

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Tuesday 5 July 2016 at 7.00 pm

MINUTES

PRESENT: Deputy Mayor Marcia Cameron (Substitute), Councillor Malcolm Clark, Councillor Nigel Haselden, Councillor Joanne Simpson and Councillor Clair Wilcox (Chair)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Diana Morris and Councillor Bernard Gentry

1. **DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

There were none.

2. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 June 2016 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record of the proceedings.

The Chair announced a provisional timetable for the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 9.9.1.

3. **ST GABRIEL'S COLLEGE (VASSALL) 16/02324/FUL**

Case No. 16/02324/FUL (agenda item three, page eight of the agenda pack, page one of the addenda, page one of the second addendum and page one of the third addendum).

The Planning Officer gave a presentation which included a summary of the report and subsequent addenda that had been published on Friday 01 July 2016 and the day of the meeting. Members were advised of the key material planning issues for consideration which included the future demand for school places in the borough, the design of the proposed building and the anticipated impact on neighbouring residential amenity.

Following the officer's presentation, the objectors raised the following concerns:

- The existing school had traditional architectural qualities which added significant value to the local area. Conversely, the proposed building was of a poor design standard and would have an unacceptable impact on residential amenity.
- The proposed building would not conform to the character of the local area or street façade.
- The composition of the proposed development was unsatisfactory

and would leave large areas undeveloped. Unlike the current building, the new building would be more outward looking in terms of appearance and additional windows.

- The white render finishing on the elevations would make the building unattractive and create reflection problems for neighbouring residents.
- The proposed building would create a solid wall effect that would protrude above the height of the neighbouring residential accommodation.
- The height and bulk of the school would block neighbouring residents' view of the sky.
- The school community would be able to see directly in the back of neighbouring residential properties and this would result in a loss of privacy.
- The value of neighbouring residential properties could degrade as a result of the development.

The agent and transport consultant then provided the following information in support of the application:

- St Gabriel's College had been identified as suitable for redevelopment through the Education Funding Agency's Priority School Building Programme.
- The development would result in educational benefits for the school community and the scheme adhered to curriculum requirements and EFA design criteria.
- The existing school was hindered by an aging design and contained little provision for sporting activity.
- The proposed building would be predominantly brick-based and the elevations would not receive a render finishing (in line with the recommendations set out in the officer's report). An alternative material would be delivered following further consultation with council officers.
- There would be no reduction in the amount of outdoor space at the school.
- A sunlight and daylight assessment had been submitted and independently verified by external consultants on behalf of the council. It confirmed that the proposed building would have no significant adverse impact on neighbouring residential properties.
- Mitigation measures had been included in the design to help prevent overlooking and loss of privacy to neighbouring residents.
- A community use plan would need to be submitted to the council prior to the occupation of the new school.
- The proposed development was sustainable, efficient and of high quality design.
- Following construction, entry to the school would be phased over a five year period, resulting in a gradual transport impact on the surrounding area.
- There was good local transport provision which could accommodate the uplift in student numbers.
- All delivery and servicing activity would take place on site.
- A moderate uplift in the number of vehicles visiting the site was expected but car parking stress surveys suggested that there was sufficient capacity in the local area to accommodate the increased demand.

- A school travel plan would be introduced to set targets and promote sustainable transport methods. Staff would also be encouraged to park further away from the school.

Officers then provided the following information in response to questions from Members:

- Whilst the current school building had inward facing windows, it also had many outward facing windows directed towards neighbouring properties. The new building would not bring about any unacceptable change in the level of overlooking. The applicant's construction consultant confirmed that the proposed translucent windows would open like louvers; allowing views downwards but not forwards into residential properties. Windows at the upper level would have an obscure glaze to 1.7m above the finished floor level.
- The provision of outdoor space was well below the national requirements. Any reconfiguration of the building to make it wider would reduce the amount of outdoor space available.
- The applicant's agent confirmed that the school design adhered to the Education Funding Agency's (EFA) required standards and would deliver efficient use of space and a fit-for-purpose internal teaching environment.
- The property at 15 Halsmere Road had been assessed as part of the sunlight and daylight report and fell well within the BRE Guide targets.
- Despite the high parking stress in the area, there remained some capacity for additional demand. The area was also currently under review for the implementation for a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ), however this could not be taken into account in determining the application.
- It had not been considered necessary to conduct a parking survey for weekend activity because the assessment suggested that parking stress was associated with the working day. It was not anticipated that the development would result in any intensification of the site at weekends beyond existing levels.
- Condition 4 would require a car park management plan to be submitted prior to occupation.
- The school transport plan would promote the use of sustainable means of transport by the school community and would set targets for the reduction car use, particularly by staff. Current levels of cycling to and from the school were low but new cycle parking provision would help to address this. 40 per cent of current students walked to school.
- The applicant's transport consultant confirmed that, as yet, no consideration had been given to new sixth form students who may choose to travel to the school by car. The limited parking opportunities would discourage parking by sixth formers.
- 13 trees would be lost as a result of the development, including one Honey Locust tree of high amenity value. Condition 11 sought a mix of replacement trees.
- The applicant's agent stated that the school would need to record any community lettings in a way that would allow the local authority to monitor the level of community use on request.
- Having advised against the use of render, officers would work with the applicant to ensure a suitable alternative was delivered (e.g.

panelling).

The committee considered points raised by speakers and information provided by officers in conjunction with the report before making the following observations:

- White rendering would not be suitable for this development and Members supported officer's advice to pursue alternative materials.
- It was important that the school worked closely with local residents to resolve issues such as the parking stress and the intensification of community use.
- Students should be involved in the shaping of the school's green spaces.
- An informative should be included requesting that the school travel plan included measures to reduce and limit the amount of sixth form students travelling to the school by car.
- An informative should be included requesting that a Honey Locust Tree be included in the new planting to replace the one which would be lost.

It was MOVED by Councillor Wilcox, SECONDED by Councillor Simpson, and

RESOLVED, unanimously

To APPROVE planning permission subject to a Section 106 Agreement and the conditions as outlined in the officer's report and published addenda and the following:

- i. An informative to be included requesting that the school travel plan includes measures to reduce and limit the amount of sixth form students travelling to the school by car.
- ii. An informative to be included requesting that a Honey Locust Tree be included in the new planting to replace the one which would be lost.

CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting ended at 20:02.

CHAIR
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE
Tuesday 2 August 2016

Date of Despatch: Wednesday 13 July 2016

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