

**Application Number**

P/2014/0817

**Site Address**

White Rock Primary School  
Davies Avenue  
Paignton  
Devon  
TQ4 7AW

**Case Officer**

Mr Alexis Moran

**Ward**

Churston With Galmpton

**Description**

Construction of a two storey classroom block and dining room extension, together with the provision of a combined cycle/pedestrian path.

**Executive Summary/Key Outcomes**

The application is for a two storey extension, comprising of six classrooms, and a single storey extension to provide additional dining room capacity. The proposal also includes a connecting cycle path to join the existing path on the Brixham Road to the Davies Road school entrance. The application seeks to meet the growing demand for primary school places in Torbay.

National planning guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) encourages local planning authorities to work positively and collaboratively with schools to help to meet their needs in providing sufficient choice of school places and places great importance on this issue.

The key planning issue with this proposal is the impact of traffic generation on local highways, which is already perceived as a problem by local residents. Therefore, the applicant has been requested to submit a revised Travel Plan setting out how car trips will be reduced by promoting more sustainable modes of travel. The application is recommended for approval, subject to the submission of a travel plan to meet the Councils requirements.

**Recommendation**

Conditional approval delegated to the Director of Place in order that the detailed wording of the conditions can be finalised.

**Statutory Determination Period**

The application is a major application because the site area is greater than 1 hectare. The application was validated on 08.08.2014. The 13 week determination date is 08.11.2014.

### **Site Details**

The site is the existing White Rock Primary School which has its main access and entrance off Davies Avenue. The proposal extension would be to the rear of the existing building. The scheme includes the addition of a cycle path to the north of the site. This will provide a cycle link between the Brixham Road from the existing cycle path to the west of the school and the Davies Road entrance. This will provide a more sustainable route for parents and students from the surrounding area and the new housing development to the West of the Brixham Road.

### **Detailed Proposals**

The proposals are for the construction of a new two storey classroom block comprising of 6 no. classrooms and ancillary facilities with a floor area of 836 sq metres; the construction of a small dining room extension with a floor area of 56 sq metres and the provision of a combined cycle/pedestrian path connecting Davies Avenue with the Brixham Road and the existing cycle/pedestrian path.

The two storey extension aspect of the proposal will provide 6 no. new classrooms, WC facilities and circulation space. The proposed extension will be located on the site of the existing swimming pool. In order to site the classroom extension in this location an existing temporary classroom has already been repositioned to a location further west. This was granted permission by application P/2014/0774 which was approved on 17.09.2014. The existing swimming pool and a single storey standalone boiler room/storage building adjacent to the swimming pool are proposed to be demolished. The new classrooms will allow the school to accommodate an additional 210 pupils. This increase will be phased on a year by year basis so that there will be a maximum of 30 additional pupils per year.

The extension has been orientated so as to allow west facing classrooms, which will maximise natural light into teaching spaces.

The proposal includes the addition of a single storey extension to the existing dining room, to cater for the additional students, which will lead into an internal courtyard created by the two storey extension.

It is proposed that the new shared cycle/pedestrian path would be adopted by the highway authority. It will therefore be designed to the required standards for adoption. It is considered that the submission of details of the design, finished materials and lighting should be conditioned and works should not commence until these details are approved by the Council.

Surface water drainage from the new buildings would be to soakaways.

### **Summary Of Consultation Responses**

*Highways Officer* Highways have no technical issues, but have concerns with the additional vehicles parking in the surrounding roads of the school, at "drop off" and "pick up" times.

*Strategic Transport* Further comments awaited subject to the submission of a revised travel plan.

*Sport England* No objection

*Natural England* No objection in principle; Standing Advice applies  
*Drainage & Structures* Design of soakaways must be submitted before commencement of development on site.

*Environment Agency* No comment

### **Summary Of Representations**

Three objections have been received from local residents. The following material considerations have been raised:

- Additional on-street parking
- Increase in noise
- Extra traffic impacting on highway safety
- Too tall and out of keeping
- Parents currently park illegally

These have been reproduced and sent electronically for Members consideration.

### **Relevant Planning History**

P/2014/0774 Relocation of single storey temporary classroom building; Approved  
17.09.2014

P/2013/0920 Replace an existing temporary classroom with a new temporary  
classroom and associated drainage; Approved 21.11.2013

P/2008/0089 New swimming pool kitchenette, plant room and external store for  
sports equipment on land adjoining existing open air swimming  
pool; Approved 25.02.2008

P/2005/2140 Changing room block; Approved 17.01.2006

P/2003/0338 Extension to include new classrooms toilet and changing facilities;  
Approved 10.04.2003

## **Key Issues/Material Considerations**

The key issues are:

1. The Principle of the Development
2. Design
3. Access
4. Impact of Traffic on Highways
5. Impact on Amenity
6. Drainage

### **1. The Principle of the Development**

The principle of the development is acceptable. Local Plan Policy CFS supports all educational infrastructure in principle and Policy CF10 supports the improvement of educational facilities at existing schools provided that:

1. Sites for new schools are well related to existing or proposed residential areas, accessible to public transport and have safe pedestrian and vehicular access;
2. School sites are of a sufficient size to accommodate the satisfactory design and layout of new or improved school facilities;
3. Proposals have regard to the need to safeguard existing playing fields within the school site; and
4. Proposals can be accommodated without undue detriment to surrounding residential areas.

As the school is already in existence criterion 1 is not relevant. It is considered that the proposal accords with criteria 2 and 3 as the extension have been designed to take up minimal footprint to ensure there is no encroachment on to the existing playing fields. Criterion 4 will be discussed below.

Furthermore, paragraph 72 of the NPPF states:

"The Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:

- give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools; and
- work with schools promoters to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted."

The proposed development is needed to meet the growing demand for primary school places within Paignton. The new building has been sited on the rear of the existing school building in order to safeguard the school playing fields and not encroach closer to the residential properties to the south and east. The new classroom extension would result in the demolition of the existing outdoor swimming pool. However this facility has not been used for in excess of a year. The school currently uses the facilities at the Admiral swimming pool in Brixham where they receive lessons from dedicated swimming coaches. It is therefore considered that this provides a better overall service than the existing pool. It is considered that the extensions can be satisfactorily accommodated on the site in accordance with Policy CF10.2.

## **2. Design**

The new building has been designed to provide a gradual increase in height from that of the existing school building and reduce its overall massing. It is considered that the design results in a development which, although is taller than its surroundings, does not appear overdominant to the existing school building. The increase in height is considered to be necessary to provide the extra floor area whilst limiting the encroachment of the development on to the existing sports field and adjacent residential properties.

Therefore, the design and layout of the proposal is considered to be appropriate and an improvement on the existing arrangement. The height and massing of the new building is also considered appropriate and would not have an overbearing impact on the existing buildings. It is deemed that the proposal accords with Policies CF2, BES and BE1 of the Local Plan.

## **3. Access**

Highways have no technical issues with the proposal as the access is not to be altered. However they do have concerns with regards to the additional vehicles parking in the surrounding roads at the start and at the end of the school day. It is considered that this can be mitigated by the implementation of a suitable Travel Plan. The council has requested the submission of a detailed Travel Plan. The details of this plan will be reported at Development Management Committee (DMC).

The proposed additional car park spaces are acceptable and comply with Local Plan policy.

Therefore, the proposal accords with Policy T26 of the saved adopted Torbay Local Plan 1995-2011.

## **4. Impact of Traffic on Highways**

The new classrooms will allow the school to accommodate an additional 210 pupils. However this increase will be phased on a year by year basis over seven years which allows for a maximum of 30 additional pupils per year.

Based on the current transport modes 58% of pupils are expected to travel to school by car. This translates to 17 extra vehicle trips in the first year increasing on a yearly basis to 122 trips by the seventh year.

Currently 8% of students travel to school by scooter or cycle. It is intended to increase this number by providing extra scooter and bike spaces and the implementation of an appropriately revised travel plan (which it is expected will have been submitted prior to the committee meeting). There are 34 existing cycle parking spaces at the school and 20 scooter spaces. The application proposes an additional 30 cycle parking spaces (15 hoops) alongside an additional 100 scooter parking spaces.

At present, there are 16 car parking spaces at the school site for staff, including 1 disabled bay. As a result of the development proposed it is expected that there will be 30 full time staff and 54 part time staff. Torbay Council's emerging parking standards specify that 1 car parking space is required per 2.5 staff members or full time equivalent. It is anticipated that there will be 57 full time equivalent staff at the school which equates to a requirement of 23 car parking spaces based on the requirements of the emerging local plan. An additional 7 no. car parking spaces are proposed to be provided at the school site to ensure that the number of spaces complies with the emerging Local Plan standards (Policy TA3). The standards in the emerging plan have been used as a guide in this instance as the current Local Plan does not specify the parking standards for primary school developments.

The key issue raised by local residents objecting to the application is the impact of additional traffic generation on local roads, which is already seen as a problem at the school. However, it is the view of the officers, given NPPF requirements and technical advice, that the proposal is considered acceptable provided that a revised travel plan which confirms that the school will take proactive steps to reduce car trips to and from the school by parents and staff. Further negotiation is underway on this issue and will be reported at DMC.

It is important that this travel plan is properly implemented and monitored by the school/Local Planning Authority to ensure that more sustainable travel modes are undertaken in future. New cycle and scooter parking is proposed along with the additional cycle/pedestrian path link.

Therefore, subject to the receipt of a revised and appropriate travel plan (prior to the Development Management Committee) and a suitably worded condition regarding the implementation and monitoring of such a travel plan, the proposal would be considered to accord with Policies CF1.3, CF10.4 and T26.2.

## **5. Impact on Amenity**

Representations have raised concerns about a potential increase in noise. Given

the distance of the proposed classrooms to the nearest residential properties (some 55 metres to the south) and the existence of a wooded area in between, it is considered that there will be no material loss of amenity to the occupiers of these properties. For the same reason, it is not considered that the proposal would result in a loss of privacy to the occupiers of these properties.

## **6. Drainage**

Surface water drainage is proposed to soakaways, but inadequate information was provided in the application regarding their design and suitability. Further information will be required and a Grampian condition will be added to any planning permission. The implementation of the Travel Plan will be monitored by the council.

## **S106/CIL -**

Not applicable in this instance.

## **Conclusions**

The application is acceptable, subject to conditions. The proposal is needed to meet the demand for additional primary school places and would result in a well designed addition which would prevent the encroachment of development onto the playing fields. Although there are recognisable traffic parking problems at the school during school drop-off and pick-up times, it is believed that these can be overcome through the successful implementation of an appropriate Travel Plan in order to promote more sustainable modes of travel, such as walking, scootering, cycling and public transport.

## **Condition(s)/Reason(s)**

01. No development shall take place until details of the design, materials, gradient and lighting of the cycle/pedestrian path hereby approved have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason; In the interests of visual and residential amenity and to ensure the successful implementation of a suitable cycle route, in accordance with Policies TS, T1, T3 & EP5 of the saved adopted Torbay Local Plan 1995-2011.

02. No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a plan indicating the position, number and design of cycle and scooter parking. The cycle and scooter parking shall be provided before the first use of the class room extension hereby approved. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of encouraging sustainable use of the new facilities in accordance with Policy T2 of the Torbay Local Plan 1995-2011.

03. No development shall take place until the following information has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority: (1) Evidence that trial holes and infiltration tests have been carried out on the site to confirm whether the ground is suitable for a soakaway(s). Trial holes and infiltration tests must be carried out in accordance with Building Research Establishment Digest 365. In addition, evidence demonstrating that the use of a soakaway(s) at this location will not result in an increased risk of flooding to surrounding buildings, roads and land. This should take into consideration re-emergence of surface water onto surrounding properties after it has soaked away. In the event that the evidence submitted under (1) above demonstrates that the ground conditions are suitable for a soakaway(s) and will not result in an increased risk of flooding to surrounding buildings, roads and land: (2) Detailed design of the soakaway(s) in accordance with Building Research Establishment Digest 365, including how it has been sized and designed to cater for the 1 in 100 year critical rainfall event plus an allowance for climate change.(3) Details of the surface water drainage system connecting the new building to the soakaway(s), which must be designed to cater for the 1 in 100 year critical rainfall event plus an allowance for climate change. In the event that the evidence submitted under (1) above demonstrates that the ground conditions are not suitable for a soakaway(s) or will result in an increased risk of flooding to surrounding buildings, roads and land: (4) Evidence of how surface water will be dealt with in order not to increase the risk of flooding to surrounding buildings, roads and land. The approved classroom extension shall be occupied until the approved surface water drainage system has been completed as approved and it shall be continually maintained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests to adapting to climate change and managing flood risk, and in order to accord with saved Policy EPS of the Adopted Torbay Local Plan 1995-2011 and paragraph 103 of the NPPF.

04. The parking facilities shown on the approved plan shall be provided before the use of the development hereby approved commences and thereafter used for no other purpose unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that parking facilities will be available at all times to serve the premises, in accordance with Policy T25 of the Torbay Local Plan 1995-2011.

05. No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of landscaping. This scheme shall include details of replacement planting for a minimum of 1 Extra Heavy Standard broad-leaved tree planted in an appropriately prepared tree pit such that it becomes a focal feature for school use or provides shade to the new facility. Reason: In the interest of the amenities of the area, in accordance with Policy BE2 & L9 of the save adopted Torbay Local Plan 1995-2011.



06. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner, or at such other time as agreed by the Local Planning Authority in writing, and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the area, in accordance with Policy BE2 of the saved Torbay Local Plan 1995-2011.

07. The haulage and construction route shall be outside of root protection areas and canopies as indicated in the supporting arboricultural report.

Reason; To safeguard the existing trees and hedges in accordance with Policy L9 of the Torbay Local Plan 1995-2011 and BS5837.

08. The arboricultural report, its plans and included methodologies shall be enacted in their entirety throughout the build process.

Reason; To safeguard the existing trees and hedges in accordance with Policy L9 of the Torbay Local Plan 1995-2011.

### **Relevant Policies**

BES Built environment strategy  
BE1 Design of new development  
BE2 Landscaping and design  
TS Land use transportation strategy  
T1 Development accessibility  
T3 Cycling  
EP5 Light pollution  
EPS Environmental protection strategy  
L9 Planting and retention of trees  
T25 Car parking in new development  
T26 Access from development onto the highway  
CF8 Primary school provision  
CF10 New schools and improved school facilities