

DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE DATE: 23 September 2009

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APPLICATION REF. NO:	09/00560/DC
STATUTORY DECISION DATE:	6 October 2009
WARD/PARISH:	NORTH ROAD
LOCATION:	North Road Primary School
DESCRIPTION:	Application for biomass boiler installation and associated service yard area (amended description)
APPLICANT:	Director of Community Services

APPLICATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

This is a full application under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992. Approval is sought for the installation of a biomass boiler and the construction of a service yard enclosure at the south western end of the new North Road Primary School building, which is currently at an advanced stage of construction, following the granting of planning permission for the construction of a new primary school in September 2008 (08/00322/DC). The new primary school is being built on former playing fields to the east of the existing North Road Primary School building on St Paul's Terrace and Pendleton Road South. Immediately to the south of the application site are houses on Bob Harrison Court, approximately 20 metres away from the proposed boiler and service yard enclosure.

The proposed biomass boiler will be approximately 4.5 metres in height and will be sited in a 15x10m service yard enclosed by a cedar clad and Cotswold block work wall with a maximum height of approximately 2 metres, taking into account a slight change in levels at this part of the site. The boiler itself will have a galvanised steel finish which the Design and Access Statement submitted with the application states will weather to a grey finish. The application also proposes the installation of two stainless steel flues on the south side of the school building, which will protrude a maximum of 2.4 and 1.6 metres through the lower part of the roof respectively.

The Design and Access Statement advises that the proposed boiler will contribute to the school's heating requirements and will contribute to the School's BREEAM (British Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) energy rating by presenting a sustainable solution for the school to reduce CO2 emissions generated through its daily heating requirement.

In addition to the Design and Access Statement, a Noise Survey and Air Quality Assessment (AQA) have also been submitted with the application.

PLANNING HISTORY

08/00322/DC – Erection of new primary school. GRANTED 18 SEPTEMBER 2008

PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND

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

E3 – Protection of Open Land
E26 – Energy from Renewable Sources
E29 – The Setting of New Development
E48 – Noise-Generating/Polluting Development
H15 – The Amenity of Residential Areas

Planning Policy Statement 22 – Planning for Renewable Energy is also relevant to consideration of the application.

RESULTS OF CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY

None at the time this report was prepared. Any representations will be reported verbally to Members.

PLANNING ISSUES

The main planning issues to be considered in the determination of the application are:

- Planning Policy
- Visual Amenity
- Residential Amenity
- Highway Issues
- Other Matters

Planning Policy

Local Plan Policy E26 (Energy from Renewable Sources) is supportive of proposals for the generation of energy from renewable source, provided there is no adverse impact on landscape, wildlife and amenity. Planning Policy Statement 22 – Planning for Renewable Energy also provides more detailed guidance on renewable energy sources, including biomass, and advises that consideration must also be given to the following issues: visual intrusion, noise, air quality and traffic.

Visual Amenity

Policy E29 (The Setting of New Development) states that new development, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings will be required to respect the character of its setting in terms of its siting, design, materials, landscaping and the protection of existing townscape features.

The proposed boiler and enclosure are to be sited at the south western end of the new primary school building. The boiler will have an overall height of approximately 4.5 metres, will be seen against the backdrop of the larger, two storey school building and will not therefore be prominent in the wider streetscene. Similarly the two proposed flues, which will protrude through the lower part of the roof of the building, would not exceed the ridge height of the roof. The service yard wall, which will enclose the silo, is to be constructed of block work and cedar

cladding to match that of the main school building. It is not considered therefore that the proposed development will have an unacceptable impact on the visual amenity of the area.

The site is also designated as open land and Policy E3 (Protection of Open Land) presumes against development on existing open land that will cause material net harm to the visual relief afforded by the open space system as a whole, the character and appearance of the locality, its continuity and any formal or informal recreation afforded by the site. In the context of the new primary school building, which is currently being built on the site, the proposed boiler and enclosure are not considered to cause material harm to the open space system or the character and appearance of the locality.

Residential Amenity

Local Plan Policy E48 (Noise-Generating/Polluting Development) states that planning permission will not be granted for development which, by reason of the emission of noise or other pollutant, would be materially harmful to the amenities of existing or proposed residential or other pollution-sensitive areas. Policy H15 (The Amenities of Residential Areas) also states that permission will not be granted for the establishment, enlargement or material intensification of non-residential uses which would unacceptably conflict with the amenities of surrounding areas having a predominantly residential character or with the quiet enjoyment of dwellings and gardens in particular.

The nearest residential properties are located approximately 20 metres away to the south of the proposed silo and service yard, on Bob Harrison Court. A Noise Assessment and an Air Quality Assessment have been submitted with the application, which the Council's Environmental Health Officer is considering. The comments of the Environmental Health Officer will be reported verbally at the meeting.

Highway Issues

The Council's Highway Engineer has been consulted on the application. His views will be reported verbally at the meeting.

Other Matters

The consultation exercise carried out in respect of the application does not expire until 2 October 2009. Any comments received after the preparation of the report will be reported verbally at the meeting. The decision notice will not be issued until the consultation period has expired, however should any comments be received which raise new issues then the matter will be reported back to members.

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 proposed boiler and service yard enclosure does not raise any adverse impacts in terms of visual amenity, residential amenity or highway safety matters. The proposed development would accord with the following policies within the Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997:

E3 – Protection of Open Land

E26 – Energy from Renewable Sources
E29 – The Setting of New Development
E48 – Noise-Generating/Polluting Development
H15 – The Amenity of Residential Areas

RECOMMENDATION

PROVIDED NO OBJECTIONS ARE RECEIVED ONCE THE PUBLICITY EXERCISE HAS EXPIRED ON 2 OCTOBER 2009, PURSUANT TO REGULATION 3 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING GENERAL REGULATIONS 1992 PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

1. A3
2. B5

SUGGESTED REASONS FOR GRANTING OF PLANNING PERMISSION

The proposed boiler and service yard enclosure does not raise any adverse impacts in terms of visual amenity, residential amenity or highway safety matters. The proposed development would accord with the following policies within the Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997:

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