

**PROPOSED ERECTION OF ADULT EDUCATION EXTENSION INCLUDING NEW CLASSROOM, ADMIN FACILITIES AND CRECHE AND CREATION OF NEW NURSERY FOR THE SCHOOL AT MILLBROOK COMBINED SCHOOL, MILL END ROAD, HIGH WYCOMBE
BUCKS STREET ATLAS PAGE 172 B4**

To: Development Control Committee

Date: 5 December 2000

Author: Head of Spatial Planning

A PURPOSE OF REPORT

1 To determine the above application.

B PROPOSED ACTION

2 **The Committee is invited to APPROVE application number CC/60/00 for the erection of an adult education extension including new classroom, admin facilities and crèche and creation of a new nursery for the school at Millbrook Combined School, Mill End Road, High Wycombe subject to the following conditions as determined by the Head of Spatial Planning including:**

- **External materials to be submitted to the County Planning Authority for consideration.**

C FINANCIAL APPRAISAL

3 None

D SUPPORTING INFORMATION

4 The application was received on 25 August 2000 and was sent out for public consultation on 25 August 2000 The application was submitted by the Head of Property Management on behalf of the Education Committee.

5 Permission is sought to erect a permanent adult education extension to the school to replace existing accommodation which is now in use as school premises and to reallocate space within the existing school to form a nursery with 2 small areas of new build to provide office, storage, toilet and entrance facilities. Millbrook Combined school is the former Sands County Middle School.

- 6 The site now serves a combined school which was formed by the combination of the Sands Infant and Junior School and Green Street Infant School, whilst the nursery accommodation remains on the former Green Street infant school site. The separation of the nursery and the school causes operational and administrative problems and so the proposal is to bring the nursery to the main school site as soon as is possible. The main nursery area is to be accommodated within existing accommodation at the school. Small extensions and internal alterations are required to provide the nursery teaching and play areas as well as the necessary office and storage and toilet facilities for this use. These extensions are proposed to infill small open areas within the main built up area of the school. As part of the scheme, these would provide a significant enhancement of the outside areas to form a safe and secure play area for the children.
- 7 The proposed adult education extension contains two elements:
- a The main teaching block extension which is proposed to contain 5 general teaching rooms, office accommodation and two art/practical rooms. Existing accommodation which is within the main school but adjoins the proposed new block is to be used to provide specialist I T facilities and separate women's group rooms.
 - b The second element of the proposal is to erect a crèche facility for use by the adult education students' children only. Adult Education currently takes place on the first floor of part of the original school buildings which are located to the north west of the proposed nursery facility.

Site Description

- 8 The school site is roughly rectangular with the main school buildings to the north west and the hard playground area to the south east. The school was originally separated in the girls and boys facilities and the two elements were symmetrical. In later years the school became a mixed junior school and all of the original accommodation was retained. The adult education extension is proposed to be erected in the north eastern corner of the site abutting the playground. Replacement car parking is proposed for that lost as a result of the erection of the proposed extension.

Planning Policy

- 9 The relevant strategic policy is set out in policy TR5 of the adopted Buckinghamshire Structure Plan. The relevant Local Plan policy is set out in policy RC1 of the adopted Wycombe District Local Plan and policy H14 of the Wycombe District Local Plan to 2011 Deposit Draft (Appendix A).

Views of the District Council

- 10 Wycombe District Council raise no objection in principle but ask that the following issues be considered:

- Any comments of the Environment Agency in the light of the site's location adjoining the River Wye and within the floodplain.
- The overall community needs within the Sands area and the ability of the site to accommodate other community facilities.
- In the light of the current parking situation, that the school be requested to enter into and implement a Green Travel Plan.

Consultations

- 11 Local Member – at the time of writing the report no response had been received
- 12 Hyder (Landscape) – No objections. “As land is being lost to further built structures, I would recommend that one tree with a vertical form (due to lack of space on the site) be planted within the school grounds. Any tree species is acceptable for this setting.”
- 13 Highways Development Control – Further information requested on details of the additional floor areas created and the impact of this upon traffic movements. At the time of writing the report a response to this additional information had not been received.
- 14 Safer Routes to School Officer – Bearing in mind that the proposed buildings would seem to have little impact on traffic, it seems harsh to seek the promotion of a School Travel Plan. However, since the majority of the proposals relate to the education centre, perhaps the centre (or the Education Authority) may wish to set an example by promoting a Travel Plan.

“I am concerned that the existing access arrangements will lead to pedestrian/vehicular conflicts which could be prevented by the use of segregated accesses for pedestrians and vehicles.”

- 15 Wycombe Area Office – No response received
- 16 Environment Agency – No response received

Representation

- 17 One letter of objection has been received on behalf of the occupiers of nos 22/28 Mill End Road.
- There is traffic congestion when the adult education centre is in use due to the use of the area by Docwra lorries and the use of the old BT site as a car lot with regular deliveries by transporters.
 - The situation is particularly bad at 3.15pm when cars are parked on the road

- There is an existing private nursery in the area with children being picked up until 6pm and commuter traffic through the area builds up after 5pm.
- There should be a traffic survey undertaken which would also take account of the situation at the weekends when Wycombe Wanderers fans park in the area.

Planning History

- 18 The School began as a secondary school and was later used as a junior school. There is little planning history for this site except for the submission of application number CC/242/73 – Construction of swimming pool for the junior school.

Conclusions

- 19 The main considerations are the impact of the increased pupils numbers at this site, the implications of the proposals with regard to highway safety and the situation of the application site adjacent to the designated flood plain.

The school amalgamation

- 20 There is an adult education facility currently on this site which is located within the main school complex on the first floor. This could potentially lead to conflict with pupil security. The proposal is for accommodation used by the Adult Education Centre to be returned to the school for education use and for a new centre to be erected in one corner of the site for adult use with a crèche facility for students of this centre only attached to it.
- 21 The closure of the Sands First School and Green Street First school has led to a moderate increase in the number of pupils to be accommodated at this site. However, this was anticipated and a three classroom extension is currently under construction at Oakridge School and it is anticipated that with the parental choice options in place approximately half of the pupils from the closed sites will attend Oakridge School.

Highway Safety and Traffic Movements

- 22 The school is sited in a highly populated area where most of the pupils registered at the school live in close proximity to it and walk to school. There is no evidence of pupils cycling to this school at the moment. It is not therefore considered that the amalgamations of the schools on this site has led to any significant increase in traffic movements.
- 23 The proposal is for the nursery to be accommodated within existing accommodation at the school so that all of the facilities associated with Millbrook school are located on the same site. The transfer of the nursery into the school accommodation does not in itself require planning permission as no change of use is involved. The proposed extensions which are for entrance, toilet and storage facilities only do not have implications for increasing pupil numbers and are very small in size. If the nursery element were to be considered in isolation the proposed extensions would not require planning permission under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)Order 1995.

- 24 The children who will be registered at the nursery will be largely from the local area and as happens at present, it is anticipated that the majority will be walked to school. Those parents who drive to the school will park outside of the school and walk their children into the nursery facility or will park on site spaces closest to the nursery element if this is available.
- 25 The adult education centre currently exists on this site and operates at the same times as the proposed centre. The applicant has stated that the expected number of adult students in any day is between 100-120. This largely equates to the numbers currently using the site during the daytime. The two specialist women's group rooms are to be used by particular groups of local women who are known to walk to the site. It is anticipated that this number of students will also use the site in the evenings. The maximum number of courses which will be operating at any one time is 11.
- 26 The site is to be open from 9 am to 10 PM Monday to Thursday and until 3 PM on Friday with limited daytime access during the weekend. The classes in the main will take place during the school day and in the traditional evening slot with a few twilight classes.
- 27 It is expected that three of the on site spaces to be provided will be occupied by Adult Education staff. At the present time the Adult Education element utilises 8 on site parking spaces. In the submitted proposal this number is increased to 14 spaces. The remainder of those who drive to the site during the day currently park in residential streets around the site where parking is not restricted. The crèche facility is for use by students only and therefore there will be no drop off conflict associated with this use. In the evenings the remainder of the on site spaces to the north west of the school buildings will be available for students to use.
- 28 It is therefore considered that due to the fact that a large proportion of the pupils at the school and the adults using the education centre live very locally and are known to walk to the site it would be inappropriate to request the imposition of a School Travel Plan for this replacement accommodation. It is not considered that the erection of the extension proposed will result in any significant increase in traffic movements in connection with the uses on this site.

Flood Plain

- 29 The school site is located between Desborough playing fields and the River Wye. The playing fields which are unaffected by this proposal lie within the flood plain with a sluice located on the River Wye at this point. The school site is excluded from the flood plain. During times of high water the field is used to take the extra capacity. It is not therefore considered that refusal of this application on this well established educational site could be justified in flood plain terms.
- 30 I would therefore recommend that planning permission is granted for the proposed development subject to conditions to be determined by the Head of Spatial Planning.

E BACKGROUND PAPERS

Application no. CC/60/00

Wycombe District Local Plan and Wycombe District Local Plan Deposit Draft to 2011
Deposit Draft

Consultation responses dated September, October, November 2000.

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