

## 06 FEBRUARY 2018 PLANNING COMMITTEE

5b 17/1447 Reg'd: 28.12.17 Expires: 29.03.18 Ward: HE  
Nei. 01.02.18 BVPI 12 (major) Number of 6/13 On Y  
Con. Target: Weeks on Target?  
Exp: Cttee' Day:

**LOCATION:** Land between Railway and Egley Road, Woking, Surrey, GU22 0NH

**PROPOSAL:** Erection of additional secure fence to school boundary, landscaping revisions and minor works within car park area

**TYPE:** Full

**APPLICANT:** Hoe Valley School

**OFFICER:** Joanne  
Hollingdale

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### **REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE**

The application is for major development (as the site area to which the application relates is over 1 hectare). The application is therefore outside the Scheme of Delegation.

### **SUMMARY OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of additional secure fence to school boundary, landscaping revisions and minor works within car park area

### **PLANNING STATUS**

- Green Belt
- Thames Basin Heaths SPA
- Flood Zone 1
- Hook Heath Escarpment of Landscape Importance
- Tree Preservation Order

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**GRANT** planning permission subject to conditions.

### **SITE DESCRIPTION**

This application relates to part of the wider Hoe Valley School site where a new secondary school and leisure facilities are under construction but nearing completion. This application relates to the area in front of the school/leisure building and the application site in this instance extends to some 1.3 hectares.

The application site relates to the hard surfaced and car parking areas to the front of the building on the site. To the east the application site fronts the Egley Road whilst to the south the site borders the Wyevale Garden Centre and an open field to the rear of the garden centre. To the north and west of the application site is the remainder of the school/leisure site.

### **PLANNING HISTORY**

## 06 FEBRUARY 2018 PLANNING COMMITTEE

The most recent planning history for the site is as follows:

PLAN/2015/0703 - Demolition of existing barn and erection of replacement barn (including temporary provision of three storage containers); engineering works to alter site levels; formation of new access to Egley Road and improvement of existing field access to provide emergency vehicle access; erection of three storey building for use as school and leisure centre; formation of 8-lane athletics track; formation of 2 x grass football pitches, 3 x 5-aside football pitches and 2 x multi-use games areas (MUGAs); formation of car park including bus / coach drop-off area; erection of sports amenity lighting; hard and soft landscaping and ancillary works including ancillary structures and fencing/gates (additional information and additional/amended plans submitted). Granted 22.12.15

PLAN/2016/0247 - Section 73 application to vary/remove Conditions 2 (approved plans/documents), 4 (external materials), 5 (CMP/PEP), 6 (CTMP), 12 (details of cycle parking), 18 (contamination), 19 (archaeology), 22 (tree climbing survey), 23 (Ecological mitigation and management plan), 24 (stag beetle), 25 (biodiversity enhancements), 26 (scrub removal), 27 (external lighting), 28 (tree protection works), 29 (hard surfacing within root protection areas), 30 (details of service runs in root protection areas), 31 (green roof details), 33 (additional tree planting), 34 (Landscape and Ecological Mitigation Plan), 36 (acoustic insulation/ventilation), 41 (starting system for athletics track), 43 (control of emissions), 46 (BREEAM), 60 (temporary storage containers), 63 (Screen for MUGA), 64 (planting to east of screen) and 65 (sports hall court markings/storage) of planning permission PLAN/2015/0703 for the demolition of existing barn and erection of replacement barn (including temporary provision of three storage containers); engineering works to alter site levels; formation of new access to Egley Road and improvement of existing field access to provide emergency vehicle access; erection of three storey building for use as school and leisure centre; formation of 8-lane athletics track; formation of 2 x grass football pitches, 3 x 5-aside football pitches and 2 x multi-use games areas (MUGAs); formation of car park including bus / coach drop-off area; erection of sports amenity lighting; hard and soft landscaping and ancillary works including ancillary structures and fencing/gates (AMENDED DESCRIPTION - ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS ADDED AND ADDITIONAL/AMENDED PLANS/INFORMATION RECEIVED 07.07.16 AND 11.07.16). Granted 28.09.16

PLAN/2016/0546 - Display of 6no. non-illuminated hoarding signage to Egley Road frontage and display of 1no. non-illuminated free standing signboard to rear of site in relation to the proposed school and leisure development permitted under planning permission ref: PLAN/2015/0703. Granted 14.07.16

PLAN/2017/0647 – Construction of a new single storey external equipment storage facility adjacent to the approved athletics track. Granted 27.07.17

### **PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

The application seeks permission for the erection of additional secure fence to school boundary, landscaping revisions and minor works within car park area.

Section 4 of the submitted Planning Statement provides a summary of the proposed items:

- (i) The erection of a new secure fence to the east of the school building between the school and the car park with access gates included to provide access to the school demise;

## 06 FEBRUARY 2018 PLANNING COMMITTEE

- (ii) Amendment of the secure fence line to the east of the Community Leisure Centre such that it runs adjacent to the pedestrian path and immediately to the north of the covered cycle parking;
- (iii) The provision of additional planting along the additional fence line to visually soften its appearance;
- (iv) Provision of a delivery bay immediately adjacent to the new secure fence line with double gates in the fence-line to accommodate school deliveries;
- (v) Marking of the main pedestrian and cycle route approach to the building from the site entrance to clearly demarcate which 'side' of the route is for each user group;
- (vi) Installation of a 'cyclists dismount' sign at the end of the cycle path;
- (vii) Marking of pedestrian pathways within the car park on the car park surface;
- (viii) Amendments to the landscaped area immediately to the east of the school entrance, adjacent to the main pedestrian and cycle path, to provide more direct walking routes to the school entrance. The re-designed area includes the provision of demountable bollards where the pathways adjoin the car park to preclude vehicular access;
- (ix) Re-location of five motor-cycle parking spaces in light of pedestrian routes through car park and minor re-alignment of path providing access to athletics track;
- (x) Minor amendments to landscaping within the car park to deter pedestrians from 'cutting through' areas of the car park.

In support of the application a Planning Statement has been submitted by the applicant detailing the proposals and the justification for them.

### **CONSULTATIONS**

**County Highway Authority** – is satisfied that the application would not have a material impact on the safety and operation of the adjoining public highway. The County Highway Authority therefore has no highway requirements.

**SCC as Lead Local Flood Authority** – Subject to the WBC Engineer being satisfied we have no further comments to make.

**WBC Drainage and Flood Risk Engineer** – No objection to the application subject to condition (condition 7).

**WBC Environmental Health Officer** – No comments on the application

**WBC Arboricultural Officer** – The proposal is considered acceptable and the changes will enhance the approved planting. Clarification relating to tree pits was requested. Clarification has been provided regarding the tree pit construction and the Arboricultural Officer has confirmed that the details submitted are acceptable.

**Surrey Policy Crime Prevention Design Advisor** – No comments have been received

## 06 FEBRUARY 2018 PLANNING COMMITTEE

**WBC Contaminated Land Officer** – No objection subject to conditions (conditions 5 and 6).

### **REPRESENTATIONS**

102 neighbour notification letters of the application have been sent out, in addition to the application being advertised on the Council's website and by statutory press and site notices. The application has been advertised as a Departure from the Development Plan.

1 letter of objection has been received on the application. A summary of the main points raised in the letters is given below:

- Horrified at the extraction of trees and lack of tree planting on the southern aspect of the school [*Officer note: there is no change to the amount of proposed tree planting on the site*];
- The proposed fence is ugly and will not have tree planting in front is depressing [*Officer note: there would be planting in front of parts of the proposed fence*];
- This part of Egley Road is now a much poorer environment in terms of greenery;
- The letters of support are all similar from parents who do not live opposite the site.

85 letters of support for the application have been received (18 of these have been received from the applicant/school teachers/employees). A summary of the main points raised in the letters is given below:

- Safety and safeguarding of students is a top priority to ensure students are safe and secure and are not distracted when in school;
- Students should be able to travel from the site entrance to the school building safely with the proposed designated walkways in the car park assisting with this;
- There is no reason for the refusal of this application.

### **RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES**

Ministerial Statement - Policy Statement – planning for schools development August 2011

#### Woking Core Strategy 2012

CS1 – A Spatial Strategy for Woking

CS6 – Green Belt

CS9 – Flooding and Water Management

CS16 – Infrastructure Delivery

CS18 – Transport and Accessibility

CS19 – Social and Community Infrastructure

CS21 – Design

CS24 – Woking's Landscape and Townscape

CS25 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development

#### Development Management Policies DPD 2016

DM2 – Trees and landscaping

DM5 – Environmental Pollution

DM6 – Air and Water Quality

DM8 – Land contamination and hazards

DM13 – Buildings in and adjacent to the Green Belt

DM21 – Education Facilities

#### Supplementary Planning Document

Design February 2015

Woking Character study 2010

Parking Standards July 2006

Draft Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) June 2015  
Policy GB8 – Nursery land adjacent to Egley Road, Mayford

National Planning Practice Guide

### **PLANNING ISSUES**

1. The developments approved under PLAN/2015/0703 and PLAN/2016/0247, for a new secondary school and community leisure facilities have been implemented and the development is nearing completion. This application seeks permission for some additional fencing to the front of the building on the site, associated layout/landscaping alterations and a number of other minor alterations such as markings to denote pedestrian routes within the car park area.

### **Green Belt**

2. The site is located in the Green Belt. The NPPF makes clear that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. Paragraphs 89 of the NPPF states that new development within the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the listed exceptions is satisfied. In this case the proposed fencing and other minor alterations do not comply with any of the listed exceptions and do not fall within the categories of other development in paragraph 90. Therefore the proposed development comprises inappropriate development within the Green Belt.
3. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances (NPPF paragraph 87). When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. ‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations (NPPF paragraph 88).
4. In this particular case, the majority of the proposals would be at ground level i.e. markings within the car park, with the proposed fencing projecting significantly above ground (2 metres in height). Given the development approved for the site and the proximity of the proposed new fencing to the building under construction it is not considered that this proposal would result in any harm to the openness of the Green Belt or any harm to the purposes of the Green Belt. As noted in the paragraphs below no other harm is considered to result from the proposal. The only harm identified would be the by definition harm resulting from the inappropriateness of the proposed development.
5. In considering whether very special circumstances exist for the proposal, the applicant has advised that the fence is needed to ensure the safety and security of staff and students. It is advised that windows from seven teaching spaces front directly onto the car park as do the main hall and staff work-room. It would therefore be possible for someone who has no legitimate business with the school to walk right up to the school building including potentially open windows or doors. This is considered to pose an unnecessary risk to students and staff. The proposed fence will provide a physical separation from the car park and would create a secure area immediately to the east of the school building, including the school cycle storage area. The proposed fence would replace the bollards previously proposed in this area. In this particular case it is therefore considered that the need to provide a secure school environment does amount to very special circumstances which would outweigh the ‘significant weight’ to be given to the harm to the Green Belt by reason of the inappropriateness of the proposed development.

**Visual amenity and landscaping**

6. Policy CS21 of the Core Strategy states that new development should respect and make a positive contribution to the street scene and the character of the area within which it is located. Policy CS24 of the Woking Core Strategy relates to Woking's landscape and townscape. The application site is included within the Core Strategy designation of 'escarpment and rising ground of landscape importance' of Hook Heath.
7. In this case the proposed fencing would reflect the height (2 metres) and colour (black) of the fencing approved elsewhere on the site. In addition as the additional fencing would be located either in front of the approved building or in close proximity to it, it would primarily be viewed with the building in the background. The proposed additional/altered fencing is not therefore considered to result in any adverse visual impact to the appearance of the site and street scene. The other alterations proposed are largely at ground level and would be viewed in the context of the approved car park and are not considered to result in any adverse visual impacts.
8. The application also proposes to introduce some additional low level planting in the car park area immediately in front of part of the proposed fence and amendments are also proposed to the landscaping in front of the school building to accommodate the change in the pedestrian footways and elsewhere in the car park. Overall however there is no reduction in the number of trees to be planted in the car park area and the amendments to the landscaping are not considered to affect the character or visual appearance of the front of the site. The Council's Arboricultural Officer has advised that the proposal is considered acceptable and the changes will enhance the approved planting.
9. The proposed development is therefore considered to comply with Policies CS21 and CS24 of the Core Strategy and the policies in the NPPF in this regard.

**Impact on neighbouring residential amenities**

10. Given the nature of the proposals and their location within the existing car park and close to the front of the approved building, the proposals are not considered to result in any adverse impacts to the amenities of nearby neighbouring occupiers in terms of overbearing, loss of daylight/sunlight or loss of privacy. The proposed development is therefore considered to comply with Policy CS21 of the Core Strategy and the relevant policies in the NPPF.

**Highways and Movement**

11. Although the application seeks alterations to the car park area, these alterations mostly relate to improving the movement of pedestrians around the car park and from the frontage of the site to the school building. The number of parking spaces proposed and their broad layout is not changing. A delivery bay would now be provided in the car park close to the front of the school building. Although the motorcycle parking location is proposed to be altered it would be in the same broad location and the number of motorcycle parking spaces would still be provided. The main approach to the school through the site will be demarcated to show that one side of the path is for pedestrians and the other side for cyclists, although a 'cyclist dismount' sign will also be installed.
12. The County Highway Authority has no requirements for the application. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy CS18 of the Core Strategy and the policies in the NPPF.

**Contamination**

13. Policies DM5 and DM8 of the DM Policies DPD relate to contamination. The Council's Contaminated Land Officer has raised no objection to the application subject to the imposition of conditions (conditions 5 and 6). Subject to the recommended conditions the proposed development, in relation to contamination, is considered acceptable and would comply with Policies DM5 and DM8 of the DM Policies DPD and the relevant policies in the NPPF.

#### **Flood Risk and Drainage**

14. Whilst this application does not propose any changes to the approved drainage scheme, the car park area would provide underground storage/attenuation for surface water and it is necessary to ensure that the above ground works and tree pit details do not compromise this part of the drainage system. The applicant has advised that the land drains would be wrapped with a membrane to prevent tree/root ingress where they are located close to trees. The Council's Drainage and Flood Risk Engineer has advised that the proposals are acceptable subject to a condition requiring the surface water drainage scheme to be implemented in accordance with the previously approved details (condition 7). The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy CS9 of the Woking Core Strategy and the relevant policies in the NPPF.

#### **Local finance considerations**

15. As the proposed development is for education and leisure uses, the development is nil rated under the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule.

#### **CONCLUSION**

16. The proposed development is inappropriate development in the Green Belt, although the proposal is not considered to result in any further harm to the Green Belt or to any other planning matter. In this case it is considered that very special circumstances exist (site security and the safeguarding of students) which outweigh the substantial weight to be given to the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and justify the granting of planning permission in this case. Notwithstanding the conflict with Policy CS6 which is outweighed by the very special circumstances, in all other respects the proposed development is considered to comply with Policies CS9, CS16, CS18, CS19, C21, CS24 and CS25 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012, Policies DM2, DM5, DM6, DM8, DM13 and DM21 of the DM Policies DPD 2016, Supplementary Planning Documents Parking Standards (2006), Woking Design (2015) and the policies in the NPPF and is recommended for approval.

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Planning application file PLAN/2017/1447

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**GRANT** planning permission subject to the following conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced not later than three years from the date of planning permission granted under reference PLAN/2015/0703 i.e. on or before 21<sup>st</sup> December 2018.

Reason: To accord with the provisions of Section 91 (1) of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

## 06 FEBRUARY 2018 PLANNING COMMITTEE

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance the following approved plans and documents:

Location Plan PL014 Rev 1 rec 22.12.17

Proposed Site Plan PL015 Rev 1 rec 22.12.17

Amended Proposed Site layout – South 1 of 3 rec 16.01.18

Proposed Site layout – North 2 of 3 (HVS-TF-00-00-DR-I-60002 Rev 32) rec 22.12.17

Amended Proposed Site layout – Barn 3 of 3 (HVS-TF-00-00-DR-I-60004 Rev 36) rec 18.01.18

Fence details (HVS-TF-00-00-DR-L-64005 Rev 04) rec 22.12.17

Ancillary structures: Hydrant tank, pump house, tractor stores (HVS-TF-00-00-DR-L-64003 Rev 4) rec 22.12.17

Street Scene and materials PL011 Rev H rec 22.12.17

Planting Plan - Car Park Planting (HVS-TF-00-00-DR-L-60006 Rev 12) rec 22.12.17

Planting Plan – Adjacent to building (HVS-TF-00-00-DR-L-60019 Rev 03) rec 22.12.17

Planting Plan – Site wide Structural Planting (HVS-TF-00-00-DR-L-60005 Rev 21) rec 18.01.17

Specification notes and Planting Schedule (HVS-TF-00-00-DR-L-66001 Rev 16) rec 22.12.17

Site Sections (HVS-TF-00-00-DR-L-61001 Rev 6) rec 22.12.17

Drainage Details Sheet 4 of 4 (E511-GSP-Z6-XX-DT-C-31018-C Rev 3) rec 18.01.18

Tree Pit planting details (HVS-TF-00-00-DR-L-64001 Rev 5) rec 18.01.18

Email from Terrafirma detailing tree pit construction dated 18.01.18

Email from GTACivils to WBC Drainage and Flood Risk Engineer regarding land drains dated 18.01.18

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is completed in accordance with the approved plans.

3. The fence hereby permitted shall be installed in accordance with the height, design and colour details as shown on approved plan - Fence details (HVS-TF-00-00-DR-L-64005 Rev 04) rec 22.12.17 prior to the first occupation of the school/community leisure development unless otherwise first approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity of the site in accordance with Policies CS6 and CS21 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.

4. The landscaping (including tree, hedge and shrub planting and lawn areas) of the site shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved plans and approved specification notes and planting schedule. All landscaping shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and approved planting schedule in the first planting season (November-March) following the installation of the fence hereby approved or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner and maintained thereafter. Any retained or newly planted trees, shrubs or hedges which die, become seriously damaged or diseased or are removed or destroyed within a period of 5 years from the date of planting shall be replaced during the next planting season with specimens of the same size and species unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and biodiversity and to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the locality in accordance with Policies CS7, CS17, CS21 and CS24 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and policies in the NPPF.

5. If, prior to or during development, ground contamination is suspected or manifests itself then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning



## 06 FEBRUARY 2018 PLANNING COMMITTEE

Authority) shall be carried out until the developer has submitted an appropriate remediation strategy to the Local Planning Authority and the written approval of the Local Planning Authority has been received. The strategy should detail how the contamination shall be managed.

The remediation strategy shall be implemented in accordance with such details as may be approved and a remediation validation report shall be required to be submitted to Local Planning Authority to demonstrate the agreed strategy has been complied with.”

Reason: To comply with the NPPF which requires development to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of water pollution (paragraph 109) and to ensure that adequate site investigation information, prepared by a competent person, is presented (paragraph 12) and to comply with Policies DM5 and DM8 of the DM Policies DPD 2016.

6. Prior to first occupation of the development, the applicant shall demonstrate to the Local Planning Authority that areas of public open space/landscaping are suitable for its new intended use by providing a brief methodology of how they intend to demonstrate this which shall be first submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This could comprise a simple soil sampling exercise that shall also incorporate chemical analysis of any soils brought onto site. Once approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority the applicant shall submit the results in writing, and said results shall require written sign off prior to the first occupation of the site.

Reason: To comply with paragraph 122 of the NPPF to demonstrate that the site is suitable for its new use and to comply with Policies DM5 and DM8 of the DM Policies DPD 2016.

7. The surface water drainage scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and calculations as approved pursuant to Condition 17 of planning permission PLAN/2016/0247 under conditions application COND/2017/0004 prior to the first occupation of the development approved under PLAN/2016/0247. Thereafter it shall be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details in perpetuity.

Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding, to improve and protect water quality and to ensure the future maintenance of these in accordance with Policies CS9 and CS16 of the Woking Core Strategy 2012 and the policies in the NPPF.

### Informatives

1. As planning permission PLAN/2015/0703 has been implemented the obligations as detailed in the Council’s Executive Undertaking as given effect by the Council’s Executive on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2015 and as listed in the officer report to Planning Committee for PLAN/2015/0703 **have taken effect and are required to be complied with.**
2. The applicant is advised that the development is required to comply with the conditions attached to PLAN/2016/0247, particularly those with on-going requirements; unless specifically altered by this permission.
3. The applicant is advised that the school/leisure site including the outdoor sports pitches and athletics track are considered to be a single planning unit in *sui generis* use.

## 06 FEBRUARY 2018 PLANNING COMMITTEE

Therefore planning permission will be required for any further development (including a material change of use) on the site.

4. The applicant is advised that all retained trees on the site are protected by Area Tree Preservation Order 154/1973. Any works to trees (other than the works specifically approved by this consent) will require the formal written consent of the Local Planning Authority.
5. In seeking to address and discharge the “contamination remediation” condition 5 above, the applicant’s attention is drawn to the fact that the application site is situated on or in close proximity to land that could be potentially contaminated by virtue of previous historical uses of the land. Visual and olfactory evidence of contamination can take many forms including hydrocarbon or solvent odours, ash and clinker, buried wastes, burnt wastes/objects, metallic objects, staining and discolouration of soils, oily sheen on ground water and fragments of asbestos containing materials (ACMs) (Note: this list is intended to be used as a guide to some common types of contamination and is not exhaustive).

In seeking to address the condition a photographic record of works should be incorporated within the validation report. Should no ground contamination be identified then a brief comment to this effect shall be required to be provided in writing to the Local Planning Authority. The Local Planning Authority cannot confirm that the condition has been fully discharged until any validation report has been approved.

6. The Council confirms that in assessing this planning application it has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive way, in line with the requirements of paragraph 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.
7. You are advised that Council officers may undertake inspections without prior warning to check compliance with approved plans and to establish that all planning conditions are being complied with in full. Inspections may be undertaken both during and after construction.
8. The applicant is advised that advertisement consent will be required for any signage on the building/site.