

DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE DATE: 17 October 2012

Page

APPLICATION REF. NO:	12/00527/DC
STATUTORY DECISION DATE:	28 November 2012
WARD/PARISH:	MOWDEN
LOCATION:	Mowden Infant and Junior School, Federation of Mowden Schools, Conyers Avenue
DESCRIPTION:	Erection of extensions to Mowden Infant and Junior school, creation of 1 No. enclosed play area and 4 No. hard play surface areas. Additional car parking area and drop off area off Conyers Avenue and new car parking area at Bushel Hill Drive entrance (additional information received 30 August 2012 and 12 September 2012)
APPLICANT:	Director of Resources

APPLICATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

The “L shaped” application site consists of the Mowden Infant and Junior Schools which are two separate buildings linked by a footway which runs through the associated playing fields. The two school buildings are constructed from facing brickwork and are predominately single storey with flat roofs. The surrounding area is predominately residential with Bushel Hill Park and playground to the north east of the site. There are a group of trees within the grounds of the site on the Fulthorpe Avenue frontage which are part of a tree preservation order dated 1951

The Infant School is located within the south east corner of the application site adjacent to the Bushel Hill Drive and Fulthorpe Avenue junction. The Junior School is located in the north west corner of the application. Pedestrian access into the application site is currently available from Conyers Avenue, Chester Grove, Bushel Hill Drive and Fulthorpe Avenue. Vehicular access to the existing car parks within the school grounds occurs at Conyers Avenue and Bushel Hill Park.

A Darlington Borough Council Cabinet Report dated February 2012 states that pupil projections for the coming years continue to show a high level of need for school places across the Borough. Data shows that by 2014 projected numbers of children requiring a school place within the Borough will exceed available places within the existing primary schools. By 2015 the number of pupils is projected to rise to almost 8,800 and this will continue to rise with to a peak of almost 9000 by 2020.

Mowden Pupil Admissions dated 2011 shows that both Mowden Schools draw pupils from all the neighbouring Wards (Park West/Hummersknott/College/Pierremont/Cockerton East/Cockerton West and the rural ward of Heighington/Coniscliffe) as well as pupils from within the Mowden Ward itself. The Schools Adjudicator also directed Darlington Borough Council to change the pupil admission arrangements to account for children from the rural approaches to the west of the urban area, particularly the Merrybent and High Coniscliffe area and the Council identified the Mowden Schools as the schools to take the children from that area who do not gain a place at their nearest local school and this was formally approved by the Office of the Schools Adjudicator.

There are currently 180 pupil places in the Infants School and 248 places in the Junior School. The proposal would result in an additional 210 pupil places in total (90 in the Infants School and 120 in the Juniors School) and the proposed development involves:

Infants School

- The erection of two classrooms and three Break Out room extensions on the north elevation
- The erection of a classroom extension on the south elevation
- Internal remodelling to existing classrooms
- The erection of an extension on the east elevation to enlarge the existing administrative/reception area and to create a Headmasters room
- The erection of an extension on the east elevation to create a Special Educational Needs area
- Erection of wc; cloak room and store room extensions
- The realignment of the existing car park
- The enlargement of an existing hard surface play area and the creation of a new hard surface play area

Junior School

- The erection of an extension on the east elevation to create two classrooms, a Special Educational Needs room, a library and Break Out room, Resource/ICT area and wcs;
- The erection of an extension on the east elevation to enlarge the existing administrative/reception areas and to create a Headmasters office
- The erection of an extension on the west elevation to create two classrooms
- The enlargement of two existing hard surface play areas and the creation of a new enclosed hard surface play area
- The creation of a new vehicular access off Conyers Avenue and a Drop Off area within the school grounds
- Additional staff parking on the existing access road off Conyers Avenue

An amended Site Layout Plan has been submitted which reinstates a footpath link from the proposed drop off area to the existing hard surface play area adjacent to Chester Grove.

A number of trees within the application site would be removed in order to facilitate the development but there would be a proposal to plant replacement trees throughout the site.

Prior to the submission of the planning application, the applicant carried out consultation exercises with local residents in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement document 2010.

PLANNING HISTORY

The most recent entries are:

01/00332/DC In June 2001 planning permission was GRANTED for the erection of a single storey extension to provide ICT suite at Mowden Infant School

08/00331/DC In June 2008 planning permission was GRANTED for the erection of a single extension at Mowden Junior School

10/00310/DC In July 2010 planning permission was GRANTED for the construction of footpath linking school buildings

12/00109/DC In April 2012 planning permission was GRANTED for the erection of two single storey extensions to form toilet extension and external store with canopy at Mowden Infant School

PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND

The following planning policies are considered relevant:

Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997

E2 – Development Limit

E3 – Protection of Open Land

E12 – Trees and Development

E14 – Landscaping of Development

Darlington Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2012

CS1 – Darlington's Sub Regional Role and Locational Strategy

CS2 – Achieving High Quality Sustainable Design

CS15 – Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity

CS16 – Protecting Environmental Resources, Human Health and Safety

CS18 – Promoting Quality, Accessible Sport and Recreation

RESULTS OF CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY

Thirteen letters of objection have been submitted to the Local Planning Authority. The objections can be summarised as follows;

- *The existing parking situation is ridiculous. We already suffer at the hands of Mowden Hall who cannot provide parking for its employees. We are now going to encourage more parents to drop off and collect their children by car*
- *Why does the school need expanding?*
- *At pick up and drop off times I can't get near my property for parked cars*
- *Parents are very inconsiderate and it is dangerous for children with the traffic turning in Chester Grove. Cars park across residents driveways. Residents have to drive over verges and pavements to get to their own driveways. Inconsiderate parking of vehicles creates dangerous situations for children crossing the road. The proposal will only make this existing problem worse and it's only a matter of time before a child is injured*

- *I understand that there are plans to remove the soft landscaping around the Junior School adjacent to Chester Grove. This will make the appearance of the school less aesthetic than originally planned and it will impact upon the area even more. Removing trees and soft landscaping will make us a less green and ecological area and with the recent increases in rainfall this could lead to flash flooding at Chester Grove. At present time a considerable amount of water runs off the school grounds and down the road*
- *We object to the four trees being removed on the boundary with Chester Grove. They are important for wildlife and David Bellamy was involved in the planting of the trees to support nature conservation. Trees enhance the aesthetics of the area. We would object to the existing Beech hedge being removed for the same reasons but it would also make the horrible blue fence more prominent*
- *Will the surface of the new play areas be constructed from porous materials? Would any drainage be incorporated to prevent water flowing down Chester Grove because of the gradient of the school grounds?*
- *We object to the enclosed play area being sited adjacent to our property (Chester Grove). There is sufficient space at the other side of the school play ground where it would not be adjacent to any homes*
- *There is already a parking problem on an afternoon between 2:30pm and 3:30pm. Parents arrive at 2:30pm and get a parking space and it ends up with residents drives being blocked, double parking, parking on pavements and corners of junctions with children crossing roads between parked cars and cars reversing trying to get out of Chester Grove. These problems exist in the whole of the surrounding area. We have previously had the involvement of the Police Support Officers and the problems have not been resolved. White lines and zigzags are not policed and not much notice is taken.*
- *We have concerns about emergency vehicles being able to obtain access to Chester Grove between 3:00pm and 3:30pm.*
- *Whilst the Traffic Assessment has considered the redevelopment of the Mowden Rugby Club, no consideration has been given to a change of the Mowden Public House to residential development*
- *Should an additional 210 pupils be eventually admitted we would suggest that the percentage of pupils travelling by car will be greatly in excess of 50% of the overall number of pupils. There would be a minimum of a further 105 vehicles arriving at the school looking for car parking and this will greatly exacerbate the already existing problem. The provision of the proposed parking within the school grounds will not be adequate for the possible increase in traffic*
- *The increase in traffic would significantly increase posing a high risk of accidents and injury to residents and children.*
- *Mowden Infant and Junior Schools were built to educate children living in the Mowden Ward and the surrounding areas and not from all over the town, which walked to and from their homes in the early 70s when very few people had cars to take children to schools. Now the Council propose to expand the capacity to accommodate more children from outside Mowden Ward when the roads and infrastructure is not capable of coping with the extra volume in traffic*
- *The proposal is an infringement of Mowden resident's rights who are mainly pensioners and we do not want the extra traffic on the estate with the danger and risk it will bring*
- *An expansion of the school does not make sense. Mowden Ward has an elderly population and is getting older. There is going to be fewer families with young children not more. Children will have to be transported onto Mowden estate from other areas of the town causing no end of problems, road congestion and pollution emissions. If an emergency occurs at peak times it could be a matter of life or death to some individual*

- *A new and larger school should be built in the town with adequate access roads and approach roads.*
- *There is no need for the 210 extra school places in the Mowden Ward. Currently only 40% of the children who attend the school live in the Ward. A much smaller extension may be required to accommodate the proposed houses at the Rugby Club but even this is disputable due to the small number of pupils from Mowden Ward currently attending the school. School places for the future should be planned to reduce the impact of traffic and parking on residents in areas which they are situated and not placed to make existing situations worse*
- *The Government have recently announced that Mowden Hall will be a free school from 2013. The teachers and parents at the free school will require somewhere to park their cars/drop off their children. These parking spaces will be created by making existing employees park on the roads of Mowden Estate*
- *Why does the school require additional parking spaces for parents to drop off their children? If they live in the area, they should walk to school. The school should not be allowing children to be admitted to the school from other areas of the town. Additional parking will encourage more parents to use their car to drop their children off. The Council and the school should be encouraging children to walk to school and consider the environment, not encouraging parents to drive to school. Children and parents should walk to school to get fit.*
- *When the school has evening activities Conyers Avenue is a car park with cars parked bumper to bumper and across resident's driveways*
- *There will be a serious accident on Conyers Avenue or the surrounding roads. Expanding the school will only make this happen sooner rather than later*
- *As well as daily problems during term time Conyers Avenue has an even bigger problem with vehicles when events are held on an evening, which are often held on several consecutive nights.*
- *The drop off area will be a huge blot on the landscape and will result in the loss of a large area of green space. I would question whether it would be used or just ignored.*
- *The current schools were built to match the estate and the catchment area of the time and they matched the environment and the infrastructure of a small estate. Increasing school capacity without changing the infrastructure is a recipe for accidents to happen and a devaluation of property. Modifying car parks at the school is not enough. There is a constant push for people to use cars less for the benefit of the environment, yet, here is a policy set against this by increasing the number of people and cars to one focal point at Mowden School thus increasing pollution. It is intimated that two hundred more places are being made which is an increase in the order to one third to one half. How is this the safe option?*
- *As there is no allocated parking for parents who have children at the Infants School we are concerned that they will be encouraged to use Conyers Avenue and the proposed drop off area increasing the amount of traffic in this area*
- *The drop off area could result in queues forming waiting to get in. This would impact upon leaving and accessing properties on Conyers Avenue. We don't want to live next door to a car park and the drop off area will not resolve the traffic and parking problems with such a large increase in children attending the two schools*
- *The gate at the pedestrian entrance to the Junior School looks as though it is being moved beyond the gas sub station. Prior to the fencing being erected we had problems with children climbing onto the sub station and on one occasion they set fire to the conifers behind the sub station. We are concerned that the intention is to leave this area open*

Two of the objection letters are very detailed and they are critical of the contents of the Justification Statement and the Transport Assessment submitted with the planning application. They also raise similar concerns over issues such as the existing parking problems and photographs were enclosed.

Consultee Responses

Northumbrian Water has raised no objections to the proposal

Sport England has no objection to the proposal

The **Council's Environmental Health Officer** has raised no objections to the proposal but he has requested the imposition of planning conditions relating to contaminated land and a Dust Action Plan

The **Council's Traffic Manager** has raised no objections subject to conditions relating to a Travel Plan and a Construction Management Plan

The **Council's Arboricultural Officer** has raised no objections to the proposal subject to planning conditions being imposed to secure tree protection measures and a landscaping scheme

PLANNING ISSUES

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

Planning Policy

Residential Amenity

Visual Appearance and Impact upon the Character of the Surrounding Area

Highway Safety

Impact upon Trees/Landscaping

Protected Species

Drainage

Contaminated Land

Planning Policy

The application site lies within the development limit for the urban area as identified by the Proposals Map of the Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997 (Local Plan). The proposal would accord with the general principles of Saved Policy E2 of the Local Plan and E1 of the Darlington Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2011 (Core Strategy).

The requirement to extend these schools to provide additional spaces to meet the future needs of children in the locality and the wider Borough has been identified by the Local Authority.

There are elements of the proposal which will encroach onto the existing green spaces and playing fields surrounding the two school buildings. The application site is identified by Policy CS18 of the Core Strategy as a playing field, and the policy states that the loss of sports and recreation facilities, including playing fields will be permitted provided the development only affects part of the site and does not adversely impact upon its value to sport and recreation.

Saved Policy E3 of the Local Plan also identifies the site as being part of the Open Land Network. The policy states that proposals within the Network will only be appropriate where there is no net harm on:

Visual relief afforded by the system in the built up area

The site is situated within the school grounds so views are limited to within the site. The majority of the playing pitches and other outdoor play areas will remain and will continue to provide visual relief across the school grounds.

Character and appearance of the locality through loss of openness and greenery

The small loss of open land for play areas and car parking means that the openness of the site will broadly remain intact while the loss of greenery is negligible. The design of the new facilities should be appropriate to the context of an education facility but should add value to the character and appearance of the school grounds.

Facilities for organised sport which contribute to adopted standards

The proposal meets the criteria for the loss of a small area of playing fields (see above).

Facilities available for other formal recreational and leisure activities, informal recreation or horticulture

The school grounds are not available to the public for these uses. However the application seeks to enhance the outdoor play offer for pupils at the schools by extending play areas to make better use of the land available.

Internal continuity of the system

The remaining extent of the school grounds will ensure that the continuity of the system remains intact.

Areas recognised for their nature conservation or wildlife interest

The site is not recognised for nature conservation or wildlife importance.

Sport England have also considered the application in the light of its playing field policy, which aims to ensure that there is an adequate supply of quality pitches to satisfy the current and estimated future demand for pitch sports within the area. The proposal contains only two elements that actually affect playing fields and these are the new hard surface play area to the west of the Infants School and the extension to the existing hard surface play area to the south of the Junior School. However, both areas have been designed so that they do not affect areas of playing field that can be utilised for sport and as such Sport England does not object to the application.

In view of the above, it is considered that, in principle, the proposed development would accord with Saved Policy E3 of the Local Plan and Policy CS18 of the Core Strategy.

Residential Amenity

The proposed extensions to the two school buildings would not have an adverse impact upon the neighbouring dwellings in terms of loss of privacy or being overbearing structures when viewed from the dwellings. The distances between the extensions and dwellings are acceptable and the existing boundary treatments which consist of wrought iron fencing and hedgerows will help to screen the proposal.

The new enclosed hard surface area located adjacent to Chester Grove would be used by pupils only. It would not be flood lit and it would be enclosed by a barrier approximately 1.2m high for ball retention purposes. This additional play surface will not adversely affect the neighbouring dwellings. The proposal does not include the installation of any new plant or machinery.

The drop off area would have low level bollard lighting. The design, location and lighting impact of the bollards would need to be secured by the imposition of a planning condition

It is considered that the proposed development would not have an adverse impact upon the amenities of the neighbouring dwellings. However, it would be appropriate to impose a planning condition to secure the submission of a Construction Management Plan which will include details of the hours of construction, a Dust Action Plan and routes for construction vehicles.

Visual Appearance and Impact upon the Character of the Surrounding Area

The application site is enclosed by wrought iron fencing approximately 2m high along with established hedging. The existing school buildings are predominately single storey with flat roofs, constructed from facing brick with intermittent areas of cladding underneath window openings.

The proposed extensions will be predominately single storey with flat roofs apart from the two classroom extensions on the Infants School and the new library on the Junior School. These elements would be approximately 1.5 storeys high (5.4m high) with barrelled roofs. The extensions would be constructed from a mix of facing brickwork to match the existing buildings and smooth render. Whilst the additions will incorporate modern materials and be of a more contemporary design, they will not have an adverse impact upon the visual appearance or character of the surrounding area.

The proposed drop off area would be located to the front of the Junior School within a grassed open area. A new entrance would be created adjacent to an existing pedestrian access of Conyers Avenue. It is considered that the partial loss of the grassed area to the front of the Junior School and the other new hard surface areas would not have an adverse impact upon the character of the application site or the surrounding area. The existing wrought iron fencing would screen the drop off area and the other hard surfaces from outside the application site and replacement tree planting would occur throughout the site.

Highway Safety

There is an existing car park for the Infant School which has capacity for 16 spaces. The Transport Statement states that staff that cannot park in the car park, park on Bushel Hill Drive or Fulthorpe Avenue and parents dropping off and collecting their children also park on Bushel Hill Drive and Fulthorpe Avenue.

There is a car park for the Junior School which has a capacity of 11 spaces. Staff that cannot park in this car park, park on Conyers Avenue and parents dropping off and collecting their children park on Chester Grove, Barnes Road and Conyers Avenue.

The Infant School starts at 09:00 and finishes at 15:10 whilst the Junior School starts at 08:55 and finishes at 15:20. Parents dropping off and collecting their children arrive at the school sites in advance of these times.

The main concerns raised at the public consultation exercises and subsequently mentioned in the letters of objection to the application relate to highway safety, indiscriminate parking associated with the dropping off and picking up of children at opening and closing times, access for emergency vehicles, road safety concerns etc.

The Transport Statement confirms that the number of two way trips to the site will increase as a result of the development but the increase in volume will not have an adverse impact in network

capacity terms. The need for parking spaces will increase and the Statement states that it is unlikely that the increased level of demand could be safely accommodated within Chester Grove and Bushel Hill Drive and it would result in additional parking occurring on Fulthorpe Avenue, Conyers Avenue and Barnes Road. The Statement considers whilst these roads are able to accommodate additional parking demand the anticipated level of demand may result in vehicles over spilling into other areas or result in more indiscriminate parking within the vicinity of the schools.

To mitigate the extra dropping off and picking up of children by parents it is intended to create a drop off and short stay car park accessed directly off Conyers Avenue. This would create a further 28 spaces and three disabled spaces. There would also be 12 additional staff parking spaces off the existing car park and additional cycle storage space would be provided within a shelter adjacent to the drop off area.

The Statement also recommends a list of mitigation measures to help to minimise the impact of the development on the road network. The measures include revisiting the school's existing Travel Plan and implementing sustainable travel initiatives for pupils, staff and parents.

The Council's Traffic Manager has considered the proposal and the findings of the Statement. He has raised no objections to the proposal subject to the imposition of a planning condition to revise and update the existing School Travel Plan to consider the mitigation measures outlined within the Assessment.

As a further note, he has also confirmed the School, in conjunction with the Local Highway Authority will be carrying out a review of the existing parking controls and restrictions in the area and around the school. This review will involve consultations with local residents and if protection to private driveways and further parking restrictions are agreed and implemented, they along with the other measures secured by planning condition would improve the situation for residents around the start and finishing times of the schools.

Impact upon Trees/Landscaping

The trees which are part of the County Borough of Darlington Tree Preservation (No 1) Order 1951 would not be affected by the proposal. There are other trees within the site and some of them would have to be removed in order to facilitate the development. The Council's Senior Arboricultural Officer considers that the trees to be removed are not worthy of a tree preservation order but a suitable landscaping scheme including replacement trees of suitable species would need to be secured by a planning condition.

The proposal currently involves the removal of a row of trees on the western boundary of the site with Conyers Avenue in order to extend the existing hard play surface. Whilst the trees are not worthy of a preservation order, this extension to the hard surface may not have to be extended as shown on the submitted plans and there may be an opportunity to retain the existing trees or plant replacement trees in this location. This would be explored as part of the overall landscaping scheme for the development.

A planning condition would also need to be attached to any grant of planning permission to ensure that the appropriate protection measures for the existing trees to be retained are put in place prior to the commencement of the construction period.

Protected Species

A Bat and Breeding Bird Risk Assessment confirms that there are no records of bats at the site and there were no opportunities for birds or bats to gain entry into the fabric of the buildings in the areas to be affected by the proposed works. The site is considered very low risk for bats. Whilst the semi mature trees are unsuitable for roosting bats they might be used by breeding birds and any works to the trees and shrubs must be implemented outside the bird breeding season. Natural England licenses would not be required for the development

Drainage

The proposal involves the enlargement of three existing hard surface areas and the creation of two new hard surface play areas. The drop off area is also a new hard surface. Pin kerbs and drainage channels would be incorporated into the design of the hard surfaces and the detail of the drainage measures would be secured by a planning condition

Contaminated Land

The application has been accompanied by a Desk Top Study and an Environmental Search Report which has been considered by Environmental Health and discussions are still ongoing. As a result, it is considered appropriate to impose a planning condition relating to contaminated land

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

A high level of need for school places across the Borough has been identified by the Local Authority. The Local Authority has been directed to change the pupil admission arrangements to account for children from the rural approaches to the west of the urban area, particularly the Merrybent and High Coniscliffe area and the Mowden Schools have been identified as the schools to take the children from that area who do not gain a place at their nearest local school.

It is considered that the proposed extensions by reason of their size, position and appearance will not cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the schools or the surrounding area. The proposals have no significant impact in terms of loss of daylight or sunlight to neighbouring dwellings and maintain adequate levels of privacy. It is considered that the proposed drop off area and the updating and implementation of the existing Travel Plan to include mitigation measures outlined in the Transport Statement will minimise the impact of the development upon the surrounding road network and no highway objections have been raised. An appropriate landscaping scheme will compensate the loss of the trees to be removed in order to facilitate the development. The proposal is considered to comply with the relevant policies in the development plan set out below:

Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997

E2 – Development Limit

E3 – Protection of Open Land

E12 – Trees and Development

E14 – Landscaping of Development

Darlington Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2012

CS1 – Darlington’s Sub Regional Role and Locational Strategy

CS2 – Achieving High Quality Sustainable Design

CS15 – Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity

CS16 – Protecting Environmental Resources, Human Health and Safety

CS18 – Promoting Quality, Accessible Sport and Recreation

RECOMMENDATION

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

1. A3 – Implementation Limit (Three Years)
2. B4 – Details of Materials (Samples)
3. Notwithstanding the details shown on the approved plans, details of any external lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority within an agreed timescale. The details shall include the design, location and hours of operation of the lighting and also a Lighting Impact Assessment. The development shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the approved details
REASON: In the interests of the visual amenity of the locality and residential amenity
4. Prior to the commencement of the development a Construction Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall include the proposed hours of construction, a Dust Action Plan, the designating and signing of construction traffic and plant routes, warning signage, construction phase proposals, methods for keeping public roads clear of debris including wheel washing facilities. The development shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the approved Plan
REASON: In the interests of residential amenity and highway safety
5. Notwithstanding the details shown on the approved plans precise details of the means of enclosure for Play Area 6 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority within an agreed timescale. The development shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the approved details
REASON: In the interests of the visual amenity of the locality
6. Prior to the commencement of the development precise details of a scheme for the disposal of surface water from the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the approved details
REASON: To ensure that the discharge of surface water from the site does not increase the risk of flooding outside the site
7. J2 – Contamination
8. Notwithstanding the details shown on the approved plans, precise details of a secure cycle store shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning

Authority within an agreed timescale. The development shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the approved details
REASON: To ensure that an appropriate secure cycle storage space is provided on site

9. Prior to the development being brought into use, a Sustainable Travel Plan shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall consider the mitigation measures set out in Section 6 of the document entitled “Mowden Infant and Junior Schools Extension – Transport Statement” dated 31 May 2012 produced by JMP Consultants Limited and confirm timescales for implementation
REASON: In the interests of highway safety and to promote sustainable forms of travel

10. Details of landscaping shall be submitted to, and approved by, the Local Planning Authority prior to work commencing on site. The scheme shall include the planting of replacement trees (containerised or in air pots) with a minimum of 20cm girths. Such landscaping shall be provided either within the first planting season after the completion of the development or any individual phase thereof or prior to the buildings being occupied and thereafter permanently maintained. Any trees or shrubs removed, dying, severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within five years of planting shall be replaced by trees of similar size and species to those originally approved and planted.
REASON: To ensure a satisfactory appearance of the site and to improve the visual amenities of the locality.

11. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, details shall be submitted of a scheme to protect the existing trees shown on the submitted plans to be retained. The submitted details shall comprise generally the specification laid down within BS 5837 and shall include fencing of at least 2.3m high, consisting of a scaffolding frame braced to resist impacts, supported by a weldmesh wired to the uprights and horizontals to dissuade encroachment. The agreed scheme of protection shall be in place before the commencement of any work, including demolition operations. The Local Planning Authority shall be given notice of the completion of the protection works prior to the commencement of any work to allow an inspection of the measurements to ensure compliance with the approved scheme of protection. Notwithstanding the above approved specification, none of the following activities shall take place within the segregated protection zones in the area of the trees:

- (a) The raising or lowering of levels in relation to the existing ground levels;
- (b) Cutting of roots, digging of trenches or removal of soil;
- (c) Erection of temporary buildings, roads or carrying out of any engineering operations;
- (d) Lighting of fires;
- (e) Driving of vehicles or storage of materials and equipment.

REASON: To ensure that a maximum level of protection in order to safeguard the well being of the trees on the site and in the interests of the visual amenities of the area.

12. B5 – Detailed Drawings (Accordance with Plan)

SUGGESTED SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR GRANTING PLANNING PERMISSION

A high level of need for school places across the Borough has been identified by the Local Authority. The Local Authority has been directed to change the pupil admission arrangements to

account for children from the rural approaches to the west of the urban area, particularly the Merrybent and High Coniscliffe area and the Mowden Schools have been identified as the schools to take the children from that area who do not gain a place at their nearest local school.

It is considered that the proposed extensions by reason of their size, position and appearance will not cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the schools or the surrounding area. The proposals have no significant impact in terms of loss of daylight or sunlight to neighbouring dwellings and maintain adequate levels of privacy. It is considered that the proposed drop off area and the updating and implementation of the existing Travel Plan to include mitigation measures outlined in the Transport Statement will minimise the impact of the development upon the surrounding road network and no highway objections have been raised. An appropriate landscaping scheme will compensate the loss of the trees to be removed in order to facilitate the development. The proposal is considered to comply with the relevant policies in the development plan set out below:

Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997

- E2 – Development Limit
- E3 – Protection of Open Land
- E12 – Trees and Development
- E14 – Landscaping of Development

Darlington Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2012

- CS1 – Darlington’s Sub Regional Role and Locational Strategy
- CS2 – Achieving High Quality Sustainable Design
- CS15 – Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- CS16 – Protecting Environmental Resources, Human Health and Safety
- CS18 – Promoting Quality, Accessible Sport and Recreation

INFORMATIVE TO BE INCLUDED SHOULD PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED

Highways

The applicant is advised that works are required within the public highway, to create a new access to the site, and contact must be made with the Assistant Director: Highways, Design and Projects (contact Mr S. Pryke 01325 388743) to arrange for the works to be carried out or to obtain authority under Sec. 184 of the Highways Act 1980 to execute the works.