of this facility.

On this basis it is considered that any harm to the Urban Open Space is extremely limited in the long term and the design is not considered to harm the character and appearance of the wider site.

### Impact on Adjoining Properties

Policy BE1 of the UDP seeks to protect existing residential occupiers from inappropriate development. Issues to consider are the impact of a development proposal upon neighbouring properties by way of overshadowing, loss of light, overbearing impact, overlooking, loss of privacy and general noise and disturbance.

Concerns have been raised regarding the proximity of the buildings to property in Abbey Lane and resultant noise and disturbance from the use that may affect residential amenity. It was observed at the time of site visit that the backdrop to the location was the school playing fields to the west and residential properties to the east on the opposite side of Abbey Lane at an approximate distance to the learning shelter of 18m to the front elevation of the closest property.

It is noted that the school fields can be noisy due to children playing. However this needs to be measured against the background noise of the local urban environment and the level of addition in this respect that a learning shelter would add to this. Given that it would be expected that noise from a school would take place in the natural course of a school day it is not considered, given the location of the outdoor learning centre building along this boundary, that any increase in noise and disturbance from the use will be significant enough to withhold planning permission on this basis.

#### Arboriculture and Ecology.

Policy NE7 states that proposals for new development will be required to take particular account of existing trees on the site and on adjoining land, which in the interests of visual amenity and/or wildlife habitat, are considered desirable to be retained.

The Council's Arboricultural Officer has reviewed the scheme and not raised any objections as regards effects to trees and ecology.

#### **Summary**

Therefore, given the relatively low impact of the structure, the use and siting of the structure is considered acceptable.

Background papers referred to during production of this report comprise all correspondence on the file ref(s) 17/02283/FULL1 and any other applications on the site set out in the Planning History section above, excluding exempt information.

#### **RECOMMENDATION: PERMISSION**

Subject to the following conditions:

- 1 The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of 3 years, beginning with the date of this decision notice.**

**Reason: Section 91, Town and Country Planning Act 1990.**

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the plans approved under this planning permission unless previously agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.**

**Reason: In order to comply with Policy BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interest of the visual and residential amenities of the area.**

- 3 The materials to be used for the external surfaces of the building shall be as set out in the planning application forms and / or drawings unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.**

**Reason: In order to comply with Policy BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interest of the appearance of the building and the visual amenities of the area.**

- 4 The detached single storey outdoor learning building hereby permitted shall be used as an ancillary classroom in direct association with the main school on the site and for no other purpose.**

**Reason: In order to prevent an overdevelopment or over intensive use of the site and in the interests of the amenities of adjacent properties and in order to comply with Policy BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan.**