

5g a) 3/10/2229/FP and b) 3/10/2230/LB – Single storey rear flat roofed extension to administration block at Wareside Primary School, Wareside, Ware, SG12 7QR for Mrs Elaine Batten

Date of Receipt: a) 21.12.2010
b) 21.12.2010

Type: a) Full – Minor
b) Listed Building Consent

Parish: WARESIDE

Ward: HUNSDON

RECOMMENDATION:

- a) That in respect of application 3/10/2229/FP planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:
1. Three year time limit (1T12)
 2. Sample of materials (2E12)
 3. Approved plans (2E102) (3251001, 3251002, 3251003, 3251004)

Summary of Reasons for Decision

The proposal has been considered with regard to the policies of the Development Plan (East of England Plan May 2008, Hertfordshire County Structure Plan, Minerals Local Plan, Waste Local Plan and the saved policies of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007), and in particular policies GBC3, ENV1, LRC1, TR7 and Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment. The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies is that permission should be granted.

- b) That in respect of application 3/09/0271/LB listed building consent be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:
1. Listed building three year time limit (1T14)
 2. Samples of materials (2E12)
 3. Listed building (making good) (8L10)

Summary of Reasons for Decision

The proposal has been considered with regard to the policies of the Development Plan (East of England Plan May 2008, Hertfordshire County Structure Plan, Minerals Local Plan, Waste Local Plan and East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007), and in particular Planning Policy Statement

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5: Planning for the Historic Environment. The balance of the considerations having regard to that policy is that permission should be granted.

_____ (222910FP.LD)

1.0 Background:

- 1.1 The application site is located within the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt to the south of the village of Wareside as shown on the attached OS extract.
- 1.2 Wareside Primary School comprises of two main buildings; the original 19th century school house at the front of the site and the later school building and subsequent extensions to the rear. The original school house is a Grade II Listed Building, while the later school building is curtilage listed. The main school building comprises of 2 classrooms, a hall which doubles as a classroom, staff room, dining room and kitchen. There is a soft play area, playground and swimming pool at the rear of the school and playing fields to the south of the site. The site also benefits from off-street car parking for between 15 and 20 vehicles at the front of the site.
- 1.3 The proposal is a single storey rear flat roofed extension to the administration block. The proposed extension, which would be 5.8 metres in width, 7.9 metres in length and 3.1 metres in height, would be situated at the rear of the existing staff block. The applicant has indicated that the proposed extension would provide an additional classroom to enable each of the teaching groups within the school to have their own classroom. The hall would then be used exclusively for specialist subjects, such as music, PE and ICT.
- 1.4 As part of the proposal, the two existing storage sheds would be demolished. This would not require the grant of planning permission. It is also noted that the proposed extension would extend into part of the soft play area at the rear of the school building. It has been indicated by the applicant that the existing play equipment would be relocated and the remaining play area would be maintained.

2.0 Site History:

- 2.1 Planning permission was granted for a new playground (LPA Ref: 3/02/2494/CC) and installation of 2no. twinfix canopies to the children's play area and parents' waiting area (LPA Ref: 3/07/2279/FP, 3/07/2280/LB). There is no other relevant planning history at the application site.

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3.0 Consultation Responses:

- 3.1 The Council's Conservation Officer comments that the location of the proposed single storey extension is to the rear of the newer block and as such would have no impact on the architectural significance and setting of the collection of buildings. Although it is recognised that the extension interrupts the recessed 'window' to the gabled elevation of a later extension, in context this interruption is considered to have little impact on the architectural value of the building as a heritage asset.
- 3.2 Environmental Health advises that any permission the Planning Authority may give should include recommended conditions in relation to construction hours of working, dust, asbestos, bonfires, soil decontamination and refuse disposal facilities.

4.0 Parish Council Representations:

- 4.1 No representations have been received from Wareside Parish Council at time of writing report.

5.0 Other Representations:

- 5.1 The applications have been advertised by way of press notice, site notice and neighbour notification.
- 5.2 No letters of representation have been received.

6.0 Policy:

- 6.1 The relevant Local Plan policies in this application include the following:

GBC3	Appropriate Development in the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt
ENV1	Design and Environmental Quality
LRC1	Sport and Recreation Facilities
TR7	Car Parking – Standards

In addition to the above, it is considered that Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment, forms part of the considerations within this application.

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7.0 Considerations:

7.1 The determining issues in relation to this application are as follows:

- The principle of development within the Rural Area and on Sports and Recreational land;
- The impact of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the existing curtilage Listed Building and the setting of the Listed Building;
- The provision of off-street vehicular parking;
- The impact of the proposed development on the amenities of local residents.

Principle of Development

7.2 The application site is designated as within the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt in the Local Plan, wherein permission will not be given for the construction of new buildings or for changes of use other than for those purposes as specified within Policy GBC3. The proposed development does not fall within one of the specified developments or uses outlined in the Policy, thereby forming a departure from the Local Plan.

7.3 The preamble to Policy GBC3 states that the Rural Area is a significant rural resource. The development strategy is to concentrate and direct development to the main settlements. Other settlements have also been selected where limited development may be appropriate to maintain the vitality of the area. However, development in smaller settlements, such as Wareside, will be accommodated only to support facilities and services needed to meet the employment and housing needs for that settlement and its surroundings.

7.4 The applicant has indicated that Wareside Primary School benefits from two existing classrooms within the main school building as well as the hall. As pupils at the school are taught in three separate teaching groups the hall doubles as a classroom which limits its use for other activities, such as music, PE and ICT. The proposed extension would therefore enable each teaching group to benefit from its own classroom which would provide a suitable learning environment for pupils. Moreover, the hall would be available exclusively for other activities, as described above, allowing appropriate delivery of a range of subjects to all pupils.

7.5 It should also be noted that part of the site to the rear of the school is

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designated as a sport and recreational facility within the Local Plan (Policy LRC1). This part of the site is currently a play area with play equipment which is used by pupils of the school. It is acknowledged that the proposed extension would encroach onto part of the play area (16.3 square metres) however; the majority of the play area and its equipment would be retained. It was observed on site that the school benefits from a playground, soft play area and swimming pool, as well as playing fields to the south of the site. It is therefore not considered that the proposed reduction in the size of the existing play area, in order to accommodate the proposed extension, would be harmful to the provision of outdoor sports and recreation facilities within the locality as suitable facilities will continue to be provided to school pupils.

- 7.6 Wareside Primary School is a part single, part two storey detached building which is situated within a spacious site that is surrounded by mature boundary landscaping. It is considered that the proposed flat roof extension, which would be modest in size and limited in height, would be well screened from the surrounding area. Furthermore, as part of the proposed development, the existing storage sheds would be demolished and replaced with a high quality extension that would be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the existing building. It is acknowledged that the proposed extension would provide additional classroom facilities, enabling the hall to be used exclusively for specialist activities. While the proposed extension would result in a reduction in the size of the soft play area to the rear of the building, it is considered that a sufficient level of facilities would be retained on site.
- 7.7 It is acknowledged that the proposed development would form a departure from policy however, having regard to all of the above considerations, it is considered that special circumstances exist that would outweigh the harm by reason of inappropriate development to the Rural Area.

The impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing curtilage Listed Building and the setting of the Listed Building

- 7.8 The proposed single storey flat roofed extension would adjoin the rear of the main school building, which is curtilage listed. It is considered that the location of the proposed extension to the rear of the main building, its limited roof height and simple flat roofed design would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the curtilage listed building and its setting. While it is acknowledged that the Council's Conservation Officer raised some concern regarding the proposed extension obstructing the recessed window of the gable end extension, it is considered that this in itself would not constitute sufficient reason to

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recommend refusal of the application.

- 7.9 In respect of the impact of the proposed development on the setting of the listed building, it is considered that as the proposed extension would be situated at the rear of the site, the modern school building would visually screen the proposed extension from the listed building. Having regard therefore to the limited impact of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the curtilage listed building and the setting of listed building; it is considered that the proposal would be acceptable.

The provision of off-street vehicular parking

- 7.10 It has been noted that there is an existing car park at the front of the site which provides parking for between 15 and 20 vehicles. The car parking standards within the Council's Vehicle Parking SPD suggest that a maximum of 1 space is required for every full time member of staff with an additional 1 space per 20 pupils aged under 17 years old. The applicant has confirmed that there are approximately 10 full time equivalent staff at the school and approximately 40 registered pupils. Taking into consideration the SPD standards, approximately 12 car parking spaces would be required for a school of this size. On the basis that the existing number of staff and pupils would not increase as a result of the proposal and that there are approximately 15 to 20 car parking spaces already available on site, it is considered that there would be sufficient car parking available, in accordance with Policy TR7.

The impact of the proposal on the amenities of local residents

- 7.11 The application site is situated to the south of the village of Wareside with its nearest neighbouring dwelling at Reeves Green Cottage, which adjoins the eastern boundary of the site. It is considered that the proposed extension, which would be located at the rear of the building, would be limited in height and shielded by the existing school building. Furthermore, it is considered that the proposed extension would not result in an increase in the level of activity on the site as it would provide additional accommodation for existing pupils. As such, it is considered that the proposed extension would not be detrimental to the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. It is also acknowledged that the property known as Vicarage is situated approximately 60 metres to the west of the application site. It is considered that the degree of separation between the proposed extension and the neighbouring dwelling, together with the mature boundary landscaping which would restrict views of the proposed development, would not adversely impact upon the amenities of nearby neighbouring occupiers.

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Conditions

- 7.12 It has been noted that Environmental Health has recommended certain conditions as part of the grant of planning permission. However, it is not considered that the proposed conditions would meet the relevant tests of Circular 11/95 and are not therefore recommended in this instance. It is considered appropriate however to require the submission of a sample of materials to be used in the development in order to secure a satisfactory external appearance.

8.0 Conclusion:

- 8.1 In summary, it is considered that the proposed development would be acceptable in this instance and that special circumstances exist to outweigh the harm, by reason of inappropriateness of development within the Rural Area.
- 8.2 It is therefore considered that there are material considerations in this case which allow permission to be granted contrary to Policy GBC3 and LRC1 of the East Herts Local Plan, and it is recommended that permission be granted subject to the conditions set out above.