

DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE DATE: 30 April 2008

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APPLICATION REF. NO:	08/00222/DC
STATUTORY DECISION DATE:	4 May 2008
WARD/PARISH:	HARROWGATE HILL
LOCATION:	Longfield School, Longfield Road, Darlington, DL3 0HT
DESCRIPTION:	Erection of cycle storage shelters to accommodate 102 cycles
APPLICANT:	DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

APPLICATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

This is an application submitted under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 and involves the erection of a single storey cycle storage shelter within the grounds of Longfield School and Sports College. The shelter would measure 14.27m long; 8.6 wide with an overall height of 2.52m. The building will be a lightweight “glasshouse type” constructed with steel frames and Perspex panels. It will have curved sides and a flat roof, which stands slightly proud, to provide ventilation. The building will contain 51 “Sheffield” type cycle hoops, which will allow 102 cycles to be stored securely under cover.

The building would be positioned on land previously used as tennis courts, close to the schools western boundary with dwellings on Drinkfield Close and Huntershaw Way. The building would be approximately 15m from this boundary.

PLANNING HISTORY

None relevant.

PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND

The relevant policies within the Borough of Darlington Local Plan are:

- E2 Development Limits
- E3 Protection of Open Land
- E28 Surface Water and Development
- E29 The Setting of New Development
- E46 Safety and Security
- H15 The Amenity of Residential Areas
- T38 Public Cycle Parking

RESULTS OF CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY

Two letters of objection have been received from the occupiers of properties on Drinkfield Crescent. The objectors state that the properties suffer from flooding due to the erosion of the edges of the existing tennis courts, which leads to rainwater flooding the rear gardens. The objectors are concerned that the proposed building does not include any drainage proposals.

PLANNING ISSUES

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

- Generally
- Planning Policy
- Residential Amenity;
- Visual Appearance and Character of the Area;
- Highway Matters;
- Drainage

Generally

Darlington is the only highway authority in England to have received funding, as both a Sustainable Travel and Cycling Demonstration Town. The aim of the Council is to encourage as many people as possible to be more creative about their travel choices. Much of this work is carried out through work with schools and it is vital that schools have adequate capacity to accommodate the bicycles of children that wish to cycle to school. Since 2004 cycling to school as the usual mode of transport has increased from 0.9% to 4.5% of trips across all schools in the borough.

By providing the new cycle facilities more pupils will be able to cycle to school with the knowledge that their bike will be parked in a secure place. As a result more pupils will be encouraged to cycle to school.

Planning Policy

The application site Policy E3 (Protection of Open Land) of the Borough of Darlington Local Plan is a criteria based policy that requires due regard to be had to the maintenance and enhancement of the usefulness, appearance and nature conservation interest of any open land within the borough. The policy goes on to state that any development that inflicts material harm on, inter alia, the visual relief provided by such areas; the character and appearance of the locality through loss of open spaces and greenery; facilities for organised sports, formal or informal recreation which contribute to meet other objectives of the development plan; internal continuity, linkages and nature conservation interests, will not be granted.

The development is considered to be acceptable in principle, subject to detailed matters of development control, which are considered in the remaining sections of this report.

Residential Amenity

The building would be sited on land previously used as a tennis court adjacent to the boundary with dwellings on Drinkfield Close and Huntershaw Way. The longest elevation (14.27m) will run parallel with the boundary. Access into the building would be in the south elevation via an

existing school access road off Longfield Road. The building will be visible from the dwellings but it is approximately 15m from the boundary fencing, and it is a low level building seen against the more dominating school buildings beyond. It will not be a dominant building within the overall context of the site and it is constructed from materials, which will minimise its visual impact. It is considered that the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the residential amenities of the neighbouring dwellings.

Visual Appearance

The building would not be readily visible from other areas outside of the school site and as already stated it would not be a dominant building when viewed inconjunction with the existing school buildings.

Highway Matters

No highway objections have been raised.

Drainage

There is a grassed banked strip located between the edge of the former tennis courts and the boundaries of the neighbouring dwellings.

Officers from the Transport Policy Team have contacted the manufacturer and they considered that the proposal would not significantly increase the levels of rainwater running off the existing compound into the neighbouring gardens. The building would be installed within the boundary of the former tennis court area and any water run off would not be directed onto the grass banking. Any run off would run adjacent to the properties and down the school drive due to the sloping driveway or run off in the opposite direction of the dwellings.

The issue of the broken edging has also been brought to the attention of the Head of School.

SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

The proposed development has 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. The proposed development does not give rise to crime and disorder issues.

CONCLUSION

The proposal is part of the Council's programme to encourage as many people as possible to be more creative about their travel choices and to provide a secure area for cycle parking within the school grounds. The concerns raised by the objectors have been taken into account but it is considered that the proposed building will not significantly increase the flooding problems that they are currently experiencing. The development does not raise any residential amenity, highway safety or crime prevention issues and it would comply with the following polices within the Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997:

- E2 Development Limits
- E3 Protection of Open Land
- E28 Surface Water and Development
- E29 The Setting of New Development
- E46 Safety and Security

H15 The Amenity of Residential Areas
T38 Public Cycle Parking

RECOMMENDATION

THAT PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED SUBJECT TO REGULATION 3 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING GENERAL REGULATIONS 1992 AND SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

- 1) A3 Implementation Limit (Three Years)
- 2) B5 Detailed Drawings (Accordance with Plan)

SUGGESTED SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR GRANTING PLANNING PERMISSION

The proposal is part of the Council's programme to encourage as many people as possible to be more creative about their travel choices and to provide a secure area for cycle parking within the school grounds. The concerns raised by the objectors have been taken into account but it is considered that the proposed building will not significantly increase the flooding problems that they are currently experiencing. The development does not raise any residential amenity, highway safety or crime prevention issues and it would comply with the following policies within the Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997:

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