

**DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE**

**COMMITTEE DATE: 15 January 2013**

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**APPLICATION REF. NO:** 13/00862/FUL

**STATUTORY DECISION DATE:** 27 January 2014

**WARD/PARISH:** PARK EAST

**LOCATION:** Skerne Park Academy  
The Coleridge Centre  
Coleridge Gardens  
DARLINGTON  
DL1 5AJ

**DESCRIPTION:** Erection of extension to existing school building to provide 3 No. additional classrooms, new small hall, community changing facilities, four court sports hall and other ancillary accommodation and circulation space (amended description)

**APPLICANT:** Hummersknott Academy Trust

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**APPLICATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION**

Planning permission is sought for the erection of an extension to the existing school building to provide three additional classrooms, new small hall, community changing facilities, four court sports hall and other ancillary accommodation and circulation space.

The existing school is roughly triangular in shape. The proposed extension would be located to the west of the existing building.

The proposal is intended to:

- Provide an additional self sufficient out of hours community entrance and sports facility.
- Improve and extend the existing teaching facilities.
- Improve internal circulation.

The area of two of the class rooms and the changing facilities would be some 25m by 15m. To the south of this, adjoining the existing school building would be a further class room and a new small hall. These would cover an area some 20m by 6.5m. Eaves height of the classrooms, small hall and changing facilities would be 3.5m and there would be a further 1.2m to the ridge. This would be the same as the existing building.

The proposed sports hall would be 34m by 18m. The sports all would be 9m in height to the top of a dual pitch sloping curved roof.

The primary school function is part of the Coleridge Centre which includes adult learning facilities and a Sure Start facility.

The school site is located to the north of Ribble Drive and to the west is bounded by the back gardens of properties along Eden Crescent. There is a car park in the south west corner of the site and a multi use games area. The location where extension is proposed is mostly a grassed area.

## **PLANNING HISTORY**

04/00661/DC, on 31 August 2004, planning permission was granted for a new community education building with associated car park and external play areas to replace existing school.

## **PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND**

The following policies of the development plan are relevant:

Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997:

- E2 – Development Limits
- E3 – Protection of Open Land
- E14 – Landscaping of Development

Darlington Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2011:

- CS1 – Darlington’s Sub-Regional Role and Locational Strategy
- CS2 – Achieving High Quality, Sustainable Design
- CS14 – Promoting Local Character and Distinctiveness
- CS16 – Protecting Environmental Resources, Human Health and Safety
- CS18 – Promoting Quality, Accessible Sport and Recreation Facilities

The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 is also relevant. The above policies are considered to be compliant with the National Planning Policy Framework.

## **RESULTS OF CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY**

Occupiers of neighbouring properties have been consulted by way of letter and a site notice has been displayed.

An objection has been received from the owners / occupiers of **12, 14, 16 and 18 Eden Crescent**. The points raised are summarised below.

- *The views from the rear of the house will be obscure.*
- *The size of the building is huge, would block any sun and would overshadow the garden.*
- *None of the rear windows will let in the light that they currently do.*

- *A solid constriction would be unsightly, would block views and give us a feeling of being enclosed.*
- *Security and privacy would be jeopardised.*
- *There will be issues with security lighting.*
- *There will be issues times of usage and noise problems,*
- *Visitors to the sports hall will undoubtedly park in our street.*
- *Drainage will also be a problem as the garden is lower than the school field and already suffers from flooding now.*
- *The school has a field further away from houses. The sports hall could be built further away from houses.*
- *More building could be added in the future.*
- *This building will take over the community centre open to all to hire possibly for discos and parties.*

The **Highways Officer** raised no objections as existing car parking could be utilised outside of school hours. A condition for additional secure cycle parking would be required.

The **Environmental Health Officer** commented that conditions relating to contaminated are not required. The Environmental Health Officer also recommended that the use of the sports hall be restricted to use between 9:00 and 21:00.

**Sport England** raised no objection subject to a condition regarding a community use agreement for the proposed sports hall.

## **PLANNING ISSUES**

Policy E3 (Protection of Open Land) of the Borough of Darlington Local Plan states that permission will not be granted for development which harms the visual relief, character and openness afforded by open space or the provision of sport facilities. Policy CS18 (Promoting Quality, Accessible Sport and Recreation Facilities) of the Darlington Core Strategy states that sport and recreation facilities will be protected and where appropriate enhanced to provide a range of quality, accessible and safe facilities to meet the needs of the community. Sport England have commented that the proposal does not impact on the school playing field's capacity to accommodate pitches and that the sports hall is a standard four court hall. The siting of the proposal is such that it would not harm the visual amenity provided by the open space, would not harm existing playing field provision and would provide an additional sports and recreation facility.

Policy CS2 (Achieving High Quality, Sustainable Design) of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2011 is one of the main considerations in relation to this application. Policy CS2 includes provision that new development should reflect or enhance Darlington's distinctive nature; create a safe and secure environment; create safe, attractive, functional and integrated outdoor spaces that compliment the built form; and relate well to the Borough's green infrastructure network. Policy CS14 (Promoting Local Character and Distinctiveness) of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document states that the distinctive character of the Borough's built, historic, natural and environmental townscapes, landscapes and strong sense of place will be protected. The design of the extension and sports hall would be commensurate with the host property. The proposed materials would include red brickwork to match existing and grey finished single ply membrane roofing. The windows would include powder coated aluminium frame curtain walling. The school building as existing is of a contemporary design and the proposal would be in keeping with this and not harmful to the visual amenity of the area.

Policy E14 (Landscaping of Development) of the Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997 states that development will be required to incorporate appropriate hard and soft landscaping which has regard to its setting. Regarding landscaping the proposal is to extend the existing hard landscaping to the classrooms on the North West elevation to meet the new classrooms, small hall and community entrance. Three trees which were planted in 2006 would need to be removed for the sports hall.

Policy CS16 (Protecting Environmental Resources, Human Health and Safety) of the Core Strategy seeks to protect against significant detrimental impacts on the environment, general amenity and the health and safety of the community. There would be over 25m from the proposed sports hall to the nearest properties on Eden Crescent to the west. This would be sufficient that the proposal would not result in significant detrimental impacts to the residential amenity of neighbouring properties. Notwithstanding the comments of the Environmental Health Officer, the hours of operation specified in the planning application are 06:30 to 21:00. Restricting the hours of use to these times would be appropriate. No details have been provided of any additional security lighting and therefore a condition for this information to be submitted and approved would be necessary.

The existing building has an area of approximately 3,590m<sup>2</sup>. The proposal is for a further 1,000m<sup>2</sup>. The existing access and parking arrangements would not be altered as part of the proposal. It is intended that the additional use by the community will be out of school hours. The Highways Engineer has commented that additional car parking is not required. The facilities will be utilised by the Academy during school hours therefore should not generate additional traffic, whilst during out of hours the users of the sports facilities can utilise the existing car park.

Policy CS3 (Promoting Renewable Energy) of the Core Strategy states that all major developments of more than 1,000m<sup>2</sup> of non residential floorspace should secure at least 10% of their energy supply from renewable and decentralised or low carbon sources. The proposal would create in the region of 1,000m<sup>2</sup> of non residential floorspace and therefore policy CS3 would apply. Details of renewable / low carbon energy have not been provided with the application and therefore a condition in this regard would be necessary. Policy CS2 (Achieving High Quality, Sustainable Design) of the Core Strategy states that from 2013 to 2016 non residential development should meet BREEAM 2011 'very good' or 'outstanding' ratings. Again, a condition in this regard would be necessary.

The size of the development and its location in Flood Risk Zone 1 are such that a Flood Risk Assessment is not required for the application. A Drainage Statement was submitted with the planning application and this identifies that surface water drainage will discharge into the adjacent public sewers and that such matters will be addressed via building regulations and with Northumbrian Water.

### **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**

The proposal would not be harmful to the visual amenity of the area including that provided by the existing open space. No significant issues regarding light and outlook are raised given the distances to the nearest residential properties. The existing parking arrangements are considered adequate to meet the needs of the proposal. Conditions are considered necessary regarding renewable energy and BREEAM 2011 standard. Surface water will be discharged into his public sewer.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that planning permission be granted subject to conditions.

### **CONDITIONS**

1. A3 Implementation Limit (3 years)
2. B5 Detailed application (Accordance with Plans)
3. Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority the development hereby approved shall achieve a minimum of 10% of its energy needs from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources.

Reason – In order that the development meets the requirements for decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources of energy in accordance with Policy CS3 of the Darlington Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2011.

4. Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority the development hereby approved shall meet as a minimum BREEAM 2011 ‘very good’ rating.

Reason – In order that the development meets the requirements for BREEAM 2011 standards in accordance with Policy CS2 of the Darlington Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2011.

5. Prior to the development hereby approved being commenced a Construction Management Plan shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall include details of designating and signing construction vehicle and plant routes, warning signage, construction phase proposals and keeping public roads clear of all construction debris. The construction phase proposals should also highlight how the day to day operation of the school will be kept separate from the construction traffic. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved management plan.

Reason - In order to protect highway safety and residential amenity.

6. Prior to the development hereby approved being commenced, precise details of additional secure cycle parking and storage details shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include the number, location and design of the cycle stands and the development shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the approved details

Reason – To ensure that the adequate secure covered cycle parking provision is made.

7. Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the sports hall hereby approved shall not be used outside the hours of 06:30 to 21:00.

Reason – In the interests of residential amenity.

8. Use of the sports hall and changing accommodation shall not commence until a community use agreement prepared in consultation with Sport England has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and a copy of the completed approved agreement has been provided to the Local Planning Authority. The agreement shall apply to sports hall, and changing accommodation and include details of pricing policy, hours of use, access by non-educational establishment users, management responsibilities and a mechanism for review, and anything else which the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Sport England considers necessary in order to secure the effective community use of the facilities. The development shall not be used at any time other than in strict compliance with the approved agreement.

Reason - To secure well managed safe community access to the sports facilities, to ensure sufficient benefit to the development of sport and to accord with Policy CS18 (Promoting Quality, Accessible Sport and Recreation Facilities) of the Darlington Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2011.

9. Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, no development shall take place until details of any additional security lights to be installed on the extension hereby permitted or the existing car park have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, thereafter the permission shall only be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason – in the interests of residential amenity.

The following policies have been taken into consideration in arriving at this decision.

Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997:

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

Darlington Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2011:

- CS2 – Achieving High Quality, Sustainable Design
- CS3 – Promoting Renewable Energy
- CS14 – Promoting Local Character and Distinctiveness
- CS16 – Protecting Environmental Resources, Human Health and Safety

## **INFORMATIVE**

In connection with condition 6, additional secured cycle parking should be installed in connection with the sports facilities as the existing provision of 5 spaces is insufficient. A further 10 - 15 secure cycle spaces would be required.

