

1.0 [WD/D/20/000109](#)

Site Address - WOODROFFE SCHOOL, UPLYME ROAD, LYME REGIS, DT7 3LX

Proposal - Erect new school building with associated landscaping.

Applicant name – Dorset Council

Case Officer – Darren Rogers

Ward Member(s) Cllr D Turner

This application is reported to Planning Committee as the applicant is Dorset Council in line with the Councils constitution.

2.0 Summary of Recommendation: Grant subject to conditions

2.0 Reason for the recommendation:

- The proposal is considered to acceptable in its design and general visual impact and as regards impact on the AONB and in the context of the wider school grounds.
- There is not considered to be any significant harm to neighbouring residential amenity.
- The proposal is not considered to adversely affect nature conservation considerations.
- The proposal is not considered to adversely affect land stability considerations.
- There are no other material considerations which would warrant refusal of this application.

3.0 Key planning issues

Issue	Conclusion
Principle of Development	Presumption in favour of sustainable development it being located within the defined development boundary for Lyme Regis.
Design	Design considered appropriate for the site.
Amenity	Not considered to result in a significant adverse effect on living conditions of either neighbouring properties.
AONB	Would be viewed in relation to neighbouring built form and within the

	school complex.
Highway Safety	Highways raise no objections.
Biodiversity/Nature Conservation	Considered acceptable subject to conditions.
Land Stability	Considered acceptable subject to conditions.

4.0 Description of Site

4.1 The site at present consists of the well established Woodroffe School located within the defined development boundary of Lyme Regis which along with the whole of the town is designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

5.0 Description of Proposal

5.1 The existing school has had an increase since 2014 from 168-174 Pupils, and this has not been considered sufficient for expansion funding. However a Feasibility Study to address the condition need of the existing ROSLA Block (Raising of School Leavers Age) funded by the Education Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA) under the second phase of the Priority School Building Programme (PSBP2) Local Delivery Scheme has been completed.

5.2 The School has achieved funding to provide new facilities on the site defined within this planning application. This was the preferred solution identified by the feasibility study after demonstrating deliverability and value for money, with the outline business case being approved by the ESFA.

5.3 The proposal is for a new two-storey teaching block, proposed to replace the existing facilities currently provided within the ROSLA Block and has a gross internal floor area of 512m². The ground floor accommodation of 241.6m², comprises of a library resource centre, toilet, office, store and ancillary spaces. The first-floor accommodation of 270.5m², comprises of three general classrooms, a small group room, toilet, office and a store.

5.3 A Ground Investigation report; Preliminary Ecological Appraisal With Biodiversity Mitigation Enhancement Plan; Compliance Report – Performance Study; and Structural Report has been submitted along with Tree; Landscaping; and Lighting reports

6.0 Relevant Planning History - There have been various applications across this site none of which are essentially relevant to this determination.

7.0 Relevant Constraints

Within the defined development boundary for Lyme Regis
AONB designation
Instability Zone 1

8.0 Consultations

All consultee responses can be viewed in full on the website.

8.1 Highways - *As the proposal does not represent an intensification of use of the site with no alterations to onsite car parking or servicing and is clear of the public highway the Highway Authority has NO OBJECTION to the proposal.*

8.2 Lyme Regis Town Council - *Members recommended that the application be approved because there were no material listings that would warrant its refusal.*

8.3 Technical Services - *With regards to this application i have no objection. A site investigation has been undertaken to understand the geological implications of constructing the development at this location so that the ground stability is not affected. This has helped inform the design process particularly with regards the potential retaining elements for the site and the foundations. It appears that some further design work will be required in this regard. Building Control will have to be satisfied with the retaining structures and foundation arrangements if/when an application is made for Building Regs approval. I would also advise that all collected surface water is discharged to a piped drainage system (as appears to be the case) or harvested in some way and does not drain to soakaway.*

8.4 Environmental Health - *In view of the previous use of this site, the planning authority will have to satisfy itself that it is able to fully discharge its liabilities in respect of contaminated land. It is recommended that, should consent be granted, a suitable condition is applied which requires the applicant, in the event that ground contamination is encountered during construction, to cease operations and seek specialist advice; operations should not recommence without the written consent of the planning authority. The planning authority may wish to advise the applicants or their agents that the planning authority will in these circumstances be guided by:*
BS 10175:2001 Investigation of potentially contaminated sites - Code of Practice Guidance for the Safe Development of Housing on Land Affected by Contamination (Environment Agency). **NB – This can be covered by an informative note**

9.0 Representations

9.1 One representation with concerns about closeness to a neighbouring boundary and possible over-looking/shadowing concerns.

10.0 Relevant Policies

West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan

INT1.	Presumption In Favour Of Sustainable Development
ENV1.	Landscape, Seascape And Sites Of Geological Interest
ENV2.	Wildlife And Habitats
ENV10.	The Landscape And Townscape Setting
ENV11.	The Pattern of Streets And Spaces
ENV12.	The Design And Positioning Of Buildings
ENV15.	Efficient And Appropriate Use Of Land
ENV16.	Amenity
SUS1.	The Level Of Economic And Housing Growth
SUS2.	Distribution Of Development
COM6.	The Provision Of Education And Training Facilities
COM7.	Creating A Safe And Efficient Transport Network
COM9.	Parking Standards In New Development
COM10.	The Provision Of Utilities Service Infrastructure

10.2 National Planning Policy Framework

Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development

Section 4 – Decision-making

Section 6 - Building a strong, competitive economy

Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport

Section 11 - Making effective use of land

Section 12 - Achieving well designed places

Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Decision making:

Para 38 - Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

Other material considerations

- Design and Sustainable Development Planning Guidelines (adopted 2009)
- West Dorset Landscape Character Assessment 2009
- DCC Parking standards guidance

11.0 Human rights

Article 6 - Right to a fair trial.

Article 8 - Right to respect for private and family life and home.

The first protocol of Article 1 Protection of property

This Recommendation is based on adopted Development Plan policies, the application of which does not prejudice the Human Rights of the applicant or any third party.

12.0 Public Sector Equalities Duty

As set out in the Equalities Act 2010, all public bodies, in discharging their functions must have “due regard” to this duty. There are 3 main aims:-

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people
- Encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where participation is disproportionately low.

Whilst there is no absolute requirement to fully remove any disadvantage the Duty is to have “regard to” and remove OR minimise disadvantage and in considering the merits of this planning application the planning authority has taken into consideration the requirements of the PSED.

13.0 Financial benefits

Material benefits of the proposed development	
None relevant	

14.0 Climate Implications

14.1 The development will comply fully with Building Regulations and is accompanied with a fully detailed “Compliance Report – Performance Study” as regards building construction and the energy performance of the building.

14.2 Energy would be used as a result of the production of the building materials and during the construction process but the development would be built to current building regulation standards at the time of construction.

15.0 Planning Assessment - The following issues are considered relevant to this proposal:

- Principle of development
- Design/Character of the Area/ Landscape AONB Impacts
- Amenity
- Highways/Access and Parking
- Biodiversity
- Land Instability

15.1 Principle of development - The site is within the development boundary and within the school complex. The principle of what is proposed is therefore clearly acceptable.

15.2 Policy COM6 The Provision of Education and Training Facilities of the adopted Local Plan states:

i) *Proposals for the provision of new/replacement facilities or the expansion of existing education and training facilities will be supported, provided that:*

- *The location is well linked in terms of accessibility to the local catchment (taking into account how this may change through the development of strategic housing sites); **(this criteria is met)** and*
- *Any loss of facilities consequential to the development is re-provided to the same or higher standard. **(this criteria is met)***

15.3 Given the above the proposal accords with Policy COM6.

15.4 Design/Impact on Character of the Area/AONB

The vernacular on the school site and surrounding context has been carefully considered in order to ensure that the new proposal is effectively integrated into the existing school campus. The prominent original school building is of Gothic Revival architectural style, common among school campus's in the early 20th Century. The existing school campus has a variety of teaching blocks being defined by different materials. The existing materials consist of red brick, stone, blockwork, metal cladding, clay tiles, and standing seam or metal roofs.

15.5 The proposed materials have been developed to reference the palette of materials found within the local area and the existing campus. The proposal draws on the character of the original 1930s Gothic Revival Grammar School building, with the use of matching red brick, black window frames and a tiled pitched roof form. This use of a natural, high quality material palette will begin to create a coherent style across the campus, enabling it to exhibit a sense of place. Careful contemporary detailing will reflect the pattern and use of the building as a modern teaching facility.

15.6 At pre-application stage officers advised that the design appeared to be well considered, with the massing of the building as a whole broken up, and the single storey elevation on the SW side sympathetic in relation to the residential properties nearby. The current proposal continues and improves on this by retaining the single storey elevation to the south-west side by lowering the building into the ground, and reflecting the form of the neighbouring residential properties with the use of a pitched roof form.

15.7 Although the proposal would likely appear to be quite large and by virtue of its height and proximity to the adjacent tennis courts 'loom' over this area, this is not an

objectionable issue in the context of the other school buildings. The building would likely be visible from the opposite hill slope across the Lyme valley (in and around Colway Lane/ Talbot Road for example to the east) and this possesses a potential landscape impact threat. However the proposed building will be largely screened by the existing mature vegetation and the ridge level of the proposal is approximately 2 metres lower than the existing sports hall and will be of a similar massing and form as the surrounding buildings. The use of a tiled pitched roof and red facing brick ensures that the proposal reflects the materials of the local context, allowing the building to blend in to the landscape and not become a prominent feature within the setting.

15.8 As such the design solution would not unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the local area designated an AONB and as such would not conflict with Policies ENV1, ENV10 and ENV12 of the adopted Local Plan nor the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) and in particular Section 12, all of which seek a good quality of design which respects the local context.

15.9 Amenity

Policy ENV16 of the Local Plan and paragraph 127 of the Framework seek to ensure that new development provides a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. In this regard the main impact is on neighbour's amenity. At pre-application stage officers outlined that there does not appear to be any major issues with impact on neighbouring amenity as the site sits well below the level of the residential properties to the SW and there is a good degree of vegetated screening along the mutual boundary. The single storey element of the development would not be overbearing.

15.10 The submitted proposal further reduces the scale and massing of the single-storey element and will have no impact upon the existing boundary vegetation between the school and the neighbouring residential properties. The proposal is set back approximately 23m from the boundary with the neighbouring properties, with a ridge level around 2m lower than the existing sports hall. In order to reduce potential impact upon neighbouring amenity, construction activity on site will be limited to the times below. This can form part of a planning condition if required.

Monday to Friday 08:00 - 18:00

Saturday 08:00 - 13:00

Not at all on Sundays or Bank Holidays

15.11 As such it is considered that the proposal would be in accordance with Policy ENV16 of the local Plan which sets out that proposals for development should be designed to minimize their impact on the amenity and quiet enjoyment of existing properties and ensure amongst other things that it does not have a significant adverse effect on the living conditions of occupiers of residential properties through loss of privacy; or inadequate daylight or excessive overshadowing, overbearing impact.

15.12 Highway Safety

As the proposal does not represent an intensification of use of the site with no alterations to onsite car parking or servicing and is clear of the public highway the Council as Highway Authority has no objection to the proposal. As such in respect of highway safety, it is considered that the proposal meets the requirements of Policy COM7 & COM9 in the Adopted West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland Local Plan (2015), and the advice contained in the NPPF.

15.13 Biodiversity/Ecology Trees

The application is accompanied by an Ecological Survey and Biodiversity Mitigation Plan (BMP)

15.14 A tree survey has been included with the submission and highlights measures required to protect the existing mature vegetation. Careful consideration has been given to the placement of the proposal to ensure that it does not negatively impact upon the existing mature trees and roots to the south. The proposal will require the removal of six existing small trees, however a proposed landscape scheme designed by Indigo, has been developed and submitted as part of this application, demonstrating measures to mitigate this. This includes new areas of soft landscaping, the planting of eight new trees and the inclusion of biodiverse planting and habitat measures. Provided that this is conditioned to be carried out in accordance with the submitted reports it can therefore be concluded that there will be no adverse effect on ecology or trees

15.15 Ground Conditions/Land Stability

The campus sits on sloping, unstable ground and therefore requires careful and well-considered engineering. The land is in slope instability zone 1. The building has been positioned in an under utilised area of the site, that will not impact upon the amenity of other facilities on the school campus. The sloping site allows the proposal to be lowered into the site, therefore reducing the scale and impact of the massing within the landscape.

15.16 The position of the new teaching facility lowered into the ground in this part of the hillside offers an opportunity to improve the circulation around the campus, allowing the school to provide step-free access between the upper and lower levels of the site. A ground investigation survey was carried out in June 2019 and has been submitted as part of this application. This highlights that the site features medium-dense sand dominated soil at approximate 103.2m OD, allowing wall and column loads to be supported off of conventional shallow strip or pad foundations.

15.17 Nevertheless the foundations and building will be carefully detailed and engineered, with a robust retaining wall developed and constructed to ensure the ground stability is not compromised. Your Technical Services officers state that they have no objection. A site investigation has been undertaken to understand the geological implications of constructing the development at this location so that the

ground stability is not affected. This has helped inform the design process particularly with regards the potential retaining elements for the site and the foundations. It appears that some further design work will be required in this regard. Building Control will have to be satisfied with the retaining structures and foundation arrangements if/when an application is made for Building Regs approval. Your Technical Services officers advise that all collected surface water should be discharged to a piped drainage system (as appears to be the case) or harvested in some way and does not drain to soakaway. This can be conditioned

16.0 Conclusion

16.1 The school vernacular has been carefully considered in order to ensure that the new proposal is effectively integrated into the existing school campus. The new building has been designed to reflect the scale and massing of the existing teaching blocks, as well as the rhythm of the surrounding context. An appropriate landscaping scheme, with the introduction of trees around the new building will help to effectively integrate it into school surroundings. It is considered that the proposal creates no visual harm to the surrounding area and that the sympathetic design approach is a positive enhancement, forming a strong relationship with the site. The building responds to the school vernacular in its form, rhythm, massing and by using a palette of high quality materials.

16.2 The proposed development is acceptable and therefore recommended for approval.

17.0 Recommendation - Grant subject to the following conditions:

1) 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: This condition is required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Existing Site Location Plan and Block Plan - Drawing Number P001 Rev D received on 14/01/2020

Proposed Lower Ground Floor Plan - Drawing Number P004 Rev D received on 14/01/2020

Proposed North West Elevation - Drawing Number P009 Rev D received on 14/01/2020

Proposed North East Elevation - Drawing Number P006 Rev D received on 14/01/2020

Drainage Layout - Drawing Number SK-02 Rev P1 received on 14/01/2020

Proposed Upper Ground Floor Plan - Drawing Number P005 Rev E received on 14/01/2020

Tree Removal Plan - Drawing Number 882-TR-01 received on 14/01/2020
Proposed Site Plan - Drawing Number P003 Rev E received on 14/01/2020
Proposed Section - Drawing Number P010 Rev I received on 14/01/2020
Landscape Plan - Drawing Number 882-MP-01 Rev A received on 14/01/2020
Proposed South East Elevation - Drawing Number P007 Rev D received on 14/01/2020
Proposed South West Elevation - Drawing Number P008 Rev D received on 14/01/2020

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3) Before any development is carried out above damp proof course level details and samples of all facing and roofing materials shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority and the development shall be completed in accordance with these details.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the completed development is sympathetic to its locality.

4). The development shall be carried out in accordance with the Tree Report and Tree Removal Plan 882-TR-01 received on 14th January 2020 and the recommendations of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of Nikki Taylor dated 9 August 2018 along with the accompanying Biodiversity Mitigation & Enhancement Plan received on 14th January 2020 unless agreed otherwise in writing with the local planning authority. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development.

REASON: In the interests of nature conservation.

5) The development shall be carried out in accordance with the landscaping scheme received 14th January 2020 drawing number 882-MP-01 REV and the Proposed External Lighting Plan received 14th January 2020. The works shall be carried out in the first available planting season or prior to the occupation of any part of the development.

REASON: In the interests of enhance the visual amenities of the locality.

6) Hours of construction shall be limited to the following hours:

Monday to Friday 08:00 - 18:00

Saturday 08:00 - 13:00

Not at all on Sundays or Bank Holidays

Reason: In the interests of neighbouring amenity

7) All collected surface water shall be discharged to a piped drainage system or harvested in some way so that it does not drain to soakaway.

REASON: In the interests of land stability

INFORMATIVE NOTE TO APPLICANT

In view of the previous use of this site, the planning authority will have to satisfy itself that it is able to fully discharge its liabilities in respect of contaminated land. It is recommended that, should consent be granted, a suitable condition is applied which requires the applicant, in the event that ground contamination is encountered during construction, to cease operations and seek specialist advice; operations should not recommence without the written consent of the planning authority. The planning authority may wish to advise the applicants or their agents that the planning authority will in these circumstances be guided by:

BS 10175:2001 Investigation of potentially contaminated sites - Code of Practice Guidance for the Safe Development of Housing on Land Affected by Contamination (Environment Agency).