

'Hold Date'	
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Bristol City Council Development Management

Delegated Report and Decision

Application No: 16/06846/F **Registered:** 23 December 2016

Type of Application: Full Planning **Expiry Date:** 17 February 2017
Case Officer: Angelo Calabrese

Site Address:

Red Maids School
Westbury Road
Bristol
BS9 3AW

Description of Development:

Erection of modular classroom building to provide music and art space, shared between Senior and Junior School, together with external works to provide footpath links.

Ward: Westbury-on-Trym & Henleaze

Site Visit Date:

Date Photos Taken:

Consultation Expiry Dates:

Advert 1 Feb 2017
and/or Site 1 Feb 2017
Notice:

Neighbour: 30 Jan 2017

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is part of a playing field associated with Red Maids School. The site is an allocated open space and is situated in Downs Conservation Area.

RELEVANT HISTORY

There have been a significant number of planning applications over the years for the school which are not possible to list in this report.

There are no other applications relating to this part of the site.

APPLICATION

Permission is sought to erect modular classrooms which were once located on the Redland High School site (granted consent under app: 14/01515/F). This facility will be shared by the senior school and junior school .See plans for full details.

Further information was submitted on the 20th March-Sustainability Statement and a tree report on the 7th March.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL () DELEGATED
Red Maids School Westbury Road Bristol BS9 3AW

The applicants have also submitted a transport statement and travel plan on the 17th February.

RESPONSE TO PUBLICITY AND CONSULTATION

Neighbours consulted by letter and a site notice and press advert issued. A total of 69 representations were submitted, 56 objecting and 1 in support. 11 made representations not stating either support or objection.

The following is a summary of the main points raised-

The proposal allows the expansion of the school by smoke screen

Significant increase in traffic problems and highway safety issues.

Proposal should include car parking

A traffic management plan is required.

Westbury on Trym Society have raised concerns with traffic in the locality and the parking of staff around the site. Redmaids School and the new St Ursula's Academy has become traffic and parking nightmare for all those who live in this square half mile.

Councillor Gollop has made the following points-

Supports the school but, Traffic having an unacceptable impact on the area.

Traffic, travel and parking plan is required before permission is granted.

Councillor Radford-

Concerns with traffic on the roads

A transport plan is required to address parking facilities and drop off and pick up.

The school should work with the community.

OTHER COMMENTS

Sport England has commented as follows:-

Objections see key issue section of report.

Transport Development Management has commented as follows:-

Following further consideration , objections are raised. See key issue section of report.

Arboricultural Team has commented as follows:-

Following submission of further information no objections are raised.

RELEVANT POLICIES

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL () DELEGATED
Red Maids School Westbury Road Bristol BS9 3AW

National Planning Policy Framework – March 2012

Bristol Local Plan comprising Core Strategy (Adopted June 2011), Site Allocation and Development Management Policies (Adopted July 2014) and (as appropriate) the Bristol Central Area Plan (Adopted March 2015) and (as appropriate) the Old Market Quarter Neighbourhood Development Plan 2015.

In determining this application, the Local Planning Authority has had regard to all relevant policies of the Bristol Local Plan and relevant guidance.

A) IS THE PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT ACCEPTABLE?

The proposed site is allocated as important open space. Policy DM17 states Development on part, or all, of an Important Open Space as designated on the Policies Map will not be permitted unless the development is ancillary to the open space use.

The proposal is not ancillary to the open space use, which is a playing field. Therefore the scheme is unacceptable in principle.

B) WOULD THE PROPOSAL RESULT IN THE LOSS OF PLAYING FIELDS?

The application will be located on part of the school playing field. Sport England have been consulted and have objected to the application. During the assessment of the proposal there has been correspondence between Sport England and the applicant.

The applicant considers that the proposal does not conflict with the requirements of the NPPF for the following reasons-

NPPF states- Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless: an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

Applicant response- The proposed location for the 'Pod' is surplus due to the Golden Hill site & split use 2 Astros (one built last summer) and Artificial grass to be provided in Junior school playground for use all year (complete Easter 2017). The pod is also providing a dance studio which is not currently provided within the school.

Sport England has reviewed the submitted information and has advised that it will not lift its objection based on current information submitted). Not one of the five exceptions to Sport England's Playing Field Policy in their opinion has been proven. Nor one of the exceptions in para 74 of the NPPF.

The playing field land to be lost to the proposal has been and can be used for sporting activity and as a playing pitch.

Sport England has advised that there is no 'in date' Playing Pitch Strategy for the area to justify the

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL () DELEGATED
Red Maids School Westbury Road Bristol BS9 3AW

loss of the playing field land without replacement. Sport England states that their guidance seeks replacement as land (such as agricultural land) not currently with an established land use as playing field land; the Golden Hill site is already an existing playing field land site.

Sport England encourage the applicant to find a location on the site that is not playing field land that has been or can be used for sporting activity and as a playing pitch.

Therefore the proposal results in the loss of the part of the playing field which is contrary to and not satisfied the tests set out in guidance within the NPPF.

C) WOULD THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT HARM THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THIS PART OF THE. CONSERVATION AREA?

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. The Authority is also required (under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990) to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, with any harm or loss requiring clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 132 of the NPPF states that significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Further, Para.133 states that where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss. Finally, Para 134 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

Policy BCS22 and DM31 requires development to safeguard or enhance heritage assets such as conservation areas.

The location of the buildings is away from public views of the conservation area. Therefore the proposal will preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. No harm caused.

D) WOULD THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PRESERVE THE LISTED BUILDING OR ITS SETTING OR ANY FEATURES OF SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST WHICH IT POSSESSES?

The site is located a significant distance from the Listed Buildings which are situated within the Red Maids site. No harm caused to the setting of the listed buildings.

E) WOULD THE PROPOSAL UNACCEPTABLY AFFECT THE RESIDENTIAL AMENITY OF THE AREA?

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL () DELEGATED
Red Maids School Westbury Road Bristol BS9 3AW

The location of the new building is some distance from neighbouring residential properties, which will ensure that the use of these buildings would not compromise the amenity of neighbouring dwellings.

F) WOULD THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT SATISFACTORILY ADDRESS TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT ISSUES?

A number of objections have been received regarding the expansion of Red Maids School since they merged with Redland High. Concerns have been expressed that this building enables the site to accommodate the additional children from the merger. During the initial assessment of the application it is unclear if the pod will permit the school to accommodate more pupils or if there is already space on site to accommodate the pupils from the merger. A number of residents have stated that this application is a 'smoke screen'. It is also noted that the building that is being erected is one that is being moved from the Redland High site which is part of the merger.

The applicants have submitted a statement of need which states that the 'building is required in order to continue to provide the same level of opportunities in art, drama and music for both the junior and senior school' since the merger. The junior and senior schools need additional space for weekly art sessions and DT lessons. This appears to be required following a space audit, which suggests that the school needs this building to accommodate the extra pupils.

Officers requested the applicant to submit a transport statement to address concerns that he proposal would have in terms of accommodating the extra pupils from the merger.

The applicant submitted a statement on the 17th February. The statement advises - It is important to note that these studios are not required to facilitate the merger between Red Maids' School and Redland High School, which took place in 2016, as no additional classroom space is necessary due to the under occupation of the existing classroom supply'. The statement also includes a classroom audit which does indeed show space in a number of existing classrooms around the site. The reasons for the additional music rooms is because the existing rooms are at 90-100% occupancy. The applicants claim that it is not possible to utilize any existing classrooms as they have to be adapted specifically for this use. No further justification is given why existing spaces cannot be modified.

Consequently in terms of traffic generation, the applicant considers the site has ample capacity to accommodate the merger without the need for additional classroom space.

Highway officers have revised this information with the case officer, and while initially satisfied with the response, further concerns have been raised. It is considered that insufficient justification has been given for the use of existing facilities on the site, particular where a number of classrooms are undersubscribed, which could be used for music lessons. Therefore the facilities proposed are considered to enable the expansion of the school. The submitted transport statement fails to acknowledge that the presence of additional classroom space could increase the capacity of the school site. It is therefore questionable as to whether or not the new facilities are absolutely necessary and a refurbishment of existing facilities could not be undertaken.

Highway officers are concerned by the detrimental impact of increases in traffic being experienced by nearby residents and on face value, the school appears to be incrementally developing the site without any consideration of the wider impact of their development.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL () DELEGATED
Red Maids School Westbury Road Bristol BS9 3AW

Therefore Highway officers consider that insufficient information has been submitted to support the application to demonstrate that it will not have a material impact on the safety of the surrounding streets, contrary to policies BCS10 and BCS15, and DM23. The case officer agrees with this conclusion.

F) DOES THE PROPOSAL HAVE ANY IMPACT ON SURROUNDING TREES.

The applicant has submitted a tree report late in the assessment of the application which has been reviewed by the City Tree officer. They have advised that there is no objection to the proposal but would require more detailed ground protection prior to the commencement of work on site. This can be secured by condition if the scheme was approved.

G) DOES THE PROPOSAL ADDRESS THE CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES OF THE LOCAL PLAN?

The application includes a sustainability statement which address the relevant policies in the Local Plan. The submitted statement appears to be the statement submitted for the pod building when permission was sought for the building on the Redland High school site. This document is therefore out of date and fails to acknowledge the large trees which could cast considerable shadow over the building and reduce the potential of the solar panels.

The applicants have provided an updated statement which addresses the location and shadowing from the trees and concludes that the solar panels alongside an air source heat pump, will achieve more than a 20%. Therefore it is considered that the development addresses the climate change policies of the core strategy.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

How much Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will this development be required to pay?

This development is liable for CIL, however the CIL rate for this type of development, as set out in the CIL Charging Schedule, is £nil and therefore no CIL is payable.

RECOMMENDED REFUSED

The following reason(s) for refusal are associated with this decision:

Reason(s)

1. The proposal will result in the loss of part of a playing field contrary to the guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.
2. The site is within an area allocated as Important Open Space. The proposed development is not ancillary to the open space use and therefore the proposal is contrary to Policy DM17 of the Bristol Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (2014).
3. Insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate that the proposal will not have a highway safety impact on the surrounding streets, contrary to policies BCS10 and BCS15 of

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL () DELEGATED
Red Maids School Westbury Road Bristol BS9 3AW

the Bristol Core Strategy 2011, and DM23 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2014.

Advice(s)

1. Refused Applications Deposited Plans/Documents

The plans that were formally considered as part of the above application are as follows:-

- 1749.LOC01 Site location plan, received 23 December 2016
- 1749-PL01 Existing site plan, received 23 December 2016
- 1749-PL02 Proposed site plan/roof plan, received 23 December 2016
- 1749-PL03 Proposed ground floor plan, received 23 December 2016
- 1749-PL04 Proposed elevations, received 23 December 2016
- 1749.SK01 Proposed site plan, received 23 December 2016

Case Officer: Angelo Calabrese

Authorisation: Katy Dryden

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