

SECTION '2' – Applications meriting special consideration

Application No : 10/03256/FULL1

Ward:
Kelsey And Eden Park

Address : Langley Park School For Girls
Hawksbrook Lane Beckenham BR3 3BE

OS Grid Ref: E: 537998 N: 167337

Applicant : Langley Park School For Girls

Objections : YES

Description of Development:

First floor extension to sixth form block. Two storey detached music block. Additional hardstanding to enlarge existing car park/ replace parking spaces

Proposal

- Two storey detached building for use as music block.
- First floor extension to existing single storey sixth form block.
- Hardstanding for replacement car parking spaces.

Location

- The school is located on the northern side of Hawksbrook Lane.
- To the east the site is bordered by St Dunstan's Lane and, beyond that, sports grounds and a golf course.
- The site is bordered to the west by Langley Park School for Boys.
- To the south are games/tennis courts and playing fields.
- To the north are the playing fields.
- The proposed music block would be sited at the eastern side of the site near to St Dunstan's Lane.
- The site of the music block forms part of an existing car park.
- The sixth form block which is to be extended to two storeys is located towards the southern edge of the site.
- The proposed car park enlargement would be to the car park adjacent to the sixth form block at the southern edge of the site.

Comments from Local Residents

- The Governing body of Langley Park School for Boys has asked that the application be determined in accordance with the relevant planning policies.

- Old Dunstonian's Sports Club Ltd has raised concerns over the supply of water to building within their grounds being unduly affected by the development.

Comments from Consultees

The Council's Highways Development Officer has advised that, provided the numbers of staff and/or pupils at the school is not to be increased, there are no objections to the proposal, subject to an amended parking layout being submitted with regard to section 2 of the car park.

The Council's Drainage Planner has advised that the site is within an area where the Environment Agency requires restrictions on the rate of discharge and a petrol interceptor is required as the number of car parking spaces exceeds 30.

The Council's Children and Young People Services support the application.

The Metropolitan Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor raises concerns over the lack of information in the application relating to how crime prevention measures will be incorporated into the design of the development and recommends a 'Secured by Design' condition being attached to any permission given so that the development achieves full SBD accreditation.

Planning Considerations

The site falls within Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) where permission will not be given for inappropriate development unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated that clearly outweigh the harm. Furthermore, the openness and visual amenity of the MOL shall not be injured by any proposals for development within or conspicuous from the MOL which might be visually detrimental by reasons of scale, siting, materials or design.

The application falls to be determined in accordance with the following Unitary Development Plan policies:

- BE1 Design of New Development
- C7 Educational and Pre-School Facilities
- G2 Metropolitan Open Land
- NE7 Development and Trees
- T3 Parking
- T6 Pedestrians
- T7 Cyclists
- T15 Traffic management
- T18 Road Safety

In strategic terms the most relevant London Plan policies are:

- 3A.24 Education facilities
- 3C.23 Parking Strategy
- 3D.8 Realising the value of open space and green infrastructure

3D.10 Metropolitan Open Land
4A.14 Sustainable Drainage

There are a number of relevant national policy documents that are relevant to the consideration of this application. These include:

PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development
PPG13: Transport

The scheme would result in the loss of 10 trees. The arboricultural report accompanying the application grades them as C. There are no objections to the loss of these trees subject to the imposition of a condition that replacement trees are planted elsewhere on the site.

Planning History

Planning permission was granted for the single storey detached building for use as sixth form block under ref. 05/04454.

Conclusions

Assessment

The main issues relating to the application are the effect that it would have on the openness and visual amenity of the MOL, the impact that it would have on the amenities of the occupants of surrounding residential properties, the effect it would have on parking and the local highway network and the effect it would have on any significant trees.

According to the criteria in Policy G2 of the UDP the proposed music block and the extension to the sixth form block would constitute inappropriate development within the MOL. The applicant has provided further information to address the inappropriateness. They state that very special circumstances exist as the new music block would allow the school to offer its students an improved educational experience where currently music rooms are shared with other departments and facilities are inadequate. Furthermore, it is also stated that the sixth form block extension would provide extra study and teaching space as well as office accommodation for staff, improving cohesion by having all the facilities located within one building and reducing pressure in other areas of the school which are nearing use capacity.

It is noted that a report commissioned by the Council in 2008 into the sufficiency and suitability of accommodation at the school, highlighted a number of deficiencies with the existing school accommodation. Specifically, the report identified that the school's music and sixth form accommodation was inadequate, circulation spaces and the accommodation constraints were curtailing the sixth form offer and both drama and music spaces were at 100% capacity. The report also identified that the existing site access and car parking for staff and visitors is difficult.

In their statement of why very special circumstances exist, the applicant states that as the development would be located within the built-up area of the school, surrounded on three sides by larger buildings, it would preserve the current levels of openness and maintain the break in the urban fabric.

The proposed music block would be positioned on the site of an existing car park with buildings to the north and south. To the west is a large area of hardstanding with existing school buildings beyond. It would measure approximately 10 metres to the highest point of the roof. Whilst it is agreed that the building would be within the curtilage of the existing built-up area of the site, Members may consider that the existing sense of spaciousness could be diminished by enclosing the open area with a building of this height, as well as impacting views from St Dunstons Lane and the sports field to the east. With regard to design and materials, the music block would have a sedum roof and cedar cladding which would enable it to blend in with its open surroundings and appear less conspicuous from the surrounding area of MOL. Furthermore, the design, with its two angular roof structures, would give the building visual interest.

Taking all this into account, Members will need to carefully consider whether the scale and siting of the proposed music block would harmfully impact the openness and visual amenity of the MOL to an extent which would warrant refusal of the scheme, or whether the existing pattern of development at the site and extensive tree planting along the St Dunstan's Lane/Sports Field boundary, as well as the proposed design and materials, would sufficiently mitigate any significantly harmful effects.

The existing single storey sixth form block is located within the built curtilage of the school site. The proposal would result in a replica second storey with a flat roof measuring 6.5m high (as scaled from ground level). It would match the existing cedar-clad single storey building in its design and materials, and this would soften the visual impact of the building in the context of the surrounding woodland. Whilst the second floor extension would invariably have some effect on the views into the site from the Hawksbrook Lane boundary, it is considered that as it would be fairly modest in height it would not significantly harm the openness and/or visual amenity of the MOL or the area in general.

The proposed car park enlargement would encroach into the wooded area at the southern edge of the site and would result in the loss of 10 trees. In terms of visual impact, the wooded area would remain largely intact, protecting the visual amenities of the MOL and there are no objections to the loss of these trees from an arboricultural perspective.

There are no additional children or staff proposed as a result of the scheme and the proposal would not result in a loss or gain in number of car parking spaces. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in terms of parking and impact on the wider road network.

There are no residential buildings nearby which would be adversely affected by the proposal.

Conclusions

The application has been assessed in light of the aims and objectives of the London Borough of Bromley UDP, all other relevant national and regional planning guidance and all other material planning considerations. Overall, Members may agree that the proposal is of a high standard of design, would complement the scale, form and materials of adjacent buildings and areas and would not result in any conditions prejudicial to highway safety. However, it falls within MOL where special circumstances apply.

Given that the site is designated MOL, Members will therefore need to carefully consider whether or not very special circumstances have been demonstrated that clearly outweigh the harm and, if so, whether the openness and visual amenity of the MOL would be injured by the proposal.

Background papers referred to during production of this report comprise all correspondence on files refs. 10/03256 and 05/04454, excluding exempt information.

as amended by documents received on 03.02.2011

RECOMMENDATION: MEMBERS' VIEWS ARE REQUESTED

- | | | |
|---|-----------------|--|
| 0 | D00002 | If Members are minded to grant planning permission the following conditions are suggested: |
| 1 | ACA01
ACA01R | Commencement of development within 3 yrs
A01 Reason 3 years |
| 2 | ACA04
ACA04R | Landscaping Scheme - full app no details
Reason A04 |
| 3 | ACB05
ACB05R | Replacement tree(s) elsewhere on site
Reason B05 |
| 4 | ACC01
ACC01R | Satisfactory materials (ext'n'l surfaces)
Reason C01 |
| 5 | ACD02
ADD02R | Surface water drainage - no det. submitt
Reason D02 |
| 6 | ACH02
ACH02R | Satisfactory parking - no details submit
Reason H02 |
| 7 | ACI21
ACI21R | Secured By Design
I21 reason |

Reasons for granting permission:

In granting permission the Local Planning Authority had regard to the following policies of the Unitary Development Plan:

- BE1 Design of New Development
- C7 Educational and Pre-School Facilities
- G2 Metropolitan Open Land
- NE7 Development and Trees

- T3 Parking
- T6 Pedestrians
- T7 Cyclists
- T15 Traffic management
- T18 Road Safety

The development is considered to be satisfactory in relation to the following:

- (a) the appearance of the development in the street scene
- (b) the character of the development in the surrounding area
- (c) the impact on the amenities of the occupiers of adjacent and nearby properties
- (d) the relationship of the development to trees to be retained
- (e) accessibility to buildings
- (f) the safety of pedestrians and motorists on the adjacent highway
- (g) the transport policies of the development plan
- (h) the urban design policies of the development plan
- (i) the recreational open space policies of the development plan
- (j) the adjoining owners concerns raised during the consultation process

and having regard to all other matter raised.

INFORMATIVE(S)

- 1 RDI12 Disability Legislation
- 2 The site is within an area where the Environment Agency requires restrictions on the rate of discharge and a petrol interceptor is required as the number of car parking spaces exceeds 30No.

D00003 If Members are minded to refuse planning permission the following grounds are suggested:

- 1 The site falls within Metropolitan Open Land wherein there is a presumption against inappropriate development and the Council sees no very special circumstances which might justify the grant of planning permission as an exception to Policy G2 of the Unitary Development Plan.
- 2 The proposal would, by virtue of its scale and location, have a detrimental impact on the openness and visual amenity of the area, contrary to Policy G2 of the Unitary Development Plan regarding development within or conspicuous from Metropolitan Open Land.

Reference: 10/03256/FULL1

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