

12. FULL APPLICATION – CLASSROOM EXTENSION WITH ASSOCIATED SERVICING AT COMBS COUNTY SCHOOL, LESSER LANE, COMBS. (NP/HPK/0217/0193 404120 / 378383 P5524 SPW 28/02/2017)

APPLICANT: MR JEREMY GOACHER – DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Site and Surroundings

Combs County School is located on Lesser Lane in Combs, within the designated Conservation Area. The building is a shared space providing the school and village hall.

The oldest part of the school fronts onto the highway and is an attractive building of vernacular merit. The windows of this part have arched openings. There is a modern extension behind the original building which has been designed in sympathy with the original and appears subordinate to it and has less ornate detailing. The school is constructed of natural gritstone with natural blue slate roof.

There are open fields to the east and south site, on the opposite side of the road there are dwellings. At present in the location the proposed extension would occupy there are two timber sheds. Hedging within the site screens this area in views from the road. There is also a hedgerow forming the boundary with some mature trees within it; these are covered in ivy and appear to have been cut back considerably in their lifetime.

The land immediately behind (to the east) of the school is designated in the Chapel-en-le-Frith Neighbourhood Plan as Local Green Space.

Proposal

The proposal is for an extension to the school. This would extend off the south west facing elevation of the existing extension and would have a small link section with flat roof. The main extension would have a pitched roof clad with natural blue slate and natural gritstone walls, heads and cills with timber windows and doors.

The main part of the extension is single storey and 6.4m x 8.7m.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions.

- 1. Standard time limit**
- 2. Development in complete accordance with the submitted plans ‘PBS16-0812-D04’, ‘PBS16-0812-D05’, ‘PBS16-0812-D07’, ‘PBS16-0812-D08’ and specifications, subject to the following conditions or modifications.**
- 3. Stonework, natural gritstone, to match the existing and shall be coursed and pointed to match the existing.**
- 4. The roof shall be clad with natural blue slate to match the existing.**
- 5. The rainwater goods shall be cast metal painted black and shall be fixed directly to the stonework on rise and fall brackets, without the use of fascia boards.**

6. The windows and doors shall be made of timber and shall have a painted or stained white or off white finish to match the existing.
7. Flush pointed roof verges.
8. The rooflights shall be fitted flush with the plane of the roof slope.
9. Windows and doors recessed 100mm from the external face of the stonework.
10. The development shall not be carried out other than in complete accordance with the submitted tree protection plan 'PBS16-0812-D04/x/100'.

Key Issues

Design, amenity, impact on the Conservation Area and impact on trees.

History

NP/HPK/0616/0549 – Planning application for new build modular classroom and associated servicing. This was withdrawn following officers' concerns about its design and impact on the conservation area and setting of the heritage asset.

In 2016 Enquiry 8680 followed on from the 2016 application and was to consider options for an extension to the school. Officers advised that they would be able to support a scheme as proposed in this application; however it would need a tree survey to be undertaken and submitted.

Consultations

Highway Authority – No objection subject to no loss of parking.

High Peak Borough Council – No response to date.

Chapel-en-le-Frith Parish Council – Object. The school and village hall are a multi-function facility and as such the Parish Council have concerns that the proposal would affect the facilities use. The proposed plans may compromise the facilities ability to still be able to provide a multi-use space/facility for the use of the community.

Representations

Two representations have been received. One objection and one just stating a point about land ownership.

One is from the occupants of a neighbouring property, Lower Lea. This raises objections on the following planning grounds; other grounds are raised but not included as they do not raise material planning considerations. If required these can be seen on the electronic file.

1. As there is currently only 1 full time and 2 part time pupils and no disabled children there is no demand from the village for an extension or indeed a school at all.
2. Parked cars cause obstruction, make it difficult for visibility when pulling out of driveway but also for farm traffic to pass for example tractors when cars are parked on both sides of the road.
3. The location is within a Conservation Area, how can the extension be built when there are two mature trees in the area marked for development.
4. What about the sheds where are they going to be relocated?

5. Why is the hedge being cut down?

The other representation relates to land ownership, explaining that the managing trustees of the building have been informed about the application. Any grant of planning permission does not imply the approval of the Methodist Trustees.

Main Policies

Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, GSP4, HC4, L1, L3, T7.

Relevant Local Plan policies: LC3, LC4, LC5, LC20, LT10, LT18.

Chapel En-le-Frith Neighbourhood Plan. – TM3, C1.

SPDs 'The Design Guide', 'The Detailed Design Guide For Alterations and Extensions'.

Core Strategy DS1 explains that in settlements and in the countryside outside the Natural Zone extensions to existing buildings are acceptable in principle. Policy HC4 set out that proposals to provide community facilities and services involving a change of use of traditional buildings or a replacement building which achieves enhancement, will be encouraged. However, the most relevant policies to these proposals are the policies of the development plan that deal with design and detailing: particularly core strategy GSP3 and Local Plan policy LC4.

Together these require that where development is acceptable in principle its detailed treatments are of a high standard that respects, conserves and where possible enhances the landscape, built environment and other valued characteristics of the area. Particular attention is paid to amongst other things: design details, materials and finishes that reflect or compliment the style and traditions of local buildings; the amenity, privacy and security of the development of nearby properties.

As the site is within a Conservation Area development must demonstrate how it conserves or enhances the character and appearance of the designated conservation area or which would harm the significance of the heritage asset. (CS L3 and LPP LC5).

Local Plan Policy LC20 deals with protecting trees put at risk by development, it requires sufficient information is included to enable the impact on trees to be properly considered. Where risk of damage to trees is acceptable, room must be left on site for their replacement with an appropriate species.

The relationship between the Core Strategy and the National Planning Framework has also been considered and it is concluded that they are consistent because the NPPF recognises the special status of National Parks and promotes sustainable development sensitive to the locally distinctive character of its setting.

Assessment

The policies of the development plan encourage community facilities. The planning statement explains that at present the school has 25 infant children aged 4 to 7. The need is for a purpose-built classroom and toilet extension to cater for those with special educational needs. Officers acknowledge the need for the extended community facility. However, it should be noted that there is no requirement in policy to demonstrate a need for community facilities where these are outside of settlements such as Combs, which are not listed in CS Policy DS1.

There is a presumption against development on Local Green Space as designated in the Neighbourhood Plan. The proposal will not affect the Local Green Space designated in the

Neighbourhood Plan as this lies behind the site. The principle of the development is therefore not contrary to Chapel-en-le-frith Neighbourhood Plan policy C1 and remains acceptable in principle.

The design and detailing of this scheme has been refined and resolved via the pre-application advice process. As submitted it is generally considered to be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the original building and its Conservation Area setting. The proposal will allow the original building to remain the dominant aspect on the site. This is because the proposed extension is set back from the road and will appear clearly subordinate, in height and width, and is built in matching materials. Planning conditions will be required to secure these materials.

The proposal will conserve the character of the Conservation Area and will not harm its significance.

It is noted that a neighbouring property has objected to the proposal. However officers do not consider that the direct impacts of the proposal could be considered to be harmful to the residential amenity of nearby properties, or the amenity of the area more generally. It is also noted that they have made a comment about loss of the hedge which currently screens off the yard area where the extension will be located. Officers are not concerned about this as the extension is sufficiently well designed to stand on its own merits. The hedge needs to be removed to achieve this level of accommodation. It is noted that the objector has also raised concern about the existing sheds being relocated. This information has not been provided as part of the proposal, but it is noted that they may be able to be relocated on the site by the County Council under permitted development rights. The Council, as with any other public authority operating in the National Park should have regard to National Park purposes and in doing so should choose the most unobtrusive location for them, if indeed they are being relocated. Planning Officers also do not share the parish council's concerns in relation to the extension prejudicing the current mixed use of the site.

The representation also raises the issue of cars parking on both sides of the street. The Highway Authority is the lead consultee on highway matters and has not objected provided that there is no loss of existing parking, which there is not. Officers therefore consider that the proposal is in accordance with the policies of the development plan insofar as they relate to highway matters.

Following officer's advice, a tree survey has been included as part of the submission. This identifies the trees that could be affected as two Ash trees. A plan shows the root protection area and details the method for works in these areas to protect the trees. This has been scrutinised by the Authority's Tree officer and accepted. A planning condition can ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the tree protection plan to ensure the proposal is in accordance with Local Plan policy LC20.

Conclusion

Considering the above, the proposal is in accordance with the policies of the development plan and is recommended for approval subject to the conditions set out above.

Human Rights

Any human rights issues have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this report.

List of Background Papers (not previously published)

Nil