

Agenda Item: 6.7

06/01605/P

08/05/2006

Kenley

Application for full planning permission

Agent:

Claire Price

The Facility Architects

96b Bermondsey Street

London

SE1 3UB

Applicant:

Papillon House School

Location: 98 Higher Drive, Purley, CR8 2HL

Description: Use as a day school for children with autism

Drawing No(s): Plan Nos: 810/SPL 01, 02, 810/SEL 01, 810/PL 01, 02, 810/PEL 01 and Other supporting statements (all rec. 28th April 06) and additional site plan rec. 8th June 06

Recommendation: **Grant Permission**

Subject to the following condition(s) and reason(s):-

1. Unless otherwise previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority, the site and associated buildings shall not be used as a day school for more than 16 autistic children at any one time.

Reason: To protect the residential amenities of adjoining and neighbouring occupiers

2. Unless otherwise previously agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the rear garden shall only be used as a play area for a maximum of 10 children at any one time.

Reason: To protect the residential amenities of adjoining and neighbouring occupiers

3. The application premises shall not be used as an autistic day school except:- between 09:00 hours and 15:00 hours on Mondays to Fridays (excluding bank holidays)

Reason: To protect the residential amenities of adjoining and neighbouring occupiers

4. The site and associated buildings shall be used as a specialist autistic day school as specified in the application and for no other purpose (including any other purpose in Class D1 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 2005, or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification).

Reason: To protect the residential amenities of adjoining and neighbouring occupiers

5. The approval of the Local Planning Authority shall be obtained with respect to the following matters before the development is begun:-
 - (1) vehicle sight lines
 - (2) vehicle and pedestrian visibility splays
 - (3) cycle parking
 Reason: To ensure an acceptable standard of development having regard to the policies of the Unitary Development Plan and of the Second Deposit Draft Replacement Unitary Development Plan (the Croydon Plan)

6. The development shall be begun within three years of the date of the permission.
 Reason: To comply with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

In granting permission the local planning authority had regard to the following policies:-

1. The relevant policies of the Unitary Development Plan are SP1, SP2, BE1, BE10, BE11, BE16, BE17, T23, T46, H1, SP40, CS2 and CS6.
2. The policies of the Second Deposit Draft Replacement Unitary Development Plan (referred to as the Croydon Plan) which would amend the above and which impact upon the proposal are SP1, SP2, UD2, UD6, SP16, T30, T43, H1, SP30 and CS1.

The development is considered to be satisfactory in relation to the following:-

- (a) the appearance of the development in the street scene
 - (b) the relationship of the development to adjacent property
 - (c) the character of the development in the surrounding area
 - (d) the impact on the amenities of the occupiers of adjacent and nearby properties
 - (e) the privacy of occupiers of adjacent and nearby properties
 - (f) the relationship of the development to trees to be retained
 - (g) the safety of pedestrians and motorists on the adjacent highway
 - (h) the housing policies of the development plan
 - (i) the transport policies of the development plan
 - (j) the community services policies of the development plan
- and having regard to all other matters raised.

Ward: Kenley

PLANNING CONTROL COMMITTEE

Lead Officer: Head of Planning Control

22nd June 2006

06/01605/P- 98 Higher Drive, Purley, CR8 2HL

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report concerns an application for full planning permission for the use of the property as a day school for children with autism.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that full planning permission be granted subject to the conditions and reasons set out in the agenda.
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3. BACKGROUND

(a) Site Description

- 3.1 The application site is located on the western side of Higher Drive within the Kenley ward. The site lies opposite Foxley Wood and Sherwood Oaks recreation ground, designated as Local Open Land, but there are no development plan Proposals Map constraints on the site.
- 3.2 The site is occupied by a substantial detached, two storey dwelling house, constructed in red brick with slate tiled roof. The plot shape is fairly rectangular with a frontage width of approximately 34 metres and an approximate depth of 49 metres. The dwelling itself is setback from the public footpath by approximately 18 metres, and there is a detached garage sited forward of the dwelling and towards the southern boundary.
- 3.3 The land topography in the vicinity drops from east to west resulting in the dwelling house sitting significantly lower than the public footpath and highway. The rear garden in turn sits at a lower land level to the dwelling house.
- 3.3 Vehicular and pedestrian access is from a single entrance point from Higher Drive, with the site being well screened from the roadside by tall hedgerows along the front (eastern) boundary.
- 3.4 There is a large garden to the rear which is well screened with various hedgerows and a mix of both small and large trees.
- 3.5 The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character with substantial detached properties on relatively large plots. The immediate vicinity also comprises various new development sites and a home for elderly, at number 92.

(b) Relevant Planning History

- 3.6 There is planning history on the site but none recent that is considered relevant to the application.

(c) Proposal

- 3.7 The proposal is to convert the existing house into a day school for young children with autism. It is proposed that the initial intake will be for 16 children aged between 5-11 years with 5 staff members. The school will operate during school term time and weekdays only from 9am to 3pm, and will be used by staff members over the weekends. This will possibly be one weekend per academic term for a few hours, for a couple of staff members can carry out tasks such as gardening that cannot be carried during the week.

- 3.8 There are no proposed alterations to the exterior of the dwelling house; the internal layout will provide for an assembly hall, kitchen, dining room, hallway, office, lounge and WC on the ground floor. The first floor layout will provide for four classrooms, a sensory room, bathroom and three WC's. It is proposed that the detached garage will be converted into a soft-play centre for the children.
- 3.9 The current vehicular and pedestrian access will be slightly altered to provide a 'T' shaped turning circle on-site so vehicles can enter and exit the site in a forward gear. It is proposed that there will be two on-site parking spaces for staff use. The children will be transported daily to and from the site in a mini-bus.
- 3.10 It is proposed to have two classes of eight children, and play times/lunchtimes will be organised in two sittings. For example, at lunchtimes, one class will play outside, whilst the other eats inside, and vice-versa. A twenty minute period is proposed for a morning break and the same in the afternoon, with an approximate twenty minute period for external play for each group at lunchtimes.

4. PLANNING POLICIES

- 4.1 The relevant policies of the Unitary Development Plan are SP1, SP2, BE1, BE10, BE11, BE16, BE17, T23, T46, H1, SP40, CS2 and CS6.
- 4.2 The policies of the Second Deposit Draft Replacement Unitary Development Plan (referred to as the Croydon Plan) which would amend the above and which impact upon the proposal are SP1, SP2, UD2, UD6, SP16, T30, T43, H1, SP30 and CS1.

5. CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 Ten adjoining and nearby owners/occupiers were notified in writing of the application; eleven written representations were received objecting to the proposal. The following points were raised:
- a) Noise disturbance; peaceful environment enjoyed by local residents, many retired will be dramatically disturbed by child play noises;
 - b) Located on a blind bend in the road, therefore very dangerous especially with morning and afternoon drop-off and collection times;
 - c) Property and location is not suitable for this use, completely out-of-character;
 - d) Located too far away from good public transport links; will be a significant increase in vehicular traffic
 - e) Not enough car parking spaces proposed for staff;
 - f) Building size is not sufficiently large for the increased intake over the years;
- 5.2 Councillor Steve Hollands has referred the application to the Planning Control Committee on the grounds that the proposal is out of character with the area and will result in a considerable increase in car traffic. Insufficient parking is provided and a considerable amount of noise will be generated by the children

using the school causing disturbance to local residents. The site is a considerable distance from public transport and is not easily accessible by foot due to the local terrain.

6. CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The principal issues to be considered are:

- a) Whether the proposal is acceptable in principle having regard to the land use policies of the development plan.
- b) The effect of the proposed development on the visual amenities of the street scene and the character of the area.
- c) The impact on the amenities of adjoining and nearby occupiers to the site.
- d) Traffic and highway implications.

(a) The principle of this use

6.2 The Council's policies on housing supply are H1 of the UDP and H1 of the draft Croydon Plan. These seek to resist the loss of housing but allow for the conversion of residential accommodation for the provision of community uses sought by other policies in the respective Plans.

6.3 Policy CS2 of the UDP and CS1 of the draft Croydon Plan state that "the Council will seek to ensure that the distribution of community facilities meets local needs and those new facilities are designed and sited so as to encourage wider use by the community including people with disabilities. The Council will ensure that such uses do not cause significant harm to residential character or amenity".

6.4 The site has no Proposal Map designation constraints and provided the proposal does not conflict with other policies in the Development Plans then it is considered to be acceptable in principle. The criteria set out above are dealt with below.

(b) Appearance and character

6.5 There would be no external alterations to the property and the property is well screened from the street, so would not have a detrimental effect on the street scene or the character of the area, in terms of design and appearance. As the proposal is for a relatively low number of children and with the site and building being sufficiently sized, it is considered the proposal would not be out of context with the character of the residential area.

(c) Impact on adjoining and nearby occupiers

6.6 There have been a number of objections to the proposed development and these concerns have been considered. The site and those adjoining are well separated with good screening provided at all boundaries with the development also being relatively small in scale. The Council's Specialist Pollution Team has commented that ambient noise levels are not expected to be significant but that conditions should be attached to a grant of planning permission limiting the hours of use, the intake numbers and the use of the garden. It is considered

that the site is wholly appropriate for the use with the site specifics assisting in safeguarding the amenities of nearby residents. It is no considered that the proposal will be significantly detrimental to the amenities of adjoining and nearby residents.

(d) Traffic and highway issues

6.7 Although not specified, it can be noted that the existing site has sufficient spacing for a number of off-street car parking spaces, although the site only has a single access. It is proposed that 2 car parking spaces will be provided for staff and the majority of children will be transported to and from the school by a minibus, provided by the LEA; the children are encouraged to use the minibus to promote independency.

6.8 At this point the staff have not been appointed, so it cannot be pinpointed how many will drive to and from the school, use public transport/cycle/walk, or be dropped off by car. There will be a slight alteration to the site layout to allow for a 'T' shaped turning point for the minibus and other vehicles to enter and exit the site in a forward gear. Although the alterations will perhaps reduce the number of on-site parking spaces, the proposed alterations and minibus use will also reduce the amount of vehicular traffic.

6.9 The existing hedgerows running along the front boundary will be trimmed in height to provide the necessary pedestrian visibility splays.

6.9 Conditions would be attached to the grant of permission requesting vehicle sight lines to be provided and retained on-site, together with details of proposed cycle parking to promote sustainable transport alternatives.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 The Council's Specialist Pollution Team has commented that the proposal is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on the amenity of adjacent properties.

8. EQUALITIES CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 The use would cater for people disadvantaged by learning disabilities.

Report Author: Natalie Glover

Background Documents: 11 letters of objection
Referral from Cllr Steve Hollands

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