

Committee Report: 8 October 2018

Application Number:

CC/0029/18

The proposed works includes two extensions, including; a new school hall, and new CDT/IT room and associated paths and gates. it is also proposed that a number of small internal adaptations are undertaken, including the removal of a number of existing internal walls.

Title:

Additionally, it is proposed that a new 8 space car park is constructed to provide formal staff parking, replacing the existing rear hard standing, Access to this parking area is improved, by widening the path outside the school, providing greater site lines and turning circles.

Site Location:

Denham Village Infant School
Cheapside Lane
Denham
Uxbridge
Buckinghamshire County Council
Walton Street
Aylesbury
HP20 1UY

Applicant:

Case Officer:

Anna Herriman

**Electoral divisions affected
& Local Member:**

Denham, Roger Reed

Valid Date:

26 March 2018

Statutory Determination Date:

21 May 2018

Extension of Time Agreement:

12 October 2018

Summary Recommendation(s):



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



The Planning Development Control Committee is invited to APPROVE application no. CC/0029/18 subject to the conditions set out in Appendix A.

Appendices:

Appendix A: Schedule of Conditions

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The application was submitted by Contour Architecture Ltd on behalf of Buckinghamshire County Council It was submitted on 21st March 2018 and validated on 26th March 2018. The original target date was 21st May 2018 but due unresolved heritage issues, this was extended to 12th October 2018. Listed building consent was granted on 30th August 2018 from South Bucks District Council. The application was advertised by a site notice, neighbour notifications and a newspaper advert due to it being a departure from the development plan. This is due to the development being located within the Green Belt and may have an impact on the setting of a listed building.
- 1.2 In order to overcome concerns raised by the Listed Buildings Officer, further amendments to the original proposals were needed to be made. These were as follows:
- The hall to be moved south, away from the northern boundary by 500mm.
 - The toilet area on the hall has a flat roof, to reduce the scale and tie in with the existing flat roof on toilet block.
 - The Computing, Design and Technology (CDT) room has moved north, away from the southern boundary and east, away from the school, again by around 500mm.
 - Some planting has been added to the southern wall of the CDT block, to soften the appearance.
 - A note has been added to the ground floor plan, stating that if a sliding door is found in the wall, it will be retained.
- 1.3 Further consultation took place on 6th September and this report has been updated with comments that have been received so far following the consultation on the revised drawings. Any further updates would be addressed to Members at the Committee meeting verbally on the day of the Committee meeting.

2.0 Site Description

- 2.1 The existing school site lies to the south of Denham Village in South Buckinghamshire. The school main building and attached walls is Grade 2 listed building on the site. However, the school is not within Denham Village Conservation Area as it lies approximately 158 metres to the south. The main entrance is situated directly on Cheapside Lane to the west of the main school building. The north of site is bounded by a side access path that connects the local cricket club field to the east. The southern part of the site is bounded by a side access road, which provides a route to the small school car park as well as to the local cricket field. This access road is not a public highway and belongs to the Parish Council. The school site is approximately 128 metres to the north of the A40 and approximately 714 metres to the north west of the junction of the A40 with the M40 motorway. The school is located in the Metropolitan Green Belt.
- 2.2 There is a soft play area to the east of the school building to the boundary with the cricket field and a habitat area to the south of the soft play area. There are no trees with Tree Protection Orders (TPO) in this habitat area. The school playground is at the front of the school to the west of the school buildings, abutting Cheapside Lane. The nearest property is approximately 9 metres north from the proposed hall building. To

the south of the school, the nearest property is approximately 10.5 metres from the proposed CDT / IT block.

3.0 Site History

CC/59/04	Proposed single storey extension to Grade ii listed building to provide self-contained teaching area for reception class	Application Permitted	16.12.2004
CC/60/04	Proposed single storey extension to provide self-contained teaching area for reception class	Application Permitted	16.12.2004

4.0 Description of the Proposed Development

- 4.1 The school currently caters for 5-7 year olds with a total capacity of 72 pupils at Key Stage 1.
- 4.2 There are currently 7 part-time teaching staff and three parking spaces. The aim of this planning application is to enable pupils to carry on their primary school education under one institution. It is envisaged that the school would become a combined school with 45 pupils in Key Stage 1 and 60 pupils in Key Stage 2, bringing the total capacity to 105 pupils. Staff numbers would also increase to 4 full-time and 6 part-time..
- 4.3 The proposed works includes two extensions: a new school hall, and new CDT/IT room and associated paths and gates. It is also proposed that a number of small internal adaptations are undertaken, including the removal of a number of existing internal walls. Additionally, it is proposed that a new 8 space car park is constructed to provide formal staff parking, replacing the existing rear hard standing. Access to this parking area would be improved by widening the path outside the school, providing greater site lines and turning circles. The proposed development would add approximately a total of 246sqm of new floor space.

Need

- 4.4 There is a current need for children at the school to be able to carry out their primary education in one location. The proposed expansion would enable pupils to continue at the school for Key Stage 2. This would remove uncertainties that changing schools at the end of Key Stage 1 would bring and would reduce home to school transport and flow of pupils between schools in the catchment area. Although the school is under capacity at the moment, the addition of Key Stage 2 to the school and increase in capacity at the school would also assist to accommodate the planned future housing growth in the area.

Buildings

- 4.5 Currently, the site comprises the original school buildings and old school house, which date from the mid 19th century and later additions. The additions include a classroom, library infill space and toilets, which were added in the 20th century. Elements of the existing buildings are known to be listed. The school buildings are generally constructed of brick with a high level of detailing and pitched tiled roofs. Internally the teaching spaces have high windows and ceilings. The toilet block is a flat roofed building, in contrast to the rest of the school. Overall, the appearance is typical of a school constructed in the 19th century and appears to be in good condition. The height of the existing building is approximately 7 metres and 7.7 metres at the windcatchers. The height of the school at the tall tower is approximately 10.5 metres high.
- 4.6 It is proposed to have two new-build buildings (hall and CDT / IT), some internal alterations and increase in parking spaces.

Hall:

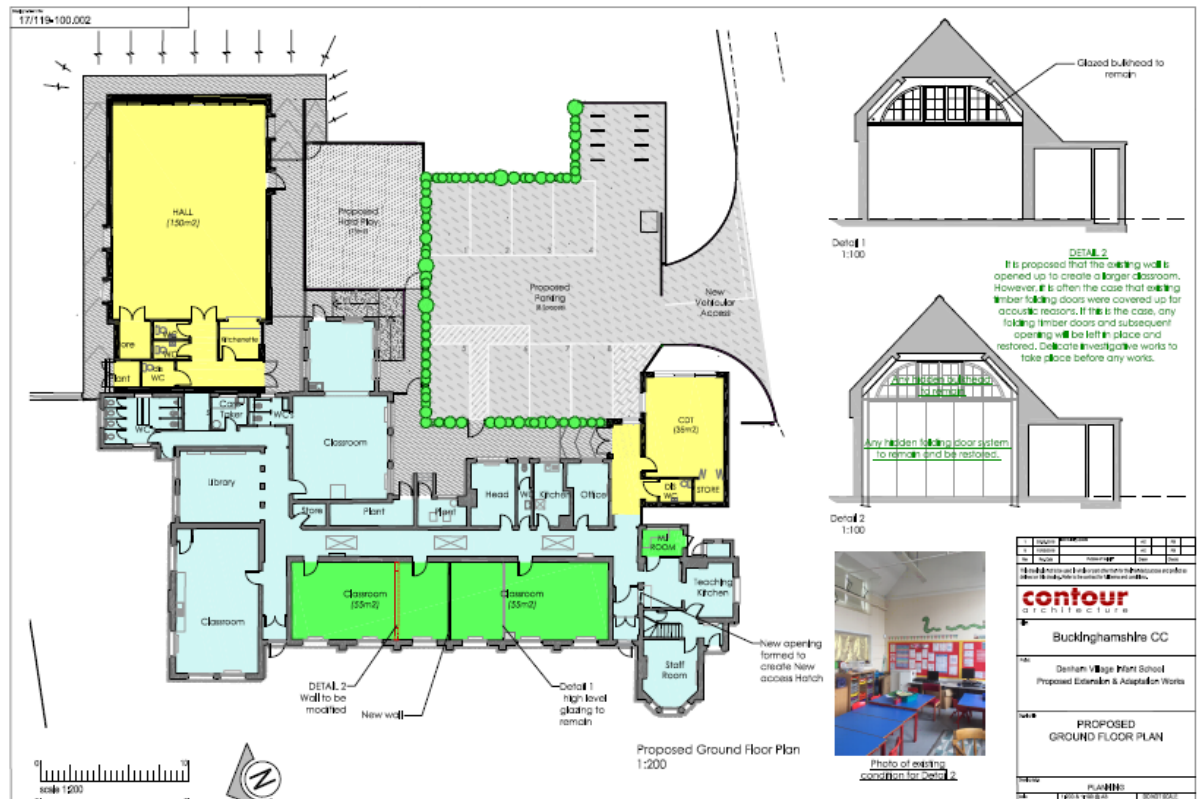
- 4.7 The proposed hall building measures 10.5 metres x 19.5 metres and a height of approximately 7 metres and 7.7 metres at the windcatchers. The building comprises a 150m² hall space with views on to the rear grassed areas. Other rooms include: a kitchenette with serving hatch, two WCs, an accessible WC, chair store, plant room and associated circulation. This building aims to provide a modern hall space for teaching P.E., performances and school assembly. This block is to be placed directly adjacent to the existing toilet block; an improved access will be provided to connect the existing building to the proposal. It is proposed that the block will be positioned on an area that currently contains climbing play equipment, which would be relocated.
- 4.8 The proposed building uses the form and scale of existing structures to inform the proposal. The pitched roof follows the same geometry and angles as closely as practicably possible. 'Windcatchers' on the roof are arranged to appear as ventilation chimneys, as found in several locations on the existing school building. For example, the side windows sail past the gutter line to become flat roofed dormers, as in the original school building. In the case of the hall, it is proposed that a basket weave detail is used on the north and south elevations, utilising the same brick colour, but in a pattern that borrows from historic context without mimicry. The rear section of the proposed hall, housing the storage and kitchenette, is to have a lower, shallower roof pitch. The amended design for the toilet block to comply with the listed building consent now proposes a flat roof. The eastern façade is formed with a glazed gable wall, allowing natural light to illuminate the hall space. The top half of this wall is shrouded with horizontal timber brise soleil, providing shading to prevent solar gain. This glazed wall will also provide a view into the green area to the east of the building. The hall is proposed to have dark grey concealed drainpipes and slimline aluminium gutters.

CDT/I.T

- 4.9 This additional building is to facilitate CDT/I.T. or other technical classes for small groups. This measures 8 metres x 7 metres with an approximate height of 4.5 metres. The applicant has stated that there is currently no other space in the school that can cater for this type of teaching. It is proposed that an existing corridor be extended to create internal access to this room. A teaching store cupboard is provided. It is also proposed that an accessible/staff WC is included as part of this building. It is proposed that this block is placed directly to the south east of the existing school corridor, which would itself be extended to allow internal access to the CDT/IT block. External walls and a single tree would have to be removed to facilitate the construction of the new block. Proposed elevational proportions and volumes have been designed to follow the vernacular of existing structures, this is to ensure that the aesthetic nature of the

existing structures is not compromised and to ensure that there is a visual harmony across the site. The CDT block and hall follow the shapes and proportions of existing structures. The walls are proposed to be brick with stretcher bonds. The CDT / I.T. room is also proposed to have concealed drainpipes and slimline aluminium gutters in dark grey powder finish.

4.10 The location of the proposed extensions can be seen below in yellow in the drawing below:



4.11 Internal modifications:

The 'Old House' part of the school is re-designated as a staff zone, allowing administration areas to be front of house. This also allows accommodation nearer to teaching spaces to be re-designated as timetabled spaces, creating a clearer definition between teaching and staff spaces. The proposed internal modifications are shown in green in Figure 1. It is proposed that the existing separating wall between the existing hall and classroom be relocated to the centre of the structure, creating two classrooms. It is proposed that the existing glazed bulkhead is moved to the new location. If it is not possible to relocate the glazed bulkhead, a replica will be created above the new wall. The new wall will be skimmed and painted plasterboard. It is proposed that structural steel is implemented as a replacement to the demolished wall, which is to be visible and painted white. This is to reflect existing structural elements, which are also visible.

Car Parking:

4.12 Currently, there are 3 parking spaces. This planning application includes a proposal of 8 car parking spaces, one of which is a disabled bay, with direct access to entrance doors via pathways. The parking has a 1200mm fence around the perimeter and a new sliding gate. The sliding gate is proposed to allow as great a turning circle as possible within the hard standing, as the access road is narrow and constrained. Evergreen

hedgerows are proposed on parts of the parking that border play spaces, this is to aid in the effects of exhaust fumes. A single tree is to be removed to facilitate the construction of this hardstanding. An additional section of hard standing is to be installed, which will facilitate 6 Cycle hoops and bin storage. The surface would be of porous macadam with formal line marking.

New Vehicular Access:

- 4.13 A new splayed access is proposed to the proposed parking with a sliding, lockable gate. The surface would be of porous macadam.

Widened path:

It is proposed that part of the path should be widened to 3 metres, which will reduce the carriageway, but increase safety.

New Hard Play:

- 4.14 This hard standing will replace some hard standing that would be lost as a result of the new car park. The surface would be of porous macadam. The area would be surrounded by “garden” wall with planters.

Pupil numbers and Staffing:

- 4.15 The school is under capacity. However, proposed new housing in the area means that pupil numbers would increase and make the school over capacity, hence the need for this extension.

- 4.16 There are currently 7 part time members of staff at the school which is an equivalent of 4 FTE staff. The proposed new development would reduce the number of part-time staff to 6 and add 4 full time staff, equivalent to 7 FTE. The proposed is to increase capacity to 105 pupils.

Opening hours:

- 4.17 The school’s opening hours are Mondays to Fridays 08.00 – 16.00.

Lighting

- 4.18 Currently on existing buildings, the school has flood lights mounted to rear walls. The new development proposes low level bollards to the parking area and emergency lighting over emergency exits.

5.0 Planning Policy & Other Documents

- 5.1 The policies relevant to this planning application are as follows:

- 5.2 South Bucks District Local Plan (SBDLP) saved policies:

- GB1 (Green Belt)
- EP3 (Use, Design and Layout of Development);
- EP4 (Landscaping);
- EP5 (Daylight and Sunlight);
- EP6 (Designing to reduce crime);
- TR5 (Accesses, Highway works and traffic generation).
- TR7 (Parking Provision)
- C6 (Alterations and Extensions to Listed Buildings).

- 5.3 South Bucks Local Development Framework Core Strategy (SBCS):

- CS8 (Built and Historic Environment)
- CS13 (Environmental and Resource Management)

5.4 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2018. The relevant paragraphs are as follows:

Schools:

Paragraphs 92, 94,

Green Belt:

Paragraphs 134, 143, 144, 145c

Design and Location:

Paragraph 127

Impact on the Listed Building and its setting:

Paragraphs 194, 196

Biodiversity:

170

6.0 Consultation Responses

6.1 The Chairman of the Planning Development Control Committee is also the **Local Member** for this development and no comments have been received.

6.2 **South Bucks District Council** originally objected to the planning application stating that the proposal would affect the openness of the Green Belt and adversely impact the setting of the listed building. Listed Building Consent has subsequently been granted and minor revisions have been made to the plans as a result of this – as such, a further consultation was carried out and the Planning Authority is now awaiting further comments. Any comments that are received will be updated verbally at the Committee meeting accordingly.

6.3 **South Bucks District Council Environmental Health Officer** has no objection to the proposals following the amended drawings.

6.4 **South Bucks Conservation Officer** prior to Listed Building consent being granted, the Conservation Officer at South Bucks objected to the planning application due to insufficient information being supplied; further information is required on the impact of the extension on the Listed Building. Listed Building Consent has subsequently been granted and minor revisions have been made to the plans as a result of this – as such, a further consultation was carried out and the Planning Authority is now awaiting further comments. Any comments that are received will be updated verbally at the Committee meeting accordingly.

6.5 **Denham Parish Council** objects to the planning application due to inconsistency of roofing material that would not be in keeping with the current character of the school and also has concerns over the impact narrowing of the carriageway would have on Cheapside Lane, and parking issues. They also have concerns over the use of the path on the left hand side of the school being used by construction vehicles.

6.6 **Highways Development Management** is confident that the increase in pupil numbers increasing the vehicular movements (two way) to 204 per day can safely be accommodated onto the Local Highway Network on Cheapside Lane. With regards to pick up and drop off for children, the Highway DM Officer has no concern over this as

he feels that the proposed development would make the school more attractive to local residents living within walking distance of the school and therefore the need for the pick-up / drop off would be reduced.

- 6.7 With regard to the proposed car parking, the Highways DM Officer is satisfied that there is sufficient space for vehicles to turn within the site and leave in a forward gear.
- 6.8 The visibility splay from the exit of the access road to the south of the school site has been picked up by the agent as not being fully acceptable. However, the applicant has proposed to widen the footway fronting of the site to 3 metres in order to provide a safer walking route for pupils and in order for visibility splays to be provided from the existing access point. The Highways DM Officer is satisfied. Bollards are also provided on either side of the access point to provide improved pedestrian visibility splays from the access point.
- 6.9 The existing “Keep Clear” markings are proposed to be shortened to the shortest range acceptable in the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions. The Highway Authority would prefer that these “Keep Clear” markings are amended to follow the line of the proposed build out fronting the site as the shortening of these markings would encourage vehicles to park on the narrowed section of the carriageway along Cheapside Lane.
- 6.10 Tactile crossing points are also proposed to front of the site; this would provide pupils with a safe crossing to the site. These crossing points are on a pedestrian desire line with the pedestrian access to the school in close proximity.
- 6.11 The Highways DM Officer therefore, mindful of the above, has no objection to the proposed development, subject to conditions: prior to the commencement of the development, a condition to request space to be laid out for the car park prior to the commencement of the development, off site highway works to be carried out as in drawing SK03-C from Appendix K of the applicants Transport Assessment is to be laid out and constructed and no part of the development shall be commenced until a Construction Traffic Management Plan is submitted and approved. Also prior to the planned occupation of the development permitted, a Travel Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Transport Strategy Team which then shall be reviewed and submitted for approval at the end of each academic year. An informative referring to S278 for off site Highway Works shall be added to any permission granted.
- 6.12 **Sports England** has no comments to make as the proposed development falls outside their remit. However, they have included advice that the applicants should follow should the proposed development involve loss of any sports facility, provide new sports facilities or the development involves the provision of additional housing. The NPPF should also be considered. Their comments remained unchanged following the re-consultation on the revised drawings.
- 6.13 The **County Ecologist** has no objection subject to a condition requiring a method statement for the protection of bats prior to the commencement of development.
- 6.14 The **Rights of Way Officer** has no objection to the planning application.
- 6.15 The **County Archaeologist** has mentioned that the school has a Grade II listed building on the site and that the District Council’s Conservation Officer should be consulted. They also stated that there are multi period archaeological remains existing in the wider landscape, but there are no records of archaeological finds or features in the vicinity of the school. Therefore, they do not consider the need to add any conditions to safeguard archaeological interests.

6.16 The **Flood Management Officer** has stated that the applicant needs to be aware that ground investigations, including infiltration rate test and groundwater level monitoring, are required. However, they were pleased to see that permeable paving and rain gardens are proposed to be incorporated into the surface water drainage scheme which would provide water quality and biodiversity benefits to the proposed development. The Flood Management Officer has no objection subject to a condition requiring a surface water drainage scheme to include ground investigations, drainage layout, calculations for storm events and proposed overland flood flow. Conditions are also required for a whole life maintenance plan to be submitted to and approved prior to the development and a verification report to demonstrate that the Sustainable Urban Drainage System has been constructed as per the agreed scheme.

6.17 The **Transport Strategy Manager** Officer has no objection to the proposal and if the permission is granted they would like to see the travel plan to be reviewed to reflect:

- The content of Buckinghamshire's Getting to School Strategy that has now been formally adopted by the County Council (<https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/media/4511745/getting-to-school-strategy-smots-2018.pdf>)
- The increases in pupil/staff/visitor numbers and changes to the school catchments as the school moves to a combined infant and junior school
- The updated travel to school findings
- An updated assessment of the parking impacts and general 'neighbourliness' of the school resulting from the development
- Some thoughts on the further opportunities that may now be considered – such as accreditation through the Modeshift STARS system (I am aware that the school is registered with Modeshift but I am not aware they have submitted a plan for gold, silver or bronze accreditation); Bikeability training; 'Go for Gold'; walking zone maps - as well as the Footprints training the school is already involved with.

6.18 They also would prefer to see the cycle stands to be butterfly stands rather than hoops.

7.0 Representations

7.1 Representations have been received from three members of the public. Their concerns included:

- Impact from a tree affecting the access track to the cricket club;
- Loss of light from shadowing of the proposed development;
- Loss of privacy as a result of the proposed development;
- Concerns over damage to property (electrical and drainage supplies) as a result of construction.

8.0 Discussion

8.1 This planning application is for extensions and increase parking spaces at a school with a listed building status and also in the Metropolitan Green Belt. Therefore, the issues that need to be covered for discussion are:

- Need;
- Green Belt;

- Design and Location
- Impact on Listed Building and its setting;
- Parking
- Flood Risk
- Trees
- Biodiversity

Need / Principle of Development:

- 8.2 The CLG policy statement referred to in the letter to the Chief Planning Officers dated 15th August 2011 sets out the Government's commitment to support the development of state-funded schools and their delivery through the planning system. The policy statement states that:
- “The creation and development of state funded schools is strongly in the national interest and that planning decision-makers can and should support that objective, in a manner consistent with their statutory obligations.” State funded schools include Academies and free schools as well as local authority maintained schools.”
- 8.3 It further states that the following principles should apply with immediate effect:
- There should be a presumption in favour of the development of state-funded schools;
 - Local Authorities should give full and thorough consideration to the importance of enabling the development of state funded schools in their planning decisions;
 - Local Authorities should make full use of their planning powers to support state- funded schools applications;
 - Local Authorities should only impose conditions that clearly and demonstrably meet the tests as set out in Circular 11/95;
 - Local Authorities should ensure that the process for submitting and determining state- funded schools' applications is as streamlined as possible;
 - A refusal of any application for a state-funded school or the imposition of conditions will have to be clearly justified by the Local Planning Authority.
- 8.4 In addition to the above, I consider that the key issues for discussion are design and the impact of the development on amenity and landscaping.
- 8.5 The National Planning Policy Framework emphasis that development shall be Economical, Social and Environmental. This includes the provision of infrastructure that would assist the economy and enable positive development, encourage social interaction and be sustainable to protect and enhance the environment. Paragraph 92 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of shared space and local services to enhance the sustainability of communities. Paragraph 94 of the NPPF attaches great importance, ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities.
- 8.6 There is need to expand the school to become a combined school which would have many benefits for pupils and parents and enable children to progress through the same school for both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Prior to the submission of the planning application, the applicant has checked capacity in other schools in the local area for this age group. The school only proving for Key Stage 1 currently makes it underutilised. The opportunity to provide the teaching of Key Stage 2 at the school would make the school better used. It would also reduce adverse impact from home

to school traffic in the local area and enable Key Stage 2 aged pupils living within walking distance of the school to attend this school rather than use road transport to attend a school further away. The proposed development would enable the school to be ready for future development. It is an existing school site and the proposed development is not expected to bring in an adverse amount of extra traffic; it is a site where there are plenty of sustainable modes of travel opportunities. Therefore, I consider that the proposed development would be in compliance with the NPPF in meeting those needs.

Green Belt (Policies GB1 of the SBDLP, NPPF)

8.7 The proposed development represents inappropriate development in the Green Belt and the NPPF and Policy GB1 of the SBDLP state that permission for inappropriate development in the Green Belt should not be granted unless very special circumstances exist to justify overriding normal policy.

8.8 Paragraph 145 of the NPPF states that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this include: c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;

8.9 Paragraph 143 of the NPPF states:

“Inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.”

8.10 Paragraph 144 of NPPF goes on to state:

“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, resulting from the proposal is clearly outweighed by other considerations.”

8.11 The NPPF in paragraph 134 further sets out the purposes and objectives of including land in green belts. The purposes are as below:

- To check unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

8.12 Once Green Belts have been defined, the use of land in them has a positive role to play in fulfilling the following objectives:

- To provide opportunities for access to the open countryside for the urban population;
- To provide opportunities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation near urban areas;
- To retain attractive landscapes, and enhance landscapes, near to where people

live;

- To improve damaged and derelict land around towns;
- To secure nature conservation interest; and
- To retain land in agriculture, forestry and related uses.

8.13 Policy GB1 of the SBDLP states that development would not be permitted for new buildings unless it is for the following purposes:

- Recreational Use
- Cemeteries
- Mineral workings
- Agriculture / forestry
- Limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwelling,
- Limited infilling in existing villages
- Limited infilling or redevelopment of major existing developed sites.

8.14 These would be subject to other policies being met i.e. scale, building height, and those buildings that would not have an adverse impact on the character or amenity of the area.

8.15 It is recognised that one of the reasons for the District Council's objections to the proposed development is due to Green Belt. It is also recognised that the proposed extensions at the school are not for one of those stated that allow a building to be built in the Green Belt, and no very special circumstances have been stated within the application. The applicant has, however, justified the need for extra school places and it would be better to minimise the harm of the Green Belt by an extension to an existing school than build a new one. He also stated that the proposed extension would prevent risk of closure of the school. Under Government Statutory Policy guidance to Local Authorities there is presumption against the closure of small schools and the applicants have to demonstrate all the alternatives to closure. Their justification for keeping this school include the following benefits to ensure the school's continued viability:

- Secures the long term future of the school and the site for education provision for the local community;
- Investment in school facilities at the school would enhance the school's attraction within the local community;
- Reduced home to school transport as no longer a requirement to transport pupils/siblings to a junior school providing greater opportunities for after school clubs/social cohesion at Denham Village Infant school;
- Proposal will support the Local Authority's duty to provide sufficient school places;

8.16 I would consider the above to contribute towards Very Special Circumstances for the proposed extension to the school. Also, the proposed development would be within the site of an existing school. The proposal is not for a new building but rather extensions to an existing one. The school is bordered on its boundaries by trees. There is a building just outside of the school site on its eastern border and houses on either side. Going further from the eastern boundary of the school site is a cricket ground, also bordered by trees and some houses. Therefore, the proposed development would not have an adverse or detrimental impact on the openness of the Metropolitan Green Belt and therefore there is no justification for it to be refused and would comply with paragraph 145 c). .

Design and Location (Policies EP3, EP5, EP6 of the SBDLP and Policy CS8 of the SBCS and NPPF)

- 8.17 Policy EP3 of the SBDLP and para of the 127 of NPPF seek to promote and protect the amenity of the local area. Policy EP3 of the SBDLP and CS8 of the SBCS also seek to enhance the characteristics and the local distinctiveness of the area and the importance of the use of correct materials and resulting effect on important public views and skylines. Paragraph 127 of the NPPF echo this. EP5 of the SBDLP seeks to ensure that there is no loss of sunlight or daylight to adjacent properties. Due to the location and height of the proposed extensions there would be no detrimental impact on the loss of daylight / sunlight at the school or on neighbouring properties. Policy EP6 of the SBDLP and CS8 of the SBCS emphasises secure by design and that the design of the development should prevent crime and prevent risks to personal safety. It is therefore considered that this would not have an adverse impact on the local amenity.
- 8.18 The proposed development is located to the rear of the existing school. The nearest house is approximately 9.5 metres away to the north of the school site. However, the school boundary is screened by trees on all sides. The proposed materials for the extensions are to match existing and would not have an adverse impact on the character of the school.
- 8.19 It is noticed that one local resident had concerns over the loss of light and privacy as a result of the development. The proposed hall is the same height as the rest of the existing school buildings. There are some trees along the boundary. The hall is a one storey building with no upper windows. The proposed CDT / IT extension is proposed to be 4.5 metres high and would be located approximately 10.5 metres north of the nearest property. Again, there are some trees already on the boundary. Therefore it is considered that the proposed construction of these buildings would not cause a general loss of light.
- 8.20 Advice has been taken from the Listed Buildings Officer from South Bucks District Council regarding materials. This is an existing school site and security is already high. The proposed development includes improvement to the appearance of the car parking area (as well as the provision of extra spaces). The car parking area would be surrounding by garden style fencing which would complement the area.
- 8.21 During the construction phase, existing trees and structures would be protected as requested in the Construction Traffic Management Plan, which is one of the conditions requested by Highways DM Officer to be submitted and approved in writing prior to the commencement of the development.
- 8.22 I therefore consider that the application is in compliance with the requirements of policies EP3, EP5 and EP6 of the South Bucks District Local Plan and paragraph 127 of the NPPF and that refusal of the application on design and location grounds could not therefore be justified in this instance.

Impact on Listed Building and its Setting (C6 of the SBDLP, NPPF)

- 8.23 Policy C6 of the SBDLP states that planning permission would not be granted for alterations or extensions that would harm the character or appearance of a listed building or any of its features / special characteristics. Consent would only be provided that:

- a) the proposals would be of high standard design and would not detract from the intrinsic historic interest of the building and;
- b) the physical features of special architectural and historic interest are to be retained and not damaged; and
- c) the proposal would not detract from the intrinsic architectural interest, character or appearance of the building; and
- d) the proposal would not detract from the setting of the building; and
- e) the proposal would comply with all the other policies in this Plan.

- 8.24 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990 states that decision makers should give considerable importance and weight to the desirability and preserving the setting of listed buildings. Paragraph 194 of the revised NPPF focuses on listed buildings and that any harm should be justified for the need of the development.
- 8.25 During the planning application process, the applicant's agent has worked closely with the Listed Building Officer at South Bucks District Council. The agent has taken on board at pre-app stage some of the required changes to be made to the original plans at pre app stage including the design and positioning of the proposed extensions to the existing listed building. Following this, the agent has worked closely with the Listed Building Officer throughout, including for the provision of extra details that were required. The applicant had to make minor amendments to the proposals and since then, as a result of this Listed Building Consent has been granted by South Bucks District Council.
- 8.26 Consideration was also given to paragraph 196 of the NPPF. It is felt that the proposed development is appropriate and would bring less than substantial harm to the listed building. The public benefits outweigh the harm as it would ensure the security of the building's optimum viable use.
- 8.27 Although planning does not deal with internal modifications, these still need to be addressed and resolved, as the interior modifications were part of both the application for the listed building consent as well as this planning application. It is considered that the proposed amendments are satisfactory and would not detract from the appearance and setting of the Listed Building and attached walls on the school site. As stated earlier, the need for the extension to the school and the proposed extensions being granted Listed Building consent would outweigh any potential harm to the Listed Building setting. Listed Building Consent has been approved, subject to conditions requiring detail of design and materials, and no demolition of any listed walls is to take place. Therefore the proposed development is in compliance with the above policies.

Parking (Policy TR5 and TR7 of the SBDLP, Buckinghamshire County Council Parking Guidance)

- 8.28 Policy TR5 seeks that new and altered access should be considered in terms of safety, congestion and the environment. Development would also only be permitted where it would not have a detrimental impact on the local amenity of the area as well as the quality and character of the local area. Where off-site improvements to the highway are required to serve a development, the District Council will not grant permission unless the applicant enters into a planning obligation to secure the implementation of those works. Proposals involving either the construction of a new site access, or a material

increase in the use of an existing site access directly onto the strategic highway network will not be acceptable if they would be likely to result in the encouragement of the use of the network for short local trips or compromise the safe movement and free flow of traffic on the network or the safe use of the road by others.

8.29

Policy TR7 seeks that parking provision is made on land owned or controlled by the applicant and the proposals would not reduce the level of parking provision serving other development.

8.30

The Buckinghamshire Parking Guidance states that there should be one parking space for each FTE staff member.

8.31

Although there is a proposal for an increase in the number of parking spaces from 3 to 8 parking spaces, the location of the parking area would not have a detrimental impact on the local area and the school site. Although the proposed development would bring an equivalent of 7 FTE staff (4FTE and 6 Part time), the proposed parking spaces include one disabled parking space. Therefore, the proposals would be compliant with the Buckinghamshire Parking Guidance. The parking would be on land owned by the school / Buckinghamshire County Council and therefore would be in compliance with policy TR7 of the SBDLP. There would be no proposed changes to access except that pedestrian access would be widened to three metres. The Highways DM Officer is satisfied that this would improve the visibility splay and not have an adverse impact on the existing access track. In order to comply with policy TR5, the proposed parking arrangements and widening of the pedestrian access would need to improve the local amenity through a better and safer flow of staff vehicle movements and pedestrian movements. The Highway DM Officer has requested an informative be added to any permission that is granted to request that the applicants apply for a S284 agreement for any off-site works to the public highway. As noted in this report, there are proposed conditions by the Highways DM Officer for this, including a condition that the school implement a School Travel Plan. The application is therefore considered to be in compliance with the relevant development plan policies TR5 and TR7 of the SBDLP due to the fact that any increased traffic movements would not have a detrimental impact as more people living within walking distance of the school would be able to walk there for Key Stage 2 rather than attend a school elsewhere. Therefore, the proposed development would not contribute towards a detrimental impact on the local amenity. I consider this planning application to be in compliance with the above policies.

8.32

The Parish Council objected to Option 2 as an access route for Construction Traffic rather than using the access track to the cricket club. Option 2 would have required knocking through a wall to create an access for construction traffic to the left of the front of the school off Cheapside Lane. This option has been discarded as the wall is listed. Construction traffic will now use the existing access to the school instead.

Flood Risk (Policy CS13 of the SBCS)

8.33

It is noted that the Council's Flood Management Officer raised no objection to the proposed development. Due to the lack of sustainable solutions and detail provided in the drainage strategy it was however recommended that a surface water drainage scheme for the site be submitted before the development begins. This is also compliant with policy CS13 of the SBCS which seeks to ensure new developments have no detrimental impact from increase flooding and that developments should incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems.

Trees (Policy EP4 of the SBDLP)

- 8.34 It is noted that some of the proposed building construction is in close proximity to the location of trees. Also one tree is to be removed in the car park area. The applicant has submitted details on how the trees can be protected in Section 6.12 of the pre development aboriginal survey and impact assessment dated March 2018 (ref: RT-MME-127009). Therefore to comply with the above policy, this will be referred to in the condition. The landscape advisor was consulted, but no comments have been received.

Biodiversity (NPPF)

- 8.35 Paragraph 170 of the NPPF states that developments should minimise the impact on biodiversity and where possible provide net gains in biodiversity. The Council's Ecology Advisor raised no objection to the proposal, subject to a condition requesting the need for a watching brief / method statement for further bat surveys to check for bats prior to the commencement of the development. The condition would also request a contingency plan in the event that bats were found. Subject to this, the proposal is considered to be in compliance with the biodiversity aims of the NPPF.

9.0 Conclusion

- 9.1 Application CC/0029/18 seeks planning permission for proposed extensions and internal alterations, including 8 space car parking and a widened pedestrian access at Denham Village Infant School, in the village of Denham, Buckinghamshire.
- 9.2 I believe the proposed development would have no detrimental impact on the local amenity of the area, has no conflicts in design and location and there would be no detrimental increase in traffic. In terms of Green Belt, it is considered that very special circumstances apply where the proposed development increasing the age range of pupils the school caters for would prevent the closure of the school. Government statutory policy guidance requires local authorities to demonstrate all the alternatives to closure. The proposal would also reduce home school transport movements and therefore has the potential to reduce to use of road transport to and from the school. I am also satisfied that the proposed development would meet the current needs of the school-aged children in the local area, providing for educational requirements.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

CC/0029/18 – Planning Application
Listed Building Consent dated 30th August 2018 South Bucks District Council.
South Bucks District Council Local Plan
South Bucks Local Development Framework Core
National Planning Policy Framework 2018
Consultation and representation replies dated March, April, May, June, July, August and September 2018

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason:

To prevent the accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions, to enable the Local Planning Authority to review the suitability of the development in the light of altered circumstances and to comply with the provisions of Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. The development shall not be carried out other than in complete accordance with the following drawings / documentation:

- Drawing no: 17/119-050.001 Rev 1 – Site Location Plan
- Drawing no: 17/119-050.003 Rev 1 – Proposed Site Plan
- Drawing no: 17/119-100.002 Rev 1 - Proposed Ground Floor
- Drawing no: 17/119-100.003 Rev 1 – Proposed Roof Plan
- Drawing no: 17/119-140.002 Rev 1 – Proposed Elevations (Hall)
- Drawing no: 17/119-140.003 Rev 1 – Proposed Elevations (CDT /IT)
- Drawing no: 17/119-140.004 Rev 1 – Proposed Elevations in Context

Reason:

In the interests of local amenity and to comply with policies EP3, EP5, EP6 and TR5 of the South Bucks District Local Plan and CS8 and CS13 of the South Bucks Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

3. Prior to the commencement of the development, materials proposed for the construction of the hall and the CDT / IT block shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority; The approved shall therefore be implemented with approved plans.

Reason:

In the interests of local amenity and to comply with policies CS8 of the South Bucks District Core Strategy and EP3 of the South Bucks District Local Plan.

4. Prior to commencement of the development the off-site highway works shown in principle on Drawing SK03-C from Appendix K of the Transport Assessment submitted with the planning application shall be laid out and constructed in accordance with details to be first approved in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

In order to minimise danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the highway and of the development and in accordance with policy TR5 of the South Bucks District Local Plan.

5. No part of the development shall commence until a Construction Traffic Management Plan including details of:
- Construction access;
 - Management and timing of deliveries
 - Routing of construction traffic;
 - Vehicle parking for site operatives and visitors;
 - Loading/off-loading and turning areas;
 - Site compound;
 - Precautions to prevent the deposit of mud and debris on the adjacent highway.

Has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development hereby permitted shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved management plan.

Reason:

To minimise danger and inconvenience to highway users and in accordance with policy TR5 of the South Bucks District Local Plan.

6. Development shall not begin until a surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of the hydrological and hydro-geological context of the development, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed. The scheme shall also include:

Ground investigations including:

- Infiltration in accordance with BRE365
- Groundwater level monitoring over the winter period
- Subject to infiltration being inviable, the applicant shall demonstrate that an alternative means of surface water disposal is practicable subject to the hierarchy listed in the informative below.
- Full construction details of all SuDS and drainage components
- Detailed drainage layout with pipe numbers, gradients and pipe sizes complete, together with storage volumes of all SuDS components
- Calculations to demonstrate that the proposed drainage system can contain up to the 1 in 30 storm event without flooding. Any onsite flooding between the 1 in 30 and the 1 in 100 plus climate change storm event should be safely contained on site.
- Details of proposed overland flood flow routes in the event of system exceedance or failure, with demonstration that such flows can be appropriately managed on site without increasing flood risk to occupants, or to adjacent or downstream sites.

Reason:

The reason for this pre-start condition is to ensure that a sustainable drainage strategy has been agreed prior to construction in accordance with Paragraph 163 of the National Planning Policy Framework to ensure that there is a satisfactory solution to managing flood risk and in accordance with policy CS13 of the South Bucks Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

7. Development shall not begin until a “whole-life” maintenance plan for the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The plan shall set out how and when to maintain the full drainage system (e.g. a maintenance schedule for each drainage/SuDS component) during and following construction, with

details of who is to be responsible for carrying out the maintenance. The plan shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:

The reason for this being a pre-start condition is to ensure that maintenance arrangements have been arranged and agreed before any works commence on site that might otherwise be left unaccounted for and in accordance with policy CS13 of the South Bucks Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

8. Prior to the commencement of the development, a watching brief for bats shall be submitted and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority. The development shall subsequently be carried in accordance with the approved details. The watching brief shall include:
 - Details of the pre-development check (no more than a week prior to works beginning).
 - Details of a tool box talk with anyone involved with the construction of the development in order to make them aware of the potential presence of bats and what to do in the event of finding any.
 - Careful working procedures – to be defined in the statement.
 - Details of who will be watching the construction and what qualifications they hold.
 - A contingency plan of what to do in the event of finding a bat roost.

Reason:

To ensure the protection of protected species that may be found on the site and in accordance with the NPPF.

9. Prior to the occupation of the development, space shall be laid out within the site for parking for 8 cars, a minimum of 8 cycles, loading and manoeuvring in accordance with the approved plans. This area shall be permanently maintained for this purpose and shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plans.

Reason:

To enable vehicles to draw off, park and turn clear of the highway to minimise danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the adjoining highway and in accordance with policies TR5 and TR7 of the South Bucks District Local Plan.

10. Prior to the planned occupation of the development hereby permitted, the Travel Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Development Management Team. Following occupation of the development hereby permitted, the travel plan shall be reviewed and submitted for approval, on an annual basis, at the end of each academic year. The plan shall include a full analysis of the existing modal split for staff and pupils at the school and detailed proposals for future transport provision, with the aim of securing no increase in the number of car movements generated on the school journey. In the event of an increase in the number of car movements, the school shall undertake measures, which will have previously been identified in the travel plan, as are necessary to promote a reduction in the number of car borne trips.

Reason:

In order to minimise danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the highway and to promote a reduction in the number of car borne trips and comply with National and Local planning policy and in accordance with policy TR5 of the South Bucks District Local Plan.

11. Prior to the first occupation of the development, a verification report carried out by a qualified drainage engineer must be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority to demonstrate that the Sustainable Urban Drainage System has been constructed as per the agreed scheme.

Reason:

The reason for this pre-occupation condition is to ensure the Sustainable Drainage System is designed to the technical standards and in accordance with policy CS13 of the South Bucks Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

12. Trees shall be protected as set out in the methodology in Section 6.12 of the pre development arboricultural survey and impact assessment dated March 2018 (ref: RT-MME-127009) and the development shall be carried out accordingly.

Reason:

In the interests of amenity and in accordance with policy EP4 of the South Bucks District Local Plan.