

Agenda Item:

Regulatory Committee

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Dorset County Council



Date of Meeting	23 October 2014
Officer	Head of Economy
Subject of Report	To consider planning application 6/2014/0437 to erect a new school and pre-school in field at the end of Egdon Close and construct new access to Souls Moor.
Executive Summary	This application seeks permission for a new primary school on land at Egdon Close, Bere Regis, Dorset.
Impact Assessment:	Equalities Impact Assessment: This report concerns the determination of an application for planning permission and not changes to any new or existing policy with equalities implementations.
	Use of Evidence: The recommendation has been made after the consideration of the application, supporting documents, the development plan and guidance, representations and all other material considerations as detailed in the body of the report.
	Budget: No VAT implications have been identified.
	Risk Assessment: As the subject matter of this report is the determination of a planning application the County Council's approved Risk Assessment methodology has not been applied.
Recommendation	That planning permission is granted subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 9.1 of this report.
Reason for Recommendation	As set out in paragraphs 6.7 and 6.8 of this report.

Appendices	1. Location plan 2. Block plan 3. Plans and elevations of the school building
Background Papers	Planning Application file 6/2014/0437.
Report Originator and Contact	Name: Mr Chris Stokes Tel: 01305 224263 Email: c.stokes@dorsetcc.gov.uk

1. Background

- 1.1 The proposal for a new school forms part of the Purbeck Schools reorganisation, from three tier to two tier. Middle Schools have been closed and first schools expanded into Primary Schools. In some cases this has involved the extension of the existing school, in other cases the existing school site cannot deliver a modern school curriculum and a new school is required. A new school site has been proposed for Bere Regis Primary school.

2. Site Description

- 2.1 The site is an area of pasture located to the south of the village of Bere Regis, to the west of Egdon Close. Most of the land in this area has open meadow, the majority of which has recently been laid to community woodland. An area of land has been left open for the new school site.
- 2.2 To the north of the site lies an area of registered Common land known as Souls Moor. The land slopes down from the school site across Souls Moor to the Bere stream. The moor and stream form part of a Site of Nature Conservation Interest. There are footpath routes which run immediately to the south of the site and which cross the community woodland to the north.

3. The Proposal

- 3.1 The existing school is located on a restricted site on Southbrook where there is limited play area, limited floorspace and temporary classrooms. The increase in school roll as part of the review means that the site is no longer sufficient to serve the needs of the school. It is proposed to erect a new primary school on land at Bere Mead, with access along a private driveway leading from Southbrook.
- 3.2 The new school will comprise five classrooms, school hall, a Library resource area and associated ancillary and staff accommodation. It is also intended to provide an area to accommodate the pre-school which is currently located on the existing school site. The school buildings will have access to hard and soft informal play areas and a playing field.
- 3.3 The application is accompanied by Planning Statement, a Design and Access Statement, a Landscape Assessment and a Travel Plan.

4. Consultations and Representations

- 4.1 Purbeck District Council:
No objection to the proposal, subject to planning conditions to ensure: landscaping; the implementation of an agreed Travel Plan; provision of adequate on-site parking and access; protection of important trees and hedgerows both on, and within the vicinity of, the site; protection of important nature conservation interests (including the recommendations in the Ecology Report); and the implementation of sustainable drainage measures to adequately deal with any existing surface water issues, and surface water discharge resulting from the new development.
- 4.2 Bere Regis Parish Council:
Awaiting comments.
- 4.3 Highway Liaison Engineer:
Whilst the County Highway Authority has no objections in principle to this proposal, the application details stipulate that parents will not be allowed to drop off or pick up their

children by car from the school premises, but it is unclear how this will be controlled as there are no gates on the vehicular access to the school which can be closed for school start and finishing times.

The Highway Authority therefore recommends that gates are provided at the entrance to the school and details of how parents are to be encouraged not to drop off or pick up from this access are included within the submitted Travel Plan. The Travel Plan also needs to be amended to take into account the gates being provided at the entrance to the school and details of how parents are to pick up and drop off at the school gate.

4.4 Senior Ecologist:

No objections. There is considerable native species and shrub planting and additional hedgerow shown in the design.

4.5 Environment Agency:

Awaiting comments.

4.6 Other Representations:

Nine letters, eight of which support the new school and one objection. The letters can be summarised as follows:-

- The new school is overdue, new enlarged facilities are badly needed.
- Are the drop-off facilities adequate for a building of this size?
- How will parents (or grandparents) get access to the school during the winter months when there is no drop-off facility?
- How will people with disabilities get access to the school?
- Is the building sufficient size for the long term? Will it be able to deliver the requirements of the new national curriculum?
- The colour of the walls suitable in this location.
- Will public footpath routes be lost linking the village to Moor Hill?
- Will there be room for a pre-school?
- The school is an essential facility for the future of the village.
- The new school is a really positive project and will enhance the village and the education of the children in the locality.
- It is a shame the school hall is not being built to Sport England's standards to allow a badminton court.
- Overall a nice simple design.
- Concerns about proximity of the access road to nearby houses, overlooking and privacy.

5. **Planning Policy Framework**

- 5.1 Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The term '*other material considerations*' is wide ranging, but includes national and emerging planning policy documents.

The Development Plan

- 5.2 The Development Plan includes the Adopted Purbeck Local Plan Part 1: Planning Purbeck's Future. The following policies are of particular relevance to this application:

Policy BIO: Biodiversity and Geodiversity.

Policy CF: Community Facilities and Services.

Policy D: Design.

Policy IAT : Improving Accessibility and Transport.

Policy LHH: Landscape, Historic Environment and Heritage;
Policy FR: Flood Risk.

National Planning Policy

5.3 National Policy Planning Framework - Paragraph 69 (Promoting Healthy Communities).

6. Planning Assessment

6.1 Having regard to the provisions of the development plan, the information submitted in support of the application and the representations received, the main planning considerations are:

- Principle of Development
- Design and Layout
- Highways and Access
- Landscape Impact

Principle of Development

6.2 Bere Regis First School is located on a cramped site with limited play space and cannot reasonably accommodate extra pupils. A site has been chosen which is closer to the village centre where there is ample space for new classrooms, hard and soft play areas and off street staff parking for the Primary and Pre Schools. The improvement of school facilities is consistent with Policy CF of the Purbeck Local Plan.

Design and Layout

6.3 The design of the buildings is in accordance with the Governments 'Baseline Design' which sets a maximum cost per square metre of floorspace. Dorset Property has developed a design which meets the Governments standards. The building would be constructed of brickwork (buff coloured) and a metal standing seam roof coloured light blue.

Highways and Access

6.4 The First School is located on Southbrook and has no parking and turning facilities on site and children have to walk along the main road to the school. The new school would be closer to the village centre and would have a segregated pedestrian route from the southern edge of the village via a bridge over the Bere Stream. Vehicular access would be from Southbrook along a dedicated access road running to the south of Egdon Close. Staff parking for the Primary and Pre School staff, and disabled parking spaces, would be provided on site. The applicants have agreed to provide a gated access to the school to deter parent drop off and turning within the site.

Landscape

6.5 The new school site would be located on open pasture on sloping site overlooked by the village to the north and visible from Elder Road. However there is an extensive area of newly planted community woodland and would be screened by tree planting to the south and west. Egdon Close would screen the site from the east so that the school would only be visible from the north. A hedge and hedgerow trees would be planted on the northern boundary, breaking up the outline of the new buildings, and screening the new access road. Consequently there would be limited impact on the landscape once tree planting becomes well established.

Residential Amenity

6.6 The site is located to the east of properties in Egdon Close but will not have an adverse impact on the properties. The access road will run to the rear of some of the properties but

will be at a lower level than their gardens and a hedgerow and trees will be planted along the boundary. There will be staff cars, delivery vehicles and visitors but it is not considered that this would create an unreasonable nuisance.

Conclusion

- 6.7 As part of the Purbeck Schools reorganisation it is proposed to provide a new site for the Bere Regis Primary school. The school would have improved access and would be of an appropriate design and layout to deliver a modern Primary curriculum and be in keeping with its surroundings in accordance with Policies BIO, CF, D, IAT and LHH of the Purbeck Local Plan Part 1.
- 6.8 The school will operate a travel plan to reduce the potential for parental drop-off. It is also proposed to improve the landscaping to the site in accordance with Policy LHH of the Purbeck Local Plan Part 1.

7. Human Rights Implications

- 7.1 The provisions of the Human Rights Act and principles contained in the Convention of Human Rights have been taken into account in reaching the recommendation contained in this report. The articles/protocols of particular relevance are:

Article 8 - Right to respect for private and family life
The First Protocol, Article 1 - Protection of Property.

- 7.2 Having considered the impact of the development, as set out in the assessment above as well as the rights of the applicant and the general interest, the opinion is that any effect on human rights does not outweigh the granting of the permission in accordance with adopted and prescribed planning principles.

8. Statement of Positive Involvement

- 8.1 In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF the Council, as Local Planning Authority, takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. The council worked with the applicant/agent in a positive and proactive manner by:
- Providing a pre-application advice service;
 - Updating the applicant/agent of any issues as they arose in the processing of the application;
 - Suggesting solutions to potential planning issues; and
 - Providing the applicant with the opportunity to address issues so that a positive recommendation to grant permission could be given.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 That planning permission be granted subject to the conditions set out below:-

1. Three Years - Full Planning application

The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason:

In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. Materials
No development shall take place until samples/details of materials to be used have been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out using the approved materials.

Reason:

To ensure that the external appearance of the completed development is satisfactory and sympathetic to its locality in accordance with Policy D of the Purbeck District Local Plan.

3. Submitted Plans and Details
The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved plans 2079/005570/ A100 P2; A101 P2; L100 P2; L101 P2; L102 P2; L103 P2; and H1057/06/2/B; and the Design and Access Statement dated August 2014.

Reason:

To enable the County Planning Authority to deal with any development not in accordance with the approved plans.

4. Landscaping Scheme
No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape proposals have been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. These details shall include, as appropriate:
(i) Proposed finished levels or contours.
(ii) Means of enclosure.
(iii) Surfacing of vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas.
(iv) Hard surfacing materials.
(v) Implementation timetable.

Soft landscaping details shall include

- (i) Planting plans.
(ii) Written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with grass establishment).
(iii) Schedules of plants, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities, where appropriate.
(iv) Implementation timetables.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details

Reason:

To preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area in accordance with Policy LHH of the Purbeck Local Plan Part 1.

5. Tree Protection
All existing trees, shrubs and other natural features not scheduled for removal shall be fully safeguarded during the course of the site works and building operations (see guidance notes enclosed and BS 5837: 1991). The protection measures shall be as specified in drawing number S01 and the Arboriculture Impact Assessment and shall be maintained during the course of the works on site. No unauthorised access or placement of goods, fuels or chemicals, soil or other materials shall take place inside the fenced area.

Reason:

To ensure the continuity of amenity afforded by existing trees and in accordance with Policy LHH and BIO of the Purbeck Local Plan Part 1.

6. Details of Segregated Access
Prior to the use of the school commencing, a scheme for a segregated access to the school from Elder Road shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the County Planning Authority. The scheme shall include the provision of gates to the vehicular access to the school and means of controlling access. The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to use of the school commencing and complied with for the duration of the development.

Reason:

To provide safe access to the site in accordance with Policy IAT of the Purbeck Local Plan Part 1.

7. Lighting
No development shall take place until details of the lighting for the building including external/security lighting having been submitted to and approved by the County Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason :

In the interests of the character and appearance of the area and in accordance with Policy LHH of the Purbeck Local Plan Part 1.

8. Landscaping and Ecology
The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the recommendations of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment dated July 2014.

Reason:

In the interests of the ecology of the area and in accordance with Policy LHH of the Purbeck Local Plan Part1.

9. Access, Turning and Parking
The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied or utilised until the access, turning and parking shown on Drawing Number L100 Revision P2 has been constructed. Thereafter, these areas shall be maintained, kept free from obstruction and available for the purposes specified.

Reason:

In the interests of road safety.

10. Access Crossing
Before the development is commenced the first 10 metres of the access crossing from Southbrook, measured from the nearside edge of the carriageway, shall be laid out and constructed to a specification submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

In the interests of road safety.

11. Access Gates
Before the development commences a scheme showing precise details of the proposed entrance gates onto Southbrook shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority. Any such scheme shall require approval to be obtained in writing from the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be constructed before the school is brought into use and, thereafter, shall be maintained available for the purpose specified.

Reason:

In the interests of road safety.

12. Cycle Parking

Before the development commences a scheme showing precise details of the proposed cycle parking facilities shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority. Any such scheme shall require approval to be obtained in writing from the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be constructed before the development is commenced and, thereafter, shall be maintained, kept free from obstruction and available for the purpose specified.

Reason:

In the interests of road safety.

13. Highway Improvements

Prior to school hereby permitted being brought into use the highway improvements to Southbrook, indicated on Drawing Number HI1057/06/2/B, must be completed to a specification which shall first be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

In the interests of road safety.

14. School Travel Plan

Prior to school hereby permitted being brought into use a detailed travel plan must be submitted to, and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The travel plan must include travel survey data for all modes of transport and set out measures and targets to reduce car trips to the school. The School must also complete the School Travel Health Check annually to monitor the success of the plan. If subsequent annual School Travel Health Checks do not meet the targets set in the approved travel plan a revised travel plan which amends the measures, and specifies the timescales required to meet the targets must be submitted to the County Planning Authority for approval.

Reason:

To reduce the impact of school traffic on the highway network, to increase the number of children using active modes of travel to school.

15. Drainage

No development shall take place until a scheme for the drainage of the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The drainage shall then be constructed in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason:

In the interests of the proper drainage of the site having regard to Policy FR of the Purbeck Local Plan Part 1.

Highway Informative

NOTE: The applicant is advised that notwithstanding this consent Section 184 of the Highways Act 1980 requires the proper construction of vehicle crossings over kerbed footways, verges or other highway land. Before commencement of any works on the public highway, Dorset County Council's Dorset Highways should be consulted to agree on the detailed specification. They can be contacted by telephone at Dorset Direct (01305 221000), by email at

dorsetdirect@dorsetcc.gov.uk, or in writing at Dorset Highways, Dorset County Council, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ.

9.2 Additional information for inclusion in decision notice:

1. A statement explaining how the Council worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive way as set out in paragraph 8.1 above.
2. Note to Applicant:
Contact with the County Highway Authority should be made in connection with the above conditions through Ian Madgwick of the Transport Development Team.

Matthew Piles
Head of Economy
October 2014