

**COMMITTEE DATE: 11/08/2014**

**Application Reference: 14/0460**

WARD: Hawes Side  
DATE REGISTERED: 12/06/14  
LOCAL PLAN ALLOCATION: Protected School Playing Fields/Grounds  
APPLICATION TYPE: Full Planning Permission  
APPLICANT: School Governors

**PROPOSAL:** Erection of two single storey extensions to front elevation to enlarge the existing staff-room and media suite and provide additional office space and a first aid room with associated landscaping works.

**LOCATION:** BAINES ENDOWED C OF E SCHOOL, PENROSE AVENUE, BLACKPOOL, FY4 4DJ

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**Summary of Recommendation:** Grant Recommended

**CASE OFFICER**

Miss S. Parker

**INTRODUCTION**

This application is being brought back before Committee following deferral on 14th July 2014. When the Committee visited the site and considered the proposal on that day some concern was expressed regarding the provision of flat roofed extensions to the front of the traditional school building. The application was deferred to enable the applicant to explore the potential to provide a pitched roof solution as it was felt that this form of roof would be more appropriate given the traditional form and design of the main building.

Since then the applicant has submitted six alternative options for the extensions, all of which have pitched roofs in some form. In exploring these options, the key constraint has been the desire for the roof of the original school building to remain visible and its integrity to remain, and to ensure that the roof proposed would drain adequately. It would be possible to replicate the main school roof on the extensions but this would still result in a large area of flat roof and would entirely obscure the original roof of the building. As such, the options show smaller sections of pitched roof in various formats. None of the formats proposed would match the art deco design of the original building and all would appear either overly bulky and would therefore obscure the main building, or would be out-of-character and contrived. All would create valley gutters which would complicate maintenance. One option has been proposed that would see a pitched roof which would be

provided behind the parapet wall currently proposed but this is not considered to represent an improvement over the current scheme and would again obscure the main school roof. The options have been considered by the Council's Built Heritage Manager who concurs that the option brought before Committee on 14th July is the most appropriate. This design provides visual interest and reflects the art deco character of the main school building but does not affect the form of its original roof. The flat roof would be concealed behind a parapet wall designed in art deco style. The flat roof form would minimise the impact of the extensions on the bulk of the school building and the resulting impact on the streetscene would be lessened. It is recommended that a condition be attached to any permission granted to ensure that a scheme to secure the proper drainage of the roof be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Council. The Built Heritage Manager has stipulated that a more traditional link between the original school building and the extensions be provided, and that matching, conservation-grade bricks are used. Both have been agreed by the applicant.

The Committee is respectfully reminded that this option represents a substantial improvement from the original submission in April of this year that was brought before the Committee with an officer recommendation for refusal in May. No pre-application advice had been sought prior to that application and the extensions proposed were boxy in design and made no reference to the historic character of the main school building. The development would also have resulted in the loss of the existing mature landscaping along the frontage of the site with no replacement planting proposed. The application was refused on 7th May 2014 in line with the officer recommendation and a meeting was subsequently held between Council officers, the Headteacher of the school and the architects who designed the scheme. Amendments to the scheme were discussed and have led to the submission of this application which has the full support of the Council's Built Heritage Manager.

With the exception of the site visit date, the remainder of this report remains as submitted to the Committee in advance of its meeting on 14th July 2014.

## **SITE DESCRIPTION**

The application site sits on the southern side of Penrose Avenue between the junctions with Colwyn Avenue and Skipton Close. The main building consists of a long section of building along the frontage with additional sections of building arranged around a central courtyard to the rear. At the back of the site is another long building running along the boundary that is shared with the industrial units on Burton Road. More modern buildings have been added in the south-eastern corner and at the eastern end of the site and immediately to the south-east of the main building.

The main building is of high-quality, period design and has been put forward for inclusion on the Local List. It is constructed of smooth Accrington red bricks with rosemary roof tiles and is of art deco design. The building is single-storey but the central portion of the frontage rises up above the side wings to create a focal feature with taller arch-topped windows and stonework detailing. The building frontage has strong symmetry and makes a very positive contribution towards the quality of the streetscene. At present there is a significant amount of established landscaping to the front of the school behind the boundary railings which adds to the visual appeal of the site.

## **DETAILS OF PROPOSAL**

The application seeks planning permission for the erection of two single storey extensions to the front elevation to provide a first aid room, an enlarged foyer, additional office space, a new staff room and to extend the group room and multimedia suite. These extensions would sit on either side of the raised central section and would follow the sections of recess and projection of the existing elevation. They would project forward by some 3.3m. The extensions would be 3.2m in height and would be linked into the main building by a lower section some 2.8m in height. The extensions would reflect the character of the original building and would be of brick construction with some stone detailing.

The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement and an Arboricultural Statement.

The Committee will have visited the site on 11th August 2014.

## **MAIN PLANNING ISSUES**

The main planning issues are considered to be:

- The impact of the extension on the appearance of the building and streetscene;
- The value of the additional space created to the provision of education at the school.

These issues will be discussed in the assessment section of this report.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

**Head of Transportation:** No objection. The proposal seeks to upgrade the existing facilities rather than provide new teaching space and so staff numbers, access and parking requirements are unlikely to be affected.

**Built Heritage Manager:** No objection to the scheme following the changes made since the previous application.

## **PUBLICITY AND REPRESENTATIONS**

Site notice displayed: 23rd June 2014

Neighbours notified: 18th June 2014

No representations have been received at the time of preparing this report. Any comments that are received before the Committee meeting will be reported in the update note.

## **NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK**

In March 2012, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published. This document sets out the Government's approach and expectations with regard to planning and development. It places heavy emphasis on sustainable development and the need for the planning system to be proactive in driving economic growth. There is a presumption in favour of development where there are no over-riding material considerations. In particular, paragraph 72 states that Local Planning

Authorities should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools to widen choice in education. The Framework makes it clear that all developments should be of a high standard of design and paragraph 64 states that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions. This emphasis on the need for good design is repeated in the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) which was published in March 2014. The Framework also places emphasis on the need to protect the historic environment. Paragraph 135 requires applications that would affect non-designated heritage assets to be carefully judged with regard to the scale of any harm and the significance of the heritage asset.

### **SAVED POLICIES: BLACKPOOL LOCAL PLAN 2001-2016**

The Blackpool Local Plan was adopted in June 2006 and the majority of its policies saved by direction in June 2009. The following policies are most relevant to this application:

- LQ1 Lifting the Quality of Design
- LQ2 Site Context
- LQ14 Extensions and Alterations
- BH3 Residential Amenity
- AS1 Access and Parking

### **EMERGING PLANNING POLICY**

#### **Blackpool Local Plan: Part 1 - Core Strategy: Proposed Submission**

The Core Strategy Proposed Submission was agreed for consultation by the Council's Executive Committee on 16th June 2014 and by the full Council on 25th June 2014. The document is due to be published for public consultation on 4th July 2014 for a period of eight weeks. Once this consultation period has closed, the intention is that the document will be submitted for consideration by an independent Planning Inspector through an Examination in Public in 2015.

Emerging policies in the Core Strategy: Proposed Submission that are most relevant to this application are:

- CS7 Quality of Design

This policy does not conflict with or outweigh the provisions of the adopted Local Plan policies listed above.

### **ASSESSMENT**

#### **Principle**

There are no planning policy considerations which would preclude the extension of the school to provide new and improved facilities.

## **Design**

The original main school building is of high-quality, period design and construction. The frontage has strong symmetry and features of architectural interest and the building as a whole make a strong, positive contribution towards the quality of the wider streetscene. It is proposed that the building be included on the Local List as a heritage asset of local value. To the front of the site established landscaping including a number of trees forms a green buffer between the main building and the boundary railings. This softens the appearance of the site and again makes a strong positive contribution to the quality of the streetscene.

The application proposes two extensions to the front of the main building with one on either side of the raised central section. Each extension would run 13m along the frontage of the building before stepping in by 1.5m to create a recessed section some 4.5m in length. The extensions would then step out again for a final 5.2m until they reach the end of the existing building. The two recessed sections would each have a flat roof and a central doorway giving access to the school. These doorways would be glazed and topped by a glazed gable feature. The projecting sections would also have flat roofs but these would be concealed behind a parapet wall with raised corner sections topped with ball finials. To provide a visual break between the extension and the main building, the parapet wall would not extend all the way back to the main building and a glazed section stepped in from the side elevations would be provided. The fenestration would match the style and format of that on the original building.

Although the extensions proposed would obscure the existing building, the design has substantially improved since the previous application. The parapet wall detailing would be art deco in style and would reflect the suggestions of the Council's Built Heritage Manager. The areas of recess would be effective in breaking up the massing of the extension and providing depth and visual interest.

In response to previous concerns, a revised planting scheme is now proposed. The existing trees would still be removed from the frontage but new planting would now be provided with a central focus to the front of the existing school hall. Details of this planting would be agreed through condition should planning permission be granted.

On balance, following the changes made since the refusal of the previous application, the design of the extensions and the amount of landscaping proposed is now considered to be acceptable.

## **Amenity**

It is not considered that the extensions proposed would have an unacceptable impact on residential amenity by virtue of loss of privacy, outlook daylight or sunlight.

## **Parking and Highway Safety**

The extensions proposed would not result in the loss of any off-street parking spaces and would not generate any additional demand for car parking provision. As such, no highway safety issues are identified.

## **Other Issues**

An arboricultural report has been submitted with the application which notes that none of the trees proposed for removal are of particularly high quality. However, six category B (moderate quality) and three category C (low quality) trees would be lost. It is recommended that a condition be

attached to any permission granted to ensure that replacement planting is carried out elsewhere on the site to ensure that overall levels of biodiversity value are not detrimentally affected.

## **CONCLUSION**

The application is a resubmission of a proposal previously refused on design grounds. A number of key changes have been made to the design of the extensions proposed and a meaningful area of landscaping would now be provided at the front of the school to compensate for the loss of the existing trees. Subject to the recommended conditions listed below, the scheme is now considered to be acceptable. As such, the Committee is respectfully recommended to agree in principle to the application but to delegate the issuing of the decision to the Head of Development Management after the notification period has expired (14<sup>th</sup> July 2014)

## **HUMAN RIGHTS ACT**

Under Article eight and Article one of the first protocol to the Convention on Human Rights, a person is entitled to the right to respect for private and family life, and the peaceful enjoyment of his/her property. However, these rights are qualified in that they must be set against the general interest and the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. It is not considered that the application raises any human rights issues.

## **CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998**

The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the Council's general duty, in all its functions, to have regard to community safety issues as required by section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

**Recommended Decision:** Grant Recommended

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- 2 Details of the bricks, window frames, door frames and stonework to be used on the external elevations shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the development being commenced.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the locality, in accordance with Policy LQ14 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016.

- 3 Notwithstanding the details shown on the approved plan, the floor to ceiling windows proposed in the east and west elevations of the extensions hereby approved shall be set back from the frontage of those elevations by at least 100mm.

Reason: In order to ensure that a clear visual break would be provided between the existing main school building and the proposed extensions in order to safeguard the historic character of the existing building and to provide depth and visual interest in the interests of the character and appearance of the development, in accordance with Policies LQ1 and LQ14 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016.

- 4 Notwithstanding the details shown on the approved plan, the fenestration and doorways proposed in the front elevations of the extensions hereby approved shall be set back from the frontage of those elevations by no less than the width of one of the bricks approved pursuant to condition two attached to this permission.

Reason: In order to provide visual depth and interest in the interests of the appearance of the development in accordance with Policies LQ1 and LQ14 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016.

- 5 Details of the rainwater goods and the means of draining water from the roof the main building and the extensions hereby approved shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development. The approved rainwater goods and means of drainage shall then be provided as part of the development and shall thereafter be retained.

Reason: In order to prevent rainwater ingress into the historic main school building and in the interests of the appearance of the development in accordance with Policies LQ1 and LQ14 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016.

- 6 a) Notwithstanding the information shown on the approved plan, no development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscaping works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include any proposed changes to existing ground levels, means of enclosure and boundary treatment, areas of soft landscaping, hard surfaced areas and materials, planting plans specifications and schedules (including plant size, species and number/ densities), existing landscaping to be retained, and shall show how account has been taken of any underground services. These details shall also demonstrate that the overall biodiversity value of the site would be maintained following the removal of the existing trees along the frontage of the site.

b) The landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details within the first planting season following completion of the development hereby approved or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority (whichever is sooner.)

c) Any trees or shrubs planted in accordance with this condition which are removed, uprooted, destroyed, die, or become severely damaged or seriously diseased within 5 years of planting shall be replaced within the next planting season by trees or shrubs of similar size and species to those originally required to be planted, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure the site is satisfactorily landscaped in the interests of visual amenity and to ensure there are adequate areas of soft landscaping to act as a soakaway during times of heavy rainfall with regards to Policy LQ6 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016.

### **Advice Notes to Developer**

1. Please note this approval relates specifically to the details indicated on the approved plans and documents, and to the requirement to satisfy all conditions of the approval. Any variation from this approval needs to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to works commencing and may require the submission of a revised application. Any works carried out without such written agreement or approval would render the development as unauthorised and liable to legal proceedings.