



Report to South Area Planning Committee

Application Number:	PL/23/0768/FA
Proposal:	Extension of rubber mulch surfacing on school field.
Site location:	The Stoke Poges School Rogers Lane Stoke Poges, Buckinghamshire SL2 4LN
Applicant:	The Stoke Poges School (Miss Kyra Sheehan)
Case Officer:	Kanchan Sharma
Ward affected:	Stoke Poges & Wexham
Parish-Town Council:	Stoke Poges Parish Council
Valid date:	28 March 2023
Determination date:	28 June 2023
Recommendation:	Conditional permission

1.0 Summary & Recommendation/ Reason for Planning Committee Consideration

- 1.1 The application proposes resurfacing on the existing playing grounds of the Stoke Poges School with rubber mulch that is an all-weather surfacing.
- 1.2 The application site is a community school managed by Buckinghamshire Council and the application therefore has to be determined by the Planning Committee.
- 1.3 Recommendation – Conditional Permission.

2.0 Description of Proposed Development

- 2.1 The application seeks planning permission for the installation of all-weather surfacing on the existing playing ground of the Stoke Poges School. This application proposes laying of additional 640m² of rubber mulch, which is an all-weather surface and can be used by children throughout the school year.
- 2.2 The application is accompanied by:
 - a) Heritage Statement
- 2.3 An additional plan was submitted to reflect the location of the proposed resurfaced area and the existing football pitch (including a 3m runoff area).

3.0 Relevant Planning History

- 3.1 PL/22/4082/SA - Withdrawn, 15 March 2023 - Certificate of lawfulness for proposed installation of all-weather surfacing.
- 3.2 PL/21/4611/FA - Conditional Permission, 11 March 2022 - Erection of single storey classroom building.
- 3.3 14/02374/FUL – Conditional Permission, 16 February 2015 - Single storey extension to existing single storey building.
- 3.4 00/08008/CC – Conditional consent, 10 October 2000 - Extensions to provide 4 classrooms, new library, staffroom and admin. facilities; internal alterations; new hard play areas and car parking.

4.0 Summary of Representations

- 4.1 No third-party representation has been received.

5.0 Policy Considerations and Evaluation

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), July 2021.
- Planning Practice Guidance
- South Bucks Core Strategy Development Plan Document - Adopted February 2011
- South Bucks District Local Plan - Adopted March 1999 Consolidated September 2007 and February 2011;
- South Bucks District Local Plan Appendix 5 (Conservation Areas)
- South Bucks District Local Plan Appendix 6 (Parking standards)
- Chiltern and South Bucks Townscape Character Study 2017
- Stoke Poges West End Conservation Area Designated 19th July 2011 Character appraisal.

Principle and Location of Development

Core Strategy Policies:

CP11 (Healthy and viable town and village centres)

Local Plan Saved Policies:

C1 (Development within a Conservation Order)

EP3 (The use, design and layout of development)

- 5.1 The application site is located within the developed area of Stoke Poges where new development is acceptable in principle.
- 5.2 Chapter 8 of the NPPF relates to promoting healthy and safe communities and specifically at Paragraph 95 states that 'it is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the need of existing and new communities. Local Planning Authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach in meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education.' This goes on to further elaborate that great weight needs to be given to create, expand or alter schools. Expanding school facilities is therefore considered acceptable in principle.
- 5.3 The proposal involves the provision of additional all-weather surface within the existing ground and would not increase the capacity of the school but deliver an improved outdoor area for the school.

Design / Historic environment (or Conservation Area or Listed Building Issues)

Core Strategy Policies:

CP8 (Built and historic environment)

Local Plan Saved Policies:

C1 (Development within a Conservation Order)

EP3 (The use, design and layout of development)

- 5.4 The site is located with the Stoke Poges West End Conservation Area. Paragraph 199 of the NPPF advises that great weight should be given to the conservation of a heritage asset, with the weight varying depending on the importance of the asset. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. 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 (paragraph 202).
- 5.5 Given the existing and established uses on the site, the location of the proposed new surface and its use, it would not have any material or adverse consequences for the conservation area or the character and appearance of the area generally.
- 5.6 The development would not be readily visible from public realm and listed Buildings within the area are at significant distances from the proposed development such that the new surface would not have any impact on the setting of these Listed Buildings.
- 5.7 It is considered that the proposal would comply with policies EP3 and C1 of the South Bucks District Local Plan and Core Policy 8 of the Core Strategy.

Amenity of existing and future residents

Local Plan Saved Policies:

EP3 (The use, design and layout of development)

- 5.8 Given the scale and nature of the proposal it is considered that it would not have any adverse impact on the amenity of nearby neighbouring residential properties.

Other Matters

Sport England

- 5.9 The proposed works were related to the resurfacing of the school's play area and therefore, Sports England (SE) was consulted. In response to the consultation, SE requested for the proposed pitch layout plan, which could reflect how the playing field is marked out and used for sports pitches as the playing field accommodates a mini-soccer pitch.
- 5.10 Following the submission of additional plan, Sports England has confirmed that the proposed development of laying a new all-weather surface would not interfere with the existing playing facilities and would retain the use of the playground and is deemed acceptable. As such Sport England has raised no objection to the proposal.

6.0 Weighing and balancing of issues / Overall Assessment

- 6.1 In determining the planning application, section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In addition, Section 143 of the Localism Act amends Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning

Act relating to the determination of planning applications and states that in dealing with planning applications, the authority shall have regard to:

- a. Provision of the development plan insofar as they are material,
- b. Any local finance considerations, so far as they are material to the application (such as CIL if applicable), and,
- c. Any other material considerations

6.2 As set out above it is considered that the proposed development would accord with the relevant Development Plan Policies.

7.0 Working with the applicant / agent

7.1 In accordance with paragraph 38 of the NPPF (2021) the Council approach decision-taking in a positive and creative way taking a proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions and work proactively with applicants to secure developments.

7.2 The Council work with the applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by offering a pre-application advice service, and as appropriate updating applications/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application.

7.3 In this instance the applicant

- The applicant was informed about the request submitted by the Sports England.
- The applicant was provided the opportunity to submit additional information to the scheme to address the issues raised by Sport England.
- The application was considered by the Planning Committee where the applicant/agent had the opportunity to speak to the committee and promote the application.

8.0 Recommendation: Conditional Permission. 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 from the date of this decision notice. (SS01)
Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91(1) (a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (or any statutory amendment or re-enactment thereof).
2. The materials to be used in the construction of the finishing surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be as per the details on the plans.
Reason: To safeguard the visual amenities of the area. (Policy GB1 and EP3 of the South Bucks District Local Plan (adopted March 1999) refers.)
3. The development to which this planning permission relates shall be undertaken solely in accordance with the following drawings:

List of approved plans:

<u>Received</u>	<u>Plan Reference</u>
27 Mar 2023	Location Plan
28 Mar 2023	Site Plan
18 May 2023	Proposed Site plan

APPENDIX A: Consultation Responses and Representations

Councillor Comments

No comments received.

Parish/Town Council Comments

No comments made.

Consultation Responses

Sports England

Initially raised concerns and requested for an additional information, which was submitted during the course of the application. Following the submission of additional plan, Sports England has confirmed that the proposal would meet their E3 and E5 exceptions, which are as:

E5 - 'The proposed development affects only land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and does not:

- reduce the size of any playing pitch
- result in the inability to use any playing pitch (including the maintenance of adequate safety margins and run-off areas);
- reduce the sporting capacity of the playing field to accommodate playing pitches or the capability to rotate or reposition playing pitches to maintain their quality;
- result in the loss of other sporting provision or ancillary facilities on the site; or
- prejudice the use of any remaining areas of playing field on the site.'

E3 - 'The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor facility for sport, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field.'

The proposed development of laying a new all-weather surface would not interfere with the existing playing facilities and would be acceptable.