

DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE DATE: 13 January 2010

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| APPLICATION REF. NO: | 09/00814/DC |
| STATUTORY DECISION DATE: | 14 January 2010 |
| WARD/PARISH: | HEIGHINGTON AND CONISCLIFFE |
| LOCATION: | Heighington CE Primary School, Hopelands Heighington, Newton Aycliffe |
| DESCRIPTION: | Installation of metal framed cycle store for 20 No. cycles |
| APPLICANT: | Director Of Corporate Services |

APPLICATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

This is a full application under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992.

Heighington Church of England Primary School is located to the north of residential properties along Hopelands. The School building is located towards the west of the site with the remainder of the grounds located towards the east and centre of the site.

The boundary treatment with the neighbouring properties consist of timber fencing. There are also trees and shrubs located around the perimeter of the school site.

Planning permission is sought for the installation of a metal-framed cycle parking shelter to store twenty cycles.

The cycle shelter would be approximately 5.6m by 4.5 and some 2.7m in height. The structure would feature a polycarbonate roof, a galvanised steel frame and timber panelling.

The cycle shelter would be located to the south of the site (in the eastern section) close to the boundary fence with numbers 52 and 53 Hopelands. The section of the grounds in which the shelter would be located is separated from the main field by a path. There are existing sheds and outbuildings on this section of the school grounds site.

There is a target in the School's travel plan (2006 to 2011) to provide appropriate infrastructure in relation to secure cycle storage as no provision is currently made.

PLANNING HISTORY

00/00395/DC, on 10 August 2000 planning permission was granted for an extension to include additional classroom together with cloaks and circulation corridor.

02/00330/DC, on 12 June 2003 planning permission was granted for the construction of an additional classroom.

02/00588/FU, on 7 August 2002 planning permission was granted for an extension to the existing hall and additional office space.

02/01042/DC, on 5 March 2003 planning permission was granted for a new classroom extension.

03/01176/DC, on 21 January 2004 planning permission was granted for the erection of a single storey staff room extension.

06/00485/DC, on 20 June 2006 planning permission was granted for an extension to a toilet block and internal alterations.

08/00441/FUL, on 15 July 2008 planning permission was granted for the erection of a classroom extension including landscape works

PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND

The following policies of the Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997 are relevant to the application:

- E2 – Development Limits
- E3 – Protection of Open Land
- E29 – The Setting of New Development
- E23 – Nature and Development
- E48 – Noise Generating Development
- H15 – The Amenity of Residential Areas
- T38 – Public Cycle Parking
- R1 – Designing for All
- R24 – Open Space Provision
- R25 – Provision of Community Facilities

Policy 22 (The Design of Open Spaces) of the Darlington Open Space Strategy 2007 – 2017 is also relevant

RESULTS OF CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY

Occupiers of neighbouring properties have been consulted on the proposal and a site notice has been displayed. No objections have been received.

The Highways Engineer raised no objections to the proposal.

Sport England commented that the cycle shelter will be situated at the southern end of the school's playing field, beyond a footpath that runs into the school grounds from Redworth Road. The footpath forms the southerly boundary of unusable playing field and as such the shelter occupies land which cannot now be used to lay out a playing pitch. Sport England does not therefore raise an objection to the application.

Heighington Parish Council commented that the application should be approved.

PLANNING ISSUES

There is currently no provision at the school for cycle storage and by providing the shelter, the number of persons being able to cycle to school will increase. The provision of a cycle storage area would contribute towards meeting the targets of the School Travel Plan (2006 to 2011). The aims of providing the cycle storage are:

- To improve access to education, particularly for those without access to a private car, those with a disability and to those that have the greatest need;
- To provide and promote travel choices to all, in particular to reduce the proportion of car driver trips to and from schools;
- To improve safety and security for all by addressing the real and perceived risks;
- To improve the health of the community through increasing levels of sustainable travel.

The main issues to be considered here are whether or not the proposed development is acceptable in the following terms:

- Planning Policy
- Visual Amenity
- Residential Amenity

Planning Policy

The school grounds are identified in the Borough of Darlington Local Plan as being open land. Policy E3 (Protection of Open Land) of the Local Plan states *inter alia* that permission will not be granted for development which inflicts material harm on:

- The visual relief afforded by the system in built up areas;
- The character and appearance of the locality through loss of openness and greenery;
- Facilities for organised sport;
- Facilities available for informal recreation; and
- Areas recognised for their nature conservation or wildlife interest.

The cycle store would be located on a small area of land to the south of the school building. The shelter would not harm the visual relief afforded by the school grounds or harm the character of the locality through loss of openness. The proposal would not harm any facilities for formal sport. Taking into account the limited scale of the cycle shelter and area in which it would be located, the proposal would not be harmful to informal recreational activity. The proposal, therefore, accords with Policy E3 (Protection of Open Land) of the Local Plan.

Policy T38 (Public Cycle Parking) of the Local Plan states that cycle parking will be provided in appropriate locations.

The school and its grounds are located outside of the development limits as identified in Policy E2 (Development Limits) of the Local Plan. The proposal would, however, not be contrary to Policy H2 as it relates to the existing school and its function and would not be detrimental to the surrounding countryside.

Visual Amenity

The proposed single storey cycle shelter would be situated to the south of the school site on a grassed area close to the boundary with residential properties on Hopelands. The shelter would not be out of keeping with the character of the site or its surroundings. The shelter would not be highly visible from public viewpoints due to the boundary treatment as well as trees and shrubs along the perimeter. The proposed development would not have a detrimental impact upon the character of the surrounding area and therefore accords with Policy E29 (The Setting of New Development) of the Local Plan.

Residential Amenity

The nearest residential dwellings are to the south and are some 9m from the location of the proposed cycle shelter. The boundary treatment between these properties and the school site includes timer fencing as well as trees and shrubs. Taking the height of the proposal into consideration together with the boundary treatment, the proposed cycle shelter would not have any significant detrimental impact on neighbouring residential properties in terms of light and outlook.

The proposal would not significantly increase activities from pupils in school grounds and it is considered that the siting of the shelter in this location would not have any significant detrimental impacts upon the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings. The proposal, therefore, accords with Policy H15 (The Amenity of Residential Areas) of the Local Plan.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect

CONCLUSION

There is currently no provision at the School for cycle storage and by providing the shelter, the number of persons being able to cycle to school will increase. The provision of a cycle storage area would also contribute towards meeting the targets of the School Travel Plan (2006 to 2011) for providing appropriate infrastructure. The siting and design of the shelter does not raise any significant residential amenity, visual amenity or highway safety issues. The following policies within the Borough of Darlington Local Plan were considered:

- E2 – Development Limits
- E3 – Protection of Open Land
- E29 – The Setting of New Development
- E23 – Nature and Development
- E48 – Noise Generating Development
- H15 – The Amenity of Residential Areas
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RECOMMENDATION

THAT PURSUANT TO REGULATION 3 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING GENERAL REGULATIONS PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

1. A3 Implementation Limit (3 years)
2. B5 Detailed Application (Accordance with Plans)

Suggested summary of reasons for granting planning permission

The proposed development is considered acceptable and will not cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal has no significant impacts in terms of residential amenity. The proposal does not adversely impact on highway safety. No issues are raised in relation to crime prevention. The proposal is considered acceptable in light of the following Policies of the Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997:

E2 – Development Limits
E3 – Protection of Open Land
E29 – The Setting of New Development
E23 – Nature and Development
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